

Title: *Typus Cosmographicus Universalis*

Date: 1532-55

Author: S. Grynaeus/H. Hoblein [S. Münster?]

Description: This oval woodcut map of the world, printed on two sheets, was first published in 1532 as a supplement to the anthology of travel reports entitled *Novis Orbis Regionum ac Insularum veteribus incognitarum . . .* (Basel) by Simon Grynaeus and Johann Huttich, edited by Hervagius, with a commentary by Sebastian Münster (the anthology also contains the letters of Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci the travels of Varthema and Marco Polo, as well as other matters). The map had earlier been considered by some scholars such as Henry Harrisse to be Münster's work because of the statement in his commentary: "*We have found it impossible to indicate the position of all of the regions and all of the islands, because the narrowness of our map did not allow it, and that was not our object*". A.E. Nordenskiöld points out that the inscriptions, the distribution of land, the method of drawing the meridians on the oval projection are all different than Münster's other maps. The general character of the woodcuts alone is the same, proving that these maps may have issued from the same school of engravers.

Cartographically speaking, the map and Münster's *Declaratio* do not reflect the most recent knowledge of the day. The author of the map did not know, for example, of the first circumnavigation of the globe, as may be concluded by, among other things, the omission of the south polar continent, the discovery of which had been foretold by several earlier cosmographers, while its existence was considered to have been confirmed by Magellan in 1522. Neither is there any passage alluding to this memorable event in Münster's introduction, although he discusses the influence of the Portuguese voyages and praises the discoveries of Columbus and Vespucci. The configurations of the Old World and the New are still strongly marked by the early globes produced by Johann Schöner (#328) and by Caveri's and Waldseemüller's *Lustitanian* image of America (#307 and #310), or Apian's map of 1520 (#331). One explanation is that this map may have been prepared by Holbein earlier and kept on hand by the publisher for a while before he issued it for the first time.

North America is shown narrow and elongated, deeply indented north of the Tropic of Cancer, and is labeled *Terra de Cuba*. This portion of the New World is positioned very close to *Zipangri* [Japan]. In the North Atlantic, far out to sea, is a deeply indented island named *Terra Cortesia* (instead of the usual *Terra Corterealis*) that represents present-day Newfoundland, also a *Lustitanian* map trait. South America is depicted as wide in the north and narrow and finger-shaped in the south. This continent bears the names *Parias*, *Cannibali*, *America Terra Nova* and *Prisilia*. In the two earliest editions (1532 and 1537) the word *ASIA* is inserted on this continent, disappearing with the 1555 Basle third edition, along with the word *Typus* added to the title. Interestingly for its time, the large continent of Antarctica is omitted. Within the oval, on the right there are two frames about 8 x 9 cm each containing a long inscription. The first begins with the word *India*, the second with the word *Scyrtarum* (according to Harrisse, later changed to *Scytarum* in the 1555 third edition).

The frame is square, but the *mappamundi* is on an oval projection (after Bordone, #343), and in the space between the curve and the angles there are finely engraved hunting scenes, peoples from distant lands, real and imaginary animals, a high-pooped galleons, ornaments, fantastical mermaids and monsters and two cherubs energetically turning crank handles at the north and south poles. The decorative border is one of the most striking features of this map, something seldom seen in other maps dating from the

first half of the 16th century. The masterful delineation of these scenes, as well as of the ships and sea monsters that embellish the oceans, has caused the design of the map to be attributed to Hans Holbein the Younger, who created vignettes for Sebastian Münster and others between 1528 and 1532 in Basel.

A few months before Johann Huttich's *Novus Orbis Regionum* was published in Paris with the world map of Finaeus, it had already been published in Basle with this vastly different world map. The map is from a geographic viewpoint a largely regressive work, though nonetheless an attempt to give order to diverse and confusing elements. Its most interesting geographic feature is its reconciliation of current data with Columbus' insistence that Cuba was part of continental Asia. To achieve this, as mentioned above, the map's author has combined and modified features found on the two monumental world maps of Martin Waldseemüller, done in 1507 and 1516 (#310 and #320).

The configuration for North America is extracted from the 1507 work, but it has been given the identity of Cuba as per the 1516 map. That 1516 Waldseemüller map, in a posthumous concession to Columbus, identified North America as *Terra de Cuba Asiae Partis* [Land of Cuba, Part of Asia].

But by adopting Waldseemüller's 1507 rather than his 1516 geography, this 1532 map shows North America as a separate land not connected to Asia, and therefore identifies it only as *Terra de Cuba*, deleting the *Asiae Partis*. The map's author accepted Columbus' claim that Cuba was not an island, accepted Waldseemüller's 1516 map in equating Cuba with North America, but did not accept Columbus' claim that it was part of Asia. The problem remained, however, as to what to do with the island of Cuba. It had been curiously retained, without identity, on the 1516 Waldseemüller map; the author of the present map logically deletes one of the two large islands representing Cuba and *Hispaniola*, but indecisively retains the names of both islands, *Isabella* [Cuba] and *Spagnola* appearing above and below the remaining island.

In the north, the landfall of the Corte-Reals is neatly contained in an island, *Terra Cortesia*. The mythical island of *Antilia* has now evolved into the "real" Antilles, *Insulae Antigliae*. *Zipangri* [Japan], still more than a decade pre-"discovery," lies midway between *Cathay* and North America. In the Indian Ocean, the incorporation of new data is astonishingly poor, with India and *Tabrobana* [Sri Lanka] still in reversed proportions, as per Ptolemy.

The true importance of this map lies beyond its geographic novelties, however. Though geographically dated, it introduces a radical new concept in the understanding of earth's nature and its place in the cosmos. While prevailing cosmological theory placed the earth at the center of the universe with the cosmos orbiting around it, here the earth is shown rotating on an axis, illustrated by cherubs at either pole churning the planet around with cranks. As this clear reference to axis rotation precedes the publication of Copernicus' *De Revolutionibus Coelestium* by eleven years, the map's author no doubt learned about Copernicus' principles either orally, as they were shared by word of mouth for two decades prior to the publication of the book, or from one of the copies of his brief manuscript work *Commentariolus*, which Copernicus is known to have circulated among selected friends by 1529.

The cranks with which Holbein's cherubs allegorically spin the earth are themselves of interest as an early record of this still relatively recent innovation. The development of the device about a century earlier marked a major advance in late medieval technology.

The fantastic figures surrounding the map represent people and fauna from various parts of the world. Some of these, such as the Ubangi people of Africa, are quite real; others are the invented descendants of medieval myth. Taken as a whole, the map is a pastiche of elements spanning the classical (Ptolemaic Indian Ocean), medieval (mythological figures), late medieval (crank, Polean geography), and Renaissance (American and African geography), as well as fresh scientific theory of the underground radical fringe: the as yet unpublished theory of axis rotation, an alien and disorienting concept which thrust upon the map's viewer the ultimate culture shock: that of challenging one's long coveted status in the universe.

Despite its lack of currency, this map remained something of a favorite and appeared (with various alterations in the type-printed insertions) in several editions of this and other books.

This oval-projection woodcut map, surrounded with finely executed designs of cannibals, hunting scenes, and monsters, is commonly attributed to Hans Holbein the Younger. The New World is based on out-of-date conceptions found in the Waldseemüller map (1507, #310) and globes by Johann Schöner (1515-20, #328); artistically it is one of the most interesting maps of the 16th century. The landmass above the West Indies is called *the Land of Cuba*; Japan (*Zipangri*) is close to the west coast; an isthmus in Central America opens a sea passage to the South Sea. It first appeared in a book of travels, by Simon Grynaeus and John Huttich, *Novus Orbis*, 1532. This reproduction is taken from the 1555 edition of the same work, in which there are minor changes in the type-printed insertions of the map.

Location: University Library, Munich, 2•Inc.452,1 (third edition)

British Library, London, BL 985.h.17

Size: 54.5 x 35.5 cm (21 x 14 inches)

References:

*Cumming, W.P., R.A. Skelton, D.B. Quinn, *The Discovery of North America*, pp. 63-65.

Harrisse, H., *The Discovery of North America*, pp. 586-588, no. 198.

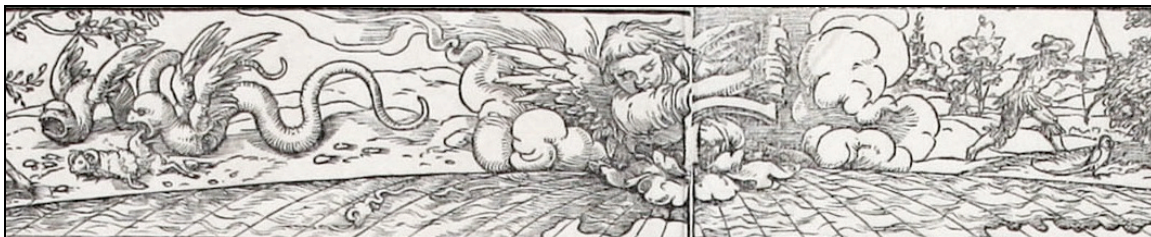
*Nordenskiöld, A.E., *Facsimile Atlas*, pp. 105-106, Plate XLII.

*Shirley, R.W., *The Mapping of the World*, pp. 74-75; no. 67, Plate 61.

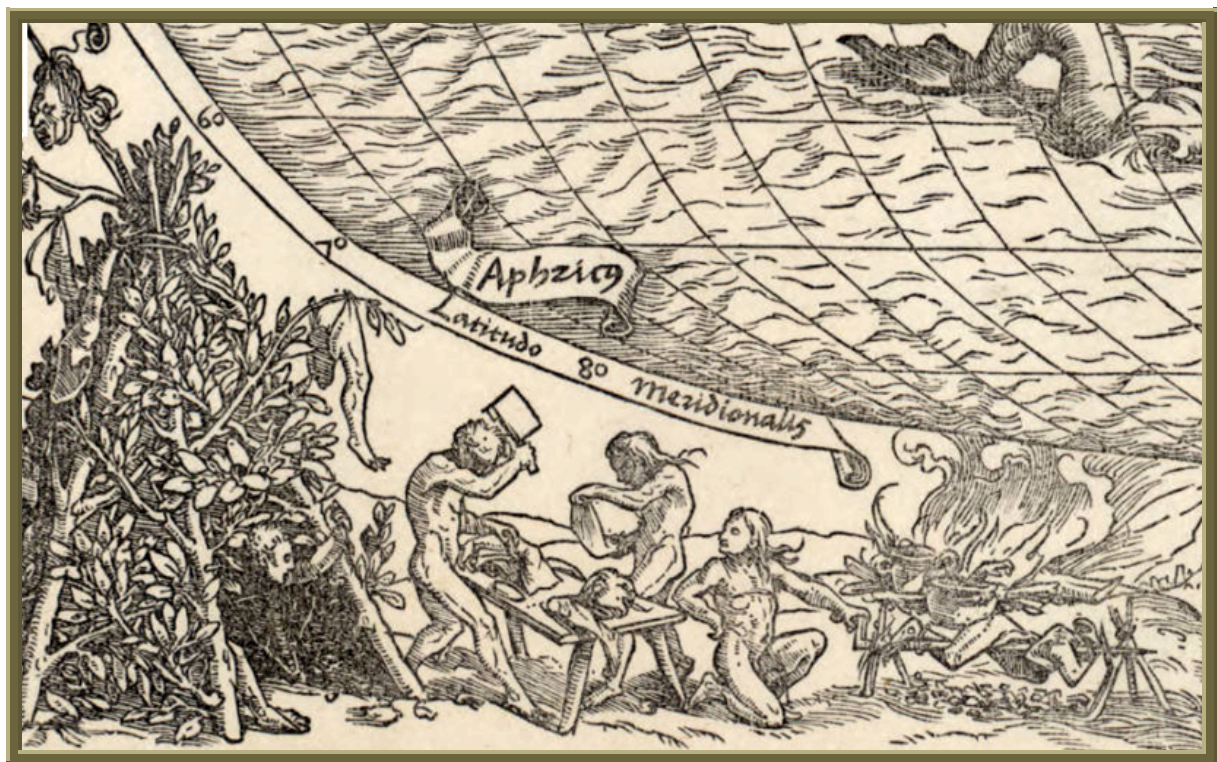
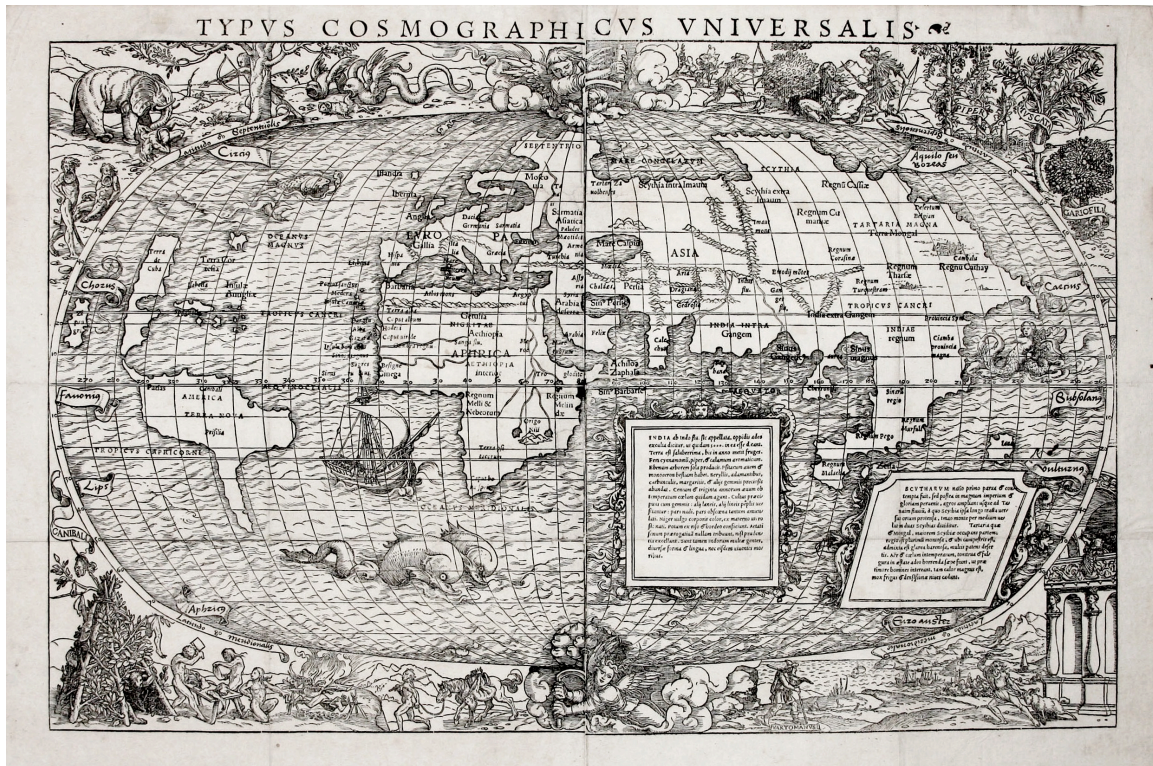
*Suarez, T., *Shedding the Veil*, #21, pp.75-78.

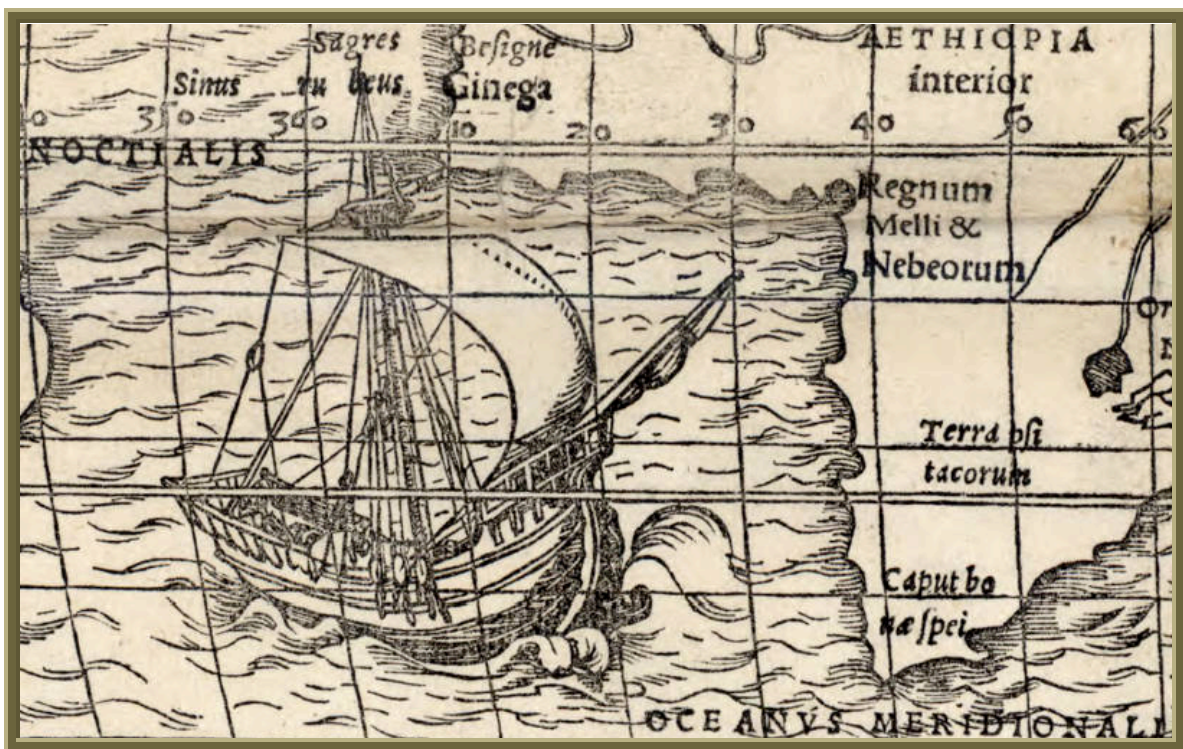
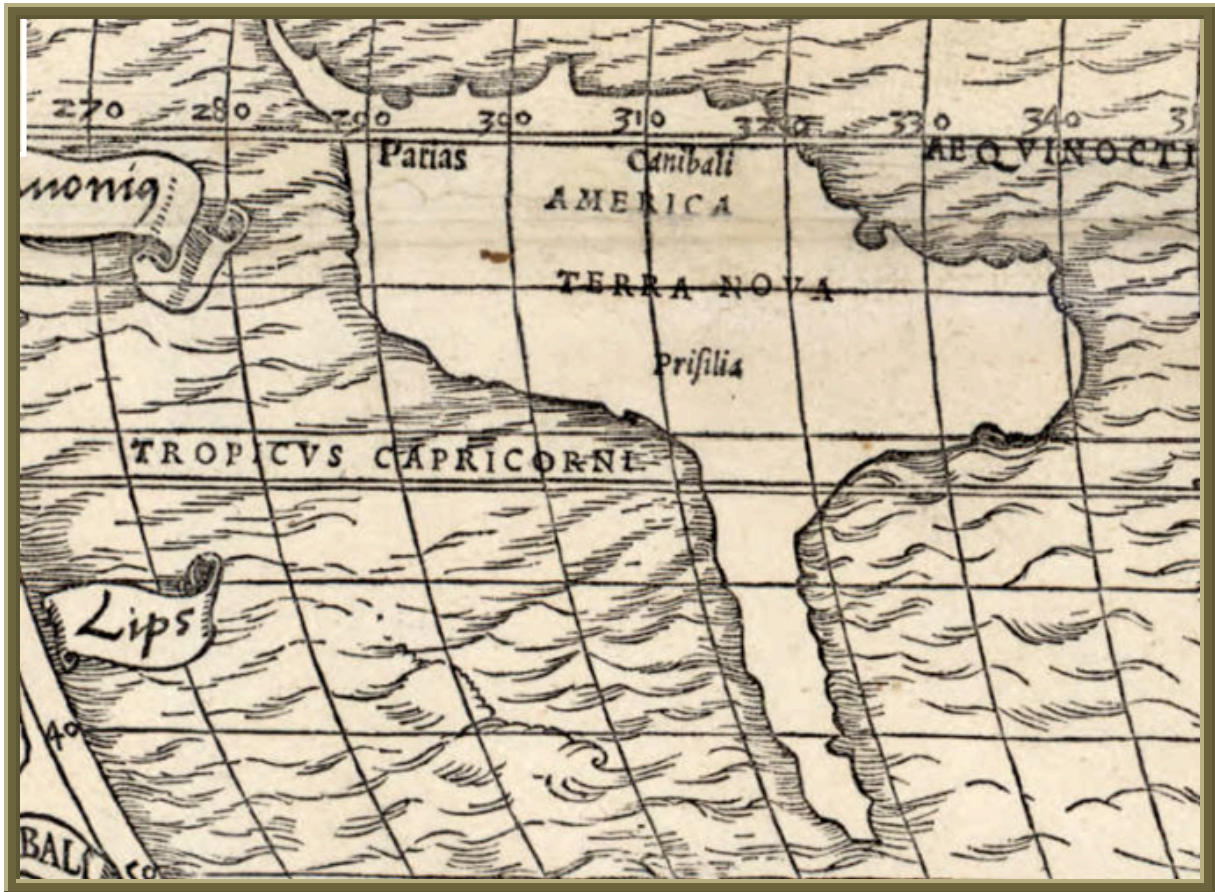
*Wolff, H., *America, Early Maps of the New World*, pp. 70-71, cat. 86.

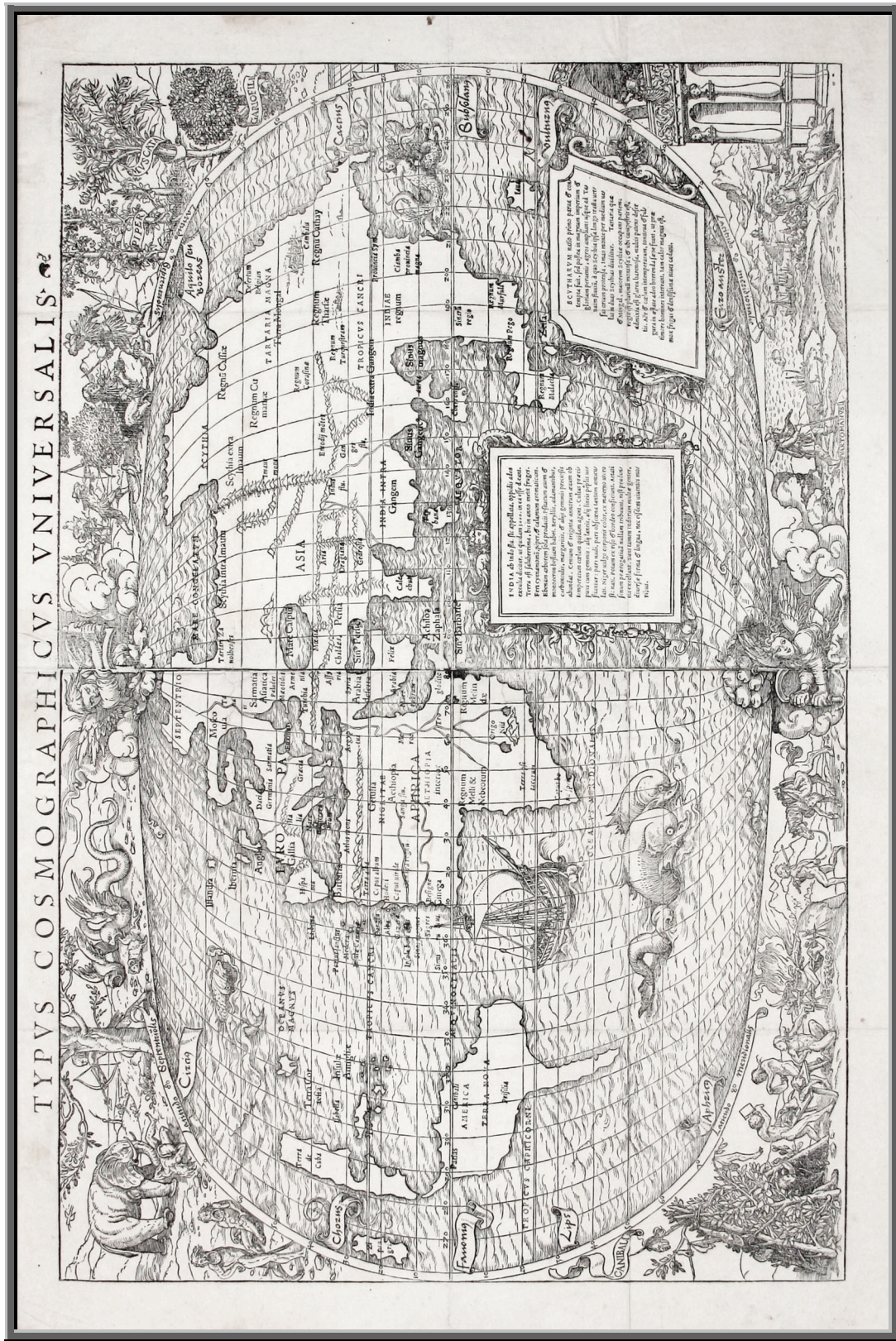
*illustrated













The son of a peasant, Simon Grynaeus (1493-1541) managed to work his way up the social ladder thanks to his intelligence, which won him a place at the University of Vienna, where he distinguished himself as a Classicist. He later taught in Hungary, Germany and Switzerland, and travelled to England with a letter of commendation from Erasmus, which granted him access to all the greatest libraries. In 1532 he published the first general history of travels, the '*Novus orbis regionum ac insularum vereribus incognitarum*' with Johann Huttich. It contained a world map by Sebastian Münster with decorations attributed to Holbein.

This portrait appeared in Jacob Verheiden's '*Praesantium Theologorum Effigies*' (1602), a collection of portraits of some of the most important theological figures, and like the majority, was made by Hendrik Hondius. It shows the upper half of Grynaeus wearing simple layered garments, and is accompanied by four lines of Latin verse praising his achievements; "Te quicumque, Simon Grinaee, aspexit, amavit, / Splenduit in vultu grata tanta tuo / Te quicumque, Simon Grinaee, audiuit, amavit: / Facundo fluxit tantus ab ore lepos · [Whoever saw you, Simon Grynaeus, loved you; such grace shone in your face. Whoever heard you, Simon Grymeus, loved you: such wit flowed from your eloquent mouth].