



**Cartography as a Strategy of Empire in
*Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos
en las Islas i Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano*
by Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Connett', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Christina Connett

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Figure 1. *Década Primera* title page, Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General...* Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In the sixteenth century, some of Spain's most intriguing imperialistic strategies of asserting its New World claims are the official histories commissioned by the monarchy and the use of cartography to support these narratives and their relevant agendas. This project is a study of the cartographic elements employed in one of the most ambitious of these efforts, the *Historia General de los hechos de los Castellanos en las islas y tierra firme del Mar Oceano*, 1601-1615, by Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, with the purpose of better understanding and broadening the arc of historical discourse on this work. While much scholarship has been given to the text of the *Historia General...*, its author, context, and sources, there have been no thorough examinations of the title pages and maps, particularly using a methodology which combines cartographic and art historical analyses. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate that Herrera's use of maps was an active, not a passive effort in legitimizing Catholic Spain's claims on the Americas and to contextualize this strategy of asserting possession and power.¹ By using Christian and classical iconography and humanist historiographical structure embedded in a cartographic program, Herrera addresses Catholic obligations in the Americas particularly in response to Protestant propaganda; unifies and nationalizes the New World within the Catholic Habsburg monarchy; and legitimizes possession of new territories and the governance of the Indians. This essay will contribute to the field a fresh perspective on the *Historia General de los hechos de los Castellanos en las islas y tierra firme del Mar Oceano* with an analysis of the cartographic elements in the format of the title pages, the panels of the title pages and the Herrera-Velasco maps of the New World.

¹ J. B. Harley, "Silences and Secrecy: The Hidden Agenda of Cartography in Early Modern Europe," *Imago Mundi* 40 (January 1, 1988): 57-76. See Harley, 57-76 for further discussion of mapping as an active rather than passive voice.

In 1598, Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, the *cronista mayor* for King Philip II, was commissioned by the king to write a history of the great deeds of the Spaniards in the New World during the Golden Age of discovery, from 1492 to 1554. Between 1601-1615, the *Historia General de los hechos de los Castellanos en las islas y tierra firme del Mar Oceano* (hereafter referred to as the *Décadas*), and the supplementary *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*² (hereafter referred to as the *Descripción*), was published in four volumes. The *Décadas* is divided into eight “*Décadas*,” or decades, each of which is decorated with an elaborate and highly iconographic title page. These illustrations, along with the title page of the *Descripción* are of enormous importance in how they serve to visually enhance and support the agenda of the enterprise as a whole. In addition to the title pages, the *Descripción* also includes fourteen maps with corresponding text describing the New World (hereafter referred to as the Herrera-Velasco maps).

As a cartographic art historian, the *Décadas* is at first most interesting for its inclusion of the map engravings based on mid-sixteenth century manuscripts by Juan López de Velasco. Herrera’s project stands as the first government sanctioned publication of detailed Spanish maps of New Spain, geographic knowledge which until this time were *arcana imperii*, or closely guarded national secrets.³ However, as I argue here, the title pages are also an exercise in mapping in construction as well as content. In fact, the title pages that introduce each of the *Décadas* read much like a travel narrative or an itinerary map in their linearity and chronology but are symbolic in nature, and serve to support the text and the agenda of the work as a whole rather as a tool for way-finding. This deliberately constructed route of visual and textual narrative leads the reader on an historical journey of Herrera’s highly selective creation.

² The *Descripción* was often later bound into the fourth volume, but is also found independently in some editions. This will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

³ Richard L Kagan, *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 163.

I argue that Herrera attempts to legitimize Spanish control over the Empire by imposing a Eurocentric Catholic universality to the Empire through his application of strategic religious and imperialistic iconographies imbedded within a cartographic program. “The idea of empirical truth was essential to the belief of the Spanish in a meaningful imperial experience,” and what is asserted here is that the inclusion of cartographic elements lends credence to this perception of truth.⁴ Although critical cartographic scholars now recognize that maps are subjective and are the products of the time and opinions of their creators, the assumption of “truth” has historic precedence: “According to Renaissance theorists, maps are a key to the interpretation of history: they provide the framework of historical events and at the same time demonstrate their scale. They are also reliable, thanks to their mathematical construction, and consequently they enable their users to check the accuracy of historical accounts.”⁵ However, as J.H. Harley points out, “maps are... inherently rhetorical images. It is commonplace to say that cartography is an art of persuasion... rhetoric permeates all layers of the map. As images of the world, maps are never neutral or value free or completely scientific. Each map argues its own case.”⁶ Maps can be read as cultural texts as any other form of visual media as none objectively exists outside of its own intention and time.

A detailed investigation into the context of the *Décadas* and its iconography as it pertains to the vocabulary of historical map analysis will reveal the indebtedness of the work to the genre of map production. *Décadas* will be compared to contemporary historiographies from Spain and elsewhere in Europe to determine consistencies and unique qualities of the work in question. Very little scholarship has been devoted to the imagery supporting the text, and this is essential to

⁴ Joan Pau Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America,” in *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 95.

⁵ George Tolia, “Maps in Renaissance Libraries and Collections,” in *History of Cartography*, ed. David Woodward, vol. 3, Part 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 656.

⁶ J. B. Harley, *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 5.

understanding its nature and relevance in the context of 16th century Spanish expansionism and imperialism in an age of tremendous change politically, economically, legally, and theologically.

Reflected in Herrera's efforts is the extraordinary economy of message and design integral to cartography, and we will argue that this technique was somewhat forced onto the project, resulting in some lack of consolidation typically essential to a successful cartographic enterprise. Mapping here is symbolic rather than simply geographic, but the awkwardness endemic to Herrera's *Décadas* may also reflect other tension of the times such as the author's being a Christian Humanist⁷ – “the change from one way of perceiving the world to another was not restricted through aesthetics.”⁸ The existence let alone the conquest and governance of the Americas were subjects covered neither in the Bible nor by classical historians, and this lack of reference philosophically, spiritually and cartographically required new systems of inquiry and scholarship.

Three kinds of maps exist in the Herrera work, and each will be described and analyzed in regards to their support of the main agenda of the work as a whole: the title page designs of each *Década* and the *Descripción*, respectively, as narrative itinerary maps within classical and Christian frameworks; the geographic spaces within the individual panels on these pages; and the Herrera-Velasco maps, which are included in the supplementary *Descripción*. The relevance of these cartographic elements to the overall agenda of the *Décadas* through their iconographic programs is the focus of this research.

Although Herrera's *Décadas* has been used as an historical source for centuries, it is important to recognize and illuminate the much deeper story the project has to tell... “Verbal texts, maps, icons, and other cultural products should be taken as

⁷ Stephen Greenblatt, *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern*, 1st ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012), 228. See the discussion of More's Utopia as a literary example of the unresolvable tensions in this cultural and intellectual identity.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 10. Here Greenblatt is referring to cultural shifts during the Italian Renaissance that permeated not only art but all forms of culture and science during this time.

rhetorical artifices and not as depositories of data from which a factual truth may be construed. Rhetoric, in this sense, is not simply an art of persuasion, but also implies strategic moves that constitute forms of subjectivity and produce what Roland Barthes called an ‘effect of the real.’”⁹ While Herrera’s *Décadas* gives an “effect of the real” by its inclusion of maps, these in turn are further legitimized by the use of title page design reminiscent of Biblical book covers and classical Roman visual narrative traditions; these elements constitute acts of persuasion that are inherently strategic. These illustrations serve as visual vehicles of possession, moving away from the distortions of myth making inherent in the medieval mappaemundi into a new type of mapping characterized by its “ever-growing intellectual respectability”¹⁰ in the age of exploration, here relying on that respectability of scientific inquiry, particularly in Spain in the sixteenth century, to justify a textual narrative with which it is associated.

The illustrations also change the way we read the text as they illuminate the organization of the *Décadas*. While Moretti here speaks of post-authorial maps as a tool for literary history, I do believe the same is true of Herrera’s maps: that they “highlight the... place-bound nature of literary forms: each of them with their own peculiar geometry, its spatial taboos and favorite routes. And then, maps bring to light the internal logic of narrative: the semiotic domain around which a plot coalesces and self-organizes.”¹¹ While the location of Herrera’s story is clearly defined in the text, the maps in all their forms contextualize the story of the Castellanos conquest of the New World firmly in a hierarchical order, timeframe, and geography that support and clarify the text.

A closer look at these illustrations from an intersemiotic perspective reveals the complexity of the layers of interpretation from the original story to the end user,

⁹ José Rabasa, *Inventing America: Spanish Historiography and the Formation of Eurocentrism*, 1st ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 9.

¹⁰ David N Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of Acontested Enterprise* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1993), 51.

¹¹ Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900* (London; New York: Verso, 1998), 5.

the consumer or audience of these works. We can infer public reaction to the *Décadas* by the multiple editions and translations from the 17th century on, which allude to its popularity and relevance, and therefore also assume it spoke in a visual and textual language that was accessible and engaging to the public. The title pages were adapted and recycled in other later publications, which again suggests a continuity of influence and relevance. Acknowledging the disparities and selection process from the actual event, the primary accounts of that event as told for a European audience, the selection of these resources by Herrera for the text and then again for the illustrations is a fascinating tale of manipulation and construction towards Herrera's agenda of Spanish legitimate control of the Americas.

This essay will contribute to the field a fresh perspective on the *Historia General de los hechos de los Castellanos en las islas y tierra firme del Mar Oceano* an analysis of its cartographic elements, providing a deeper reading into Spanish 16th century expansionism strategies. The imagery follows a well-established visual rhetoric, or art of persuasion in maps familiar in their design to the audience; Herrera provided his *Décadas* in a format and visual language his readers would understand and respond to in order to best serve the intentions of his king. In this regard, we will be looking at Herrera as a work designed and built around a European perspective; how the work was received and utilized within the American colonies falls outside of the scope of this work.

Chapter I consists of introductory material, including literature review of scholarship to date relevant to this study, the research methodology employed, and definitions and clarifications of terminology.

In Chapter 2, the history of the creation of the *Décadas* is covered, including the life and career of Herrera. A critique of his relevance to modern scholarship, his strengths and weaknesses as an historian, and his patronage by three successive Habsburg monarchs: Philip II, III, and IV will be examined as well as the fluctuations in policies that influenced the publication of Herrera's work. Finally,

the work will be contextualized within the framework of contemporary historiographies and their challenges in accommodating the New World in relevant models of inquiry.

Chapter 3 focuses on the physical attributes of the *Décadas*, and contains a detailed description of each title page, the title page of the *Descripción* and the Herrera-Velasco maps. Examples of source material are included and as well as analytical commentary. This section is intended to familiarize the reader with the images and their context within the larger program of the work to better understand the physical and illustrative construction of the *Décadas*.

Chapter 4 applies cartographic and art historical methodologies to analyse the illustrations of the *Décadas* in their distinct categories, and includes discussions on the iconographical applications of cartography, the importance of map production in the sixteenth century, and looks at various types of visual references employed by Herrera to impose his agenda upon the reader. This is the main section of the work where the central arguments are made and justified. This is followed by project conclusions and recommendations for further study.

Literature Review

The literature on Herrera y Tordesillas and the *Décadas* includes biographical material, critical reviews of his historical writing, surveys of sixteenth century historiographies, and on a more granular level, a lawsuit brought against the writer by a disgruntled descendant of one of his historical figures included in the *Décadas*. Herrera is frequently included in short passages and citations of works of larger scope on the general histories of the conquest of the New World as a primary source of data from the period. These latter entries typically recognize the shortcomings of Herrera as an historian in the context of his role as Coronista Mayor, working under the specific instructions of the royal crown, while many criticize Herrera for plagiarizing works by earlier writers. Given his access to the royal archives and that many of these materials are now missing or destroyed,

Herrera is recognized as the only instrument available to access these other works.

As previously mentioned, there is very little written on the iconography of the title pages, which was the incentive for approaching the work from this point of view, and none which deal with the title pages from a cartographic methodology. What does exist is outlined here.

Antonio Ballesteros y Beretta wrote the prologue for the 1934-57 edition of the *Décadas*, and is one of the first modern authorities on Herrera, but his biographical information is still scant. What there is involves legal documents, epitaphs, and other important primary documentation, but his work does not focus on the illustrations.¹²

The most significant work on iconography in the *Décadas* is an article by Tom Cummins of the University of Chicago, “De Bry and Herrera: ‘Aguas Negras’ or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America” which compares the title pages of Herrera to contemporary prints of Theodore de Bry, as they relate to the Protestant and Catholic conflicts between Spain and Holland in particular.¹³ While Cummins relates the material to a Christian agenda he does not analyze the overall program of the title page design as it relates to Bible covers, nor address the cartographic elements. He does make some further mention of Herrera’s iconography in *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in the Mesoamerica and the Andes*, but this deals specifically with Aztec imagery in the sixteenth

¹² Antonio de Herrera, *Historia general de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las islas y tierra firme del Mar Oceano: Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*, ed. Antonio Ballesteros y Beretta (Real Academia de la Historia, 1934).

¹³ Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America,” ed. Gustavo Curiel, Renato González Mello, and Juana Gutiérrez Haces, *Arte, Historia E Identidad En América: Visiones Comparativas, XVII Coloquio Internacional de Historia Del Arte 1* (1994): 17–31.

century and Herrera's borrowings from a Mesoamerican Codex.¹⁴ Berthold Riese also addresses the Andean sources of the Aztec images used in the *Descripción* but this work does not focus on the illustrations in their entirety.¹⁵

Cummins asserts that the relationship between the images and the text are not as relevant as this author believes, in part because they are not interspersed within the text so as to benefit the reader with visualizations of specific events "as opposed to the totality of history as Herrera conceived it."¹⁶ However, we think the images are that much more relevant because they contribute to the overall unification effort of the project as a whole and each *Década* as a unit, and that they are deeply significant to the text in that regard.

Richard Kagan is an authority on Herrera in North America and Europe, and has included studies of that author in larger works of broader topics, such as in *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Modern Spain*. In this work, Kagan dedicates a fascinating chapter to Herrera, and contextualizes him biographically, politically, and intellectually, but again focuses in depth on Herrera the historian rather than on the images within the *Décadas*. Kagan's research has greatly informed this essay, and his insights to the Habsburg monarchy have proven invaluable.

María de Portuondo discusses the Velasco maps in regards to their use in the *Décadas*, but focuses mostly on the life and career of Velasco and the impact and dissemination of his work. The publication of the maps in Herrera is discussed, and while we agree with some of her main assertions, the following statement is in conflict with our findings: "Geography in Herrera y Tordesilla's text was secondary, merely a backdrop on which to paint the heroic deeds of the Spanish

¹⁴ Tom Cummins, "Representations in the Sixteenth Century and the Colonial Image of the Inca," in *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Walter Mignolo (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 188-219.

¹⁵ Berthold Riese, *Ethnographische Dokumente Aus Neuspanien Im Umfeld Der Codex Magliabechi-gruppe* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1986).

¹⁶ Cummins, "'De Bry and Herrera: 'Aguas Negras' or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America,'" 24.

in the New World.”¹⁷ While we do agree the illustrations support the textual narrative, it is argued in this paper that the cartographic elements in the title pages and Velasco maps serve as the structure and legitimization of the entire project and fill a much more important role. While her work has been very useful for the larger context of Spanish cosmography, the implications of the cartographic elements are not fully realized as she considers the maps overall as a secondary subject in the scope of her project.

Mariano Cuesta Domingo also tackles the Velasco maps in the *Décadas* in his *Descubrimientos y Cartografía en la época de Felipe II*, and makes a short analysis of each as reproduced in Herrera’s work.¹⁸ Cuesta Domingo does reference the cartographic elements as integral to the framework of the larger story but focuses on the maps in the *Descripción* and not on the title pages, nor on the larger iconographic implications of their inclusion in the work: “Un marco geográfico que es el teatro de operaciones de los hechos que el cronista narra pero también es un elemento fundamental para la explicación y comprensión de los acontecimientos descritos, un plano de referencias.”¹⁹ But Cuesta Domingo does consider the special qualities of Herrera’s work in that he employs the unique access he had to all of the primary resources of the New World explorers in his *Décadas*: “[Herrera] fue mucho más allá hasta aproximarse a la ciencia geográfica en sí, culminando una tradición acumuladora de datos que se inició con el primer viaje de Colón y se ofrece al lector a través de otras crónicas, tratados de náutica y manuales entre los que destacar las obras de Fernández de Enciso, Alonso de Chaves, Alonso de Santa Cruz hasta llegar al antecesor de Herrera, López de Velasco.”²⁰

¹⁷ Maria M. Portuondo, *Secret Science: Spanish Cosmography and the New World* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2009), 296.

¹⁸ Mariano Cuesta Domingo, “La Cartografía Grabada En La Obra De Antonio De Herrera,” in Mariano Cuesta Domingo (editor), *Descubrimientos y cartografía en la época de Felipe II* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1999), 71–114.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 82.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 82–83.

Cuesta Domingo is an excellent source for biographical information, particularly in his prologue of the 1991 edition of the *Décadas*, and also addresses the position of “cronista” as it relates to the work of López de Velasco, Herrera y Tordesillas, and Céspedes del Castillo in his article “Los cronistas oficiales de Indias. De López de Velasco a Céspedes del Castillo.”²¹ He discusses the subjectivity and construction of the historiographers of the sixteenth century, and particularly Herrera, as catering their selection of information to their respective agendas. Cuesta Domingo lists the source material in great detail in this latter work, and focuses on the issues of plagiarism, citation, and construction and use of textual information rather than how it relates to the illustrations.

Ricardo Padrón has also incorporated Herrera into his larger investigation on Latin American imperial studies in cartography, and concentrates on the Herrera-Velasco maps included in the *Descripción* chapter rather than on the title pages themselves.²² His work will illuminate the discussion of these important elements of the *Décadas*.

In the “El Grabado en España” by Carrete Parrondo, Checa Cremades, and Bozal Fernández, there is some discussion as to the commissioning of the engravings in the *Décadas*, but this study highlights the price and commission rather than the purpose. The authors consider the *Décadas* to all have been produced by the same engraver, which is, in fact, erroneous.²³

Certainly countless modern historians have relied heavily on Herrera as a resource, given his access and reliance upon original documents in the king’s collections, many of which have never otherwise been published and many which have since been lost. There are numerous references to Herrera in the works of

²¹ Mariano Cuesta Domingo, “Los Cronistas Oficiales de Indias. De López de Velasco a Céspedes Del Castillo,” *Revista Complutense de Historia de América* 33 (2007): 115–50.

²² It was Ricardo Padrón who originally introduced the author to the lack of scholarship on Herrera as a whole, which inspired our first investigation into this work.

²³ Juan Carrete Parrondo, Fernando Checa Cremades, and Valeriano Bozal Fernández, *Summa artis: historia general del arte. Vol.31, El grabado en España (siglos XV al XVIII)* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1988), 227–230.

John Elliott, Henry Kamen, and Phillip Prescott, and these most frequently attribute him as a source for primary documents on the early history of Spanish American conquest. As frequently, he is criticized by many for his lack of writing skill and his tendency to plagiarize unapologetically from his sources, many of whom were no longer alive to contest. His faults for his lack of original research are typically asserted, while his importance as the primary compiler of much valuable information is applauded.

There is at least one dissertation dedicated to the *Décadas* written in 1944.²⁴ This work is very valuable for its reference to criticisms of Herrera by scholars in the 17th to 19th centuries as well as for sources of original documentation, but the main topic of the paper is devoted to a court case brought against Herrera after the publication of the *Décadas* by an ancestor of one of the characters who was quite unhappy with Herrera's assessment of his family's role in the New World.

Research Methodology

Using an art historical and cartographic historical model, the latter based in part on the techniques of J.B. Harley, primary materials from the sixteenth century, including maps, prints, historiographies, and other printed materials, as well as paintings and sculpture were investigated and compared to the *Décadas*. Libraries and museums in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States were gleaned for material, and experts in the field consulted. The John Carter Brown Library in Providence, RI; the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.; the Harvard Libraries in Cambridge, MA; the Yale Libraries in New Haven, CT; Archivos de Las Indias in Sevilla; and the Museo Naval in Madrid; and the National Islamic Heritage Library in Qatar, to name a few, provided much of the primary resources referenced to complete this project.

²⁴ Clinton Harvey Gardiner, "Antonio de Herrera and THE HISTORIA GENERAL" (University of Michigan, 1944).

Of particular importance was the consultation for advice, resources, and research focus from art historians and historians in the field of European historiographies, cartography, and art history, most notably Amadeo Serra Desfilis, Richard Kagan, Ricardo Padrón, Tom Cummins, Nicolas Wey Gómez, and Magali Carrera. Their comments, suggestions, and referrals opened doors to collections and guided this paper. Many papers published by this team of official and unofficial advisers played a leading role in the research for this paper.

Rather than looking at maps as solely evidence of geographic knowledge and contemporary mathematical sophistication in presentation of physical space on a two dimensional surface, J.B. Harley proposed studying maps with a different methodology. He looked at maps in terms of absences and inclusions which he argued reveals their very specific socio-political agendas which can say as much or more about the assumptions on the part of the mapmaker regarding the audiences for whom they were intended as they do about their creators and benefactors. Like any form of graphic visual culture, maps represent an effort to purvey their message in abstract symbols recognizable to their consumers while selecting what details to include and what to exclude in the dataset provided. They are therefore uniquely instrumental as a cultural mirror, or in J.B. Harley's words, according to "an alternative epistemology, rooted in social theory rather than scientific positivism."

This is particularly interesting in regards to Herrera in that the cartographic pieces in Herrera are embedded within a historiographical project, a genre which again is often more revealing not only as indicative of what they include but also in their strategies of persuasion. Rolena Adorno suggests that historiographies of the sixteenth century in general are similar in their reflection of social practices rather than a concrete reality in that they "were not merely reflective of social and political practices, but were in fact constitutive of them... these works do not describe the events, they are events; and they transcend self-reference to refer to the world outside themselves. This referentiality however is not historical, as in the historical truth which referent is a past event. It is instead rhetorical and

polemical, with the objective of influencing readers' perception, royal policies, and social practices." Contemporary historiographies and their designs, commissions, and agendas overall are compared to Herrera in this context to determine what is unusual or typical in his particular approach to the commission and its purpose.

Harley also applies Panofsky's iconographical analysis to maps to reflect upon the visual meaning inherent in cartographic signs, style, and form as would any art historian investigating a painting.²⁵ A similar method is employed here in that the title pages in particular will be analyzed according to contemporary trends and interests in map publication as well as in fine art, book decoration and design. Decorative and design formatting iconography is described in terms of their reference to symbols of religious, imperial, and chivalric sources that would be arguably familiar to the intended audience, and how the "truth" of these iconographic programs is validated by their associations with maps.

Definitions

While the general, or shortened name for the *Historia General de los hechos de los Castellanos...* used by scholars in Spanish is *Las Décadas*, and the same general term is used in this work, the author grammatically treated *Décadas* as singular in English. This was a decision based on consideration of the work as a whole as a unified piece.

Little is known of neither the engraver nor the designer of the title pages, and rather than refer to them by name in each case, I will be using Herrera's name to discuss these images as the understood architect of the illustrations. While these are very unlikely to reflect his own hand in any way, as the master of the project it would have been in his best interest to make sure they conformed to his specifications as the visual introduction to his monumental task. It has been well

²⁵ Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*, 47.

discussed by other scholars that he took great pains to please his employers, and it is therefore presumed that he would have been strict with the imagery design and have had a great involvement in their execution and design. That he paid for the images himself will be discussed in the following chapters, but this does imply his control over the commission.

In an effort to diversify language and remain on task, generalized terms are often employed. For example, the author has freely used as synonymous labels like “Native Americans” and “Indians,” or in another case “New World,” “Americas,” “Indias,” and “Spanish America.” These terms are not assumed to be equal in all contexts, but for the purposes of this work they are used interchangeably with apologies for any loss of precision.

While certainly many of the characters in Herrera’s *Décadas* are not, in fact, Spanish, when speaking of the work as a whole, “Castellanos” or “Spaniards” will be used as a general term. The first is relevant as the term used by Herrera himself, and the second to also include anyone under Habsburg rule. The relevance of including figures from other nationalities, like Magellan, for example, as part of the “*hechos de los Castellanos*” will be discussed in greater detail below.

Cartography as it is understood in this project will be explained fully in the following chapters but here we want to clarify that “cartography” and “mapping” are used interchangeably. In our use of the word “cartography” itself, we must acknowledge the relatively new development of the very term as having been coined, according to Brückner, by a member of the British Geological Society in 1859. “In its singular definition, the term ‘cartography’ signaled the advent of the standardization of maps and the professionalization of the mapping industry...”²⁶ and implies a singularity of use and practice, dissemination and production that is unrealistic. While Herrera’s work fell prey somewhat to this prevailing “polythetic

²⁶ Martin Brückner, ed., *Early American Cartographies* (UNC Press Books, 2011), 5.

nature of cartographic culture in the Americas”²⁷ “diversified canon of maps... uneven patterns with which early American cartographies traveled in and out of... knowledge systems,”²⁸ nonetheless his work does fall into a time period when standardization and professionalization was a directive of the Casa de Contratación and other cartographic institutions. While these efforts will be discussed in detail below, we will show here that the *Décadas* embodies a moment of transition between historical conventions of humanism versus burgeoning scientific empiricism and cartographic advances, inhibited further by echoes of Spanish conventions of secrecy in regards to geopolitical affairs.

Here will be used the term “Spanish Empire” to describe the holdings of the Habsburg monarchy during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. However, Anthony Pagden does explain that technically “There never was, of course, a ‘Spanish Empire’” and although the territories ruled by the Habsburg and Bourbons are considered as such, “they were always, in theory and generally in legal practice, a confederation of principalities held together in the person of a single king.”²⁹ However, for our purposes here “Spanish Empire” refers to the entirety of territories under Philip II and his successors’ governance rather than as a political definition.

²⁷ Ibid., 6.

²⁸ Ibid., 7.

²⁹ Dr. Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination: Studies in European and Spanish-American Social and Political Theory 1513-1830* (Yale University Press, 1998). See 3–5, and his explanation that the Americas did legally achieve the status of “kingdoms” rather than colonies but only through force.

CHAPTER 2

“¿Pero qué es la historia de América toda sino una crónica de lo real-maravilloso?”

– Alejo Carpentier, *El reino de este mundo*

The Author

Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas (1549-1625), *cronista mayor de las Indias* and the *cronista de Castilla* for the Spanish monarchy, is recognized as one of the greatest contributors to the histories of the New World.

Called the “prince of historians of America,”³⁰ by some, an “annalist” by others,³¹ his work has been the keystone to much later scholarship, but he is also

consistently criticized for his chronological writing style, plagiarism, and errors of notation.³² Regardless, he

published one of the most important resources on Spanish

America in the early seventeenth century, the *Historia*

General de los hechos de los Castellanos en las islas y tierra

firme del Mar Oceano.



Born in Cuéllar,³³ in the Province of Segovia in Castile, Herrera’s dedication to God and country is without dispute. It is known that he was a devout Catholic, and in his will he states that he was an officer of the Inquisition.³⁴ He was educated in Spain then went to Italy where he was trained as a Humanist in classical letters.³⁵

³⁰ Juan Bautista Muñoz, *Historia Del Nuevo-Mundo*. (Madrid: Por la viuda de Ibarra, 1793), xxv.

³¹ Justin Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America* (Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1886), 67.

³² *Ibid.*, 67. Muñoz, Irving, Prescott, Tickner, and others have lauded his abilities as a “research, candor and justness” while Bancroft has condemned his style as burdensome and his citations inconsistent.

³³ Antonio de Herrera Tordesillas, *Historia General de Los Hechos de Los Castellanos En Las Islas Y Tierrafirme Del Mar Océano ... Publicada Por Acuerdo de La Academia de La Historia*, ed. Antonio Ballesteros Y Beretta (Madrid, 1934), There is some debate on Herrera’s birthplace, see Ballesteros–Beretta, x, or Duro’s Epitafio on this topic.

³⁴ Cristóbal Pérez Pastor, “Testamento de Antonio de Herrera”, *Boletín de La Real Academia de La Historia*, vol. 25, 1894.

³⁵ Nicolás Antonio, *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova Sive Hispanorum Scriptorum Qui Ab Anno MD. Ad MDCLXXXIV. Floruere Notitia*. / (Apud Joachimum de Ibarra, Typographum Regium,

There he met Vespasian Gonzaga, the brother of the Duke of Mantua, for whom he worked as a translator and writer for several years. When Gonzaga became the Viceroy of Navarra, Herrera travelled with him there and later to Valencia, where he was presented and accepted in the Spanish court. He was a keen and discriminating architect in his advancement of career; he was quite adept at moving in the right circles and knowing his audience:³⁶ “El último objetivo de Antonio de Herrera fue su prosperidad económica.”³⁷ He made a good enough impression at court that when Gonzaga recommended his services to King Philip II, Herrera was soon under the employ of the Spanish Crown.³⁸ This was the beginning of his long service to the Habsburg monarchy, under three successive kings.

Herrera typically included lavish complimentary dedications to cater to the egos of his patrons: “nuestro personaje emplea todos los resortes del arte adulatorio, en el que debía ser muy experto.”³⁹ His praises to the monarchy in his dedications of each project performed under their patronage are certainly to be expected in this context, but they are evidence of his desire to please his benefactors and to advance his career. For example, with the death of Philip II in 1598, Herrera made sure he would be well accepted by the future king and dedicated his two books of that year to Prince Philip, soon to be Philip III: “El veterano escritor prepara su situación y mira el próximo futuro.”⁴⁰ Political changes were becoming evident, and he made sure to remain in favor and relevant with the times: “el Cronista se apresta a sostener el cambio político que ha de experimentar España con la

1783), “Post apprehensas hic inter nos priores literas, studiis humanitatis bene excultus ac dives Italiam cogitavit,” 128.

³⁶ Gardiner, “Antonio de Herrera and THE HISTORIA GENERAL,” 11.

³⁷ Cuesta Domingo, “Los Cronistas oficiales de Indias. De López de Velasco a Céspedes Del Castillo,” 122.

³⁸ William Hickling Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Peru : With a Preliminary View of the Civilization of the Incas* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2004), 699.

³⁹ Ballesteros y Beretta, Antonio, “Proemio” to Tordesillas, *Historia General de Los Hechos de Los Castellanos En Las Islas Y Tierrafirme Del Mar Océano ... Publicada Por Acuerdo de La Academia de La Historia*, xxvii.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, xxx.

muerte de Felipe II.”⁴¹ If nothing else, Herrera was a driven career man and dedicated to serving his patrons to garner favor: “En sus publicaciones fue Herrera oportunista.”⁴²

Herrera was an accomplished translator of texts, typically from Italian to Spanish. Philip II commissioned Herrera to translate *Dies labors de la razor de estado* and *Causes de la grandest y magnificence de las crusades* by Juan Botero in 1592, and through royal patronage, he also became a respected and financially successful historian and a decent, if not terribly poetic, writer.⁴³ In 1598, Herrera was awarded the prestigious position of cronista mayor de Indias, which included a substantial salary and access to the royal archives from which to draw for his numerous publications under the auspices of the monarchy.⁴⁴ With the death of Pedro Ambrosio Ondériz in 1596, the position of Cronista Mayor became available, and Herrera, who had already been recognized for his accomplishments by the “royal authorities,” was assigned the role in May, 1596.⁴⁵ He was also named Cronista Mayor de Castilla, and he thereafter followed the courts of Philip II, Philip III and finally Philip IV, from Valladolid to Madrid, where he lived until his death in 1625.⁴⁶ While Philip II’s father, Charles V had hired many official chroniclers who ultimately failed in producing any work of lasting importance, or even completing the projects they began, Herrera was quite prolific, publishing numerous histories under the patronage of Philip II.⁴⁷ These included his *Historia general del mundo* (1601); and histories of Milan (1598); Turkey (1598); and Flanders (1600), but certainly his most important and comprehensive work was the *Décadas*, which was published in numerous editions and in several languages.

⁴¹ Ibid., xxx.

⁴² Ibid., xxxi.

⁴³ Mariano Cuesta Domingo, “Herrera Y Tordesillas, Antonio de (1549-1625),” in *Guide to the Documentary Sources for Andean Studies, 1530-1900*, vol. II (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 290. Cuesta Domingo mentions his will as attesting to his financial status.

⁴⁴ William Hickling Prescott and John Foster Kirk, *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2004), 699, n46.

⁴⁵ Gardiner, “Antonio de Herrera and THE HISTORIA GENERAL,” 11.

⁴⁶ Cuesta Domingo, “Herrera Y Tordesillas, Antonio de (1549-1625),” 290.

⁴⁷ See Kagan’s discussions of the royal cronistas and Philip II’s lack of interest in a royal biography during his lifetime, Kagan 2005.

When Herrera published the first four *Décadas* and the *Descripción de las Indias* in 1601, he was in his early fifties. Therefore, according to Ballesteros-Beretta, the *Décadas* represents a mature work of a man whose career and expertise in his craft is well established; “el cronista entonces había alcanzado la plenitud de sus facultades.”⁴⁸ That Herrera was at the height of his career gives some authority to the assumption that he had substantial control over its production. That Herrera deemed the illustrations an indispensable part of the work is apparent in that Herrera himself commissioned and paid for the plates.⁴⁹ The plates engraved by Juan Bautista Morales, which were probably the second printing of 1615, were paid for not by the day, as was also customary, but by the desired number of images.⁵⁰ It is unknown or sure if this was the case for Morales, but this author believes strongly that the design and images were provided for the artist in great detail by Herrera. “En algunos casos el contrato recoge toda suerte de detalles y pormenores: padrones, dibujos, modelos, número de estampas que debían de salir de cada lamina, retallados y tiempo y precio de realización.”⁵¹

The Commission in Context

There is evidence that the *Décadas* was commissioned to fulfill at least one official agenda: to address Spanish Catholic fulfillment of its obligations in the New World under the papal bulls of Alexander VI, including the *Inter caetera* in 1493, “with its concession to the crown of exclusive rights to evangelization in its transatlantic possessions” which “extended the royal Patronato to the Indies.”⁵² In accordance with the Laws of Burgos, a code of legislation for the Spanish Indies developed

⁴⁸ Tordesillas, *Historia General de Los Hechos de Los Castellanos En Las Islas Y Tierra firme Del Mar Océano ... Publicada Por Acuerdo de La Academia de La Historia*, xxxiii.

⁴⁹ This according to a conversation with Richard Kagan .

⁵⁰ Carrete Parrondo, Checa Cremades, and Bozal Fernández, *Summa artis.*, 228.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 228.

⁵² John Huxtable Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 2006), 68.

and published after a special Junta in Burgos in 1512 under orders of King Ferdinand, Indians were free people, with rights to own property and the right to remuneration.⁵³ In his instructions to Herrera, Philip II made direct reference to his objective for the *Décadas* commission: “[You will] make certain to demonstrate that the Catholic Kings [Spain’s monarchs] have complied with the bull of the Pope [Alexander VI], also that this nation is much defamed by foreigners with cruelty and avarice as result of omissions by its governors. You must investigate this, always making certain to tell the truth.”⁵⁴ However, there are at least two other agendas being addressed as well: unification of empire and legitimizing possession in the interests of governance over land as well as the native population. It will be argued here that the *Décadas* demonstrates attempts to visually fulfill each of these goals in a highly complex iconographical structure as part of a larger effort of sixteenth century Spain, which was “to achieve a measure of coincidence among the overlapping concepts of humanity, Christianity, and classical (urban) civility.”⁵⁵

The consistency of Philip II’s interest in responding to unfavorable publications about the Spaniards is evident in another project as well. While still in Gonzaga’s service, Herrera was approached by the Philip II’s advisor Juan de Idiáquez to write a general history of the world from 1559-1585, in part to refute the claims of other European writers that the “did little to promote Spanish interests and, even worse, contained ‘gossip [that could be used by] rivals of His Majesty and our nation.’”⁵⁶ While the New World was a particularly explosive topic for the Protestants, as will be discussed below, this request demonstrates the larger unrest in Europe regarding the Habsburg monarchy that Philip II was keen on resolving through contemporary historiography.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 150. Herrera y Tordesillas as quoted and translated by Kagan. Notations are Kagan’s and mine.

⁵⁵ John M. Headley, “Geography and Empire in the Late Renaissance: Botero’s Assignment, Western Universalism, and the Civilizing Process,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 1121.

⁵⁶ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 130.



Figure 2. Titian, *Philip II*, 1551, oil on canvas. Museo del Prado, Madrid



Figure 3. Justus Tiel, *Allegory of the Education of Philip III*, 1595, Oil on canvas, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

The *Décadas* fell under the patronage of two monarchs. While the Herrera work was published after the death of Philip II, it was conceptualized and commissioned by Philip II and completed during the reign of Philip III. Its transitional and inconsistent nature consequently reflects evolving policies and perceptions of the New World and Spain's relationship to it. For example, in its inclusion of the *Descripción*, the *Décadas* represents a change in cartographic secrecy during the reign of Philip III, before whose reign these publications would have been unlikely. Herrera therefore represents an interesting transition among these rulers, justifying the past through nostalgic iconic references, while representing more modern and lenient policies at the start of the seventeenth century. The changes in leadership are reflected in the dedication history of the works. While the initial project was commissioned by Philip II, the first four *Décadas* were published after his death in 1601, and were dedicated to Philip III. However, the second series of *Décadas* published in 1615, was dedicated to different people. *Década quinto* is dedicated to Philip III, *Década sexta* has no dedication, *Década setima* to D. Luis de Velasco, Marquis de Salinas, Presidente del Consejo de Indias and *Década octua* to D. Francisco de Texada y Mendoza.



Figure 4. Cantino planisphere, 1502. Biblioteca Estense, Modena, Italy

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI addressed the dispute between Portugal and Spain over the rights to newly discovered land to the West and important trade routes to the East in the Bulls of Donation, or the Alexandrine Bulls. The Bulls included the *Inter caetera*, which designated the line of demarcation that would later be negotiated between Spain and Portugal, modified and ratified in the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494. The Valencian born Pope favored the Crowns of Aragon and Castile in his Papal Bulls, although the full extent of the land he was bequeathing was still unknown at the time. The longitudinal Line of Demarcation set boundary lines between the empires, cutting the world in half where everything 100 leagues west of the Cape Verdes went to Spain, and to the east of that line to the Portuguese. The lack of specificity over which part of the Cape Verdes the line should be drawn from led to some confusion,⁵⁷ and later the line was shifted slightly westward to include some of eastern South America, which is now

⁵⁷ Vincent Virga, *Cartographia: Mapping Civilizations* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2007), 178.

Brazil.⁵⁸ This line can be seen in the *Cantino planisphere* (Figure 4), as a heavy line running vertically through the east side of South America.

The Lines of Demarcation were moved about on various maps to best serve the agenda of the cartographers' respective patrons, and were a primary concern when the Padrón Real, the master map of the Spanish Empire was modified in 1535 to include the valuable Spice Islands in either Spanish or Portuguese territory.⁵⁹ "Cartographic exactitude would suffer considerable elasticity in the interest of politics, while the unresolved problem of longitude provided a broad berth for vagaries." In 1524, at the Congress of Badajoz, "the Spanish delegates disputed the Portuguese claim to the Spice Islands by drawing the meridian through the tip of the Malay Peninsula, claiming for Spain the Moluccas, what would soon be called the Philippines, the entire eastern Asiatic coast, including much of China, and all that lay eastward."⁶⁰ The Treaty of Zaragoza of 1529 would define this antimeridian line opposite the world from that established in the Treaty of Tordesillas. Looking at these two seventeenth century maps, for example, we can see the conflict in action, where the "first line of demarcation" (Figure 5) runs far to the west, and is "corrected in the "true demarcation" by shifting dramatically to the east, removing most of Brazil from Portugal's control (Figure 6).⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ibid. Teixeira maps plates 144 and 145.

⁵⁹ Alison Sandman, "Mirroring the World: Sea Charts, Navigation, and Territorial Claims in Sixteenth Century Spain," in *Merchants & Marvels: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Pamela H Smith (New York: Routledge, 2002), 100–101.

⁶⁰ John M. Headley, "Spain's Asian Presence, 1565-1590: Structures and Aspirations," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (November 1, 1995): 627. See Headley for an excellent explanation of the development of Pacific cartographic identity in the work of Velasco.

⁶¹ Virga, *Cartographia*.177.

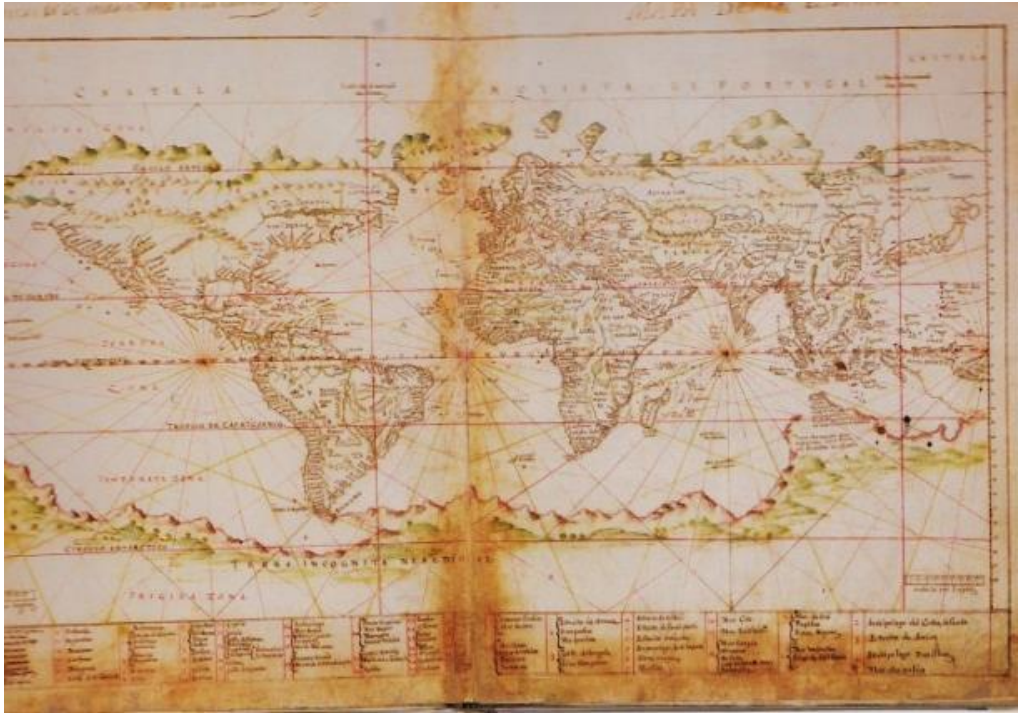


Figure 5. João Teixeira, *World and South Atlantic*, 1630, showing the “first demarcations between Castile and Portugal.” Library of Congress

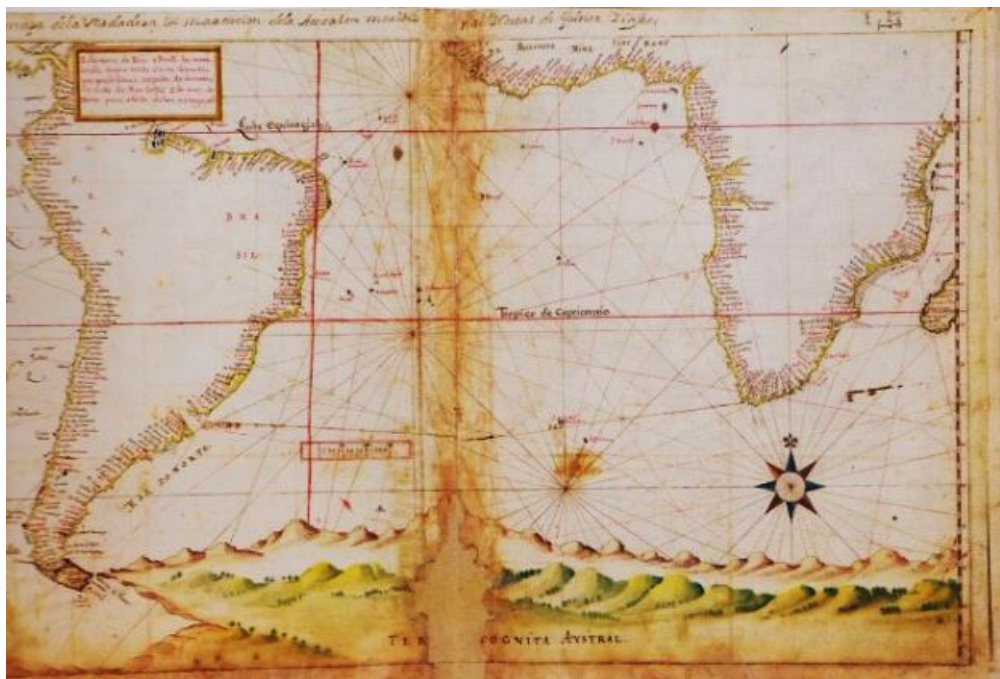


Figure 6. João Teixeira, “Fifth map of the true demarcation,” *Taboas geraes de toda a navegação*, 1630. Library of Congress

The Bulls of Donation contained a condition, that the monarchy would convert the natives of the New World to Catholicism in exchange for the Church’s support

of their rights to these lands.⁶² “Pope Alexander VI granted Ferdinand and Isabella, as well as their successor, sovereignty over all islands and mainlands discovered or to be discovered to the west of the line of the papal line of demarcation running from pole to pole one hundred leagues west of the Azores, *in the expectation that they would use their authority to bring the light of Christianity to the benighted heathen*” (my italics).⁶³ If they were shown to be negligent in this obligation, their rights to these lands would thereby fall into question.

The preposterousness of this gift to the Protestants in particular, cannot be overestimated in some respects: “...in effect, the Spaniards were the recipients of a divine grant of lands and peoples they had yet to find and see, let alone subdue...this permitted claims of possession to be seen with possession itself... Everything that followed, the entire business of Conquest and colonization, was the consolidation of that possession.”⁶⁴ If the Spaniards broke their agreement with the Pope, what right might they claim to this land, and, according to the Protestants, under what authority would the Pope have to give it in the first place?

Bartolomé de las Casas (1484-1566), a Dominican priest and bishop of Chiapas, and others made terrible allegations of Spanish mistreatment of the native populations in the Americas, in what would be later called the Black Legend. These stories were widely published and illustrated in Northern Europe, a region tired of Habsburg control and only too happy to disseminate anti-Spanish proganda. Images depicting the mistreatment of the natives of the Americas not only served as a protest against the inhumanity of the Spaniards, but also as a political tool confronting the legitimacy of the Line of Demarcation:⁶⁵

⁶² Richard L Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 151.

⁶³ Ricardo Padrón, *The Spacious Word: Cartography, Literature, and Empire in Early Modern Spain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 112.

⁶⁴ Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 68.

⁶⁵ Richard L Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 152.

“... Protestant printers decisively won a propaganda campaign that cast Iberia as a land of murderous, rapacious conquerors, and benighted, zealous priests.”⁶⁶

The Black Legend was used as “a weapon in an interimperial struggle,” a political tool of protest against the legitimacy of the Spanish rule in the Americas while also reflecting fears Inquisition in the north and Philip II’s reputation for violence and other atrocities.⁶⁷ Prince William of Orange accused Philip II of lechery, incest and the murder of his son, while Antonio Pérez, João Teixeira, and Balthasar Álamos de Barrientos condemned him more unilaterally as a terrible tyrant and an ineffective leader.⁶⁸ Accounts of Philip II’s character were inconsistent during his lifetime, and in recent years his terrible reputation in the north has been questioned for its political motivations. He has been called an “unfathomable personality. His image as bequeathed to us by contemporary and later historians has undoubtedly been distorted by the exaggerations of his prejudiced biographers, who, depending on their own political leanings, have portrayed Philip as anything from a saintly savior of Europe to a monster of uncompromising cruelty.”⁶⁹

However, some of this residual animosity may be exaggerated, in light of new scholarship: “Philip II has suffered the fate of those whose enemies have been their biographers.”⁷⁰ In his new forward to the 2001 edition of *Imperial Spain 1469-1716*, originally published in 1963, J.H. Elliott acknowledges the development of our perception of Habsburg monarchy in the last forty years with recent archival

⁶⁶ Daniela Bleichmar et al., ed., *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2009), 2.

⁶⁷ *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 6.

Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 6.

⁶⁸ Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 1998), 420.

⁶⁹ Jane C Nash, *Veiled Images: Titian’s Mythological Paintings for Philip II* (Philadelphia; London: Art Alliance Press ; Associated University Presses, 1985), 14.

⁷⁰ Jonathan Brown, “Philip II as Art Collector and Patron,” in *Spanish Cities of the Golden Age: The Views of Anton van Den Wyngaerde* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 14.

research in Spain. While his work has overall been more sympathetic to the Habsburgs than earlier non-Spanish historians, he realizes that his book would be quite different if it had been written in the 21st century, and this would apply to the early 20th century presumptions of the backwardness and isolation of sixteenth century Spain: “if I had been writing the book today I would not have drawn such a sharp contrast between the ‘open’ Spain of the early sixteenth century and the ‘closed Spain’ of Philip II and his successors. The metropolis of a worldwide empire can never seal itself off fully from foreign influences, and cultural borrowings from Flanders and Italy in particular remained continuous through the two centuries of Habsburg rule.”⁷¹

There were obvious conflicts in the interests of Castellanos in the New World. Some may have been there in their minds for God, but others were certainly motivated by personal gain. In the words of Marcos de Isaba, a Spanish soldier in the Americas: “In the past Spaniards were well-loved by all peoples, but for the last ninety years we are hated and detested on account of the ongoing wars. Spanish soldiers have fought with much valor and courage and with great loyalty to their king. They have worshipped and served the cause of God... and because of his infinite goodness, Spaniards have achieved authority and grandeur on earth; but because envy is like a worm that never rests, it is the sources of the enmity and hatred shown to us by the Turks, Moors, Arabs, Jews, French, Italians, Germans, Bohemians, English, and Scots, all of whom are enemies of Spain. Even in the New World the sound of Spanish arms causes hatred and resentment.”⁷²

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, a foot soldier with Cortés was perhaps the most realistic in his frank statement of intentions of the Spanish explorers: “We came to serve

⁷¹ John Huxtable Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716* (London: Penguin, 2002), xvi. There are some caveats to using this work as a source as there are cultural assumptions that in the current age seem very antiquated, such as when Elliott describes the conquistadors’ religious zeal for conquest which made “the Castilians more than a match for Indians who fought bravely enough, but who lacked their zest for life.” 66. These sweeping assumptions of superiority are taken into account by this author in referencing Elliott’s book.

⁷² Marcos de Isaba, *Cuerpo enfermo de la milicia española (1594)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa. Secretaría General Técnica, 1991), 217. Quoted in Ishikawa, 69-70.

God and His Majesty, to give light to those who are in darkness, and also to get rich.”⁷³ Díaz claimed that soldiers in the New World “cared for little but gold and girls.”⁷⁴ The impact of European contact on the native peoples in this regard is legendary. One example is the exportation of Bahamian Indians to Hispaniola when the population of the latter was in ruins. Rather than address policies regarding preservation of life let alone evangelization, the solution was to bring in more labor from other islands. Hispaniola may have had a population as high as 8 million in 1492 to extinction in 1535, while the Bahamian islands went from 500,000 in 1492 to 0 by 1542, including those shipped to work in Hispaniola and other parts of the Caribbean.⁷⁵

When Herrera was commissioned for the *Décadas*, Don Bartolomé de Las Casas’s *Brevísima relación* (1552) and Benzoni’s *Historio del Mondo Nuovo* (1565) had recently been translated to other European languages and caused quite a stir in the rest of Europe. Las Casas was considered an authority on the New World, having been the first priest ordained there; his works were very popular and widely read all over Europe in various languages.⁷⁶ His sentiments are perhaps best expressed in his will: “I believe that because of the impious, criminal and ignominious deeds perpetuated so unjustly, tyrannically and barbarously, God will vent upon Spain His wrath and His fury, for nearly all of Spain has shared in the bloody wealth usurped at the cost of so much ruin and slaughter.”⁷⁷ While Las Casas did have the salvation and preservation of the Indians at heart, others professed God when Gold and Glory were possibly more relevant to their personal interests. Pánfilo de Narváez petitioned Charles V to remind him that to delay his explorations would “weigh greatly on your royal conscience if it hindered the

⁷³ *Historia Verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, 66.

⁷⁴ Walter Cohen, “The Discourse of Empire in the Renaissance,” in *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*, ed. Marina Brownlee and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 270.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 261.

⁷⁶ Manson & Woods International Inc Christie, *Important Books, Atlases and Manuscripts: The Private Library of Kenneth Nebenzahl*. (New York: Christie’s, 2012), 31.

⁷⁷ Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, 1st ed (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 245.

conversion of the Indians to our holy Catholic faith and postponed the benefits to your royal patrimony.”⁷⁸ However, in the accounts of Las Casas, Narváez was accountable for massacres against the Indians, and his allusions of Christian imperatives may have been driven by other objectives.

The “Black Legend,” a term for these narratives which was never used in the sixteenth century, but coined by the Spanish historian Julián Juderías in 1914, was a complex anti-Spanish sentiment championed particularly by the French, English and Dutch from the 16th century onwards.⁷⁹ Various origins have been suggested, but most propaganda regarding the Spanish was based on their treatment of the Indians in the New World and exacerbated by the 16th century Wars of Religion, William of Orange’s *Apologia* in 1580 “in response to Philip II’s ban or proscription of the leader of the revolt in the Netherlands,” and some believe the Black Legend began even earlier, in Italy as a response to the growing power of the Spanish crown or by the Reformists in Germany.⁸⁰ “Según la leyenda negra, el Rey Prudente era, en realidad, el Demonio de Mediodía. Un ser fanático. De una sensualidad extraviada e incestuosa.”⁸¹ As Puerto points out, the anti-Spanish propaganda was not only directed at the monarchy and the conquistadors, but came to define the rest of the Spanish people, “como componentes esenciales del peculiar espíritu español.”⁸²

As these sentiments gained ground, Protestant publications responded, such as Theodor de Bry’s series on the Spaniards in his *America* series of 1595, which

⁷⁸ Andrés Reséndez, *A Land So Strange: The Epic Journey of Cabeza de Vaca*, First Edition, Third Printing (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 43, as translated by Resendez.

⁷⁹ While there are many arguments supporting “glory, gold, and God” as the sole inspirations of the Spaniards in occupying the New World, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and others have tried to assert there were other motivations. See Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2006).

⁸⁰ Jonathan Locke Hart, *Representing the New World: The English and French Uses of the Example of Spain*, 1st ed (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 5.

⁸¹ Javier Puerto, *La Leyenda Verde: Naturaleza, Sanidad Y Ciencia En La Corte de Felipe II (1527-1598)* (*Estudios de Historia de La Ciencia Y de La Técnica*) (Salamamca: Junta de Castilla y Leon Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 2003), 7.

⁸² *Ibid.*

illustrated the stories recounted by Las Casas, Richard Hakluyt, and others who had first hand experience in the New World. Although he himself never went to the Americas, De Bry's highly graphic and disturbing images of Spanish explorers torturing and killing Indians in terrifying detail were effective and highly popular anti-Spanish propaganda. His horrific engravings of the Spaniards' cruelties overseas exacerbated already strained relationships between the Protestant North and Catholic Spain.

Although *America* was published a hundred years after the discovery of the New World, it is surprisingly the first real attempt to provide Europe with illustrations of the New World and therefore De Bry's pictures are profoundly important in setting the stage for European perception of the Indians and Spaniards. These images represent the first broad, comprehensive attempt to present the world with high quality, visually stunning images to accompany the stories of the Americas.⁸³ According to Bucher, news and images regarding the New World had such a limited audience in Europe, that "the majority of the population did not suspect the existence of another continent,"⁸⁴ as previous images included only a few earlier woodcuts.

By illustrating the discoveries of Catholic Spain and Portugal, de Bry is effectively "waging a war" between the Protestants and Catholics according to recent scholarship.⁸⁵ The text overall is highly biased towards Protestant interests, with sources heavily edited or omitted entirely, while the "pictures of the Amerindians is completely bound up with the emotional, financial, and political interests of the parties engaged in the struggle with the Spanish in America" and has more to do with the struggles of the Protestants in America "against the Spanish hegemony promoted by the famous Bull of Pope Alexander IV."⁸⁶ However, Gravatt

⁸³ Bernadette Bucher, *Icon and Conquest: A Structural Analysis of the Illustrations of de Bry's Great Voyages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 3–6.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸⁵ Geoffrey C. Gunn, *First Globalization: The Eurasian Exchange, 1500-1800*, 1st Edition (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 27.

⁸⁶ Bucher, *Icon and Conquest*, 6.

illustrates conflict with the polarity of this reading, and believes de Bry indicates in his preface that he is actually holding up a mirror to all Europeans to learn from the examples of greed and godlessness represented in New World conflicts.⁸⁷

Regardless of his intentions, the series of images held more influence than the text, and served to fuel the fire of anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic propaganda in the north, where terrible images of the brutality of the Spaniard's despotism in that region were also a popular subject of anti-Catholic sentiments. For example, there was a wide distribution of engravings and paintings depicting the oppression of the Dutch under the Duke of Alba, who was widely hated and feared,⁸⁸ here shown in the midst of torture, execution and cruelty, the devil behind his throne as an instrument of the Catholic Church (Figure 7).

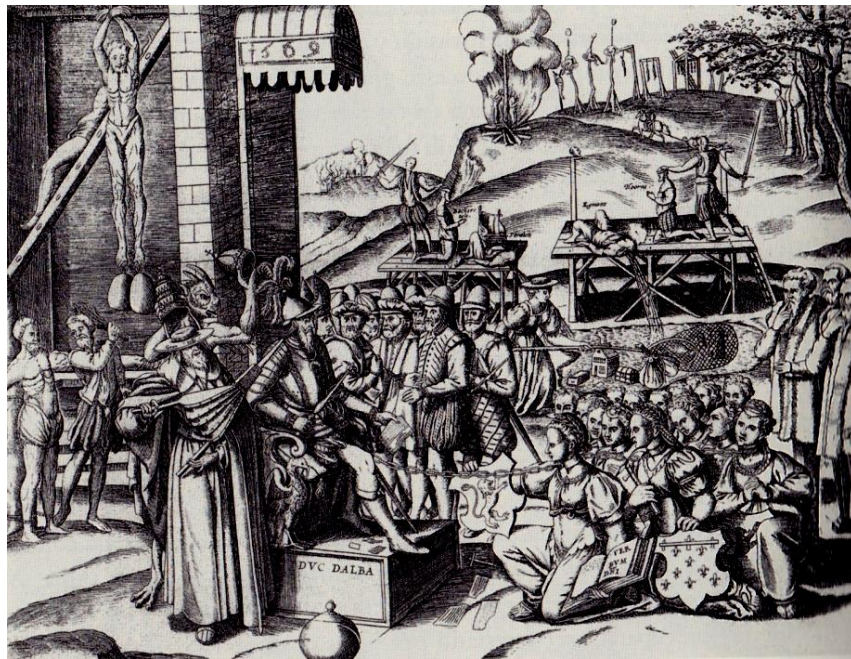


Figure 7. Anonymous, *El trono del duque del Alba (O Alegoría de la tiranía de Alba)*, 1569. Rijksmuseum

⁸⁷ Patricia Gravatt, "Rereading de Bry's Black Legend," in *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2007), 225–226.

⁸⁸ Cristina Fontcuberta, "La Iconografía Contra El III Duque de Alba Sobre Usos Y Recursos de Las Imagenes de Oposicion En La Epoca Moderna," in *La Historia Imaginada: Construcciones Visuales Del Pasado En La Edad Moderna* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2008), 207–34.



Figure 8. Theodor de Bry, “Hernando de Soto committing atrocities against Indians in Florida,”
Brevis narratio eorum quae in Floridae Americae provincia Gallis acciderunt, 1591

De Bry’s imagery is even more brutal. In one image, he illustrates the maiming of the Florida Indians by De Soto who punished the Indians for their inability to procure gold, chopping off their hands as punishment (Figure 7), and in another, a mother and child have been hanged together while a soldier feeds another child he has carved in two to the dogs (Figure 8). Others depict the Castellanos pitting their dogs against sodomites and other horrors of genocide and torture. Like many other images of the New World, these illustrations were created by artists who had never been outside of Europe, but who relied on the comparably graphic verbal accounts of those who had.



Figure 9. Jean Théodore de Bry,
Spaniards killing women and children and feeding their remains to dogs. From "Illustrations de
Narratio regionum Indicarum per Hispanos quosdam devastatarum," 1598

While de Bry's *America* series would have been financially out of reach for most Europeans, they were very popular with higher class clients. The images would have been known as well to the public of many towns, most likely, as it was customary to put the frontispieces in window fronts to entice buyers and to circulate them as advertisements for publication.⁸⁹ The fact that so many in Europe were illiterate, there would have been great interest in the dynamic and visual narratives of these plates in the north,⁹⁰ particularly as many were unfavorable to the Spaniards. The allegiance felt by the European North with the plight of the American native under the swords of the Spanish probably reflected the tales of the brutality of the Spaniards during the Inquisition, although as Davies has suggested, the Inquisition in Spain was quite tame compared to other horrors of the time being committed throughout Europe: "Popular tradition dies

⁸⁹ Mercedes López-Baralt, *Icono y conquista: Guamán Poma de Ayala* (Madrid: Hiperión, 1988), 134.

⁹⁰ Bucher, *Icon and Conquest*, 11–12.

so hard that it is still necessary to point out that the Spanish Inquisition, judged by the standards of the times, was neither cruel nor unjust in its procedure and its penalties.”⁹¹ This may point to an exaggerated fear drummed up through propaganda in the north, or the general severity of violence to which sixteenth century Europeans were regrettably accustomed.



Figure 10. Codex Kingsborough, *Memorial de los Indios de Tepetlaoztoc*, sixteenth century, British Museum, Ms. 13964.

De Bry was certainly not the only producer of such images, and that there was some validity to the tales he depicted cannot be disputed. Indigenous codices reflected similar brutalities in manuscript form. The *Codex Kingsborough* for example, produced in the 16th century by Nahua Mesoamericans (Figure 9), represents Spaniards as the bearers of great physical abuse and insult to the indigenous peoples.⁹² This codex was produced as a protest to the king of Spain by the Tepetlaoztoc Indians about the mistreatment of their people by Spanish

⁹¹ R. Trevor Davies, *The Golden Century of Spain, 1501-1621* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1937), 13.

⁹² The dissemination of these images needs further explanation, but that there are many manuscript examples, they would have been known in some elite circles.

officials. While it may not have met mass publication in its own time, the king would have been aware of the work.⁹³

A former conquistador who renounced his family's holdings in Hispaniola after witnessing a mass slaughter of the Indians there under Governor Ovando,⁹⁴ Bartolomé de Las Casas advised the king against the principles of non-surrender, to relinquish the lands back to the native peoples. His solution was "to preserve the ancient states with their kings and governors; to preach the Gospel in them, but without the support of arms; if these local kings seek to form some sort of federation presided over by the king of Spain, to accept it; to profit by their wealth only if they propose such a thing themselves..."⁹⁵ For Las Casas, the Indians should be allowed to determine their relationship with the Spanish Empire, and the right to any further interference was eradicated by the poor treatment of the native peoples.

Francisco Vitoria also delved into the complexities of the domination and conversion of the American Indians, an "alien and non-Christian peoples."⁹⁶ "For Vitoria and his followers, Spanish dominion in the Indies could not be founded on mere conquest or assumption of superiority and divine right but required complex historical, religious, and legal validation. Legitimate empire carried with it major moral and spiritual responsibilities, which were in fact its prime justification, and had to be restricted and mediated by the tutelage of both natural and civil law."⁹⁷ The very governance of the Indians and their rights were under debate in Spain and elsewhere in Europe. As Cohen points out, there are limitations to an empire's self-definition of itself in terms of self and other: "The discourse of empire cannot be reduced to the endless proliferation of self-congratulatory binary oppositions"

⁹³ *Codex Kingsborough. Petition of the Indians of Tepetlaoztoc to the King of Spain against the Spanish Officials of the Town. Original XVI Century M.s. in British Museum (m.s. Add. 13964). Plates Drawn and Painted from the Original by Miss Annie G. Hunter...*, 1917.

⁹⁴ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 153.

⁹⁵ Todorov, *The Conquest of America*, 193.

⁹⁶ Stanley G Payne, *Spanish Catholicism : an Historical Overview* / (University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 43.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

and this tension is evident in the lack of solidarity on the issue of Indian rights in Spanish America.

The existence of the Americas raised enormous biblical, moral, and social dilemmas: where did these people come from and what were their rights in relation to the known world? Neither the Bible nor the classical historians, the spiritual and legal templates for the Early Modern European world make any mention of the Americas or their peoples.⁹⁸ The inconvenience of the existence of the New World and its conflict with traditional metanarratives of Europe “had to be reconciled with an image of the world imprinted on European minds by biblical and classical narratives.”⁹⁹

The Old Testament was quite clear on the dispersion of man. After the great Flood, where God cleansed the world of all life save the creatures and men aboard Noah’s Ark, Noah sent his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japeth and their wives to repopulate the Earth. “These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread” (Genesis 9:19 King James Version). Shem’s descendants inhabit Asia, Ham’s Africa, and Japeth’s Europe. If one ascribes to this belief system, one has to believe that all men are the descendants of Adam according the myth of a singular creation. This is clearly illustrated in the “T-O” map below, originally drawn by the 7th century scholar Isidore of Seville.



Figure 11. Isidore, Bishop of Seville. *Etymologiae* (Etymologies). Augsburg: Guntherus Ziner, 1472

⁹⁸ This will be discussed in regards to humanism and mapping in great detail below.

⁹⁹ Portuondo, *Secret Science*, 1.

This map is intended to be spiritual rather than geographic, and illustrates the world as known at the time of Isidore. The map is oriented with east at the top, as that is the direction of the rising sun and the light of God, and also the location of the Garden of Eden, which lies to the east “And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.” (Genesis 2:8 King James Version). Asia is therefore shown at the top, and in the tradition of the sons of Noah is marked with the name Shem, Europe is at the lower left marked Japeth, and Africa in the lower right is Ham’s territory. The horizontal of the “T” is made up of the rivers Aegean and Black Seas on the left, the Nile and Red Sea on the right, and the Mediterranean Sea is the vertical branch. The “O” is the great ocean that surrounds the lands of the world. This simple map describes the placement of man throughout the earth as clearly described in the Bible.

When Columbus landed in the New World, this raised a problem of epic proportions: how do the people he discovered there fit into the known construct of the world according to the Old Testament? Were these “Indians” sons of Adam as descendants of the sons of Noah, and what were their rights, and more pressingly as time went on, the rights of the children of Spaniards and Indian women? Physical contact between the Spaniards and the Indians was inevitable, and resulted in “the greatest racial mixing that has ever been contemplated”¹⁰⁰ The legal rights of these children were an integral part of the larger question of Indian civil liberties and rights to land and governance.

Cartographically and spiritually, the New World presented some significant challenges. Years after the discovery of these new lands, the Ptolemaic projections continued to try and force them into the accepted global projection. Maps based on Ptolemy, such as that included in the *Nuremburg Chronicles* in 1493 (before Columbus returned with news of his discoveries), only show the northern hemisphere as the southern was inhospitable and unknown, and as the

¹⁰⁰ Alejo Carpentier, *Obras Completas de Alejo Carpentier: Ensayos*, vol. 13 (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno, 1990), 133. As quoted in Rolena Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 2.

circumference of the earth was erroneous according to Ptolemy's calculations, this did not leave much room for the Americas.



Figure 12. Hartmann Schedel, Mappa Mundi, Nuremberg Chronicle, 1494

The challenges to European cartographers to accommodate the New World is exemplified in German mapmaker Johann Ruysch's map of the world from 1507, one of the earliest maps to show the Americas (Figure 13). Ruysch tries to accommodate the inconvenient truths of Columbus's voyage in a Ptolemaic projection, and includes the island of Hispaniola and its environs as floating alone between Europe and Asia. The New World is acknowledged as a large hitherto unknown set of islands, but Ruysch does not disrupt the formula of Ptolemy beyond an obvious stretching of the circumference of the world to incorporate this new space. He labels the islands as belonging to Ferdinand, and demonstrates there is still a formidable amount of room to make the direct sail to the Asian markets.¹⁰¹ Although the travels along the east coast of current day South America by Amerigo Vespucci were already known, Ruysch does not include this

¹⁰¹ Virga, *Cartographia*, 173.

information on the map and notes “This map is left incomplete for the present, since we do not know in which direction it trends.”¹⁰² This lack of information is represented by the covering of the west end of the lands of Ferdinand with a wide ribbon.

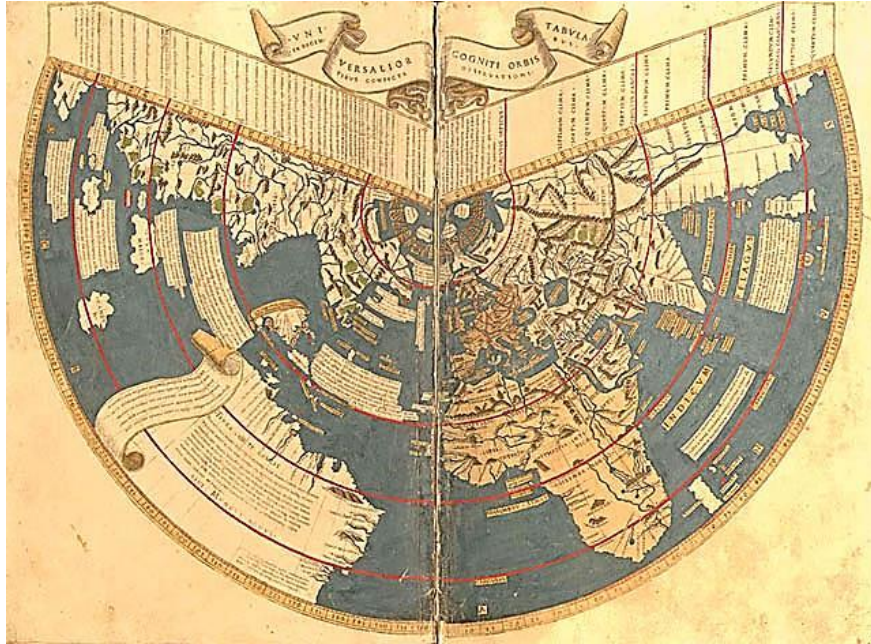


Figure 13. Johann Ruysch, *Map of the Known World*, 1507

In this wonderful late sixteenth century T-O map, Heinrich Bünting tries to accommodate the spiritual old world Christian program with the Americas, which have been relegated into the lower left corner, and curiously, England, which has somehow gotten itself left out of the original Christian world (Figure 14). The map is in clover form, and like its predecessors includes the three old world continents with Jerusalem at the center. The map is now oriented with north at the top, which reflects this new standard in the sixteenth century during the Age of Discovery, where orientations of faith were becoming superceded by those of imperialism and navigation. As there were excellent maps of the Americas by this time, it is interesting that this map derived from medieval Christian belief systems was still being produced, and it certainly demonstrates the inconvenient truth of

¹⁰² Ibid.

the Americas and the awkwardness of trying to fit them and their peoples into the larger Christian narrative.

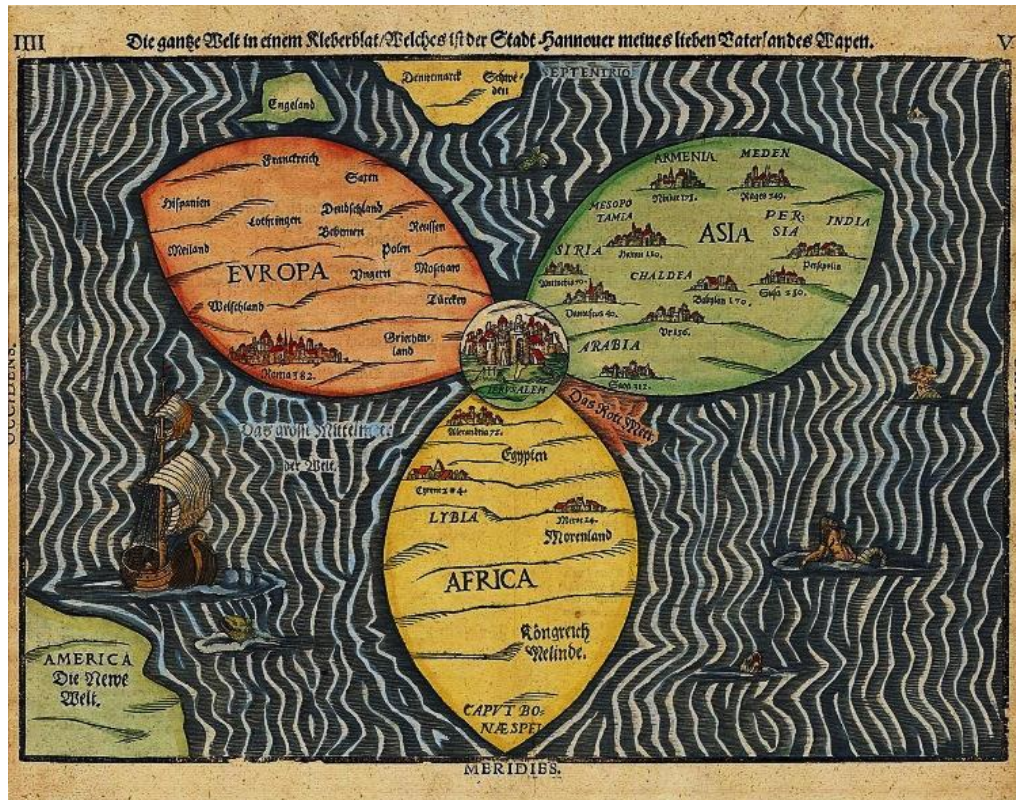


Figure 14. Heinrich Bünting, *Die Gantze Welt in ein Kleberlat Welches ist der Stadt Hannover meines lieben Vaterlandes Wapen*, woodblock print, 1581, Magdeburg, Germany

Some religious leaders and philosophers tried to explain the Indians as part of the lost twelve tribes of Israel, or remnants of other early migrations from Greece, China, or Carthage. Fray Gregorio García, for example, attempted to explain the cultural diversity of the New World as a result of numerous migrations of ancient cultures,¹⁰³ while José de Acosta quite astutely insisted the Indians were Asians who had migrated across the Bering Strait.¹⁰⁴ For Oviedo, the Indians were sometimes considered to be descendants of Hesperus, a mythical medieval king

¹⁰³ Gregorio García, *Origen de los indios de el Nuevo Mundo e Indias Occidentales* (Valencia: en casa de Pedro Patricio Mey, 1607).

¹⁰⁴ Angel Delgado Gomez, *Spanish Historical Writing About the New World 1493-1700* (Providence, RI: The John Carter Brown Library, 1992), 88.

of the Iberia in order to validate his claim that the Spaniards were rightful rulers of the New World because they conquered it first.¹⁰⁵

While Columbus never acknowledged having landed in a previously undiscovered land, he did describe the inhabitants as malleable and non-Christian, and certainly of a lower order than the European explorers: “They should be good and intelligent servants”¹⁰⁶ In Burgos, in 1512-13, a great council was held with theologians and jurists to determine the legitimacy of the Spanish control of the Indies and the Indians, resulting in the *Leyes de Burgos* (Laws of Burgos), which forbade the mistreatment of the Indians and supported their conversion to Catholicism.

Francisco de Vitoria (c. 1485-1546) argued in his paper “On the Evangelization of the Unbelievers” from 1534-35, against forced conversion, but defended the right to restrain nonbelievers from harming missionaries and to force those “who have received the faith may be forced back to the faith,” according to Saint Thomas.¹⁰⁷ He followed the work of Saint Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) in a pursuit of Spanish Christian Universalism which demanded an ethical program of imperial expansionism, which included recognizing that these lands were not vacant nor ill-used, which would give the Spaniards rights to Indian property by law.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America,” 99.

¹⁰⁶ Virga, *Cartographia*, As translated by the author, 173.

¹⁰⁷ Kenneth R. Mills, William B. Taylor, and Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Colonial Latin America: A Documentary History* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 65–67.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.



Figure 15. America, ca. 1580. Engraving by Theodor Galle after Jan van der Straet, ca. 1575

Visual references to the ill use of land were plentiful, and include an engraving by Theodor Galle of the arrival of Vespucci in America (Figure 15), the latter here allegorized by a nude female figure. She has been reclining on a hammock, and sits up in surprise or greeting. Her nudity is a sign of her Eden-like state of naïveté, a heathen who has not been enlightened in the ways of Christ. Although she does have a spear, which alludes to her innately violent nature, it lies uselessly against a tree and she does not reach for it; this and her supine position indicates that she is open both literally and figuratively to receive European conquest, enlightenment and knowledge. The sloth-like creature near the tree also suggests a notion of lack of industry and misuse of land in this society, as does the woman's propensity to sleep out of doors with the animals. In the background, cannibals feast on human body parts over an open fire on uncultivated land with neither fields nor structures. By contrast, we see Vespucci displays symbols of his presumed superior intellect and moral character: a navigational astrolabe which has allowed him the empirical knowledge necessary to get across the sea, a staff and banner

headed by a cross, and a sword which is also not in use but ready if he needs to defend his interests in the New World. His powerful ships with sails full behind him also allude to military power and strength.

In 1564, Las Casas “proposed that Spain abandon altogether its rule over the Indies.”¹⁰⁹ He claimed the Papal Bulls of 1493 bestowed “exclusive access” to the lands found by Columbus to the Catholic Monarchy, Isabel and Ferdinand but according to what Las Casas witnessed himself in the Americas, the Spanish were not keeping up their end of the agreement.¹¹⁰ “The principles of Las Casas’s proposal can be summed up as follows: By natural, divine, and human law, the inhabitants of the Americas, who never harmed or had been subject to any Christian prince, are free and sovereign in their own lands; the papal donation gave the church the right to evangelize but not to dispossess the native peoples of their lands or to abrogate their right to rule them. Spain’s invasion and rule of the Indies is illegitimate and tyrannical; the only means by which Spain can rule legitimately is at the invitation and with the free and willing consent of the native peoples of the Indies.”¹¹¹

Legal debates blossomed in the sixteenth century over the legality of proposed temporal authority of the Church over anyone, especially over infidels in a foreign world.¹¹² Discussions between Bishop Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550-51 in the Valladolid Debate addressed the capability of the Indians for self-governance. Held in front of a council of 14 judges,¹¹³ Las Casas argued that Indians should be free, while Sepúlveda (1490-1573) “justified Spanish domination of Native American peoples because he found them to be

¹⁰⁹ Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, 2007, 22.

¹¹⁰ Nicolás Wey Gómez, *The Tropics of Empire: Why Columbus Sailed South to the Indies* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2008), 100–101.

¹¹¹ Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, 2007, 41.

¹¹² Wey Gómez, *The Tropics of Empire*, 101.

¹¹³ Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, 2007, 13.

inferior humans” destined at birth, according to the teachings of Aristotle to *natura servus*, or slaves by their very nature of this innate inferiority.¹¹⁴

In her will, Isabel herself seems to have given the Bulls of Donation some reconsideration in how they pertained to the Indians’ rights in the New World. She appears to acknowledge the purpose of the Bulls as being “spiritual and not temporal” and could be understood in her will to her heirs and husband that the concessions of Alexander VI “constituted a right of way for evangelization but not a charter for possession or occupation of the new orb, much less for disposing at will of its inhabitants.”¹¹⁵

The humanity of the Indians was not under dispute, but rather the legality of their rights of possession in the New World. “It is clear that any question about the nature of the Indians of the New World was generated... as a way of dealing with the right to military conquest and the imposition of colonial governance.”¹¹⁶ “As the new ‘subjects and vassals’ of the previously described imaginary and undescribed lands under conquest, Indians without realizing it, would be considered rebels by the very nature of their resistance to their subjectivity to the Spanish crown. This category conveniently cast the native resistance to the invasion as the unjustifiably violent and illegal disruption of the *pax colonial* (colonial peace). Spanish activities were then framed as campaigns of ‘pacification’ rather than conquest, and resistance leaders could be tried and executed for treason.”¹¹⁷ When the ban on slavery was instituted by the crown, this sense of the rebel perpetuated the legal practice of capture and enslavement of Indians considered to be a threat to their new mother country. Christian militarism as a model of governance, as we shall see, plays a significant role in the *Décadas* as a justification of possession and guardianship.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 67

¹¹⁵ Wey Gómez, *The Tropics of Empire*, 100–101.

¹¹⁶ Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, 2007, 105.

¹¹⁷ Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 68–69.

The Project

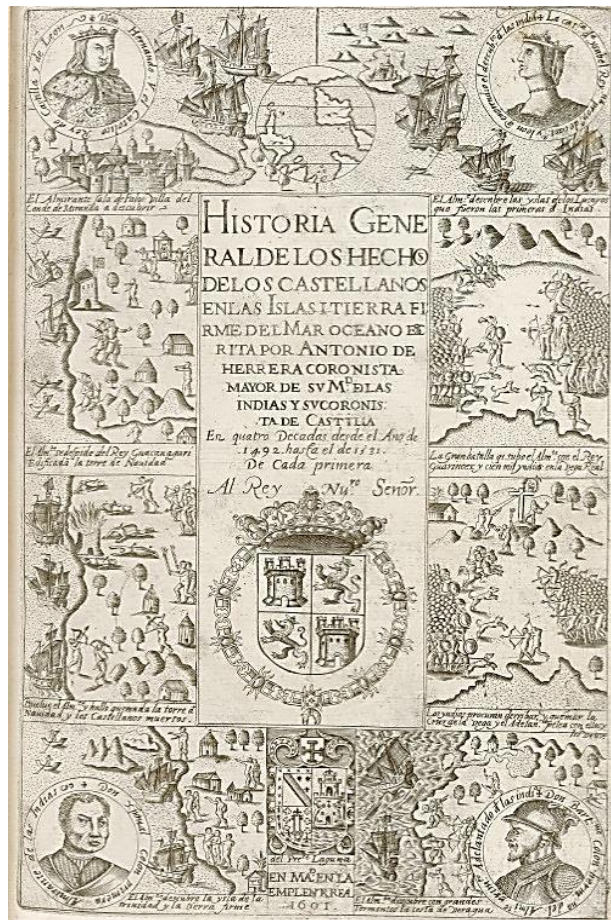


Figure 16. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Década Primera, Historia General de los Hechos...*, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

It has been well said that Spanish America was connected to Spain by a bridge of paper.

- Angel Gomez¹¹⁸

Herrera's challenge in the *Décadas* was to accommodate and resolve these issues within a general history of the Americas: addressing the obligations of Catholic Spain under the Bulls of Donation, the legitimacy of governance in the New World, and the paucity of templates from which to draw in dealing with this new territory historically and spiritually. He had been instructed to tell the truth, and as part of an officially commissioned history, he also had to cater to royal expectations and public reception.

¹¹⁸ Gomez, *Spanish Historical Writing About the New World 1493-1700*, xi.

As the appointed Cronista Mayor for Philip II, Herrera had access to a fantastic collection of primary resources material in the royal archives from which to construct his history due to his official position as *Cronista Mayor* and *Cronista de Castilla*,¹¹⁹ including the Cámara Real (Royal Chamber), the Archivo Real (Royal Archives) the Consejo de Indias (Council of the Indies) and numerous manuscript resources.¹²⁰ These archives included gifts from Cortés to Felipe II; Cortés's original letters; the *Relaciones Geográficas*, or questionnaires that were sent out to the New World, upon which much of the practical knowledge regarding such matters as censuses and local government structures in the new world was based; and unpublished manuscripts by Las Casas and others.¹²¹ This compiling of information refers to what historian Gunn calls the sixteenth century "collection genre," exemplified by the gathering and organizing of travel literature for religious and political purposes.¹²²

This is consistent with sixteenth century views on cartography, when the geographer was believed to rely upon the "visualization of a known fact," rather than what he himself has actually seen. As the Geographer tells Petit Prince, "I am not an explorer. I haven't a single explorer on my planet. It is not the geographer who goes out to count the towns, the rivers, the mountains, the seas, the oceans, and the deserts. The geographer is much too important to go loafing about. He does not leave his desk. But he receives the explorers in his study. He asks them questions, and he notes down what they recall of their travels. And if the recollections of any one among them seem interesting to him, the geographer orders an inquiry into that explorer's moral character... Because an explorer who

¹¹⁹ José Miguel Morales Folguera, *La construcción de la sociedad utópica: el proyecto de Felipe II (1556-1598) para América* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2007), 400.

¹²⁰ Cuesta Domingo, *Andean*, 290.

¹²¹ These questionnaires were also sent around Spain, but here we are concerned only with those pertaining to the New World.. See Barbara E Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain: Indigenous Cartography and The maps of the Relaciones Geográficas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) for in-depth look at the *Relaciones Geográficas* and their significance during the reign of Philip II.

¹²² Geoffrey Gunn, *First Globalization*, 26-27.

told lies would bring disaster on the books of the geographer."¹²³ That Herrera had never been to the Americas was not of great consequence nor was it unusual. In fact, Juan Lopéz de Velasco, whose maps are reproduced in the Herrera work, also never went to the New World; like Herrera, his maps are based on the scientific observations of others that he transcribed into cartographic form.



Figure 17. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, “The Geographer,” *The Little Prince*. Paris: Gallimard, 1943

Cummins speaks of Herrera’s work as inherently textual, part of a “historical construction of America that privileges the interpretive ordering of the narrative of events rather than one that privileges the experiential recording of them.”¹²⁴ In other words, Herrera acted as a compiler and interpreter of archival resources and histories, rather than writing of his experiences first-hand. However, these resources validate his own voice as the authority on the Americas: “... to assert their own historical authority, writers take up earlier writers (El Inca reading Cabeza de Vaca) in order to establish a credibility that claims to be historical but is in fact literary.”¹²⁵

¹²³ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince* (San Diego: Harcourt, 2000).

¹²⁴ Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America.”, 18.

¹²⁵ Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, 2007, xii.

In this way, Herrera can be regarded as a type of cartographer himself. The traditional role of cartographers in the production of portolan charts in the Mediterranean included gathering information from first-hand sources and producing maps accordingly. Mapmakers would interview ships and their crews on distances traveled, depths of various seas, rivers, inlets, weather conditions, seafaring hazards and other dangers, they would read their logs and recorded itineraries. These portolan charts (Figure 18) were remarkably accurate to suit a particular purpose: travel by sea, and they tended not to include information that was irrelevant to this enterprise. They “probably began as graphic extensions of the written descriptions found in pilot books,” which in modern terms we would call “shipping directions,” verbal descriptions on travel by sea and important local knowledge concerning obstacles such as reefs and resources like fresh water to find along the way.¹²⁶

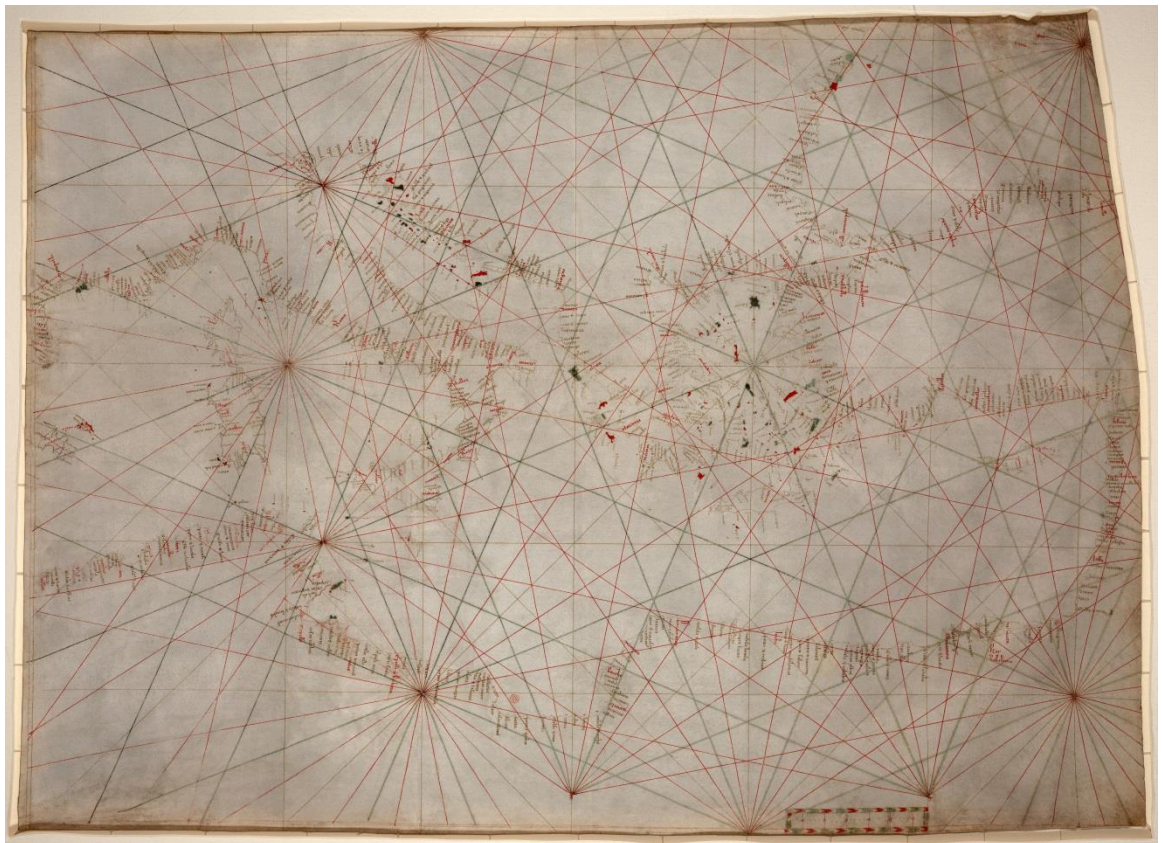


Figure 18. Anonymous, *Portolan nautical chart of the Mediterranean Sea*, 14th century.
Library of Congress

¹²⁶ John Noble Wilford, *The Mapmakers* (New York: Knopf, 1981), 60.

Herrera the Historian

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, there had only been three types of writings on the New World: military, navigational, and general histories, predominantly written in Europe.¹²⁷ The first two categories were usually incorporated into the third and frequently by historians who had never been to the New World. For example, Hernán Cortés's letters on the Mexican conquest were included in the work of Peter Martyr, who wrote *De Orbe Novo* in 1530: "... the traveler and his chronicler (who were not necessarily the same person) were working creatively at three simultaneous levels: a definition of the global ideology of imperial legitimation and imperial strategy according to a special bias, the expression of personal experiences geared towards a profitable social recognition, and the collective construction of an empirical body of information concerning the lands and people of the New World."¹²⁸ The empirical body of information was the general history, a compilation and restructured narrative based on primary accounts which is the tradition followed by Antonio de Herrera.

The title of Herrera's work, *Historia General de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas I tierra firme del mar oceano* is an active one, addressing the "hechos," the deeds or actions, of the Castilians in the New World. It denotes dynamism, militarism, and exploration rather than intellectual enterprises and scientific pursuits. It is reminiscent in name to the *Estoria de Espanna* commissioned by Alfonso X in the 13th century, which has as an original title, "los fechos d'Espanna," or the deeds of Spain. In that work, "Spain" refers to the King himself or the "royal deeds," and had the intention of educating the next generations of monarchs.¹²⁹ What is interesting in contrast is while the Herrera firmly establishes the Spanish monarchy as the initiators of "hechos" in the New World through the royal seal and other iconography to be discussed below, his title encompasses the

¹²⁷ Kathleen Ann Myers, *Fernández De Oviedo's Chronicle of America: A New History for a New World*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), 2.

¹²⁸ Rubiés, "Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America," 76.

¹²⁹ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, 26.

entirety of his cast of characters, the “Castellanos,” in the establishment of empire in the America, as players in a larger narrative of discovery, conquest, and possession.

Of tremendous importance in any analysis of the *Décadas* is to remember it is an *official history* written under the express command of the Habsburg monarchy. This distinguishes the intention of the *Décadas* as being reflective of a larger imperial agenda: “Considering the dearth of Spanish publications on the New World, particularly cartographic, it is noteworthy that this book had official backing.”¹³⁰ The official history represents a larger royal enterprise of careful selection and editing to “create a historical record.”¹³¹ Like all histories, it is the creation of a text upon which one can base present and future relationships with the past, but here even more explicit in its having been authorized and approved by the heads of state: “official history addressed the present: it is designed to court public opinion and, legitimate a ruler’s claim to power, or rally support for a particular political program or set of beliefs.”¹³² To be remembered in perpetuity is one thing, but to have the means to craft cultural memory for present and future generations is something altogether more powerful. In the words of Alfonso V of Portugal, “What would have become of the deeds of Rome if Livy had not written them? What of Alexander’s without a Quintus Curtius, or those of Troy without a Homer, of Caesar’s without a Lucan?”¹³³

The fact that the quality of Herrera’s images is consistently below that of other parts of Europe can possibly be explained by a proliferation of this genre of publication. Herrera’s work is unusual in its attempt to incorporate a larger iconographical program printed in Spain rather than the more prolific and experienced north, arguably produced in the Iberian Peninsula as a part of the

¹³⁰ Philip D. Burden, *The Mapping of North America*, First edition. (Rickmansworth: Raleigh Publications, 1996), 140–142.

¹³¹ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 3.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 9–10; see 1–15 on official histories in Europe.

nationalistic enterprise of the project. The quality of the prints themselves in terms of their sophistication perhaps results from the lack of relevant training and demand, as most quality prints were still being printed in northern Europe: "... we find that the record of the printing press in Madrid during the first two decades of its existence, and for all practical purposes up to the end of the century, is one which is singularly free from any attempt to provide the reading public with books, in which either decoration or illustration formed any conspicuous feature. One reason for this is to be found in the very large output of official publications during the period in question, a class of literature, which then, as now, did not lend itself to much, if any, artistic achievement."¹³⁴

King Philip II passed away in September 1598, a short time after Herrera was commissioned to produce the *Décadas*. As his first born son, Don Carlos died in 1568, Philip's second son, the notably ineffectual Philip III, was destined to take the throne. The unrest in the North, pressures from the Ottomans, the Inquisition in Spain, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 by Queen Elizabeth were crushing the empire. Income from the Americas was an integral part of financing the vast territory disputes in Europe let alone in managing the New World colonies themselves. Unification and management of the empire's resources were considerable challenges for Philip II, who inherited great debt and saw the Empire suffer bankruptcy and recovery under his reign: "Under Philip II, Spain and Portugal became the leaders of the Catholic Reformation, a movement that sought to stall the spread of the Protestantism in Europe and of the Ottomans in the Mediterranean. An overstretched Spanish empire gradually bled itself white..."¹³⁵

Unification of the colonies with the rest of the Empire and the control of the precious trade from the Indies were imperative to the financial success of Spain.

¹³⁴ James Patrick Ronaldson Lyell, *Early Book Illustration in Spain* (London: Grafton & Co., 1926), 304.

¹³⁵ Bleichmar et al., *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800*, See introduction by Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, 2.

Not only did the colonies bring in silver and other precious materials but many goods were exported to the Indies as well, which provided a much needed market for products made in Spain. “American revenue... was contributing somewhere between a fifth and a quarter of the total by the end of Philip II’s reign.”¹³⁶

Defining the New World as an integral and recognizable part of the Habsburg monarchy in language, geography, and religion was essential to bond the empire as a whole, and this task fell to the *Décadas*.

Kagan refers to two types of official histories: *historia pro persona* and the *historia pro patria*; the former would focus on the king himself whereas the latter is a more inclusive “Livy-esque narrative centered on the achievements of the kingdom as a whole.”¹³⁷ While Herrera would certainly be categorized as “Livy-esque,” it can be argued that Philip II did not see the monarchy as separate from Spain but *as* Spain, and therefore the kingdom as a whole. While the text does not refer to Philip II directly as the narrative takes place before he came to power, the first *Década* illustrations establish visually the authority and legitimacy of his reign through the legacy of Ferdinand and Isabella as well as the royal seal and dedications. As King Philip II was well aware, ‘storage of authoritative resources involves above all the retention and control of information and knowledge.’¹³⁸

By including Ferdinand and Isabella, Herrera engages the *Indias* in the larger unification of Aragon and Castile, exemplified by the union of the Catholic monarchs. While people of the Iberian Peninsula already referred to their land as *Hispania* in the Middle Ages, within that they were of one of the four Christian Crowns: Castile, Portugal, Aragon, and Navarre and again from one of many distinct provinces of that Crown.¹³⁹ Elliott asserts that the growing expansion into the outside world added to feelings of nationalism, and a desire to reunify *Hispania* into two provinces “under one scepter” as it had been under Roman rule,

¹³⁶ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 55.

¹³⁷ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, 14.

¹³⁸ Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*, 55.

¹³⁹ Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716*, 18–19.

Hispania Citerior and *Hispania Ulterior*.¹⁴⁰ Aragon was more motivated than Castile for a union as they were under great internal pressure of revolution in Catalonia and external pressure from the French along the Pyrenean border, there was no question that the resulting marriage contract negotiations would give Isabella primary power in government, although Ferdinand proved in future years to be a powerful and agreeable ally.¹⁴¹

While in sentiment, the houses of Castile and Aragon were unified, there still remained many discrepancies and cultural differences that would not be overcome. Aragon “contrasted strikingly with medieval Castile. Where, in the early fourteenth century, the Crown of Aragon was cosmopolitan in outlook and predominantly mercantile in its inclinations, contemporary Castile tended to look inwards rather than outwards, and was oriented less towards trade than war. Fundamentally, Castile was a pastoral and nomadic society, whose habits had been shaped by constant warfare-by the protracted process of the Reconquista, still awaiting completion long after it was finished in the Crown of Aragon.”¹⁴² However, by the time of the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, “crude, vigorous” Castile had surpassed Aragon due to plague, famine, and civil war that devastated the latter, and Castile’s concurrent financial success in the development of its important wool industry and international maritime trade.¹⁴³

An official history, of course, controls the narrative, and takes the power away from foreigners in shaping cultural and political memory. Juan López de Velasco, who was made Cronista Mayor and Cosmógrafo Mayor de las Indias in 1571, recommended that Philip II commission a history of his own reign, and not to leave this task to foreign writers whose allegiance to Spain might be in question. He suggested as well that this be a selective history (as all histories are), one that leaves out details which may do harm to the empire if made public.¹⁴⁴ “In effect,

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 22-23.

¹⁴² Ibid., 31.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 42.

¹⁴⁴ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, 126.

Velasco wrote, “there are things that history, as it should, can and must be silent about. This [history] is a suitable means for discrediting and undoing false rumors by manifesting the truth, while also leaving unwritten others that might not be advisable to be known.”¹⁴⁵

Similar to reading maps as cultural texts, the styles of these historiographies themselves carried a telling agenda. For his official history, Herrera relied on humanistic historiographical models, which in the sixteenth century was typified by “a providential concept of history, eloquence, and good tone, a courtly morality, and an elegant style” but which must be considered as a part of the colonial process: “that the good tone and courtly morals convey, beyond rhetorical formulas, another mode of violence and conquest,... that the elegant style implies cultural appropriation of narrative forms that follow other poetics.”¹⁴⁶

Histories in sixteenth century Spain were largely based on humanist and Biblical templates. Incorporating the New World into these models as the Spaniards and others literally and figuratively passed through the Pillars of Hercules was problematic as traditional modes of thought became obsolete, and classical and biblical historiographical models inadequate. The classical and Biblical historians knew only to the limits of the Pillars of Hercules, and the complexities that lay beyond this boundary were literally uncharted territory, literally, politically, theologically. Any attempts to explain its existence and its relationship to old world metanarratives would be rife with holes, partly because of its foreignness but also because of the vastness and complexities of the physical and social characteristics indigenous to the New World, which seemed determined to avoid any mass generalization: “The main paradigm for the appropriation of the New World, was, not surprisingly, a language of marvels which would inscribe territorial expansion and profit-seeking within a providential plan and widen the

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 127 n. 7.

¹⁴⁶ José Rabasa, *Inventing America: Spanish Historiography and the Formation of Eurocentrism*, 5-6.

horizon of natural and human diversity in a vaguely humanistic project.”¹⁴⁷ As mentioned previously, the Bible was of little help as well, as the sons of Noah were only described as populating Europe, Asia, and Africa, and the twelve apostles, who evangelized to the four corners of the world never reached the Americas.

The discovery of the New World coincided with an enormous interest with all things classical, and ironically with the histories of the great conquests and explorations of the Romans, such as “Xenophon’s march to the sea; Caesar’s conquest of Gaul; Tacitus on the German tribes.”¹⁴⁸ The rediscovery of Ptolemy and classical writings, long preserved in Arabic translations, but forgotten through the centuries by Christians, inspired new models of scholarship. Spain’s ties to Italy through the Crown of Aragon, which had lands in southern Italy, was the link to the humanist scholarship of “the Florentine Humanist Leonardo Bruni, who... revived the Greco-Latin intellectual tradition.”¹⁴⁹ However, with the realization of these vast areas of land and civilizations, unknown to the ancient scholars was certainly disconcerting to the humanists. They needed to find a way to reconcile the classical age with the new age of discovery, forcing a square peg into a round hole.

One of the greatest historiographical advancements after the discovery of the New World was the transition from the “late medieval humanist dependence of knowledge upon textual interpretation and exegesis” to an “institutionalization of empirical practices” in large part to compensate for the tremendous deficiencies in classical knowledge.¹⁵⁰ The work of the ancients were no longer relevant in describing the New World, Portuguese explorers had disproven theories of inhabitable Torrid Zones by circumnavigating Africa, and the Spaniards

¹⁴⁷ Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America,” 77.

¹⁴⁸ Gomez, *Spanish Historical Writing About the New World 1493-1700*, , xi.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁵⁰ Antonio Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature: The Spanish American Empire and the Early Scientific Revolution*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 2.

through their explorations of South America. In his *Naturalis Historia*, Pliny makes no reference to the curious fruits and peoples of the Americas, the avocado and armadillo, and his work was found lacking. There was no reference point for these new and marvelous discoveries, no vocabulary and no historical precedent to interpret. Empirical science based on first hand experience, was born out of necessity to describe and study these new lands for the first time in a European context.

However, couching the Americas in classical templates lent historiographies an air of familiarity and authority of knowledge: “historical myth and reality do not cancel each other out entirely...in order to be meaningful, historical discourses either sustain or refute myths – and that, in order to be credible, myths draw their inspiration from a perception of historical realities.”¹⁵¹ Humanism is based on the study of classical texts as models for contemporary scholarship, reached broadly across nations and disciplines. “More gets his style from Cicero, his structure from the Platonic dialogues, and his theme from the *Republic*;... Sepúlveda turns to Aristotle; Shakespeare observes the classical, ostensibly Aristotelian three unities in only one other play besides *The Tempest*; Grotius defends Dutch maritime marauding through classical allusion; Peter Martyr, like so many of his successors, finds antiquity in America, complete with Amazons, giants, cannibals, and a revival of the Golden Age – a Golden Age that the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega locates in pre-conquest Peru.”¹⁵² Throughout this period we see many nods to the annalistic format of Livy’s *History of Rome*, which was (posthumously) organized into decades (*décadas*), or ten year increments. These include *De Orbe Nouo decades* by Pietro Martire d’Anghiera, 1516; *Historia de las Indias* by Bartolomé de las Casas, finished in 1561 but published in mid-nineteenth century, the *Decadas* of the archivist in Goam Diogo do Couto, published in 1597-1612, and, of course, Herrera’s *Décadas*. Herrera’s linearity has been compared to works of classical historians

¹⁵¹ Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America,” 74. See this chapter for a discussion on the complexities of touting the riches of the New World while acknowledging the failures and challenges the Spaniards faced in the Americas.

¹⁵² Cohen, “The Discourse of Empire in the Renaissance.”, 266.

such as Livy, and indeed it does follow the classical narrative structure in its chronology of great men and their deeds, in Livy's case, even organized into decades in a similar format to the *Décadas*.¹⁵³ That some authors not only to frame the New World discoveries into classical templates considered to have surpassed these models is apparent in the comments of João de Barros, the "Portuguese Livy", whose work included *Asia: Dos Factos que os Portugueses Fizeram no Descobrimento e Conquista dos Mares e Terras do Oriente* (1552-3), commonly referred to as the *Décadas*: "Had I Ptolemy, Strabo, Pliny or Salinus here, I would put them to shame and confusion."¹⁵⁴

Indeed, Herrera's use of Roman models for his *Decadas* by this time was "ubiquitous," according to MacCormack. References to the works of classical historians, particularly Tacitus, were already deeply embedded in earlier historiographies by Oviedo, Cieza, and Zárate. These writers were quick to make analogies between the histories of Peru and Rome, for example, "designed to help the reader understand and remember the sequence and nature of events: to grasp what happened, why it did, and why it mattered."¹⁵⁵ Great leaders of Rome were compared with those of the Peruvian conquest and civil wars, and the stories of Peru were laid out in a manner consistent with those of Livy and Tacitus. Partly this was due to the changing nature of the purpose of histories in the sixteenth century.

Sixteenth century Spanish historiographies concerning the Americas faced a challenge of separating fact from fiction in an age drawn to epic tales of conquest and romance. The discipline of historiography already presents its own paradox, as de Certeau has explained in *The Writing of History*: "Historiography (that is, 'history' and 'writing') bears within its name the paradox – almost an oxymoron –

¹⁵³ Cummins, "De Bry and Herrera: "Aguas Negras" or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America.", 20.

¹⁵⁴ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*. Ibid., From O'Sullivan's *Age of Discovery*, and quoted in Livingstone, 34.

¹⁵⁵ Sabine MacCormack, *On the Wings of Time Rome, the Incas, Spain, and Peru* / (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2007), 85.

of a relation established between two antinomic terms, between the real and discourse,”¹⁵⁶ there is always the tension of the real and the selections, voice, and hegemony of knowledge belief system of the author. Herrera had been instructed to tell the “truth” and indeed there were conflicts between the fantasies of riches of the new world and the actual accounts shared in many first-hand histories and letters of the age. The New World as reported by early chroniclers was inconsistent with the mid to late 16th century European public perceptions of the wealth of the Americas and chivalric conquistadores. According to the Italian historian, Geolotto Cei, “he marveled that everyone in Europe thought the Indians were wealthy, while in fact they were extremely poor; he marveled at sexual customs which gave more pleasure to women than to men, and which did not sustain a rigid social order; and he marveled at how quickly millions of Indians had been decimated after meeting the Spanish, enslaved and overworked until they desired to die rather than breed children.”¹⁵⁷ As Rubiés explains, the explorers and conquerors in the New World were more often than not disappointed as the realities of their pursuits for wealth and honor did not match up to their expectations according to contemporary myth creations of El Dorado, Amazon women, and other fantasies.¹⁵⁸ As Adam Smith pointed out in *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776, “Spanish witnesses were either purposefully or unconsciously lying... the Spaniards’ armies... often went hungry and, when fed, consumed so much of the small available food supply that the natives starved to death.”¹⁵⁹

“The fundamental aspect of this vision of American cultural identity... is that historical discourse either sustain or refute myths – and that, in order to be

¹⁵⁶ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, translated by Tom Conley (New York, 1998), xxvii.

¹⁵⁷ Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America,” 99.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 74–75.

¹⁵⁹ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, Cultural Sitings (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2001), 11.

credible, myths draw their inspiration from a perception of historical realities.”¹⁶⁰ By referencing historical models the narrative gained credibility as fact versus fantasy, but again this was not a perfect solution. The confusion of which historical models were best suited to 16th century historiographical discourse on the Indies is illustrated by the lack of continuity in formula and the experimentation of various formats and content. Las Casas criticized earlier models in his *Historia de las Indias*, and struggled in the prologue with identifying the very intention of history through Jewish, Greek and Roman models, coming to the conclusion that history should reflect instead the hand of the divine.¹⁶¹ But this posed problems as well, of course, as again the Bible itself makes no mention of the Americas either, and according to Genesis, was not part of the world created by God.

Herrera tries to resolve these issues by unifying Spain under both Classical and Biblical visual and narrative models but binds them together in a cartographic framework under the authority of an official history with complete access to all resources available in the archives of Spain. By combining these historiographical methodologies, Herrera makes a valiant effort to meet the challenges presented by the very existence of the Americas and to legitimize the Spanish claims there. By relying on classical and Biblical templates while allying the great Castellanos visually to the geography of the Americas, he establishes authority, divine will and empirical (and therefore truthful and correct) knowledge. While we will discuss the significant limitations of Herrera as an historian in the modern sense, the *Décadas* has been described as “One of the undoubted masterpieces of Spanish colonial historiography.”¹⁶² Despite its shortcomings, the work as a whole represents a unique attempt to resolve the conflicts of contemporary models of historical narrative structures in a transitional age of a time caught among

¹⁶⁰ Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America,” 74.

¹⁶¹ Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, 2007, 90.

¹⁶² William D Ilgen and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *The Bernard J. Flatow Collection of Latin American Cronistas in the Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: An Annotated Catalogue* (Chapel Hill, N.C: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2005), 148.

traditions of humanism, religious fervor, and a new age of empirical study. In that sense Herrera was quite outdated even in his own time as empirical science took precedence, but his work speaks of and to an earlier age with an imperial nostalgia embedded with iconography of the age.

Herrera's work tried to balance the "long struggle to fit the Americas into the world picture inherited from antiquity,"¹⁶³ as did many other writers of the sixteenth century. The second chorus of Seneca's *Medea* was often considered to be the inspiration of Columbus's voyage, and a justification of the position of some historians like Gómara, that the ancients had not only known about the new world but may have actually gone there themselves. Their adversaries on this point believed quite the opposite, that Columbus had broken the intellectual and physical boundaries of the Pillars of Hercules, that he had indeed reached "*regions extra Ptolemaeam*,"¹⁶⁴ or a world outside of Ptolemy. Columbus himself believed this, as referenced in letters, and later by his own son Ferdinand, who would write in the margin of his own copy of Seneca: "This prophecy was fulfilled by my father."¹⁶⁵

*Venient annis saecula seris,
quibus oceanus vincula rerum
laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
Tethysque novos detegat orbis
nec sit erris ultima Thule.*

-time shall in fine out breake
When Ocean wave shall open every Realme
The wandering World at will shall open lye,
And Typhus will some newe founde Lande Survay
Some travelers shall the Countries farre escrye,
Beyond small Thule, known farthest to this day.
(Seneca *Medea* 375-79, tr. John Studley, 1581)¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ James Romm, "'Novos Orbes' and Seneca in the Renaissance," in *The Classical Tradition and the Americas*, ed. Wolfgang Haase, vol. I (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter Inc, 1993), 78.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 77–80.

¹⁶⁵ Diskin Clay, "Columbus' Senecan Prophecy," *The American Journal of Philology* 113, no. 4 (1992): 617.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 617.

Herrera belonged to the second camp, as he “conducts an extensive review of the evidence for ancient knowledge of the Americas, only to conclude that antiquity could not have perceived the New World simply because God had not intended them to do so”:¹⁶⁷ “De nada de lo sobredicho se ha hacer fundamento, porque el discurso de Séneca fué muy contrario, porque persuadiéndose, que este descubrimiento había de ser por el Norte... Y si lo de arriba se ha de mirar en discursos, el verdadero es el que se lee en el capítulo 28 de Job, adonde parece, que Nuestro Señor tenía este Nuevo Mundo encubierto a los hombres, hasta que por sus divinos y secretos juicios fue servido de darle a la nación Castellana.”¹⁶⁸

As Romm points out, Herrera has substituted a chapter from the Book of Job for Seneca in this argument: “For Herrera, and for others like him, the discovery of the New World formed the culmination of the *novus ordo saeculorum* ushered in by the coming of Christ; no age that lacked the benefit of His grace could be given credit for such a discovery.”¹⁶⁹ For Herrera, the Americas were found by Divine intervention by the true faith with the mission of evangelizing the native peoples there.

The agenda of the *Decadas* is further illuminated by this abstention from contemporaneous development of early modern science in Spain and the “institutionalization of empirical practices” in Spain following the discovery of the New World and all of its wonder under the support of Felipe II.¹⁷⁰ While Herrera gathered and compiled material from travelers and writers, organized and cataloged and prioritizing the great deeds of the Spaniards, others were breaking from this tradition to gather empirical evidence on those anomalies of the New World, like Oviedo, that Pliny had not known to include in his catalogue of the

¹⁶⁷ Romm, “‘Novos Orbes’ and Seneca in the Renaissance,” 101.

¹⁶⁸ Tordesillas, *Historia General de Los Hechos de Los Castellanos En Las Islas Y Tierrafirme Del Mar Océano ... Publicada Por Acuerdo de La Academia de La Historia*, See *Década Primera*, Chapter I.

¹⁶⁹ Romm, “‘Novos Orbes’ and Seneca in the Renaissance,” 102.

¹⁷⁰ Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature*, 2.

Natural World.¹⁷¹ Therefore this work can be seen as a transitory work between Renaissance Humanistic historiographies and new disciplines of historical inquiry which would consist of a more empirical approach.

The propaganda of these official histories was geared more towards preserving empire rather than promoting expansion. This particularly clear in the case of Philip II “who in 1573 took the historic step of decreeing that all further military expeditions in America should cease.”¹⁷² As MacCormack again illustrates, this change in focus reflects a time in the Americas when war leaders were being replaced by administrators and lawyers: “Hence, the historians of antiquity whom Oviedo, Cieza, and Zágarate regarded as exemplary-Sallust, Livy, Plutarch, and Diodorus... yielded primacy of place to Tacitus, who wrote about the first century of Roman imperial rule.” This Tacitist movement was already well in place by the time Herrera wrote the *Décadas*, a movement begun in Italy but soon to move through Spain, France and Germany.¹⁷³

A large part of the attraction to Tacitus as a model for this new era was dissimulation as a political tool.¹⁷⁴ That Herrera was aware of Tacitus is also ubiquitous, as he quotes him throughout the work, and “he produced a double narrative: an account of events in the Americas arranged, in the manner of Tacitus, as annals, and a running commentary on this account consisting of quotations from the works of Tacitus and Tacitus’s Italian commentator, Annibale Scotto.”¹⁷⁵ Herrera refers to this directly in the *Décadas*, 7,6,3: “La disimulación contiene en si un no sé de aparente virtud, que participa algo de la prudencia, Reyna de todas las virtudes morales, de la qual no saben aprovecharse los

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Henry Kamen, *The Escorial: Art and Power in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 170.

¹⁷³ MacCormack, *On the Wings of Time Rome, the Incas, Spain, and Peru* /, 86.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., See MacCormack’s discussion on Fernandez and his *Historia*, where the latter claims peace was brought to Peru through the careful dissimulation of La Gasca. Also, MacCormack’s reference to Ronald Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958) for examples of dissimulation in the works of Tacitus, 86.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 86.

ignorantes y groseros sino los cuerdos y sagazes, que conocen los tiempos, las ocasiones, y la naturaleza de los hombres con quien tratan.”¹⁷⁶ It is a very attractive idea to associate the work of Herrera with Roman ideals, as is consistent with the explicit instructions by the king for the job of Cronista Mayor. The royal chroniclers were expected to “write, declare, and collect all the material pertinent to the royal chronicle,” to emulate the style of Livy and other ancient historians and, finally, “to embellish their chronicles with judgments based on philosophy and sound doctrine.”¹⁷⁷

Many considered, particularly in the nineteenth century, that Herrera was not simply a compiler of information, but a plagiarist. For example, when Bartolomé de las Casas died, his papers, including his as yet unpublished *General History of the Indies*, were ordered released to Juan Lopéz de Velasco, who was then the *cronista mayor de Indias*, and were afterwards loaned to Herrera when he took on this position in 1597.¹⁷⁸ Many of these documents have since disappeared, but Herrera did in fact virtually copy the entire text of Casas’ *Historia General* and Cervantes de Salazar’s 1566 *Crónica de la Nueva España* into his own.¹⁷⁹ He also borrowed heavily (sometimes copying verbatim) from Cervantes de Salazar, Francisco López de Gómara, Bartolomé de Las Casas, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, Bernal Díaz, and Jiménez de Quesada among others.¹⁸⁰ However, he does cite his sources extensively, including a list of all of them he used for the *Décadas*, and commentary on whether or not the sources were considered reliable.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 89. “Dissimulation enshrines a certain evident virtue which participates to a degree in prudence, the queen of all moral virtues; persons of wisdom and good sense, not the ignorant and vulgar, will know how to use it, for they comprehend times, opportunities and the nature of those with whom they interact.”

¹⁷⁷ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 75.

¹⁷⁸ Wagner, H.R., *The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas*, 256.

¹⁷⁹ Wagner, H.R., *The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas*, 256-257, n. 3 & 4

¹⁸⁰ Howard F. Cline and Robert Wauchope, *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (University of Texas Press, 1964), 243. See Wauchope for a description of authors cited by Herrera in each section of the *Historia*.

¹⁸¹ Mariano Cuesta Domingo et al., *Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, historiador acreditado* (Cuéllar; Madrid: Caja Segovia : Ayuntamiento de Cuéllar ; Universidad Complutense de Madrid G.I. “Expansión Europea,” 2009); Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia*

“Hanse seguido en esta historia los papeles de la Cámara Real y Reales archivos; los libros, registros y relaciones y otros papeles del Real y Supremo Consejo de las Indias, dejando aparte muchas cosas que los referidos autores han dicho, por no poderse verificar con escrituras auténticas.”¹⁸²

However, this amalgamation of sources was not a rarity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, Theodor de Bry was consistent only in his extensive editing, plagiarizing, and melding of various illustrative elements to serve the grander scheme of his works. The Indians were lumped aesthetically as one culture, dressing the Arawaks in Hispaniola in the clothes of the Peruvian Incas, for example, and authors like Jean de Léry’s were paraphrased extensively and edited aggressively.¹⁸³

While Herrera did copy works of other authors, his individual role in the material’s orchestration into the *Décadas* was nothing if not subjective. He must have considered his role as author integral to his representation of New Spain as tremendously important, as he includes his own image in the frontispiece of the *Descripción de las Indias*, “pictorially uniting himself with the subject of his history as one of its participants which he achieves through the act of writing.”¹⁸⁴ By including himself on the most fanciful frontispiece in terms of decoration but the most “scientific” in terms of the maps included in the section and the ethnographic images taken from first-hand accounts and indigenous artists, he demonstrates his personal knowledge and expertise for the project. “Herrera’s authorial voice intrudes on several occasions to emphasize that his task is to give memory and glory to the deeds and the actors in his nation’s conquest and settlement of the Americas”: “... mi intento ha sido, en esta historia que haia

General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano, 1:57-80, 1991.

¹⁸² Herrera y Tordesillas, 1991, 122.

¹⁸³ Bucher, *Icon and Conquest*, 14.

¹⁸⁴ Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America,” 19.

memoria de los primeros Pacificadores, Pobladores, Fundadores de las Ciudades, I villas I los otros medios, que hubo para asentar aquella Republica.”¹⁸⁵

Some nineteenth century thinkers did refute the reliability and quality of the *Décadas* and Herrera as a scholar, such as Hubert Bancroft, who considered Herrera “bald and accurately prolix, his method slavishly chronological” demonstrating “inexperience and incompetent assistance” with “notes badly extracted, discrepancies, and inconsistencies.”¹⁸⁶ His biggest sin to most scholars in modern scholarship has likewise been his lack of originality and finesse: “As a historian, Herrera was not altogether original, as he was a scholar who chiefly relied on the work of others rather than engage in original archival research.”¹⁸⁷

Regardless of the more recent criticism, Herrera’s work was tremendously influential: “It became a classic study very early.”¹⁸⁸ “Because the work was published so frequently and addressed to such a broad audience, it had a substantial impact on European readers for centuries afterwards.”¹⁸⁹ Although first edition was in Spanish, the significance of which will be discussed below, the immediate popularity of the *Décadas* is evident in its multiple publications in various languages: French and Latin in Amsterdam in 1622, German in Frankfort in 1623 and 1624, French in Paris between 1660 and 1671, Dutch in Leiden in 1706, and the first English edition appeared in six volumes in London in 1725-1726, Spanish in Madrid in 1726 and again in Antwerp in 1728, Madrid in 1729-30, 1934-57, and 1992.¹⁹⁰ Its frontispieces were adopted by artists such as Theodore De Bry, who

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. note 8, 19 from *Década Cuarto*, Libro I, Cap. IX.

¹⁸⁶ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Central America* /, vol. I (San Francisco :, 1882), 317. Quoted in Winsor, *History of America*, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1886, 67.

¹⁸⁷ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 270.

¹⁸⁸ Morales Folguera, *La construcción de la sociedad utópica*, 400.

¹⁸⁹ Cuesta Domingo, “Herrera Y Tordesillas, Antonio de (1549-1625).” Cuesta Domingo, 293.

¹⁹⁰ Cuesta Domingo, “Los Cronistas Oficiales de Indias. De López de Velasco a Céspedes Del Castillo,” 123.

copied the frontispiece of the *Descripción* in Volume XII of *Historia Americae sive novi orbis*, 1590-1634.¹⁹¹

In the 19th century, Herrera was criticized for his inconsistencies and humanist style of research and authorship. “The ideal historian of the Renaissance was a Humanist who, detached from the facts he narrated, ordered and analyzed his sources in a way similar to the modern scholar.”¹⁹² As mentioned above, there is some contention as to whether or not he was truly an historian in the modern sense. There is no doubt that the *Décadas* is seminal reading for the Latin American historian: it “is, indeed, a noble monument of sagacity and erudition; and the student of history, and still more the historical compiler, will find himself unable to advance a single step among the early colonial settlements of the New World without reference to the pages of Herrera.”¹⁹³ The work is most importantly for the researcher, a compilation of primary sources to which, as *Cronista Mayor*, Herrera had access to, documents which were not available to anyone else. “It must not be forgotten that, in addition to the narrative of the early discoveries of the Spaniards, Herrera has brought together a vast quantity of information in respect to the institutions and usages of the Indian nations, collected from the most authentic sources. This gives the work a completeness beyond what is to be found in any other on the same subject.”¹⁹⁴ “No one has ever disputed the fidelity of old Herrera, styled the Prince of Historians, to the sources of information then accessible, and no one has ever exceeded him in careful research and interesting narration of aboriginal history. He sought and obtained many of the original documents, which the industry and spirit of the old missionaries and explorers made so numerous and voluminous. He copies, almost bodily, the MS. History of the Indies by Las Casas.... His work is a perfect treasure-house of the most valuable details, regarding the original state of the religion an

¹⁹¹ See Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America” for a fascinating comparison of these two writers and their imagery.

¹⁹² Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 4–5.

¹⁹³ Prescott and Kirk, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, 701.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 699.

manners of the Indian”¹⁹⁵ He borrowed freely from as yet unpublished histories of the Americas, including manuscripts written by Bartolomé de las Casas, Bernal Díaz and Juan López de Velasco’s *Geografía y Descripción Universal de las Indias*, the latter of which would not be published until 1894.

While this alone makes the *Décadas* a valuable resource, there are many faults in his meaningful use of these documents: “Of all the narratives and reports furnished to Herrera, for his history of the Indies, and of which he made such scanty and unintelligent use, very few have been preserved.”¹⁹⁶ Later scholars have pointed out numerous errors in Herrera’s facts, including Quintana, who “has exposed several glaring anachronisms” in the historian’s accounts of the early Peruvian conquest.¹⁹⁷ Prescott points out that although “his work is arranged on the chronological system of annals, [Herrera] is by no means immaculate as to his dates.”¹⁹⁸

The Livy-esque decade format, while a classical tradition, is also problematic for readers. Many tales from the New World happened over longer periods of time and are awkwardly forced into a fractured format that leaves the reader confused and frustrated. This obsessive chronology is at times extremely confusing as he binds the narrative in his decade structure rather than by historical figure. “By means of this tasteless arrangement the thread of interest is perpetually snapped, the reader is hurried from one scene to another, without the opportunity of completing his survey of any. His patience is exhausted and his mind is perplexed with partial and scattered glimpses... This is the great defect of a plan founded on

¹⁹⁵ Thomas Warren Field, *An Essay Towards an Indian Bibliography: Being a Catalogue of Books, Relating to the History, Antiquities, Languages, Customs, Religion, Wars, Literature, and Origin of the American Indians, in the Library of Thomas W. Field ; with Bibliographical and Historical Notes, and Synopses of the Contents of Some of the Works Least Known* (Scribner, Armstrong, and Company, 1873), 170, note 161.

¹⁹⁶ Clements R. Markham, *Narratives of the Rites and Laws of the Incas* (Juniper Grove, 2009), vii.

¹⁹⁷ Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Peru*, 542, note 19. Prescott refers to Quintana’s *Españoles Celebres*, Tom. II, Appendix, No. 7.

¹⁹⁸ Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Peru*, 542, note 19.

a slavish adherence to chronology.”¹⁹⁹ While this formatting has its own iconographical significance, which will be described below, it was not successful in its adherence to a cohesive narration of historical events. For example, Cortés does not just occupy *Decada Terzera*, but appears again and again throughout the work, so the continuity of his role in the New World is interrupted. Because some of his protagonists have a storyline that progresses through many decades, in other words, Herrera abruptly starts and ends their stories to suit his chronological progression.

Herrera’s use of the Roman chronological model and devotion to the divine, morality, military aristocracy and nationalist mythologies aligns him certainly to Oviedo and others. While Rubiés refers to these qualities as innately medieval,²⁰⁰ in Herrera’s case it is the opinion here that his work represents a transition between the medieval and the humanist. It is possible that Herrera used this model in an attempt to realign the goals of conquest with Christianity, a relationship that was highly criticized by Oviedo, who emphasized the greed and weak efforts for indigenous conversion on the part of the Spanish. By reclaiming this style with the addition of the title pages with their inherently Christian iconographic references, it is suggested here that Herrera was using a deliberate strategy to demonstrate the Catholic claim to the Americas.

The authority granted to his work through the patronage of the royal family, his unique access to first-hand accounts, design of the visual elements within the work, and its overall associations with classical and Christian imagery and mapping lent it legitimacy to contemporary audiences that may get lost in our modern readings of the imagery.

¹⁹⁹ William Hickling Prescott, *William H. Prescott’s History of the Conquest of Mexico* (London: Continuum, 2009), 700.

²⁰⁰ Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America.” 77.

However, it is the authority inherent in its construction as a map in relation to the text that lends the *Décadas* its greatest air of truth. In works of poetry and prose “The reader is guided by information delivered in a particular sequence both textually and visually. That sequence is determined by the work’s purpose at any given moment. For the sake of clarity, exposition is often delivered straightforwardly. At other times, the purposeful withholding, suppression, or indirect revelation of information is key.”²⁰¹ While an historian ostensibly of nonfiction, Herrera y Tordesillas with all his faults is also a storyteller, and he creates the story through inclusion, omission and a molded sequence of events to convey the story he wants us to know, in this case relevant to the “hechos” or deeds of the Spanish conquest of the Americas. His narrative is part of the larger Spanish metanarrative that addressed “The mastering of America.”²⁰²

²⁰¹ Turchi, 2004, 107.

²⁰² Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World.*, 30.

Contemporary Historians

It is important to place Herrera in context of his contemporaries to illustrate the uniqueness of his approach. While there were many attempts to catalog the New World, in this author's opinion, none were in the same model as Herrera although there were many similarities and overlaps in strategies. The first hand publications of explorers like Columbus and Cortés are not of the greatest interest in this context, and will only be noted when relevant; for this discussion we are more interested in contextualizing the *Décadas* of Herrera in a larger framework of contemporary and earlier general histories. These include types in classical humanist templates like Livy's decade and Pliny's encyclopedic format, more modern empirical natural histories, and also styles that referenced popular chivalric epics. It is important to acknowledge here as well the intimate nature of humanist academia in the sixteenth century, where can be presumed that these historians were familiar with the work of their peers: "we are bound to reflect upon the smallness and intimacy of the sixteenth century world, which often seems like a group of like-minded friends sharing the excitement of the heady rediscovery of classical antiquity."²⁰³

²⁰³ David Buisseret, *The Mapmakers' Quest: Depicting New Worlds in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 43.

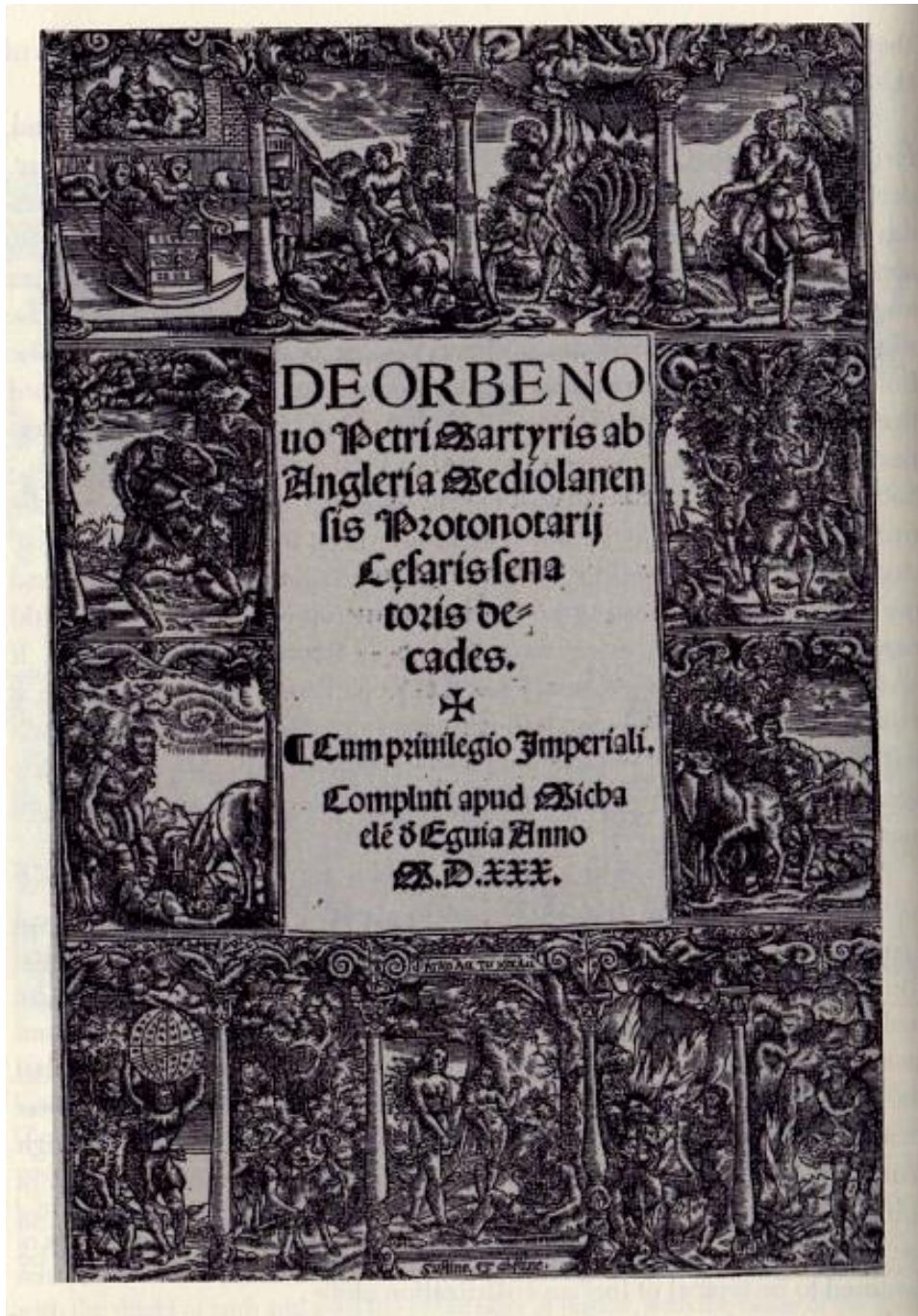


Figure 19. Peter Martyr. *De Orbe Novo Decades*, Alcalá de Henares, 1516

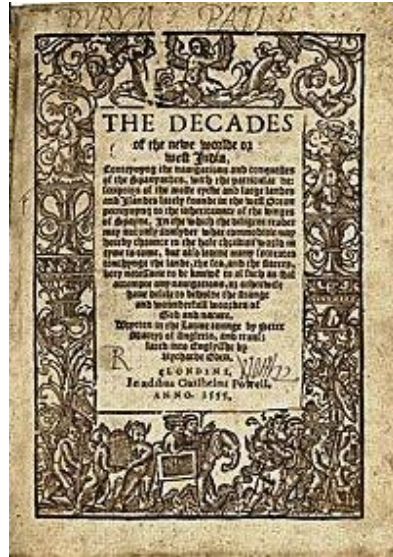


Figure 20. Title page of Richard Eden's translation of Peter Martyr's *Decades of the New World, The decades of the new worlde or West India...* London: In aedibus Guilhelmi Powell, 1555.

Pietro Martire d'Anghiera (1457-1526), also known as Peter Martyr or Pedro Mártir de Anglería, like Herrera, wrote in the manner of Titus Livius. Martyr organized his works into eight *Décadas*, although he aligned himself more completely with the classical tradition by publishing in Latin, possibly due to his being an Italian humanist. Martyr came to the Spanish court from Italy as a teacher under Queen Isabella, becoming a personal favorite to the queen as a lecturer and after her death served as one of her funeral escorts.²⁰⁴ The first three decades were published as *De orbe novo decades cum Legatione Babylonica* in 1516, and all eight in their entirety were published posthumously in 1530. Also like Herrera, Martyr never went to the New World but compiled information for his accounts from the resources available to him as secretary to the Council of the Indies and the official chronicler of the Indies under Charles V.²⁰⁵ He did, however, know some of the first explorers personally, like Columbus with whom he corresponded extensively after his voyages to the Americas, and he was the first historian to note the importance of the Gulf Stream in navigating the east coast of the Americas.²⁰⁶ He consolidated the natural histories of the plants, minerals and

²⁰⁴ Ronald S. Love, *Maritime Exploration in the Age of Discovery: 1415-1800* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), 119.

²⁰⁵ Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 10.

²⁰⁶ Love, *Maritime Exploration in the Age of Discovery*, 120.

peoples of the New World, and was the first historian to relate the Indians with the Classical world by aligning them with the Golden Age and claiming classical myths such as the fountain of youth may be accessed in the New World.²⁰⁷ Martyr legitimized some of the claims of Las Casas in his *Decades*, by not refuting his claims and mentioning only briefly the Spaniards attempts to convert the Indians.²⁰⁸ His influence was immediately prevalent in other parts of Europe through translation into English by Richard Eden as part of a larger text on the Americas in 1555.

²⁰⁷ Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 10.

²⁰⁸ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 153-4.

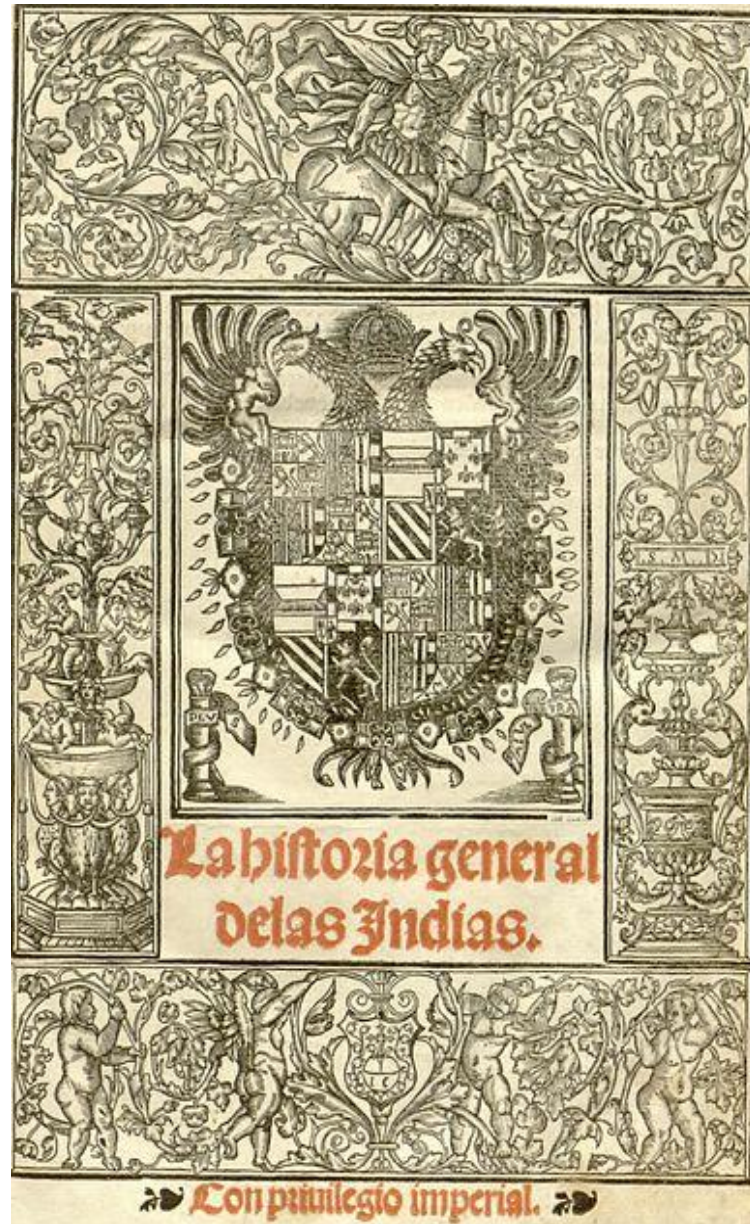


Figure 21. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *De la historia general de las Indias*, Toledo, 1526

Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (1478-1557) was the official royal chronicler of the Indies for the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V from 1532-1557, and lived and wrote in Hispaniola. His first work on the Americas was a report commissioned by Charles V, the *Sumario*, which addressed mostly natural history of the New World but also some governance issues and other observations. This is immediately different from Martyr, who wrote completely from Spain with no first hand knowledge of his subject, a difference noted by Oviedo “who resented Martyr’s

reputation” in this regard.²⁰⁹ His enterprise represents a very different type of history than Herrera’s *Décadas*, in that he not only related the stories of discovery and conquest, but more famously provided an extensive natural history of the Indies, giving life to the wonders of the New World through description and illustration. Like Herrera, Oviedo had access to official archives for information, but unlike Herrera, he relied heavily on empirical evidence of his own travels in the Americas and direct interviews with explorers and travelers. Considered by some to be “the founder of physical geography,” Oviedo was enormously influential and a contemporary and rival of Bartolomé de las Casas.²¹⁰ However, although the first nineteen books were published in Oviedo’s lifetime, an extensive amount of the project was not available to the public until 1851-55,²¹¹ possibly because he did not always cater to the monarchy as they desired, coupled with his store of empirical knowledge of the New World and the Spaniards burgeoning desire to thwart the decimation of valuable information, which may have disrupted his attempts to have his work published earlier.²¹²

In his *La historia general y natural de las Indias*, Oviedo follows classical models of Pliny “in his encyclopaedic account of the conquest and its setting, and his evident sense of historical perspective, do not detract from a system of values which was essentially medieval in its emphasis on divine intervention, moralistic explanation, aristocratic military ethos and nationalistic mythology.”²¹³

Oviedo did include commentary on the behavior and governance of the Spanish conquistadors, and frequently condemns their greed and delusions. After discussing the plight of Pánfilo de Narváez, his loss of ships and an enormous number of crew members along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, Oviedo

²⁰⁹ Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 14.

²¹⁰ Myers, *Fernández De Oviedo’s Chronicle of America*, 4.

²¹¹ Ilgen and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *The Bernard J. Flatow Collection of Latin American Cronistas in the Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, 22.

²¹² Richard L Kagan, *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), p. 156-157.

²¹³ Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America,” 77.

commented: “He thought he would be Governor and lord, but he was not able to govern himself. Can there be more frivolity than listening to these leaders?”²¹⁴ However, while Oviedo condemns the attempts of Narváez, he greatly supports the efforts of Columbus and Cortés, which Rubiés argues is because they succeeded and had a clear objective, which, of course, they did not. He celebrates Columbus for having found treasures of gold, but that he would be ultimately more famous for having brought the Catholic faith to the Americas.²¹⁵ Oviedo criticizes the monarchy, declaring that they were not facilitating the enterprises which were developing and conquering the Americas, but left the bulk of the liability and financial responsibility to private enterprises and privateers. Overall his work glorifies the Spanish heroes and supports the conquest in general with the exception of some who were driven by greed rather than the glory of God, and he places the Indians as solidly inferior but not without cultural interest.²¹⁶ His interest in Christianizing the Native Americans is evident on his title page in the visual reference to Santiago Matamoros, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

La Historia general de las indias reflects royal interests in natural resources in what Canizares-Esguerra calls the “green treasures” of the New World, which was profoundly profitable to Spain such as dyes, stimulants, pharmaceuticals, woods and spices. For example, Oviedo explains the terrain and fertility of the Caribbean island of Margarita and its governance – what is already there and what is the landscape to be cultivated: “*Pero es fertile de arboles/y pastos para ganados/ y otras granjerias/y agricultura de Indias...*” and other resources of interest to European exploitation such as pearl diving in the Caribbean in *Libro Diez y nueve*. The illustrations in Oviedo reflect growing interest in empirical study, as they are not romanticized but clearly meant for identification and he includes simple

²¹⁴ Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Natural History of the West Indies* /, North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures ; (University of North Carolina Press,, 1959), IV, 298.

²¹⁵ John Huxtable Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492-1650* (Cambridge [Eng.]: University Press, 1970), 11.

²¹⁶ Myers, *Fernández De Oviedo’s Chronicle of America*, 20.

woodblock prints of various plant species and their produce; Native Americans and items of anthropological interest like hammocks, dwelling structures, and canoes; and diagrams of how Native Americans do things, such as lighting fires and panning for gold.

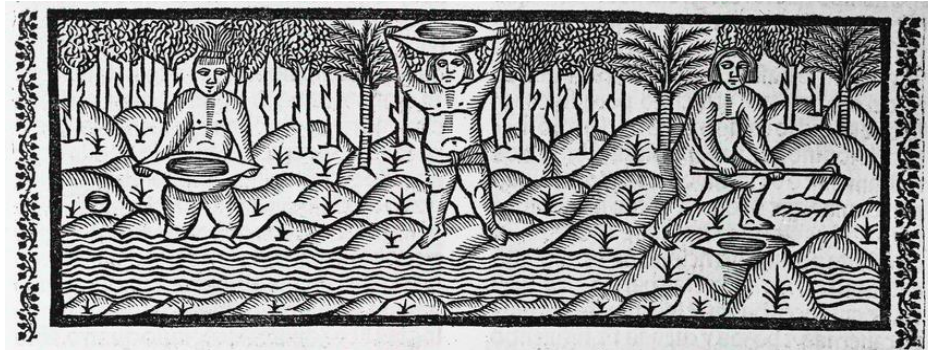


Figure 22. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, “Mining Gold” *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, Seville, 1535. John Carter Brown Library

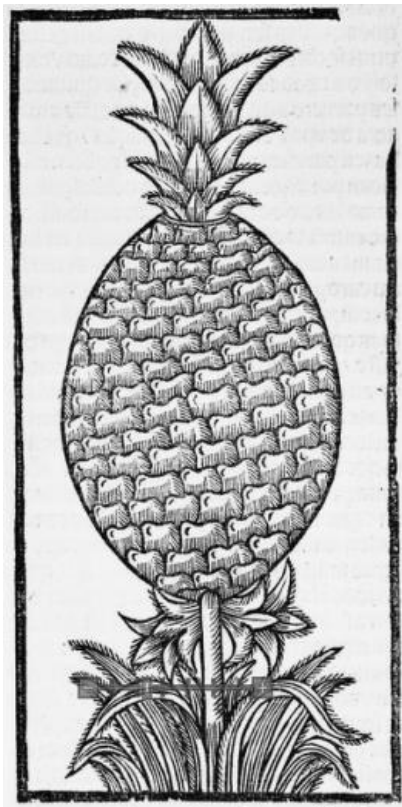


Figure 23. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, “Pineapple” *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, Seville, 1535. John Carter Brown Library

The imperial authority of the project is announced on the title page, “*Con privilegio imperial*” and also with the inclusion of the coat of arms of the

monarchy boldly in the center, and “PLUS ULTRA” wrapped around the Pillars of Hercules below.



Figure 24. Francisco López de Gómara, Title Page of *La Istoría de las Indias y conquista de Mexico*, Saragossa, 1553

Francisco López de Gómara (1511-1566) never visited the Americas, but based his *La Istoría de las Indias y conquista de Mexico* on communications with Fernando Cortés, representing Cortés as a conquerer and leader akin to Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar.²¹⁷ His work was organized in two parts: the first is dedicated to world geography and the Indies, and descriptions of Columbus’s discoveries, colonization of the island of Hispaniola, and key conquests and explorations in the New World. The second part covers the entire life of Cortés particularly in regards

²¹⁷ Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 17.

to the conquest of Mexico and Gómara includes detailed accounts of Aztec culture.²¹⁸

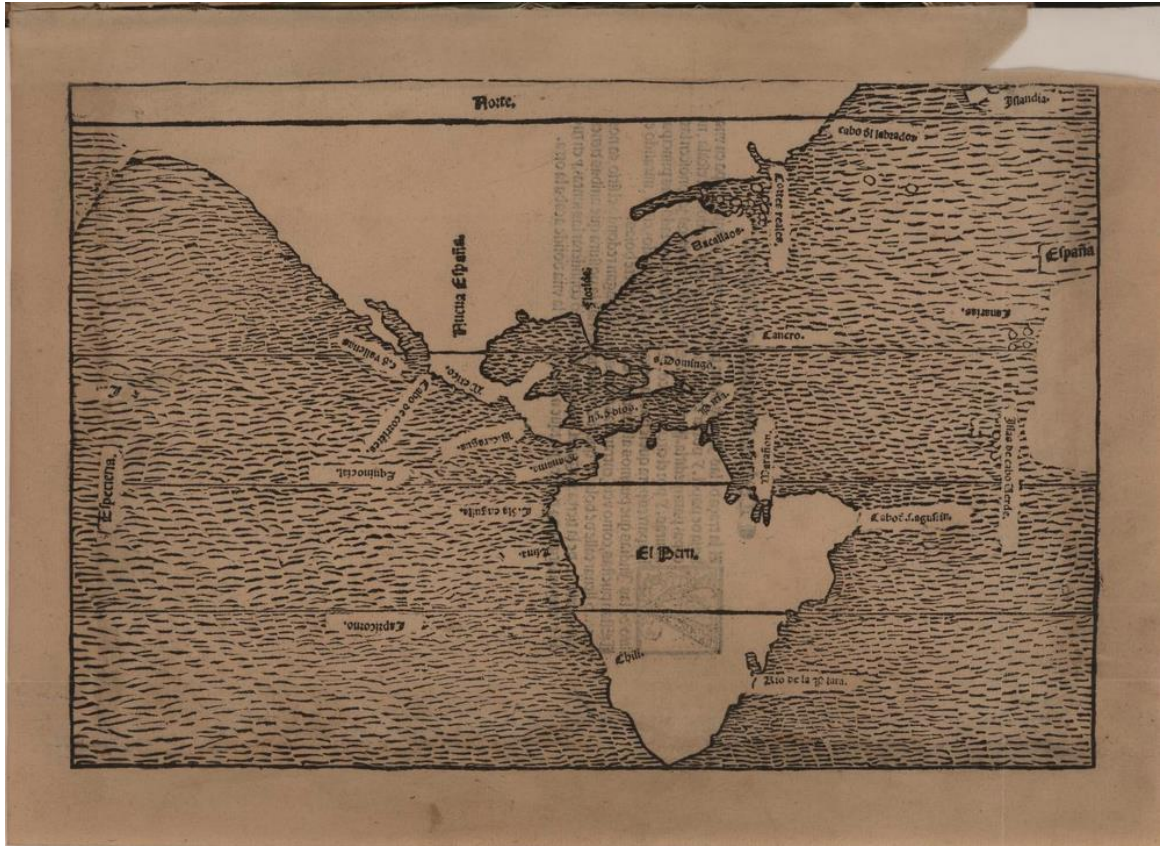


Figure 25. López de Gómara, *Primera y segunda parte de la Historia general de las Indias, La conquista de Mexico*, 1552. John Carter Brown Library

The attempts of Gómara to become the Cronista Mayor were foiled by his perhaps more truthful accounts than was politically acceptable to the monarchy of the conquests of Pizarro and the atrocities of the civil war in Peru.²¹⁹ The control of the government over such sources is explicit in the 1556 law which prohibited the publication, sale or distribution of works without prior inspection by the Council of the Indies.²²⁰ Philip had already outlawed Gómara's book in 1553, although it was published anyway, and *Brevísima* by Las Casas was published

²¹⁸ Cristián Andrés Roa-de-la Carrera, *Histories of Infamy: Francisco López De Gómara and the Ethics of Spanish Imperialism* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005), 19. Cristián Andrés Roa-de-la Carrera, *Histories of Infamy: Francisco López De Gómara and the Ethics of Spanish Imperialism* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005), 19.

²¹⁹ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 159-160.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 160.

illegally in 1552.²²¹ Completely out of Philips control, both of these books enjoyed enormous international popularity in multiple languages all over Europe.



Figure 26. Francisco López de Gómara, *Buffalo*, *La Historia General de Las Indias*, Antwerp, 1554

A Castilian humanist, he served as Cortés's chaplain in Spain, and had solid connections to high society, humanist scholars, and privileged records at the Casa de Contratación in Sevilla. He received much criticism from Oviedo and Las Casas for his excessive heroicising of Cortés, and when Herrera was accused of misrepresenting Pedrarias Dávila by his grandson, Herrera was accused of "following Gómara's narrative."²²² His *La Istoria de las Indias y conquista de Mexico* was published as part of a larger work, the *Istoria de las Indias* in Italian in 1556, French in 1568, and English in 1578.²²³ It was allegedly his zeal for Cortés "to the almost complete exclusion of others who accompanied him" that inspired Bernal Díaz del Castillo to write his own account of the conquest in his *Historia verdadera del la conquisat de la Nueva España* in 1568.²²⁴

²²¹ Ibid.,160.

²²² Roa-de-la Carrera, *Histories of Infamy*, 3.

²²³ Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 17–18.

²²⁴ Ligia Rodríguez, "López de Gómara (1511-Ca. 1559)," in *Guide to the Documentary Sources for Andean Studies, 1530-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 358.

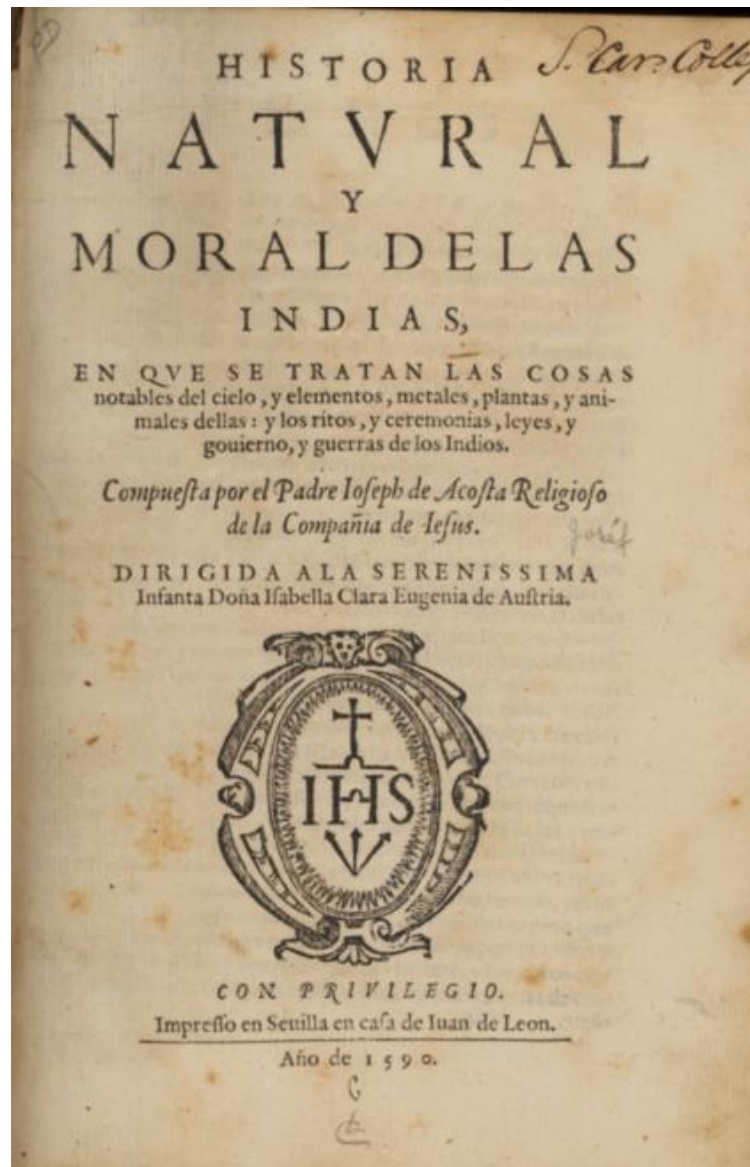


Figure 27. *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*. Sevilla 1590

José de Acosta (1540-1600) was considered by later admirers to be the Pliny of the New World. His *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* consists of four books on the natural history of America and three on the Indians. It was published in Castilian in 1590, although the first two books were published in Latin as part of an earlier work.²²⁵ The 1590 edition is organized in seven books with no relevant illustrations or maps. The only imagery includes the first letter of each book which are not related to the text in a meaningful way and were most likely taken from the

²²⁵ Ilgen and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *The Bernard J. Flatow Collection of Latin American Cronistas in the Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, 47.

printer's (Juan de Leon, Sevilla) standard type box. For example, the "T" in Libro Tercera is of a centaur on horseback and the "A" decorated with two warriors are consistent throughout. However the link with the Christian obligations in the New World is apparent in the title page with the symbol of the Jesuits and the imperial commission for the work in his dedications.

Unlike Herrera, Acosta spent 17 years with the Indians of Peru, about whom he dedicates most of his observations. His intention was to develop a better understanding of the Indians in order to facilitate conversion, and speaks among many things of the Indians' origins in the Old World, the errors in classical and medieval assumptions about the Torrid Zone, and empirical observations from his own experiences on natural resources and fauna of the New World. He asserts in his dedication (to Infanta Doña Isabel Clara Eugenia de Austria) and his preamble that while there are many works published on the New World, works devoted to philosophical consideration of the Indies is lacking: "A la Serenissima Infanta Doña Isabel Clara Eugenia de Austria. Señora. Aviendome lama gestad del Rey nuestro Señor dado licencia de ofrecer V.A. esta pequeño obra intitulada Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias, no se me podra atribuyr a falta de consideración, querer ocupar el tiempo que en cosas de importancia V.A. tan santamente gasta, diuitiendla a materias q por tocar en Philosophia son algo oscuras, y por ser de gentes Barbaras no parecen a proposito."²²⁶ He went beyond Oviedo as a natural historian and was widely admired in his lifetime for his "approach to natural phenomena, searching for causes and effects in the spirit of critical inquiry."²²⁷ In only a few years, his work became enormously popular and was translated into Italian, French, German, Dutch, English and Latin.²²⁸

²²⁶ José de Acosta, *Historia Natural Y Moral Delas Indias, : En Que Se Tratanlas Cosas Notables Del Cielo, Y Elementos, Metales ... Y Guerras De Los Indios* (Impresso en Seuilla: en casa de Iuan de Leon, 1590), 7–9.

²²⁷ Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 56.

²²⁸ Ilgen and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *The Bernard J. Flatow Collection of Latin American Cronistas in the Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, 47.

CHAPTER 3

Physical Description of the *Décadas*

The *Historia general de los hechos de los Castellanos in las islas i tierra firme del mar oceano* is comprised of eight sections, that describe ten years each, covering the period of 1492-1531, which Herrera considered the golden age of the Spanish conquest,²²⁹ and a supplemental work, the *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*. In the eight decades there are eighty books in total (ten in each *decada*) and 1,221 chapters, and each decade includes an index.²³⁰ There are nine title pages in total, including the *Descripción*. Other illustrations include fourteen maps of the American coasts, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, Pacific, Philippines, Moluccas Islands and Japan, which are included only in the *Descripción*. There is also decorative upper case type introducing each chapter and fanciful filigree to end some but not all of the *libros*. These two latter types appear to be simple decorative devices consistent with other publications of the time, and will not play a role in this discussion.²³¹

The *Décadas* was originally published in two sets: the first four decades were published in Madrid by Juan Flamenco in 1601, and the second set of four decades in 1615 by Juan de la Cuesta, also in Madrid.²³² They are usually published in four

Antonio de Herrera, *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las islas y tierra firme [sic] del mar Océano o “Décadas” de Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas*, ed. Mariano Cuesto Domingo (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1991), *Descripción*, 93.

²²⁹ Herrera y Tordesillas, “Y el aver acabado le Historia de las Indias en el año 1554 fue, porque en su pacificaron, y sosegaron de todos los rumores del Perú, y porque en los años siguientes no hubo tantos sucesos que se pudiesse continuar por la orden de las *Décadas* anualmente.” From a letter to Don Luis Velasco, published in Volume I of the *Décadas*, and quoted in Cummins, n20.

²³⁰ See Mariano Cuesta Domingo, “Herrera Y Tordesillas, Antonio de (1549-1625),” in *Guide to the Documentary Sources for Andean Studies, 1530-1900*, vol. II (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 290-293.

²³¹ These consist mostly of classical putti, filigree and floral designs that one can find in other works by the same printers.

²³² James P. R Lyell, *Early Book Illustration in Spain*, (London: Grafton & co., 1926), 304. Juan de la Cuesta was made famous as being the first to publish Don Quixote, and was “the chief printer in Segovia in the sixteenth century,” 301. There was no press in Madrid until after 1566, five years after the establishment of Madrid as the seat of the crown.

volumes with two decades contained in each. The supplemental *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales* was also published in 1601 by Juan Flamenco, but separately and later typically bound into the *Décadas* as desired by the buyer, in some copies before the first decade, some with the *Descripción* and *Tabla* (second edition) bound as a fifth volume, and in others, like the copy at the John Carter Brown Library in Providence, RI, the section comes after *Decada Quarto* in the second volume of four.²³³

With the exception of *Década Quinta*, each engraved title page is divided in 10 to 14 compartments depicting different scenes of conquest, discovery, and other important events, or of Indian figures. In seven of the nine title pages, there are accompanying text descriptions for each panel run around the border of the page, and each of these pages is decorated with four medallion portraits of the *Castellanos* to be discussed in the ensuing chapters, with character's name and title in a circular frame around the image. These are formatted in a similar style, with some variations to be discussed in detail below. *Década Quinta* has twelve portraits of Incan rulers, and the *Descripción* only includes the author's portrait but is otherwise similar in format. Each title page engraving covers virtually the entire surface of the paper and is in a strict rectangular format around the title panel and dedications, each of which will be described in its own section to follow.



Figure 28. Magellan, detail *Década Primera* Title Page, 1601

²³³ The significance of the *Descripción*, therefore, is considered here as part of the whole project, but as its placement within the *Décadas* varies considerably, less attention is placed on its location in the work.

Décadas I-IV and VI-VIII are decorated with medallion portraits arranged so they face each other, drawing and containing our attention inwards towards the center panel which is decorated with the emblem of the monarchy, the author, and title of the work. Along each edge are vignettes that describe various events, usually battles, or other matters of greatest significance to the history of the corresponding *Decada* text. Like the textual narratives that follow, the panels are rigidly chronological, and follow the trail of the greatest deeds of the conquistadors, religious leaders, explorers and patrons of the enterprises in New Spain. The linearity and strict chronological structure of the narrative is visually exaggerated by this symmetrical layout of the images.

In *Décadas I-IV*, the narrative panels take on an aerial omniscient view, where the audience observes from above the scenes of Herrera's narrative. Constructed as a cartoon-like linear pictorial narration, the panels are flattened and stylized to accommodate legibility for the reader and betray little attempt at realism in linear or atmospheric perspective, with people in the background as big as or bigger than those in the foreground. There are often hundreds of little figures on each page, and for the most part these are rendered awkwardly with marginal skill on the part of the artist, and they are more akin to generalized actors in a grand play rather than having any individual role. Groups are bunched together tightly so that only the figures on the margins can be seen, the rest relegated to a sea of the tops of heads and helmets. The geography of the landscapes occasionally reflects the location depicted but more often than not indicates a Europeanized generalization, indicating that geography is symbolic, a geopolitical stage upon which the actions are played and land possessed rather than as a wayfinding tool. Foliage for the most part consists of identical nondescript trees of the same size and shape as decorations, and is used similarly to maps of the time to fill empty spaces.

Coastlines are abrupt and crisp in their delineation from the sea, and the waves of still waters are indicated by small dashes, where tempestuous seas are indicated by rogue giant waves in the middle of otherwise quiet but longer dashes.



Figure 29. Royal Seal, detail *Década Primera* Title Page, 1601

Every title page is centered around the title and author, but most importantly the royal seal of the empire. The collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece, presented to a limited number of knights plus the sovereign of the Habsburg empire after the absorption of Burgundy, surrounds the castles and lions of Castile and León. As the the Order of the Golden Fleece was prohibited to heretics, and had become a symbol during the Reformation of a specifically Catholic reference, contemporaries of Herrera would be aware of the king's obligation under this order to preserve, protect and bring honor to the Catholic faith.²³⁴

There is quite a shift not of template but of content and style in the later publication in Madrid at Juan de la Cuesta in 1615.²³⁵ In the lack of sophistication of these medallions the artist seems to reflect a similar talent as Juan Peyron.

However there are some significant shifts in style and content. Rather than three vertical panels between the medallions in the previous *Décadas*, here there are

²³⁴ Sarah Schroth, "Veneration and Beauty: Messages in Images of the King in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Spain in the Age of Exploration, 1492-1819* (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 2004), 119.

²³⁵ The *Década Quinta*, which will be discussed in detail below, breaks from the narrative panels altogether, and includes historical medallion portraits on Incan rulers.

only two with fewer and sometimes no captions, and the medallions themselves have gotten much larger. Battlefields are the theme rather than first contact, and the costumes of the medallion portraits are more obviously referencing imperial portraiture and Christian Militarism with their imperial batons, elaborate filigreed armor, and ruffled collars of the court replacing the more medieval chain mail sleeves, gentlemen's overcoat of Magellan or the puritanical clothes of Cortés in the earlier 1601 panels.

The battle scenes depicted include tight groups of soldiers in military formation shooting in every direction with cannons rather than swords. Cavalry, fortresses and firearms lend a much more foreboding air to this series, and the battles are dominated by military European structures rather than include any settlements of native origin. The only panel with boats is a battle scene, and there are only a few examples of cityscapes but these are settings for battle.

While the later narrative panels, medallions, and the central title panels are slightly more sophistic in technique, with greater detail and negligibly more skill than the work of Peyron, they have none of the charm of the 1601 title pages. There are valiant attempts at depicting movement, such as the forward rush of the horses in the "*Batalla de las Salinas*" at the bottom of *Década Sesta*, and the figures are significantly less deformed and awkward as they were in *Décadas I-IV*, and in fact they are even smaller and greater in number. Rather than the random tree or empty spaces surrounding the portrait medallions, the engraver here has chosen to place decorative classical elements which also makes the pages seem more heavily framed but the characters have less of a direct relationship with the landscapes depicted. Christian militarism is more prevalent than the earlier scenes, and more flags of conquest pepper the landscape held high by the cavalry and foot soldiers.

The *Descripción* is organized in a different format than the *Decadas* in that it includes chapters rather than books on each region, and these include sections which correspond to and describe each of the fourteen maps: "Aqui entra la Tabla

2,” e.g. Each map is numbered and titled on the plate which adheres them to the textual descriptions of each region, and each is folded as they are of a larger folio size than the printed text pages. The title page panels are not narratives but fanciful illustrations of the wonders of the New World, including native gods of the land and classical gods and creatures of the seas, and the page includes a medallion of the author himself. The *Descripción* does not include an index but rather a list of presidentes, consejeros, secretarios, y fiscales, and gobernadores and virreyes,²³⁶ leaders from the Empire in the Americas since the discovery. The second Spanish edition was edited and expanded by Andrés González Barcia and included a “Tabla General de cosas notables.” The title page of the *Descripción* is changed in this edition, which was republished in 1727, 1728, 1729, and 1730.

The maps and title pages of the 1601 printing at Juan Flamenco are known to have been engraved by Juan Peyron.²³⁷ However, there is also evidence that in 1600 the master engraver Joan Baptista de Morales signed a contract for work on the *Décadas* to produce five copper plates, for which he would be paid 15 ducats each.²³⁸ Perhaps these were for the second set of volumes including *Décadas V-VIII*. Great efforts have been made by this author to find other examples of Juan Peyron and any other evidence of his artistic involvement, but to no avail. However, the relevance of the authorship of the engravings may not be as relevant as they might have been elsewhere, as in Spain the engravers were perhaps less renowned as individuals than they were in other countries during this time.

²³⁶ Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano* (En Mad: [i.e. Madrid]: En la Emplenta Real, 1601), *Descripción*, 93-95.

²³⁷ Henry Raup Wagner, *Antonio De Herrera, Historia General De Las Indias Occidentales* (Berkeley, 1924), 173.

²³⁸ Cristóbal Pérez Pastor, *Bibliografía Madrileña* (Madrid: Tip. de los huérfanos, 1891), 337–338.

Title Page Descriptions

In this section, each title page will be described in detail with medallion portraits identified as well as each panel analysed in terms of its content, style, and subject matter. The significance of the medallions and some key panels will be discussed in Chapter 4 according to cartographic and art historical methodologies. The order of analysis in this chapter will attempt to follow as chronologically as possible the narrative of the panels, which tend to run down each side of the page from top left to bottom left and then top right to bottom right, rather than in a circular fashion of clockwise or counterclockwise.

Bibliotheca Colbertina. 1.

HISTORIA GENERAL DE LOS HECHOS DE LOS CASTELLANOS EN LAS ISLAS Y TIERRA FIRME DEL MAR OCEANO ESCRITA POR ANTONIO DE HERRERA CORONISTA MAYOR DE S.M. DE LAS INDIAS Y S.V. DE CASTILLA.
 En quatro Decadas desde el Año de 1492. hasta el de 1531.
 De Cada primera.
 Al Rey Nu.º Senor.

EN LA ENLA EMPLERREA 1601.

El Almirante sale de los puertos de Sevilla a descubrir las Indias.
El Almirante describe las yslas de los Lucayos que fueron las primeras de Indias.
El Almirante describe la torre de Babel edificada por el Rey Guacanagari.
La gran batalla que tubo el Almirante con el Rey y Guatuzuma y cien mil yndios en la Vega Real.
El Almirante halla quema a la torre de Babel y los Castellanos muertos.
El Almirante descubre la ysla de la Trinidad y la tierra firme.
Las yndias procuran derribar y quemar la torre de la Vega y el Almirante pelean con ellos.
El Almirante descubre con grandes tormentos la corte de Veragua.

Figure 30. Década Primera Title Page, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA PRIMERA

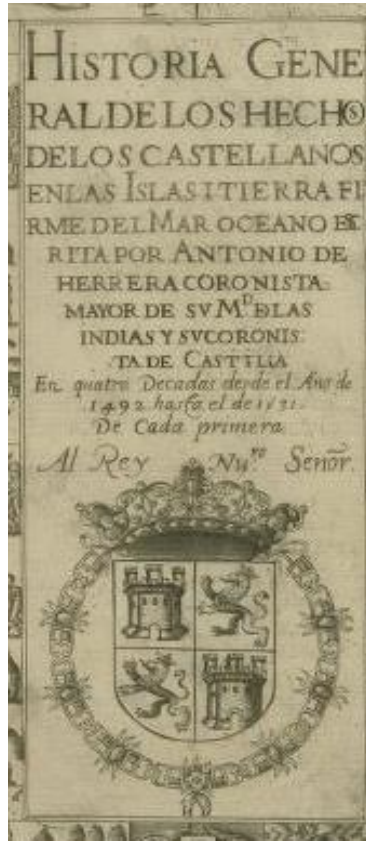


Figure 32. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 31. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

The first *Década*, which is arguably the most important as it sets the stage for the entire work, includes four medallions, eight panels and a globe. In the center of the page is the title information in a double lined frame, the text of which reads: “*Historia General de los hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas i tierra firme del mar océano... escrito por Antonio de Herrera coronista mayor de svMD de las Indias y su Coronista de Castilla, En quarto Décadas desde el Año de 1492 hasta el de 1531. Década primera, Al Rey Nuestro Señor.*” Below this textual information is the royal seal of Castille and Leon, which includes two castles and a lion surrounded by symbols of the Order of the Golden Fleece. The lowest register includes another seal, of Presidente Paulo Laguna, President of the Council of the Indies. Under this frame is a small undecorated frame which states publication information: “En Madrid en la emplenta [sic] real, 1601.”



Figure 34. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 33. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 36. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 35. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

The four medallions each occupy a corner of the page overlaid against the background panel image, and they include the first and most prominent characters in the discovery of the New World according to Herrera. Each is named and titled in a wide framed circle surrounding their medallion portrait. These include King Ferdinand (Don Hernando V el Catolico Rey de Castilla y de Leon), Queen Isabella (La catolica dona Ysabel Rey propia del Castilla y Leon, quien emprendió el descubrimiento de las Indias) and the only woman to appear in a medallion portrait, Bartholomew Columbus (Don Bartolome Colon Hernando Almirante primero Adelantado de las indias), and Christopher Columbus (Don xpoual Colon primeros Almirante de la Indias).

The panels of this *Década* as with the following, will be briefly described and sources discussed in brief where relevant. The iconography of these panels will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.



Figure 37. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 1. El Almirante sala de Palos villa del conde de Miranda a descubrir

This panel shows Columbus and his three ships, the *Niña*, the *Pinta* and the *Santa María* departing from Palos, now known as Palos de la Frontera, in the south of Spain on August 3, 1492. The city is represented as fortified with a prominent cross on top of a central church building and set along the banks of the Canal de Palos, now called Río Tinto. The three ships are heading out to the open sea towards the top left of the image. Their grand size marks them as the focus of the panel and the only element of action. The *Niña* and *Pinta* were both four masted caravel-type ships and the *Santa María* was a carrack-type, which is not clear in the image.

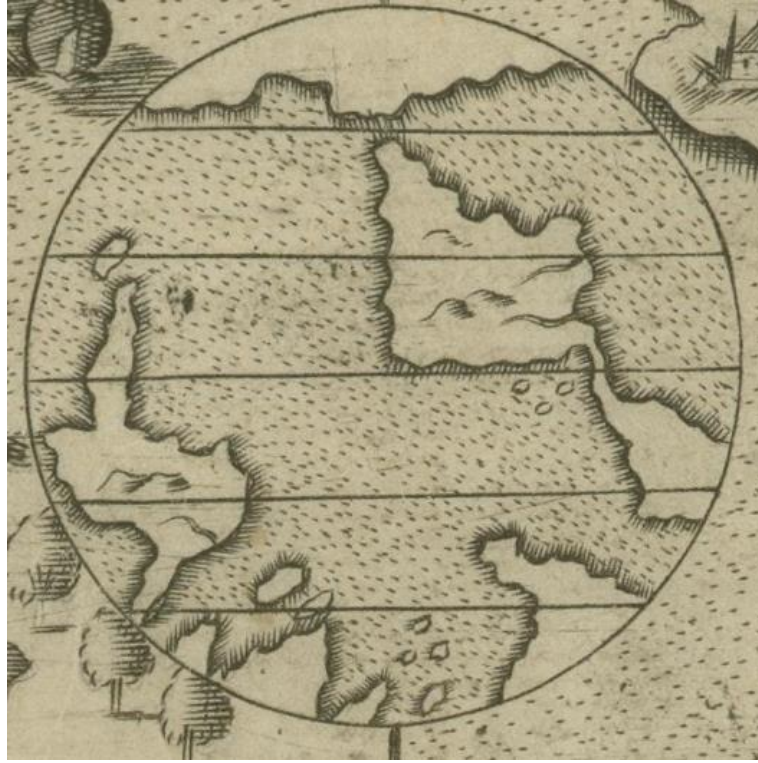


Figure 38. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

GLOBE INSERT

Between Ferdinand and Isabella is an upside down globe of the western hemisphere, including Europe, Africa, North and South America and Terra Incognita (Antarctica). The globe includes five lines of latitude presumably including the equator, the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, but none of these are shown with any accuracy as the Equator would be slicing through Panama rather than the north end of what is now South America. The symbolism and possible sources are discussed in depth below, but the globe like the panels is highly simplified and not terribly realistic with series of small dashes to represent water and heavy hashmarks perpendicular to the coastlines indicating depth. There are random lumps of mountain ranges in South America and Africa and Europe is not well described. Rather, this is a map that centers on the Atlantic, the iconography for which again, will be in addressed in Chapter 4.



Figure 39. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 2. El Alm[irant]e descubre las [y]slas delos Lucayos que fueron los primeros d[elas] Indias

In the second panel, which is placed partly beneath the globe and partly beneath Queen Isabella, Columbus's ships are shown approaching the Lucayan Islands, now known as the Bahamas. Although the ships are just approaching, this panel shows several time periods in the same moment as there is already a European-like settlement on one of the islands, and the flag of the Kingdom of Castile and Leon is recognizable as flying over another. The highest point in the Bahamas is on Cat Island, which some argue was Columbus's first port of call, but this only rises to 63 meters above sea level. The mountainous region pictured here are more indicative of the Caribbean islands to the south than to the notoriously flat Bahamas, and like many other examples we will see throughout the panels demonstrates some artistic license. There are no native inhabitants present, this land has already been conquered and cities built, which would not actually be the case for years. The inclusion of a pilot boat is also interesting, as there are

numerous reefs and shoals around these islands and accurate steerage around them would have been necessary. This may be a detail derived from Columbus's logs or those of others who traversed these waters.

That Isabella is the medallion overlaying this image is essential both as the Catholic Queen and also in her role as the instigator of the discovery as described in the text surrounding her portrait.



Figure 40. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 3. *El Al[miran]te se despide del Rey Quacanagari Edificada la torre de Navidad*

Time is fluid in this third panel, where the shipwreck of the *Santa María* off the coast of what is now Cap Haitian, Haiti, on Christmas Day, 1492, occupies the same panel as the tower of Navidad which was erected from her timber and named as a tribute to the day she went down. The tower is represented on the coast line and flies the flag of Castile and León. There are several Castellanos present with their backs to the water, designated here by their clothes, spears and rifles. In the upper right corner is King Guacanagari, one of the five Caciques, or leaders of the Taínos who lived on the island of Hispaniola, is carried on a covered palette by a group of his people and oddly wearing a crown. He allowed Columbus to build the tower in or near his village which may be represented by the scattered huts around the landscape. Here we see the native open boats, which are depicted with higher sterns and bows than those of the Europeans, and often standing while they paddle, which will be consistent throughout most of the panels.



Figure 41. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 4. *Buelue el Almirante y hallo quemada la torre de Navidad y los Castellanos muertos*

Columbus returned to Spain for one year, leaving forty of his men to guard the tower. During his absence, pictured here, the Taínos burned the tower and slaughtered the Spanish. As three ships are depicted here, the artist must again be showing different points in time, perhaps when Columbus returned and the action on the land had already occurred. The setting is the same although the dead Spaniards lie on the ground pierced with arrows, while the Indians cock new ones in their bows. In this picture the Spanish seem vastly outnumbered, and several more Indians come at the tower with torches.



Figure 42. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 5. *El Almirante descubre la ysla [sic] de la trinidad y la tierra firme*

This panel interestingly does not show any of Columbus's crew, but two ships are depicted under full sail along the coast of Trinidad. Again there are nude Indians on the land, here pointing to the ships but here without any weapons, while a few are on open boats standing with a single paddle. Again, there is an assortment of native dwellings and a scattering of decorative trees. While the caption describes the discovery of the island of Trinidad, the ships seem to be departing or possibly at anchor but no Spaniards are in sight.

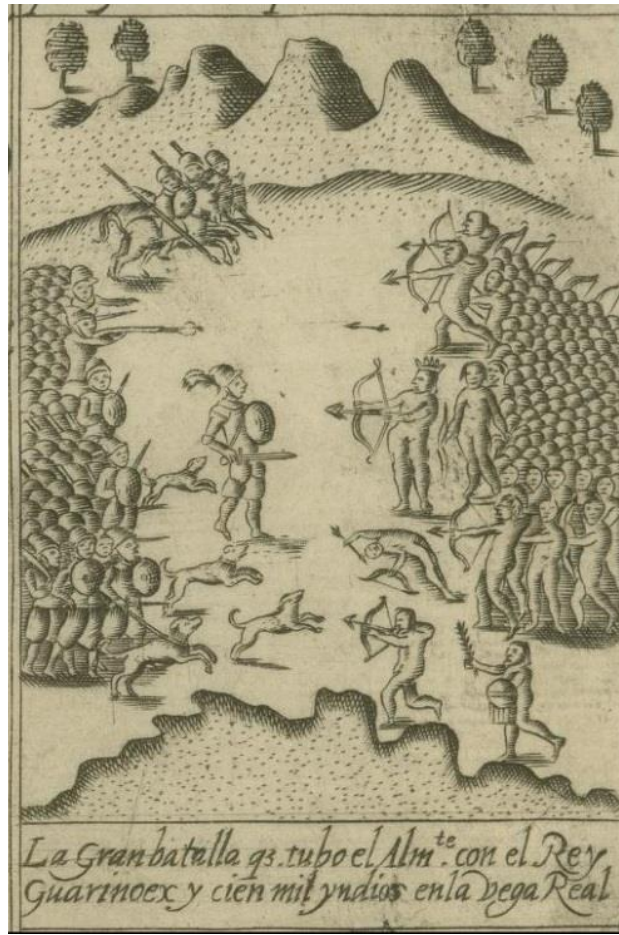


Figure 43. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 6. *La Gran batalla que tubo el Almirante con el Rey Guarinoex y cien mil Yndios en la Vega Real*

This is the first image in Herrera that attempts to depict the military superiority of the Spaniards against the American peoples. The Spanish are here retaliating against one hundred thousand Taínos led by Guarinoex, with swords, armor and shields against the latter's arrows. Animals are also shown for the first time, with dogs used for battle as well as three soldiers on horseback, all of which may have been brought back with Columbus on his second voyage. The king pulls back his bow and wears his crown but no other clothing as he faces the well armored general with his feathered helmet, metal armor and sword. The stylized masses of people on each side are wonderful here as they are so tightly packed together that only the figures on the inside edges can be made out. Most figures are indicated only with the tops of their heads, little mounds compressed in the center of each crowd indicating a large number of men on either side.

The setting is completely unidentifiable and merely produces a decorative geographical setting for the events taking place, a stage between the mountains and the sea. The coastline here even more than its predecessors belies logic with its tight twists that should come from a much larger map, and makes the people seem like giants in comparison.



Figure 44. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 7. Los yndios procuran derribar y quemar la Cruz de la Vega y el Adelantando pelea con ellos y los Vence

One of the most interesting panels on this page, the scene here is a battle of Vega, in what is now known as Santo Cerro. According to one account, the cross was a gift from Queen Isabella, and Columbus had it placed on the hill above the plains of La Vega. During a battle with the Taínos, the Indians tried to burn the cross and pull it down. Here one Indian has a torch, one an ax, and two are trying to pull the cross down with ropes. As legend has it, *The Madonna de las Mercedes* appeared on one of the arms and scared the Indians away. Here she is shown with baby Jesus glowing above the right arm of the cross.



Figure 45. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

In the foreground, as above, there are a couple of men on horseback and dogs rushing the Indians, one on a leash and the other two lunging freely towards the defenders. The Taínos hold cocked bows and some of the bows are indicated at the top of their mass of fighters, while on the Spanish side the top edge shows spears or swords. The Spanish are again heavily armored and the landscape is fairly ubiquitous with a few trees and a hut. The reference to the cross actually being placed on the hill above the battle is an effort towards faithfulness to the narrative on the artist's part.



Figure 46. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 8. El Almirante descubre con grandes Tormentos la costa de Veragua

The last panel on the title page for *Década Primera* is overlaid with the medallion portrait of Columbus's brother Bartholomew Columbus, who was left in charge of the new settlement of Isabella in Hispaniola while Christopher Columbus went off to discover the coast of Veragua in what is now Venezuela. The coast was very rough there, as is awkwardly depicted here with rogue giant waves tossing Columbus's ships about. Here the Spaniards seem more endangered, trapped between the Indians, who appear to outnumber them in this case, and the tormented seas.



Figure 47. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA SEGUNDA



Figure 49. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 48. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 50. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 51. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Década segunda is a very exciting page filled with wonderful iconography and layering of purpose. It follows a very similar format to *Década Primera*, but here the panels are more numerous and more complex, and the title information is simpler with only the central panel only including the title, author, royal seal, and decade number. This page includes twelve panels of various sizes, some of which identify certain locations by name and others place Indian characters and items of anthropological and cultural interest in a generic landscape that serves as little more than a simple stage to the scene. The medallions represent “Diego

Velasquez de Cuellar autor del descubrimiento de Nueva España,”governor of Cuba and founder of Havana; “Adelantado Basco Nuñez de Xeres de Badajoz [Vasco Nuñez de Balboa] quien descubrió la mar del Sur”, discoverer of the Pacific Ocean; “El Capitan Juan de Grijalva de Cuellar el primero de descubrió a Nueva España,” early explorer of Yucatan and born in Cuellar like Herrera and Velasquez; and “El Adelantado Juan Ponce del Reyno de Leon descubridor de la Florida,” discoverer of Florida. This particular page is particularly interesting in that it tries to describe ethnographic and anthropological details on the New World that was completely ignored in the first *década*: the Indians here appear clothed in extraordinary costumes and their tools, customs, and even some indigenous animal life are illustrated. There is no globe or other reference to a map of the world to contextualize the Americas, the action here takes place entirely within the New World.



Figure 52. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 1. Salen tres navios de Santiago de Cuba a descubrir

Under the medallion of Velasquez is the town of Santiago de Cuba, as he was the founder of this city as well as Havana and become governor of Cuba. Santiago is depicted as already Christianized, its tall spire capped with a cross, and fortified by a winding stone wall, and the houses are recognizably European. The only allusion to the Indian population is a lone man in a loin cloth standing on the coastline and pointing out towards the sea.



Figure 53. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 2. Basco nuñez toma posesion de la mar del sur

Basco Nuñez “takes possession” of the Pacific Ocean by charging into the sea still wearing his armor and carrying his sword. That he is the leader is indicated by the same feathered helmet as the medallion portrait, a distinction the regular footsoldiers do not share. There are a few Indians who serve as decoration in the image, standing above the group of Spanish soldiers and their dogs, and the usual generic landscape elements of scattered trees and a dwelling. There is a curious figure coming up from behind the soldiers who appears to be wearing Indian clothing and carrying a pack on his back, who could perhaps be their native guide or another decorative figure.



Figure 54. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 55. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANELS 3 and 4

These are the first two panels to disclude any textual reference as they do not appear to be of any particular event, and the first attempt by the artist to include any details about the Indians beyond nudity and arrows. This is probably due to the copying of elements from various codices brought back from the Americas and which would have been at Herrera's disposal as the Cronista Mayor. In Figure 54, there are examples of various weapons, and an animal costume is shown on and off of a human figure. There are some wonderful details of weapons, including a feathered shield and a double pointed arrow, as well as spears and quivers. The landscape is only a plain and horizon line with no other recognizable features. In Figure 55, however, there is a very realistic depiction of a turkey, a stalk of corn and what might be a succulent plant of some sort. This is the first and fairly unfrequent attempt by the artist to describe the natural world of the Americas and must have been based on primary accounts due to the lack of fantasy prevalent throughout the rest of the panels.

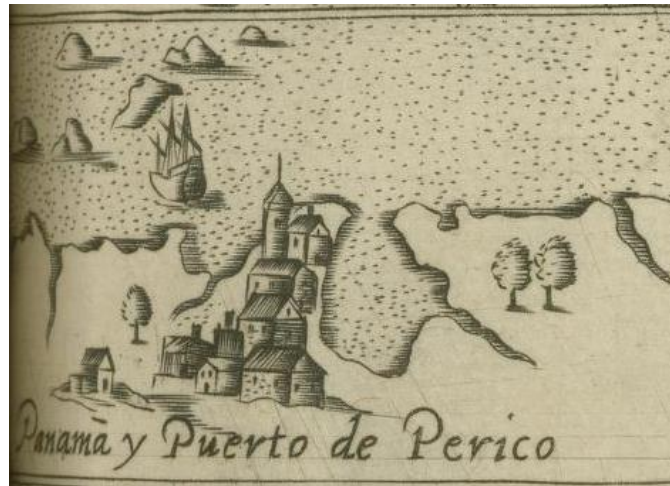


Figure 56 *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 57 *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANELS 4 and 5. Puerto de Perico [Isla Perico] in Panama; Santa Maria de la Antigua del Darien on the Panama coast

These two panels are also a first in the series as they identify specifically two European settlements without the context of a specific event nor indigenous precedent. Each includes a church and steeple, at least one ship as an indication of exploration and trade with the colonies. In Santa Maria, which was founded by Balboa, there are two large caravel type ships in the harbor and two under full sail approaching the colony, as well as several rowing dinghies. Both images depict a complete lack of native presence, which is interesting given that the panels are embedded within a page filled with detailed indigenous references.



Figure 58. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 59. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANELS 7 and 8. ...”de los ydolos de México”; “Montezuma va al templo”

Here we see more of the codex references depicting idolatry of the Aztec people on the left, the strangeness of which would have been recognizable to a European audience. The eagle may be the symbol for Tenochtitlan, which was founded where an eagle landed on a nopal cactus with a snake in its beak. There is a Spanish soldier with a crossbow who confronts the Indian who appears to be walking away from this conflict. On the right, Montezuma is identified as the king riding the litter carried by his men, with drums and horns accompanying the procession to the temple, which is depicted in the panel below.



Figure 60. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 61. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANELS 9 and 10. 9 has no caption, and 10 reads: “van aser [sic] sacrificados”

On the top is a battle scene of perhaps the Flower Wars, which were ritual battles meant to provide fresh victims for sacrifice to ward off a great famine.²³⁹ The panel seems to have been taken from the sixteenth century Codex Magliabechiano, and depicts the Aztec jaguar warrior *tlahuahuanque*.

²³⁹ *The Conquest of North America*. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973), 26–28.



Figure 62. *Codex Magliabechiano*, sixteenth century, folio 30r. National Central Library of Florence

In Panel 10, the results of the Flower Wars, which Montezuma is presumed to attend based on Panel 8, victims are pierced through the stomach and thrown down the stairs of the temple. There were many tales in Europe of the sacrifices of the Aztecs, one chronicler noted there were more than 50,000 in one year, and the Spanish justified the conquest of the Aztecs due to this practice.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Michael Wood, *Conquistadors* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2000), 42.

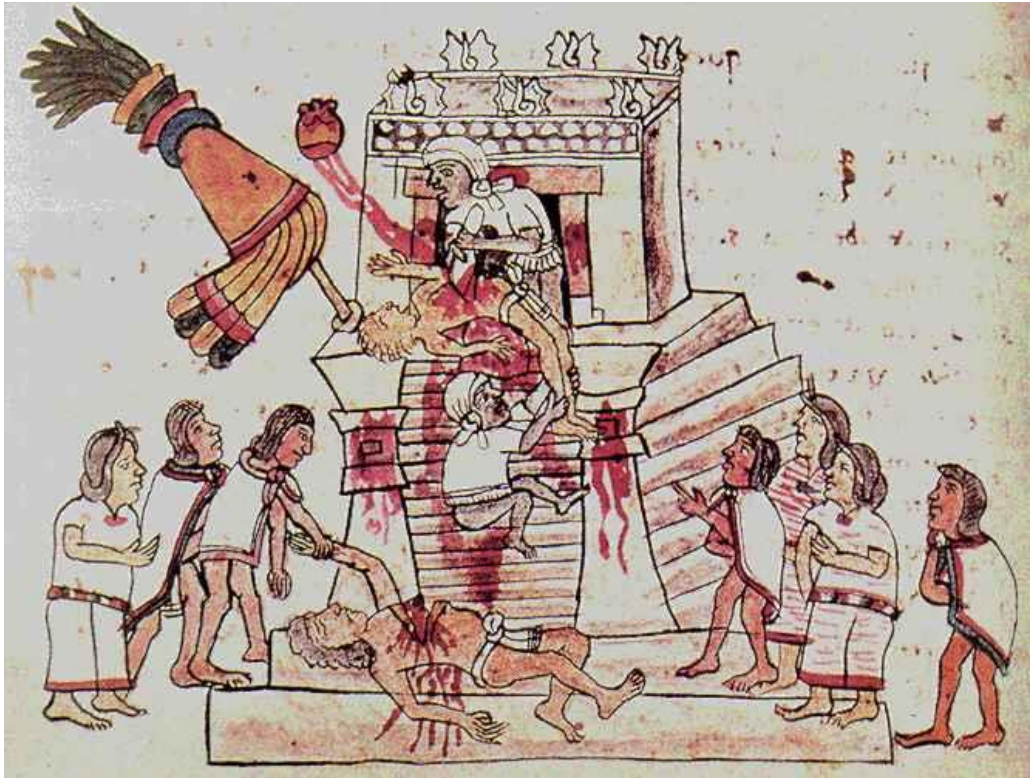


Figure 63. Aztec ritual human sacrifice portrayed in the page 141 (folio 70r), Codex Magliabechiano (cf. FAMSI (Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc.)

These alcove panels, as this author terms them as they are sidebars over larger images, are extremely interesting in the context of their locations as overlays on battle scenes. The Flower War and the sacrificial barbarity justify not only the settlements in the Europeanized, and therefore “civilized” order one finds above, but warrants the battles with the indigenous peoples below as valid and necessary under the orders of God via the Pope under the Treaty of Tordesillas.



Figure 64. *Década Segunda*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANELS 11 and 12. “Grijalva pelea con los yndios;” “Juan ponce pelea con los de la florida”

What is very interesting here is that again the conquerors’ medallion portraits are applied over the panels most associated with their actions, but that these actions are justified by the actions of the Aztecs. Grijalva, who was the first to hear of the great city of Mexico, and whose expeditions would inspire Cortés,²⁴¹ is depicted as fighting Indians now more sophisticatedly dressed and with feathered shields and headdresses, with crossbows, swords, and guns. Ponce de León’s battle with the Florida Indians appears under his medallion on the right in a similar scene, but here the less civilized natives appear undressed as in *Década Primera*.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 24.

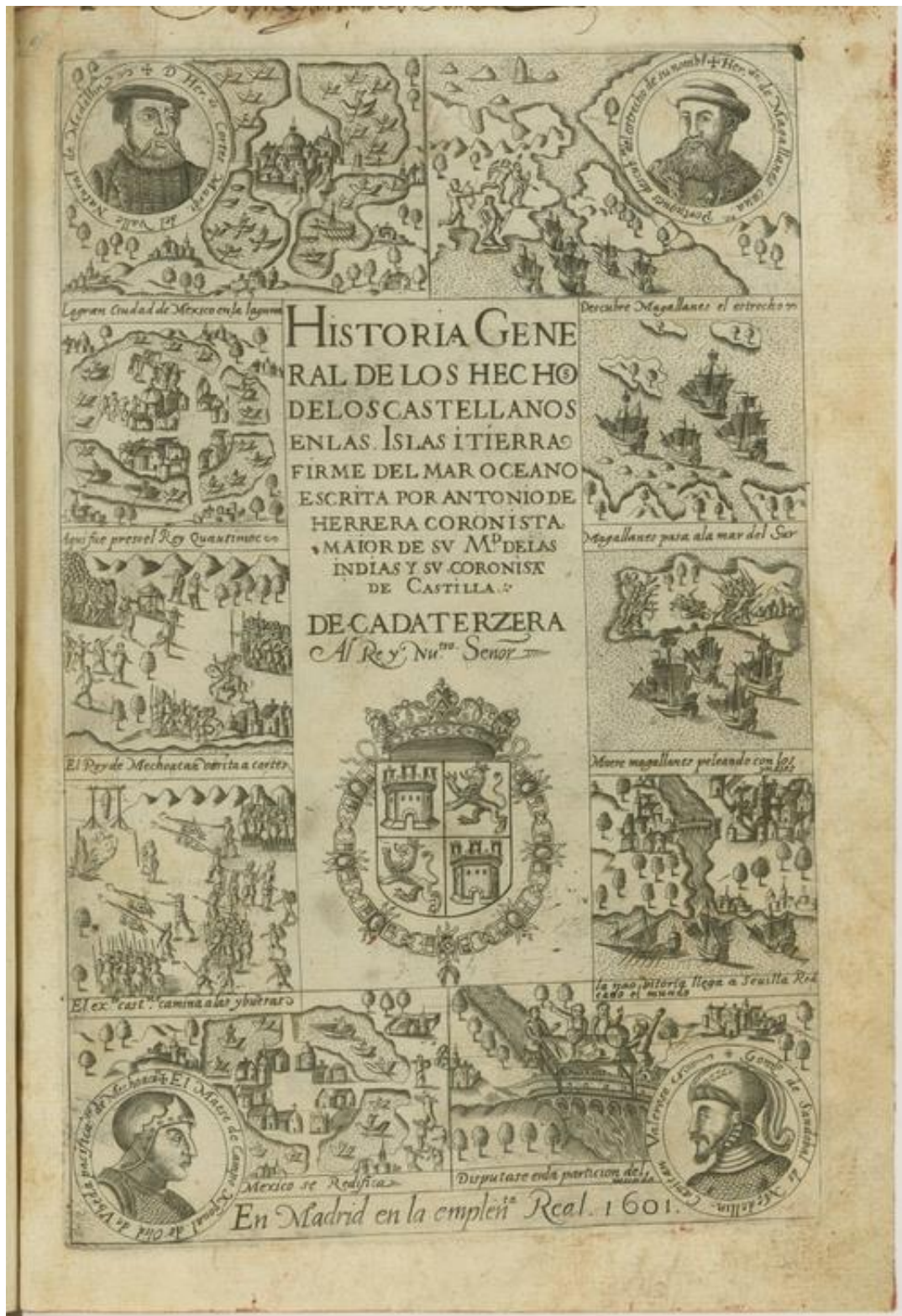


Figure 65. Década Terzera, Title Page, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA TERZERA

In the third decade title page, here are medallions of Hernán Cortés, Ferdinand Magellan, Christoval Olid, and Gonzalo Sandoval connected by ten vignettes, with the title cartouche in the center of the page as described above in the second década, although here with the addition of “Al Rey Nuestro Señor” under the title. This page focuses on the conquest of Mexico, and the conquest and rebuilding of Tenochtitlan and the discovery of the Magellan Strait, the death of Magellan and the return of his mutinous fleet to Spain.



Figure 67. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 66. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

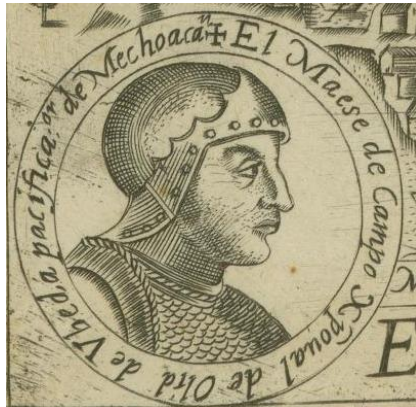


Figure 68. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 69. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

The medallions are described as “Don Hernando Cortés Marqués del Valle Natural de Medellín”; “Hernando de Magallanes cau..ro Portugues descubridor del estrecho de su nombre.”; “El Maese de Campo Xpoual de Olid de Vbeda pacificador de Mechoaca.” Cortés is of course best known as the conquerer of the

great Montezuma and of Tenochtitlán, Magellan for his discovery of the Strait of Magellan and his expedition's circumnavigation of the world.

While Cortés was known as a great conquerer, he is here shown as an older man in a gentleman's fashion, not as a soldier as are the two figures on the bottom. He reflects instead a nobleman's demeanor as does Magellan who faces him. Cortés wears a short round hat, is bearded and obviously of some advanced age, with a small ruffled collar of the court. There is a portrait that is quite similar in Madrid, ca. 16th century, but it is unclear if it actually predates the Herrera.



Figure 70. Spanish School, *Hernan Cortés*, ca. 16th century.
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

Magellan is depicted in a similar fashion, as a gentleman of the court with fur collar and hat, but here as well marked with the cross of the Order of Santiago on his chest. He had been awarded this honor by Charles V in 1518 “as a mark of favor to the expedition.”²⁴²

²⁴² Antonio Pigafetta, *Magellan's Voyage: A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation* (Courier Dover Publications, 2012), 149.



Left: Figure 72. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Center: Figure 71. Symbol of the Order of Santiago

Right: Figure 73. Anonymous, *Ferdinand Magellan*, copy from a sixteenth century painting, Museo Naval, Madrid

Olid and Sandoval are interesting characters, as they were both involved in the conquering of México, although Olid fell from grace by rebelling against Cortés after some accomplishments. Sandoval, on the other hand, was a close associate of Cortés, being from the same town and supposedly of exceedingly good character: “Cortés spoke of him after his death with the deepest regret, and represented him to the emperor as one of the finest soldiers in the world.”²⁴³ Each is represented here as a soldier in full armour. It is interesting to note that according to Bancroft, who seems to have gotten the description from Bernal Díaz regarding Olid’s appearance, that “Despite the peculiarity of a groove in the lower lip, which gave it the appearance of being split, the face was most attractive.”²⁴⁴ That he is shown in profile here, the first of the characters to be represented as such, may show some knowledge of this defect and Sandoval could have been oriented to match him.

²⁴³ Hubert Howe Bancroft et al., *History of Mexico* (A.L. Bancroft, 1888), 76.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*



Figure 74. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 1. Lagran Ciudad de México en la laguna.

While the lagoon, or Lake Texcoco, is filled with native ships with their raised prows, Tenochtitlan, or “México” is represented as a purely European city, surrounded by smaller hamlets also recognizable as Old World settlements with church spires and European architecture. This surely is a depiction of the city after it had been destroyed then rebuilt by the Europeans in 1521, as it shows few similarities to the first known map of Tenochtitlán which was probably included in a letter from Cortés to Charles V in 1520²⁴⁵ and to which Herrera would have had access. Not only is the city shown as fortified and secure with great walls and towers, but the countryside appears tamed and under control: “Cities were regarded as one of the hallmarks of civilization by sixteenth century Europeans.”²⁴⁶ The ships and skiffs in the lagoon visually aid the viewer in understanding the four sections as water and also the security of an island city. That the city has been Christianized is apparent with the cathedral dome that overwhelms the other architecture as well as by the cross planted on the right

²⁴⁵ This comparison is developed further below.

²⁴⁶ J. B. Harley, *Maps and the Columbian Encounter: An Interpretive Guide* (Milwaukee: Univ of Wisconsin Milwaukee, 1990), 81.

causeway connecting the island to the mainland and a guard tower beside it. This implies that the residents here are Christians, only Christians, and are protected by God.

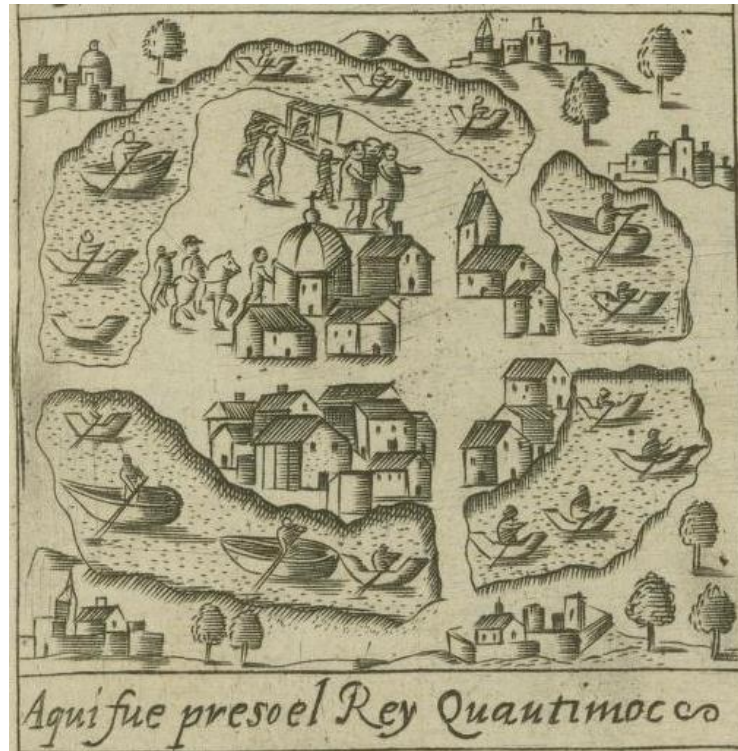


Figure 75. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 2. *Aqui fue preso el Rey Guatimoc*

Continuing vertically down, the second panel is again of Mexico City at the moment when king Cuauhtemoc is about to meet Cortés, who is presumably the figure on the horse and be taken prisoner. This would be the surrender of the Aztec king to the Spaniard, who supposedly patted him on the head whereupon Cuauhtemoc asked to be killed. Cortés kept him alive but allegedly tortured the fallen king to determine the location of gold treasure of which there was disappointingly little.²⁴⁷ The city already has a cathedral with dome and cross in this image, as as in the panel above, there are numerous European settlements shown all around the island.

²⁴⁷ Wood, *Conquistadors*, 96–97.

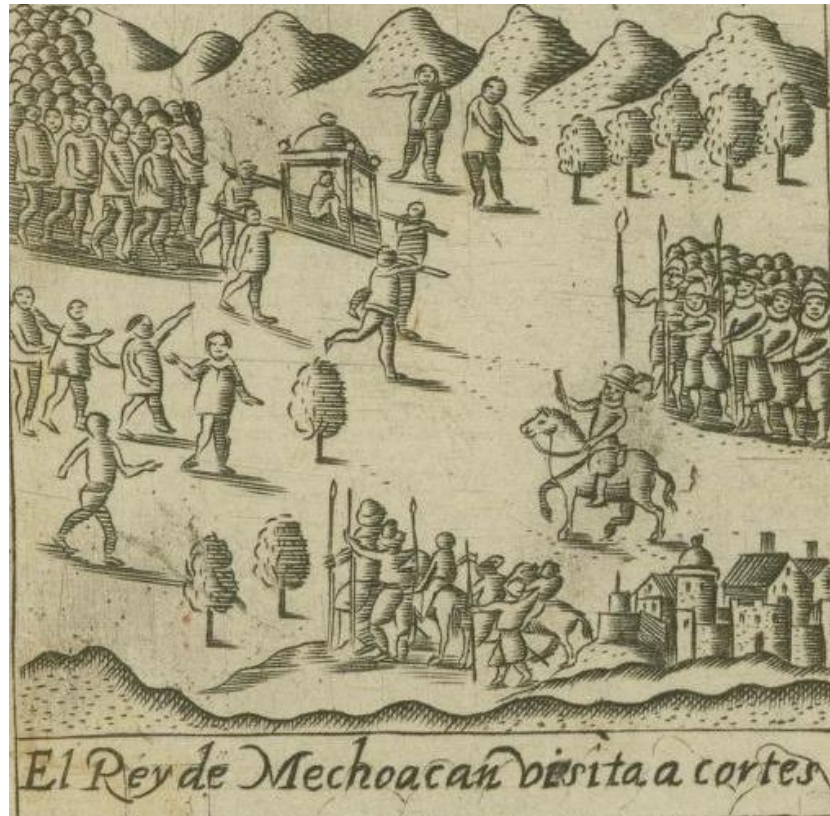


Figure 76. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 3. *El Rey de Mechoacán visita a cortés*

Cacique Tangoxoán of Michoacán visited Cortés and submitted to him after the conquest of Tenochtitlán, and soon thereafter Olid was sent to found a colony at Patzcuaro.²⁴⁸ In this image, the king is carried on a litter by his men, and Cortés approaches on horseback, the respective symbolic attributes of commanders on each side. While each leader is accompanied by an armed company, no weapons are drawn as this was a peaceful negotiation.

²⁴⁸ Herbert Eugene Bolton and Thomas Maitland Marshall, *The Colonization of North America, 1492-1783* (The Macmillan company, 1920), 36.



Figure 77. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 4. *El ex.to castellano camina a las ybuèras*

Cortés's famous journey to Honduras to investigate the rebellion of Olid was of great consequence to his men and to his hold on México-Tenochtitlan. Olid had been sent to find a strait between the Caribbean sea and the Pacific and conquer Honduras, but he decided to go rogue and take the region for himself. Cortés made the last king of Mexica, Cuauhtemoc, and other deposed indigenous rulers as well as a procession of “pages, musicians, jugglers, falconers, and cooks” accompany him on a journey that was not only to bring justice to Olid but a voyage “designed to exalt the magnificence of Cortés’s power.”²⁴⁹ This particular scene does not allude to the numerous hardships his men had to face on this long journey where many of the Spanish soldiers and their horses died. Instead, here is depicted a scene of the execution of Cuauhtemoc and other alleged co-conspirators by hanging, burning and cannon fire, whom Cortés suspected of plotting to take back the city of Tenochtitlan. The only other Indians shown appear to be porters with large packs on their backs. There are a large number of Spaniards on horseback, and many on foot as well. When Cortés reached the

²⁴⁹ *A History of Latin America to 1825* (John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 147.

colony in Honduras, Olid had already been murdered and there was no passage to be found to the Pacific.²⁵⁰



Figure 78. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 5. México se Redifica [reedificar]

After Tenochtitlán was reduced to ruins during the conquest, the Spaniards rebuilt the city according to European conventions, including churches signified by a cross. Numerous figures are shown carrying lumber and the city is much emptier than in PANEL 1, implying time on the left side of the title page is indeed moving upwards from the earliest to the latest event.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 147.



Figure 79. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 6. *Descubre Magallanes el estrecho*

Here we see the monumental and highly symbolic passage of Magellan's five ships through what would thereafter be called the Straits of Magellan, the passage to the Pacific around South America. However, while five ships left Spain under Magellan, only three passed through the strait. The SANTIAGO wrecked off Patagonia before they could make it to the passage, and the SAN ANTONIO deserted soon after entering the canal. Only eight days after the desertion, the remaining three ships, the CONCEPCION, VICTORIA, and TRINIDAD, the latter commanded by Magellan, would enter the Pacific Ocean.

In an effort to reach the Spice Islands without passage through Portuguese trade routes around Africa, this journey marked a major turning point in sea domination for the Spanish. There is some drama in the image as a small group of Indians, here nude and uncivilized again as on the first decade, confront the European crew with bows and arrows. Magellan's journeys were legendary in Europe in the sixteenth century, as in the detail below from an Ortelius map. An angel guides

the ship across the Pacific, perhaps the Divine intervention for the figure in the stern, presumably Magellan, who guides the ship with a navigational instrument across the seas.



Figure 80. Detail from Abraham Ortelius, “Maris Pacifici quod vulgo Mar del Zud,” published in *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Antwerp, 1609. Originally published in 1589



Figure 81. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 7. *Magallanes pasa a la mar del Sur*

After the ship SANTIAGO had been wrecked at sea, Herrera shows the remaining four ships, the TRINIDAD (flagship), VICTORIA, SAN ANTONIO, and CONCEPCIÓN heading into the Pacific in November, 1520. However, the SAN ANTONIO deserted shortly after entering the strait, and only three ships entered the Pacific under Magellan's command. It is interesting there is no visual reference to the attempted mutiny already having taken place earlier in Port St. Julian on Easter Day, 1520. Also, the name "mar del Sur" is used here, the name given by Balboa, and not the name "Pacific" as given by Magellan himself and the name which would eventually stick.



Figure 82. *Década Tercera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 8. Muere [muerte] magallanes peleando con los yndios [sic]

Although there are four ships in the illustration, only three in fact remained at this time in Magellan's fleet. Regardless, they are depicted arriving under full sail at Mactan Island in the Philippines. In the center of the image is shown the death of Magellan at the Battle of Mactan on April 27, 1521, again showing several points in time in a single image. Indians advance with bows drawn towards the Castellanos have turned their backs on their aggressors and are retreating towards the coast. Magellan's body was never recovered, as is evidenced here as his men fall back without him. Again, there is some artistic license in that the Battle of Mactan occurred on the beach and not inland as implied here.

The visual kinetic dynamism in this little scene is driven by the forward leanings of each group, suggesting strong momentum. As is typical of all of these panels, but perhaps more so here, the men are all enormous in comparison to the landscape, which is shown as a generic little island with a few trees and a town.

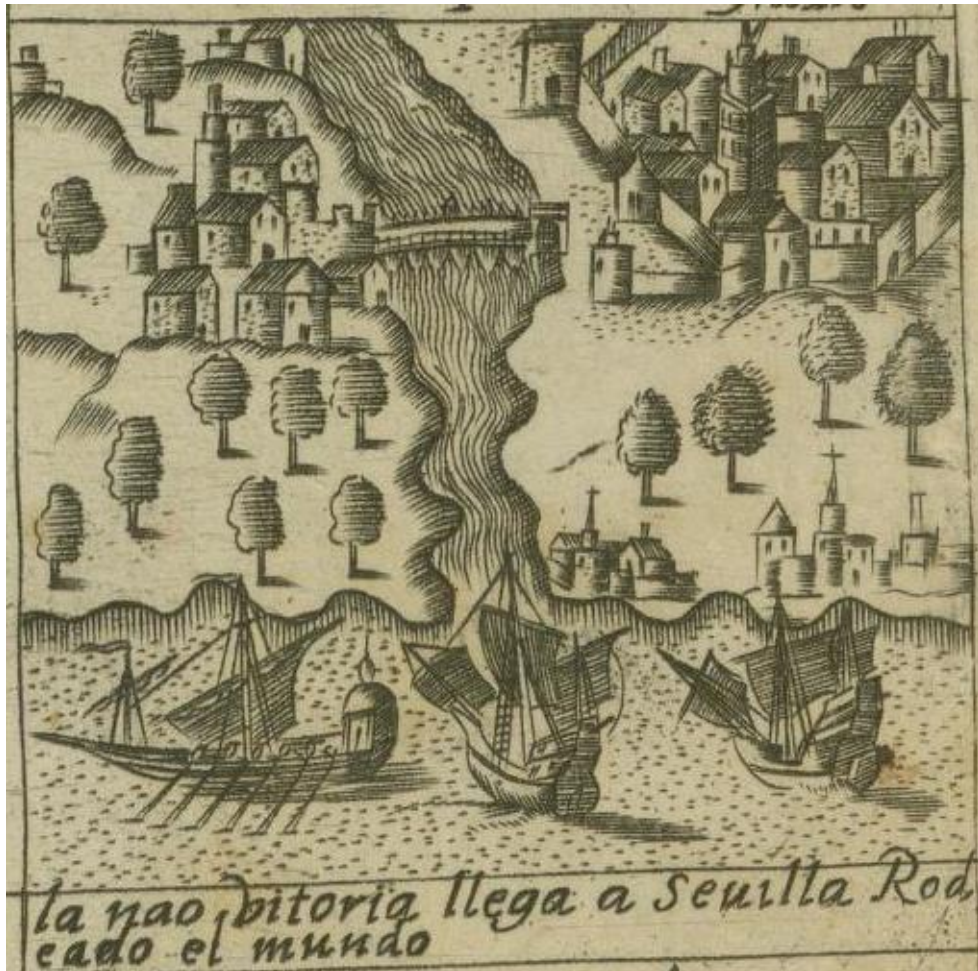


Figure 83. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 9. *La nao Vitoria llega a Sevilla Rodeado el mundo*

The only ship of Magellan's to make it around the world successfully was the NAO VICTORIA, also known as simply VICTORIA and VITTORIA, ("nao" refers to a carrack type ship in Spanish) which was captained by Juan Sebastián Elcano. It arrived back in Sevilla with only 18 of the original 270 crewmembers three years after they left, one of the most symbolic voyages of global discovery and travel, and also one with great cost. The entrance into the River Guadalquivir runs almost vertically up the panel towards Sevilla. The long river journey up to the city has been greatly shortened for visual effect.



Figure 84. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 10. *Disputanse en la partición del mundo*

In this wonderful little panel, the theme is a rather animated discussion on the dispute of the Moluccas between Spain and Portugal in 1524 on the bridge over the Caya River, a tributary of the Guadiana River between the towns of Badajoz and Yelves (see *Década Terzera*, Libro IV, Cap. VII). When Magellan's 18 surviving sailors returned to Spain on the *Victoria* in 1522, the captain Del Cano described the vast spice wealth on the islands of the Moluccas. The Portuguese, who believed this area was in their domain, protested to Charles V who believed the Castilians possessed the Moluccas under the Treaty of Tordesillas.²⁵¹ They agreed to decide the issue by arbitration, and a junta was organized to “attempt to split the known world in half.”²⁵² The junta was riddled with stalemates, and a solution was not finalized until the Treaty of Saragossa in 1529, in which the Castilians gave up their claims on the Moluccas in return for 350,000 ducats. However, Charles reserved the right to buy back his claim to renegotiate the Moluccas if the amount was paid back in full.²⁵³

²⁵¹ Jerry Brotton, *A History of the World in Twelve Maps* (London: Allen Lane, 2012).

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 211.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

Again in greatly exaggerated size to the landscape and the bridge upon which they sit, men surround a table covered with navigational tools and two globes, which could be terrestrial and celestial globes or a terrestrial and armillary sphere. The men's arms are raised in a heated debate, pointing in different directions to argue their point.



Figure 85. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA QUARTA



Figure 87. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 86. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 89. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 88. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

This, the last decade in this format of the 1601 edition, includes ten panels and four portraits and all follow the theme of the conquest of the Incas. The title panel only includes the title, royal seal, and the designation “*Década quarta*.” The corner medallions include “El Adelantado Don Diego de Almagro Capitan Liberalismo,” who participated in the conquest of Peru and discovered Chile; “El Marquis Don Francisco Pizarro de Truxillo,” conqueror of the Inca empire; “El Adelantado Don Pedro de Alvarado de Badajoz,” the conquistador of most of

Central America; and “El Capitan Diego de Ordás del Reyno de Leon,” early explorer of Panama and Colombia. Almagro is depicted as an armoured soldier, Pizarro as a marquis in fashionable dress, and Alvarado and Ordás each wear the same Order of Santiago, the former as a medallion around his neck and the latter as an emblem on his shirt like Magellan.



Figure 90. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 1. Francisco Pizarro y sus companeros estan en la ysla Gorgona

Pizarro and his “glorious thirteen,” who had agreed to accompany him to Peru, were “effectively abandoned” on the Island of Gorgon along with several Indian interpreters by his defectors for seven months until they were rescued by Almagro who sent a ship from Panama.²⁵⁴ The island was named for the many venomous snakes that lived on the island and is off the coast of what is now Columbia. There are only a few figures on the island in this panel and two ships

Jerry Brotton, *A History of the World in Twelve Maps* (London: Allen Lane, 2012), 198–199.

²⁵⁴ Wood, *Conquistadors*, 112–113.

appear off of the coast, so it is unclear if this is depicting the point of abandonment or rescue. One figure lies on the ground perhaps referring to a snake bite. On a neighboring island, there are some interesting native huts.

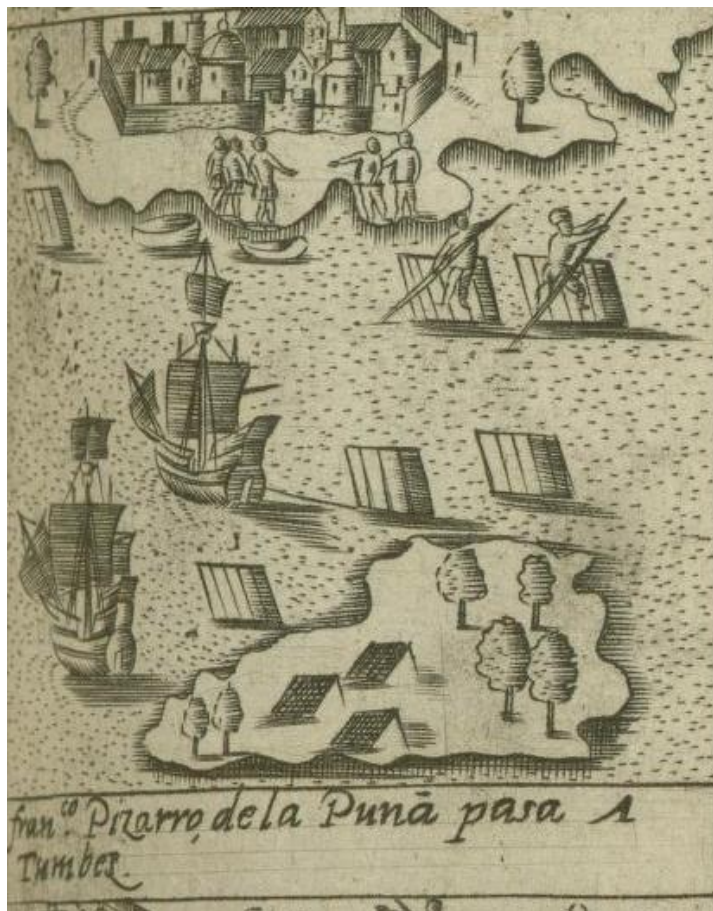


Figure 91. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 2. *Francisco Pizarro de la Puna pasa a Tumbes*

Here Herrera has chose to depict the point of first contact between the Europeans and the Incan people. The indigenous people went out on barges made of balsa wood to greet the strangers and welcomed them into their village, where the Spaniards saw a civilized and well-ordered society.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 119–121.

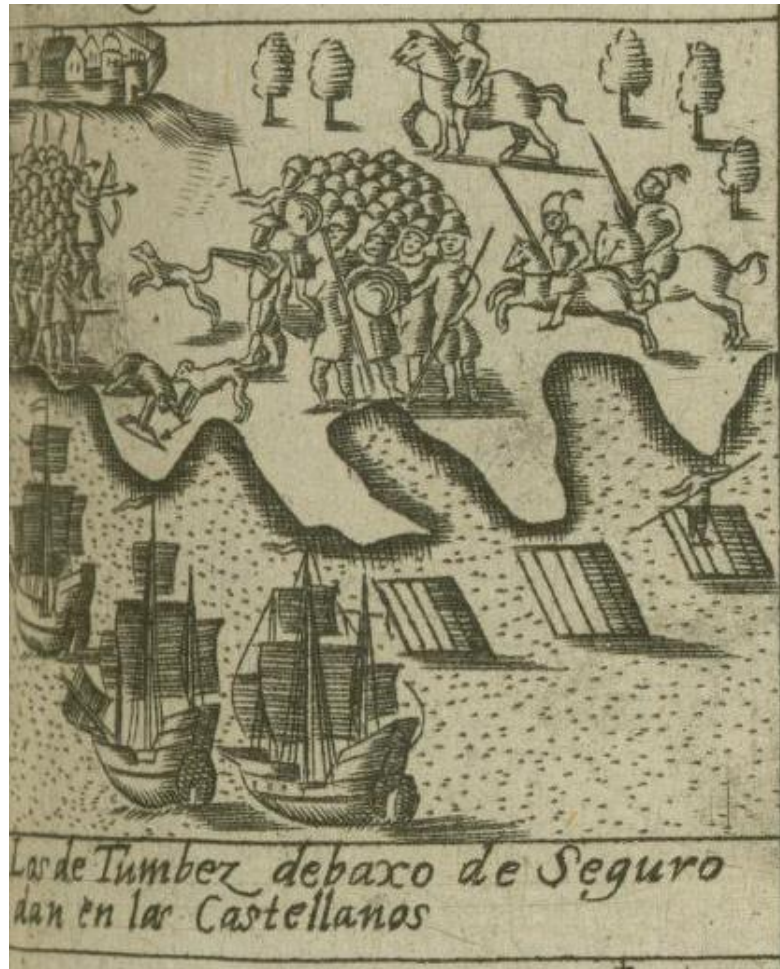


Figure 92. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 3. *Los de Tumbes debaxo de Seguro dan en las Castellanos*

Again we see the balsa wood rafts referred to in Panel 2, but here having read the “Seguro” of submission, the Spaniards are asserting their dominion over the Incan people. The two groups face one another, and the Spaniards have unleashed the dogs upon the Indians. Three ships are in the harbor, as usual under full sail and again perhaps alluding to another point in time of their arrival before the battle scene above. There are several Spaniards on horseback leading a charge, and a village in the upper left corner.



Figure 93. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 4. *Edificase el primer templo en San Miguel de piura y Hernando de Soto pelea con los yndios [sic]*

Near the Tangarara Valley, Hernando de Soto fights the Indians outside of the first Spanish settlement in Peru, San Miguel de Piura. Herrera notes the first church in Peru which dominates the upper right corner. Three ships and rafts are depicted off of the coast, and on the left a battle scene between the Incan people and the Spaniards, again with bows and arrows against armour and steel, and three dogs charge the Indians.



Figure 94. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 5. Francisco Pizarro sale de Panamá a descubrir

It is unclear which of Pizarro's expeditions this panel depicts, it is most likely the second as this was more successful than the first. Three ships leave the settlement of Panama under Pizarro to discover the Incan world. On the shore there are European soldiers marching in small groups with rifles over their shoulders, declaring a well fortified town under colonial control.



Figure 95. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 6. Los Castellanos pasan a la ysla [sic] Puná

Here we see three ships of Pizarro rafting from Tumbez to Isla Puna in the Gulf of Guayaquil in present-day Ecuador. There is one island in the scene with two Indians and dwellings, with generic vegetation.



Figure 96. *Década Quarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 7. *Los Castellanos pelea con los yndios [sic] en la puná*

Here another battle scene of what appears to be equal numbers, but the balance is thrown by the advancing dogs, cavalry, and ships on the Spanish side. Again, the Europeans wield armor, swords, and shields against the bows, arrows, and spears of the indigenous island population.



Figure 97. *Década Cuarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 9. La batalla de Utlatlangz dio don Pedro de Alvarado a los yndios [sic]

Cannons are added to the Spanish forces in this panel, and leashed dogs and cavalry again support the Spanish troops.



Figure 98. *Década Cuarta*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 10. Diego Ordás Reconoce el bolcan de Tlascala

Diego de Ordás was fascinated with the volcano Popocatepetl at Tlascala, and during an eruption in 1519, he climbed to the top with two companions to look inside the crater as well as to see the view of Mexico City and its environs. This deed of daring impressed the Indians from Tlaxcala and Huerxotzingo, as they

would not make the climb with him.²⁵⁶ While there were three men who made the climb, there are depicted here either two views of the same group, one on each side of the mountain, or this is another example of artistic license. Observers to the climb surround the volcano pointing up at the top which is spewing flames and lava is a rather spectacular display of swirling marks. There is a city off to the top right which may be Mexico City, which Ordás claimed to have seen from the summit, although the volcano is over fifty miles away, or Tlascala itself.

²⁵⁶ Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Discovery and Conquest of Mexico 1517-1521* (Taylor & Francis, 2004), 159.

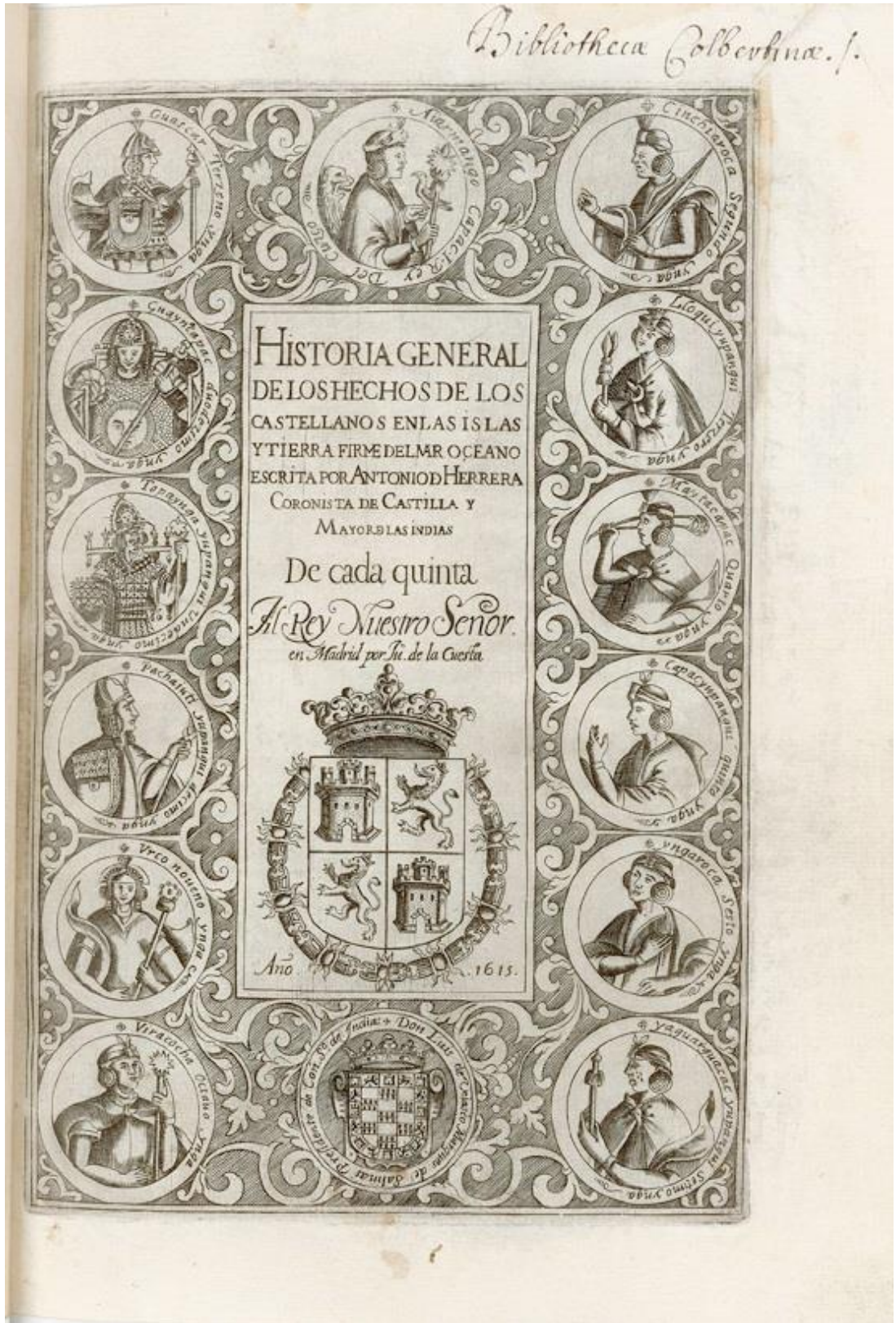


Figure 99. Década Quinta, Title Page, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA QUINTA

This first década of the 1615 edition is very interesting for completely breaking the mold of the Biblical template which will be discussed in Chapter 4, although the style of execution of this page seems to be the hand of the previous engraver rather than the engraver of decades six through eight. The page retains the central plate of the title, author, publishing information, the coat of arms of Castile and León, but there rather than narrative panels there are instead 13 portrait medallions of Incan leaders dressed in full regalia, headdresses, and with some cultural artifacts. The background, rather than showing any geographical information at all, is decorated in vegetal filigree. In the center of the medallions in the lower two corners is the coat of arms of the president of the Council of the Indies and Viceroy of New Spain and Peru, the Marqués of Salinas Luis de Velasco. Velasco was raised in Mexico City and was Viceroy of New Spain from 1590-1595 and 1607-1611 and of Peru from 1596-1604. He was instrumental in Peru in defending against the Dutch “pirata” Oliverio van Noorte, and was granted a royal charter (*cedula real*) from the Monarchy in 1601 for his accomplishments in the Americas.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ Raquel Chang-Rodríguez, *La palabra y la pluma en “Primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno”* (Lima: Pontificia universidad católica del Perú, 2005), 156.

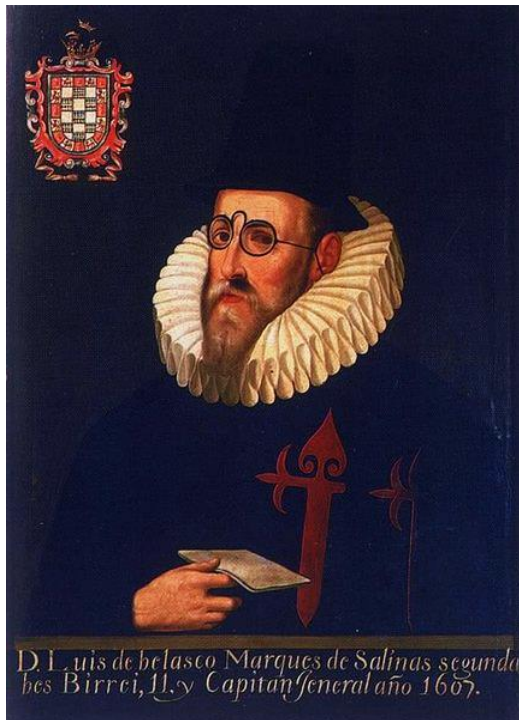


Figure 100. Luis de Velasco II, Marqués de Salinas, Viceroy of New Spain and of Peru, 17th century



Figure 101. Guaman Poma, *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 1615

The Incan medallions are labeled as follows: Aiarmango Capac I Rey del Cuzco, Cincharoca segundo Ynga, Lloquiyupangui terzero Ynga, Maytacapac quarto Ynga, Capacyupangui quinto Ynga, Yngaroca sexto Ynga, Yaguarguacac yupangui setimo Ynga, Viracocha octavo Ynga, Vrco noveno Ynga, Pachaiuti yupangui decimo Ynga, Topaynga yupangui undecimo Ynga, Guaynacapac duodezimo Ynga, Guascar terzeno Ynga.

The page does not illustrate Atahualpa, the last king of the Incas, who died in 1533. Atahualpa had taken over the Incas from his brother Huascar (Guascar in Herrera's title page) and was later captured by Pizarro and used as a puppet to control the Incan people. *Década Quinta* as well includes no mention of this incident, pictorially Atahualpa, the last of the Incan kings was omitted from historical record.

The source for these portraits has not been determined by this author, but they themselves have become the source for many subsequent portraits of these

characters, like medallions of other characters on other title pages. There has been some discussion by Mendizábal Losack that this Herrera title page, portraits in Guamán Poma's work and the chronicle by Fray Martín Morúa were all based on indigenous portraits "que Garcilaso remitió a Alfonso de Mesa y a Melchor Carlos Inca en España," but López-Baralt argues convincingly that there are too many assumptions in this argument.²⁵⁸ Cuesta Domingo also suggests via Juan Carlos Estensoro that the portraits may have come from a silk cloth that accompanied a petition from Melchor Carlos Inca.²⁵⁹ Cummins suggests they may have been based on portraits painted by indigenous artists in a European manner for the "descendants of Inca kings, who intended to have the painting entered into court as evidence to establish their hereditary rights as recognized by Spanish law," portraits which are now lost.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ López-Baralt, *Icono y conquista*, 103–105.

²⁵⁹ Cuesta Domingo, "Herrera Y Tordesillas, Antonio de (1549-1625)," 293.

²⁶⁰ Cummins, "Representations in the Sixteenth Century and the Colonial Image of the Inca," 191.

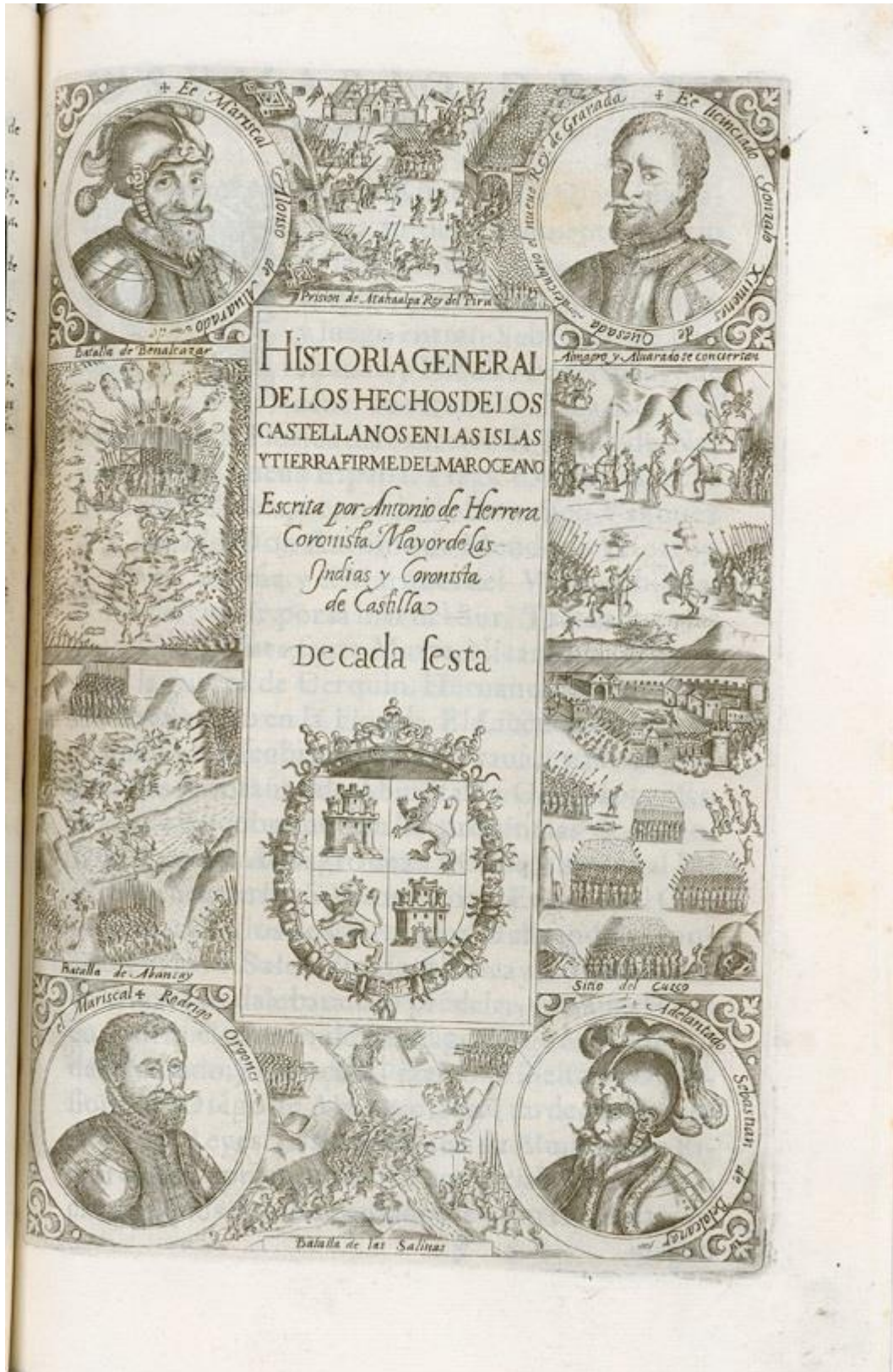


Figure 102. *Década Quinta*, Title Page, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA SESTA



Figure 103. *Década Quinta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 104. *Década Quinta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 105. *Década Quinta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 106. *Década Quinta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

Década Sesta marks the shift in the biblical template design in the 1615 Juan de la Cuesta published edition, and the images and text focus on the conquest of Peru. The medallions are much larger than the 1601 titlepages, and geographically the panels have less detail and are at a larger scale as well. The panels include very few captions, and every single scene from now on through each *Década* is dominated by battle scenes. The action is placed on generic landscapes with no borders on the sea. While there is some topographical information and the vantage point still remains omnisciently high, there is no longer a clear sense of a

geographical location. Gone is the medallion with the coat of arms of the President of the Council of the Indies. Also, the labels for some of the panels have moved to the top rather than the bottom, and there is a strip of hashmarks horizontally across the two vertical panel strips in their place. Rather than floating the medallion portraits over an entire scene, as in the portrait of Cortés where there are even trees on the outside edge of the page, here there is a stylistic continuity of the filigree decoration of *Década Quinta* in the outside corners of the page framing the portraits on one side.



Figure 107. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

The medallions include the conquistadors of Peru: “El Mariscal Alonso de Alvarado;” “El Licenciado Gonzalo Jimenez de Quesada descubrio el nuevo Reyno de Granada;” “El Mariscal Rodrigo Orgones;” and “Adelantado Sebastian de Belalcazar.” Here the conquerers are depicted as soldiers, not as men of the court like Cortés. Each wears armor that is much more detailed in its rendering than that of the previous decades. All are bearded with fashionable moustaches of the time, and Alonso de Alvarado and Sebastián de Belalcazar wear fantastic feathered helmets while Jimenez and Orgones have ruffled collars that one might see in imperial portraiture as will be discussed below.

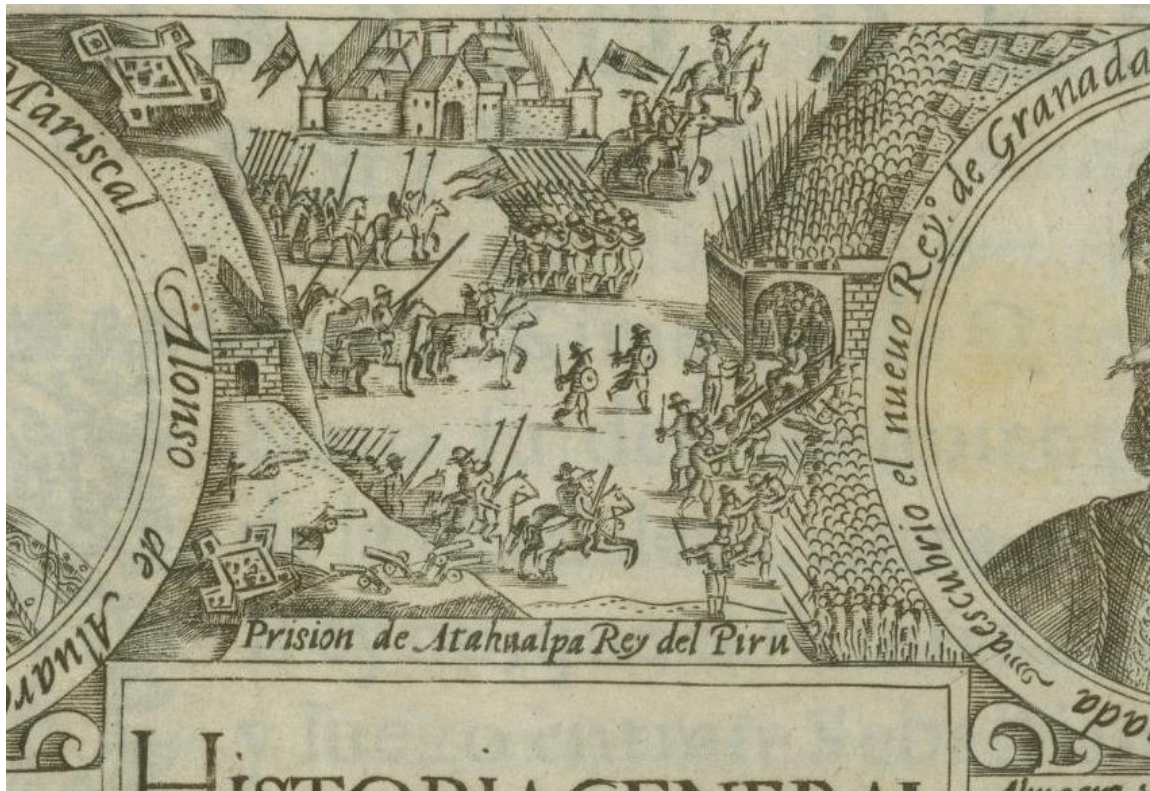


Figure 108. *Década Quinta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 1. Prision de Atahualpa Rey del Piru

Atahualpa is shown here on the right side after his capture by Pizarro. The scene illustrates the complete military dominance of the Spaniards as there are no other Indians present, and Atahualpa is completely surrounded by Spanish soldiers armed with spears, swords and cannons. There are forts shown in bird's eye view on the left side, banners and flags are posted throughout the scene, and the fortified walls on the right are stuffed with armed soldiers. Atahualpa is depicted with a crown and sitting on his palanquin, as he is in other renditions of the same scene, such as de Bry (Figure 109), so this is the moment before he was brought down and put in prison, preceding Pizarro's betrayal of their ransom agreement and the Incan leader's subsequent execution. There is no question in this image that the Spaniards are in control of the empire, and that they are well equipped to manage the Incans.



Figure 109. Johann Feyerabend, for Dieterich de Bry, *Der König Atabaliba kompt mit grossem Pracht zu Caxamalca an, America*. Pt. 6, Frankfurt, 1597

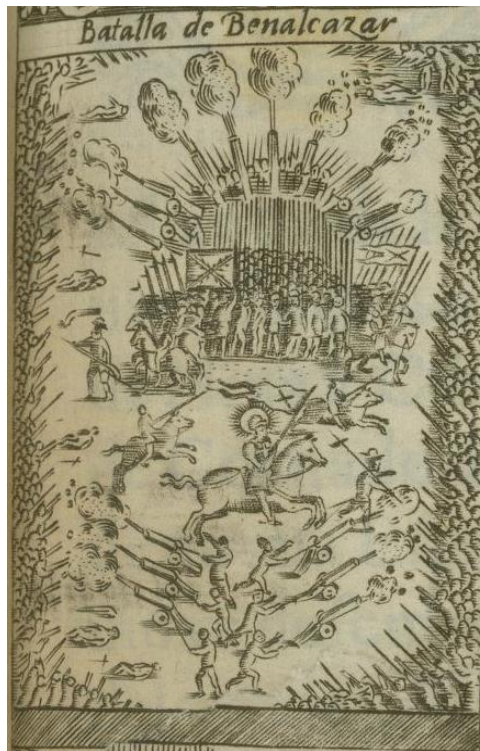


Figure 110. *Década Sesta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 2. *Batalla de Benalcázar*

This tight battle scene shows a mass of Spaniards in the center shooting at their adversaries who surround them with cannons. Cavalry with spears and men on the ground are led by a soldier on horseback, Benalcázar, in his battle against Rumiñavi, the general for Atahualpa. Benalcázar is portrayed as an iconic Christian knight with a halo of holy light emanating from his head and waving a banner with cross.



Figure 111. *Década Sesta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 3. *Batalla de Abancay*

Along the banks of the Río Abancay, rough with rapids, there was a battle between Spanish rivals, Almagro's army led by Rodrigo Orgóñez and Alonso de Alvarado. The battle was fought with little bloodshed and Alvarado was pushed back. The scene has small packed groups of square troops, some cavalry and some footsoldiers, and Indian allies in the lower two corners. Several horses and their riders cross the river and a battle wages on the other side.



Figure 112. *Década Sesta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 4. *Almagro y Alvarado se concertan*

Here the treaty between these two rival Spanish camps, Almagro and Alvarado is depicted as the two leaders stand to face each other, having descended from their horses, their soldiers on opposite sides of the image but with their weapons unthreatening.

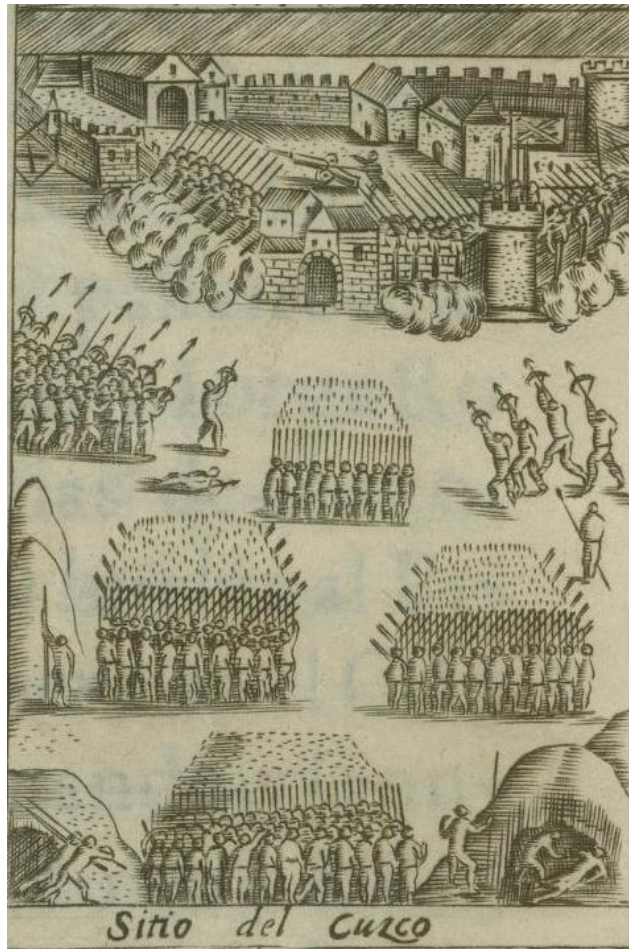


Figure 113. *Década Sesta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 6. *Sitio del Cuzco*

This panel shows a battle scene at Cuzco, with Incans and Spaniards standing outside the fortified walls, the Indians firing arrows at the city, which sends a barrage of cannonfire at their besiegers. In the right foreground there is a figure who appears injured in a cave being tended to by another.



Figure 114. *Década Sesta*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 6. *Batalla de las Salinas*

This wonderful little panel demonstrates a dynamism that is unusual for the rest of the page, where horses stream in a blur to charge across the river during The Battle of Salinas where Benalcazar and Alvarado fought against Diego de Almagro near Cuzco. The hills in the background are used for the first time in this imagery as an integral object in the scene, as some soldiers hide behind it.

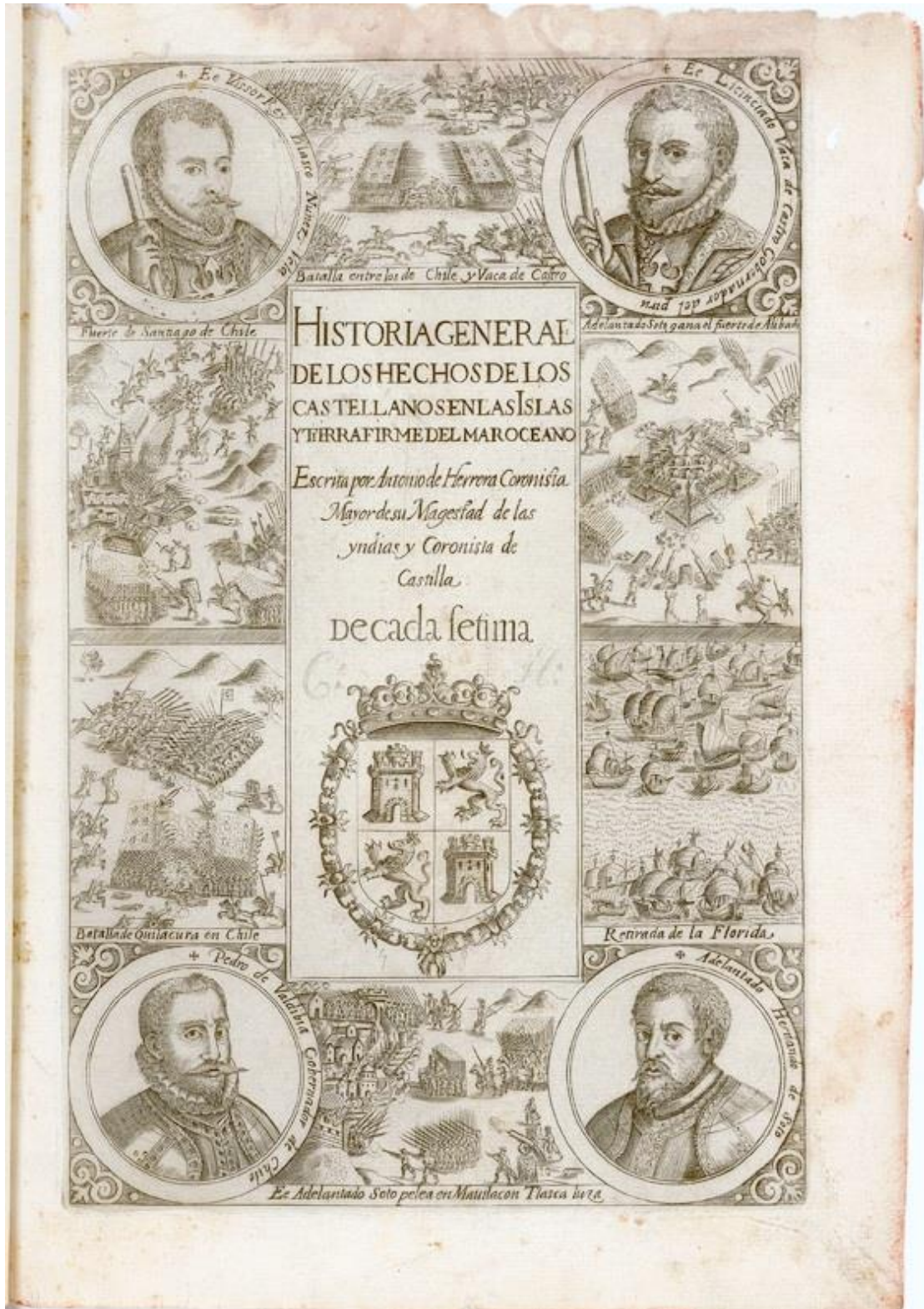


Figure 115. *Década Setima*, Title Page, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA SETIMA



Figure 117. *Década Setima* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 116. *Década Setima* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 118. *Década Setima* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 119. *Década Setima* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library

Década Setima includes medallions of “El Vissor Rey Blasco Nuñez Vela;” “El Licenciado [Cristóbal] Vaca de Castro Gobernador del piru [sic];” “Pedro de Valdivia Gobernador de Chile;” “Adelantado Hernando de Soto.” All men wear a goatee and mustache and Blasco Nuñez Vela and Vaca de Castro also hold batons and wear the cross of the Order of Santiago. Again, three men are clearly equipped with armour and three with ruffled collars of the court. Also included is the Spanish royal coat of arms in the center; and six vignettes of battles in Chile and

the Gulf of Mexico, the fort and major Spanish city on the Gulf (present-day Mobile), and De Soto's retreat to Florida.

Six vignettes show the battle between the forces of Chile and Vaca de Castro; the battle of Santiago de Chile; the battle of Quilacura in Chile; the battle at Mauvila, the fort and chief city of the Gulf Indians (present-day Mobile) who, led by their chief, Tuscaloosa (here Tlascaluza) were conquered by Hernando de Soto; and Hernando de Soto's retreat to Florida.



Figure 120. *Década Setima*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 1. *Batalla entre los de Chile y Vaca de Castro*

Here “los de Chile” refers to the sympathizers with Almagro, many of whom were in Peru but were known as “men of Chile”²⁶¹ and illustrates one of the many civil war battles amongst the conquistadors, here among Almagro’s supporters and those of Pizarro. Here Spaniards are pitted against Spaniards with tight foot soldiers, cannons and cavalry on each side, all seemingly equally weighted, as the dead litter the ground on either front. Again, perspective is heavily tilted and the horses in the background are much larger than those in the front. The geography

²⁶¹ Thomas Cleland Dawson, *The South American Republics: Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama* (G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1904), 46.

of the space serves as a set, and there is no reference to a specific location as the scene is just about the battle.

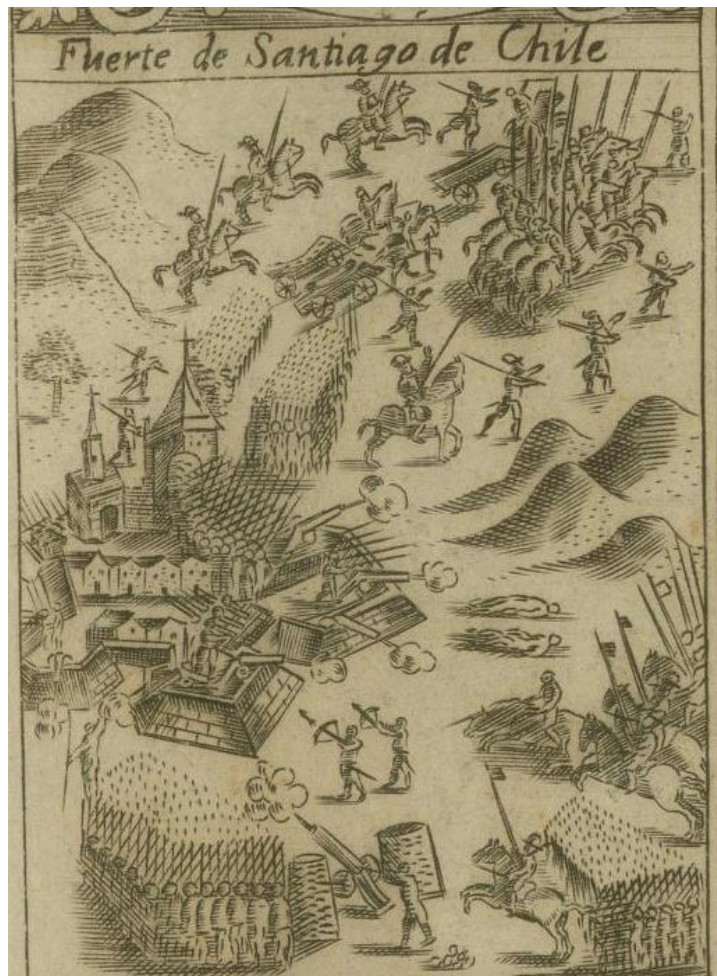


Figure 121. *Década Setima*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 2. *Fuerte de Santiago de Chile*

This panel depicts the return of Pedro Gutiérrez de Valdivia to Santiago while it was still under attack by indigenous rebels. Valdivia, who founded Santiago, had been fighting the Indians at Cachapoal, and returned to help fight off the rebellion led by Michimalonco. Here we see the city as protected by a fort and dominated by a steeple with cross, and what could be Valdivia leaving in the top right corner and returning in the lower right.

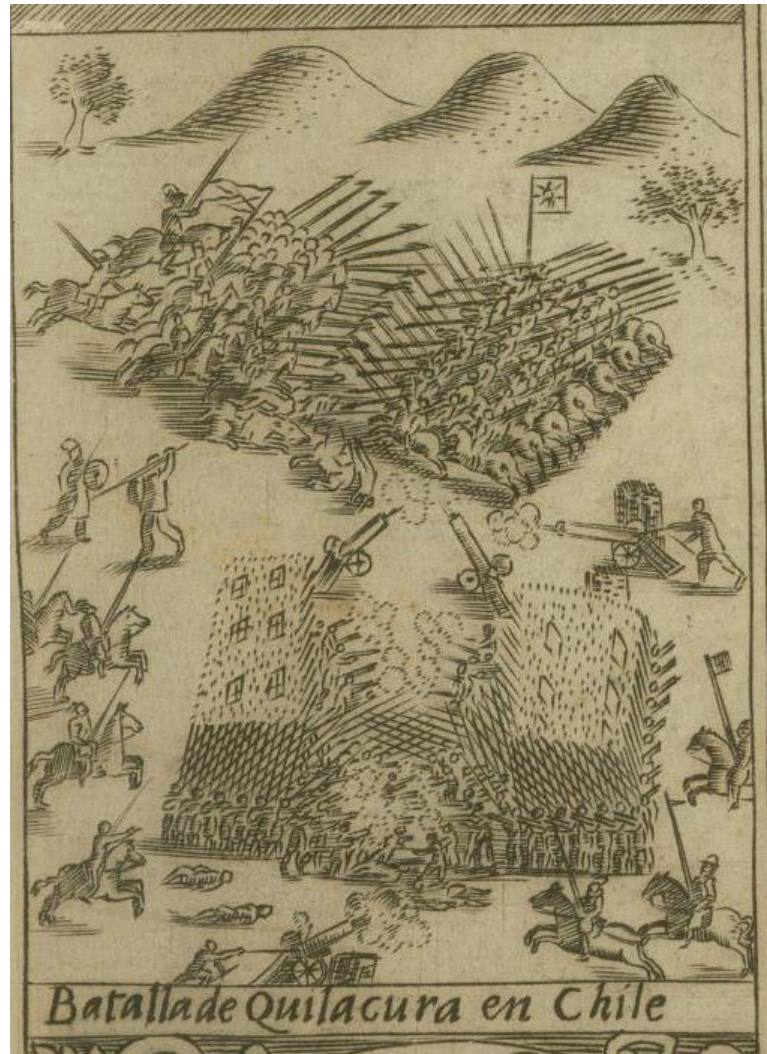


Figure 122. *Década Setima*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 3. *Battalla de Quilacura en Chile*

The battle of Quilacura was fought between Valdivia and Mapuche warriors under Malloquete in 1546. Again the sides seem evenly weighted, and are designated by their banners. On the left the banner over the foot soldiers and those carried by the cavalry are of a cross, and the other side are blank or with a sun.



Figure 123. *Década Setima*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 4. *Adelantado Soto gana el fuerte de Alibamo*

This panel shows De Soto's capture of the Indian fortified town of Alibamo, on the Yazoo River, Mississippi, 1541. The illustration here seems true to contemporary descriptions as the city was “built of palisades, in the form of a quadrangle, four hundred paces long on either side... Portions of the fort appeared to have been recently constructed for defense against the horses... the outside portals were too low and narrow for a cavalier to enter on his horse.”²⁶² Nevertheless, De Soto did conquer the Alibamos. A significant difference between the panels of these later years of the conquest and those from the earlier 1601 *Décadas*, is that it is more difficult to differentiate from the indigenous population and the Spanish troops as the Indians have at this point acquired much of the same technology of

²⁶² Albert James Pickett, *History of Alabama and Incidentally of Georgia and Mississippi, from the Earliest Period* (R. C. Randolph, 1896), 45.

fortification, cannon fire and guns as is depicted here, and sometimes they fought alongside the Spaniards in the latter's civil wars.

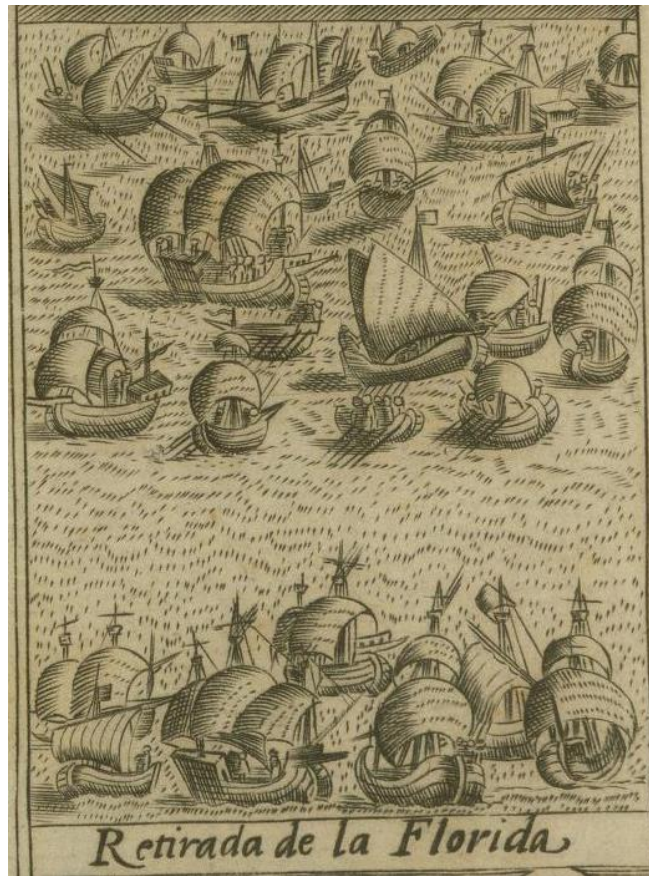


Figure 124. *Década Setima*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 5. *Retirada de la Florida*

This appears to be the arrival at Florida rather than the retreat from it as Hernando de Soto never left Florida by sea, but came there with several ships bound for Mexico as well as his own to carry the extensive supplies and people to accompany him on his expedition. It is possible that the panel shows two separate times, the arrival by de Soto and the departure by his remaining soldiers after his death, as the number of boats is inconsistent with other accounts. The ships are shown with no land in sight, and are of varying types and apparently going in all different directions. It is a curious panel for which the author has not found an obvious precedent.



Figure 125. *Década Setima*, Title Page, detail, 1615. John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 6. *El Adentantado Soto pelea en Mauilacon Tlascaluza*

In present day Mobile, Alabama, de Soto conquered Tlascaluza (Tuscaloosa) at Mauvila. De Soto and his men are represented on the right with their banners, firing cannons and guns at the well fortified city also defended with European weapons.

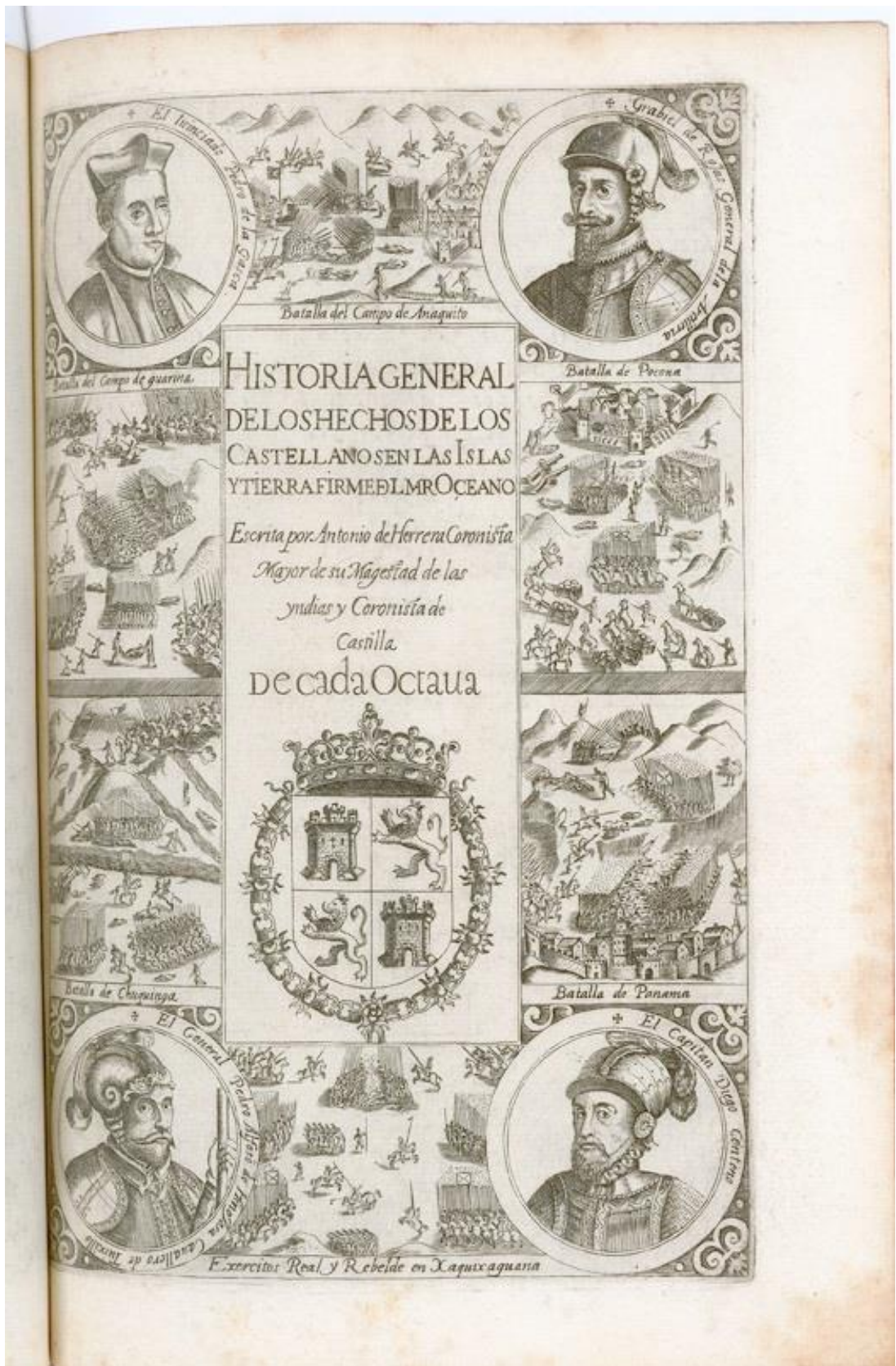


Figure 126. *Década Octava*, Title Page, 1615, John Carter Brown Library

DÉCADA OCTAUA



Figure 128. *Década Octava* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 127. *Década Octava* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 130. *Década Octava* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 129. *Década Octava* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library

This title page includes medallions of four conquistadors who were involved in the civil wars in Peru trying to restore power to Spain: “El licenciado Pedro de la Gasca;” “Garbiel de Rojas General de la Artilleria;” “General Pedro Alonso de Hinojosa Cauallero de Tuixillo;” and “El Capitan Diego Centeno.” The panels consist entirely of battle scenes, and the landscape is a generic backdrop to these events.



Figure 131. *Década Octava*, Title Page, 1615, John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 1. *Batalla del Campo de Anaquito*

Blasco Núñez Vela and Gonzalo Pizarro fought at Añaquito outside of Quito as part of the ongoing civil wars among the conquistadors and representatives from Spain. Vela died during the battle, and here the fight takes place outside of the city walls between the Spanish forces.



Figure 132. *Década Octava*, Title Page, 1615, John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 2. *Batalla del Campo de guarina*

Depicted here is a battle between Pizarro and Diego de Centeno at Huarina, which again depicts cavalry and tight formations of foot soldiers. There are a few scattered dead on the ground, indicative of the losses on both sides.

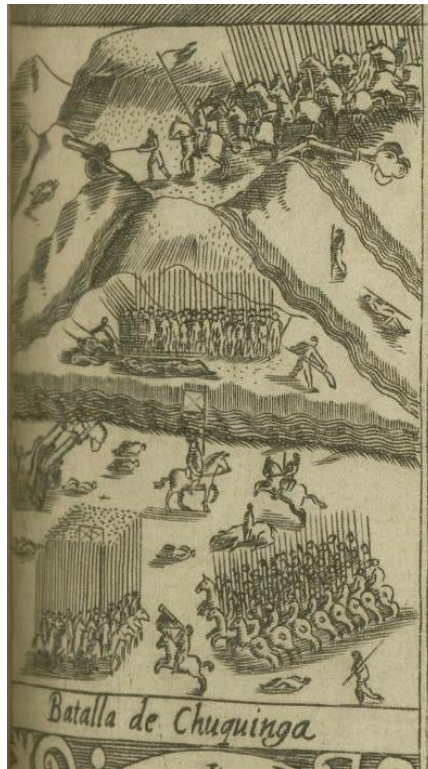


Figure 133. *Década Octava*, Title Page, 1615, John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 3. *Batalla de Chuquinga*

Alonso de Alvarado fought for the Crown against the younger brother of Pizarro, Gonzalo, in the Battle of Chuquinga in what is now Peru. He did not survive the battle, and here the landscape becomes more intricate with winding rivers and strategic use of hills in military tactics.



Figure 134. *Década Octava*, Title Page, 1615, John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 4. *Batalla de Pocona*

Similar to the others on this page, the battle scene here takes place against a fortified city, and also included in the image are horse drawn carts with wagons of artillery.



Figure 135. Como se tirará la artillería y seguirán las municiones en tal ocasion, Ufano, *Tratado de la artillería*, 1612²⁶³

²⁶³ Alvaro Soler del Campo, "Los Medios de La Guerra: El Armamento Portatil Y La Artilleria," in *Felipe II, Un Monarca Y Su Época: Un Príncipe Del Renacimiento: Museo Nacional Del Prado, 13 De Octubre De 1998-10 De Enero De 1999* [catálogo (Madrid: Sociedad



Figure 136. *Década Octava*, Title Page, 1615, John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 5. *Batalla de Panama*

Another battle scene on the plains outside of the fortified city of Panama, here in the center of the image above the church tower, there is a froth of activity between two groups of foot soldiers as they appear to shoot each other at close range. Dead horses and men lie on the ground between the opposing sides, and the hills are again used as a strategic military position.

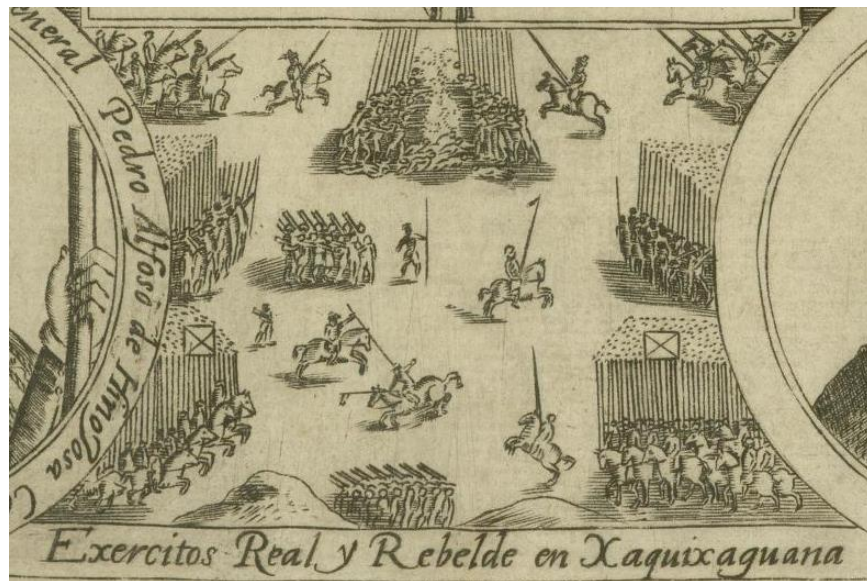


Figure 137. *Década Octava*, Title Page, 1615, John Carter Brown Library

PANEL 6. *Ejercitos Real Rebelde en Xaquixaguana*

Jaquijaguana, Chile was the site of a battle between Gonzalo Pizarro and Pedro de la Gasca in 1548. The close proximity of the foot soldier fire and rearing cavalry add to the drama of the scene.



Figure 138. Descripción de las Indias, Title Page, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

DESCRIPCIÓN DE LAS INDIAS

While the page description is included in this paper last, it was published in 1601 concurrently with *Décadas* I-IV as the format breaks quite distinctly in style and overall design from the rest of the title pages. This wonderful frontispiece illustrates the more romantic and exotic visions of the New World, including panels describing the pagan gods of the Aztecs, European sea gods and sea creatures, and the unusual dwellings on small islands. Native Americans paddle in their small skiffs along with the gods and sea creatures in a world without reference to Europeans. The world shown here is the Americas before the arrival of the Europeans, as is indicated in the bottom panel depicting a ship with a flag decorated with a cross, arriving in the new world. This is precontact and raw *Indias* according to this image, and the fantasy of the artist has been allowed to take over from the more sober and historical panels of the *Décadas* title pages.

The globe of a rather awkward western hemisphere in mirror image lies in the center of the top panel, and the four panels running down each side are all derived from indigenous codex sources. Like the *Décadas* titlepages, the panels surround center rectangular section with the title and author information and the coat of arms. The only medallion included on this page is the portrait of the author himself, identified here as being of Cuellar, the grand orchestrator of the project and the keeper of knowledge as the *cronista mayor*.



Figure 139. *Descripción de las Indias*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

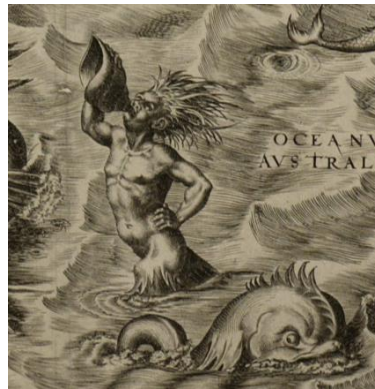


Figure 140. *Descripción de las Indias*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 141. Johannes Stradanus, “Christophorus Columbus Ligur Terroribus Oceani superatis alterius pene Orbis regiones à se inventas Hispanis regibus addixit An. Salutis,” from *Americae Retectio*. Antwerp: Johannes Galle, 1560?-1618

There are many similarities in the decorations of the *Descripción* title page to cartographic decorations of earlier works such as Stradanus and Gutiérrez, such as the hornblowing sea nymphs, even down to their pointed ears and postures. The reference to Neptune, mermaids and sea monsters are also fairly ubiquitous at this point, as we can see in the same examples. Even the angel who accompanies Philip II in his trip across the Atlantic in the Gutiérrez makes an appearance in the Herrera, while here Neptune shares his shell carriage with a nude woman, who may be an allegorical figure of the Indias. However this role may already have been filled by sexually ambivalent character in the upper left who is nonetheless similar to representations of “America” wearing a feather head piece, but who also has something in common with the Apollo and lyre sea creature in another Stradanus (and copied by de Bry).



Left: Figure 142. Stradanus, detail

Center: Figure 143. *Descripción de las Indias* Title Page, detail, John Carter Brown Library

Right: Figure 144. Gutiérrez, detail



Figure 145. *Descripción de las Indias* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Left: Figure 146. *Descripción de las Indias* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Right: Figure 147. Gutiérrez, detail



Left: Figure 148. *Descripción de las Indias* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library



Center: Figure 149. Philippe Galle, *America*, 1581-1600, engraving, detail



Right: Figure 150. Johann Feyerabend, Theodor de Bry, *Inventio Maris Magallanici*, Frankfurt, 1594, detail

The upper panel is not dissimilar with the de Bry frontispiece panel from part X, “Woman with a fan and Neptune,” in that it incorporates many similar elements. The de Bry is without a doubt much more sophisticated in its execution. This image also shows Neptune on his shell with sea creature and in the right an allegorical female nude who rests her hand on a pile of fruit, alluding to the fecundity of the New World. There is a Native American with a bone through his nose as well as a strange humanoid creature with horns and fangs, perhaps reflecting a similar slightly demonic nature to the odd pointy eared sea creature in the left top panel of the Herrera.



Figure 151. Theodore de Bry, *America. Pt 10*, 1619, Oppenheim. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 152. *Descripción de las Indias* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library

The four side panels are evidence of the material to which Herrera had access, such as the numerous indigenous codices brought back to Europe in the sixteenth century. These lovely images depict the Aztec gods, kings and sacrificial temples, and are labeled accordingly. Reading down the left panels, they read: “el dios de los finados” (Mictlantecuhtli, god of death); “el dios de las aguas” (Tlaloc); “el dios de los truanes” (Tezcatlipoca); and “Acamapich primero rey de México.” The panels on the right read: “Hoitzilipochtli el mayor dios de México” (god of war); “el dios del viento” (Ehecatl); “el dios del vino” (Ometochtli); and “Forma de los Templos de los yndois de Nueva españa.”



Figure 153. *Descripción de las Indias* Title Page, detail. John Carter Brown Library

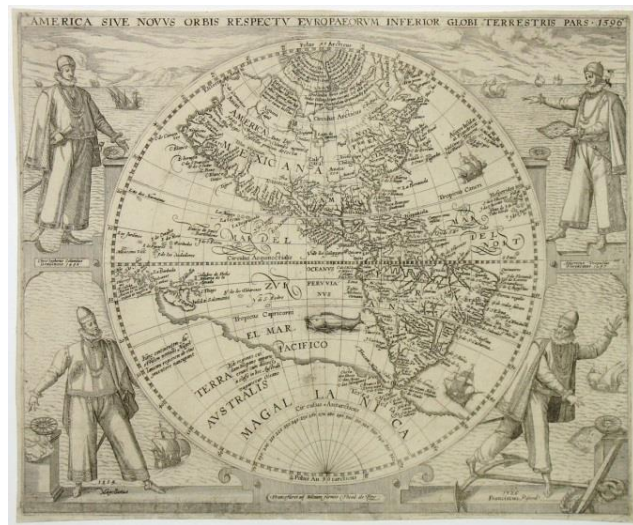
Herrera's panels did in fact use indigenous sources, commissioned by Europeans but nonetheless showing a Mesoamerican form of representation. As Cummins suggests, and is certainly consistent with other examples in Herrera, the *Descripción* panels reduce the visual information presumably for legibility by a European audience. This suggests, as has been pointed out in the earlier title pages, a desire consistent with imperial iconography to reduce the visual information to representing the exotic "other" (or non-European) rather than presenting an encyclopedia of anthropological study. In the *Libro de Figuras*, commissioned by a friar in the Americas, "The text written by the friar on the verso precedes the related image and offers a description of the iconography and the Nahuatl terms," while in the Herrera these images are "collapsed" and the god is no longer named but described.²⁶⁴ However, while the images were edited and modified, they are nonetheless recognizably not European in origin, and add not only exoticism for the armchair traveler to accompany the maps which also allow the mind to travel to these new worlds, but also legitimize the source material and the text as a whole.



Left: Figure 154. Codex Ixtlilxochitl, folio 101v, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*

Right: Figure 155. Codex Ixtlilxochitl, Folio 102r, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*

²⁶⁴ Cummins, "Representations in the Sixteenth Century and the Colonial Image of the Inca," 190. See also Elizabeth Hill Boone, *The Codex Magliabechiano and the Lost Prototype of the Magliabechiano Group* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 3-6, 45-53.



Left: Figure 156. Herrera y Tordesillas, *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*, Amsterdam, 1622

Right: Figure 157. *America sive Novus Orbis Respectu Europaeorum Inferior Globi Terrestris Pars*, 1596

De Bry copied the 1622 edition of the *Descripción* published in Amsterdam and merged it with the *America sive Novus Orbis Respectu Europaeorum Inferior Globi Terrestris Pars*, 1596, for the twelfth part of *America* published in 1623.

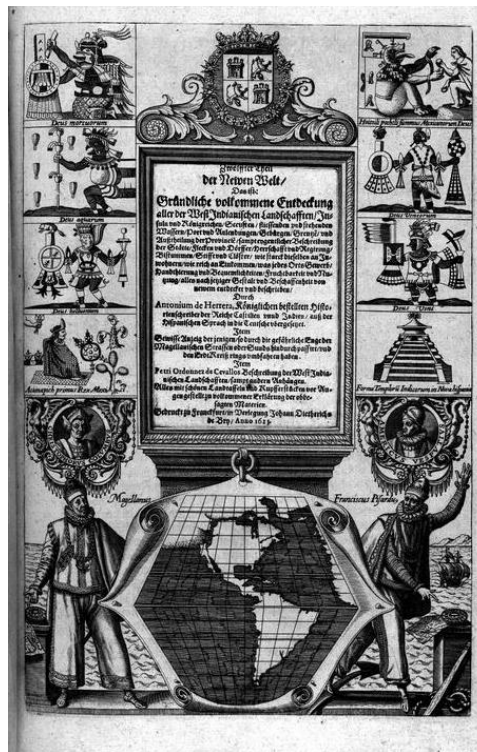


Figure 158. Theodore de Bry, *America*. pt. 12. Fränckfurt: Gedruckt in Verlegung, 1623

Herrera-Velasco Maps

The fourteen maps published in the *Descripción* were expanded by Herrera from the manuscript maps of Juan López de Velasco previously ordered by Phillip II. Like Herrera, Velasco relied on primary sources without ever having been to the Americas in order to make his maps. Velasco's reliance on first hand contributions to geographic information gathered during the *Relaciones geograficas de las Indias* project allowed a depth of detail unparalleled in the Americas at the time: "López de Velasco's attempts to make the New World knowable through maps rank among the high cosmographic achievements of the sixteenth century."²⁶⁵ These maps are quite different in style and function from the cartographic elements described in the title pages, and this will be discussed in detail below. Here we will describe the physical characteristics of the maps and compare them with the manuscript copy of the original maps they were derived from found in the John Carter Brown Library. This manuscript postdates another copy at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, but is still earlier than the Herrera. It is included here, but as it is a copy and perhaps a copy of a copy, there is some caveat given here for too strict a comparison. There is some discussion of the absences and conclusions from this copy to the Herrera in the section dedicated to this theme below.

²⁶⁵ Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain*, 11.

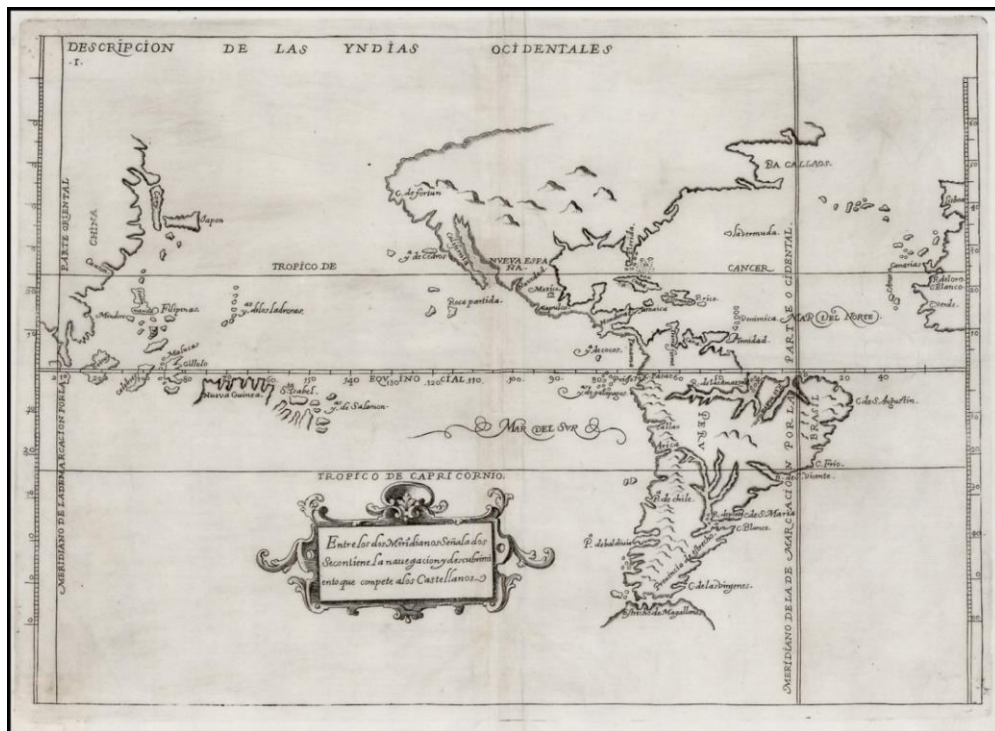


Figure 159. Map 1. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción de las Yndias Ocidentales”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library. Cartouche reads: *Entre los dos meridianos señala dos se contiene la navegacion y descubrimiento que compete a los Castellanos.*

This map is the first of the fourteen that show all of the Spanish holdings of the Atlantic and Pacific, and includes North and South America, with parts of Asia, the Philippines, Europe (Portugal and Canary Islands), etc. Prominently marked are the Papal line of demarcation in the Atlantic, established in the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), and the later Pacific line of demarcation defined in The Treaty of Saragossa (or Zaragoza) signed by Charles V on April 22, 1529, the antimeridian to the line established by the Treaty of Tordesillas. Herrera shows the Asian line faithfully to Velasco’s calculations, but in the text miscalculate the longitude of Malacca by 34° west to Spain’s advantage.²⁶⁶

Few topographical details, such as mountains and coastal shading are shown, and the northwest part of North America is almost blank. California is named and shown attached to North America, not as an island as had been the case on some earlier maps.

²⁶⁶ Kevin Joseph Sheehan, “Iberian Asia: The Strategies of Spanish and Portuguese Empire Building, 1540-1700” (University of California, 2008), 213.



Figure 160. Juan Lopez de Velasco, "Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias," *Demarcación y diuision de las Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 161. Juan Lopez de Velasco, "Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias," *Demarcación y diuision de las Yndias*, detail, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 162. Map 2. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción de las Yndias del Norte”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map 2 includes North America, Central America, the northernmost part of South America, and the Caribbean. Among the locations are Florida which looks quite different in shape to Map 1, Yucatan, audiencias of New Galicia, New Spain, Guatemala, Española, and New Spain.



Figure 163. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de las Yndias del Norte,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

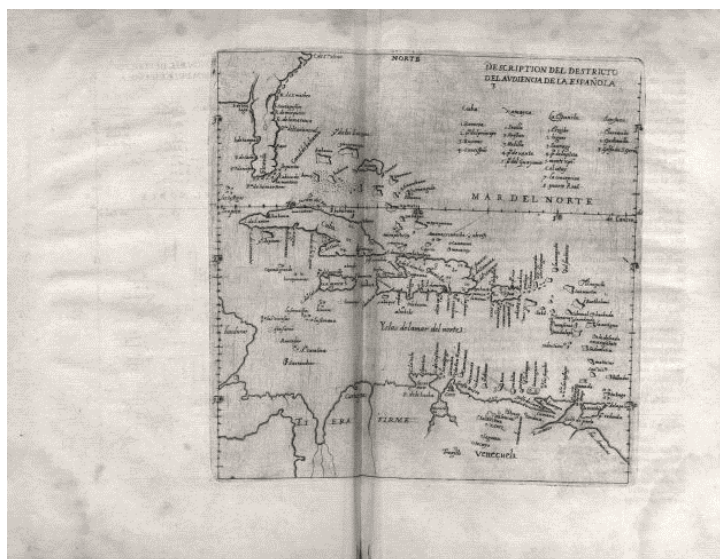


Figure 164. Map 3. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción del destricto del audiencia de la Española”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Here is depicted the Caribbean, southeastern North America from Florida to what is now South Carolina, and the northern part of South America. “Of interest to us on this map is the distinctive narrow Florida peninsula. Unlike the previous item [141n] some internal detail and nomenclature is given. It contains a relatively accurate delineation of the R. de S. Matheo, St. Johns River, with a large upstream lake. Along with the appearance of Santagustin [San Augustine], it illustrates the presence of the Spanish in Florida since 1565. This is one of the more detailed of the Herrera-Velasco maps.”²⁶⁷



Kevin Joseph Sheehan, “Iberian Asia: The Strategies of Spanish and Portuguese Empire Building, 1540-1700” (University of California, 2008), 211.

²⁶⁷ Burden, *The Mapping of North America*, 142n.

Figure 165. Juan Lopez de Velasco, "Descripción de la Audiencia de la Española," *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

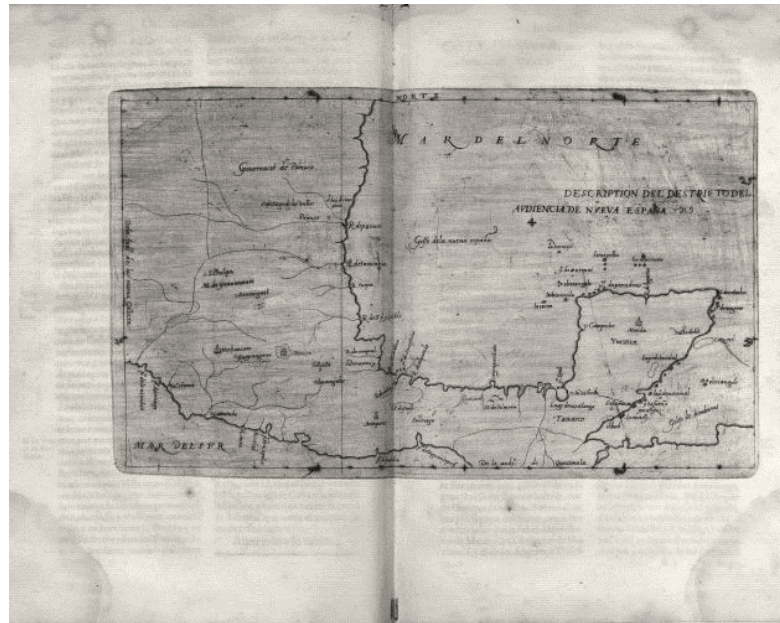


Figure 166. Map 4. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, "Descripción del dstricto del audiencia de Nueva España", *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of Central America, including the Yucatan peninsula, present-day Mexico, Honduras, and Guatemala. Rivers and settlements are located and labeled.



Figure 167. Juan Lopez de Velasco, "Descripción de la Audiencia de la Nueva España," *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

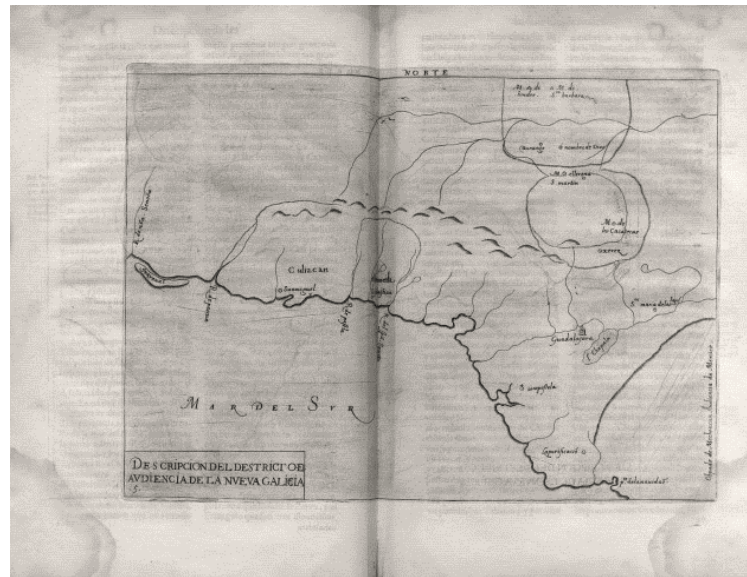


Figure 168. Map 5. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción del distrito de la Audiencia de la Nueva Galicia”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601.
John Carter Brown Library

Map of part of Central America, including present-day Mexican states of Aguascalientes, Colima, and Jalisco, and parts of Durango, Guanajuato, Michoacán, Nayarit, and Zacatecas.²⁶⁸



Figure 169. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de la Audiencia de la Nueva Galicia,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7.
John Carter Brown Library

²⁶⁸ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 71-72n.



Figure 170. Map 6. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción del audiencia de Guatemala”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of part of Central America, including present-day Chiapas, southern Yucatan, Guatemala, Nicaragua, south to Costa Rica and Panama.²⁶⁹



Figure 171. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de la Audiencia de Guatemala,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁶⁹ Bornholdt, *Cuatro Siglos de Expresiones Geográficas del Istmo Centroamericano*, Plate 27n 75; Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 73-74n.



Figure 172. Map 7. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción de las Yndias de Mediodía”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of South America showing the papal line of demarcation, Amazon River, Rio de la Plata, and the Strait of Magellan.²⁷⁰



Figure 173. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de las Yndias del medio día,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷⁰ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 75-76n.

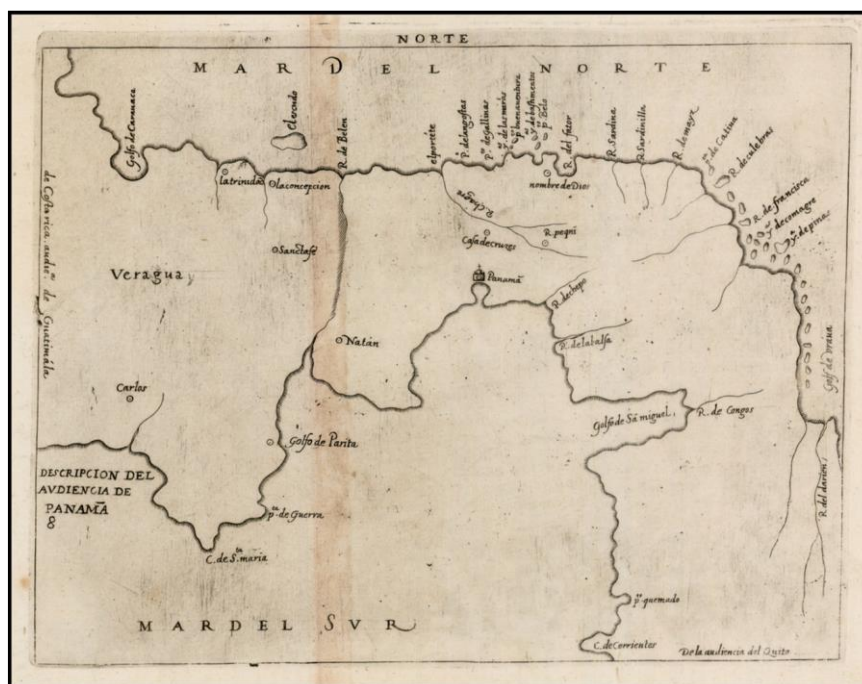


Figure 174. Map 8. Antontion de Herrera y Tordesillas, "Descripción del audiencia de Panamá", *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of the audiencia of Panama, showing rivers and settlements.²⁷¹



Figure 175. Juan Lopez de Velasco, "Descripción de la Audiencia de Panama," *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷¹ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 77-78n.

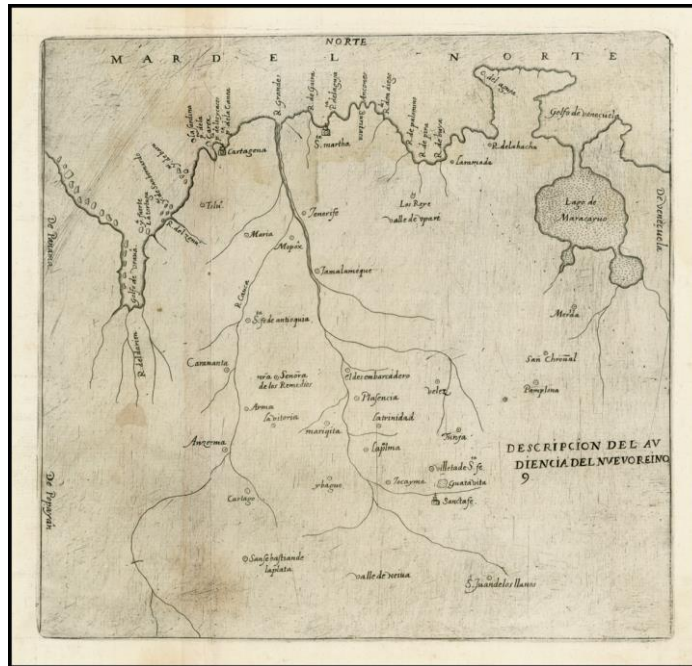


Figure 176. Map 9. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción del Audiencia del Nuevo Reino”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of the Audiencia of the New Kingdom of Granada, present-day Colombia and Venezuela, locating rivers and settlements.²⁷²



Figure 177. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción del Nuevo Reyno,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷² Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 79-80n.

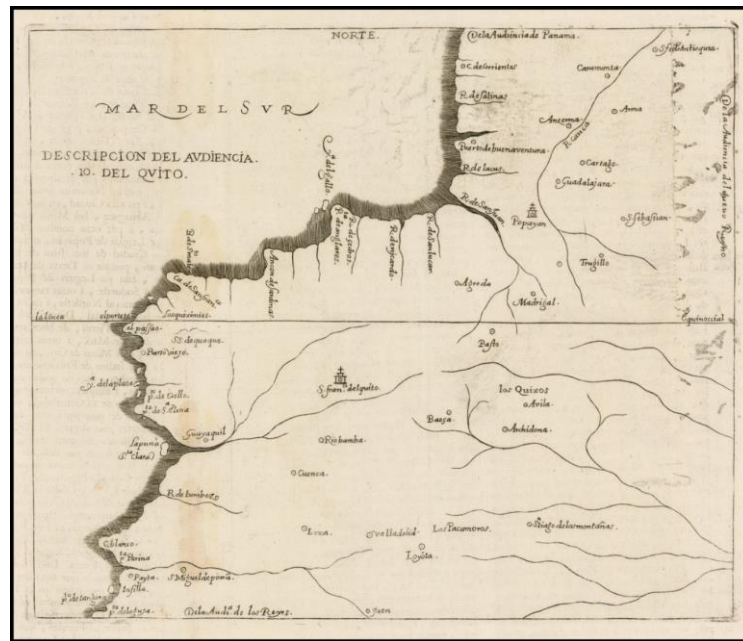


Figure 178. Map 10. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción del audiencia del Quito”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of the audiencia of Quito, present-day Ecuador with parts of Peru, Colombia, and Brazil, showing rivers and settlements.²⁷³



Figure 179. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de la Audiencia del Quito,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷³ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 81-82n.

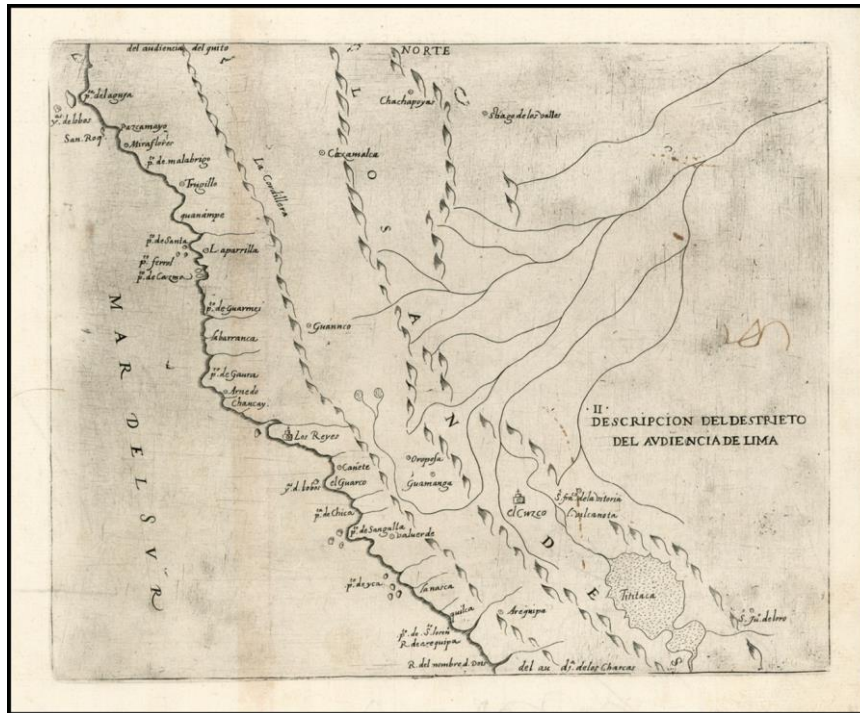


Figure 180. Map 11. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción del dstricto del audiencia de Lima”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of the audiencia of Lima, present-day Ecuador, parts of Peru, Colombia, and Brazil, including rivers, Lake Titicaca, and settlements.²⁷⁴

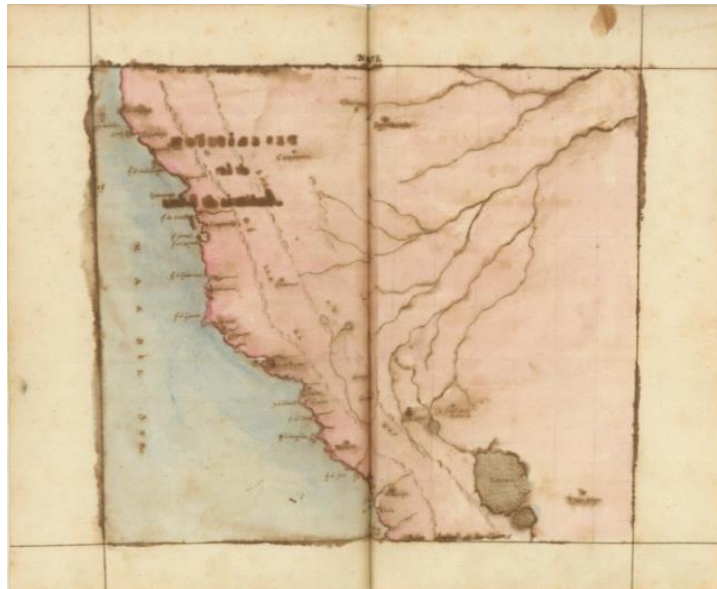


Figure 181. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de la Audiencia de Lima,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷⁴ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 83-84n.

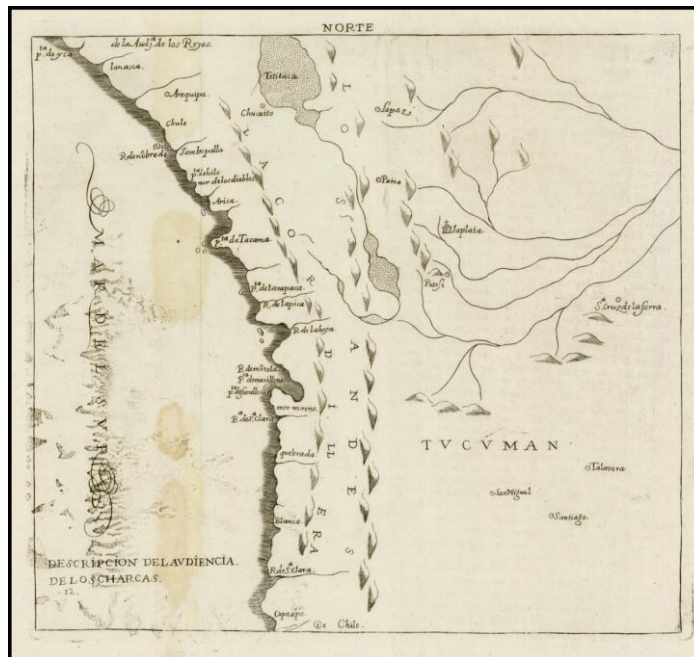


Figure 182. Map 12. Anotnio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción del audiencia de los Charcas”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of the audiencia of Charcas, present-day Bolivia, with some rivers and settlements.²⁷⁵



Figure 183. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de la Audiencia de los Chárkas,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷⁵ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 85-86n.



Figure 184. Map 13. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción de la provincia de Chile”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of the audiencia of Chile with some topographical details, rivers, settlements. Oriented with east at top.²⁷⁶

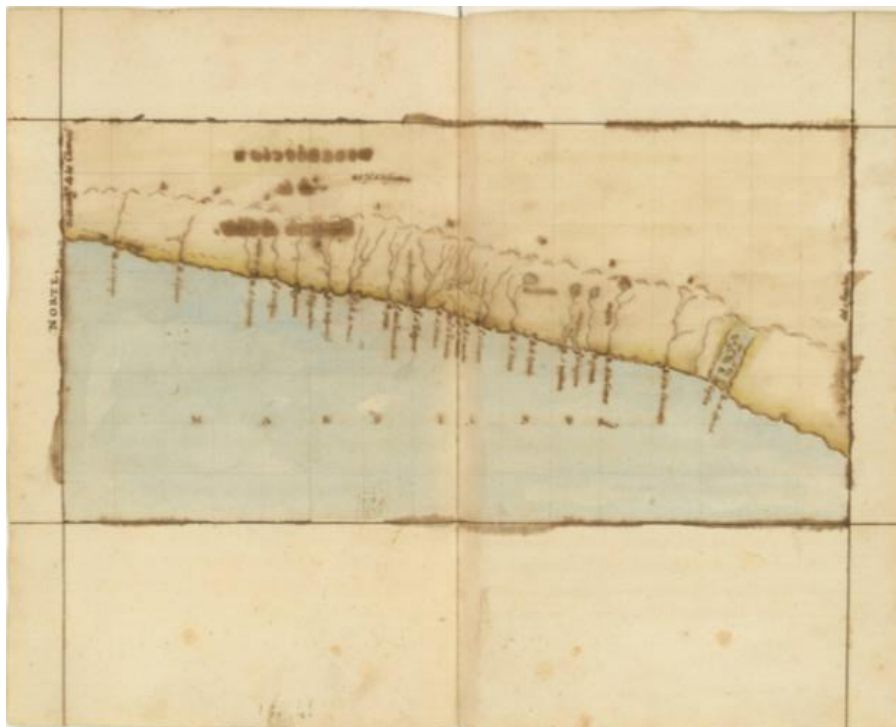


Figure 185. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de Prouincia de Chile,” *Demarcación y nauegaciones de Yndias*, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷⁶ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 87-88n.

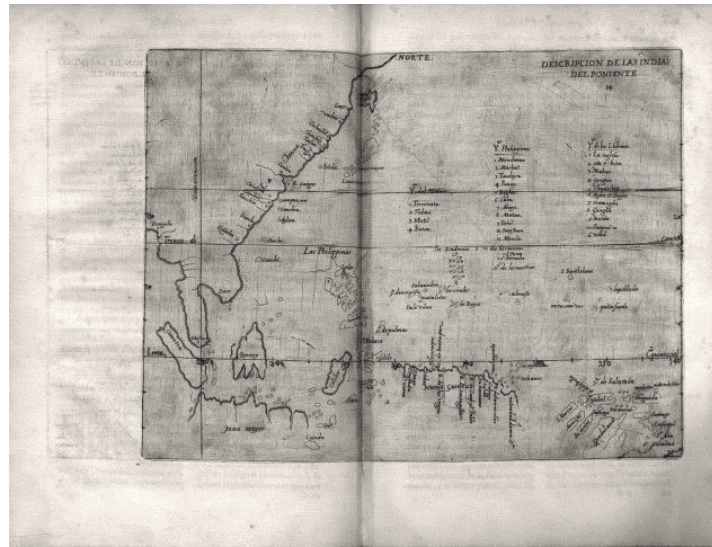


Figure 186. Map 14. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, “Descripción de las indias del Poniente”, *Descripción de las Indias*. Madrid: En la Emplenta Real, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Map of the East Indies from Bengal to the Solomon Islands and north to Japan, as shown as one island. Also included are the Moluccas, the Philippines, and New Guinea.²⁷⁷

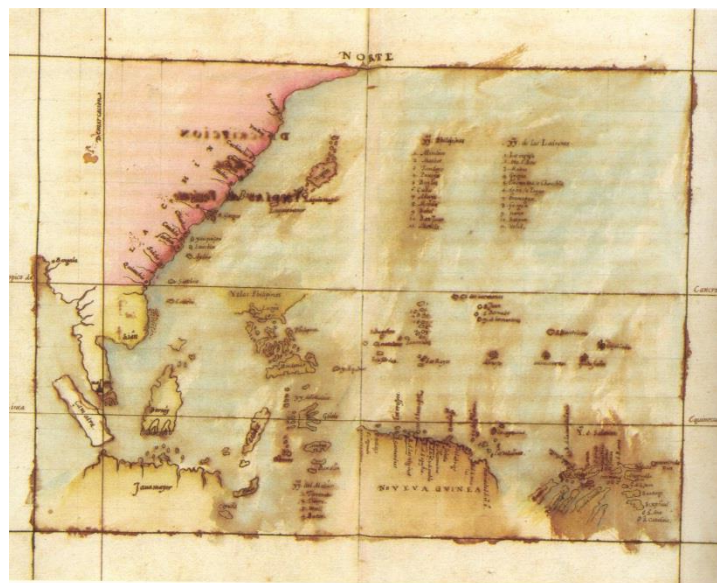


Figure 187. Juan Lopez de Velasco, “Descripción de las Indias Poniente”, 1575 copy of the original. Codex Sp 7. John Carter Brown Library

²⁷⁷ Vindel, *Mapas de America en los Libros Españoles*, Plate 89-90n. Derek Hayes and North Pacific Marine Science Organization, “Historical Atlas of the North Pacific Ocean: Maps of Discovery and Scientific Exploration, 1500-2000” (Seattle: Published under the auspices of North Pacific Marine Science Organization [by] Sasquatch Books, 2001), p. 18n (Plate 16n). Thomas Suárez, *Early Mapping of Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Periplus, 1999), pp. 172-173

CHAPTER 4: CARTOGRAPHIC METHODOLOGY AND THE DÉCADAS

The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory - *precession of simulacra* - that engenders the territory...

- Baudrillard²⁷⁸

As previously mentioned, while it is obvious the Herrera-Velasco maps are cartographic elements, here I argue that the title pages of Herrera's *Décadas* are as well, and that by reading them according to art historical and cartographic methodologies, we will augment our understanding of this material and gain fresh insight into their significance as an integral part of Herrera's project.

Earlier we discussed the unique challenges wrought on historians in the sixteenth century after the discovery of America. With no referents on which to model these new discoveries, European historians struggled with balancing and integrating classical and Biblical knowledge with the interpretation of the Americas, culturally, spiritually, and politically. I argue in this paper that Herrera, in an effort to defend Spain's legitimacy in the New World and to be perceived as telling the truth relied on maps and Biblical and classical iconography to support his textual narrative. "Though most evident in works of art, the change from one way of perceiving the world to another was not restricted to aesthetics" in talking about "intellectual daring" during the Renaissance.²⁷⁹ Herrera was, regardless of the criticisms cited in Chapter 2, intellectually daring in the *Décadas* through his innovative use of cartography.

While maps define and order space according to the agenda of the producer and geopolitical referents of their age, cartouches and other decorative elements serve to illuminate and focus the political and social agendas of maps in the cultural vernacular, making them more desirable to the consumer through contemporary standards of beauty and visual legibility. If we accept the map as

²⁷⁸ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (University of Michigan Press, 1994), 1.

²⁷⁹ Greenblatt, *The Swerve*, 10.

any other “nonverbal sign system” such as painting or music, we can deconstruct its symbolism and context in much the same way as we would any other cultural expression. That Herrera’s illustrations were recognizable to the audience is integral to their success in transmitting the desired relationships to the spaces depicted. The abstraction of space had to rely on known symbols of geographic relationships, and this paper will illuminate “... the importance of talking about codes of vision in assessing landscape. That is, it brings into focus the question of how we perceive the external world- whether psychologically, historically, or socially-as an issue that cannot be taken for granted, but needs to be theorized, analysed, debated.”²⁸⁰

The map is a “signifying system” through which “a social order is communicated, experienced and explored.” Maps at once seem to describe a landscape scientifically, but they also interpret space according to the categories of knowledge of the audience. Although maps seem an objective enterprise, maps are inherently subjective in nature and are rarely, and arguably never, objective visual abstractions of space and can be important indicators of the social, religious and personal contexts in which they were created. When looking at any map it is important to consider who made it, for what purpose, and for what audience. A place represented on a map is indicative of more than the geographical location. “It embodies textual sources, imaginary representations, and symbolic values” and can also stand in for a “cultural memory.”²⁸¹ Maps have an agenda; they reveal very deliberate decisions in what they include and exclude in an effort to eliminate superfluous chaos, and display only what is necessary to serve a particular objective. Maps lead the “reader” on a specific journey of the author’s choosing, and can be interpreted as cultural text like any other visual culture medium.

²⁸⁰ Nicholas Green, “Looking at Landscape: Class Formation and the Visual,” in *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space*, ed. Eric Hirsch and Michael O’Hanlon (Oxford University Press, USA, 1995), 31.

²⁸¹ Christian Jacob, *The Sovereign Map: Theoretical Approaches in Cartography throughout History*, trans. Tom Conley, 1st ed. (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2006), Plate 3 text.

According to Victor Stoichita, if we compare 16th century images of a cartographer at work with an artist preparing a landscape, we see the former with his tools and his back to the window (Figure 188), while the artist gazes outside. The artist relies on first hand observation, while the cartographer, like Herrera, is an assembler and transcriber of facts: “the map is not a landscape seen from afar, from a long way away, or from a very great distance. It is the product of cultural panorama. There is, therefore, no question of the visual object having been distanced but rather the level having been ruptured. That is why a map cannot simply be an ‘image’. It is at the same time both *image* and *text*,”²⁸² and reflects “the values of the map producing society.”²⁸³ What is excluded from the map is almost and sometimes more important than what is included, and these absences can also be quite telling when interpreting maps from a critical perspective. Herrera’s selection process as to what he includes and excludes is part of the cartographic process in the frontispieces as well. As in any history there are choices of what will be remembered and what will be forgotten, but the prevalence of selective truths, exaggeration and perhaps embellishment was not unusual: “Throughout Europe, reason of state was the order of the day during most of the seventeenth century. It meant, *inter alia*, that in the last resort, the end justified the means, and that the virtue of prudence, praised by philosophers from Aristotle onward, found one of its finer modes of expression in the art of dissimulation.”²⁸⁴

²⁸² Victor I. Stoichita *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, 178

²⁸³ Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*, 65.

²⁸⁴ MacCormack, *On the Wings of Time Rome, the Incas, Spain, and Peru* /, 89. See Herrera’s own comments on dissimulation on page....

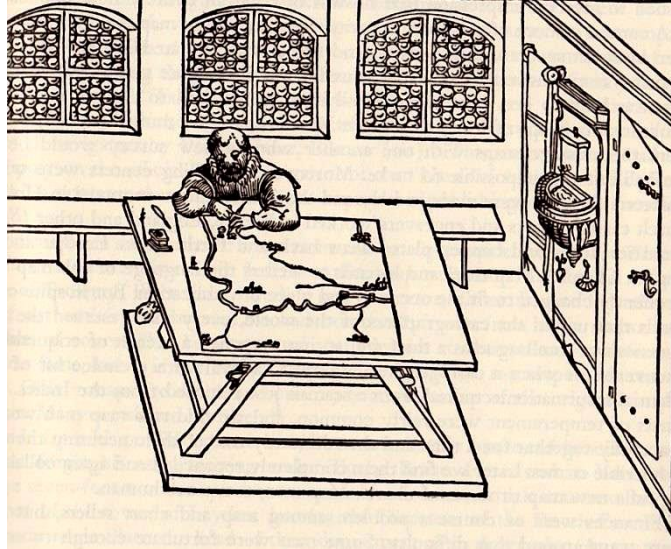


Figure 188. Paul Pfintzing, *Methodus Geometrica*, Nürnberg, 1598

In the case of the *Décadas*, the reader needs to be convinced that the visual elements are a form of cartography and that reading it as such can broaden the scope of discourse for further understanding of this important work. There are, as has been mentioned above, three main categories of cartographic work in the *Décadas*: the title pages themselves; the cartographic elements within these panels and decorations of the title pages; and the fourteen maps of the New World included in the *Descripción de las Indias*. By aligning his *Décadas* to contemporary perceptions of map production, Herrera borrows the validating scientific nature of maps with known Biblical iconic design to fortify the validity of his assertions within the text as truth through science and ordained by God. In historic imperialistic maps, under which category Herrera's work belongs, the agendas of maps can be embedded in complex iconography.

In his instructions to Herrera, Philip II made direct reference to his objective for the *Décadas* commission. Herrera was charged with asserting Spain's compliance to the religious obligations of the Alexandrine Bulls of Donation, which required the Spanish: "[You will] make certain to demonstrate that the Catholic Kings [Spain's monarchs] have complied with the bull of the Pope [Alexander VI], also that this nation is much defamed by foreigners with cruelty and avarice as result

of omissions by its governors. You must investigate this, always making certain to tell the truth.”²⁸⁵

While it is one thing to write a truthful account, he also had to convince his readers that what he was writing was, in fact, true by disentangling the conquistadores from chivalric novels of the sixteenth century. “Europeans were being flooded with a spurious literature of imaginary travels and chivalric romances that freely mixed fact and fiction,” and historians had even more pressure to maintain the air of truth in their accounts of the New World.²⁸⁶ By adhering to a contemporary geopolitical format in the titlepages, and including Juan Lopéz de Velasco’s maps of the new world, Herrera was trying to maintain that illusion of truth based on contemporary associations of the scientific objectivity of maps to ensure the audience of the validity of the accompanying text. That maps were considered truthful during this time period is evident in their use in court as legal documents. Maps in Tudor England had already been used as legal cases and “maps were by no means unknown in French courts of law in the fifteenth century; they may also have been found in Spain.”²⁸⁷

The importance of the visual in sixteenth century propaganda is irrefutable, and cannot be underestimated in its impact on establishing imperial order in the Spanish Americas. “The basic characteristic of the late medieval mind is its predominantly visual nature.”²⁸⁸ The elements of Herrera’s visual narrative preface thereby introduce their textual references, but they are no less important and reflect a narrative structure that can stand on their own.

²⁸⁵ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, Herrera y Tordesillas as quoted and translated by Kagan. Notations are Kagan’s and mine.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

²⁸⁷ David Buisseret, *The Mapmakers’ Quest: Depicting New Worlds in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 5; See also F. de Dainville, “Maps and Litigations in the 15th Century Cartes et Contestations Au XVe Siecle,” *Imago Mundi* 24 (January 1, 1970): 99–121 referenced in Buisseret. As Ricardo Padrón has pointed out, this point is proven by the presence of such maps in the Archivo de Chancilleria in Valladolid.

²⁸⁸ Buisseret, *The Mapmakers’ Quest*, 32–33.

While in many medieval maps, the geographical relationships between the map and its characters were “strained,” Herrera tries to solve this problem by compressing the main narratives into his *Décadas* both visually and textually into a Christian template by using the maps however simplistic and generalized but recognizable symbols of European spatial delineation, “to make connections where no connections are apparent, to create dramatic incident where few emotive clues are provided: in short, to use the map as a vehicle for imaginative comprehension.”²⁸⁹ For example, on the titlepages characters who did not have any direct relationship to each other in the historical narrative occupy the same space on these pages. Where here their stories seem to flow together naturally, they are forced to do so by Herrera to lend some sense of unity to the pictorial history. “This visual mapping of different time and space as something connected under the sovereignty of the King is precisely what Herrera, as Royal Chronicler, is attempting to do in his compilation of various textual sources in order to produce a single *Historia General*.”²⁹⁰

In any investigation of sixteenth and early seventeenth century Spanish interpretations of their relationship with the New World and the rest of Europe one must, as John Headley warns, beware of “presentist notions and requirements” and try to see things through the eyes of the contemporary audience “by entering into a mentality of splendid confidence, even magnificent arrogance, manifested by so many of Spain’s soldiers, administrators, and evangelical preachers, caught up in the vast momentum of Iberian providential expansiveness and the sense of impending global unity.”²⁹¹ Ironically, as with most visual culture read outside of its own context, if we look at these images from a “presentist” point of view, the glaring propagandistic overtones of the imagery actually detracts from our presumptions of the validity of the text to the

²⁸⁹ Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought*, See Kline’s thorough and fascinating discussion of how this idea applies to the Hereford Map and the geographical and narrative associations.

²⁹⁰ Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America.”, 23.

²⁹¹ See references to this image in both Headley, “Spain’s Asian Presence, 1565-1590,” November 1, 1995; Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*.

modern reader, while it would have been attempting the opposite effect at the time of publication “... the image continuously subverts the integrity and therefore the authority of the text.”²⁹² What is revealing is what projected authority and truth in Herrera’s time, and from this perspective we can read and interpret the cultural text of his cartographic selections.

That Herrera is highly ordered and structured both visually and textually is another link to the cartographic methodology applied here: “Geography and history are two narrative and mnemonic arts that are both expressed in images, and the map, as a synoptic representation of space... an example of concise, structured description.”²⁹³ This applies not only to his aligning himself with Livy and Tacitus in terms of historiographical style, but also to the rigid and thoughtful structure of the titlepages themselves as will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. Herrera’s visual mapping follows an obsessive path towards a specific agenda, but the work is not simple nor in any way straightforward. His reflects a multi-dimensional perspective towards a common goal, where there are many layers of “truth” based on contemporary cultural, historical, political, religious, and personal motivations.

As will be argued here, the images that decorate the title pages of Herrera’s *Décadas* adhere to a cartographic and art historical iconography, lending authority to its main agenda of legitimizing the conquest of the *Indias*. By aligning Europeanized symbols of spatial order, design and language with the grander enterprise of religious and imperial agendas (arguably the latter two being the same in this case), Herrera uses these visual spaces to remind his audience of Spain’s rights to the Americas through a complex iconographical network of symbols aligning the Monarchy and the Spanish Empire with Christianity and the Roman Empire while nationalizing and unifying Spain and her “Castellano” heroes in the New World conquest. By developing a unique methodology derived from

²⁹² Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America,” 1.

²⁹³ Tolias, “Maps in Renaissance Libraries and Collections,” 656.

cartographic studies as well as art historical research, we aspire here to impact and contribute to the scant studies of the title pages of this work by shedding new light on their powerful iconography justified by references to geographic knowledge and European structures of space and possession.

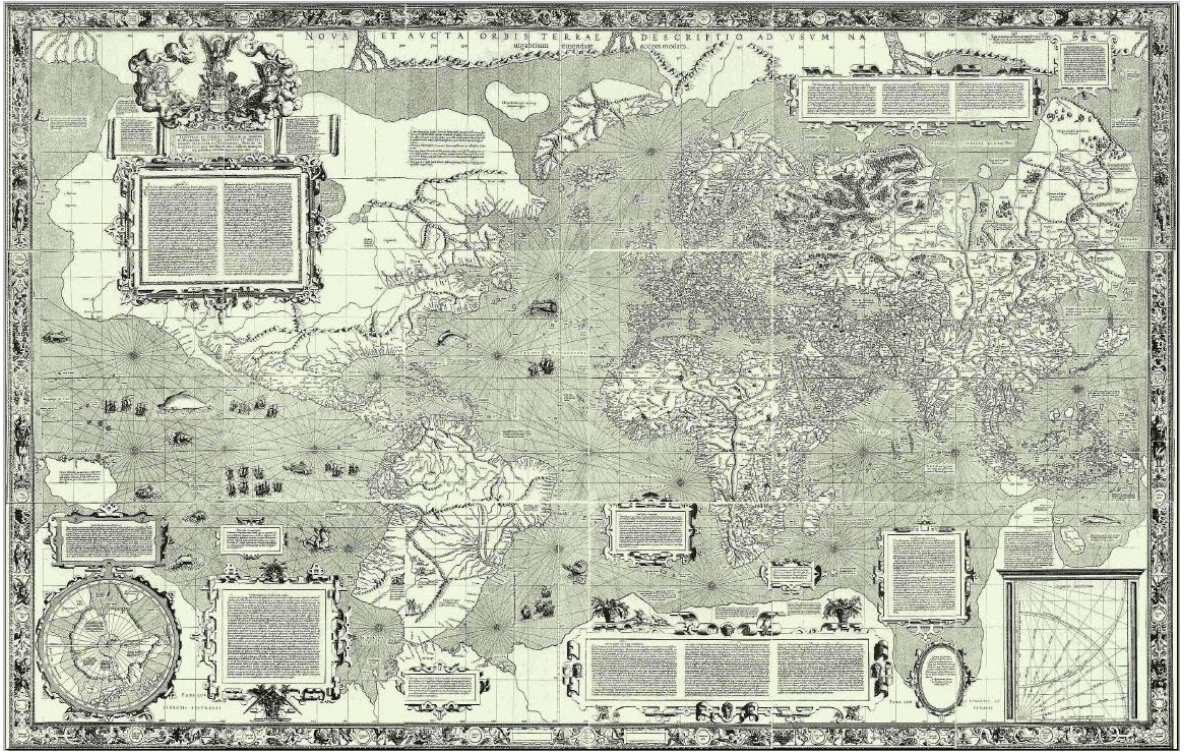


Figure 189. Gerardus Mercator, *Nova et Avcta Orbis Terrarum Descriptio ad Usum Navigantium Emendate Accommodata*, 1569

What are Maps?

Maps are obsessive, abstract spatial constructions with at least one, but sometimes several particular agendas. They are obsessive in that the best designed maps eliminate all of the superfluous chaos of geographical information that is not relevant to the purpose of the map, and, if successful, they can represent brilliant economy of design. Whether these are maps used to navigate the seas or illustrate the nervous system, too much information, too little, or lack of clarity of design confuses the end user of the map. The cartographer must turn noise into clear signals and rely on signs, symbols, and language recognizable to the audience so they may understand and process the visual (or in some cases tactile) information. Some information will be

privileged and some will be excluded in the selection of relevant information to serve both the agenda and design of the map.

For example, in Mercator's map of the world from 1569 above (Figure 189), one receives information suited specifically to the purpose of navigating sailing routes along a rhumbline, or a straight course from one point to another. The obvious problem of drawing a rhumbline on a two dimensional map set to the longitude lines of the globe is that the sailor would have to plot many courses to compensate for the curvature of the earth; imagine flattening an orange, the rips filled by stretching the empty spaces through distortion or "projections." Mercator tried to solve this problem in his groundbreaking projection by distorting the earth to accommodate the "gaps" made by making longitudinal lines parallel. This distortion suits its specific agenda, of maritime navigation, but greatly exaggerates the shapes and size of the land masses in the extreme north and south. The interior of the Americas is filled with informative cartouches, reflecting the paucity of information regarding these areas, but also pointing to the irrelevance of this data according to the original intention of the map.

A wonderful modern example of this obsessive quality of maps is the London Underground, originally designed in 1931 by Harry Beck (Figure 190). If one tried to use the map of the London Underground to determine driving distance between landmarks it would be utterly useless as the scale is inaccurate for surface travel. Its sole purpose is to aid the traveler in navigating the trains in order and relevant lines from one point to another, and any other information is disregarded. It is a great example of economy of design in cartography.

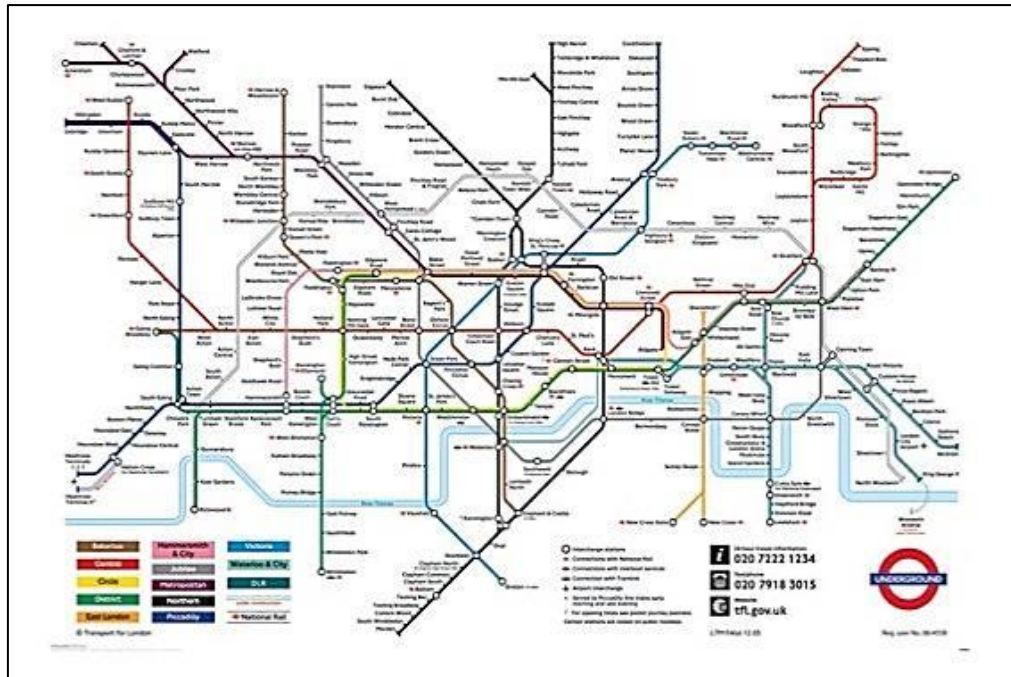


Figure 190. *London Underground*. Originally designed by Harry Beck, 1931

Maps can serve a more symbolic purpose like geospiritual illustration. For example, consider the T-O map of Isidore of Seville (Figure 191), which illustrates the known world's Biblical landscape on a spiritual level rather than as a method of navigation. As one can see below, and is discussed in Chapter 2, the world is organized according to the dispersion of the sons of Adam to the three known continents, with Asia at the top, Africa to the right, and Europe to the left. Jerusalem is at the center of the world with East at the top, the location of the rising sun and also of the Garden of Eden, and hence the word "orientation" or facing towards the Orient to the East.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ Most early Arabic maps have south at the top, also for religious purposes, the direction of Mecca from Arabia.



Figure 191. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, Günther Zainer, Augsburg, 1472

The Ebstorf mappa mundi is an elaborate T-O map, but here the world has become the physical embodiment of Christ (Figure 192). His head can be seen at the top, his hands to each side, and His feet on the bottom. Jerusalem is the navel of Christ, in the center of the world, and like the Isidore, the East is at the top as shown by the small vignette of Eden next to the head of Christ. This union of geography and Christian metanarrative is important to recognize as a prevailing medieval mindset of God and Earth as one and also of the Platonian idea of man as “minor mundus,” “a little world, reflecting in both body and soul the structure of the cosmos,”²⁹⁵ which had allegences to concept astrology and the four humors as well. The spiritual and physical worlds are merged physically here, and tales from the Bible are depicted in the areas in which they were believed to have occurred. While it is unlikely anyone believed this was a wayfinding map, it does illuminate the perception of the physical presence of God in the terrestrial plane.

²⁹⁵ Evelyn Edson and Emilie Savage-Smith, *Medieval Views of the Cosmos* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, 2004), 46.



Figure 192. Gervase of Ebstorf, *Ebstorf Map*, manuscript map on goat skin, 3.6m x 3.6m, 13th century. Originally in the Ebstorf convent, but destroyed in 1943 during WWII.

Another example of this mingling of the spiritual and physical are a series of anthropomorphic maps by Picino de Canistris (1296-1350), his attempts “to comprehend the meaning of God’s universe and his place within that scheme,”²⁹⁶ such as the image below (Figure 193) which attempts to better understand the relationship of the soul to the cardinal points and four seasons.

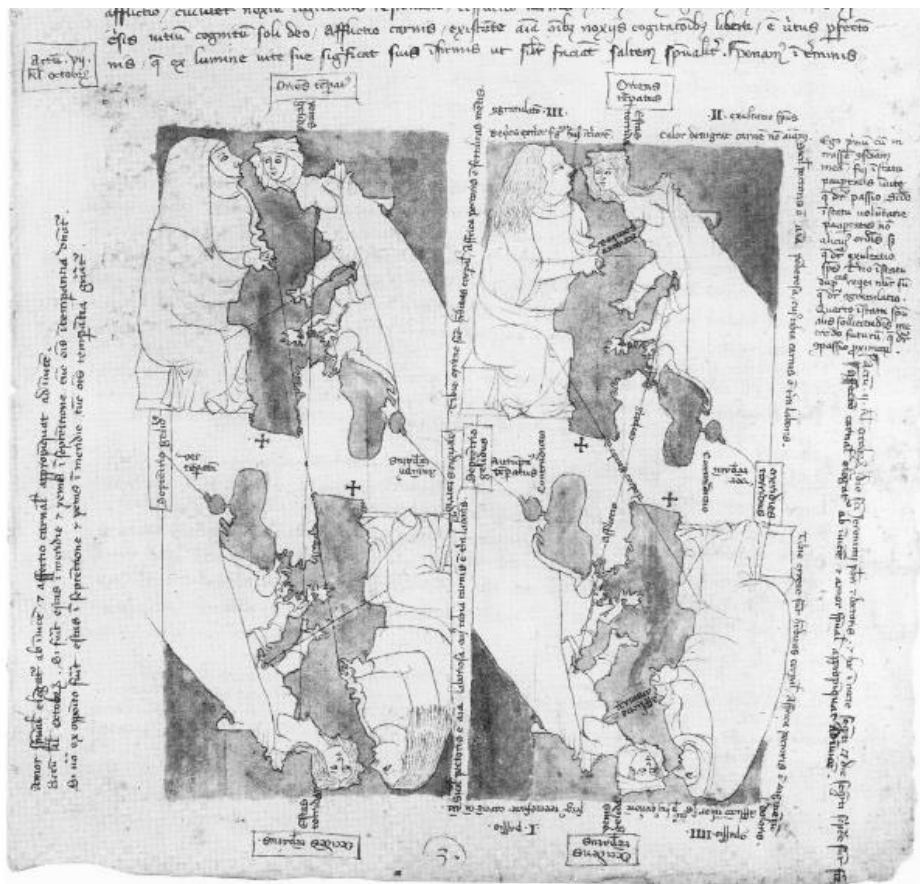


Figure 193. Diagram on the States of the Soul in Relation to the Four Cardinal Points and the Four Seasons, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat 6435, f. 58r

A wonderful later example of merging the spiritual as embodied by the Habsburg Empire as the head of the Holy Roman Empire is the map widely reproduced and in several variations, here in the Munster version (Figure 191). Hispania is the head

²⁹⁶ Catherine Harding, “Opening to God: The Cosmographical Diagrams of Opicinus de Canistris,” *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 61, no. 1 (January 1, 1998): 20.

of the continent and the church, with her right arm Italy and the rest of her gown making up the rest of Europe. She holds a scepter and the globus cruciger as symbols of Holy Roman Imperialism, and is an elegant embodiment of the Habsburgs as representatives of God on Earth.



Figure 191. Sebastian Munster, *Europe as Queen*, Basel, 1570

While maps can include wayfinding from one place to another, or how the world relates to Biblical narratives, we will be focusing here specifically on imperial and Christian agendas of possession in cartography and spatial structure as they relate to the *Décadas* of Antonio de Herrera in the late sixteenth century Spain.

Imperialism, Casa de Contratación and Spanish Mapping in the sixteenth century

“Maps are tools of imperialism as much as guns and warships.”²⁹⁷

Philip II was very aware of the power in using “geography and cartography as instruments of government”²⁹⁸ as was his father Charles V, often giving maps as diplomatic gifts to remind rivals and potential investors of his conquests and power. Not only were elemental developments essential in navigation, but also in perceptions of time: Charles V and Philip II faced “problems of global space which was tied to a new perception of time, as the future demanded long range planning of uncertain length over unknown distances.”²⁹⁹ The importance of mapping in the development and management of the Spanish empire is evident in the development of the Casa de Contratación and in the efforts to map the Iberian Peninsula in the sixteenth century. This lends credence to the assertion that in Herrera’s time maps in Spain were not only respected as legitimate tools for governance but were also recognized as a technology of imperial control, and they existed in several forms.

Maps in paintings are referred to by Harley as “territorial symbols,”³⁰⁰ and the Renaissance is rich with examples in portraiture but also in fresco paintings. For example, map mural cycles of the Italian Renaissance “may be interpreted as visual summa of contemporary knowledge, power, and prestige, some of it religious, but most of it secular.”³⁰¹ Examples include the Palazzo Vecchio in

²⁹⁷ Harley, *Maps and the Columbian Encounter*, 97.

²⁹⁸ Ricardo Padrón, “Mapping Plus Ultra: Cartography, Space, and Hispanic Modernity,” *Representations*, no. 79 (July 1, 2002): 28–60.

²⁹⁹ Ursula Lamb, *Cosmographers and Pilots of the Spanish Maritime Empire* /, *Collected Studies*; (London: Variorum, 1995), chapter VIII, 1.

³⁰⁰ Denis E Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design, and Use of Past Environments* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 295.

³⁰¹ Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*, 72-73.

Florence, the Vatican Palace in Rome, and the Palazzo Farnese at Caprarola, all created between 1560 and 1590.³⁰²



Figure 194. Palazzo Farnese *Sala del Mappamondo*, completed 1574. Caprarola, Italy

Above we discussed that the French were already using maps in legal cases as early as the 14th century to clarify one's position, and that these types of maps "may also have been found in Spain."³⁰³ If this is true, it would imply that the Spanish courts like those in France found maps to be objective evidence and helpful in verifying facts.

As already discussed in Chapter 2, the discovery of the New World posed serious spiritual, legal, and moral questions for the Spanish, but most practically it presented logistical problems in how to describe these lands in a meaningful way for travel and the exploitation of resources. In the sixteenth century the Humanists turned to classical sources; Pliny was a standard model for historiography, Ptolemy for geography, and the laws and imperialism of the Romans were embraced by the Christian kings. However, the greatest writers and

³⁰² Juergen Schulz, "Maps as Metaphors: Mural Map Cycles of the Italian Renaissance," in *Art and Cartography: Six Historical Essays* (London: University Of Chicago Press, 1987), 97. Juergen Schulz, "Maps as Metaphors: Mural Map Cycles of the Italian Renaissance," in *Art and Cartography: Six Historical Essays* (London: University Of Chicago Press, 1987), 97.

³⁰³ Buisseret, *The Mapmakers' Quest*, 5.

thinkers of the classical age were silent beyond the Pillars of Hercules at the gates of the Mediterranean, and Europe was without an intellectual infrastructure to describe the rapidly expanding empire. One of Spain's greatest contributions to science in the sixteenth century was the institutionalization of empirical practices of gathering, control, and dissemination of knowledge through the creation of the Casa de la Contratación and the Council of the Indies.³⁰⁴ This was certainly not just for intellectual curiosity but also for governance and possession: "To catalog the world is to appropriate it."³⁰⁵

That Spain was aware of surpassing the ancients in geographical knowledge is well represented in the coat of arms of Charles V, which included the Pillars of Hercules and the words "*Plus Ultra*," or "further beyond," framing the coat of arms of the monarchy. These pillars were recognized as symbolic of the farthest reaches of the travels of Hercules during his twelve tasks, and probably referred to the promontories of the Rock of Gibraltar and either Monte Hacho in Ceuta or Jebel Musa in Morocco. Dante described in the *Inferno* Ulysses's voyage beyond the pillars to seek knowledge only to sink during a whirlwind. The Spaniards, as celebrated in Charles V's coat of arms, had made it over and beyond unknown waters, and now had to create a new system to manage and describe what they found there. "The very existence of America exposed the errors in Ptolemy's geography; its species showed deficiencies in Aristotle's taxonomy."³⁰⁶ This represents a major shift from a reliance on the classics to empirical study institutionalized by the Spaniards. "When in ancient or modern times have the great enterprises of so few succeeded against so many?...and who has equaled

³⁰⁴ Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature*, 2. As Barrera-Osorio describes, the "Scientific Revolution" started in Spain in the 1520's with this institutionalization. While Barrera-Osorio credits the institutionalization of empirical practice to Spain, the development of theoretical science to England, Holland, and France in the seventeenth century, which does not come to Spain until later in that century.

³⁰⁵ Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*, 165.

³⁰⁶ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 57.

those of Spain? Certainly not the Jews nor the Greeks nor the Romans, about whom most is written.”³⁰⁷

The world was rapidly expanding. The explorers described by Herrera are but a few of the many who doubled the size of the known world in the sixteenth century. These were not entirely European but included the Arabs and the Chinese as well: Ibn Majid, Ibn Batuta, Ibn Khaldun from the Middle East and Chêng Ho, for example, were greatly influential on European mapmakers and explorers in the European Age of Exploration.³⁰⁸ Certainly the increased development of cartography around the rediscovery of Ptolemaic mathematical formulas of space delineation supported and enhanced these interests during this time, as did conflicts in territorial claims of the new world following the discoveries of Columbus.³⁰⁹



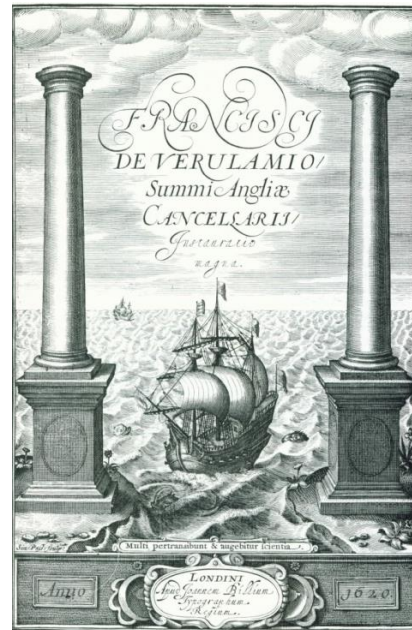
Left: Figure 195. Detail of the *Tabula Peutinger*, 12th-13th century copy of a 4th century original, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Vienna. Showing the columns as gateways to the Atlantic

Right: Figure 196. Emblem of Charles V of Spain, Town Hall of Seville

³⁰⁷ Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 1, Francisco de Jerez in 1534, as translated by the author.

³⁰⁸ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 46–47.

³⁰⁹ Richard L Kagan and Benjamin Schmidt, “Maps and the Early Modern State,” in *History of Cartography*, vol. 3, Part 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 662–663.



Left: Figure 197. Andrés García de Céspedes, *Regimiento de navegación*, Madrid, 1606.

Right: Figure 198. Sir Francis Bacon's *Instauratio Magna*, London, 1620. Note again the use of the Pillars of Hercules, on the left with a ship under full sail heading out beyond the classical boundaries under the royal seal of the Spanish Empire. The copying of this image by Sir Francis Bacon on the right years later demonstrates albeit without reference to the source, the reliance on Spain for this break with classical study and development of navigational institutions, and familiarity with Spanish texts on this subject.

Rapid developments and institutionalization of knowledge systems logically follow the needs of their patrons, and nautical science was no exception as “the first discipline which developed an international group of lay experts whose work ranged from the total shaping of ideas concerning the universe to the charting of oceans and the design of nautical instruments.”³¹⁰ Opening distribution of goods across vast expanses of oceanic space was essential to the development of global trade involving the resources of the New World, and protecting and systematizing this trade was integral to its success. Physical control was implemented with the limitation of trade with the Americas to one port, Seville.³¹¹ Knowledge was controlled and closely monitored with the founding of the *Casa de Contratación* in Seville in 1503 by royal decree.

³¹⁰ Lamb, *Cosmographers and Pilots of the Spanish Maritime Empire* /, chapter III, 40. Lamb's chapter “Science by Litigation: A Cosmographical Feud” discusses in great detail the development of scientific discipline in the sixteenth century as becoming increasingly distinct as scientific knowledge rather than knowledge based on medieval conceptions of “the truths of theology, magic, or poetry”.

³¹¹ Davies, *The Golden Century of Spain, 1501-1621*, 21.

Certainly the dangers inherent to ships carrying great wealth was of considerable concern. Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, a chronicler of the comings and goings of ships between Seville and the Indies, noted in 1606 that the loss of a fleet that year to a storm “impoverished many in Peru and Seville.”³¹² However, the challenges of more extensive sea voyages in the sixteenth century, already rife with disease, malnutrition and other perils, led to some important advances in navigational equipment and cartographic techniques. These efforts are beautifully illustrated in *Invention of the Compass*, an engraving included in *Nova reperta*, ca. 1599-1603. In this image, Flavio Gioia of Amalfitano, the 14th century inventor of the maritime compass, works with both text and compass. He does not look out the window but relies on the tools in his office, which includes a pool of mercury, terrestrial globe, and armillary sphere. Beyond him through the window are antiquated boats suited for fishing closer to shore, while hanging from his ceiling is a spectacular model of a modern carrack,³¹³ alluding to wider and deeper ocean travel farther afield, which can only be realized through academic pursuits in navigation.

³¹² James Casey, *Early modern Spain a social history* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 75.

³¹³ Susan Dackerman, Harvard Art Museums, and Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, *Prints and the Pursuit of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.; New Haven [Conn.]: Harvard Art Museums ; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2011), 38.



Figure 199. Hans Collaert the Younger, after Stradanus (Jan van der Straet), *Invention of the Compass*, from *Nova reperta* (*New inventions and discoveries of modern times*), ca. 1599–1603. engraving.

For example, while the true time keepers that made determining longitude accurately was still quite a way in the future,³¹⁴ 16th-17th century attempts at a better assessment of longitude with the tools available made great advances: “all the great practical improvements in timekeeping, such as the gilding of watch parts against corrosion, introduced in the mid-seventeenth century, and the use of the pendulum and balance spring in the mid-seventeenth century, were inspired by attempts to perfect the means to find the longitude, primarily at sea.”³¹⁵

The mass printing of “rutters,” or pilot books concerned primarily with tides and coastlines of known areas, were becoming more widely prevalent as explorations expanded, providing first hand information of new coastlines and prevailing currents. Accurately plotting one’s position in the open sea without the familiar visual landmarks of the Mediterranean made Atlantic crossings precarious. Modifications of the astrolabe, a tool used by Muslims to determine the direction

³¹⁴ See Dava Sobel's excellent book, *Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time* (New York: Walker, 1995).

³¹⁵ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 49.

of Mecca for qibla, for sea travel by European explorers in the sixteenth century was of significant help in ensuring safe passage, as were other cartographic advances in Seville.³¹⁶

Modeled after the *Casa de India* in Lisbon, the *Casa de Contratación* was staffed with cosmographers who studied the physical universe, and pilots, who were trained in navigation and chart modification. Its objectives were not only to regulate commerce and act as a maritime court of law, but to focus on and promote maritime studies as a school of navigation, regulate and oversee the production and distribution of maps, and amend the closely guarded master map of the world, the *padrón general*: “era inventario de las tierras descubiertas, al que se iban agregando, día por día, los datos de los nuevos descubrimientos.”³¹⁷ The *Leyes de Indias* declared that “los pilotes y marineros vayan echando sus puntos y mirando muy bien las derrotas, corrientes, aguajes, vientos, crecientes y aguadas que en ellas hubiere, y los tiempos del año, y con la sonda en la mano noten los baxos [sic] y arrecifes...”³¹⁸ In 1594, Phillip II established classes in “Náutica y Astronomía moderna,” one of many official efforts to standardize and systematize training and quality control of experts.³¹⁹ “Portuguese and Spanish cosmographers literally redrew the map of the earth... As the Portuguese inched their way around the Cape of Good Hope with the help of cross-staffs, astrolabes, and compasses; they helped rewrite history on a global scale. The new maritime routes across the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean helped create new global economies.”³²⁰

³¹⁶ Ibid., See chapter 2 for a detailed explanation of the use of these instruments in navigation.

³¹⁷ Salvador García Franco, *Historia Del Arte y Ciencia De Navegar : Desenvolvimento Histórico De “Los Cuatro Términos” De La Navegación*. (Madrid: Instituto Histórico de Marina, 1947), 55.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 101.

³²⁰ Bleichmar et al., *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800*, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, 1–2. See also Jerry Brotton, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World* and his discussion of the impact of cartography in developing mercantile power during the early modern period.

The *Casa* made important contributions in publications on navigational study, which were translated into other languages as important references for other European nations. “La segunda y tercera edición del *Arte de navegar* de Pedro de Medina, fueron distintas de la primera y se lanzaron con el título de *Regimiento de navegación*; sólo en Francia llegó su libro a las doce ediciones.”³²¹ Other publications on navigation included *Suma de Geografía* by Fernández de Enciso, 1519; and *Tratado del Esphera y del Arte de Marear*, Francisco Falero, 1535.³²²

Other countries sought to emulate its model, sending scholars to Seville and translating Spanish texts into many other European languages. For example, in 1558 Stephen Borough came to Seville to visit the navigational school “with the intention of establishing a similar institution in England.”³²³ While there was some exchange of knowledge, this seems to have been limited to the general enterprise of navigational techniques and training.

The control of geographic information was of unprecedented importance in the maintenance and exploitation of the resources of the Americas. Philip II was constantly in need of money to defend the empire and Catholicism in Europe against Protestants and the Ottomans. The protection of routes of maritime exploration and trade, from which was derived the bulk of Spain’s wealth, was integral to financial stability of the empire. Therefore the dissemination of knowledge was closely monitored; the secrecy with which the *Casa de Contratación* guarded the details of the *padrón general* reflects concerns facing any maritime trading enterprise of this period. Until Herrera, official state maps were prohibited from being printed to control the dissemination of cartographic information, and there were strict rules governing the use and stewardship of any maps used for travel. The regulations were fierce and systematic on the

³²¹ García Franco, *Historia Del Arte Y Ciencia de Navegar*, Tomo I, 54.

³²² Martín Fernández de Enciso and Mariano Cuesta Domingo, *Suma de geographia* (Madrid: Museo Naval, 1987); Francisco Faleiro, *Tratado Del Esphera Y Del Arte Del Marear : Con El Regimie[n]to de Las Alturas : Co[n] Algu[n]as Reglas Nueuame[n]te Escritas Muy Necesarias*. (Sevilla: En la i[m]prenta de Juan Cro[m]berger., 1535).

³²³ Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature*, 5.

government level; even as *Cronista Mayor*, Herrera was strictly overseen by officials. At the end of each salaried year (400 ducats each) he had to bring what he had finished in that time frame to the council for review before publication.³²⁴

There is an irony in the intense scrutiny in cartographic enterprises and the general lack of consistency in map production coming out of Sevilla in the mid 16th century: “los cartógrafos industriales establecidos en Sevilla contaban con una obligada guía, al par que con una necesaria inspección y aprobación de sus trabajos por el piloto mayor y cosmógrafo” but there are many instances where “cartas no ajustadas al padrón real... tenían dos graduaciones con el fin de salvar con ellas el desconcierto de las variaciones de la aguja de marear...”³²⁵ Until after 1570, cartography was terribly erratic in Spain, perhaps, as Richard Kagan has suggested and Ricardo Padrón maintains, because cartographic talent and scientific advancements were confined to the *Casa de Contratación*: “As a result, the vast majority of Spanish maps produced during this period were those developed on the margins, or even entirely outside the methods, assumptions, and institutions of the cartographic revolution.”³²⁶

Map collecting was of enormous importance in Renaissance collections as they related to public and imperial interests, and there is considerable evidence to claim “state interest as the driving force behind the formation of map collections” during this period.³²⁷ Charles V was fascinated by maps, and even spent most of the winter of 1539 learning about maps from the royal cosmographer and cartographer Alonso de Santa Cruz. As quoted and translated by Richard Kagan, Santa Cruz later wrote how Charles V “spent most days with me, Alonso de Santa Cruz, royal cosmographer, learning about matters of astrology, the earth, the theory of planets, as well as sea charts and cosmographical globes, all of which

³²⁴ Gardiner, “Antonio de Herrera and THE HISTORIA GENERAL,” 12.

³²⁵ García Franco, *Historia Del Arte Y Ciencia de Navegar*, II, 57.

³²⁶ Padrón, *The Spacious Word*, 40. See also Kagan 2000, 55–63 as noted by Padrón. See also Richard L. Kagan and Fernando Marias, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793*, 1st Edition (Yale University Press, 2000), 55-63.

³²⁷ Tolias, ““Maps in Renaissance Libraries and Collections,” 652.

gave him much pleasure and joy.”³²⁸ That Philip II knew of the work of the Gerardus Mercator and Jacob van Deventer is obvious not only in his having spent many years in the Netherlands, but he was also an avid collector of maps and books; he kept at least 4,000 books alone in his incomparable Escorial library.³²⁹ He owned a copy of Ortelius’s wildly popular *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, which he supposedly kept “close at hand.”³³⁰ Kagan suggests that this interest reflects two things: the knowledge and acknowledgement of cartography as an effective tool in managing an empire; and “an affiliation of cartography and the project of early modern state building.”³³¹

The commissioning and collecting of maps by European rulers throughout the 16th century, and including Charles V and Henry VIII also reflects a new perspective on the associations of land and power: “Sovereignty in medieval Europe was power over people, not place, and only gradually did it begin to encompass ideas of territoriality.”³³² Increases in imperial commissions also reflect a new “territorial consciousness” that emerged in the early Renaissance that conflicted with medieval concepts of governance.³³³ The concept of mapping as a management tool of government and to assist in warfare was a relatively new concept to sixteenth century Spain. “The concern with the mapping of Spain was part of the inventory of resources which marked the growth of the early modern state.”³³⁴

There were several major cartographic projects undertaken during the reign of Philip II, including extensive surveys and mapping of the Iberian Peninsula;

³²⁸ Kagan and Schmidt, “Maps and the Early Modern State,” 661.

³²⁹ Davies, *The Golden Century of Spain, 1501-1621*, 120.

³³⁰ Robert W. Karrow, Abraham Ortelius, and Leo Bagrow, *Mapmakers of the Sixteenth Century and Their Maps: Bio-Bibliographies of the Cartographers of Abraham Ortelius, 1570 : Based on Leo Bagrow’s A. Ortelii Catalogus Cartographorum* (Chicago: Published for The Newberry Library by Speculum Orbis Press, 1993), 9.

³³¹ Kagan and Schmidt, “Maps and the Early Modern State,” 661.

³³² *Ibid.*, 662.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 664–665.

³³⁴ Casey, *Early Modern Spain a Social History*, 19.

topographical views of the cities of Spain commissioned by the king; and the *Relaciones geográficas* project in the Americas.³³⁵

In the mid sixteenth century, Philip II commissioned Anton van den Wyngaerde to produce city portraits of the Iberian Peninsula.³³⁶ The grid patterns still visible in these drawings and their relative faithfulness to the subject allude to an objectivity that in fact falls sway to aesthetics and symbolism (Figure 200). It has been well discussed that Wyngaerde's city portraits were highly subjective, focusing on important historical buildings and omitting new buildings, and moving objects, like the Valencia Cathedral in the *View of Valencia*, to be more visible than it would appear in real life, and aesthetically appropriate to the overall composition.³³⁷



Figure 200. Anton van den Wyngaerde, *View of Valencia*, 1563, pen and ink.
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

In 1571, Juan López de Velasco was assigned the role of cosmógrafo-cronista “of the states and kingdoms of the Indies, islands, and mainland of the Ocean sea,” the most distinguished position in the Consejo Real y Supremo de las Indias. Velasco then served “for nearly twenty years as the official gatekeeper of official

³³⁵ Kagan, “Clio and the Crown: Writing History in Hapsburg Spain,” 86.

³³⁶ The precedent for cityscapes is vast, and includes the *Della Catena* Map of Florence, ca. 1471-82. Museo Storico Topografico di Firenze. While work lacks the complexity of the Wyngaerde, it exemplifies a tradition well established at the time of Philip II's commission.

³³⁷ Richard Kagan, “*Urbs and Civitas* in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Spain,” in *Envisioning the City: Six Studies in Urban Cartography*, ed. David Buisseret (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 84–85.

knowledge about the New World and compose[d] the first official – although secret-cosmography of the New World.” He was in charge “of gathering and organizing all relevant information about the Spanish territory in the West Indies... and about the native population.” To accomplish this enormous task, Velasco consolidated all of the data on the New World of the previous 20 years, which culminated in his *Geografía y descripción universal de las Indias* in 1574.

Philip II also requested a grand project of written questionnaires be undertaken in the New World, the *Relaciones Geográficas*, which were distributed between 1577-1586 to the colonies to gather geographical and other relevant descriptions of their respective surroundings,³³⁸ “printed questionnaires to local officials [in the Indies] asking them, among other things, to provide the latitude and longitude of their localities and to observe and record two predicted lunar eclipses.”³³⁹ Maps were also requested, as well as descriptions of the coast, ports, and “informaciones geográficas sobre las características físicas y naturales” and of cities’ positions in regards to the North Star and the sun at midday. Examples of these questions include: “21.a - Los volcanes, cuevas y todas las otras cosas notables... 40.a – Las mareas y crecimientos de la mar que tan grandes son...” This work included an enormous amount of politically sensitive information for navigation and other matters that rendered it unavailable for publication but was an invaluable resource within the government for identifying and managing these new territories. Philip II required that a map accompany each report, indicating the importance he placed on visual depictions to substantiate and augment the written word for better understanding and governance.³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Howard F. Cline, “The Relaciones Geográficas of the Spanish Indies, 1577-1586,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 44, no. 3 (August 1, 1964): 341–74, doi:10.2307/2511856.

³³⁹ Padrón, *The Spacious Word*, 65.

³⁴⁰ Buisseret, *The Mapmakers’ Quest*, 89.

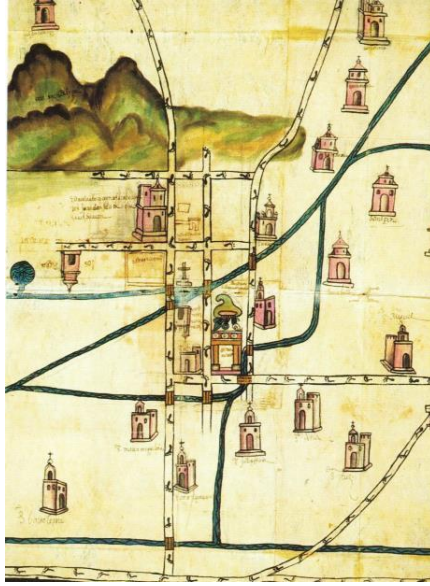


Figure 201. Anonymous, *Pintura* from the *Relación Geográfica* for Mexicaltingo, ca. 1580³⁴¹

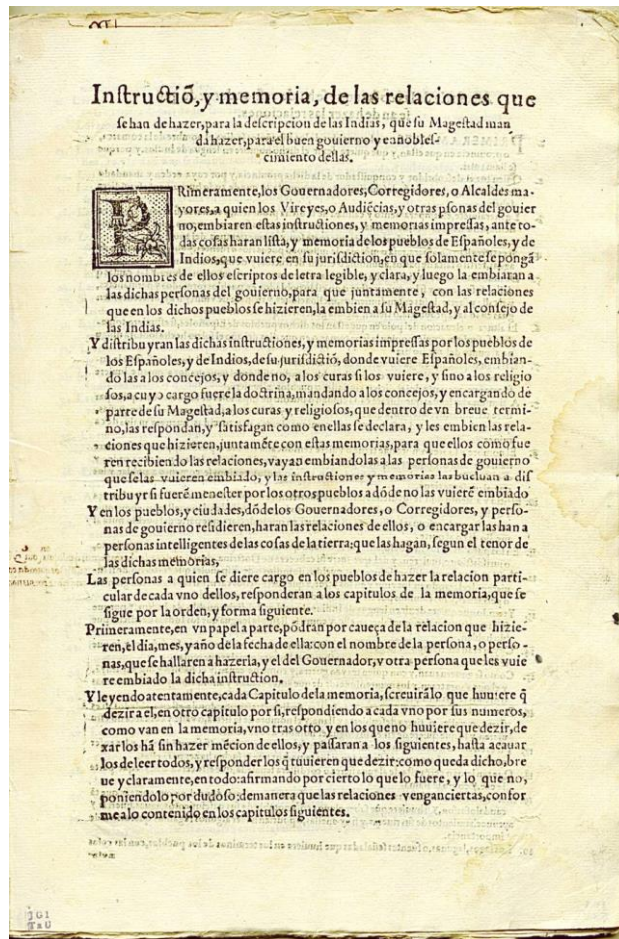


Figure 202. Text of the *Relaciones Geográficas* questionnaire. (First page), Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin

³⁴¹ Ibid., reproduced Plate IX.

Charles V left his son Philip II a formidable empire, unprecedented in scale even to the Romans. Particularly after Philip II acquired the Crown of Portugal in 1580, it was generally acknowledged that the sun never set on the domains of Philip II, or “*Sol mihi semper lucet: the sunne always shineth upon me.*”³⁴² This sentiment is illustrated beautifully in a gilded bronze medallion made ca. 1583, which shows the king on one side with a horse on top of a globe on the other with words: NON SUFFICIT ORBIS: “the world is not enough” on the other.³⁴³



Figure 203. Commemorative medal on the occasion of the annexation of Portugal by Philip II with the inscription: NON SUFFICIT ORBIS

Charles V urged his son to protect what was rightfully his in a “Political Statement” of 1548³⁴⁴: “... you will inherit and possess them, with full rights and evident justification. And if you should show weakness in any part of this, it will open the door to bringing everything back into question... It will be better to hold on to everything than to let yourself be forced later to defend the rest, and run the risk of losing it. If your predecessors with the grace of God held onto Naples and Sicily, and also the Low Countries, against the French, you should trust that He will assist you to keep what you have inherited.”³⁴⁵ Following his father’s advice, Philip II kept ahold of the colonies in Florida and the Philippines, never relinquishing control willingly of these areas, “even though the cost of defending them far exceeded their economic or fiscal benefits.”³⁴⁶ That Philip II was more interested in preserving and controlling rather than expanding his empire is clear

³⁴² Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*, 10.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

in his own words: “I would very much like to justify my actions to the whole world and show that I do not lay claim to other states... I also wish it to be clearly understood that I will defend the lands which Charles V has given me.”³⁴⁷

Geographical knowledge was essential for the survival of the empire. The Dutch Protestant rebellion against the Catholic Habsburgs was quickly draining the coffers of the Spanish monarchy, as were further conflicts with the Ottoman Turks. The unification and effective governance of the Americas and the accumulation and distribution of wealth back to the core state was a priority to maintain the empire as a world power. The silver and gold provided by the new world also helped assuage the many debts the crown was accumulating to German, Italian, and Dutch banks, and was the only thing of real value to trade with Asia, with whom the Europeans in general did enormous importing of goods. In the 16th through the 19th centuries, 80 percent of silver on the market came from the Spanish Americas.³⁴⁸ Management of the new lands was of unprecedented importance to the maintenance of the financial health of the empire.

Imperialism can be defined as “the relationship of a hegemonial state to peoples or nations under its control.”³⁴⁹ Control can take many forms and can be instigated in varying degrees, but “all, however, have the effect of removing rights and freedoms from the subject peoples and vesting them instead in the controlling power. The degree of control exercised will depend on the relationship of the process of expansion of the characteristics of the area in which it is taking place. The nature and strength of the expanding power will influence the extent to which it is able to sustain the process of expansion.”³⁵⁰ The pressure of keeping such a vast expanse of lands and peoples under the banner of one empire was a taxing enterprise, and the Spanish monarchy faced bankruptcy in

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 4.

³⁴⁸ Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2010), 124.

³⁴⁹ Geoffrey Parker, *The Geopolitics of Domination* (London: Routledge, 1988), 5.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 5.

the 16th century in its efforts to do so. A solution via cartographic means both literally and iconographically was one possible solution, as we can see in the *Décadas*.

***Décadas*: The Title Pages**

That God, the king, and Spain are inextricably linked is the key to the iconographic agenda of Herrera. Included in the very title of Herrera's work, “..Los Hechos de los Castellanos...” is reflected the presumption of this triad relationship according to Spanish Absolutism,³⁵¹ where the dual meaning of “hechos,” as “deeds” and “facts” of the Castellanos in the New World are bonded with the Spanish monarchy through image association on the title page.

The iconography of the title pages consolidates the empire under the specifically Hispano-Christian umbrella of the Catholic Monarchy of Habsburg Spain. Philip II was dedicated to following a strict “dynastic policy of Catholic nationalism... he saw religious orthodoxy as a mainstay of Spain and the empire, and the Spanish crown as a mainstay of orthodoxy in its realms... Even more than Fernando and Isabel, he tried to Hispanicize fully the Church in Spain.”³⁵² He used fewer and fewer foreigners in official church positions, and performed a massive reformation of the Catholic Church in Spain, which focused on clerical education and other significant modifications.³⁵³ Spain under Philip II was profoundly spiritual, as he himself told his governor general in the Netherlands, “You are engaged in God's service and in mine, which is the same thing.”³⁵⁴ Even under the humanistically trained Philip II, Spain maintained its status as “the champion of the Counter-Reformation and the sword of international Catholicism.”³⁵⁵

³⁵¹ Cummins, Tom, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America,” 18.

³⁵² Payne, *Spanish Catholicism*, 47.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 48.

³⁵⁴ Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*, 99.

³⁵⁵ Payne, *Spanish Catholicism*, 46.

According to Angel Delgado-Gomez, the objectives of the Spanish in Spanish America were “God, the crown, and private wealth, all three neatly conceived as mutually complementary. These were served by the Church, the King and his administration, and the sailors, soldiers, and merchants.”³⁵⁶ If we are to invest in this model, we can see how tidily Herrera has managed to tie these elements together. The format of the titlepage appear Biblical in design, the presence of the monarchy set squarely in the center in the place of the crucifix, and the great explorers and conquerors are presented iconographically in the place of the apostles.

Philip II’s piety was legendary, and his belief that the church and monarchy were inseparable is well illustrated in the instructions he left for his son Philip III as he rose to take the throne, “that he must always remember that Spanish monarchs were placed on earth to conserve and promote the true Faith – even if this meant the loss of his kingdoms and his own demise.”³⁵⁷ This is evident in the 1575 painting commissioned of Titian at the birth of Philip III. In this image, Philip II holds his son aloft as an angel descends from the heavens in rays of light bearing a scroll with the words: *Majora tibi*, “may you achieve greater deeds.” A bound Ottoman man sits on the ground forelornly looking at the ground in defeat, and a grand painting of the Battle of Lepanto of 1571, during which Philip II defeated the Turks, is set in the background. The implications of empire and Christian militarism are clear as are Philip II’s aspirations for his son to surpass and defend his father’s ideals.

³⁵⁶ Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 7.

³⁵⁷ Rosemarie Mulcahy, *Philip II of Spain, Patron of the Arts*, illustrated edition (Dublin: Four Courts Press Ltd, 2004), 58.



Figure 204. Titian, *Following Victory at Lepanto, Felipe II offers Prince Fernando to Heaven*, 1572-1575, oil on canvas. Museo del Prado, Madrid

Unification and Language

The unification of Spain under the Counter Reformation and after the expulsions and inquisitions of the 15th and 16th centuries was a carefully constructed image that perhaps was not entirely an accurate representation of the religious demographic in the 16th century.³⁵⁸ While Conversos, Jews who had converted to Christianity, and Moriscos, or converted Muslims, faced many discriminations,

³⁵⁸ Henry Kamen, *The Disinherited: Exile and the Making of Spanish Culture, 1492-1975* (Harper, 2007), 95.

they were still ingrained in Spanish society in profound ways. “It is incontestable that some of the best-known figures of Hispanic culture in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, and later of the so-called ‘Golden Age’ during the reign of Philip II, were of Jewish origin. They were by no means physical exiles, and appeared to be fully integrated into Spanish society.”³⁵⁹ Religious unity was not obvious, particularly in rural areas of Spain, where mysticism, witchcraft, and Christianity merged freely. This was due in large part to the illiteracy, diversity of language, and the cultural tapestry of Spain’s heritage. The people of Spain were compared with the barbarians from the New World: “these are veritable Indies we have in Spain.”³⁶⁰

In the sixteenth century, Catholicism on the Iberian Peninsula took on a formidable and unique character. According to Payne, the unique nature of Spanish Catholicism was a result of the Catholic Reconquest of Spain from Islamic peoples: “The principle effect of the Islamic confrontation with Hispanic Christian society was not any orientalizing of that society but rather the development of a distinct Hispano-Christian subculture within Western civilization, a subculture whose attitudes and values were shaped not by Islam but by a centuries-long process of warfare and confrontation.”³⁶¹

Language was an essential vehicle for unification of Empire: “The prime instrument of Hispanization was, of course, language.”³⁶² Herrera’s work is specifically about the “hechos” or “deeds,” of the Castellanos, and is written in the language of Castellano, a tradition already associated with empowering Christianity in the empire and with managing the empire. “By far the majority of books printed and read in Barcelona and Valencia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were devotional, a fact attesting to the primacy of religion in constituting the consciousness in this period. And the vast majority of these

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 19.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 96. See chapter 3 for a full discussion on this topic.

³⁶¹ Payne, *Spanish Catholicism*, 23.

³⁶² Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*, 57.

books were in Spanish.”³⁶³ Resina cites Sebastiá Pons and Joan Fuster as asserting that for Catalans, the language of theology, mysticism, and asceticism was Castellano and in Valencia, Castellano was used for sermons, novenas, and vestry.³⁶⁴ The importance of language in conquest is explained by Antonio Nebrija, who described the importance of the universality of the empirical language in the Americas for effective governance: “siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio... muchos pueblos bárbaros e naciones de peregrinas lenguas... tenían necesidad de recibir las leies quell vencedor pone al vencido e con ellas nuestra lengua.”³⁶⁵

The fervor of the Catholic monarchy of Isabel and Ferdinand in many ways reached its zenith in the second half of the sixteenth century, when the focus of many universities in Spain began to shift from law to theology, and vernacular works on religious topics were becoming more popular, such as *Tercer abecedario spiritual*, by Francisco de Osuna (1527) and *Retablo de la vida de Cristo*, by Juan de Padilla. Certainly this may have been in response to the proliferation of vernacular translations by the Protestant Reformationists as well, many of whom were trying to give the words of the Bible to the people without the erroneous and allegedly self-serving edits frequently employed by the Catholic clergy. For example, Martin Luther translated Erasmus’s Greek Bible translation into German, while Lefevre published the first French edition of the gospels in 1522.

The vernacular saw a great rise in use for religious texts during the Renaissance, particularly for reaching broader audiences during the Reformation, but there were other reasons as well. Medical and scientific works were also being published more widely in the vernacular, and this reflects nationalistic pride as as

³⁶³ Joan Ramón Resina, “Discontinuity in the Formation of National Culture,” in *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*, ed. Marina Brownlee and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 291.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 291–292.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 292.

well as possibly “the need for a decisive break with the past,”³⁶⁶ as the ancients had no knowledge of the new sciences of the early modern period. In 1620, Francis Bacon proclaimed in his *Novum organum* that: “it is well to observe the force and virtue and consequences of discoveries; and these are to be seen nowhere more conspicuously than in those three which were unknown to the ancients... namely, printing, gunpowder, and the magnet. For these three have changed the whole face and state of things throughout the world; the first in literature, the second in warfare, and the third in navigation...”³⁶⁷

The sixteenth century’s laicization of scientific culture took science out of the hands of the elite and made them accessible to broader audience. Explorers and writers such as João de Castro and many other Portuguese as well as Spanish abandoned Latin, the language of the Church, in favor of their national languages, “in order to make the natural history of the New World and the heroic maritime feats of the nation available to a wider public.”³⁶⁸

The first Spanish grammar book was published in Salamanca in 1492, by Elio Antonio de Nebrija. Allegedly, Queen Isabella asked the author why the book was necessary, to which he responded “language is the instrument of empire.”³⁶⁹ Herrera’s *Décadas* begins with the year 1492, binding the of his historical narrative together in a forced cohesiveness of language: “The heroes of “los hechos” are embedded in a society of Spanish speakers (castellanos) that is able to see the links of discrete events (historias particulares) as formed by their common linguistic and ‘imagined’ cultural relationship and managed under the power of

³⁶⁶ Allen G Debus, *Man and Nature in the Renaissance* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 6.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁶⁸ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 59. Livingstone also discusses the use of English by the Puritans in the Americas for quite a different purpose, the “democratization” of learning,” 72-73, which was probably not the intention of the Habsburgs.

³⁶⁹ John Armstrong Crow, *Spain: The Root and the Flower; a History of the Civilization of Spain and of the Spanish People*, 1st ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 151.

the king.”³⁷⁰ This may have had more importance for the Spanish in the 16th century, after 800 years of rule under another language, and echoed the strategies of the Roman Empire: “In the interests, then, of *realpolitik*, the citizens of the universal Spanish monarchy should be encouraged to speak Spanish... ‘language’ was more than mere speech. It was, more broadly, the means-the power (*potentia*)-by which the community came to acquire wisdom (*sapientia*).”³⁷¹

Language was known to have power, and the Humanists knew better than most the indebtedness of the Roman Empire to the “Imperial glue” of Latin in establishing and maintaining their empire.³⁷² Herrera’s text is written in Castellano, the first publication of this magnitude with imperial sponsorship to be so. This has enormous implications in placing this publication and its messages within the larger contexts of nationalizing the Spanish New World under one linguistic umbrella. This nationalism can certainly be applied to the name “*las Indias*” in the title as well, since the Spanish refused to use the name of a non-Spaniard, Amerigo Vespucci, in reference to the Americas, a term which was certainly in wide use with the rest of Europe at the time.³⁷³

While the institutionalization of a unifying Castilian language was underway in official histories, it still required some justification to readers in different parts of Spain. Valencia, for example, adopted Castilian over Catalan as preferable for publications, as explained in this disclaimer by Gaspar Escolano in his *Década primera de la historia de la insigne y Coronada Ciudad y Reyno de Valencia*, published in 1610: “Si en el phrasis Castellano me conocieres estrangero, pasa por ello, que mi pretensión no ha sido ser imitado sino solamente entendido de muchos, en

³⁷⁰ Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America.”, 21.

³⁷¹ Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*, 58.

³⁷² Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 16.

³⁷³ Peter W Dickson, *The Magellan Myth: Reflections on Columbus, Vespucci, and the Waldseemüller Map of 1507* (Mount Vernon, Ohio: Printing Arts Press, 2007), 87.

lengua universal, que lo es Castellana.”³⁷⁴ As Ramón Resina argues, this perception of a universal language as a nationalistic “truth” is inherently false as it is an empirical construction rather than indicative of otherwise nationalistic tendencies.³⁷⁵

Kagan convincingly argues that this tradition in Spain began much earlier, with Alfonso X who understood the connection between language and empire in the commission of a sacred history of Spain, the *General estoria* in the 13th century. “Here the rise of vernacular history had less to do with the nobility than with Alfonso X’s determination to enhance his royal authority and his efforts to make Castilian (i.e., Spanish) the official language of both administration and law. His empire, like that of Rome or of the Greeks, required its own language, and in this respects Alfonso anticipated by several centuries the advice that Nebrija offered to the Catholic monarchs in 1492. Henceforward, Spain’s official history was a vernacular history, a celebration of the imperium to which its rulers aspired.”³⁷⁶ When Charles V became king to take over the throne for his mother Joan the Mad, he was only sixteen and did not speak any Spanish. He was born and raised in Ghent, Belgium, and was considered by his new Spanish subjects as a “foreign intrusion” with his Flemish advisors and northern ways.³⁷⁷ However, as he aged he came to love the language, and there is some evidence that he wanted to make it a universal throughout Europe.³⁷⁸

Language as it applies to maps is of extreme importance, for as with all other elements of sign in the image, language adds to the overall structure within a recognizable framework. Conquered lands are renamed to an understandable linguistic code that allows the consumer to respond to a strange landscape in familiar codes of reference. That much of these lands, mountains, and rivers were

³⁷⁴ Ramón Resina, “Discontinuity in the Formation of National Culture,” As quoted by Ramon Resina, 288.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 24.

³⁷⁷ Reséndez, *A Land So Strange*, 20–21.

³⁷⁸ Davies, *The Golden Century of Spain, 1501-1621*, 61.

already named by indigenous peoples was often irrelevant in the time of discovery, to rename was to own and to make recognizable.

Perhaps more importantly in the case of Herrera is that language contributes to the overall structure of the cartographic elements, the geographical perception and cultural understanding of the characters depicted in the panels.

“Language... is more than just a medium for expressing thought. *It is, in fact, a major element in the formation of thought...* man’s very perception of the world about him is programmed by the language he speaks, just as a computer is programmed. Like a computer, man’s mind will register and structure external reality only in accordance with the program. Since two languages often program the same class of events quite differently, no belief or philosophical system should be considered apart from language.”³⁷⁹ Therefore, not only was the language of Castellano relevant as a means of communicating narrative and unifying symbolically the entirety of the Spanish Empire, but the structure of perception of the narrative would have been much more powerful and recognizable by that audience based on their own linguistic “programming.” Language reflects the means by which experiences and landscapes in the Indies were filtered through the Eurocentric lens. If we believe O’ Gorman’s assertions that our western concept of America as an identity was invented by Europeans, than this is even more exciting to consider how this filter was partially constructed through the descriptions of first hand physical experiences in the Indies by Europeans: “... people from different cultures not only speak different languages but, what is possibly more important, *inhabit different sensory worlds*. Selective screening of sensory data admits some things while filtering out others, so that *experience as it is perceived* through one set of culturally patterned sensory screens is quite different from experience perceived through another.”³⁸⁰

³⁷⁹ Edward T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990), 1–2.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

That Herrera sets a visual and linguistic sensory screen familiar to a European audience certainly impacts its perception by that audience in Eurocentric terms.³⁸¹

Cartographic Elements of the Title Pages

As Rabasa argues, the discovery of the New World “completed the European image of the planet; beyond that, however, it also established the universality of European history and subjectivity. Such a universality is not limited to matters of geographic location, but includes the inauguration of modes of thinking that define a global reality.”³⁸² These modes of thinking are inherently bound up in European (and here specifically Spanish) codes of both cartography and language.



Figure 205. *Década Terzera*, Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Herrera’s titlepages, unlike the Velasco maps discussed below, combine artistic and cartographic elements that indicate medieval visual traditions of geographical space rather than Renaissance influences. If we compare Herrera’s work to the *Très riches heures* map of Rome created in the early 15th century for the Duc de Berry in France, we can see some significant similarities. There is included in this

³⁸¹ An interesting argument for the prevalence of Castellano in scholarly material in Spain has been attributed to the “widespread use of Arabic [which] did help break Latin’s stranglehold on Europe’s literary and learned speech, paving the way for the rise of the vernacular languages and the great works of “national” writers, such as Cervantes in Jonathan Lyons, *The House of Wisdom: How the Arabs Transformed Western Civilization*, 1st ed. (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2010), 147.

³⁸² Rabasa, *Inventing America*, 8.

work a map of Rome (Figure 206), which is from a bird's eye view and also attempts to depict accurately the great monuments of the city. Like the work of Herrera, the map depicts a bird's eye view but side views of the buildings, but it is as if the world has been tilted like a table top to allow greater visual legibility to the viewer rather than trying to create a sense of absolute realism.

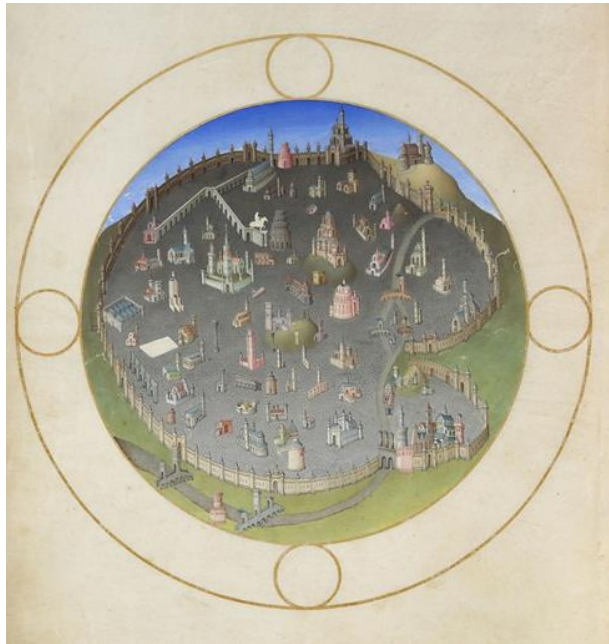


Figure 206. *A Map of Rome*, *Très Riches Heures du duc de Berry*, tempera on vellum, 1411-1416, Folio 141, Musée Condé, Chantilly, France

Herrera's cityscapes in the title pages refer to some identifiable qualities of cities, but blend them in with a generic European model which falls short of the precision of the Limbourg brother's accurate but certainly artistic rendering of Rome. This is common in another medieval tradition of what Kagan refers to as *typus*, or a map that was understood by sixteenth cartographers to represent a partially accurate rendering.³⁸³ In the example of Toledo (Figure 207), published by Pedro de Medina in 1548, Kagan points out that the recognizable features of the cathedral, alcazar, and Tagus River are blended with "a cityscape that is otherwise completely conventional."³⁸⁴ Comparing this map with Herrera's depiction of Mexico City (see Figure 205), we can see the visual reference to the

³⁸³ Kagan and Marias, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793*, 7.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 7. Pedro de Medina's *View of Toledo* is reproduced in figure 1.8 on the same page.

Cortés original map but the city itself has become a generic Spanish town like many others. This is particularly interesting as Herrera seems to have ignored the proliferation of prints made from the map of Cortés and widely published throughout the sixteenth century.³⁸⁵ By doing so, he imposes familiar Old World visual and textual terms on the New, and Europeanizes the exotic. As Elliott points out, Cortés does the same in his texts, describing the temples of the Aztecs as mosques, and the market of Tenochtitlán as similar to that of Salamanca.³⁸⁶



Figure 207. Pedro de Medina, *Castilla y Leon* (Toledo), Woodcut print, 1548

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 89–90. See Kagan for a complete description of the known publications of variations of this image.

³⁸⁶ Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492-1650*, 19.

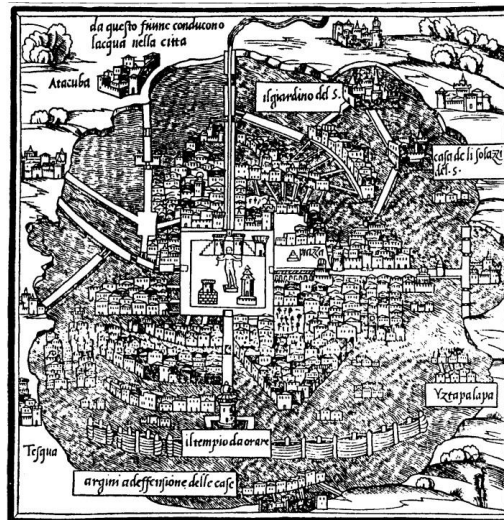
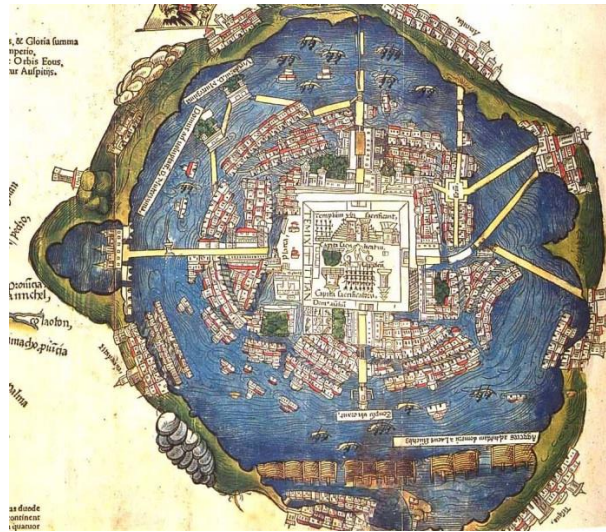


Figure 208. Left: Tenochtitlan Hernán Cortés. *Praeclara Ferdina[n]di Cortesii de noua maris oceani. . .* (Enlightenment of Ferdinand Cortés concerning new facts about the new sea and the ocean . . .). Nuremberg: Peypus, 1524

Figure 209. Right: Benedetto Bordone, *La gran città di Temixtitan*, woodcut, From *Islario*, Venice, 1529

Graphic Narratives, Itineraries, and the *Décadas* Title Pages

The structure of the titlepages in Herrera's work defines the narrative of the history of the new world in terms of navigational and cartographic elements in a system of landscape panels palatable and recognizable to a contemporary audience. It illustrates a historical process of spatial conceptualization of the New World in Spain. The panel design follows the construction of a specific type of way-finding map, the itinerary or cartogram strip map, but merge this

cartographic tradition with the iconographical structure of life of Christian and classical frieze-like narratives. As will be discussed in greater detail below, these Christian readings of the cartographic methodology are bolstered by the structure of the title pages as a whole and their reference to Bible cover design.

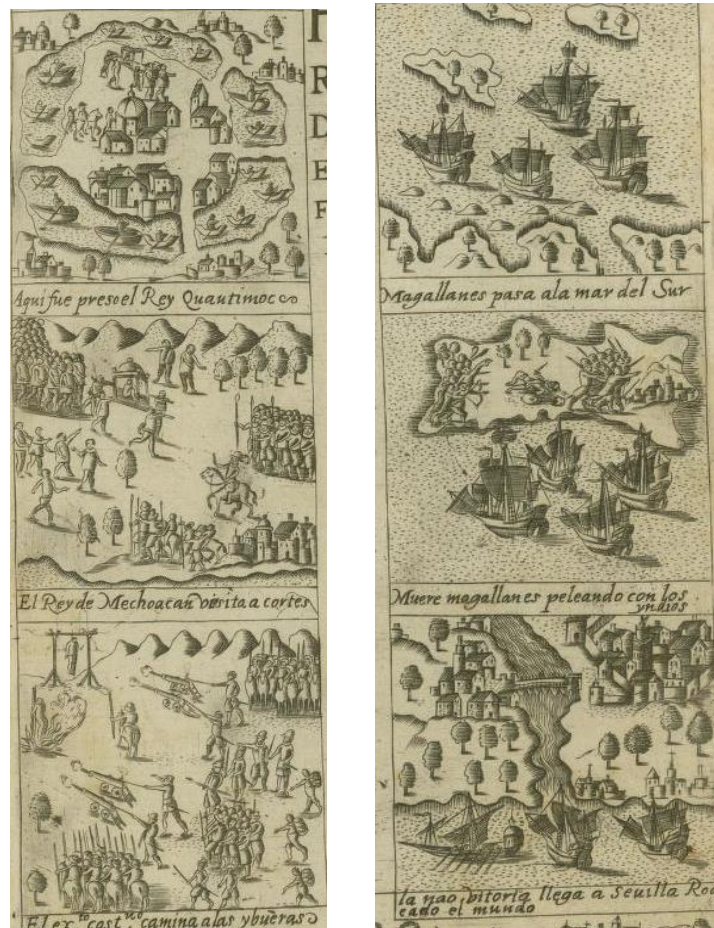


Figure 210. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Década Tercera*, titlepage detail, 1601, John Carter Brown Library

Like the Mercator and London Underground maps (Figures 189 and 190, respectively), Herrera's visual mapping includes little superfluous information, and the audience is directed along a political, religious and social order that guides one towards a particular objective: justification of empire. Readers are taken through an historical journey in much the same way one would use a map to traverse space: "On a journey, travelers see only the towns through which they pass, know only the roads upon which they travel, and experience all of this in a specific

sequence.”³⁸⁷ These types of maps translate well to Herrera’s images (and his corresponding text), as “itinerary maps... are linear, showing a progression of places in a set order. They read like a text, and therefore offered... a textual way of representing the world.”³⁸⁸

For the itinerary map, “its visual focus remains on the route in question.”³⁸⁹ In other words, to add unnecessary detail would only confuse the traveler, and impede their movement forward. One example of this type of mapping is the Roman Puetinger Map, which only exists in a 13th century copy of the fourth or fifth century original. The Peutinger was probably a conglomeration of oral reports of travel and itineraries, much as the later Portolan charts of Europe.³⁹⁰ It shows only the overland routes from Britain to the Ganges River, and lists over five thousand place names and the distances in between,³⁹¹ and is so linear that the Mediterranean appears as if it were a river rather than a sea. It is in scroll form, seven meters long and one-third of a meter wide.³⁹² Little detail is provided outside of what is necessary knowledge for the traveler along that route.



Figure 211. Detail, Peutinger Map, 13th century copy of ca. 4th-5th century original. Bibliotheca Augustana

³⁸⁷ Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain*, 35.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

³⁸⁹ James R Akerman, *The Imperial Map: Cartography and the Mastery of Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 39.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

³⁹¹ Michael Southworth and Susan Southworth, *Maps, a Visual Survey and Design Guide* (Boston: Little Brown, 1982).

³⁹² Wilford, *The Mapmakers*, 57-65.

As discussed by Ricardo Padrón, itinerary maps are “getting there” maps, “not to be mistaken for serious representations of space and world.”³⁹³ Like any type of map, an itinerary map represents the result of a variety of choices. The mapmaker, any mapmaker, must decide which of the many and varied aspects of the territory to include, which to exclude, and how to handle the material for representation. The maker of the itinerary map selects as his or her chosen objects of representation, the privileged travel destinations and the routes that connect them. All other aspects of the territory – its general topography, its predominant kinds of vegetation, its aridity or humidity—are usually excluded.³⁹⁴

Similarities are evident in the format and sparseness of a thirteenth century itinerary map from England, here showing the path to be followed as a straight line, to fit the page and reduce confusion. This work by Mathew Paris is a pilgrimage map, and simplifies the route by showing stops along the way in some detail, but very little else in the stylized topography and strict linear construction. Intended as a map for the mind rather than the body, the work probably was never used for an actual journey but for a spiritual one from home: “Cloistered monks, though discouraged from going on pilgrimages to the earthly city, could nonetheless use Matthew’s maps for an imaginative journey to the Heavenly Jerusalem.”³⁹⁵ Likewise, Herrera’s panels and the Herrera-Velasco maps were an opportunity for the armchair traveler to engage in an imperialistic journey “where the mind could dwell in remote places that could be visited through maps, plans, and views, but also the body could return there thanks to maps and charts...”³⁹⁶

³⁹³ Padrón, *The Spacious Word*, 55.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

³⁹⁵ Daniel K. Connolly, “Imagined Pilgrimage in the Itinerary Maps of Matthew Paris,” *The Art Bulletin* 81, no. 4 (December 1, 1999): 598–622, 598.

³⁹⁶ Buisseret, *The Mapmakers’ Quest*, 9.

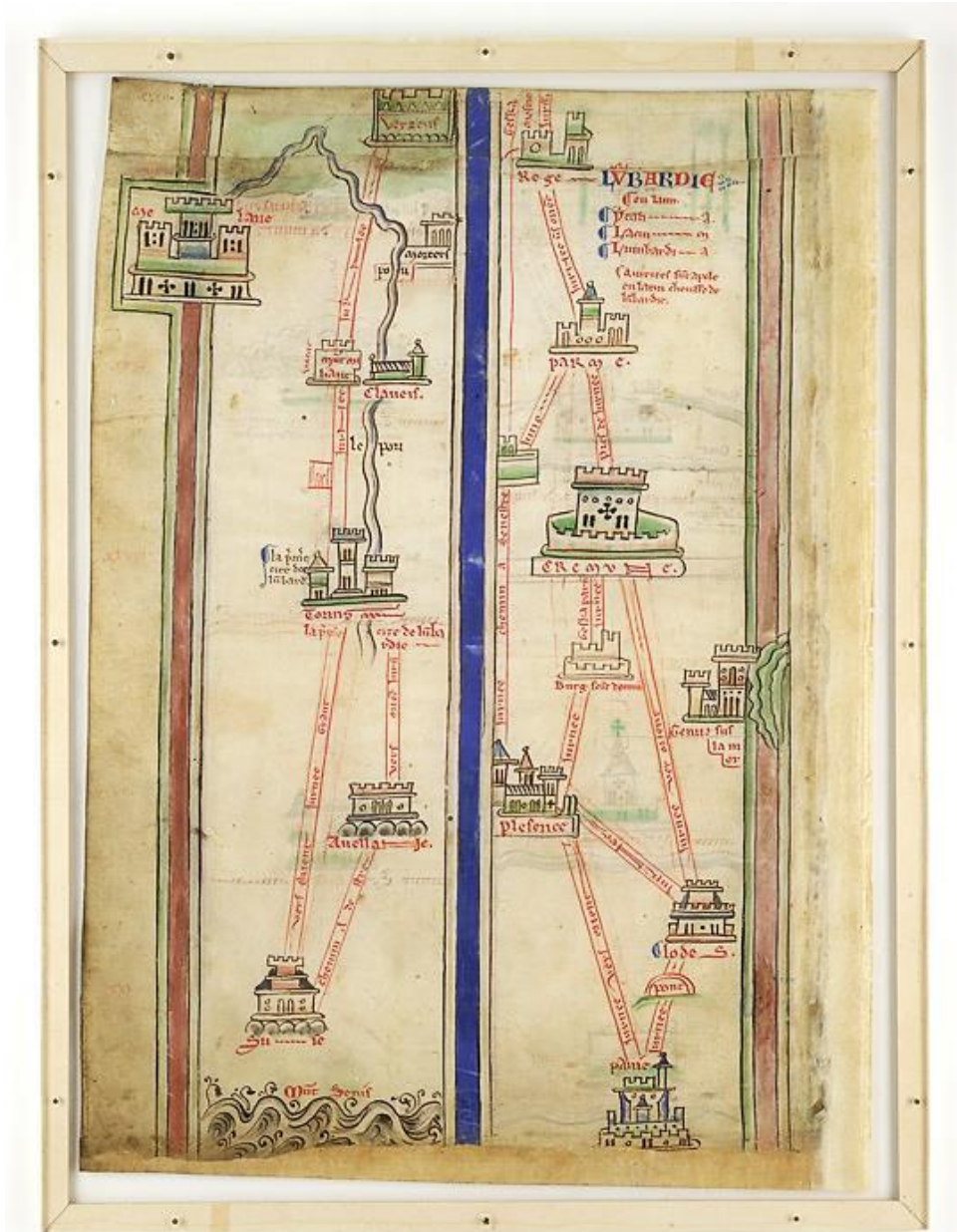


Figure 212. Mathew Paris. *Itinerary from London to Jerusalem*. Illuminated Manuscript, 1255. British Library

Another possible influence on Herrera's title page designs are classical narrative friezes and Life of Christ cycles, that Herrera would surely have been familiar with from his time in Italy and his education in Spain. In these narratives, we can "read" the stories by following the panels along a specific pathway. Like a comic strip these are read in a series of panels that tell the larger story. For example, the 4th century Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus depicts the life of Christ in separate panels, and this style of visual narration in panels is prevalent throughout early

Christianity through to Herrera's time in Bible covers, church doors, and other Church decorations.



Figure 213. *Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus*, Rome, marble, ca. 359. Museo Storico del Tesoro della Basilica di San Pietro, Vatican, Rome



Figure 214. Byzantine ivory diptych of biblical scenes, ca. 5th century. Milan Cathedral Treasury

Other precedents are church door panels, like the Ghiberti doors from the 15th century and those of Castel Nuovo in Naples. Ghiberti's panels visually depict scenes from the life of Christ and are literal portals into the interior spaces, much as those of the bible covers and Herrera's "portadas" or frontispieces into the narrative to follow. The Castel Nuovo bronze doors are militaristic in nature and

celebrate the conquest of the Neapolitan rebel barons by King Ferdinand I, or Don Ferrante. In the detail below, one can see the similarities to Herrera in spatial perspective and use of landscape as a stage set in the battle scenes, and the use of decorative medallions to frame each setting.



Figure 215. Left: Lorenzo Ghiberti – *The "Gates of Paradise"*, 1425-1452, The East Doors of the Florence Baptistry

Right: Bronze Doors to the Castel Nuovo in Naples, commissioned to Guglielmo Monaco by Ferdinand I, ca. 1475, detail below



As many of the military scenes bring to mind the Column of Trajan as well, this progression of events that leads to the final conquest as a linear narrative is relevant. While the Trajan column winds up a long, narrow column, the Herrera places his visual panel in a book form that nonetheless has a strong triumphal narrative flow that glorifies and celebrates the conquest of empire.



Figure 216. Detail of *Trajan's Column*, marble, 113. Rome



Figure 217. Initial Letter L of Genesis, *Wenceslas Bible*, ca. 1389. British Library

Predecessors to the Christian visual narrative are works of *Biblia pauperum*, which were produced from the 14th century as illuminated manuscripts but became enormously popular and widespread in the fifteenth century in printed form.³⁹⁷ Manguel suggests these were not only used for guiding the unlearned in church, but they may have helped the priest in organizing a sermon thematically and to “demonstrate the unity of the Bible.”³⁹⁸ The placement of thematically related scenes side by side from the Old and New Testament (entombment and well,

³⁹⁷ Alberto Manguel, *A History of Reading* (New York: Viking, 1996), 101–103.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

Moses and the serpents, Jonah and the Whale) add to this air of universal truth and relevance of Christianity.³⁹⁹ They relied on the visual narrative for this unification, and like Herrera, were more often than not written in the vernacular to increase their accessibility even further.



Figure 218. *Biblia Pauperum*, Anonymous Netherlandish, ca. 1465, Princeton University Library
 Left: Sheet 25: Crucifixion, flanked by Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac and Moses lifting of the brass serpent

Right: Sheet 27: the Entombment, flanked by Joseph in the well and Jonah thrown into the sea

This tradition of narrative, a visual pathway to understand the key elements to the stories of great men and to biblical figures, was surely born largely from illiteracy and propaganda of the age. If one could not read the Bible, one could travel through the text via imagery. There are endless examples of panels describing the life of Christ that may have been born of classical traditions of visual storytelling.

³⁹⁹ Alan G Thomas, *Great Books and Book Collectors* (New York: Putnam, 1975), 45.



Figure 219. Hereford *mappa mundi*, ca. 1300. Hereford Cathedral, Hereford, England.
Drawing after the original

Herrera's maps, however, are not strictly linear, but stretch around the rectangular frame and read as a journey through time as well as space. While they are not designed as a circle but a rectangle that reads from the top to the bottom on each side, there is a distinct orderliness to this design that is reminiscent of *mappae mundi* traditions. For example, the Hereford Map of the thirteenth century begins in the lower left corner and ends in the lower right; its "pictorial

frame's configuration takes us on a circular journey."⁴⁰⁰ Also interesting is that the framework text is in the vernacular Anglo-Norman which introduces the Latin text and makes the work more accessible to the audience who may or may not have literacy in that language,⁴⁰¹ consistent with Herrera's own vernacular program.

Herrera's structure is reminiscent of other medieval traditions in illuminated manuscripts such as cosmographical wheels, which attempted to order the seemingly disparate. In this example below, the ten ages of man begins in the lower left circle with birth and ends in the lower right with death. Christ is at the center of this circle connected to each phase of life by spokes in the wheel. This reflects certainly Herrera's efforts to lend order to the narrative through pictorial structure and the *Década* format, giving cohesion and symmetry to a less than linear narrative. Like a *mappae mundi* or a cosmographical diagram, Herrera has produced his own "systematic universe,"⁴⁰² although in his case his universe is defined by references to the New World. Kline argues that the *mappae mundi* was intended to "impress the audience with the immensity of factual information available about the world they lived in," and hence included great detail and text towards that objective. Like the Ebstorf Map, which served as a Christian encyclopedia of the Bible's relationship to the physical world, so was Herrera intended to amalgamate the data collected in the Americas into a spiritual format.

⁴⁰⁰ Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought*, 52.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 52–53. See Kline's work for a deep discussion of the Hereford Map, its iconography and context in Medieval mapping. This will be discussed in context of the Herrera in greater detail in this chapter.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 44.



Figure 220. *The Wheel of Life or the Ten Ages of Man*, De Lisle Psalter, ca. 1310. British Library, London

Visual narration and mapping was known in medieval Europe, as evidenced by *mappaemundi*, which combine spatial relationships with storytelling. “The factual information regarding the physical world here contained and interpreted within the Christian framework of Creation, Judgment, and Redemption was respected accordingly.”⁴⁰³ The use of works like Orosius’s *History against the Pagans*, which tells the story of man from the beginning of time, as a source for medieval *mappaemundi* is relevant for its associations with narrations which cover vast amounts of time told across a single picture plane, “a telling example of the complicity between geography and history, of tracing boundaries and telling stories.”⁴⁰⁴ Itinerary maps, by their very nature and use imply the passage of time and a physical journey through pictorial geographic space, which in the Herrera

⁴⁰³ Ibid., 90.

⁴⁰⁴ Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 300.

becomes symbolic of journeying through the narrative visually and textually. The landscape elements of the panels including the cityscapes represent a cultural and opportunistic symbolism of the Christianized familiar as accessible and understandable to the European consumer, and which also offer a refuge for Europeans and enlightenment within the American landscape.⁴⁰⁵

The panels of the title pages also follow a well established tradition of imperialism and possession: landscape cycle paintings. The strategy of ownership through pictorial description was well established by Herrera's time, and I argue here that the panels as geopolitical tools of ownership are consistent with other media with similar agendas. "One of the earliest functions of the pure landscape picture seems to have been to provide evidence of ownership, like an entry in a land register... Public property is often acquired through conquest; there may thus be a relationship between landscape paintings and conqueror, between the memory of his deeds and the record of their outcome."⁴⁰⁶

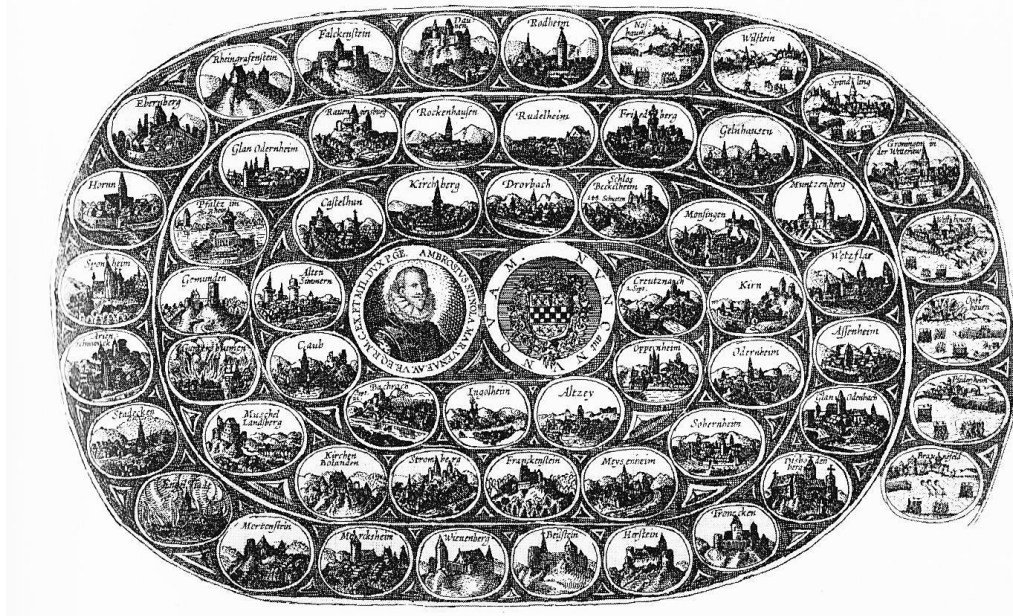


Figure 221. George Kress, *General Ambrogio Spinola*, 1621

⁴⁰⁵ Norman Joseph William Thrower and Norman Joseph William Thrower, *Maps & Civilization: Cartography in Culture and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), See Thrower's discussion of landscape as refuge and prospect, 47.

⁴⁰⁶ Martin Warnke, *Political Landscape: The Art History of Nature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 53.

For example, this image by George Kress illustrates the 58 towns conquered by Spinola in a circular path leading to the conqueror himself and his coat of arms. In Herrera's case the path follows a rectilinear path framed by the conquerors with the coat of arms in the center, but the implications are arguably the same.

This type of narrative cycle panel is also apparent in the wood panel carvings in the Toledo cathedral choir, commissioned to Rodrigo Alemán from Germany in the late 15th century and celebrating the battles leading to the conquest of Granada, which was still under way when Rodrigo began this project. Here also lies a connection of Christian militarism, the conquest of the Catholic God over the Infidels.



Figure 222. Detail of Toledo Cathedral choir panels, Rodrigo Alemán, wood, ca. 1489-1495

Christianity

As Valerie Kivelson has asserted, “The Spanish Empire was viewed as a Catholic one, where any spiritual uncertainty was irrelevant or rendered invisible.” While there seems little doubt that for Philip II religion and politics “were identical in his mind with the exaltation of the power of Spain,” the king did tend to put politics ahead of religion in some cases, such as in his support of Elizabeth I against Mary Tudor when the alliance was most advantageous for his empire.⁴⁰⁷ While a devout Catholic, Philip did not bow down to the papacy, and all papal decrees had to be approved by Council before being published: “Few rulers-except, perhaps, Henry VIII of England- have ever maintained so consistently an anti-papal policy over a long period of years.”⁴⁰⁸ One Pope considered Philip II to be integral to the Catholic faith while another excommunicated him.⁴⁰⁹

Philip II did understand the need to unify the monarchy under a “Spanish dynastic ideal” which would define him as not “King of Spain, but as the Spanish King.”⁴¹⁰ Spanish dynasties, like others in Europe historically “often derived their legitimacy from sacralization through the physical juxtaposition of royal and holy bodies in a genuine communion of saints.” According to Lazure, the building of the Escorial near Madrid was deliberate attempt by Philip II to “express the particular symbiosis between politics and a religion associated with a theocentric notion of monarchy upon which the Spanish kings had grounded their power for centuries... Philip favored continuity and, like many of his predecessors on the throne, chose to build a palace-monastery in which relics, royal household, and dynastic pantheon came together.”⁴¹¹ That Herrera tries to accomplish a similar task through the titlepages of the *Décadas* is consistent with other efforts of Philip II to sacralize his dynasty and unify the empire under a Spanish King.

⁴⁰⁷ Davies, *The Golden Century of Spain, 1501-1621*, See Chapter V, particularly 131–132.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁴⁰⁹ Nash, *Veiled Images*, 76, note 3.

⁴¹⁰ Guy Lazure, “Possessing the Sacred: Monarchy and Identity in Philip II’s Relic Collection at the Escorial,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (April 1, 2007): 64.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 64–65.



Figure 223. Royal Seat of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, completed in 1584



Figure 224. Crónica del Serenísimo Rey Don Juan Segundo, Logroño, Arnao Guillén de Brocar, 1517

Interest in the dynastic is apparent in Charles V's commissioning of *Crónica del Serenísimo Rey Don Juan Segundo*, a work on Rey Don Juan II, Queen Isabella's grandfather, where the panels trace lineage back through the Catholic kings. Through publishing works like this Charles V solidifies his own place in the Spanish dynasty and legitimizes his reign. While Philip II is not included in the *Décadas* titlepages, his heritage with the Catholic monarchy is clear in the medallions of Ferdinand and Isabella and the central panels being decorated with the arms of the Kingdom of Castile.

“For the learned and the masses, the path to memory, piety, and the emotions began with images, not print. It is difficult for readers to grasp the all-pervasive presence and sheer monumentality of visual culture in the Catholic monarchy...,”⁴¹² and much of this imagery was therefore symbolic vs. naturalistic. The cartographic elements of the title pages are literally held together by the template of early ivory bible covers. “The moral force of the concept of empire resided in the sacred character which it conferred on the institution, reputedly derived directly from God.”⁴¹³

The importance of Christianity and specifically Catholicism to explorers and the Empire during the Age of Discovery is apparent in the *The Virgin of Navigators*, 1531-1536 by Alejo Fernández and painted for the chapel in the Casa de Contratación in Sevilla (Figure 225). Here the Madonna protects the faithful with her robe, which she holds open to surround them. The figures include Columbus and Vespucci on the left, Philip II and Charles the V on the right and within the depths of her cloak can be seen indigenous peoples of the New World who have been figuratively brought into her fold. The group gathers over the oceans and ships which also fall under her gaze of heavenly grace. The implication of support

⁴¹² Bleichmar et al., *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800*, 4.

⁴¹³ Robert Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), 173.

from the Madonna as a stand in for Catholicism and Divine right in the voyages and endeavors in the New World is clear.



Figure 225. Left: Alejo Fernández, *Retable of the Virgin of Navigators*, 1531-1536. Casa de Contratación, Seville; Right: Detail of central panel



Figure 226. Left: Diego de la Cruz and Workshop, *The Virgin of Mercy with the Family of the Catholic Monarchs*, ca. 1486, oil on panel. Patrimonio Nacional, Monasterio de Santa María la Real de las Huelgas de Burgos

Figure 227. Right: Piero della Francesca, *Madonna della Misericordia*, oil and tempera on panel, 1460-1462. Pinacoteca Comunale, Sansepolcro

The altarpiece has its predecessors in other Virgin of Mercy paintings, such as *The Virgin of Mercy with the Family of the Catholic Monarchs* by Diego de la Cruz and

the Piero della Francesca's *Madonna della Misericordia*. In the Diego de La Cruz piece, the Madonna shelters King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella and their children and a group of Cistercian nuns from the demons above her shoulders. The stoicism of Piero's piece seems in strong contrast to the colorful Diego de la Cruz, where the former shows a radiant protection of gold emanating from the Madonna and the second aligns the monarchy more directly with Mary by their presence and richness of her clothing which is similar to that of the King and Queen. Her robe itself protects the worshippers from the demons in the background rather than a circle of gold, and the painting seems to be a combination of the Virgin of Mercy and the Virgin of Seven Arrows, as Mary holds six arrows and protects her followers from those being thrown at her by the devil in the upper left. This second reference is based on the figurative inflictions of pain Mary suffered as Christ was crucified and is a Roman Catholic icon reminding the faithful of Christ's pain and his mother's love.

The Casa de Contratación altarpiece is particularly interesting in that it seems to be the first example of an image of this type that refers directly to the discovery of the Americas. Of course its relevance in the chapel of the house that held the maps of Spanish Americas, which trained navigators and pilots, and oversaw maritime and trade laws is obvious, but this visual validation of the allegiance between Catholic support and Spanish imperial expansion in the Americas is particularly important to establish the assertions of Herrera's intention in the *Décadas*.

Bible Cover Format

One of the most powerful and interesting discoveries of this project was finding these examples of fifth century ivory carved Bible covers in the Milan Cathedral. The similarities with the Herrera titlepages are striking, and, I argue, deliberate. Herrera structures the deeds of the Spanish in the Indies within a powerful Christian iconographical program that attempts to lend Divine credence to the history of the Spanish conquest and occupation of the New World. Whereas the associations were more free form in the Middle Ages, Herrera fixes his narrative in a deliberate and schematic framework that belies any misinterpretation. While there is no evidence that Herrera saw these particular ivory Bible covers, there is no doubt in this author's opinion that he was influenced by this design. By aligning the Catholic kings and the great men of Spain and the cross with the insignia of the Spanish Crown, he was taking a very deliberate step in legitimizing the divine role the Spanish were taking in the New World in spreading the word of God.



Figure 228. Gospel Book Cover, "Five-Part Diptych," late 5th or early 6th century, probably made in Ravenna. Milan Cathedral Treasury

Bibliotheca Colbertina.

HISTORIA GENERAL DE LOS HECHOS DE LOS CASTELLANOS EN LAS ISLAS Y TIERRA FIRME DEL MAR OCEANO ESCRITA POR ANTONIO DE HERRERA CORONISTA MAYOR DE S.M. DE LAS INDIAS Y SVCORONISTA DE CASTILLA

En quatro Decadas desde el Año de 1492. hasta el de 1531. De cada primera.

Al Rey Nu.º Señor.

del pro.º Laguna

EN MANILA EN LA EMPLEREA 1601.

El Alm.º descubre con grandes tormentos la costa de Veragua

Figure 229. Herrera, *Década Primera, Historia General...*, 1601. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 230. Ivory Book Cover, Scenes from life of Christ and Portraits and symbols of evangelists, late 5th century. Milan, Cathedral Treasury

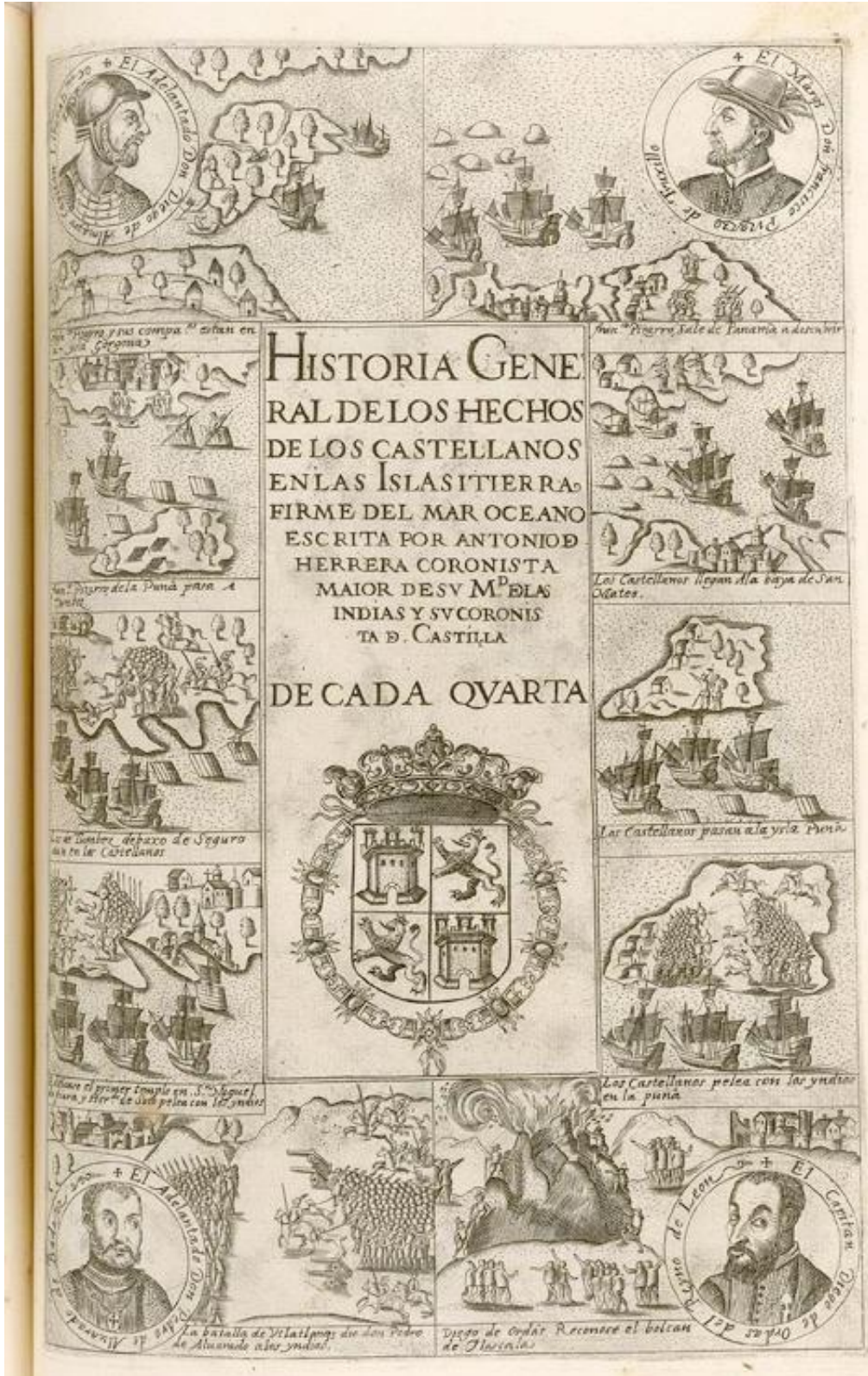


Figure 231. Herrera, *Década Quarta*, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

In the Bible covers above, one visually “reads” key scenes from the life of Christ in each panel. In each corner is one of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in a medallion framed with decorative borders, either in human or animal form. The center rectangle stands for Christ’s sacrifice itself, in one panel represented by the sacrificial lamb of Christ and in the other with the cross of the crucifixion. As covers, these ivory carvings describe the text which lies within the book to follow; they are visual representations grounding the narrative text to a visual reference. Evidence of the subjectivity of panel scene selection for the same text is demonstrated in their variation within the same template. Which scenes from the Bible are the “key” ones to show was chosen by each artist or patron, as is evident in just these two examples. Of the Bible covers, it has been noted that the panels are “Cursorily drawn, the figures do not project with any force even though many of them overall their frames. Indeed, it is the framing system of squares, circles, and oblongs which predominates.”⁴¹⁴ I argue here that for Herrera as well, it is not just which scenes he has chosen to depict that are most interesting in the iconography of the title pages in the context of this study, but the structure itself, the framing of his narrative through reference to this Biblical format. As is true of any type of looking, “the appearance of any element depends on its place and function in the pattern as a whole... vision is not a mechanical recording of elements but the grasping of significant structural patterns.”⁴¹⁵

In comparing the two sets of images, we see in Herrera that the panels are no longer the life of Christ but scenes from the exploration and conquest of the Americas by great leaders of the Spanish empire. Most panels include a short text describing the scene, and like the Bible covers, the visual narrative of the panels describe the textual one to follow. Also like the Bible covers, the panels indicate subjective decisions by Herrera, and these selections are therefore deliberate.

⁴¹⁴ Ernst Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making: Main Lines of Stylistic Development in Mediterranean Art, 3rd-7th Century* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1977), 1980, 47.

⁴¹⁵ Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye*, New version (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), iix–ix.

The power of the iconography of this template cannot be overestimated, as it binds the empire, the New World, and Catholicism firmly together within a classical and Christian visual program. The Castellanos have replaced the apostles, the New World the spiritual world of Christianity, and Christ and the Crucifixion have been replaced by the symbols of the Habsburg Empire.

In the center of the title pages, Herrera makes an even more direct relationship between God and the Catholic monarchy. Here the title and the coat of arms Castile and Leon stand in for the cross and lamb. “The moral force of the concept of empire resided in the sacred character which it conferred on the institution, reputedly derived directly from God,”⁴¹⁶ and this belief could not be more obvious than Herrera makes it here. That the presence of the Spaniards in the New World was sanctioned by God and the narrative behind that assertion was to follow is key to Herrera’s charge to assert “Spain’s compliance to the religious obligations of the Alexandrine Bulls of Donation... [You will] make certain to demonstrate that the Catholic Kings [Spain’s monarchs] have complied with the bull of the Pope [Alexander VI].”⁴¹⁷ By ensuring the audience that according to Philip II, as stated above, king, church and empire are one and the same, they assured the validity of Spanish claims in the Americas.

One very important further implication of the use of this construction is the creation of sacred space. If we understand the program overall as a direct reference to the biblical format, than the landscapes within it have surely also been handed over as Divine right to the Spanish heroes of this narrative. By placing the scenes within geographically identifiable spaces, however abstracted those spaces might be and including them by association within the divine narrative, Herrera has implied that these spaces are also touched by God and his Christian soldiers. There are, in fact, maps in Bibles during this period which would

⁴¹⁶ Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century*, 173.

⁴¹⁷ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, Herrera y Tordesillas as quoted and translated by Kagan. Notations are Kagan’s and mine.

exemplify this relationship between sacred space and textual narrative. 16th century Protestant Bibles themselves sometimes included maps, to help the reader contextualize the narrative in the real world.⁴¹⁸ In the example below, the map of Palestine at the beginning of a Geneva Bible New Testament places the map in a contemporary world with ships of the age advancing towards the Holy Land. On the left, “Major events of the Exodus are shown pictorially along the route,”⁴¹⁹ and the reader can follow the path through geographic spaces made sacred by the events which took place there, and I argue here that Herrera makes similar assertions about the Americas in his title pages.

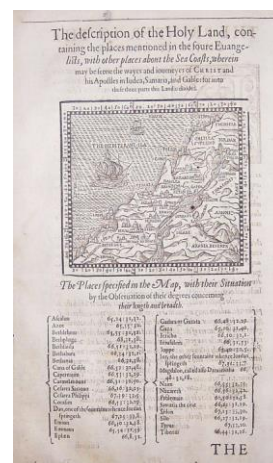


Figure 232. Left: Map of Exodus: Geneva version, from the first Geneva Bible, 1560

Figure 233. Right: Robert Barker, *The Bible: That is, The Holy Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testament*, Geneva version, 1616. Ohio State University⁴²⁰

Part of the core state’s imposition of “sacred spaces” onto the Americas would certainly include the destruction of the ones already there. This strategy of assimilation and dominance is extremely effective in eradicating over a very few generations associations with specific geographic and spiritual points of reference

⁴¹⁸ Catherine Delano Smith, “Maps as Art and Science: Maps in Sixteenth Century Bibles,” *Imago Mundi* 42 (January 1, 1990): 66. While Delano-Smith asserts that there are no examples of maps in Catholic Bibles from Spain, there are interesting comparisons to make on sacred spaces that are relevant to this study. There needs to be more research connecting the two but the comparison is raised here as a preliminary study.

⁴¹⁹ Catherine Delano-Smith, *Maps in Bibles, 1500-1600: An Illustrated Catalogue*, *Travaux D’humanisme et Renaissance*; (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1991), 28–29.

Catherine Delano Smith, “Maps as Art and Science: Maps in Sixteenth Century Bibles,” *Imago Mundi* 42 (January 1, 1990): 66.

⁴²⁰ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (Penguin (Non-Classics), 2005), plate 20.

which are indigenous to the conquered peoples. If we look at the detail of Herrera's map of Tenochtitlan, the city shows the churches built by the conquerors, and no longer the sacrificial temple illustrated in Cortés' map. In this detail of the city of Tenochtitlan, for example, which accompanies the medallion portrait of Hernán Cortés, the city is depicted as completely Europeanized, but still recognizable in format to the famous city plan sent to Charles V by the great explorer himself, and published in 1524. Rather than being cartographically accurate, the illustration depends on this one image of Tenochtitlan which perpetuated in various forms over hundred of years, and does not represent a city plan but only a town dominated by a domed cathedral built in the 1560's on the site of the Aztec temple. "there being a Geography of Religions as well as lands [sic]"⁴²¹



Figure 234. Ciudad de México, *Década Terzera* title page detail



Figure 235. Tenochtitlan Hernán Cortés. *Praelara Ferdina[n]di Cortesii de noua maris oceani. . .* (Enlightenment of Ferdinand Cortés concerning new facts about the new sea and the ocean . . .). Nuremberg, Peypus, 1524

⁴²¹ Sir Thomas Browne, *The Religio Medici & Other Writings of Sir Thomas Browne* (New York: J. M. Dent & co., 1920), 3, also quoted in Davies, p. 139.

There are some precedents to elements of Herrera's structural program, but not in its entirety. For example, it was not uncommon for the coat of arms of the Spanish monarchy to ornament title pages of histories patroned by the crown, such as the title page of Diego Fernández's *Primer, y segunda parte, de la historia del Peru* from 1571.⁴²² Peter Martyr and others used narrative panels surrounding the title frame that were relevant to the narrative within, such as the *De Orbe Nouo...* However, Herrera was the first this author has found to use the specific iconographic structure of his *Décadas* in a historiographical context.



Figure 236. Left: Diego Fernández's *Primer, y segunda parte, de la historia del Peru* from 1571.

Figure 237. Right: MARTYR, PETER. *De Orbe Nouo Petri Martyris ab Angleria Mediolanensis Protonotarij Cesaris senatoris decades Compluti apud Michaelē d' Eguia Anno M.D.X.X.X.* University of Indiana, Bernardo Mendel Collection

Medallions

⁴²² Gómez, *Spanish Historical Writing about the New World 1493-1700*, 38.



Figure 238. Luke, detail of Figure 228; and Cortés, detail from *Década Terzera*.

As described above, the medallions of the evangelists are replaced in the *Décadas* by the great players in the story of the Spanish Americas, from the moment of discovery to 1555, including explorers, administrators, and on the first title page, the Catholic King and Queen Ferdinand and Isabella. The relevance of the four evangelists in the corners of the Bible covers is their having written the Gospels included in the New Testament. Herrera, by replacing the evangelists with the monarchy, Columbus and others, implies a similar dedication to these historical figures: that they are the ultimate writers of the historical narrative he is about to relate, the shapers of history, the very reason these stories are there to be told. They are, in fact, the primary sources of his story through this iconographic reference, and therefore another indication of truth and authoritative voice.

It seems as if the medallion portrait of Ferdinand II is copied from a likeness by Michael Sittow now at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, which could also explain why the printed version is in reverse. In the *Décadas*, the monarch appears older and more regal in an ermine stole and crown, his hair neatly coiled at his shoulders. His image has been made more recognizably imperial as befitting the gravity of Herrera's message, where in life Ferdinand's piousness in dress may have been more relevant for his public image.



Figure 239. Left: Michael Sittow, König Ferdinand II, ca. 1515. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

Figure 240. Right: Ferdinand I, detail from *Década Primera*

Portraits from life were rarely for public consumption but were part of a ritual of Renaissance court life that cemented allegiances, family ties and authority: Vasari was of the opinion portraits served a purpose as visual records, reaffirming ancestral pedigrees and family status.” Kamen argues that Philip II “expended little energy” on creating a public image through commissioning monumental works for himself, and that most of the paintings of the king had made by artists such as Titian and Sánchez Coello “were lodged in private places inaccessible to the public and were never used as state portraits nor seen by any but a small group of political figures.”⁴²³ In fact, the imperial portraits of Philip II in splendid armour Kamen attributes to fashion and the “exotic hobby” of a contemporary

⁴²³ Kamen, *The Escorial*, 150–151.

prince, as his “obsession with armour... ceased completely when he became king.”⁴²⁴ If we look at the Mor portrait of Philip II from 1560, we see the king has been dressed in an elegant suit of mail, but this would have been purely costume in this age and useless in battle, as the development of the crossbow in the fourteenth century made mail obsolete.⁴²⁵



Figure 241. Antonis Mor, *Portrait of Philip II on Saint Quentin's Day*, oil on canvas, 1560. El Escorial, Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Patrimonio Nacional

Medallions of royal figures like Philip II marked ceremonious events such as that made to commemorate his marriage to Mary Tudor in 1554,⁴²⁶ and were not widely disseminated. For example, it is unlikely that the beautiful *Fifty Excelentes* (Figure 242) was ever intended as anything but a treasured collectible celebrating the Catholic monarchs.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 154.

⁴²⁵ Schroth, “Veneration and Beauty: Messages in Images of the King in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” 119.

⁴²⁶ *Felipe II, Un Monarca Y Su Época: Un Príncipe Del Renacimiento: Museo Nacional Del Prado, 13 De Octubre De 1998-10 De Enero De 1999* [catálogo (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 1998), 211.

Herrera's medallion portrait of Isabella may have come from this coin. Isabella's hair and pose, even down to the pearl necklace and square neckline are strikingly similar, although the engraving in Herrera is anatomically more awkward, with her pearl necklace choking her very broad, long neck. Her crown as well is rather truncated, which makes her skull appear to have been cut off abruptly at the top of her head, again inhibiting the naturalism of the image and betraying the lack of skill of the artist.



Figure 242. Left: *The Fifty Excelentes* coin, ca. 1490's. Private Collection

Figure 243. Right: Queen Isabel, detail from *Década Primera*

This particular template of portraiture for Isabella seems to have been wide spread, as this engraving by Campi (Figure 244). The profiles are all undeniably stemming from the same sources, but as the Campi shows the pious Isabella looking downward, it is interesting that Herrera has her looking up, perhaps at the glory of God or at the islands first discovered by Columbus in the panel beside her, a discovery for which she and the Castilian Crown were ultimately responsible. Morison claims there were no portraits from life of the Queen except medallions and coins, and if this is true the coin would be the logical source⁴²⁷ for Herrera and other images of Isabel as it would have been struck during her lifetime. There are

⁴²⁷ Samuel Eliot Morison, *Admiral of the ocean sea: a life of Christopher Columbus* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1942), 47.

a couple of portraits of Isabel, however, that are allegedly from life: one in the Prado and one by Juan de Flandes in Palacio Real, Madrid so there is a caveat here for Morison's assertion.⁴²⁸



Figure 244. Left: Portrait of Queen Isabella of Aragon by Antonio Campi, Copper engraving, 1582–1584, circa 1522-1587

Figure 245. Right: "Damisella Trivulzia", image from Giacomo Filippo Foresti, *De Claris Mulieribus*, printed in Ferrara, 1497



CHRISTOPHORO COLOMBO



Figure 247. Middle: Colon, detail from *Década Primera*



Figure 248. Right: Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, *Christopher Columbus*, ca. 1520 (detail)

⁴²⁸ I want to thank Amadeo Serra Desfilis for drawing attention to these possible exceptions.



Figure 249. Left: Theodore de Bry, Christopher Columbus as pictured in *Collectiones Peregrinationum in Indiam Occidentalem*, ca. 1590

Figure 250. Right: Portrait of a Man, Said to be Christopher Columbus (born about 1446, died 1506) Sebastiano del Piombo, oil canvas, 1519. Metropolitan Museum of Art

Columbus is very difficult to place, as in the Herrera his head is lopsided and seems to be a mixture of several different images. De Bry claimed that his engraving was taken from an original painting commissioned by Ferdinand and Isabella, but it is more likely a copy of the Piombo portrait, which was painted after Columbus died⁴²⁹ as was the Ghirlandaio. There has been an historic problem identifying a “true” image of Columbus, and it seems that even in Herrera’s time this was a matter of some disagreement or at least, not without some inconsistencies.

In regards to the medallion of Bartolomé Colon, the only images found by this researcher were later copies of Herrera’s on *Década Primera*, as this has become the source for seemingly all print material after its publication. Why there are no portraits of this important figure who occupies the title page with the monarchy and his famous brother is unknown.

⁴²⁹ André de Hevesy and Robert M Coates, *The Discoverer: A New Narrative of the Life and Hazardous Adventures of the Genoese, Christopher Columbus*, (New York: Macaulay, 1928), 278.



Figure 251. Hubert Goltzius/Aegidius Copenius Diesthemius: *VIVAE OMNIVM FERE IMPERATORVM IMAGINES...*, 1557. Anno aetatis .LX., Imperij .XIII. toxico sublatus est. Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence



Figure 252. Coin of Nero, AD 64, sesterce of Nero showing Ostia/ Claudian Harbor⁴³⁰

Besides the biblical references, the medallions also reflect Roman numismatic traditions, again with arguably significant intent. In the fifteenth century, great collections of Roman coins were amassed, but it was not until the sixteenth century that the images upon these coins took on significant relevance for historical reference and academic study: “the care devoted to numismatics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries constitutes one of the greatest (but most

⁴³⁰ J Harley and David Woodward, eds., *The History of Cartography: Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 245.

neglected) achievements of Renaissance scholarship.”⁴³¹ There were many beautiful and scholarly illustrated books on Roman coins published in the mid sixteenth century all over Europe, including Jacopo Strada’s *Epitome Thesauri Antiquitatum*, (Lyon, 1553); and Hubert Goltz’s *Vivae Omnium fere Imperatorum Imagines* (Antwerp, 1557)⁴³² and 1524 second edition of the first illustrated numismatic book, Andrea Fulvio’s *Illustrium Imagines*, which describes the collection of Jacopo Mazzocchi, the book’s printer. As Haskell suggests, these publications and studies in numismatics during this period were rarely used as primary resources of events of the past but to further study what was already known about the Roman era.⁴³³ However, what I believe is most relevant in Haskell’s discussion of these objects was that many collectors and scholars “wished to assemble a store of visual references that would be of use to the artists of their own day...”⁴³⁴ and that these medallion portraits based on Roman coins in European coin collections and publications were used for specific iconographical purposes, that of allegorical figures and for great leaders of the time: “When coins and medals acquired greater prestige,... portraits derived from the most varied sources (including the imagination) were given the medallic format as a suggestion of authenticity.”⁴³⁵

The coins included in these collections, as logic would dictate, depicted figures of great importance, including emperors and their family members. The “truth” or authenticity of the likenesses was implied by the fact that Fulvio omitted medallions of characters for whom no authentic likeness had been discovered “(such as Cossutia, the first wife of Julius Ceasar).”⁴³⁶ The most similar publication to Herrera’s text in terms of the choice of players who conquered and evangelized the Americas in the name of the Catholic church and Habsburg monarchy is probably the *Promptuarii iconum insigniorum à seculo hominum*,

⁴³¹ Francis Haskell, *History and Its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 14.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 14–19.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

subiectis eorum vitis, per compendium ex probatissimis autoribus desumptis published in 1553, which included portraits of not only great leaders and religious figures but artists and philosophers, beginning with Adam and ending with Henry II, King of France who was at the time of publication still alive and under whose patronage the work was created.⁴³⁷

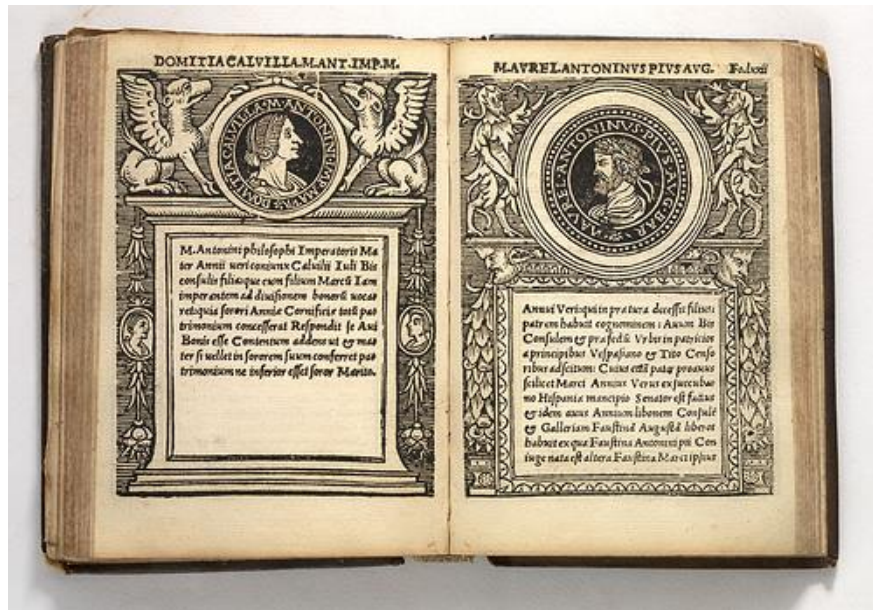


Figure 253. Andrea Fulvio, *Illustrium Imagines*, 1524 second edition of the first illustrated numismatic book

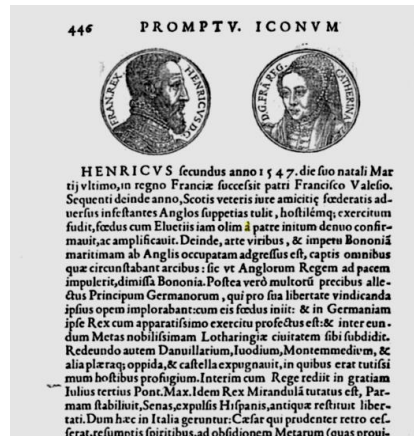


Figure 254. Guillaume Rouillé, *Promptuarii iconum insigniorum à seculo hominum*, *subiectis eorum vitis, per compendium ex probatissimis autoribus desumptis*, 1553

That medallion portraits were already well established in the sixteenth century to indicate classical imperial references and indicate authenticity of image is

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 30.

exemplified in a detail from the Battista Agnese atlas of 1553, discussed further below, with its medallion portrait of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and father to Philip II. This image of Charles V as the emblem of the old kingdom symbolically transfers his vast kingdom to his son through iconography on the title page and also through the very act of giving of an atlas, or maps of the world and its regions to his heir as an indication of his future reign.



Figure 255. Battista Agnese, *Title page of Agnese Atlas*, ca. 1543. John Carter Brown Library. 04376-1

Imperialism in Charles V's time was heavily linked with his title of Holy Roman Emperor. As stated above, one of the objectives of the cronista mayor was to follow classical traditions, implying a link both intellectually and symbolically to

the Roman Empire.⁴³⁸ In the dedication of Oviedo's work, for example, he speaks of Charles V as "Emperor of the Romans, King of Spain, Lord of the Indies and the New World."⁴³⁹



Figure 256. Left: Leone Leoni, Jugate Portraits of Emperor Charles V and King Philip II of Spain, onyx, 1550, The Metropolitan Museum⁴⁴⁰

Figure 257. Right: Heads of Augustus and Livia. Roman, ca. 5-14 CE.

In the jugate medallion above, the king is depicted in Roman imperial dress in profile, his successor Philip II behind him. The father's chin is raised higher and he wears the laurel wreath, while his son is shown as next in line behind him follows a Roman anon. Although the double portrait on the right is of Augustus and his wife, the double imperial portraits are of the same format, the emperor shown slightly above the empress and of greater immediate importance.

The medallions of the conquistadors are set upon the panels that visually describe their relationship to the setting, such as Ponce de Leon and his conquering of

⁴³⁸ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown* and David A Lupter, *Romans in a New World: Classical Models in Sixteenth-Century Spanish America*, History, Languages, and Cultures of the Spanish and Portuguese Worlds (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003) each deals extensively with this concept.

⁴³⁹Lupter, *Romans in a New World*, 2003, 8.

⁴⁴⁰ This is a rare, possibly unique instance of a Renaissance cameo documented in the carver's own words. The eminent Habsburg court sculptor Leone Leoni wrote in 1550 from Milan to Cardinal Granvella, agent of Charles V in Brussels, that a "fantastic stone" inspired him to carve a double portrait of Charles and his son, Philip II, "the way a sculptor used to do for Caesar and Augustus. Jugate portraits, in which one profile overlaps another, were indeed popularized by the ancient Romans. The object behind the heads here is a winged thunderbolt, borrowed from the imagery of Jupiter.

Florida. Like Tintoretto's portrait of Pietro Pisani in front of the great Battle of Lepanto or the Gower portrait of Queen Elizabeth shown below, in the foreground of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the subject is contextualized and empowered by the backdrop of their conquest.



Figure 258. Left: Ponce de León medallion, *Década Tercera*, detail

Figure 259. Tintoretto, *Ritratto di Pietro Pisani*, 16th century.
Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna

Philip II had himself physically surrounded by the scenes of Spanish campaigns before and during his own reign by commissioning the Gallery of Battles in his immense El Escorial, depicting the military conquests of the king, his father, and their predecessors in exquisite detail. This served to identify his role in the grander scheme of the empire to himself and visitors to the Escorial, a powerful reminder of the strength and fortitude of the Habsburgs.⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴¹ Jonathan Brown, *La sala de batallas de El Escorial. La obra de arte como artefacto cultural* (Universidad de Salamanca, 1998).

Imperialism in Globes and Maps

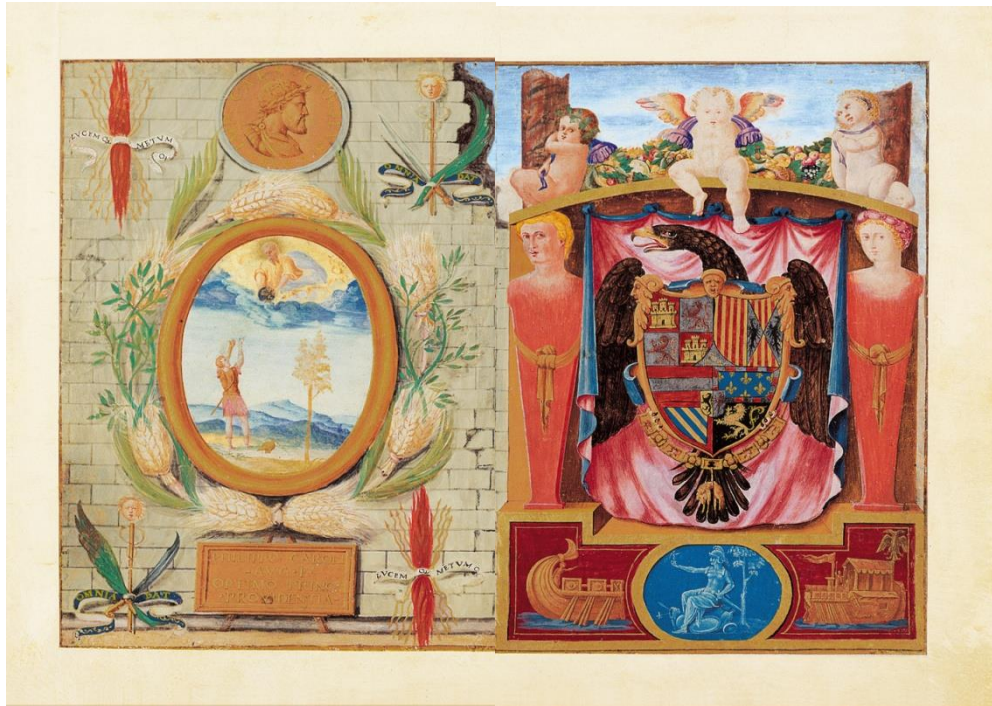


Figure 260. Battista Agnese, *Title page of Agnese Atlas*, ca. 1543.
John Carter Brown Library – 04376-1

For his sixteenth birthday, Philip II was given an extraordinary little atlas commissioned by his father, Charles V, from the studio of Battista Agnese. The title page presents a distinctly classical setting, with the coat of arms of the Habsburgs on one side and the on the other Philip II dressed as a Roman soldier accepting the world from God who reaches down from the clouds. With allusions to classicism and Divine Right, Charles V symbolically gave the world to his son with this gift of exquisite maps of the terrestrial and celestial worlds representing the territories under his rule and upon which the sun never set.

The major states of Europe have often asserted their geopolitical power by aligning themselves with a “world-view” integral to their unification under one vision of solidarity: “Islam by the Ottoman Empire, Catholicism by Spain, the Enlightenment by France and Social Darwinism by Germany.”⁴⁴² These “world-

Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance*, 255.

views” were imposed first on the core states then on the territories of expansion to consolidate the perception of unity under their respective value systems of belief, and were often expressed in globes as a symbol of the world. “Dominance is thus expressed geopolitically as the imposition on the whole of the territory of the dominant state of the characteristics of the core state. The uniformity of the internal political structure is designed to make the parts fit more readily into the wider whole. The parts will then be grouped around the core nation which remains central to the working of the system, with its ‘sacred places’ becoming also those of the territory as a whole.”⁴⁴³ The Agnese atlas reflects the sentiment in the time of Charles V aligning Divine Right with Roman imperialism as a legitimization of this dominant world view, as do the title pages of the *Décadas*.

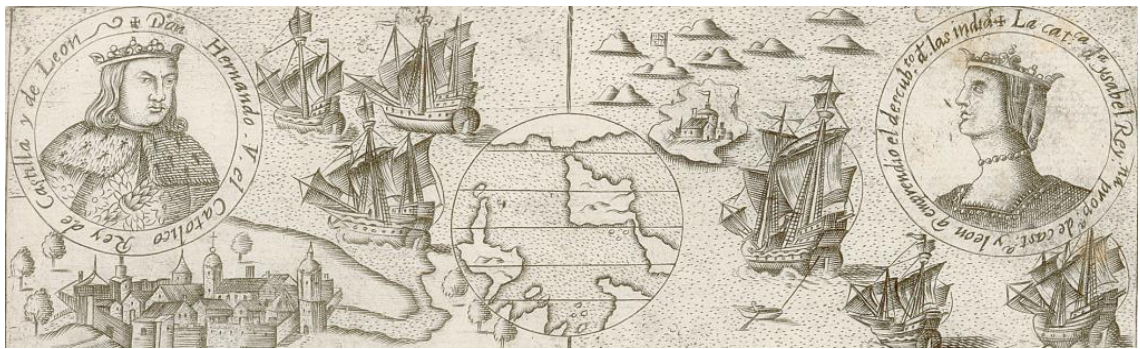


Figure 261. Title page detail, *Década Primera*

In between King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella on the title page of *Década Primera*, is a globe representing the western hemisphere from Europe to the Americas. As is common in many imperial maps of New World explorations, the globe “presuppose[s] the Atlantic as the geographic and ethnic center,”⁴⁴⁴ and the point of contact between the old and new worlds. It is here the Atlantic as a bridge between Spain and its empires to the West that is of the greatest significance here, as the seas are implied to be under the control of the Catholic

⁴⁴² Parker, *The Geopolitics of Domination*, 64.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 75.

⁴⁴⁴ Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance*, 255. Mignolo is actually talking about the Velasco maps in this quote, but this is true of the globe as well and of most maps of this period.

Monarchy in this image, and thereby trade and access to the wealth of the New World.

Curiously, this globe is upside down, which was unusual for this late date but not unheard of, and may indicate a visual nod to the *Mariner's Mirror*, a text on navigation published in 1588 and illustrated by De Bry, which also includes an upside down globe of the same area. If that was the inspiration, it is telling that Herrera does not include a celestial globe, which would indicate the purpose of wayfinding in the *Mirror* and other contemporary illustrations. The globe as a symbol of possession is relevant here, and that the globe centers on the Atlantic also alludes to the presumption of Spain as the master of this passageway between two worlds. Herrera's work includes only the terrestrial world of the empire, and therefore makes no real reference to navigation, where for the *Mariner's Mirrour*, the celestial globe as a navigational tool is relevant. This further implies the symbolic purpose of possession on a global scale.⁴⁴⁵



Figure 262. detail, Titlepage of Lucas Janszoon Waghenaer. *Spiegel der Zeevaerdt*, London, ca. 1588, Private collection

⁴⁴⁵ See Jorge Cañizares Esguerra, "New World, New Stars: Patriotic Astrology and the Invention of Indian and Creole Bodies in Colonial Spanish America, 1600-1650," *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 1 (February 1, 1999); while outside the scope of this project, there may be more to this lack of reference to the celestial world as it pertains to the Indians, the perceived inferiority of the southern constellations, and how they affected the humors and intelligence of the Indians.



Figure 263. Titlepage of Lucas Janszoon Waghenar. *Spiegel der Zeevaerdt*, London, ca. 1588, Private collection

While southern orientation of the globe is in question, and possible alludes to Arabic traditions in mapping, in which maps were typically oriented south up for religious purposes, a logical reference in post Islamic Spain, the form of the

continents seems to be pulled from Münster and Holbein. The form of Africa is very unusual, and the only precedent the author has been able to locate is from the 1532 *Typus Cosmographicus Universalis*. However, although the shapes of the continents in the Herrera mirror the Holbein, when one reverses the globe to be north oriented for comparison, one can see that South America has become Africa in the Herrera. The Holbein, while printed in 1532, supposedly copied an earlier Waldseemüller map of 1507 studied by Münster earlier in his career, rather than the revised 1516 world map,⁴⁴⁶ but this seems to be true of only of the outline of North America, and it is unclear where this unusual shape of South America came from. While there is no reason to read any particular significance in this, the lack of any dependency on geographical accuracy or even accurate copies again permits the assumption that the globe is there merely for symbolic purposes.

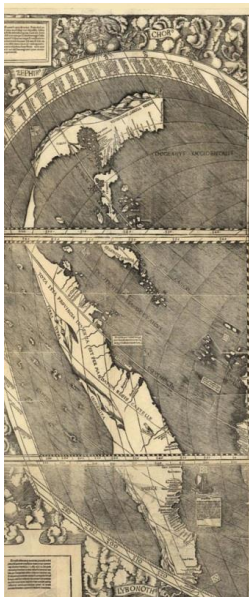


Figure 264. Left: Waldseemüller, *Universalis Cosmographia*, 1507. Library of Congress



Figure 265. Right: Sebastian Münster and Hans Holbein. *Typus Cosmographicus Universalis*. from Huttich and Grynaeus's *Novus Orbis Regionum*, woodcut, ca. 1532. Basel. Private collection

⁴⁴⁶ Susan Dackerman, Harvard Art Museums, and Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, *Prints and the Pursuit of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.; New Haven [Conn.]: Harvard Art Museums; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2011), 342.

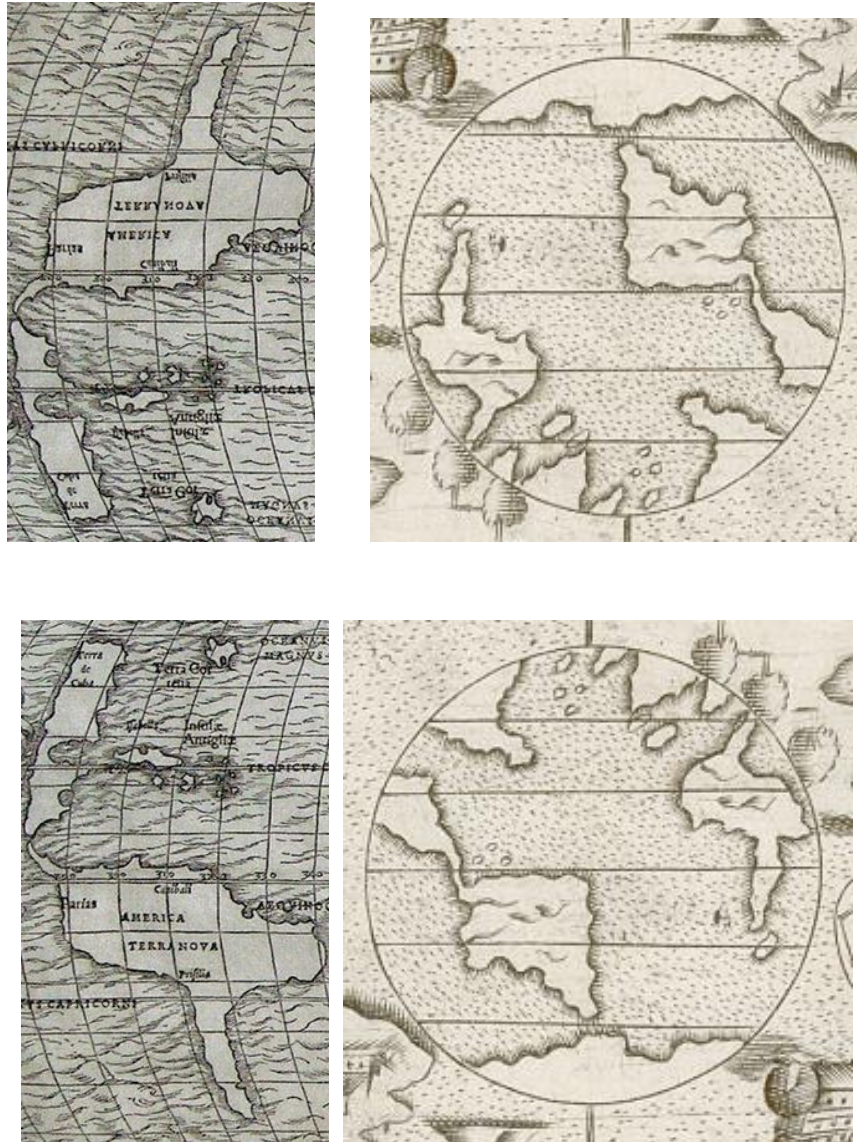


Figure 266. detail of Holbein (Figure 165) with detail from *Década Primera*. The bottom image shows the Herrera flipped and reversed to mirror image for comparison

Globe iconography in imperial portraiture was not confined to Spain, certainly. In Philip II's own time, one need only to look north to his rival Elizabeth I to find an English example of this tradition. In the Gower portrait, Elizabeth is seated in front of her crown, with her hand on a globe, her fingers covering the continent of North America and the North Atlantic Ocean, claiming these as part of the British Empire. The domination of the seas is illustrated behind the queen with scenes from the Spanish Armada, where the British ships engage the Spanish on the left and the Spanish are demolished on the rocks on the right. The British ships are bathed in the light that follows the queens's gaze, while the Spanish ships flounder in rough seas and darkness of Catholic Spain.



Figure 267. George Gower, *Elizabeth I of England, the Armada Portrait*, oil on panel, ca. 1588. Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire, England

Another example is the wonderful tapestry celebrating the marriage of Catherine of Austria, sister of Charles V, and João III of Portugal, which was produced as part of a series commissioned by João called *The Spheres*.⁴⁴⁷ The tapestry depicts the king and queen as Jupiter and Juno, and evident in the tile, presiding over the terrestrial and celestial worlds as they stand in the heavens with earth between them. João reaches over with his scepter to touch the edge of the world while Catherine points towards the rays of the sun and allegorical figures of war and plenty in the upper left corner. The globe relegates Portugal to the outer reaches of the picture plane, and instead focuses attention on the continent of Africa, which probably reflects “the growing status of the Portuguese as powerful political and commercial brokers as their voyages of discovery opened new markets down the west coast of Africa.”⁴⁴⁸ The implications of the classical authority and terrestrial possession are inherent in the globe, “which becomes the primary focus for this ratification of this legitimacy and authority.”⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁷ Jerry Brotton, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1998), 17.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 30–31.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.



Figure 268. Bernard van Orley. *Earth Protected by Juno & Jupiter*, ca. 1530's. Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid

A similar model is the painting of Charles V which also references the classical world with absolutist state portraiture, here celebrating Charles V's coronation in Bologna in 1530.⁴⁵⁰ Winged Fame holds laurel branches aloft while the Earthly Orb

⁴⁵⁰ There was a copy made of this painting by Peter Paul Rubens in 1604 which perpetuated this view of the great Spanish empire, *Allegorical painting of Emperor Charles V as ruler of the world*, now at the Residenzgalerie Salzburg.

is presented by an infant Hercules to the Christian Emperor,⁴⁵¹ who is dressed in armor and holds an imperial staff.



Figure 269. Parmigianino, *The Emperor Charles V Receiving the World* ca. 1529–1530, oil on canvas. Private Collection

⁴⁵¹ Francesca Fiorani, *The Marvel of Maps: Art, Cartography and Politics in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 40.



Figure 270. Peter Apian, *Carta cosmographica, con los nombres, propiedad, y virtud de los vientos.* Jean Bellère, Antwerp 1575

This alliance of imperial Habsburg and Roman authority is present again in this cordiform map by Peter Apian and Gutierrez's map of America. In Apian's map (Figure 270), Jupiter and Mars sit atop the world, Mars presumably as Charles V bares the double eagle crest of the Holy Roman Empire on his armor chest plate. Jupiter is aligned with the Catholic Church and thereby with Charles V as the overseer of the world. In *Americae sive quartae orbis partis nova et exactissima description*, produced by the Spanish cartographer Diego Gutierrez and Dutch engraver Hieronymous Cock in 1562, we see Spanish domains following a 1559 treaty between Spain and France with Philip's marriage to Princess Elisabeth of Valois, daughter of Henri II of France, with their coats of arms in the top left, Portugal's coat of arms in the lower right, and most importantly we see Philip II being led by Poseidon himself across the Atlantic Ocean dressed as a Roman emperor. Here the Roman gods themselves safely transport the king through the rough and dangerous seas filled with all manner of sea monsters and shipwrecks, supporting and protecting the Habsburg interests in America.



Figure 271. Diego Gutiérrez, *Americae sive quartae orbis partis nova et exactissima descriptio*, engravings by Hieronymous Cock, 1562. Library of Congress



Figure 272. Detail, Philip II on his way to the New World, Diego Gutiérrez, *Americae sive quartae orbis partis nova et exactissima descriptio*, engravings by Hieronymous Cock, 1562. Library of Congress

While some maps are perhaps more guarded in their agenda, many imperial maps of this period did not leave much to the imagination. In the tradition of portolan charts, in the map below a large flag of Castille and Leon is planted in the middle of the sea representing the Spanish possession of these lands by papal decree (Figure 273). Münster himself “was a German Catholic Franciscan theologian and priest,”⁴⁵² and he would surely have been aware of the implications of this religious connection. What is interesting, however, is that he does not show the lines of demarcation but puts the flag as seemingly claiming all of the Americas in the name of the Habsburg monarchy.



Figure 273. Sebastian Münster, *Tabula Novarum Insularum, Quas Diversis Respectibus Occidentales & Indianas uocant*, Basel, 1550. Private Collection

⁴⁵² Ben W. Huseman, *Mapping the Sacred: Belief and Religion in the History of Cartography; an Exhibition in Conjunction with the 2006 Virginia Garrett Biennial Lectures on the History of Cartography, Virginia Garrett Cartographic History Library, October 6, 2006 through December 2006* / (Arlington, Texas: Special Collections, University of Texas at Arlington Library, 2006), 8.

The allegiance of Divine Right to land possession is clear below, in a panel illustrating the annexation of the Philippines, where the divine light of God is reflected by a mirror held by the bishop onto the Philippines while Philip II points down at the islands, his face turned up to the heavens.

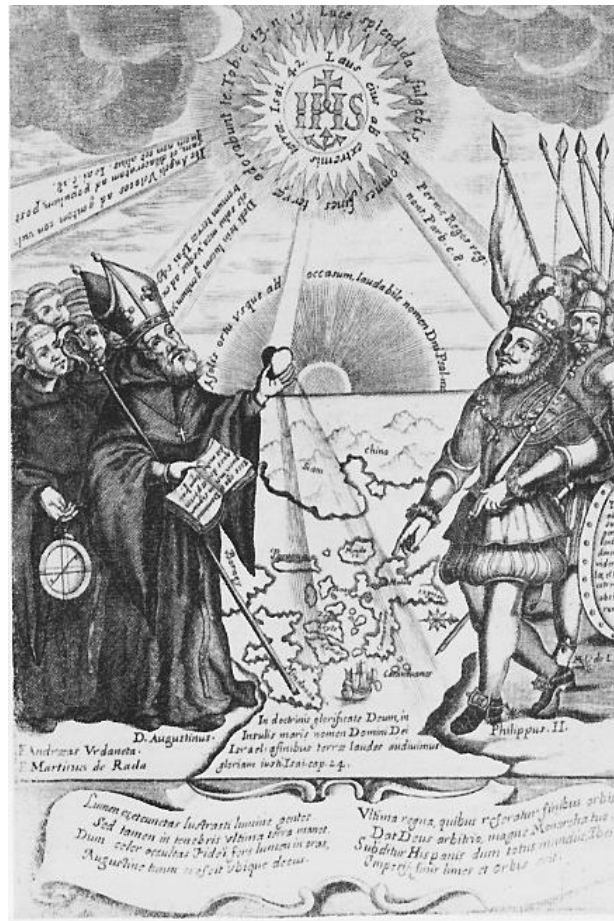


Figure 274. Nicolo Billy, *Conquista de las Islas Philipinas...*, engraving, 1698. Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid

Landscapes are also a symbol of possession, and this is reflected not only in the globe but also in the panels of the *Década* title pages. Allying the landscapes with the medallion portraits, and especially with the king and queen, indicates ownership and reidentification of the land within a European context. This artistic tradition is a cross over between cartography and art, and indicates the artist/cartographer endemic to the 16th century and a predecessor to later traditions of ownership in the 18th century and beyond. We can compare the painting of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews in the foreground of their vast estate, with

recreational hunting rifle and dog included as symbols of their aristocratic and financial standing to the medallions of Ferdinand and Isabella dressed in full regalia against a backdrop of New World landscapes as similar efforts to lay claim to a geographical space.



Figure 275. Thomas Gainsborough, *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews*, oil on canvas, 1750. National Gallery, London

Roman Empire

What, thinkest thou, was it that flung Horatius in full armour down from the bridge into the depths of the Tiber? What burned the hand and arm of Mutius? What impelled Curtius to plunge into the deep burning gulf that opened in the midst of Rome? What, in opposition to all the omens that declared against him, made Julius Caesar cross the Rubicon? And to come to more modern examples, what scuttled the ships, and left stranded and cut off the gallant Spaniards under the command of the most courteous Cortés in the New World?

– Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

The formatting of the text and imagery in the *Décadas* follows classical and medieval precedents in historical narrative and itinerary mapping, and this lent authority and legitimacy to the work that would have been recognizable to contemporary readers. The tradition of the Spanish monarchy linking itself with the Roman Empire intellectually, iconographically and ideologically was firmly established by Herrera's time. Although Philip II was less forthright than his father Charles V in pursuing this connection, it was nonetheless a fundamental strategy throughout the sixteenth century to legitimize Spanish claims in New Spain and Europe through visual ties to the classical empire and to the papacy in Rome.

While this connection to the Romans is paramount to the iconography of the work, Herrera channels a visual authority through these associations. However, as discussed above, the Spanish had surpassed the Ancients by moving beyond the Pillars of Hercules, which represented the limits of Roman geographical knowledge and Herrera distinguishes Charles V as a Spanish king rather than Roman Emperor: “I hase de advertir, que aunque el Inuisticimo D. Carlos V era Emperador de Romanos, como Castellanos no le servian en estos Descubrimientos, sino como á su Rei natural de Castilla I Leon cuia Corona no reconoce superior, le llamaremos siempre Rei i no Emperador.”⁴⁵³ Philip II himself did not use the term “emperor,” and his Kingdom was already reduced from that of his father, as Charles V had split the kingdom between his son Philip II, who

⁴⁵³ Cummins, “De Bry and Herrera: “Aguas Negras” or the Hundred Years War over an Image of America.”, 20.

received Castile, Aragon, Milan, Naples, Sicily, the Netherlands, and the Americas, and his brother Ferdinand, who controlled holdings in Central Europe.⁴⁵⁴

Historians and other storytellers would find many similarities among the conquistadors and the Romans, but Cortés was a particularly popular comparison. In Oviedo's *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, and extensively in the works of historian Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Cortés is frequently associated with Julius Caesar.⁴⁵⁵ Bernal Díaz, a soldier under Cortés, speaks of Cortés as actually surpassing the Romans: "while the Romans granted triumphs to Pompey and to Julius Caesar and to the Scipios, our Cortés is more worthy of praise than the Romans."⁴⁵⁶ Gómara asserted that the *Castellano* conquistador is not only rendered as more relevant than the Romans but makes their forebears seem obsolete: "Never did Greek or Roman, or a man of any nation, since kings have existed, do what Cortés did in seizing Montezuma, a most powerful king, in his own house, a very strong place, surrounded by an infinity of people, while Cortés had only four hundred and fifty companions.⁴⁵⁷ He also compares the feats of Balboa in his discovery of the Pacific in surpassing those of the Romans.⁴⁵⁸ Cervantes de Salazar compared the great Cortés with his Roman predecessors, and again found the latter lacking in tactics and in independent achievement: "Alexander with the Macedonians, as their king, and Julius Caesar with the Romans, as their emperor, conquered the territories of which we read, but Your Excellency, attended solely with your own valor, without any other advantage, came to equal them-and I am not sure I shouldn't rather say you had surpassed them."⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁴ Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, 126.

⁴⁵⁵ Lupher, *Romans in a New World*, 10.

Martin Warnke, *Political landscape: the art history of nature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 53.

⁴⁵⁶ Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España*, translated by Lupher, 11.

⁴⁵⁷ Francisco López de Gómara, *Historia de la Conquista de México*, 1552, as translated by Lupher, *Romans in a New World*, 2003, 11.

⁴⁵⁸ Lupher, *Romans in a New World*, 11.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, as translated by Lupher, 12.

According to popular legend, Cortés thought of himself as an heir to the Roman Empire, in fact surpassed their accomplishments. As the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V was addressed by Cortés in his fourth letter as Caesar: “I assure your Caesarian majesty that these people are so turbulent that at any novelty or opportunity for sedition, they rebel.”⁴⁶⁰ However, according to Díaz, Cortés often compared his own enterprises with those of the Romans: “He uttered many and other comparisons and heroic deeds of the Romans. As we all answered that we would do as he ordered, and that the die was cast for good fortune, as Julius Caesar said at the Rubicon.”⁴⁶¹

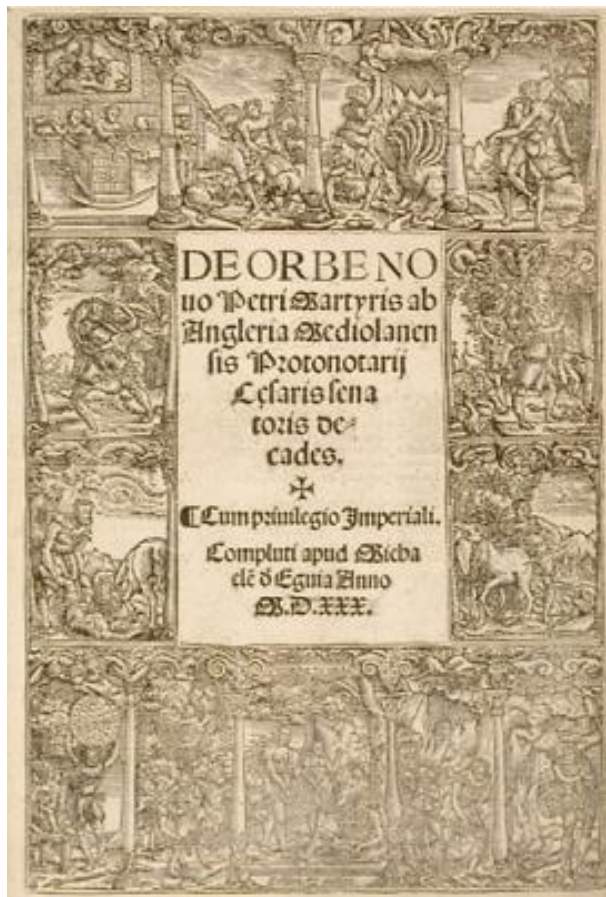


Figure 276. Peter Martyr, *De Orbe Nouo Petri Martyris ab Angleria Mediolanensis Protonotarij Cesaris senatoris decades ...* . Compluti apud Michaelē d' Eguia Anno M.D.XXX, 1530, Indiana University Library

⁴⁶⁰ Hugh Thomas, *The Golden Empire: Spain, Charles V, and the Creation of America* (New York: Random House, 2010), 4.

⁴⁶¹ Lupher, *Romans in a New World*, As translated and quoted by Lupher, 10.

The title page of the *De Orbo Novo* by Pietro Martire, includes a direct with this reference of the chivalric conquistadors with Roman mythology. On the title page of this text, Miguel de Eguia, who published this edition of Martire's work, displays the twelve tasks of Hercules and associates this with the conquests of the New World. "the New World promises to bring the conquistador-hero untold riches (here represented by the golden apples of the Hesbrides). Yet to get to this wealth (material as well as spiritual), the hero needs first to slay the multiheaded dragon of idolatry, defeat the giant Antaeus, and fool Atlas."⁴⁶² This reflects, according to Cañizares-Esguerra, the conquistadors hope to "establish their own fiefdoms through sheer chivalric prowess."⁴⁶³

Although Herrera was distinguishing Spain from Rome, he nonetheless saw a connection between the two, even comparing Philip II with Hercules in defense of Philip's actions against Queen Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots after a history unfavorable to the Spanish crown was published by George Buchanan: "Herrera, in contrast, claimed he was telling the 'truth about Mary's history and including her mistreatment by Queen Elizabeth I. He likened the latter to a 'monster' and declared her one whose 'diabolical fervour' made her the modern, female equivalent of Diomedes, the Greek ruler who taught his horses to eat human flesh but who was eventually vanquished by Hercules. Herrera, moreover, transformed the myth into contemporary politics, when he proclaimed that: 'This Hercules will be the invincible Philip II, king of Spain.'"⁴⁶⁴

The alliance of the Roman Empire and Christianity was another revival of the humanists, as is obvious in the Agnese atlas described above. The Roman Empire had borrowed Hellenistic and Oriental ideas of emperors identifying themselves with the gods, and this continued after the fall of the Western Roman Empire: "the cult of the emperor was centred on the Emperor as a god on earth."⁴⁶⁵ This

⁴⁶² Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors*, 7, Fig 1.3 caption.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁶⁴ Kagan, 2005, 271.

⁴⁶⁵ Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century*, 7.

did translate to the ideas of the Christ King, or “Christ-Cesar,” which also has ancient origins, where Christ is depicted as enthroned, often crowned, in rich settings and surrounded by a “senate of saints.” From the 4th century, the Emperor was regarded and frequently depicted as the “vicar on earth of Christ Triumphant.”⁴⁶⁶ In the sixth century, Pope Gregory I would assert the alliance of the church and the empire with great clarity and sometimes fanaticism: “To him the Roman Empire remained the political expression of the Christian universality: the Empire was the *christianum Imperium*, the *sancta respublica*, which would continue for as long as the world existed.”⁴⁶⁷ Even the Texcocan historian Alva Ixtlilxochitl made the connection of evangelism and the Roman Empire, in the latter instance comparing Cortés with Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar after reading Gómara’s *Historia general de las Indias y la conquista de México* (1552) and Herrera’s *Décadas*.⁴⁶⁸

The symbolic importance of the cities of the Americas in the 16th century and in Herrera reflects Roman ideologies of Humanism “reminiscent of the Roman idea that the city should serve as the mediator between Rome and the indigenous population, the instrument through which Roman *civilitas* would replace the *rusticitas* of the barbarian.”⁴⁶⁹ In all areas of conquest, Romans built cities that looked virtually alike, and according to the same formula. Each city contained the same types of institutions and services, such as baths, forums, amphitheaters, and basilicas. By establishing consistency, they allowed the Roman infiltrators to feel at home in a Roman template of *civilitas*, and established Roman order which contrasted with the perceived chaos of the conquered lands.

Likewise, for the Spanish in the Indies, “the town provided the antidote for what the Spaniards perceived as an alien environment inhabited by hostile peoples. In this context the town, no matter how small, was synonymous with civic order,

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁴⁶⁸ Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, 2007, 141.

⁴⁶⁹ Kagan and Marias, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793*, 26.

justice, and religion.”⁴⁷⁰ Like the Romans, there were strict guidelines for the template of the colonial town, which followed a similar grid like structure to the Roman model and included a church, central plaza and other elements that represented order and control of the environment.⁴⁷¹ In 1513 an official ordinance on settlements in the New World gave specific instructions for “streets, plaza, church and house lots to be laid out in an explicitly “regular” manner, and in 1573 more specific directions were provided, requiring four main streets running at right angles to the central plaza and opening to four external gates; eight additional streets should diverge from the cardinal directions at the corner of the plaza,” etc.⁴⁷² Uniformity and constancy was integral to the ordinance of Philip II as they were for Charles V, even in how the city was to grow and in what form: “se pueda siempre proseguir y dilatar en la misma forma.”⁴⁷³

Philip II supported a grid codification of urban plans for Spanish cities in the New World in 1573, which included a large central plaza for religious ceremonies and markets, typically including at its edges administrative, imperial or religious buildings and this “rectilinear core of the colonial city, the traza, was overwhelmingly European in culture and architecture.”⁴⁷⁴ Not only would this model fit European urban planning ideals, but would result in better control over the Indians: “La fundación de ciudades de españoles a lo largo del siglo XVI tuvo como principal finalidad la creación de centros de poder político, económico y religioso, con objeto de controlar los amplios territorios americanos, en los que los indígenas solían vivir en pequeñas poblaciones, situadas generalmente muy distantes unas de otras y en lugares escarpados. Por estos motivos fueron reducidos y agrupados en pueblos más grandes, mejor comunicados y ubicados

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 33–34. See Kagan’s illuminating chapter on this subject, 19–44.

⁴⁷² Karl W. Butzer, “From Columbus to Acosta: Science, Geography, and the New World,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82, no. 3 (1992): 554–555.

⁴⁷³ Centro de Estudios Históricos de Obras Públicas y Urbanismo (Spain), *La Ciudad hispanoamericana: el sueño de un orden*. ([Madrid]: Centro de Estudios Históricos de Obras Públicas y Urbanismo, Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Urbanismo, 1989), 79.

⁴⁷⁴ Mark A. Burkholder and Lyman L. Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, 4th ed. (Oxford University Press, USA, 2001), 184–186.

en lugares llanos, próximos a los campos cultivos y a las ciudades españoles.”⁴⁷⁵
 Isabel had herself decreed that towns be built in Hispaniola: “*facere algunas poblaciones,*” to consolidate the Christian populations, and direct orders to later ship captains to “*poblar y pacificar*” conquered lands in the new world.⁴⁷⁶



Figure 277. The city of Cuzco, Peru. German engraving from Braun and Hogenberg, *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, I, 1572

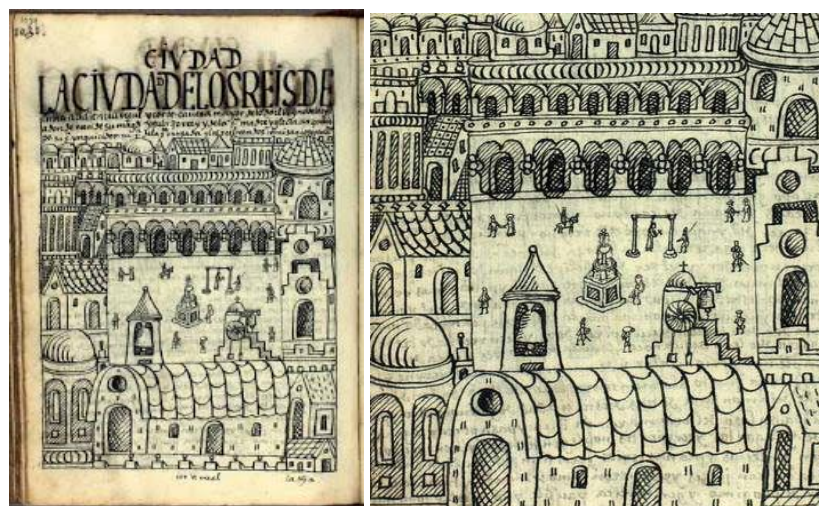


Figure 278. Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, “Lima,” *Nueva Crónica y Buen Gobierno*, 16th century

⁴⁷⁵ Morales Folguera, *La construcción de la sociedad utópica*, 70.

⁴⁷⁶ Kagan and Marias, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793*, 28.

In Poma de Ayala's illustration on Lima that accompanied his text on chronicles and good governing of the Americas, Lima looks to be a city one would expect to see in Spain, with its central plaza, domed cathedrals and linear structure. Here, too is depicted governing at work with a public gallows erected in the plaza and a poor unfortunate swinging from a rope near the city fountain.

An example of the imposition of urban order for the purpose of evangelizing Native Americans is illustrated in Diego Valadés' *Rhetorica Christiana*, from 1579. Valadés was the first recorded *mestizo* friar in the Mexico, the son of a conquistador and an Indian woman. The work is in Latin, and its purpose was "to assist preachers of his order among Indians of the New World."⁴⁷⁷ This illustration reflects his belief in the necessity for an urban order devoted to worship for the best success in evangelizing and maintaining the flock in New Spain. He believed that Indians were as "fully human" as Europeans, and that the converted were sincere in their beliefs.⁴⁷⁸ Here the centrality is the church itself and the dove of peace, which radiates light to the activities of learning and religious rites surrounding it. In each corner, rather than medallions, Valadés depicts instead four *posa* (stopping place) chapels, common in the Americas, and in each a friar instructs women, men, girls, and boys, respectively. In light of the itinerary map, these small chapel stations were literally stopping places used along the Corpus Christi procession, and rather than panels along the margins, there are actual paths lined with trees.

⁴⁷⁷ Mills, Taylor, and Graham, *Colonial Latin America*, 150.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

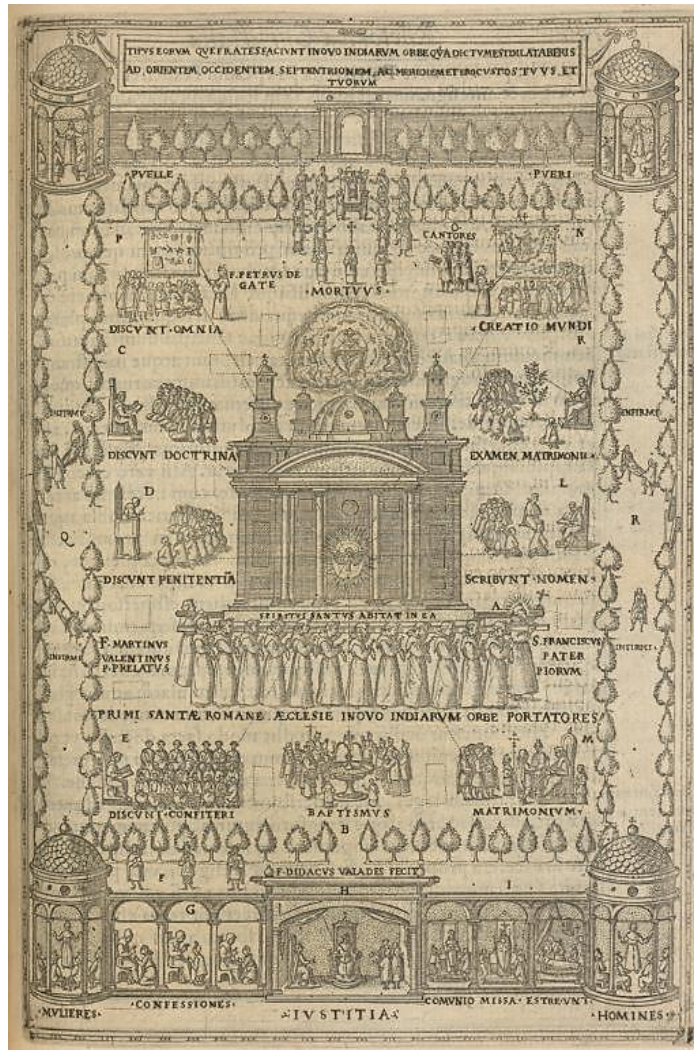


Figure 279. Fray Diego de Valadés, *Rhetorica Christiana*, Imagen de las funciones del atrio, 1579

The alliance of empire with the Christian mission of evangelism is alluded to on the right panels of *Década Primera*. Here in the third panel down from the top, there is a scene of the Indians destroying “la cruz de la Vega” as a battle rages in the foreground. If one looks closely, there is a radiating image of the Virgin and child above the right arm of the cross that responds to the violence as two men try to pull the cross down with a rope, one stands behind with a hatchet winding up to cut it down, and another stands in front holding up a flaming torch. Contemporary audiences would have found some familiarity with the symbol of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which adorned the armor of Charles V as a decorative element which can be seen in Titian’s equestrian portrait of the Holy Roman Emperor celebrating the his victory at Mülberg. “The image of the Virgin would

have been a clear signifier to others of the Spanish monarchs' special devotion to the cult of Mary, and it operated as a Catholic badge separating him, in battle and in image, from the heretics he was fighting."⁴⁷⁹ The association with the American conquest and this scene from Herrera would again allude to the justification of Spanish Christian militarism as a necessary part of the monarchy's obligations to bring faith to the heretics of the New World.

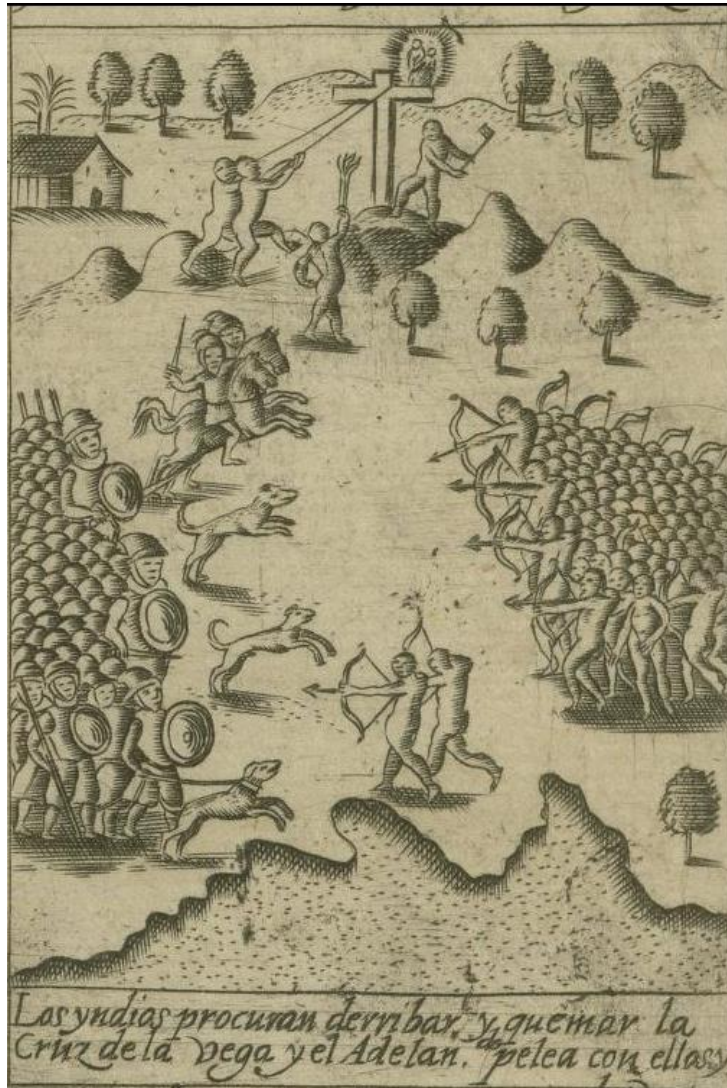


Figure 280. Detail, *Década Primera*

Christian Militarism and the Indians

⁴⁷⁹ Schroth, "Veneration and Beauty: Messages in Images of the King in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," 130.

The rights and governance of the Indians was a great debate during the sixteenth century, and while the details are beyond the scope of work of this project, there are some visual strategies of justification of conquest and proper governance of the Indians in the title pages of the *Décadas*.

“The ideology of the Spanish empire was rooted in medieval jurisprudence and the mythology of the Christian *reconquista* (reconquest) of the Iberian peninsula, in Judeo-Christian concepts of time as progressive and providential, and recycled Roman notions of universal empire.”⁴⁸⁰ “The intellectual fusion of the messianic-evangelical with the heroic-chivalric... had its political manifestation and counterpart in the uniquely Iberian close association, even amalgamation, of church and monarchy, religious orders and government agencies in a sort of evangelical imperialism. With varying modification, such an intoxicating configuration impelled soldier and preacher, jurist and administrator in a grand enterprise of Spanish Catholic imperialism.”⁴⁸¹

Militarism and Christianity were deeply associated in medieval Europe, but Payne argues it was even more so in medieval Spanish Catholicism, which seems to be profoundly demonstrated in Herrera’s work filled with scenes of battles and conquest repeatedly being played out on the stylized landscapes of his title pages, where the New World under the Habsburg banner is “unified on the basis of a militant religiosity.”⁴⁸² According to Payne, due to the militaristic origins of the Hispano-Christian society in the Reconquest, a common medieval European tendency to align military leadership with qualities of aristocracy was narrowed and exaggerated in Spain well into the sixteenth century. “The frontier society of Castile, particularly, emphasized military status above all else. The role of the warrior aristocracy was ultimately more important in the peninsula than in almost

⁴⁸⁰ Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 68.

⁴⁸¹ Headley, “Spain’s Asian Presence, 1565-1590,” November 1, 1995, 626. See also Patricia Seed, “The Requirement: A Protocol for Conquest.”

⁴⁸² Reséndez, *A Land So Strange*, 47.

any other part of Western Europe. Aristocratic status was consequently more deeply honored, as well as more profoundly internalized than lesser members of society. Status and honor became proportionately even more important, for wealth was based on conquest, dominion, and subsequent status more than upon work and economic achievement. Thus the aristocratic society of honor and arrogance had deeper roots in the experience of Reconquest Spain than could be provided by the history of other more settled parts of Western Europe.⁴⁸³

Cañizares-Esguerra argues that the Spanish “colonization was an act foreordained by God, prefigured in the trials of the Israelites in Canaan. Just as the Israelites had fought against the stiff resistance of Satan’s minions, the Philistines, Puritans, and Spanish clerics felt entitled to take over America by force, battling their way into a continent infested by demons”⁴⁸⁴ as part of a “biblically sanctioned interpretation of expansion, part of a long standing Christian tradition of holy violence aimed at demonic enemies within and without.”⁴⁸⁵

There were several elements to the *Reconquista* that arguably have some parallels with the conquest of the Americas. There was the crusade against Islam, conquests for monetary gain, and the expansion south into Muslim territories.⁴⁸⁶ The church played a powerful role, and were particularly responsible in Castile for inciting Christian Militarism: “The crusading ideal gave Castilian warriors their sense of participating in a holy mission as soldiers of the Faith, it could not eliminate the more mundane instincts which had inspired the earliest expeditions against the Arabs, and which were prompted by a thirst for booty.”⁴⁸⁷ The idea of the *hidalgo*, a man who follows a code of honor and conquers rather than earns his wealth under the guise of God was a sign of aristocracy and strength, and came to influence Castilian society “in which militantly religious and aristocratic

⁴⁸³ Payne, *Spanish Catholicism*, 24.

⁴⁸⁴ Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors*, 14.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁸⁶ Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716*, 32–33.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

strains predominated.”⁴⁸⁸ Indeed it was the hope to connect directly with eastern nations who could assist in the conquest of the Ottoman Turks that partially inspired Isabella to agree to support Columbus’s initial journey to the west as a means of “laying the foundations of a great Christian mission in the East.”⁴⁸⁹

These Castilian cultural traditions would have been familiar to Herrera as a Castilian. As his work is set in an earlier age and visually references the Catholic monarchy on the first title page the alliance of the conquest with the Americas to that of Islam cannot be overstated. The Castilians were marked by a “vigour and self-confidence” that gave its people “a natural predominance in the new Spanish Monarchy”⁴⁹⁰ of Ferdinand and Isabella, and there is no reason why this would not be reflected in the work of one of its own, Herrera. In fact, when the Americas under conquest became the legal possession of the Spanish, in their view at least, it was very much a Castilian victory; out of 1,000 conquistadors who fought in America, they were “overwhelmingly from the Crown of Castile,” including two of the greatest heroes of the Spanish conquest, Hernán Cortés and Francisco Pizarro.⁴⁹¹ Within this new Castilian dominated empire, “inhabitants of Navarre or the Crown of Aragon were regarded as foreigners.”⁴⁹²

According to Davies, in the sixteenth century the “Spanish soldiers were the best in the world” and that children at this time were raised under the “halo of romance” of this profession to such a degree that being in the military was the only acceptable position for a gentleman, particularly as devout Christians familiar with fighting the “‘infidel’ Moor.”⁴⁹³ “Hence religious zeal assisted the recruiting efforts of social pride.”⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 60.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 44–45.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 63.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Davies, *The Golden Century of Spain, 1501-1621*, 22–23.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., 22.

While the providential objectives were part of an elaborate propaganda scheme of unification under God, the presence of a certain militaristic focus of conquest and wealth cannot be ignored: “in the early decades of the Conquest it was by the sword and the compass that the Spaniards most successfully communicated.”⁴⁹⁵ This is beautifully illustrated in the frontispiece of Bernardo de Vargas Machuca’s book *Milicia y descripción de las Indias* from 1599, where the author is shown holding in one hand a compass positioned over America on a globe, and in the other the handle of his sword. The text below reads: “A la espada y el compass, Mas y mas y mas y mas.”⁴⁹⁶ While it has been argued that Columbus and Cortés were most interested in fame rather than fortune and God, the glory of God played an integral role to many: “the Conquest of the Spanish Indies was, in fact, the last Crusade”⁴⁹⁷



Figure 281. Frontispiece and title page to *Milicia y Descripción de las Indias*, Bernardo de Vargas Machuca, Madrid: Pedro Madrival, 1599. John Carter Brown Library

⁴⁹⁵ Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 99.

⁴⁹⁶ Headley, “Spain’s Asian Presence, 1565-1590,” November 1, 1995.

⁴⁹⁷ Irving A. Leonard, *Books of the Brave: Being an Account of Books and of Men in the Spanish Conquest and Settlement of the Sixteenth-Century New World* (University of California Press, 1992), 105. See also Livingston, *The Geographical Tradition*, 37.



Figure 282. Amadis De Gaula. *Los Quatro Libros De Amadis De Gaula Nueuamente Impressos & Hystoriados En Seuilla, 1526*

Two forms of literature with significant prevalence in sixteenth century Spain were the epic poem and romances of chivalry. While the former had precedent in classical writing, the chivalric romance “had no classical model, no pedigree nor tradition, and thus very little prestige.”⁴⁹⁸ For all of that, however, this latter genre was wildly popular in the Middle Ages and well into the sixteenth century, being really one of the first forms of fiction available to nobles during this period, and to lower classes starting with the proliferation of printing in the sixteenth century. “It would be difficult to exaggerate the popularity” of *Amadis de Gaula* by Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, for example, itself arguably based on French versions of Neo-Arthurian literature, which “had far and away the largest number

⁴⁹⁸ Daniel Eisenberg, *Romances of Chivalry in the Spanish Golden Age*, Juan de La Cuesta Hispanic Monographs, no. 3 (Newark, Del: Juan de la Cuesta, 1982), 9. See Eisenberg for a wonderfully detailed analysis of contemporary criticism of this genre in the sixteenth century and beyond.

of editions and copies printed... Even among those who had not read the work, almost all literate, and many illiterate Spaniards knew the name of the work.”⁴⁹⁹ The story of Amadís became the model for many other works of this type, and of course, *Don Quixote*: a travelling prince searching for adventure and conquest, frequently in battle or contests, in exotic and distant remote lands, “the interest in honor and fame” with the occasional damsel in distress thrown in for added action and romance.⁵⁰⁰

Stories of the conquistadores followed the popularity of chivalric knights, and the tendency to align the two in popular culture was an obvious association of warriors traveling far and battling unknown dangers in the name of love, God and honor. The popularity of Amerigo Vespucci in Holland, for example, is exemplified by the publication in Amsterdam in ca. 1506-1509 of his letters from the 3rd voyage, and it is curious that this edition was printed by the publisher Jan van Doesborgh, who was most famous for his popular books on chivalric romances. It has been suggested that very scarcity of his publications, including this one on Vespucci, is most likely because they were intended for the “reading public.”⁵⁰¹ In the book’s inscription is written by the publisher: “All this foregoing is translated and brought over from the Italian into the Latin, and further from Latin into Dutch, that men may know and understand, what great wonders daily are found...”⁵⁰²

While the chivalric tales of Amadís and others may not have inspired the initial motivations for conquest, it was not unusual for conquistadores themselves to ally these adventures with those of popular heroes. In Bernal Díaz del Castillo’s *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva-España*, he speaks from first hand experience as a former soldier in Cortés’s army of the Spaniard conquistador’s

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 31.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁰¹ Frederik Muller, *Catalogue of Books, Maps, Plates on America, and of a Remarkable Collection of Early Voyages, Offered for Sale by Frederik Muller at Amsterdam ...: Including a Large Number of Books in All Languages with Bibliographical and Historical Notes and Presenting an Essay towards a Dutch-American Bibliography*. (Amsterdam: Muller, 1872), 7.

⁵⁰² Ibid., 6.

reaction when they first saw Tenochtitlán. “So dazzled were they by the experience, they could compare what they saw only to the marvels of (‘cosas y encantamientos’) of the most famous books of chivalry, the *Amadís de Gaula*. Bernal Díaz and his awed companions found themselves suddenly in the presence, as the author tells us, of ‘cosas nunca oídas ni vistas y aun soñadas’...⁵⁰³ That a century after Díaz described the city in his famous story, criollos in the new world “were dressing up as knights errant, is to see the complex way in which imagination enters into experience.”⁵⁰⁴ As Pettegree notes, an Iberian soldier amazed his comrades during a battle in the New World, and afterward was said to have declared: “I didn’t do the half of what any of the knights did in the book that you fellows read to me every night.”⁵⁰⁵ However, the tendency in contemporary literature to assign these characters with the attributes of great heroes can be read in the words of Bernal Díaz del Castillo. “Una fama que así, con esa misma expression, la encontraremos en los textos de le época, como cuando Bernal Díaz del Castillo decía de Hernan Cortés aquello tan conocido y que ya hemos comentado: ‘... la fama de sus grandes hechos volaba por toda Castilla.’”⁵⁰⁶

Possibly because many of the works were translations from French and other languages into Castilian and tended to incorporate an air of bygone days, there was an overall sense that these were histories to the general reader: “there was a unanimous pretense of that the works were true histories, only rescued and modernized by a sixteenth century contemporary.”⁵⁰⁷ While, again, few of these works were entirely Castilian in production and tended to be based on other European models of romance literature, they took on a particularly Castilian nature in their remodeling. While Eisenberg, for one, does not believe that these stories directly inspired New World conquest, he does acknowledge that the similarities between these types of narratives with those stories coming out of

⁵⁰³ Ilgen and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *The Bernard J. Flatow Collection of Latin American Cronistas in the Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, 98.

⁵⁰⁴ Leonard, *Books of the Brave*, Introduction by Rolena Adorno, xxvii.

⁵⁰⁵ Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, First Edition (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), referenced in Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, 168.

⁵⁰⁶ *Historia De España Menéndez Pidal*, vol. III (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 2002), 78.

⁵⁰⁷ Eisenberg, *Romances of Chivalry in the Spanish Golden Age*, 43.

the Americas “may possibly have been a factor in their popularity.”⁵⁰⁸

Furthermore, the rise of chivalric literature coincided with the reign of Charles V, an avid romance reader a lover of sport and chivalry, while its decline seemed aligned to the more academic pursuits of Philip II.⁵⁰⁹

Herrera’s challenge was to tell the truth and he aligned his Castellanos with not only heroism of popular culture but also lent them authority through geographical references and classical and imperial authority under the ever present support of God. In the interest of not being presentist in our perceptions of how the medallions can be read in Herrera, it is important to contextualize them in light of these perceptions of hero and romance. As Kagan points out, the need to distinguish a historiography as truth was paramount. Herrera was instructed to write the “truth” by Philip II, but what good is writing the truth when no one will believe it is true? It seems logical that Herrera would have taken some pains to appeal to current interests in heroism and adventure while at the same time using a structure that revealed the validity of his narratives.

Herrera’s work was certainly distinguishable from chivalric tales in its font, which was no longer gothic. “Spanish romances were printed in gothic, and this tradition persisted even after roman and italic had been generally adopted in Spain.”⁵¹⁰ For example, *Los Quarto Libros del Cavallero Felix Magno* from 1549 follows a tradition of gothic type in chivalric stories from the beginning of the 16th century. However, Elizabeth Wright warns of making too much of this connection of “the common visual traits of most Spanish imprints in the first two decades of the sixteenth century-recycled illustrations and gothic letters-for cues to one specific genre.”⁵¹¹ If we consider the title pages of the first edition of the *Carta de relación* by Hernán Cortés in 1522, we see a similar style to the ones below in font

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., 42.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁵¹⁰ A. F. Johnson, *One Hundred Title-Pages 1500–1800*, (London: Lane, 1928), note plate 70. See also Wright, “New World News, Ancient Echoes,” 717.

⁵¹¹ Elizabeth Wright, “New World News, Ancient Echoes: A Cortés Letter and a Vernacular Livy for a New King and His Wary Subjects (1520–23),” *Renaissance Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2008): 717.

and execution. However, the distinction between fact and fantasy for most of the literate public of Spain may have been blurred. “Para un español del XVI que jamás conociera el Nuevo Mundo personalmente, las historias de López de Gómara, de Fernández de Oviedo y demás, parecerían pura ficción, leyendas, cuentas fantásticos.”⁵¹²

⁵¹² Trevor J Dadson, *Libros, lectores y lecturas: estudios sobre bibliotecas particulares españolas del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Arco/Libros, 1998), 84. Quoted by Wright, 717.

Interestingly, Fernández de Oviedo, the great historian, published a chivalric romance before his wonderful *Historia general y natural de las Indias*. A theme directly relating chivalry to militant Christianity, his *Don Claribalte* of 1519 describes a knight who conquers Constantinople and becomes not only the emperor but the pope as well.⁵¹³ A distinction between what is fact and what is fiction in these texts would be a challenge to the reader used to heroic tales of knights of fantasy. Oviedo made a point to clarify that these fantasies should not be confused with historical fact in regards to his *Historia*: “after all, I do not recount the nonsense of the books of chivalry, nor such matters as are dependent on them.”⁵¹⁴ His novel, *Libro del muy esforzado e invencible caballero Don Claribalte*, was published in Valencia in 1519, while the *Historia*, first presented in 1525 (although not published in its entirety until the 19th century). His cautionary tale is ironic, however, when one looks at the titlepage from his work of 1535. In the top panel, there is a very clear chivalric soldier trampling his foes beneath his horse’s hooves. While he does look more like a Roman soldier in his fitted metal breastplate and skirt, the reference to a romantic soldier figure is perhaps not the most consistent with Oviedo’s assurance that the facts are not to be confused with “nonsense.”

The iconography of this page is consistent with Santiago Matamoros, or Saint James the Moor Slayer, who vanquished the Moors and is the patron saint of Santiago de Compostela. Here is shown as a Roman soldier rather than a direct agent of Christ, blurring the lines between the two traditions in a way that is quite relevant to Herrera’s visual vocabulary. That the use of the reference of Saint James in the American context of vanquishing heretics and bringing the word of God to the indigenous is also evident in the work of Guamán Poma de Ayala, who depicts the saint trampling an Incan rather than a Moor. That Spaniards considered the Americas an extension of the Crusades is well illustrated by this visual connection.

⁵¹³ Myers, *Fernández De Oviedo’s Chronicle of America*, 16.

⁵¹⁴ Leonard, *Books of the Brave*, xxiii.



Figure 283. Detail of title page, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general de las Indias*, Sevilla, 1535. John Carter Brown Library

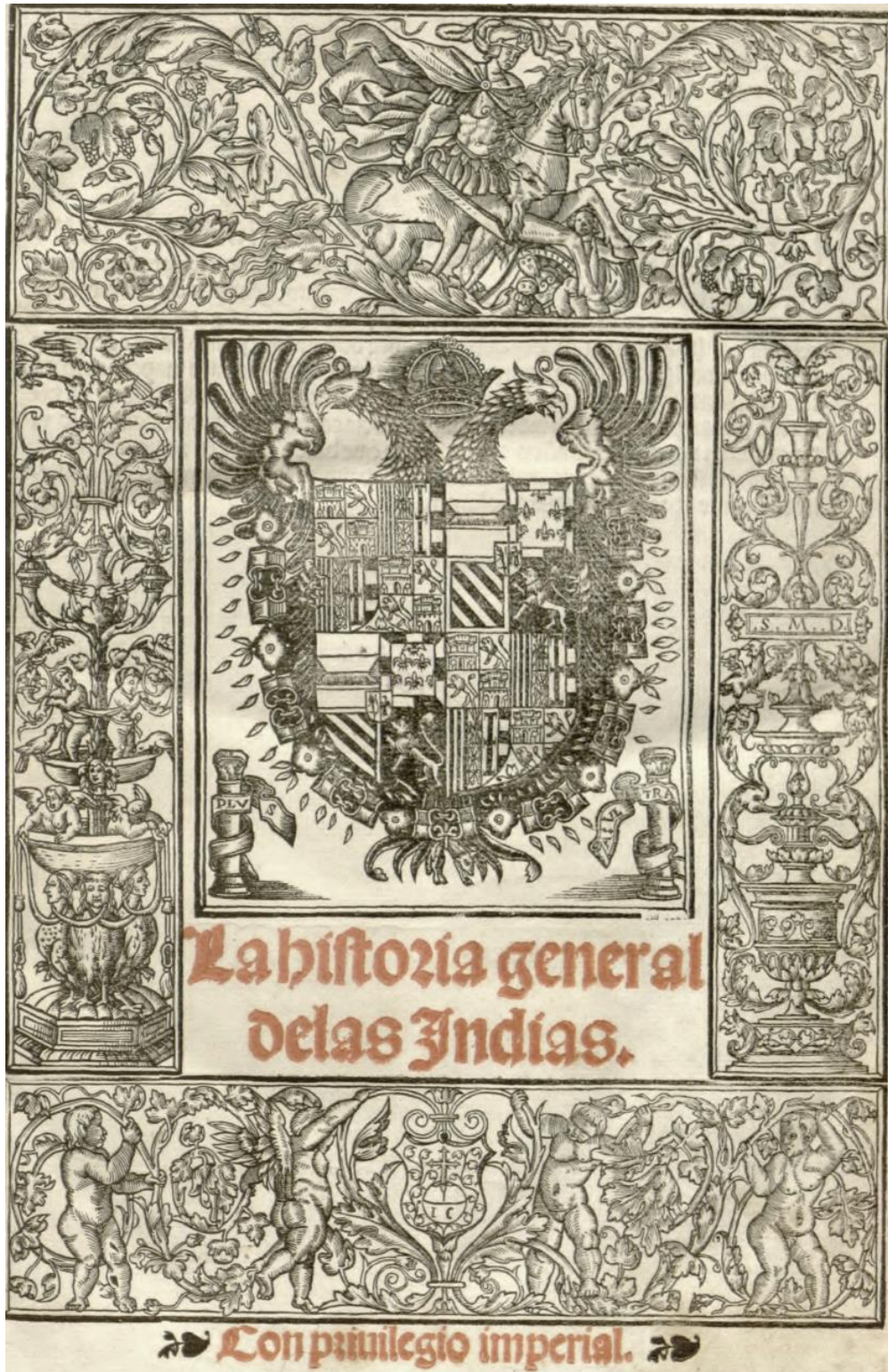


Figure 284. Title page, Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general de las Indias*, Sevilla, 1535. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 285. Guamán Poma de Ayala, *Conquista Milagro del Santiago*, *Nueva Cronica y Buen Gobierno*, Peru, 1600-1615. Det Kongelige Bibliotek



Figure 286. Santiago Matamoros, or "Saint James the Moor-slayer," ca. 17th century

Herrera's battle scenes include numerous examples of soldiers on horseback and their obvious advantage over the footed armies of the indigenous population. While they do not trod the Indians underfoot as Santiago Matamoros does to the Moors, the stance and chivalric iconography is relevant if we are to make this connection with a well established tradition of Crusader and knight imagery. On the title page of *Década Primera*, for example, the knights of the Castellanos rear up to defend the cross of La Vega and *The Madonna de las Mercedes*.



Figure 287. *Década Primera* Title Page, detail, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

The chivalric knight was almost indistinguishable from imperial portraits on horseback in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as in this painting commissioned by the Charles V to commemorate his victory at Mühlberg in 1547, where he beat the Protestant opposition during the Schmalkaldie Wars. A similar but less dynamic Charles V is depicted in the tapestry of Cornelisz, which was most likely the inspiration for a posthumous portrait of Philip II by Peter Paul Rubens ca.1630. Like the Titian painting, the Cornelisz tapestry celebrates a military victory, again over the conquest of Tunis. For this tapestry, Charles V asked that the artists Jan Cornelisz and Pieter Coeckcke van Aelst personally to join him to Tunis to witness first hand his conquering of the Turks.⁵¹⁵

A wonderful chivalric title page was published as part of a two centuries old history of Alfonso XI on the occasion of Prince Philip's return to Spain from the Netherlands to administer the government of Spain under his father's order, again alluding to a Roman Christian knight on horseback.⁵¹⁶ The tradition perpetuates well into the 17th century with Velázquez's portrait of Philip III.

As discussed above, however, Philip II was less prone to depict himself as emperor than his father; the portrait by Rubens is painted posthumously and the print of the prince in the Alfonso was not commissioned by Philip.⁵¹⁷ Therefore, the chivalric reference in the Herrera are more likely to reference an age past as part of the narrative of the age of conquest, rather than the time of Philip II, as he is not included in the tale. Propagandistic imperial imagery for Philip was in the Netherlands and arguably in the Americas was to justify Spanish possession and not to affirm the glory of king himself, who, as has been mentioned above, considered himself to be Spain.

⁵¹⁵ Kamen, *The Escorial*, 155.

⁵¹⁶ Christie's, *Important Books, Atlases and Manuscripts*, 13.

⁵¹⁷ Kamen, *The Escorial*, 159.



Figure 288. Titian, *Emperor Charles V on Horseback at Mühlberg*, 1548, oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



Figure 289. Left: Jan Cornelisz, *The Capture of Tunis*, tapestry, 1546 and 1554. Alcázar, Seville

Figure 290. Right: Peter Paul Rubens, *Philip II on Horseback*, oil on canvas, ca. 1630. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



Figure 291. Title page probably by Juan Núñez de Villasán, [ALFONSO XI, King of Castile and Leon (1311-1350)]. *Chronica del muy esclarecido Principe e Rey don Alfonso el Onzeno deste nombre de los reyes que reynaron en Castilla y en Leon*. Valladolid: Sebastian Martinez for Pedro de Espinosa and Antonio Zamora, 1551.



Figure 292. Velázquez, Diego Rodríguez de Silva y, *Felipe III on Horseback*, oil on canvas, ca. 1631. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

Philip II portrayed as a Christian knight was perhaps more relevant in the portrait by Antonis Mor, where Philip II is depicted against a black background wearing an

exquisite costume of armour and mail holding a general's baton in one hand. His gaze is confident and stoic, and it has been suggested that the baton when shown in the context of parade armour would have been a recognizable iconographical reference to "ancient and Renaissance portraits of the twelve Roman emperors."⁵¹⁸ In this official portrait, "Philip II is pictured as the Christian knight, ready to do battle at all costs, just as his ancestors who led the battle had done."⁵¹⁹ Philip III is portrayed in an almost identical pose in a portrait from 1606, several years before the second set of Herrera was published.



Figure 293. Left: Antonis Mor, *Philip II*, ca. 1557. Patrimonio Real, Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.

Figure 294. Right: Juan Pantoja de la Cruz, *Felipe III de España*, 1606. Museo del Prado, Madrid

This symbolism comes through in the medallion portraits of the conquistadors in Herrera's *Década Setima* and *Década Octava*, as evidenced here in the medallion of

⁵¹⁸ Schroth, "Veneration and Beauty: Messages in Images of the King in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," 123.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 122.

General Pedro de Hinojosa. The general is shown holding a baton and is wearing a fine helmet and armour, which would have been relevant to a contemporary Spanish audience. Interestingly, the three medallions which include batons are in the second series of volumes from 1615, and accompany the vastly more dense militaristic scenes that decorate these later pages. Schor suggests the inclusion of the sword in the Mor portrait, which we can presume also be the case with the later de la Cruz, indicates the king's willingness to "defend God's honor" in "face to face combat" as well as celebrate Spain's national pride as a leading bladesmithing center of Europe.⁵²⁰ This association would be particularly interesting to Herrera in the context of his agenda for the *Décadas*, aligning Castellanos and Christian knights in pursuit of legitimating the Spanish presence in the Americas in the name of God.



Figure 295. General Pedro de Hinojosa medallion from *Década Octava*

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 117 and 119.

Descripción de Las Indias



Figure 296. Herrera, Descripción de las Indias Occidentales



Figure 297. Abraham Ortelius. *Theatrum orbis terrarum*. [apud Aegid. Coppenium Diesth, Antverpiae, M.D.LXX.] Indiana University, Bernardo Mendel Collection

The *Descripción de las Indias* was intended as a supplement to the *Décadas* and was published separately, but most typically was included in the final binding of the *Décadas* upon purchase of the volumes.⁵²¹ This section is prefaced by an elaborately decorated title page introducing a text containing detailed geographical descriptions of the New World. The descriptions of various geographical regions are illustrated in subsections with numerous maps of New Spain, based on the heretofore unpublished drawings by Juan López de Velasco.⁵²²

This frontispiece breaks from those of the *Décadas* in many ways; it contains significantly more romantic imagery, much of it based on European cartographic traditions of sea monsters and sea gods, and it includes Gods of the Americas taken from ethnographic codices from the Americas. This reflects Herrera's own testament that the New World was full of wonders the European mind was ill equipped to comprehend. These fanciful decorations exist solely on the title

⁵²¹ In different publications of the book, the binders chose to insert this book in different locations. In the Madrid 1601-1615 version, for example, the *Descripción* appears after *Década Quarta*, where the version used for the Cuesta Domingo edition of 1991 from Madrid the *Descripción* was published in the very beginning. These insertions of this important chapter can greatly effect the reader's perception of space, which will be covered more fully below.

⁵²² It was really with Charles V that a new strategy of power was utilized – the unveiling of maps of New Spain, in an effort to demonstrate the power of Spain and the expanse of its domain through publication of its vast holdings in the New World and elsewhere. See Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*, 96 for a discussion of this topic.

pages as there is no attempt to correlate aesthetically the Velasco maps with the title pages, the latter being exceedingly plain. The Herrera-Velascos are almost exact replicas of the originals, and there is no decoration on these maps consistent with the title page, not a compass rose, a single exotic species or human being to add intrigue or fantasy.

On the title page, Herrera includes his own portrait in the lower left corner, and he is labeled with name and title in a similar fashion to his Castellanos in the *Décadas* and his place of origin as a “Natural de la Vega de la Cuellar.” Herrera’s inclusion of his own image serves the role of legitimizing his authority to speak on the events in the New World by placing himself in a similar position as the Catholic monarchs, the great explorers and religious leaders in the other pages. While he was not a primary resource, he acknowledges his legitimacy as author and compiler of knowledge, the expert who has gathered, interpreted and organized this information under the auspices of the monarchy.



Figure 298. *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*

This was not without precedent, as other authors were laying claim to their work in similar manner. Herrera might have been following examples such as Juan de Castellano or Oviedo by placing himself in the title page of the *Descripción*. Oviedo

was quite clear on his exclusive and powerful role as the chronicler of events and natural world of the Americas: “In every case, Oviedo is the central vehicle or filter through which the reader receives valuable information. Future generations will be ‘awestruck,’ he boasts, that ‘a single man could have written such a multitude of histories and secrets of nature’ (bk. 39, *Proemio*). Moreover, he states that the history is ‘not one of the least but rather one of the most high and copious that has been written by any man since Adam.’ (bk. 22, *Proemio*).”⁵²³



Figure 299. Juan de Castellanos, *Primera parte, de las elegias de varones illustres de Indias*, En casa de la viuda de Alonso Gomez, Madrid, 1589. John Carter Brown Library

Herrera-Velasco Maps

If we are to assume that the original intention was for the *Descripción* to be inserted at the beginning of the publication, the maps included therein further support this legitimization of Spanish authority, as it very clearly outlines the boundaries of the papal bull *Inter caetera* in 1493. The intention of the *Descripción* is to describe and illuminate the holdings of the empire and to glorify the people responsible for the acquisition of the lands between the meridiens of the “Oscdiental[sic]” and “Oriental” lines. In the introduction to this section, Herrera describes the physical qualities of the earth – that its scope is 360 degrees, and

⁵²³ Myers, *Fernández De Oviedo’s Chronicle of America*, 3.

the 6300 leagues (ca. 35,000 km). He says the earth is made up of two parts, the land and the sea, and that the ancients divided the earth into three parts and named each one: “A la primera llamaron Europa, mas celebrada que ninguna del las otras. A la segunda es major de las demas, y contiene el gran Reyno de la China. La tercera parte es Africa...”⁵²⁴ However, Herrera makes clear straight away what he wants to talk about in this work: “dieron en el arte de navegar, y en la invención de los navios de alto borde, acomodandolos de manera que pudiessen sufrir la fuerça de las olas de la mar, y en este arte han hecho ventaja los Españoles a todas nació del mundo.”⁵²⁵ He notes the reasons Spain has gained this privilege overall other nations: “porque reynando en Castilla, y Leon, los esclarecidos Reyes Catolicos don Fernando V. y doña Ysabel Reyna prudentissima,” Don Juan II, Chirstopher Columbus and many others. He says this fourth part is to place the greatest admiration for the people whose descriptions are included in this section.

This geographical knowledge of the world and the Indias as an assertion of knowledge and power is integral to the message of this work, the text supports the maps and vice versa, demonstrating the vast knowledge accumulated by the Castellanos and therefore their rightful possession of the lands described.

The rightful possession of the seas is also of eminent importance. As described above, Phillip II was well aware of the power of geographical knowledge, and this is reflected in the inclusion of the seas surrounding the New World. One can plant a flag, build a village, and claim ownership of land, but legitimizing possession of the seas and the stars presents a formidable challenge. Knowledge of the seas is earned at great expense, risk, and navigational training. As the Portuguese were leaders in the development of tools and technology gaining them access to the remote and previously unexplored regions of the South Atlantic, they claimed

⁵²⁴ Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano, Descripción*, 1.

⁵²⁵ Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano, Descripción*, 1.

exclusive commercial traffic rights to these areas. "... the seas that can and should be navigated by all are those which were always known and always known by all and common to all. But those others [such as the South Atlantic] which were never known before (sabidos), and never even appeared navigable, these seas (that) were discovered by such great efforts on my part [i.e., the Portuguese crown] may not [be navigated by all]."⁵²⁶ As Philip II of Spain was crowned Philip I of Portugal in 1581, the inclusion of the maps of Juan López de Velasco could be assumed to reflect expertise of the seas and established trade routes between continents by the Habsburg Empire, which would further establish legitimacy for claims for the resources and lands established due to this knowledge.

The Descripción de las Indias includes 14 maps "each of which also aimed to summarize cartographically the data available on the audiencias or major judicial-administrative units into which the overseas realms were divided."⁵²⁷ These maps correspond to text to describe the lands of three Indies of the New World in Spanish possession: Indias del Norte, or the parts of North America, Mexico, Central Mexico, Central America, and Venezuela; the Indias de Mediodía, which includes the rest of South America; and the Indias del Poniente, or the lands of the Pacific which reached all the way to China.⁵²⁸

The beauty of earlier works such as Diego Gutiérrez leaves one wondering about the very low technical quality of the maps included in the Herrera as well as the latter's paucity of information, beyond the obvious that Gutiérrez was printed in Antwerp by the well-known engraver Hieronymous Cock, and Herrera's were printed in Madrid, many engraved by Juan Peyron, an almost untraceable

⁵²⁶ Don João to Rui Fernandes May 2, 1543 quoted in Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁵²⁷ Howard F. Cline, "The Ortelius Maps of New Spain, 1579, and Related Contemporary Materials, 1560-1610," *Imago Mundi* 16 (January 1, 1962): 113.

⁵²⁸ John M. Headley, "Spain's Asian Presence, 1565-1590: Structures and Aspirations," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (November 1, 1995): see Headley for a thorough overview of the strategies of possession of the Pacific region.

artisan.⁵²⁹ It has been suggested that the Gutiérrez map was a copy of the most up to date *padrón real* at a time “when the interior of the continent was beginning to give up its secrets.”⁵³⁰ However, the Herrera-Velasco maps are useless for any real detail towards navigation, and demonstrate a continued secrecy: “The well-known maps of Herrera, such as *Descripción del distrito de la Audiencia de Nueva España*, were an extreme expression of the Spanish geographic-cartographic paranoia during this period. They show only relatively accurate outlines of landmasses, with little interior detail. As a result, Spanish claims especially to frontier areas like the northern borderlands were never securely made public.”⁵³¹

The Velasco maps were also over fifty years old by the time Herrera published them, which points again to the proprietary secrecy of the Casa de Contratación. What is fascinating about a direct comparison between the two sets of maps, those included in the 1601 edition of the Herrera and the Juan Lopez de Velasco is what Herrera decided to keep and what was edited out.

The maps of Juan López de Velasco as reproduced by Herrera (distinguished here as Herrera-Velasco maps) illustrate the vastness of the land waiting to be occupied by the Spaniards, but also show the numerous cities already established by the Empire. As has been mentioned above, like Herrera, Juan López de Velasco never went to the New World; his maps are based on the descriptions of first-hand accounts transcribed into cartographic form. His maps were the first printed maps to show the Spanish Indies all the way to the Asian coast,⁵³² and therefore the entirety of the Spanish territories.⁵³³

⁵²⁹ See Chapter 3.

⁵³⁰ Buisseret, *The Mapmakers' Quest*, 87.

⁵³¹ Dennis Reinhartz and Gerald D Saxon, *Mapping and Empire: Soldier-Engineers on the Southwestern Frontier* (Austin, Tex.: Univ. of Texas Press, 2005). Illustration 3.1, p. 58

⁵³² Padrón, *The Spacious Word*, 64–65.

⁵³³ Cline, “The Ortelius Maps of New Spain, 1579, and Related Contemporary Materials, 1560-1610,” 101. Velasco’s maps were likely sources for Ortelius, as there are great similarities of place names in each publication

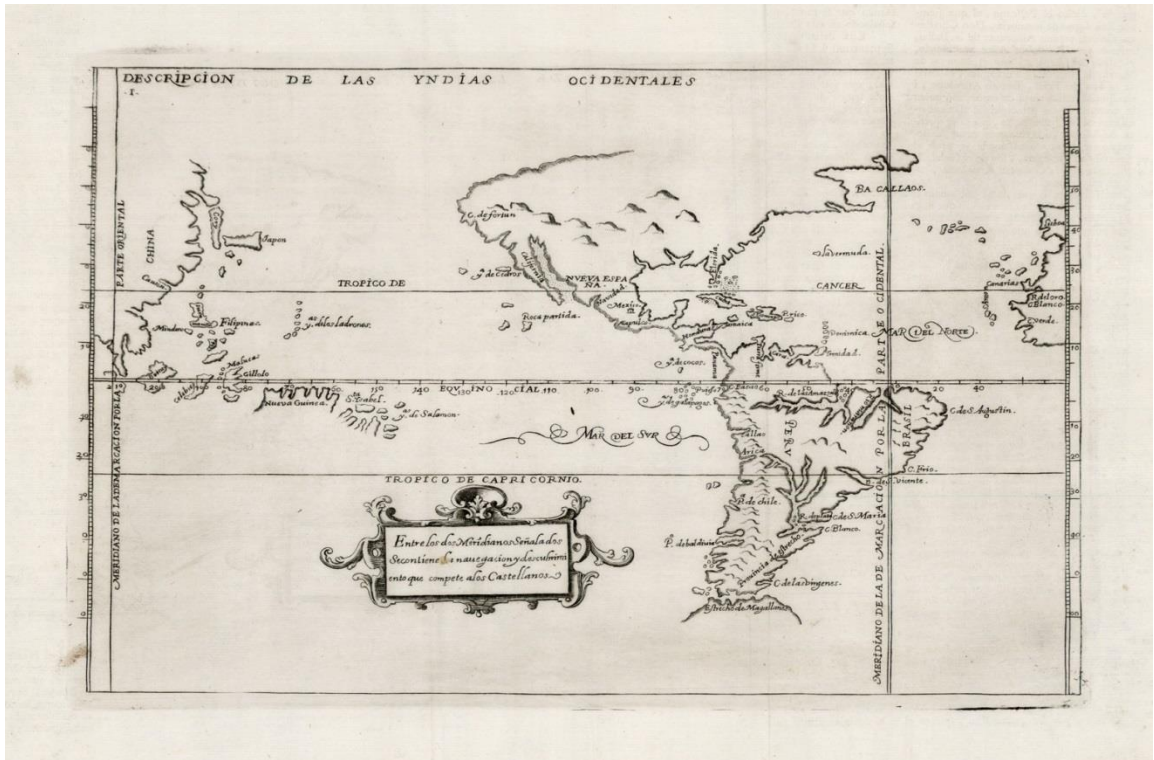


Figure 300. Juan López de Velasco, map of the Indies, 1570, as published in Herrera's *Descripción*, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

The great difference of the Velasco maps in terms of their cartographical context to other sixteenth century maps from Iberia is that they include no rhumb lines, no compass rose, nothing to delineate the spaces except for the tropics, equator, and lines of demarcation. When these were repurposed by Herrera, Herrera added latitude and longitude lines but still does not include a compass rose, which is quite unusual, even in a decorative or imperial map.

Overall the maps in each case are incredibly simple compared with the highly decorative maps of the era. They do serve their purpose in illustrating the descriptions of the Indies in Herrera, and their inconsistency with other works of this period was not criticized to this author's knowledge at the time of their publication. Quite the contrary was true in the endorsement of the *Décadas* by Andrés García de Céspedes, Royal Cosmographer for Philip II and teacher at the Casa de Contratación, who addressed the Herrera-Velasco maps specifically: "[T]odo está conforme a lo que comúnmente se platica y está más recibido entre todos los que navegan y conforme a lo que pasó en el primer descubrimiento y a

lo que después acá se hallado y que adonde quiera parecerá bien, y que se puede muy bien imprimir y que de la impresion resultará mucha utilidad y honra a la nación Castellana, y lo firmé de mi nombre a 3 enero de 1599.”⁵³⁴ Multiple printings of the book suggest the maps were “highly satisfactory for those who charted and controlled the administration of the Indies.”⁵³⁵

The manuscript Velasco maps in the John Carter Brown collection are not rendered by a terribly skilled hand, not when one compares to other manuscript maps of a similar period, such as the exquisite maps included in Philip II’s own Agnese Atlas. In the Agnese world map, which includes Magellan’s voyage in black and the silver trade of the Spanish in gold, the level of artistry is exquisite. If we look at the Gutiérrez in detail as well, it is clear that there was some talent to draw from for such an important project. However, the Agnese was produced in Italy and the Gutiérrez, although based on a maps produced by the Spanish cartographer, was engraved by Hieronymous Cock, who had studied Renaissance art in Italy which influenced his very handsome map. The contrasting stoicism of the Herrera-Velasco maps point to a starkness of bare information that may have lent the maps an air of validity and truth rather than fantasy, which exists only in the title page. Velasco, while he does in fact, discuss cosmography in his writings, he “emphasizes navigation over general cosmography,”⁵³⁶ which is evident in the starkness in these maps.

⁵³⁴ Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano*, 1:122. Quoted as well in Portuondo 297.

⁵³⁵ Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance*, 255.

⁵³⁶ Mariano Cuesta Domingo, “Lopez de Velasco, Juan (ca. 1535-1598),” in *Guide to the Documentary Sources for Andean Studies, 1530-1900*, vol. II (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 362.

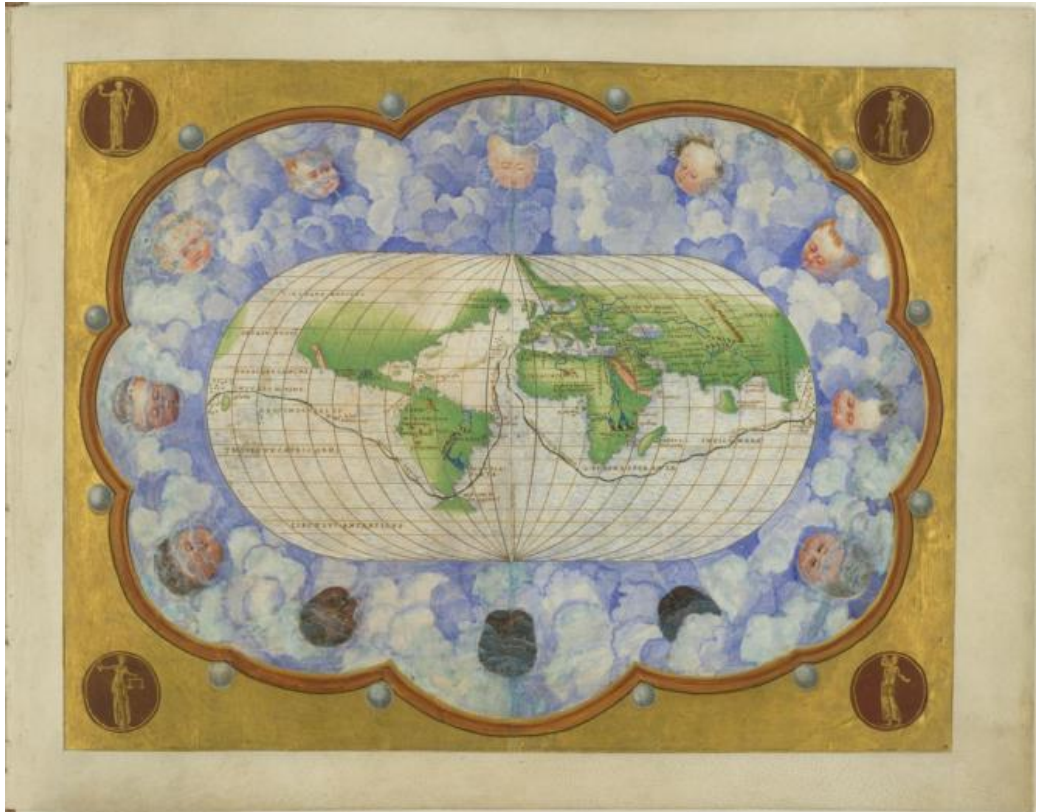


Figure 301. Battista Agnese, *Atlas of Portolan Charts*, ca. 1543-1545. John Carter Brown Library



Figure 302. Detail of Diego Gutiérrez, *Americae Sive Quartae Orbis Partis Nova Et Exactissima Descriptio*, 1562. Library of Congress

The *Descripción* maps are much sharper than the manuscript copies, due mostly to their medium of intaglio, and while the main differences of each map will be discussed, overall they retain the exceptionally simple design of the originals, with

some details added. “The use and technique of copper-engraving in the illustration of maps offered a sharper and more detailed impression than the woodcut, and also allowed for details to be added as new discoveries began to be made.”⁵³⁷ While there is more text and some topographical decoration added, the *Descripción* maps are not stylistically terribly different than the Velascos. Throughout each plate there is considerable scraping in long and short vertical lines that is presumably from the number of imprints produced or possibly from the re-engraving of old plates. As these markings are inconsistent and not always in exactly the same direction, it is unlikely that they have any decorative purpose whatsoever. There are a few instances where corrections have been made rather awkwardly to the maps, and the changes are rather starkly apparent.

What is most interesting about a comparison between the two is what Herrera chose to augment from the original and what he chose to include and exclude. Names have been altered and modifications made that are quite interesting given the scope and agenda of Herrera’s project. While some of these certainly are additions to the maps as new information became available, there are other changes that are clearly irrelevant to an increase in data and are therefore considered here to be indicative of Herrera’s agenda.

⁵³⁷ Brotton, *Trading Territories*, 36.



Figure 303. Velasco, Map 1, *Descripción de las Yndias Occidentales*, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

Velasco's first map shows the world between Spain and Asia, with dotted lines marking the paths of ships leaving from what is presumed Sevilla, the access to which is exaggerated with a wide split in the south end of the Iberian Peninsula, and shows travel routes through the Azores, throughout Florida and the Caribbean, through the Strait of Magellan. The trade route of the Manila Galleons, which traveled between Acapulco and Manila in the Spanish East Indies once or twice a year from 1565 until the 19th century is evident in the Pacific. There are only two inland details beyond rivers, which are not named on this broader range map, and these are two cities marked with the same symbol, a building of three squares with a circle in the center and what is possibly a spire, one in the center of Spain and one labeled as "Mexico," the two spiritual and political centers of the old and new worlds for the empire. It is very interesting that they are the same; there is no distinction from the old world to the new as they have been shown here to be unified in design and scale. Of course, the fact that the city called Mexico on the map had already existed for 200 years and that the Spaniards, upon conquering and restructuring the city retained much of its original layout is lost in the effect

of this map. The city is Europeanized through this symbol, which is synonymous with many Spanish maps of the Iberian Peninsula at the time, where a city was shown as a bishopric (obispado) or an archbishopric (arzobispado) by a church “con una cruz de dos brazos” or “solo con uno.”⁵³⁸ The Velasco map does not use this code for Mexico while the Herrera-Velasco map does.

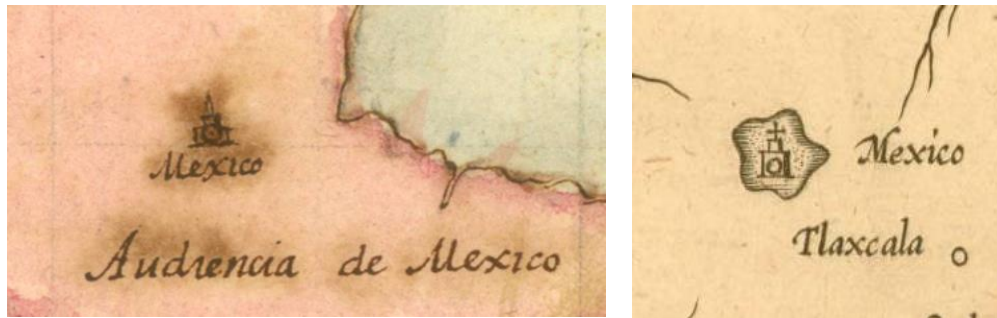


Figure 304. Left: detail from Velasco’s Map 1. Right: detail from Herrera’s corresponding map in *Décadas*

The proliferation of Spanish named cities on the Velasco and Herrera-Velasco maps does not merely, as in the case of Mexico City, displace preexisting names of Indian settlements and cities, but also illustrates the incredible number of cities founded by the Spaniards. By 1620 the “Spaniards had founded over 190 towns and cities... at least half of them before 1550.”⁵³⁹ Like many European maps delineating possession and conquest, native territories are concealed and concepts of space are represented in a recognizable European system of symbols. Homogeneity in language and in religion – churches as symbols of inhabited areas – perpetuates onto the maps of Juan López de Velasco as well.

Velasco includes the demarcation of the Occidental and Oriental boundaries of the Spanish empire as explained above, as black lines, but these are not labeled as such. Other lines mark the Tropic of Cancer, the Equator, and the Tropic of Capricorn, but these are also without labels. Herrera, however, marks these boundaries very clearly. In Herrera’s version, the Lines of Demarcation are very

⁵³⁸ Antonio Crespo Sanz, “Los Atlas de España Entre 1503 Y 1810,” in *Cartografía Hispánica: Imagen de Un Mundo En Crecimiento, 1503-1810* (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2010), 184.

⁵³⁹ Burkholder and Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, 184.

well described, as are the northern and southern tropics and the equator. The intention of this is clearly described in the cartouche: “Entre los dos Meridianos Señala dos Se contiene la nauegacion y descubrimiento que compete a los Castellanos” On the left and right edges, respectively, are labeled with lines of latitude, and longitude is marked along the equator line with Toledo as the prime meridian of zero, as mentioned in the Velasco text: “longitud occidental del meridiano de Tolédo.” Next to the city symbol on “España” there is what appears to be a large “T” which sets this meridian.

While the *Décadas* is a mostly a history of the Castellanos in the New World, the maps do indicate the broader scope of the work beyond the Americas to the Occidental line. The title of the *Décadas* and its use of *Las Indias* rather than *Nuevo Mundo*, for example, copies López de Velasco on this point. As Mignolo suggests, by designating a text and maps as the Indias, it was not necessary to make the distinction between the East Indies and the West Indies, as the East Indies were not, in fact, new, and “belonged” to the region of Asia. By including them here, Herrera and the Herrera-Velasco maps include the Pacific as part of a larger assertion of possession within the lines of eastern and western demarcation.⁵⁴⁰

If we look at the Velasco Map 1 side by side with the corresponding map in the *Descripción*, there are some very significant differences. In the Herrera-Velasco maps, landmasses are given a slightly more three dimensional quality with hatching marks along the coastlines and riverfronts. The Andes Mountains are present and a few mountains in Brazil which must refer to the Brazilian Highlands, and a few other mountains are scattered about in the center of the continent which are fairly non specific. In North America, which was obviously less well traveled by Europeans at this point, there are a few random bumps of mountains which add a decorative texture but have to place in fact.

⁵⁴⁰ Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance*, 285–286.

What is curious is that if given the opportunity to unify the two worlds visually, Herrera omits the symbolic unification of Spain and México. While México City is still the only city in the New World represented on the world map, marking it as the cultural and spiritual center of the Americas, the only mark in Europe is “Lisboa.” This is interesting for several reasons. First, Herrera ignores (as does Velasco) all other larger cities with a specific symbol; they are only marked with dots, and the whole of Spain is covered by the name of the Portuguese capital. This could obviously be a direct reference to the acquisition of the territories of the Portuguese under the Habsburg crown, and the heritage now part of that crown of the great Portuguese explorations. He does refer on the first page of the *Descripción* directly to Don Juan II as one of those responsible for Spain’s advantages over all other nations of the world: “en Portugal D. Iuan Segundo, dicho el Peilicano, el que siempre sera digno de memoria...”⁵⁴¹

“Yndias del Norte” has become “Nueva España,” and “Indias del Medio Dia,” which Velasco labels for the entirety of South America has been altered to “Peru” on the west side of the “Meridiano de a Marcacion por la parte occidental,” and “Brasil” on the east. California (“Californio”) appears as a peninsula and the “c. de fortun” in the Northwest. As the map scans in to the North and Central America in the “Descripción de las Yndias del Norte,” the cities are more apparent, and churches also mark Guadalajara and Mexico, El Salvador, and Santa Domingo. Names that echo the old world are increasing in numbers as well, and we see Compostela, Valencia, Santiago, San Salvador, names that have already displaced those that existed previously.

The publication of the Herrera-Velasco maps in 1601, albeit somewhat modified and edited and which had been kept in secrecy for decades, certainly marked a new era in Spain’s dissemination of information. However, while Portuondo does remark as I do that these new world geographies are used to justify Spain’s

⁵⁴¹ Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano* (En Mad: [i.e. Madrid]: En la Emplenta Real, 1601), “Descripción de las Islas...”¹.

territories, that “cosmographical knowledge was now repackaged strategically for public consumption,”⁵⁴² it is also clear that Philip III was not giving anything up by allowing the publication of maps already 50 years old. The information was already out there, but that the Spaniards were now using geographical information as a tool of imperialism on an international scale was indeed new.



Figure 305. (one of two sheeted map) Edward Wright. “A Chart of the World on Mercator’s Projection.” ca.1599. In *The Principall Navigations, Voiages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, compiled by Richard Hakluyt. London, 1598-1600. New York Public Library

That the Herrera-Velasco maps are not meant for navigation but to illustrate possession is evident in comparing these maps with the “Wright-Molyneux Map.”

⁵⁴² Portuondo, *Secret Science*, 298.

This map was based on projections of Moyneux's globe of 1592, and when we compare this with the Herrera-Velasco maps of the same area, it is obvious that the intentions are not consistent. Wright's map includes and expands upon the Mercator projection, which was designed specifically for sea travel, with the distortion of the poles and loxodromic, or "rhumb" lines used for compass navigation on a flat plane. Prior to the publication of the map in Hakluyt's narratives, Wright had worked on and published mathematical instructions to the Mercator projection, which Mercator had not made available. In *Certain errors in navigation*, London 1599, "Wright's most important contribution was to calculate and publish tables of meridional parts for every minute of the Atlantic..."⁵⁴³ Therefore, Wright's intentions of improving wayfinding techniques as illustrated here do not serve the same agenda as those of the Herrera-Velascos, which do not include any such navigational detail. The Wright map was well enough known to have been referenced by Shakespeare in the *Twelfth Night*, although this was not performed until 1601 and may not have been known to Herrera: "He does smile his face with more lines than are on the new map with the augmentation of the Indies."⁵⁴⁴ These lines refer to rhumb lines which are also reminiscent of earlier portolan charts with which Herrera would have certainly been familiar.

⁵⁴³ John B. Hattendorf, "*The Boundless Deep . . .*": *The European Conquest of the Oceans, 1450 to 1840: Catalogue of an Exhibition of Rare Books, Maps, Charts, Prints, and Manuscripts Relating to Maritime History from the John Carter Brown Library* / (Providence, RI: John Carter Brown Library, 2003), 8.

⁵⁴⁴ Hattendorf, "*The Boundless Deep . . .*", 9-11 reproduces this map and discusses its history and reference to Shakespeare. William Shakespeare and Modern Language Association of America, *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: Twelfth Night, or, What You Will. 1901* (London: J.B. Lippincott & Company, 1901), 209 discusses the viability of this claim, as there are some discrepancies.

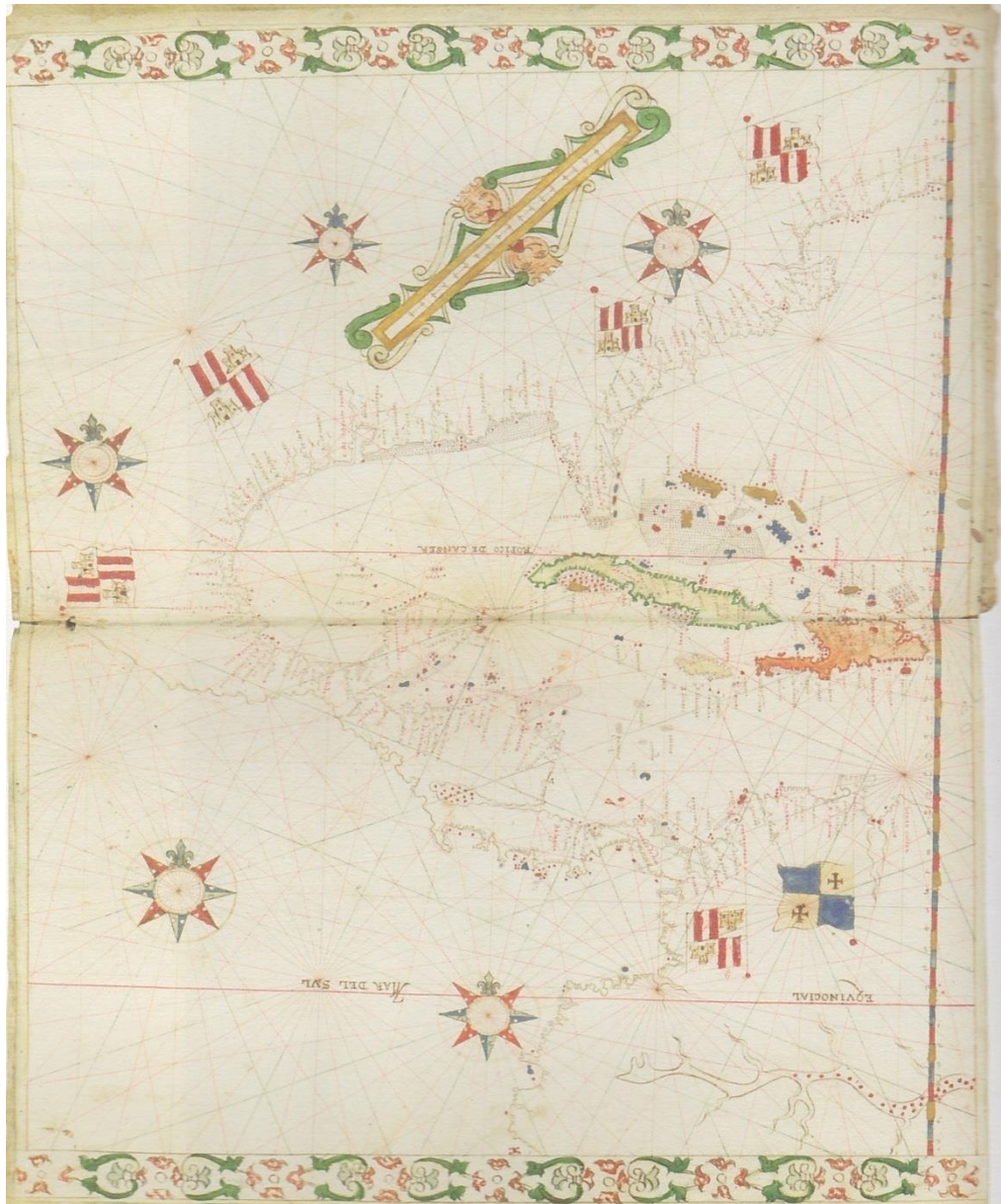


Figure 306. Hercules O'Doria, Portolan atlas of Europe, Africa, and America. Marseilles, 1592.
John Carter Brown Library

Absences and Inclusions

While we tend to analyze maps in terms of what is included, it is equally important to look at what is excluded or edited out of the final product. Maps have intentional absences imbedded within them, which can reveal more about their intention than their inclusions. One cannot include all details on a map, or it would merely be a blanket on top of the known world. There must be an omission of some elements, a conscious economy of design that keeps the flow of information along a particular path clear. “The notion of ‘silences’ on maps is central to any argument about the influence of their hidden political messages. It is asserted here that maps – just as much as examples of literature or the spoken word – exert a social influence through their omissions as much by the features they depict and emphasize.”⁵⁴⁵ J.B. Harley speaks of absences within a map as deliberate exclusions that should not be considered empty spaces, but a very telling omission to suit a specific purpose. The absences inherent in these maps as well are indicative of the focus of the project as a whole. Unlike globes, maps also have the unique position of stopping and starting along boundaries determined not by topographical information and shape but by the choices of the mapmaker: “Maps, unlike globes, may be “framed” so that what is included implies a sense of unity, with extraneous factors being left out. Interactions between areas are not evident, as they are when they are represented spherically.”⁵⁴⁶

For example, if we look again at the London Tube map we can see that there is no information available that is not relevant to its purpose – metro routes from one point to another. There are no parking lots, monuments or any other superfluous information that would distract the viewer from understanding the map’s agenda and purpose, even the distances are less relevant than the sequences of places as one would find the latter more useful than the former in this particular context.

⁵⁴⁵ Harley, *The New Nature of Maps*, 67.

⁵⁴⁶ Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, *The Power of Projections: How Maps Reflect Global Politics and History* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2006), 40.



London Underground. Originally designed by Harry Beck, 1931

On a more imperialistic bent, Captain Cook's map of New Zealand shows few indications that another culture was that space nor that all of the mountains, islands and bays already had names. He has shown the country as an Anglicized Europeanized template that was already under the control of the British Empire. What is absent is the presence of the Maori people, who had already been living there for hundreds of years as well as any concern over their ownership of the lands Cook "discovered." Maori names for mountains, cities, and rivers have been replaced by names of English monarchy, patrons, and explorers: Charlotte Sound, Cook's Strait, and Cape Egmont, for example. Certainly this is relevant as well when we look at the Herrera-Velasco maps, as mentioned above, where indigenous people and their cities, towns, and place names are excluded. Both landscapes below have been Europeanized, and show the land already in familiar Eurocentric terms with the allusion being the land is possessed and controlled by the respective colonial power.

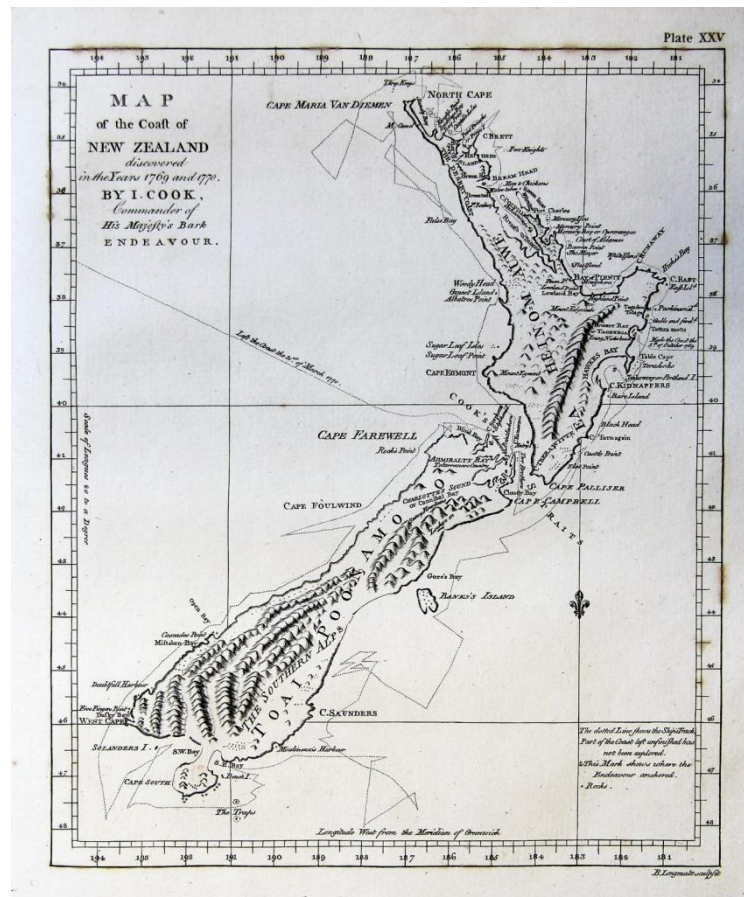


Figure 307. James Cook, Map of the Coast of New Zealand, 1769

If we read Herrera as a cartographic piece, his “silences” engage us almost as much as the details included, and they are as charged in meaning and purpose. If we understand Herrera’s frontispieces as maps which complement the textual narrative, we can follow the path Herrera has laid out for us much as we would follow an itinerary map that leads us through a specific pathway. In that sense, the mapping of this imagery can show us what Herrera’s agenda was, where he was taking us and why he wanted us to go there in the first place, but his deliberate omissions are also powerful clues into understanding the agenda of his enterprise. His omission of native placenames, Philip II, cannibalism and other native barbarism, navigational maps, and the natural world are all suggestive of his larger agenda.

Philip II

For example, the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella are present and not Philip II nor any of the other Hapsburg kings on the titlepage of *Década Primera*. This was certainly intentional, and roots the rights to the Americas from the very moment of its discovery as this story covers the golden age of exploration but also legitimizes from the time of discovery the rightful possession of the New World. Philip II's presence is still indicated by the coat of arms of the Spanish monarchy and the Biblical format, as Philip II did consider these all to be one and the same. It also aligns the empire with these patrons of the first explorers who found the new world, and asserts this was by the very grace of God in the biblical context of the titlepage design.

That Ferdinand and Isabella were also responsible during their reign for unifying the empire under Christianity with the conquering of Granada could not have been an association lost to a European audience, particularly since the glories of Christian militarism was associated with this ousting of the Muslims. As the pages are rife with battle scenes, which, as argued above legitimized the governance of the Indians through conquest, this would be all the more relevant. Herrera was wise to keep the monarchy of his time off of the title page, as the legitimization of the empire had to come from the beginning, and Philip II was not part of that story yet his inheritance of Catholic Spain and all that lay within the Lines of Demarcation is implied.

Savage Indians

That the Indians are shown as naked and primitive but redeemable and fairly conquered would be integral to legitimizing the Christian obligations under the Treaty of Tordesillas. Many images of the time showed the darker legends surrounding the indigenous people of the Americas as cannibals and savages, and Herrera keeps this in check. The customs and moral qualities of the native populations of New Spain are lacking in visual representation considerably as well, at least within Herrera's overall format.

“The central point... is, as Vico taught us, that human history is made by human beings. Since the struggle for control over territory is part of that history, so too is the struggle over historical and social meaning...the development and maintenance of every culture require the existence of another different and competing *alter ego*. The construction of identity – for identity, whether Orient or Occident, France or Britain, while obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, is finally a construction- involves establishing opposites and “others” whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from ‘us.’ Each age and society recreates its ‘others.’”⁵⁴⁷ Herrera does create the sense of other in his panel images but avoids allusions to satanic worship, cannibalism, and other atrocities popularized in book and map illustrations in the sixteenth century.

For example, cannibals were the subject of many published illustrations of the New World on maps and book illustrations. In the corner illustration from Holbein and Münster’s map of the world discussed above, where Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas are visually represented as a decorative element. *America* consists of a cannibal scene of naked Indians chopping up body parts and roasting them on a spit. Particularly macabre details of a hand reaching out of a pot and a leg and head hung out to cure on the crude teepee like structure to the left add some drama and intrigue to the wonders of the Americas. In a sixteenth century illustration by Philippe Galle, we see America symbolized as an Amazonian nude woman presented in classical European tradition with her weapons of spears and arrows, carrying the head of a man by the hair. She has a parrot by her side as well which alludes to her exoticism and location in South America. In the Gutiérrez map as well as many others of this period, Brazil is often shown as the home of cannibalistic peoples, and it is interesting that Herrera does not give in to this tradition.

⁵⁴⁷ Edward W Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 331-332.

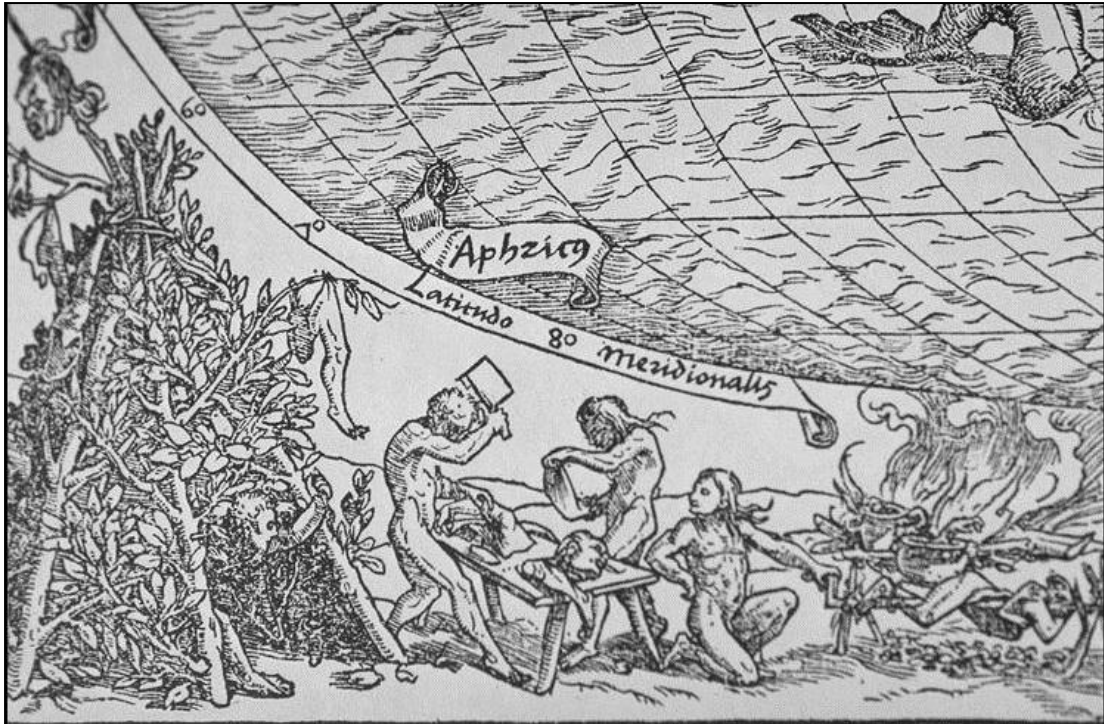


Figure 308. Detail of Holbein and Münster's map of the world, *Nouus orbis regionum ac insularum*. . . (News of the regions and islands of the world. . .), Johannes Heruagium, Basel, 1532.
Library of Congress



Figure 309. Philippe Galle, *Prosopographia*, Antwerp, 1581



Figure 310. Detail Diego Gutiérrez

In the woodcut illustrations from the 1509 German translation of Vespucci's Letter to Pietro Soderni, Indians are shown as lethargic, violent and without any moral code. While in the first panel, the Indians have decent residential structures, in front of their dwellings two figures are hacking apart a human body, presumably for consumption. In the foreground a man rests his head on his hand and stares vacantly off into space and there is no evidence of shame or modesty in the group of nude figures. Three nude *femme fatales* seduce a Spaniard whilst another woman raises a large stick, preparing to strike him on the head. In the background, open love and gratuitous exposure to the viewer displays their immodesty and lack of European notions of monogamy. In the *Mundus Novus* woodcut is depicted another example of the sexualized and cannibalistic Indian. In this image, the Indians again cure various body parts from the rafters, and a woman breast feeds her baby openly while a couple kisses in the background next to a companion gnawing on a human arm. There is some evidence here of redemption, however, as European ship bearing the cross on their sails are off the coast. These images refer to a different type of Indian than Herrera's, and refer to events described by Vespucci.⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁸ Mills, Kenneth and Taylor, William, *Colonial Latin America: A Documentary History*, 78-83



Figure 311. Johann Grüniger, *Letter to Soderini*, Strasbourg, 1509



Figure 312. Woodcut from the 1504 Augsburg edition of Amerigo Vespucci's *Mundus Novus*

This could in part be a result of the Spanish already considering the land as belonging to them and they perhaps did not feel the need to establish the Roman Law principle *res nullius*, which assumed unoccupied land to be open for possession by the first who began to use it or to live on it. The New World was already theirs by papal decree. Rather, “Arriving... in lands for the most part already well settled by indigenous populations, their principal preoccupation

would be to justify their lordship over peoples rather than land.”⁵⁴⁹ Herrera imagined the Indians to be a part of the tribes of Noah, only displaced, and therefore already citizens of the Christian Empire under the Spanish crown; to display them as heathens may only serve to deny them the possibility of being capable of change.⁵⁵⁰ This denies the audience’s impressions of the Indian as savage, as it is an obvious strategy to establish moral and ethical superiority of “us” over “them”. It was commonly believed in Spain, here according to Cortés, “is it not true that the Spaniard’s emperor is the greatest of all, that the Christians’ God is the most powerful?”⁵⁵¹ Philip II’s interests as a religious leader was a major drive in his campaigns, as he stated in a letter: “I do not... desire to be the ruler of heretics.”⁵⁵² Evangelism was the key here, and that the Indians were capable of change was paramount.

The technology of the Spaniards in the New World was instrumental purely in a symbolic nature for the submission of the Indians. Cortés mentions his power over the Indians through their fear of his “magic art,” which they feared he might turn against them: in regards to the execution of Tlacatlec, who was one of three lords accused of plotting against the Spaniards. “They have never discovered from whom I learned of their plot, they believe it was one by some magic art, and that nothing can be concealed from me.” According to Matthew Restall, this “magic art” refers to the compass and chart of Cortés, “which he claimed the natives viewed as some crystal ball that revealed things to him, a belief ‘I encouraged.’”⁵⁵³ This childish ignorance and superstition served the purpose of illustrating that the Indians need the Europeans for clarity in education and evangelization, was a sentiment that perpetuated over continents and centuries, as one can also see later in the Massachusetts Bay Colony Seal, where the Indian dressed in leaves states, “Come over and help us,” which implied that the

⁵⁴⁹Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World*, 30.

⁵⁵⁰ Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano, Década Primera*, I.

⁵⁵¹ Todorov, *The Conquest of America*, 130.

⁵⁵² Philip II to Requesens, ambassador to Rome, 12 August 1566. L. Serrano (ed.), *Correspondencia Diplomática entre España y la Santa Sede* (Madrid, 1914), vol. 1, p. 316.

⁵⁵³ Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, 150. His sources are Cortés and Gómara.

colonists were not only welcome but requested by the indigenous peoples themselves to assist them in attaining civilization and order.



Figure 313. Massachusetts Bay Colony Seal under Charles I from 1629-1686 and 1689-1692

Herrera's work visually justifies the Christianization of the Indians in only a few cases, and in fact, like other cronistas, including Gómara and León, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, actually describes the important role of Las Casas in defending Indians' rights which led to the establishment of the New Laws for the Indians.⁵⁵⁴

That Herrera was familiar with these publications is uncontested, and his agenda in the *Décadas* to clear the name of the Spanish Empire is evident: "Some writers, against the neutrality that history requires, have purposely obscured the piety, valour, and spiritual constancy that the Castilian nation has shown in the discovery, pacification, and settlement of so many and such new lands. They interpret these their deeds as cruelties in order to diminish their importance and overemphasize the evils done by a few, without ever attributing it to God's plan

⁵⁵⁴ Henry Raup Wagner, *The Life and Writings of Bartolome De Las Casas*, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1967), 108.

to punish the enormous sins of those people (the Indians), and totally ignore the exemplary good done by the many.”⁵⁵⁵ Herrera also mentions in his introduction to *Década Primera* the role the Spanish must play in the lives of the Natives found in the New World, that these are of course sons of Adam who had somehow been misplaced, but who are nonetheless subjects of the Christian Empire, and therefore, of the King of Spain by rights of this papal bull.⁵⁵⁶

For example, beyond the La Vega panel discussed above in *Década Primera*, there are few indications of Indian barbarity. One exception is the *Década Segunda* which does address human sacrifice but still stays away from being as intensely sensationalistic as other contemporary examples. It is also interesting to note that Herrera includes these images on the title pages, which illustrate the past, and not on the Herrera-Velasco maps, which depict the present.⁵⁵⁷



Figure 314. Herrera, 1601, *Década Segunda* “Van aser sacrificados”

⁵⁵⁵ Translation by Kagan, 2005, 274 of Herrera, 1991, 124: “... algunos escritores, contra la neutralidad que requiere le historia, hayan procurado oscurecer le piedad, valor y mucho constancia de ánimo que la nación Castellana ha mostrado en el descubrimiento, pacificación y población de tantas y tan nuevas tierras, interpretando a crueldad sus hechos, para oscurecerlos, haciendo, haciendo más caso de lo malo que algunos hicieron, sin atribuirlo a la divina permisión, por los pecados enormes de aquellas gentes, que de lo bueno que muchos obrar o para estimarlo.”

⁵⁵⁶ Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia General De Los Hechos De Los Castellanos En Las Islas I Tierra Firme Del Mar Oceano, Década Primera.*

⁵⁵⁷ I want to thank Ricardo Padrón for bringing this to my attention.

Now, while this image is not as exaggerated as others mentioned above, the placement of the image in the same vertical row as Isabel, who has been identified in the medallion as the “Catolica Dama Isabel” is certainly strategic, and aligns her with the Christian mother and child, proclaiming what a difficult task she has assumed in trying to convert the heathens of New Spain.

While images of Indians in Herrera’s work reflect Eurocentric and ethnocentric belief systems of his audience, he does include some primary source illustrations from earlier codices available in the Spanish archives, particularly in the *Descripción*. These being matched with the Herrera-Velasco maps for validity implies an otherness that perhaps attempts at a more symbolic ethnographic approach rather than an empirical one. Like de Bry, Herrera can be interpreted as “an ethnographic record not of America but of Europe’s integration of knowledge about the New World and of the Old World’s inability to overcome its ethnocentrism.”⁵⁵⁸ Like other works of the period, many images suffer from a profound fantasy on the part of the illustrator and should be read more in terms of what they reveal about the purposes of the enterprise rather than any scientific or ethnographic agenda, but there is an interest in including some source material from primary archives from the Indies to assert truthfulness. Herrera’s work in this way displays a befuddling and awkward range of generic, nude and homogenous Indians to the ethnographic illustrations based on Aztec codices by indigenous artists.

⁵⁵⁸ See Mercedes López Baralt in Bernadette Bucher, *La Iconografía Política Del Nuevo Mundo*, 1a ed. (Río Piedras P.R.: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1990); Myers, *Fernández De Oviedo’s Chronicle of America*.



Figure 315. Aztec Juggler, *Trachtenbuch*, 1529. Christoph Weiditz. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, Germany



Figure 316. Aztec with Parrot, *Trachtenbuch*, 1529. Christoph Weiditz. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, Germany

That there were published images of Indians from first hand accounts by Europeans seems of little consequence here. There had been drawings made in Europe of Aztecs brought to Europe by Cortés to perform for Charles V by the

German Cristoph Weiditz as early as 1529, and others produced from first hand experience in the Americas by Jacques Le Moyne of Floridian natives painted in the 1560's and John White's of Virginia Indians painted in the 1580's. Examples from these latter two groups of images were translated into engravings by Theodor de Bry in *America* in 1590 and were very widely known throughout Europe.⁵⁵⁹



Figure 317. Left: Watercolor drawing "(No Caption - Indians Dancing Around a Circle of Posts)" by John White (created 1585-1586). British Museum.

Figure 318. Right: Engraving "Their dances vvhich they vse att heir hyghe feastes" (unsigned, printed 1590) based on watercolor by White. John Carter Brown Library

⁵⁵⁹ López-Baralt, *Icono y conquista*, 133-134.



Figure 319. After Jacque Le Moyne, Theodor de Bry, *Americae*, Bd. II, Frankfurt am Main 1591, Tafel XXXIV: "Auff was weise sie ihre Erstgeborne dem König opffern"

In *Década Segunda* there are six images where only Indians are present, and the Indian is described in terms of exotic flora and fauna, and violence. Directly to the left of the title is a panel that depicts the Indians in costumes of animal skins with spears, arrows and other indigenous weapons. There is no text panel accompanying the image. This lack of narrative text is the same in the panel across the page, where again examples of weapons and shields are illustrated as well as a well rendered turkey, cactus plant, and what appears to be corn. Below these images are representations of a Spaniard aiming a cross bow at an Indian who is trying to fend off this attack with a frond of some kind, and in the foreground a large head wearing a bear headdress and a bird and seated figure. The textual description reads: "Uno de los ydolos de Mexico." Montezuma is named across the page as the leader in the litter carried by servants, and in the lower panels are depicted ritual acts of murder and sacrifice with descriptions. We see another example of the violence of the Indians with a small panel on the sacrifice of the Incas: "van aser sacrificados," showing a large man shoving a spear into another man's stomach, the second already impaled by two others.

Two victims are dying on the stairs below him, behind three men stand in dress, either waiting their turn to be sacrificed or assisting in the ceremony.⁵⁶⁰

In *Década Tercera*, the fourth panel down on the left side, Herrera depicts the execution of the lords involved in the Cuauhtémoc affair.⁵⁶¹ Herrera copies Gómara's version, where the lord Tlacatlec is hanged, not Coanacoch, as described by Díaz.⁵⁶² It is interesting to note through this example that the source for Herrera was not Díaz, as the latter typically related the darker side of the conquistador's relationship with the Indians, and was less inclined than Cortés's own accounts and those of Gómara to idealize the Spaniard leader. The frankness of Díaz did not apparently suit the image of Cortés being immortalized in Herrera's version of the story. For example, the trip through Mactun territory by Cortés and his men on their long journey to Honduras from Mexico, was, according to Cortés, met with Indians who were "unafraid" and "very friendly" in assisting the Spaniards find the resources they required for the trip. Díaz, on the other hand, relates that the Indians helped Cortés only after he promised to raid their enemies on their behalf.⁵⁶³

In the fifth *Década*, there is an entirely different view of the Indian, here shown as regal and mighty past kings of the Incan Empire. Another reason for the honor of the Incan kings could have been to establish the Indians themselves as having the capability of reform. If they were truly not men, but shared more with the humanoid monsters on the fringes of the known world, they could not be converted into Christians, and therefore the Spanish had no claims in being able to conform them to Catholicism. They must have souls and intellectual potential, and they must be men in order to fully and willingly accept the glory of God. The alignment of the Spanish empire with the classical age has some obvious references in visual vocabulary, but the Indian was also established within this

⁵⁶⁰ See description above in Chapter 3

⁵⁶¹ Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, See Restall for a comparison of different versions of the story, Diaz versus Cortés, for example.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, 150.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 149. Quotes and translation are Restall's.

tradition by the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales* in his *Primera Parte De Los Comentarios Reales*, who claimed the throne rooms of the Incas themselves were decorated with classical sculptures, and that their culture was reminiscent of ancient Rome.⁵⁶⁴

The Indians mystified Europeans, and Herrera's use of native imagery here and the use of medallions of the Incan kings served several purposes. It had the political purpose of aligning the Indians with ancient Rome and a classical antiquity. Although the motivations were different, Herrera is perhaps in some way a precedent to the 17th century Mexican scholar and royal cosmographer Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645-1700).⁵⁶⁵ Pizarro had in fact, legitimized the birth of his son to an indigenous woman, but had not married her. The rights of this child would be null and void without his acknowledgement of Spanish ownership rights. Children of mixed race marriages needed to find legitimacy in Spanish law to acquire and perpetuate the estates and other properties of their Spanish conquistador fathers, and some acknowledgement of the legitimacy of their heritage needed to be established.

The very fact that these images are, in fact, engravings, adds an interesting twist on the representations of the Indian in many similar works.⁵⁶⁶ Physical features of Native Americans are not rendered as different from those of the European, and in the absence of color, the only "otherness" to truly be established is that of culture and *policia*, not of race. There is no skin tone in uncolored engraving, and here the Indians look the same as the Spaniards save the clothes they are wearing, or rather are not, their actions, habitats, and accessories.

⁵⁶⁴ Garcilaso de la Vega, *Vega, Garcilaso de la, Primera Parte De Los Comentarios Reales, Que Tratan Del Origen De Los Yncas, Reyes Que Fueron Del Peru, De Su Idolatria, Leyes, Y Gouierno En Paz Y En Guerra: De Sus Vidas Y Conquistas, Y De Todo Lo Que Fue Aquel Imperio Y Su Republica, Antes Que Los Españoles Passaran a El*. Lisboa: En la officina de Pedro Crasbeeck, 1609; Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World*, 19 and 3, respectively.

⁵⁶⁵ Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*, 92–93.

⁵⁶⁶ Bucher, *Icon and Conquest*, 34–35. Bucher points this out in reference to de Bry's engravings, and this idea can be applied to almost all images of Indians in this age.

Science

Another notable absence in Herrera is of any real scientific enterprise, in that the *Décadas* is about why the Spanish deserve to be in the Americas, not about the gold, silver, and green treasures to be found there, although this would of course be implied by rightful possession. Herrera's images exclude a phenomenal amount of information that Herrera had access to that perhaps would have improved an overall understanding of the New World. However, his intention was not the natural sciences nor ethnographic knowledge, but the deeds, the "hechos" of the great men working under the Spanish banner. While Herrera does include some ethnographic and scant flora and fauna of the New World in his *Descripción* and *Década Quinta*, these are very much the exception rather than the rule. In this regard, it is important to discuss those things which are excluded, or left out of the particular agenda.

It was not the case for Herrera, surely, of lack of knowledge. As discussed above, Herrera had physical examples of material, plant species, etc. from the New World that he had used as a reference for the natural world. Philip II was a phenomenal collector, perhaps inspired by the famous Dutch cabinets of wonders in his empire to the north. He filled the Escorial with paintings, and plant and animal curiosities from the Indies, and Indians were brought back to Europe with the explorers and performed some of their strange customs in his court. In Charles V's time there were significant efforts to obtain curiosities from the New World, such as the royal decree requiring ships to bring home "parrots, 'turkeys from Tierra Firme,' 'other strange birds,' fruits, iguanas, chilies, cinnamon, roots, blue stones, amber" and anything else of interest.⁵⁶⁷

The paucity of an accurate textual description in European historiographies can be and is blamed by Elliott on the "inadequacies of their vocabulary," but the

⁵⁶⁷ Antonio Barrera, "Local Herbs, Global Medicines," in *Merchants & Marvels: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Pamela H Smith and Paula Findlen (New York: Routledge, 2002), 166 here quoting and translating from the Cédula Real del Rey don Carlos. January 29, 1525. Madrid. AGI, Contratación, 5787, N. 1, L. 1. ff. 33–34v.

inadequacies of the visual may also have been a result of a limited European training in expressing the natural world beyond classic models or even farther removed from its original form by stock images at the publishing house, substituting Turks for Indians, or Hawaiians for Maori.⁵⁶⁸ Repetitions of native peoples as stock images in classical forms from various decorative maps, for example, reveal perhaps not a disinterest in veracity but rather a lack of primary experience in the sixteenth century.

The myth of stagnation of the Spanish in terms of intellectual development in the sixteenth century (as well as the portrayal of Philip II as a tyrannical despot) has been debunked in recent scholarship.⁵⁶⁹ The assumption that “while the rest of Europe was experiencing social, political, and intellectual innovation, Spain remained an essentially medieval country resistant to progressive ideas” has been challenged by new research on the great interest in science led by Philip II.⁵⁷⁰ Sixteenth century Spain has now been recognized by the academic world as having an integral role in the advancement of the natural and cartographic science. In fact, “science’ was the handmaiden of the Iberian empires” and the wealth of the Americas was motivated not just by gold and silver but by other elements in the natural world: “new dyes, stimulants, pharmaceuticals, woods and spices, creating new fortunes and economies...”⁵⁷¹ One example of the importance of the organic natural world as a trade product was the cochineal beetle, which grows on a Peruvian cactus in Peru. The Spanish had the corner on the market for the rich red dye made from the blood of this little beetle, and was far superior to reds available in Europe at the time.⁵⁷² The physician Francisco Hernández was sent to the New World by Philip II on what has been considered

⁵⁶⁸ Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492-1650*, 22–23.

⁵⁶⁹ Puerto, *La Leyenda Verde*; Bleichmar et al., *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800*; Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature*.

⁵⁷⁰ Nash, *Veiled Images*, 23.

⁵⁷¹ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, “Introduction,” in *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2009), 1-2.

⁵⁷² Victoria Finlay, *Color: A Natural History of the Palette* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003), 134–168; Amy Butler Greenfield, *A Perfect Red: Empire, Espionage, and the Quest for the Color of Desire* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

the first scientific expedition to explore and compile information on plants and animals that could have important implications towards medicine,⁵⁷³ and numerous accounts were published on the flora and fauna of the New World.

“It is knowing the way things are that awakens the deepest wonder.”⁵⁷⁴ The scientific revolution developing at great speed and contemporaneously with Herrera’s work seems terribly at odds with the latter’s Humanistic formula. This greatly illustrates the lack of relevance of this historiographical style’s obsolescence in regards to dealing with the enormity of the scientific potential of New World resources. Being that he is writing a general rather than a natural history, Herrera expends virtually no effort in the natural phenomena that was the New World, but given the economic impact of the natural world on Spain’s coffers this is still an interesting omission albeit typically outside the scope of the general history genre: “Contrary to common opinion, America did not yield gilded treasures but green ones: naturalists, doctors, apothecaries, and merchants helped identify new dyes, stimulants, pharmaceuticals, woods, and spices, creating new fortunes and economies across the Atlantic, as well as new forced migrations from Africa.”⁵⁷⁵

For example, books on plants and their uses were not unusual before the seventeenth century: “Considering that for thousands of years already the ability to recognize plants with proven or supposed powers to cure had been generally acknowledged as of pressing importance, it is not surprising that botany had a long head start over all other branches of natural history.”⁵⁷⁶ While it has been suggested that books on bird types reflected interests in falconry before this time, and works on fish were useful, they did not carry the medicinal imperative of plant identification and properties integral to early medical practice.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷³ Henry Kamen, *Crisis and Change in Early Modern Spain* (Aldershot, Hampshire, Great Britain: Variorum, 1993), 62.

⁵⁷⁴ Greenblatt, *The Swerve*, 199.

⁵⁷⁵ Bleichmar et al., *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500-1800*, 2.

⁵⁷⁶ David Elliston Allen, *Books and Naturalists* (London: HarperCollins, 2010), 25.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

The popularity of these books in the sixteenth century is demonstrated in the many editions produced of Rychard Bancke's [sic] herbal published in 1525, and around the same time, the English *Grete Herball*, which is a translation of the French *Le Grant Herber* and includes illustrations from another, German source.⁵⁷⁸ However, this text still includes fanciful depictions reminiscent of medieval mythologies, including mandrakes on the title page, although they were believed to have medicinal powers.



Figure 320. P. Treveris, *The Grete Herball*, which geveth parfyte knowledge & understange of al maner of herbes and their gracious vertues, Southwarke, 1529. Private Collection

Philip II's interest in science and histories may have had a direct correlation to his own education. While his father Charles had a passion for chivalry and knighthood and had, in fact, been a great reader of chivalric novels as a child, Philip was tutored predominantly by three humanists who took advantage of his knowledge of Latin to familiarize him with classical histories and other texts. These texts, they argued, would be of great importance to educate him as a prudent and wise

⁵⁷⁸ Agnes Robertson Arber, *Herbals, Their Origin and Evolution: A Chapter in the History of Botany, 1470-1670* (London: Cambridge University press, 1912), 38–39. See also Allen, *Books and Naturalists*, 25.

king.⁵⁷⁹ He was aware of and a supporter of alchemy, the creation of gold from base metals and the distillation of perfumes and chemical drugs.⁵⁸⁰

The king's fascination with the natural world was not exclusive to the Habsburgs, and was consistent with interests developing elsewhere in Europe. The Tudors and the later Jacobean in England were also demonstrating a growing desire to pursue and catalog scientifically, in the modern sense, the natural world. In the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries, "the investigation of flora and fauna begins to become noticeably more systematic and more incisive, the investigators more obviously dissatisfied with the state in which their predecessors had left the legacy of knowledge. Increasing numbers of naturalists bring the start of fieldwork in pairs or even in groups."⁵⁸¹

Although I am pointing out the absence of scientific focus in Herrera's work, there is an important link between geographic exploration and cartography and science that must also be illuminated. As Parry describes, reconnaissance techniques were the science of the time: "Geographical exploration, with its associated skills of navigation in cartography was not merely the principle field of human endeavor in which scientific discovery and everyday technique became closely associated before the middle of the seventeenth century; except for the arts of war and of military engineering and (to a very limited extent) medical practice, it was almost the only field; hence its immense significance in the history of science and of thought."⁵⁸²

The implication of this is inherent in the lack of relevance of the classics in the age of discovery, that all reconnaissance missions of the age of discovery required new applications of new technologies and vocabulary to describe this new world. Empirical evidence, experience and standardization of techniques were of utmost

⁵⁷⁹ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 101.

⁵⁸⁰ Puerto, *La Leyenda Verde*, 14-16.

⁵⁸¹ Allen, *Books and Naturalists*, 42.

⁵⁸² J. H. 1914-1982 Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance* / (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 3. Quoted in Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 32.

importance. “Whether or not there was a southern landmass, or whether the earth was flat, or whether the Atlantic was navigable were questions that could not be resolved by rereading Aristotle; they could only be answered by honest experience. The fact that geography has always been a practical science is thus of central significance in its history, and all the more so because the triumph of experience over authority is seen by many as the fundamental ingredient in the emergence of experimental science in the West.”⁵⁸³

Agriculture

Another absence in Herrera is that while he does illustrate the application of a Christian European order on city planning in the Americas, he does not refer to agriculture or taming of nature. The well ordered and cultivated landscapes so important in the 15th century to demonstrate taming not only of the land but also of the people working it is not included in Herrera’s model of iconography, and arguably this lack is due again to the focus on possession through militarism and the divine right of God’s Will rather than working the land as proper use would dictate according to Roman law. However, one would imagine that the taming of the land would support the latter important element in Herrera’s work and this absence is not resolved at this time but pointed out as a curiosity and a subject requiring further investigation.

In this page from the fifteenth century manuscript *Trés Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, the landscape is worked according to feudal tradition, with the peasants working the land before the walls of the city they feed, and the fields are well ordered, fecund, and cultivated. The castles depicted are faithfully rendered, and this implies some fidelity to landscape design as well as to topographical interest in the architectural elements. Herrera perhaps represents a trend in New World representations of his time that was not altogether unusual in the sixteenth century. Some conquistadors were quite eloquent in describing the lands they

⁵⁸³ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 33.

encountered in great detail, like Columbus, but Elliott suggests the lack on inclusion of realism in landscapes in sixteenth century Europe reflects a general lack of interest, “especially those of the Mediterranean world, in landscape and nature.”⁵⁸⁴



Figure 321. Limbourg Brothers, *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, illuminated manuscript on vellum, 1412-1416. Chateau Chantilly, France

However, in the map of London below, also from the sixteenth century, Hogenberg and Braun show agricultural order outside of the city as part of an industrial and productive landscape, which includes ships moving through the trade route of the River Thames. This could reflect different strategies of possession, where Britain and France looked at transformation of land through labor as a justification of ownership, while the Spaniards, falling into Elliott’s model as “Mediterranean” and in Cañizares-Esguerra’s words “were more ‘medieval.’ They justified territorial possession by claiming that the pope had

⁵⁸⁴ Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492-1650*, 20.

dominium and imperium over pagan territories.⁵⁸⁵ Therefore, Herrera may therefore have focused not on taming the countryside through agriculture but on establishing Catholic dominion by the pope's decree, establishing the recipients of that obligation as the Spanish monarchy and the Indians as pagans capable of redemption rightfully and honorably conquered as heretics by a noble Christian army.



Figure 322. Franz Hogenberg and annotated by Geog Braun. *Londinum, feracissimi Angliae regni metropolis*, hand-colored engraving. Cologne, 1579. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem & the Jewish National and University Library

⁵⁸⁵ Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors*, 14.

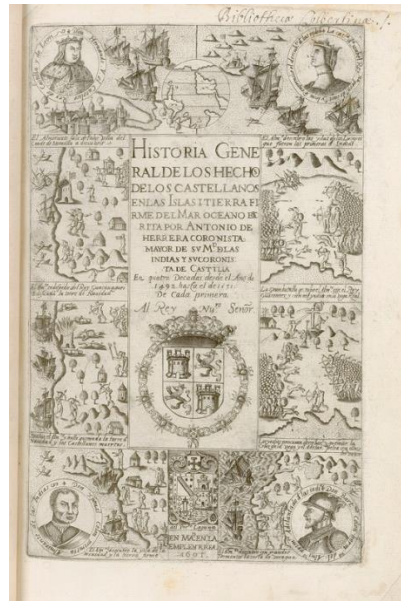


Figure 323. *Década Primera* Title Page, 1601. John Carter Brown Library

CONCLUSION

The objective of this work is to demonstrate the indebtedness of Herrera's *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las Islas i Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano* to its cartographic and other illustrative elements in its fulfillment of the commission directive, which included these explicit instructions from Philip II: “[You will] make certain to demonstrate that the Catholic Kings [Spain’s monarchs] have complied with the bull of the Pope [Alexander VI], also that this nation is much defamed by foreigners with cruelty and avarice as result of omissions by its governors. You must investigate this, always making certain to tell the truth.”⁵⁸⁶ The iconography of both the cartography and the illustrations within its framework connect the text with these directives: to demonstrate compliance, which tied into legitimizing possession of lands and guardianship of Native Americans through both God’s will and Roman law; and Truth. These connections have never been realized in any previous scholarship, and here we have shown the value of their consideration towards a deeper and richer understanding of Herrera’s project.

⁵⁸⁶ Kagan, *Clio & the Crown*, 150. Herrera y Tordesillas as quoted and translated by Kagan. Notations are Kagan’s and mine.

Philip II desired a general history that would inarguably stamp the New World with the royal seal of the Catholic Habsburg monarchy by legitimizing the possession of the Americas as ordained by God. In order to do so, Herrera needed to assert not only his own authority as the author of this history and the orchestrator of valuable primary resources, but also to prove the validity of his narrative to galvanize Spanish claims in the Americas as indisputable. Above all he must tell the truth, or at least be perceived of as having done so, and we have demonstrated in our work that he does this through a cartographic framework and all of that medium's associations with ownership and empirical, objective knowledge.

His challenges were considerable. The Protestants in the north contested the Treaty of Tordesillas as the Pope held no authority under Protestant beliefs, their logic being that even if the treaty was recognized universally under the Pope's ruling, it would be moot due to the Spaniards' negligence and mistreatment of the Indians which directly opposed treaty conditions. The New World posed its own problems inherent in efforts towards cultural, historical, spiritual, and political unification with the old world and the familiar classical humanistic templates, under which Herrera, his colleagues, and his patron Philip II were trained. Reconciling the Americas into a cohesive narrative according to traditional historiography was impossible and required a new visual and textual vocabulary. Also, Herrera needed to convince his audience that the *Décadas* was true in an age where popular chivalric literature prevailed and imaginations ran rampant in regards to the New World.

In this paper we argue that Herrera's solution was the use of cartography. Three kinds of maps exist in the Herrera work, and each type is described and analyzed in regards to their support of the main agenda of the *Décadas*: the title page designs of each *Década* and the *Descripción*, respectively; the geographic spaces within the individual panels on these pages; and the Herrera-Velasco maps. The relevance of these cartographic elements to the overall agenda of the *Décadas* through their iconographic programs has been the focus of this research and we

have shown they are integral to the text in the complete program of Herrera's *Décadas*.

In the titlepages Herrera places the cartographic elements within a biblical template, creating a sacred space of the Americas, deeply linked with imperialistic iconography in the use of the coat of arms, maps and globes, and Christian militarism. In this format, the apostles are replaced by the “authors” or primary resources of the history of the New World, the Castellano explorers, governors, and religious leaders of the Americas. Herrera thereby not only alludes to their authenticity as resources much as the narrators of the stories of the Bible, but also alludes to their sacred role in telling these tales. In this template, the crucifix or the Lamb of God is replaced by the Habsburg rulers implicitly, suggesting they are one and the same thing and legitimizing Catholic rule under the Treaty of Tordesillas. Herrera claims ownership for the Spanish via these explorers who found the new world by the very grace of God in the biblical template of the titlepages.

The panels themselves contain landscape backdrops and more decorative maps that, while generalized, put the Americas within a Europeanized visual reference, familiarizing the unfamiliar. By including the Velasco maps in the *Descripción* with its relative absence of any native markers or names and with cartographic symbols and distortions recognizably European in design, he labels and claims the land between the Lines of Demarcation as belonging to the Old World Empire of Spain.

The itinerary maps of the title pages lead us on a highly orchestrated journey through the Golden Age of discovery of the Castellanos, the stories of the greatest accomplishments and some of the greatest failures. The Biblical and Roman templates and iconographies symbolize the rights under God and the Empire. Spanish audiences would live and celebrate these adventures through the illustrations and texts of the *Décadas*, a history, like all histories that is bent towards the perceptions and interests of its patrons.

It is clear that none of the maps in Herrera's *Décadas* have any purpose beyond symbolic representation of space and the iconographical references of the sacred and imperial, here virtually indistinguishable. The panels in the title pages are Europeanized and non-specific; the globes are inverted or mirror images of highly abstracted spaces; and Velasco's maps contain very little navigational information, no rhumb lines and no compass roses. The latitude and longitude degrees in the margins are therefore more effective as markers of territory rather than to be relied upon for making one's way to the Americas or trying to return home again. They are images of possession, places to name the Americas according to European agendas, and markers of territory under the Treaty of Tordesillas. In an age in which the standardization of cartography and the capturing of geographic knowledge in Spain were in its zenith, the implications of mapping as a symbol of power and as a tool of governance are indisputable.

The agendas of maps are frequently more obvious in their absences, what they do not include, than what is actually represented. As maps are inherently abstractions of space that display choices in what is important to the overall message, they eliminate chaos of detail that distract from the main purpose. That the Catholic monarchy of Ferdinand and Isabella are present and not Philip II roots the rights to the Americas as Catholic and Spanish from the very moment of its discovery under the Spanish flag.

Ferdinand and Isabella were the first unifiers of Catholic Spain with the final conquest of the Muslims, which is very relevant in the context of Christian militarism and Philip II's own interests in being represented as a Christian over being an Emperor. The battle scenes of conquest reflect Roman laws of governance, and establish to the contemporary audience that the possession and rule of the Americas is just and righteous under not only God but humanist ideals.

Indians are shown primarily as naked, pagan and primitive rather than as savage cannibals, amazons and demons as frequently represented in contemporary

material. That they are redeemable and were fairly conquered would be integral to legitimizing the Christian obligations under the Treaty of Tordesillas and Roman law, which was a model for 16th century Spanish governance.

The absence as well of any real scientific enterprise is also telling, as this is not a story about the gold, silver, and green treasures to be found. The riches both of minerals and medicine were not of as great importance to Herrera as presumably the right to have access to these resources in the first place as ordained by God and ownership would certainly have implied these rights. The *Décadas* is about the larger picture of unification under a Catholic God, legal rights of conquest under Roman law, and justification of possession rather than about the seemingly limitless resources inherent in that possession.

The awkwardness of the images can possibly be explained by the illustrations having been commissioned in Spain rather than Holland, where artists were better trained in the art of fine printmaking. Arguably, this choice was a nationalistic one – an official commission printed in Castellano and printed in Madrid to refute the claims of the Protestants could hardly be produced in any part in the North. Also, the generic nature of the figures and the landscapes reflect a more symbolic than aesthetic approach. The simplicity too of the Herrera-Velasco maps is in opposition to elaborately decorated Dutch and English maps of the age.

There has been little successful research to date in determining the source material for the frontispiece components. While we were able to suggest a few possible sources for Ferdinand, Isabella, and Columbus, other portraits were elusive and we were only able to find later printings that referenced Herrera. The *Décadas* is the visual reference often employed for material published in the seventeenth century onward, and the originals from which they were drawn are mostly unknown. Likewise, the maps that populate the title page panels do not have clear references to earlier maps besides that of Mexico City. A deeper

attempt at making these connections was outside the scope of this paper, and would lend some more insight into Herrera's project and available resources.

The focus of this paper is on European audiences for the *Décadas*, and little attention was given to its reception in the Americas. As there are indeed copies extant in archives in the New World, it stands to reason that the work was known at least to some in the colonies. A comparison of the popularity and consumption of the *Décadas* in the context of its use and dissemination by Spaniards living in the Americas is another recommendation for further research, particularly as it relates to the self-identity of the Spanish settlers and their sense of entitlement to the lands they occupied. Furthermore, the influence Herrera may have had on New World scholarship and historiographies produced in the New World would be fascinating, but again, regrettably outside the reach of this essay.

Our work here focuses on the visual with the broader textual narrative as a backdrop, but it would be a highly useful enterprise to catalogue the direct associations among the title page panels with the text of the *Décadas* for reference purposes, which would be helpful in analyzing further the relationship between the text and illustrations.

That the cartographic elements of the *Décadas* are subordinate to the text there is little doubt, but their power in providing the framework to legitimize and clarify the narrative is of great importance in deepening our understanding of Herrera's greatest work, *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las Islas i Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano* and opens new questions for further investigations. The *Décadas* is a fascinating piece of scholarship, and its illustrations are a key to unlocking its purpose and the interests of its author, patrons and readers.

RESUMEN

En el siglo XVI algunas de las estrategias imperialistas más intrigantes para anunciar las adjudicaciones del Nuevo Mundo son las historias oficiales encargadas por la monarquía y el uso de la cartografía para apoyar estas narraciones y sus agendas relevantes. Este proyecto es un estudio de los elementos cartográficos empleados en uno de estos esfuerzos más ambiciosos, *La Historia general de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano*, 1601-1615, escrita por Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, con el propósito de conseguir un mayor entendimiento y ampliar el arco del discurso histórico de esta obra. Aunque se ha dedicado mucha investigación al texto de *La Historia General...*, a su autor, y al contexto y sus fuentes, no ha habido una revisión exhaustiva de las portadas y los mapas, particularmente usando una metodología que combine los análisis históricos de la cartografía y del arte.

El objetivo de esta tesis es demostrar que el uso que hizo Herrera de los mapas fue un esfuerzo activo, no pasivo, para legitimar la colonización de la España católica en las Américas y para contextualizar esta estrategia que afirmaba el poder y la posesión.⁵⁸⁷ Al utilizar la iconografía clásica cristiana junto a una estructura historiográfica humanista enraizada en un programa cartográfico, Herrera dirige la atención a las obligaciones católicas en las Américas, particularmente en respuesta a la propaganda protestante, y unifica y nacionaliza el Nuevo Mundo dentro de la Monarquía católica de los Habsburgo, al tiempo que legitima la posesión de nuevos territorios y la gobernación de los indios.

Este trabajo aportará al campo de la investigación una perspectiva nueva de *La Historia general de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar*

⁵⁸⁷ J.B. Harley. "Silences and Secrecy: The Hidden Agenda of Cartography in Early Modern Europe", *Imago Mundi* 40 (Enero 1, 1988): 57-76. Ver Harley, 57-76 para la discusión de la creación de mapas como una voz activa y no pasiva.

Océano con un análisis de los elementos cartográficos en el formato de las portadas, sus paneles y los mapas de Herrera-Velasco del Nuevo Mundo.

En 1598, Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, el cronista mayor del Rey Felipe II, fue comisionado por el rey para escribir una historia de las grandes acontecimientos de los españoles en el Nuevo Mundo durante le época dorada de los Descubrimientos, desde 1492 al 1554. Entre 1601 y 1615 *La Historia general de los Hechos del los Castellanos en la Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano* (en lo sucesivo nos referiremos a ella como *Las Décadas*) y el suplemento *Descripción de la Indias Occidentales*⁵⁸⁸ (en lo sucesivo se citada como *La Descripción*) fue publicada en cuatro volúmenes. *Las Décadas* se divide en ocho *Década*”, cada con una portada decorada con mucho detalle y alto contenido iconográfico. Estas ilustraciones, junto a la portada de *La Descripción*, son de una importancia enorme por la manera en que sirven para embellecer y apoyar visualmente la agenda del proyecto en su conjunto. Además de las portadas, *La Descripción* incluye catorce mapas con sus textos correspondientes, que describen al Nuevo Mundo (en lo sucesivo considerados como “los mapas Herrera-Velasco”).

Como historiadora del arte cartográfico, *Las Décadas*, a primera vista, me resulta más interesante por la inclusión de los grabados que se encuentran en los mapas basados en unos manuscritos de Juan López de Velasco de la mitad del siglo XVI. El proyecto de Herrera se mantiene como la primera publicación aprobada por el gobierno sobre mapas españoles detallados de la Nueva España, conocimiento geográfico que hasta aquel momento era *arcana imperií* o secretos nacionales, fuertemente protegidos.⁵⁸⁹ Sin embargo, como aquí discutimos, las portadas también son un ejercicio de componer mapas tanto en su ejecución como en su contenido. De hecho, las portadas que presentan cada una de las *Décadas* se parecen en lectura a un cuaderno de viajes, o a un mapa de itinerario, por su linealidad y cronología, pero son de un estilo simbólico. Sirven para apoyar el texto y la agenda de la obra en su totalidad en vez de ser una herramienta con la

⁵⁸⁸ *La Descripción* se hallaba a menudo después encuadernada junto al cuarto volumen, pero también se encuentra independientemente en algunas ediciones.

⁵⁸⁹ Richard L. Kagan, *Clio & the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 163.

cual guiarse. Esta ruta, construida a propósito de una narrativa visual y textual, lleva al lector por un viaje histórico, selectiva y esmeradamente creado por el propio Herrera.

Argumentamos que Herrera intenta legitimar el control español del Imperio al imponer una universalidad euro-céntrica y católica a dicho imperio, a través de su aplicación de las iconografías estratégicas, religiosas e imperialistas enraizadas dentro de un programa cartográfico. “La idea de una verdad imperial fue esencial para que los españoles tuviesen una convicción en una experiencia imperial significativa” y lo que se afirma aquí es que la inclusión de elementos cartográficos presta credibilidad a esta percepción de la verdad.⁵⁹⁰ Aunque los estudios académicos críticos sobre cartografía reconocen ahora que los mapas son subjetivos y producto de la época y de las opiniones de sus creadores, la suposición de “la verdad” tiene precedencia histórica: “Según la teoría académica del Renacimiento los mapas son una clave para la interpretación de la historia: enmarcan los acontecimientos históricos y al mismo tiempo demuestran su escala. También son fiables gracias a su ejecución matemática y consecuentemente permiten que los usuarios contrasten la exactitud de acontecimientos históricos”.⁵⁹¹ Sin embargo, como J.H. Harley indica, “los mapas son inherentemente imágenes retóricas. Es común decir que la cartografía es un arte de persuasión... la retórica penetra el mapa a todos los niveles. Como imágenes del mundo, los mapas nunca son neutros, ni libres de valor, ni completamente científicos. Cada mapa argumenta su propio “caso”.⁵⁹² Por tanto, se pueden leer los mapas como textos culturales, como cualquier otra forma de medio visual dado que ninguno objetivamente existe fuera de su propio propósito y época.

⁵⁹⁰ Joan Pau Rubiés, “Futility in the New World: Narratives of Travel in Sixteenth Century America” in: *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 95.

⁵⁹¹ George Tolias, “Maps in Renaissance Libraries and Collections” in *History of Cartography*, ed. David Woodward, vol. 3, Part 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 656.

⁵⁹² J. B. Harley, *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore, Md: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 5.

Una revisión detallada del contexto de *Las Décadas* y su iconografía y cómo se relacionan con el vocabulario del análisis histórico de mapas revelará la deuda de la obra al género de la composición de mapas. Se compararán *Las Décadas* con las historiografías contemporáneas de la España moderna, y de otros lugares de Europa, para determinar la consistencia y las calidades únicas de la obra en cuestión. Se ha dedicado muy poca investigación al arte de la imaginería que apoya los textos, lo cual es esencial para comprender su naturaleza y relevancia en el contexto del expansionismo e imperialismo español del siglo XVI, una época de tremendos cambios políticos, económicos, legales y teológicos.

Reflejada en los esfuerzos de Herrera, encontramos la extraordinaria economía del mensaje y del diseño esencial a la cartografía. Discutiremos que esta técnica fue algo impuesto al proyecto, derivando en una falta de consolidación, típicamente esencial para el éxito de una empresa cartográfica. Trazar los mapas en este caso es un acto simbólico en vez de simplemente geográfico, pero la torpeza, endémica en *Las Décadas* de Herrera, puede también reflejar otra tensión de la época; el hecho de que el autor fuese un humanista cristiano.⁵⁹³, pues “el cambio de una manera a otra de percibir el mundo no se limitaba a través de la estética.”⁵⁹⁴ La existencia, y menos la conquista y gobernación de las Américas, fueron temas que no estaban explicados ni en la Biblia, ni por los historiadores clásicos. Esta falta de referencia filosófica, espiritual y cartográfica hizo necesarios nuevos sistemas de respuestas e investigación.

Existen tres tipos de mapas en la obra de Herrera y se descubrirá y se analizará cada uno de ellos, en lo que respecta a cómo apoyan el agenda principal de la obra en su integridad: los diseños de las portadas de cada *Década* y *La Descripción*, respectivamente, como mapas narrativos itinerarios dentro de marcos clásicos cristianos; los espacios geográficos dentro de los paneles en estas portadas; y los

⁵⁹³ Stephen Greenblatt, *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern*, 1st. Ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012), 228. Ver la discusión de la Utopía de Tomás Moro como ejemplo literario de las tensiones no remediables en esta identidad cultural e intelectual.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 10. Aquí Greenblatt se refiere a los cambios culturales durante el renacimiento italiano que permeaba no solo el arte sino todas formas de cultura y ciencia durante esa época.

mapas Herrera-Velasco que están incluidos en el volumen suplementario. El enfoque de esta investigación es la relevancia de estos elementos cartográficos para el propósito del proyecto de *Las Décadas* en su totalidad.

Aunque se ha usado *Las Décadas* de Herrera como fuente histórica, es importante reconocer e iluminar la versión más profunda que el proyecto tiene que contar. “Textos verbales, mapas, iconos, junto a otros productos culturales, se deben de considerar como artífices retóricos y no como depositarios de datos que se podrían entender como hechos verídicos. La retórica, en este sentido, no es simplemente un arte de persuasión, sino también implica acciones estratégicas que constituyen formas de subjetividad y producen lo que Roland Barthes llamaba “un efecto de lo real”.⁵⁹⁵ Mientras *Las Décadas* de Herrera da un ‘efecto de lo real,’ al incluir los mapas, estos a su vez, están más legitimados por el uso de una portada reminiscente de las portadas bíblicas y de las tradiciones clásicas romanas de la narración visual. Estos elementos constituyen actos de persuasión que son inherentemente estratégicos. Estas ilustraciones sirven como vehículos visuales de posesión, alejándose de las distorsiones de la creación mítica inherente al mapamundi medieval y acercándose hacia un nuevo tipo de hacer mapas, caracterizado por su “creciente respetabilidad intelectual”⁵⁹⁶ en la edad de la exploración. Aquí se aprovechaba de esa respetabilidad de la investigación científica, particularmente en España en el siglo XVI, para justificar una narrativa textual a la cual asociarse.

Las ilustraciones también cambian la manera en que leemos el texto, dado que aclaran la organización de *Las Décadas*. Mientras Moretti aquí habla de los mapas posteriores al autor como una herramienta para la historia literaria, yo creo que lo mismo es verdad en cuanto a los mapas de Herrera: que ellos destacan el carácter vernáculo de las formas literarias: cada uno de ellos con su propia geometría peculiar, sus tabúes espaciales y rutas favoritas. A continuación los mapas sacan a la luz la lógica interna de la narrativa; el dominio semiótico sobre el cual se unifica

⁵⁹⁵ José Rabasa, *Inventing America: Spanish Histriography and the Formation of Eurocentrism*, 1st ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press 1993), 9.

⁵⁹⁶ David N. Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of Acontested Enterprise* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1993), 51.

y se organiza una trama.”⁵⁹⁷ Mientras el lugar de la historia de Herrera se define claramente en el texto, los mapas, en todas sus formas, contextualizan la historia de la Conquista de los castellanos del Nuevo Mundo, firmemente jerarquizados en un orden, plazo de tiempo y geografía que apoyan y clarifican el texto.

Mirando con más detalle estas ilustraciones desde una perspectiva inter-semiótica se revela la complejidad de las capas de interpretación, desde la historia original hasta el destinatario, el consumidor o el público receptor de estas obras.

Podemos deducir cuál fue la reacción del público en cuanto a *Las Décadas* por sus múltiples ediciones y traducciones, desde el siglo XVII y en adelante, que aluden a su popularidad y relevancia. Podemos suponer que se expresaba en un lenguaje visual y textual que era accesible y atractivo para el público. Las portadas fueron adaptadas y recicladas en otras publicaciones posteriores, lo cual vuelve a sugerir una continuidad de su influencia y relevancia. El reconocer las disparidades y el proceso de selección aparte del acontecimiento en sí, las versiones principales de dicho acontecimiento contadas para un público europeo, la selección de estas fuentes por Herrera para el texto, y otra vez para las ilustraciones, son otros tantos episodios fascinantes de la manipulación y fabricación dirigida a la agenda de Herrera de un legítimo control español de las Américas.

Este ensayo aporta una perspectiva nueva sobre *La Historia general de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano*, un análisis de sus elementos cartográficos, dando una lectura con mayor detalle a las estrategias de la expansión española del siglo XVI. Mientras el arte de la imaginería sigue una retórica visual bien establecida, o se elaboran como un arte de persuasión los mapas reconocibles para el público, Herrera culminó sus *Décadas* en un formato y con un lenguaje visual al que sus lectores podían responder y al mismo tiempo entender, para mejor servir así las intenciones de su rey. A propósito contemplaremos la obra de Herrera como una historia y una geografía diseñadas y hechas a medida desde una perspectiva europea. La manera en que la obra fuera

⁵⁹⁷ Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900* (London; New York: Verso, 1998), 5.

recibida y utilizada dentro de las colonias americanas, queda, en cambio, fuera del ámbito de este trabajo.

El encargo para que Herrera escribiera *Las Décadas* incluía instrucciones explícitas de Felipe II. “Vd. se asegurará de demostrar que los Reyes Católicos han cumplido con la Bula del Papa (Alejandro VI), y también que los extranjeros están difamando nuestra nación con crueldad y avaricia, por culpa de las omisiones que hacen sus gobernadores. Tiene que investigar esto, siempre asegurándose de contar la verdad.” La iconografía de la cartografía y también de las ilustraciones, dentro de su estructura, establecen la conexión entre el texto y estas directrices: demostrar el cumplimiento, que se asociaba con legitimar la posesión de tierras y la tutela de los nativos americanos, a través de la voluntad de Dios y también la ley romana; y, en definitiva, la defensa de la Verdad. No se ha presentado esta asociación anteriormente en ningún informe académico y aquí mostramos el valor de esta perspectiva, al tenerla en consideración, para lograr un entendimiento más rico y más profundo del proyecto de Herrera.

Felipe II deseaba una historia que marcara indiscutiblemente al Nuevo Mundo con el sello real de la monarquía católica de los Habsburgo, al legitimar que la posesión de las Américas fuera ordenada por Dios. Para conseguirlo, Herrera tenía que no solo afirmar su propia autoridad como responsable de esta historia y dueño de recursos primarios valiosos, sino también probar la validez de su narración, para galvanizar las apropiaciones en las Américas como irrefutables. Sobre todo, Herrera tenía que contar la verdad, o por lo menos, parecer que lo hiciera. Hemos demostrado en nuestro trabajo que lo consigue a través de un marco cartográfico, y todas las asociaciones de ese medio, con titularidad y conocimiento empírico y objetivo.

Sus desafíos fueron considerables. Los protestantes en el norte impugnaban el Tratado de Tordesillas, ya que el Papa no tenía ninguna autoridad según las creencias protestantes. Su lógica era que, aunque se reconociera el tratado universalmente bajo el mandato del Papa, poco importaría debido a la negligencia de los españoles y su maltrato a los indios, situación que iba en contra de las

condiciones del tratado. El Nuevo Mundo presentaba sus propios problemas inherentes en los esfuerzos por conseguir la unificación cultural, histórica, espiritual y política con el mundo antiguo y los conocidos modelos humanísticos clásicos, en los cuales, Herrera, sus colegas y su mecenas, Felipe II, fueron educados. Era imposible reconciliar las Américas en una narrativa coherente según la historiografía tradicional, y se requería un nuevo vocabulario, visual y textual, para incluirla satisfactoriamente en un relato universal y acorde con los ideales de la monarquía católica.

También, Herrera necesitaba convencer a su público que *Las Décadas* eran verdaderas, en una época donde imperaba la literatura popular de caballería y la imaginación se desataba al pensar en el Nuevo Mundo.

En este trabajo argumentamos que la solución de Herrera fue usar la cartografía. Existen tres tipos de mapas en la obra de Herrera y cada uno se describe y se analiza en lo que respecta a su apoyo a la agenda principal de *Las Décadas*: los diseños de las portadas de cada Década y de *La Descripción*, respectivamente; los espacios geográficos dentro de los paneles individuales en estas páginas, y los mapas Herrera-Velasco. La relevancia de estos elementos cartográficos a la agenda total de *Las Décadas*, a través de sus programas iconográficos, ha sido el enfoque de esta investigación y hemos demostrado que son esenciales al texto en el programa completo de *Las Décadas* de Herrera.

En las portadas Herrera funde los elementos cartográficos en un molde bíblico, creando un espacio sacro de las Américas, profundamente enlazado con la iconografía imperialista al usar el escudo de armas, mapas y globos, y el militarismo cristiano. En este formato, se ha sustituido a los Apóstoles por los autores o fuentes primarias de la historia del Nuevo Mundo, los exploradores castellanos, los gobernantes y los líderes religiosos de las Américas. Herrera entonces no solo alude a la autenticidad de estos como fuentes fidedignas, de una manera parecida a los narradores de las historias de la Biblia, sino que también alude a su propio papel sagrado de contar estas historias. En este modelo, se sustituye el Cordero de Dios implícitamente por los gobernantes de la casa de

Habsburgo, sugiriendo que ellos son uno y el mismo, legitimando la gobernación católica bajo el Tratado de Tordesillas. Herrera adjudica la titularidad a los españoles, a través de estos exploradores que encontraron el Nuevo Mundo por gracia de Dios, en el modelo bíblico de los frontispicios de los volúmenes de su obra magna.

Los paneles mismos contienen fondos de paisaje y más mapas decorativos que, aunque generalizados, sitúan a las Américas dentro de una referencia visual europea, tornando familiar lo lejano y desconocido. Al incluir los mapas de Velasco en *La Descripción*, con su relativa ausencia de algún marcador o nombre nativo y con símbolos y distorsiones cartográficas reconociblemente europeos en diseño, Herrera etiqueta y adjudica las tierras entre las líneas de demarcación, como pertenecientes al Imperio de España en el Viejo Mundo.

Los mapas itinerarios de las portadas nos conducen en un viaje muy estructurado por la Edad Dorada de los Descubrimientos de los castellanos, las historias de las gestas más importantes y algunos de los fracasos más notables. Los patrones e iconografías bíblicas y romanos simbolizan los derechos de Dios y del Imperio. El público español viviría y celebraría estas aventuras a través de las ilustraciones y textos de *Las Décadas*, una historia, como lo son todas las historias, inclinada hacia las percepciones e intereses de sus mecenas.

Está claro que ninguno de los mapas de *Las Décadas* de Herrera tiene ninguna utilidad más allá de la representación simbólica del espacio y las referencias iconográficas de lo sagrado y lo imperial, aquí prácticamente indistinguibles. Los paneles de las portadas están europeizados y son poco o nada específicos: los globos están invertidos o son imágenes simétricas de espacios muy abstractos; y los mapas de Velasco contienen muy poca información de navegación, no hay líneas de rumbo ni rosa de los vientos. Los grados de latitud y longitud que se encuentran en los márgenes son, por consiguiente, más efectivos como marcadores de territorio que como una guía para seguir camino hacia las Américas o intentar volver a casa desde allí. Son imágenes de posesión, lugares para poner nombre a las Américas, según la agenda europea, y marcadores de

territorio bajo el tratado de Tordesillas. En una época en la cual la estandarización de la cartografía y la concentración del conocimiento geográfico en España estaban en su zenit, las implicaciones de la creación de mapas como un símbolo del poder y como una herramienta de gobierno son indiscutibles.

Las agendas de los mapas frecuentemente son más reveladoras por sus ausencias, lo que no incluyen, que por lo que realmente representan. Dado que los mapas, por su propia naturaleza, son abstracciones del espacio que muestran selecciones de lo que es importante para el mensaje general, eliminan el caos de detalle que distrae del propósito principal. El hecho de que la monarquía católica de Fernando e Isabel esté presente y no Felipe II, arraiga los derechos de la conquista de las Américas como tierras católicas y españolas desde el mismo momento de su descubrimiento bajo la bandera de los Reyes Católicos. Fernando e Isabel fueron los primeros unificadores de la España católica con la conquista del último reducto los musulmanes en el Reino de Granada. Esto es muy relevante en el contexto del militarismo cristiano, y conecta con los propios intereses de Felipe II en que él fuese representado como príncipe cristiano, más que como emperador. Las escenas de batalla y de conquista reflejan las leyes romanas de gobernación y establecen, para el público contemporáneo, que la posesión y el mandato de las Américas es justo y justificado, no solo a los ojos de Dios, sino también según los ideales humanistas.

La ausencia de cualquier actividad real científica es también reveladora, ya que ésta no es una historia sobre el oro, plata y tesoros verdes que se encontrarían. Las riquezas de las medicinas y minerales no eran de tanta importancia para Herrera como presuntamente el derecho de tener acceso a estos recursos en primer lugar, como Dios había ordenado, y la titularidad ciertamente habría implicado estos derechos. *Las Décadas* es una narración histórica que brinda la visión más amplia de la unificación bajo un Dios católico, los derechos legales de conquista según la ley romana y la justificación de la posesión, en vez de sobre los recursos, aparentemente sin límite, inherentes en esa posesión.

Posiblemente se puede explicar la torpeza de los imágenes, ya que las ilustraciones fueron encargadas en España en vez de en Holanda, donde los artistas estaban mejor entrenados en el arte de la imprenta refinada. Acaso esta decisión tuviese un componente nacionalista por cuanto se trataba de un encargo oficial, impreso en castellano, y en Madrid, que serviría para refutar las pretensiones de los protestantes. En verdad, no se podía llevar a cabo en ningún lugar del norte de Europa. Por otra parte, la naturaleza genérica de las figuras y paisajes refleja un método más simbólico que estético. Asimismo, la sencillez de los mapas Herrera-Velasco es contraria a los mapas holandeses e ingleses de la época, tan laboriosamente decorados.

La investigación académica ha sido insuficiente, hasta la fecha, para poder determinar el material que sirvió de fuente para los componentes de los frontispicios de la obra. Si bien pudimos sugerir algunas posibles fuentes para los reyes Fernando e Isabel y el almirante Colón, otros retratos se mostraron elusivos y solo pudimos encontrar impresos que referían a Herrera. *Las Décadas* sirvieron de frecuente referencia visual para el material publicado en el siglo XVII en adelante, y los originales, de los que se han hecho los dibujos, son en su mayoría desconocidos. Igualmente, los mapas que rellenan los paneles de las portadas no tienen referencias claras a mapas anteriores excepto el de la Ciudad de México. Un intento más profundo para establecer estas conexiones estaba más allá del ámbito de este trabajo, y prestaría un mejor enfoque al proyecto de Herrera y a los recursos disponibles.

Este trabajo considera la recepción europea de *Las Décadas* y se ha prestado poca atención en cuanto a su recepción en las Américas. Como en efecto hay copias vigentes en los archivos del Nuevo Mundo, se puede razonar que por lo menos se conocería la obra en algunas de las colonias. Una comparación de la popularidad y consumo de *Las Décadas*, en el contexto de su uso y diseminación por los españoles que vivían en las Américas, sería otra recomendación para una futura investigación, particularmente en cómo se relacionan la identidad propia de los colonos españoles y su sentido de titularidad de las tierras que ocupaban.

Nuestro trabajo aquí enfoca lo visual, con un discurso textual más amplio como fondo, pero sería una actividad muy útil catalogar las asociaciones directas entre los paneles de las portadas con el texto de *Las Décadas* para fines de referencia, lo cual ayudaría a analizar más a fondo la relación entre el texto y las ilustraciones.

Apenas hay duda de que los elementos cartográficos de *Las Décadas* son subordinados al texto, pero su poder de proporcionar una estructura para legitimar y clarificar el discurso de la conquista y colonización del Nuevo Mundo es de gran importancia para reforzar nuestra comprensión de la obra más importante de Herrera, la *Historia general de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano*, y despertar nuevas preguntas para futuras investigaciones. *Las Décadas* constituyen un objeto fascinante de estudio y sus ilustraciones son una llave para desbloquear el propósito y los intereses de su autor, de sus mecenas y de sus lectores.

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