

### Florentine Goldsmith's Map, 1552?

[untitled in copperplate; a partially obscured title in manuscript reads] :  
*Universalis De Terrarum Orarium ex vera recens [ ... ] traditione*. [A Map of the Whole Earth according to accurate recent knowledge]. [anonymous] (Giorgio Callapoda?), probably Italian (Florence or Venice?), circa 1550.

**Description:** A world map on an oval projection. North and South America are shown with North America as part of China. Cartographic elements include lines of latitude and longitude, location of some rivers and settlements (*Temitistan*, or *Tenochtitlán*, is noted), some topographical details, and six classical heads of unidentified people.

The author of this map is unknown. Tradition has given it the name *Florentine Goldsmith's map* after a listing in a 19<sup>th</sup> century bookseller's catalogue, Ellis & White, 1884. According to Thomas Suarez it closely resembles a map contained in a 1552 manuscript atlas of Giorgio Callapoda, a Greek chart-maker who lived in Crete. However, the fact that the map is not similar to Callapoda's other works, and (though less compelling) the fact that the right half of Callapoda's manuscript is devoid of nomenclature while the printed map has many place-names there, both suggest that Callapoda copied the printed work, rather than vice-versa.

The map shows the world on an oval projection, which had been introduced by Francesco Rosselli about 1508 but had not won a wide audience until used by Bordone (1528, #343), Munster (1532 and 1540, #353) and Gastaldi (1546, #376). This was one of the first projection which succeeded in depicting the entirety of the earth's surface. The 1546 Gastaldi work initiated a series of related Italian maps using the projection, of which the *Florentine Goldsmith* is perhaps the most unusual. As originally engraved, the

map largely followed the 1546 Gastaldi work, except that it honored Verrazano's claim of a continental isthmus choking the southeast of North America. This particular example of the map, however, has had Verrazano's isthmus corrected (#347). The western shores of the isthmus appear to have been rubbed from the copperplate itself (rather than from the printed impression), and a new western coastline was drawn in manuscript on the map. Like the Gastaldi map, America forms an unbroken continuation of Asia.

Balboa's success in penetrating through meso-America to the Pacific in 1513, and Cortes' conquest of Mexico the following decade, both set the stage for Spanish exploration along the heretofore mysterious western shores of America. As a result of these incursions, we now see the California peninsula taking form. In about 1533 an expedition sailing north from *Nueva Hispania* suffered the murder of its captain, Diego Bezerra de Mendoza, by its chief pilot, Ortufia Ximenes, and then, reaching what they believed to be an island, the massacre of Ximenes and many of the crew at the hands of coastal Indians. The survivors of the expedition brought word back to Mexico that the new shores they had chanced upon bore rich pearl fisheries. Possibly enticed by these rumors, in 1535 Hernan Cortes sailed north, reaching a land that he dubbed *Santa Cruz*. Four years later, Cortes sent Francisco de Ulloa north to locate the fabled "Seven Cities," formerly sought on the mythical island of *Antilia* but by this time thought to lie somewhere in the American Southwest. Ulloa followed Cortes' tracks and correctly indicated, if inconclusively, that *Santa Cruz* was a continental peninsula.

**Size:** 20.5 x 29 cm

**Location:** John Carter Brown Library, Providence

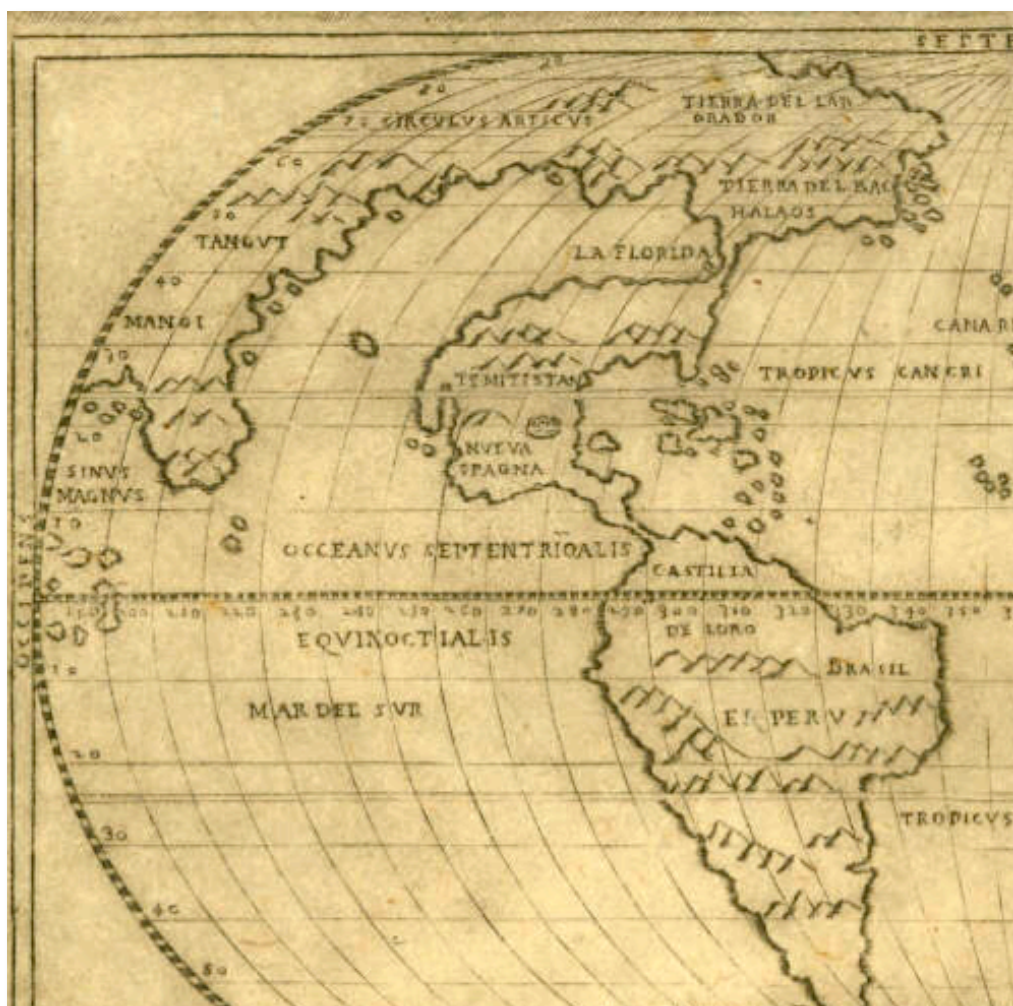
**References:**

\*Shirley, R.W., *Mapping of the World*, 98, plate 84.

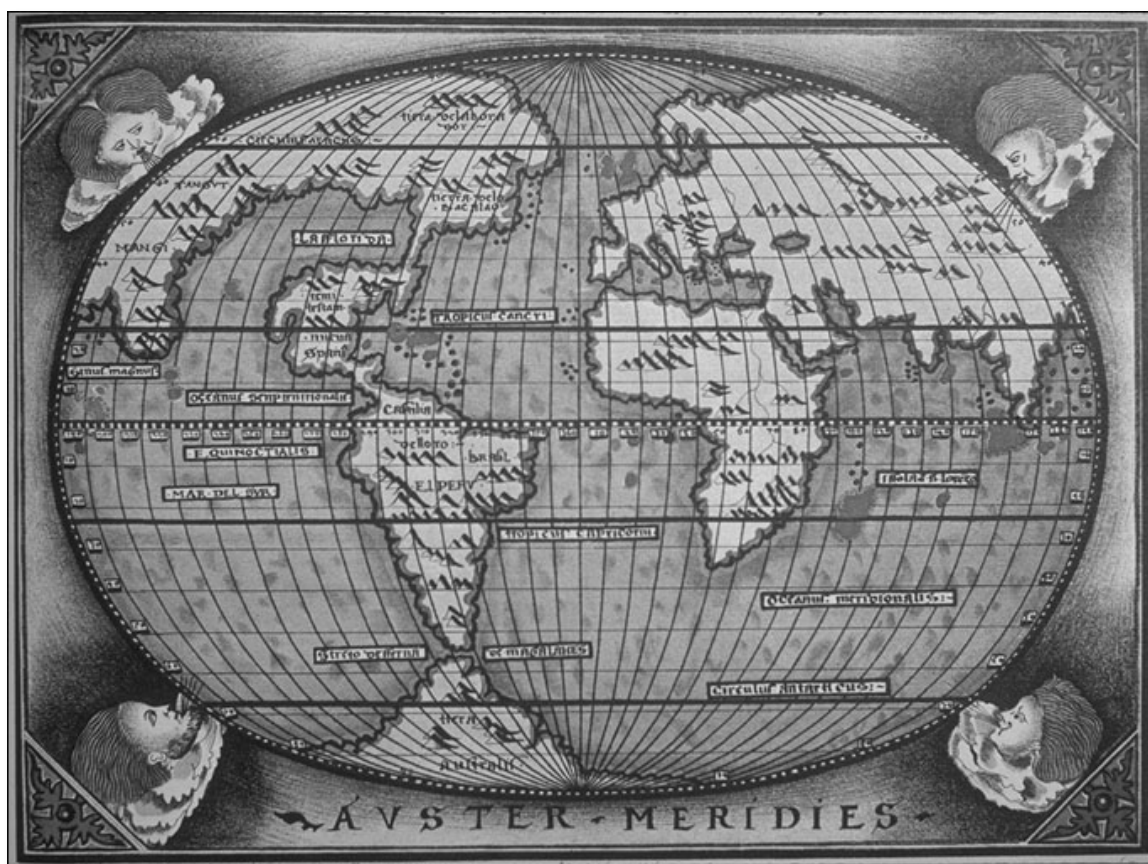
\*Suarez, T., *Shedding the Veil – A New World*, #28, pp. 96-98, Plate 21.

Wroth, L.C., *Verrazzano*, p. 194-195, 299, 318 plate 33.

\*illustrated







Calapoda world map, 1552