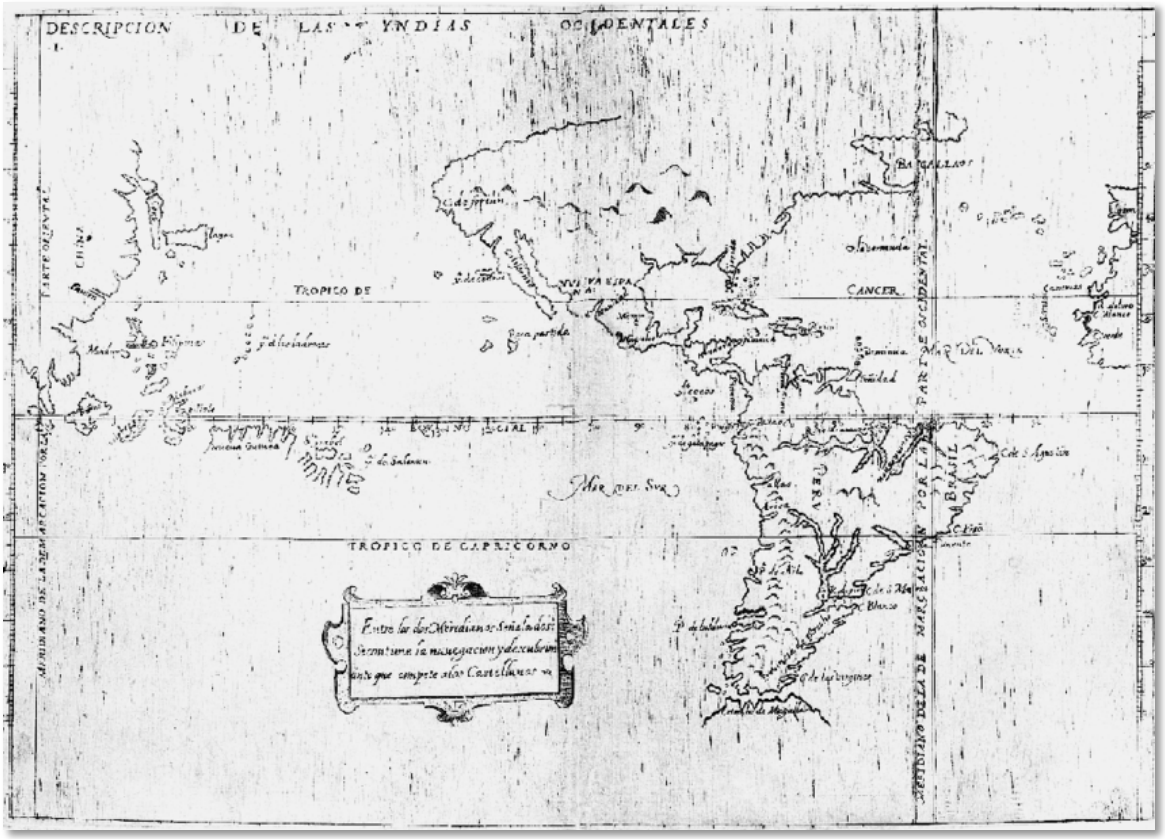


Manuscript map of Juan Lopez de Velasco (ca. 1580), housed at the John Carter Brown Library

The cartography of the official chronicler-cosmographer Juan López de Velasco, particularly his *Descripción de las Yndias occidentales* (1575), a map depicting the world from Spain and West Africa in the east to Southeast Asia in the West. Originally produced in manuscript as part of López de Velasco's *Geografia y descripción universal de las Indias* (1574), a work that remained unpublished until 1894, the map made it into print as part of Antonio de Herrera's *Descripción de las Indias*, the companion to his massive *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las Islas de tierra firme del mar oceano* (1601), known as the *Décadas*. There it appeared along with a series of accompanying maps depicting the various regions of the Spanish Indies that had also been drawn by López de Velasco as part of his 1574 work. These maps are much less detailed and attractive than maps of the Americas produced elsewhere in Europe at this time, but they should not therefore be discounted as inconsequential. Much translated and widely respected, Herrera's history circulated throughout Europe, along with López de Velasco's maps. Its prominence endured into the 18th century, when Andrés González de Barcia brought out new editions of early Spanish Americana, including Herrera's *Décadas*, complete with the maps. It might be no exaggeration, then, to say that these maps were the closest thing Spain ever had to an official, public cartography of its overseas possessions, and may very well have become the best-known maps of the Indies available during the early modern period from a confirmed Spanish source.

Like the Seville planispheres, López de Velasco's map of the Indies swims against the stream of that very long geographical tradition that had placed the Indies in the East. Like Ribeiro and his contemporaries in the Casa de la Contratación, López de Velasco tries to reorient the geographical imagination by making a new West, a Castilian

West, out of some of the very places that defined what was meant by the East, the Orient, including the Spice Islands, China, and Japan. But López de Velasco is much more explicit about this than any of the cosmographers of the 1520s had been. For one, he does not depict the Castilian hemisphere as part of a world map. Instead, he crops the rest of the world away, and thereby saves his reader from the temptation of thinking that the parts of East and Southeast Asia claimed by Castile could be more naturally or convincingly depicted as the easternmost edge of Asia, rather than as the western shores of a trans-Pacific Castilian hemisphere. He then reinforces this gesture by giving prominent treatment to the line of demarcation and the anti-meridian, the firm boundaries that enclose the Indies, and by giving one of the regional maps a highly polemical name. North America becomes *las Indias del Norte*, South America, *las Indias del Mediodıa*, and the parts of Asia and the Pacific inside the demarcation become *las Indias del Poniente*, the ''Indies of the West.'' Once again, the ''East Indies'' of the geographical tradition became the Castilian West.

His maps do other things to try to make this gesture stick, but those thingsare best understood by comparing three different versions of the map. The first, a watercolor manuscript in the collection of the John Carter Brown Library, clearly indicates López de Velasco's interest in depicting the Pacific Ocean as a lively waterway domesticated by commercial activity. This map was drawn as part of a 1575 *précis* of his *Geografıa y descripción de las Indias* entitled *Demarcacion y diuision de las Yndias*. Whereas Ribeiro's map *(#346)* fills the Pacific with the image of a navigational instrument that meant to assure the reader that its broad expanse could indeed be crossed, this map actually includes the routes of the trans-Pacific galleon trade and of significant voyages of exploration. The lines echo similar ones in the Atlantic, absorbing the Pacific into a network of maritime trade routes that tie the Philippines to the Americas, and the Americas to Spain. It also depicts the Pacific Ocean as a rather crowded, almost enclosed space. The coastline of New Guinea reaches across the Pacific, near the equator, from the Moluccas to the Solomon Islands, which appear at about two-thirds of the total distance from the Moluccas to South America. There the line tracing Alvaro de Mendaña's route from Peru to the Solomons picks up where the coastlines left off, leading the eye the rest of the way to the Americas.

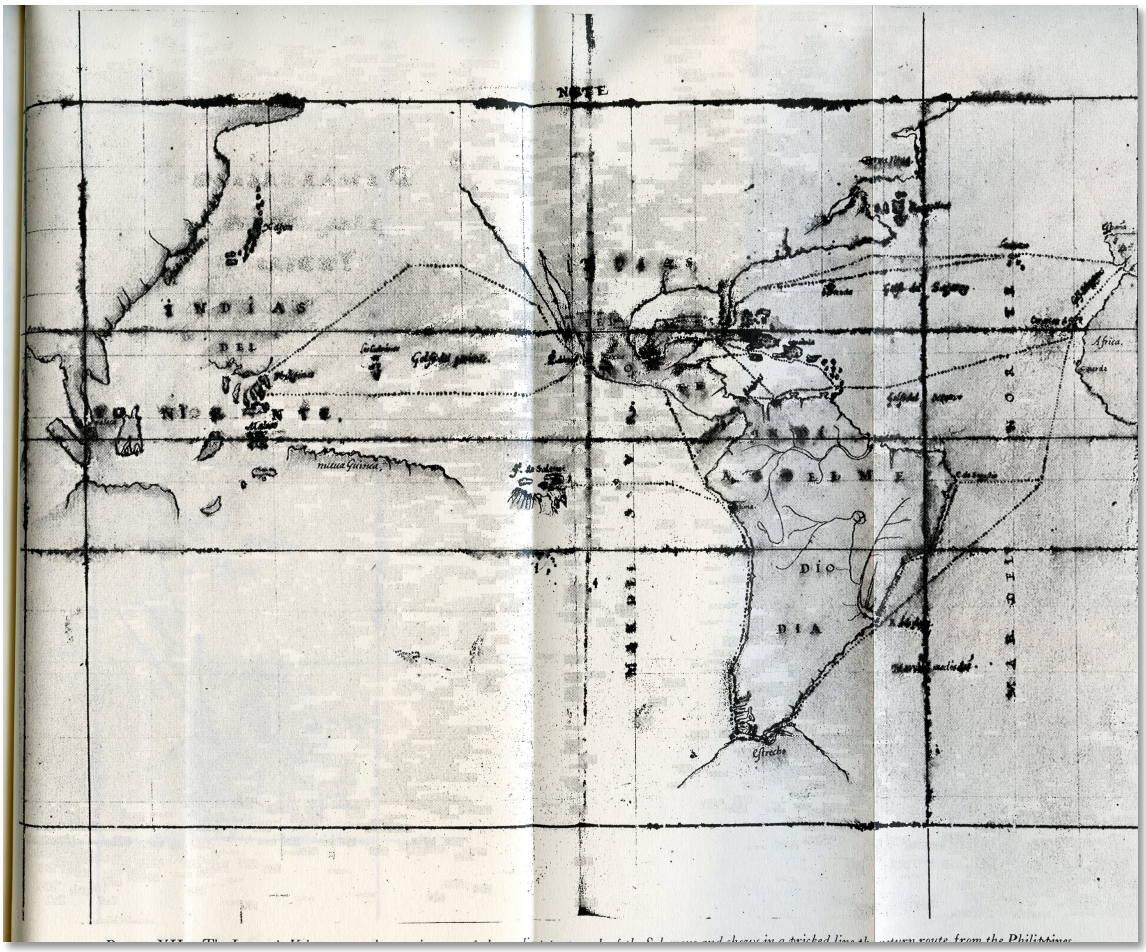
The printed versions of the map eliminate the lines marking the sailing routes, and increase the distance from the Solomon Islands to the Pacific Coast of South America, but they nevertheless maintain the impression that the Pacific is not all that broad, and that it can be crossed with relative ease. Graced by a scale of longitude that is absent from the manuscript version, the map that appeared in print with Herrera's *Descripción* (1601) tells us that one hundred ten degrees of longitude separate modern Ecuador from the Moluccas, a full twenty-four degrees fewer than Ribeiro.

The map acquires a title cartouche that fills some of the embarrassing emptiness of the South Pacific, and leaves no doubt about the political claim the map makes: *Entre los dos Meridianos Señalados se contiene la navegación y descubrimiento que compete a los Castellanos* [Between the two Marked Meridians is contained the navigation and discovery that belongs to the Castilians]. And even though the sailing routes are gone, the map nevertheless provides us with a subtle visual itinerary along which to navigate our own way across the Pacific Ocean. Once again, a line of islands and partial coastlines extends eastward from the *Malucas*, the Spice Islands, ending in the Solomon Islands almost at the center of the ocean. There, the eye picks up the prominent equatorial line, or the words *Tropico de Capricornio* and *Mar del Sur* to arrive at the Galapagos Islands

and South America. Perhaps the numerical scale of longitude draws our attention, leading us to count our way down across the Pacific. The words *Mar del Sur*, which are oriented north-south on the manuscript map, appear oriented east-west on the printed version. As Padón says, the equator itself along with the tropics brace the space together like barrel staves, fighting centrifugal pressures that would bring Asia and America entirely apart.

The version of the map printed with González de Barcia's 1726 edition, finally, faithfully reproduces the 17th century version of the map, but not without adding a few telling details. The toponym *Mar del Sur* acquires decorative curlicues that better enable it to bridge the visual gap between the Solomon Islands and South America. The cartouche acquires a more elaborate frame, better enabling it to fill the emptiness of the South Pacific, and it finds an ally in a brand new zonal diagram added to its left. Finally, and most subtly, a new toponym, *Tierra Austral* is added to the map, just south of New Guinea. These two words suggest that the cartouche and the diagram are not fig leaves for the emptiness of the ocean, but place-keepers for a new, as yet undiscovered continent that also belongs within the Castilian Indies, and that promises to both complement and fill out the fragmentary landmasses that make up the *Indias del Poniente*, as well as balance out the massive New World that dominates the Castilian hemisphere.

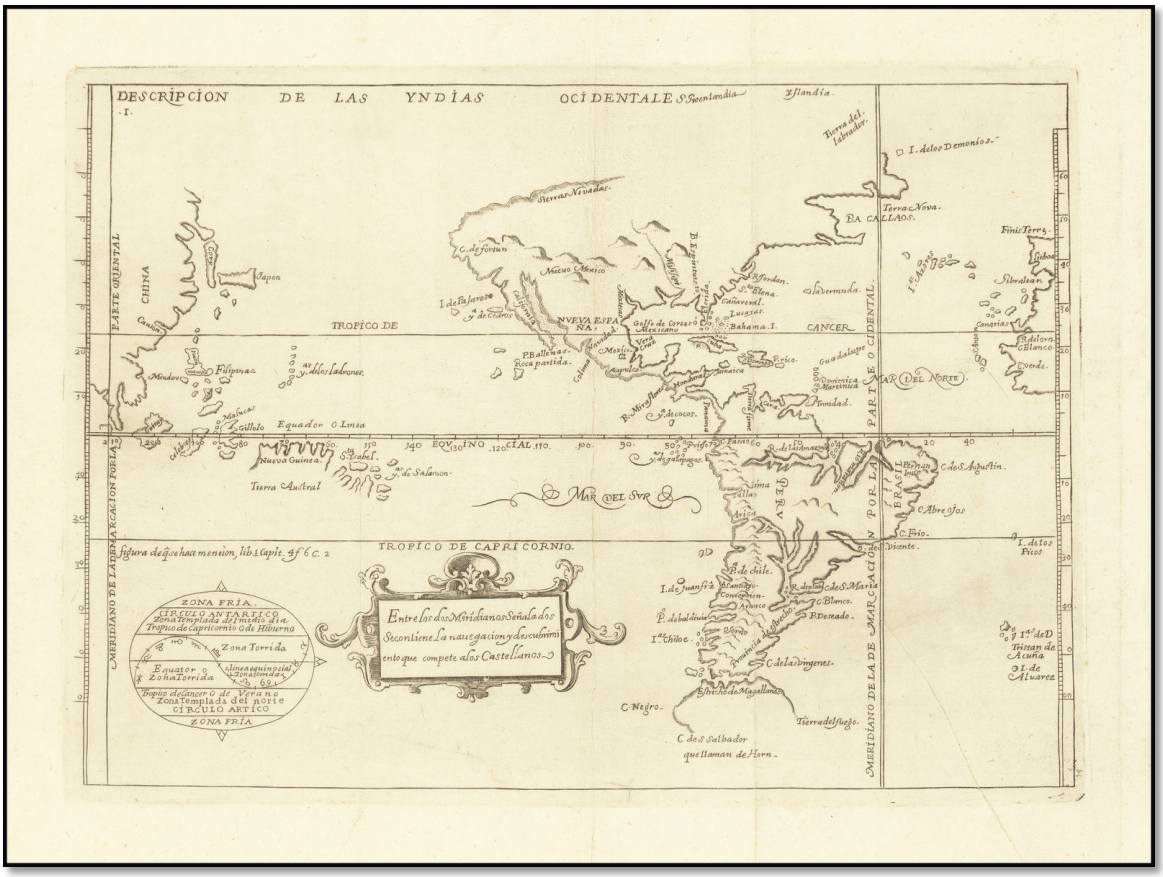
López de Velasco's map testifies to the expansive self-confidence that could be found in Spain - that dry, barren, and impoverished land that had transformed itself into the greatest power on earth. His cartography shows how far the European imagination had come since it began to map the world with tools derived from Ptolemy's *Geography* and to travel through it with ship, chart, and compass. To draw a map more or less centered on the Pacific was to depart dramatically and decisively from the old notion of an *orbis terrarum* consisting of a tripartite disk of earth surrounded by a menacing ocean. It was to depart even from the cartographic experiments of the early 16th century, which added a New World to the existing continents, and thereby rendered the *orbis terrarum* coextensive with the terraqueous globe.



López de Velasco's map of the Spanish world, ca. 1575. This is the first map in an atlas showing the Spanish world in the 1570's. John Carter Brown Library.

Give attention to a curious and important factor in Pacific history introduced by the presence upon this map of the pricked lines showing the Mexico-Philippines route and return. Mariners had found it relatively easy on the outward voyage from Mexico or Peru to the Moluccas or the Philippines. The winds were favorable and the currents not adverse to their progress. The voyage home was another matter, for a steady northeast wind made it difficult for ships to take a direct easterly course. As early as 1528 this difficulty had been discovered by Alvaro de Saavedra Ceron, who had been sent to the Moluccas from Mexico to aid Loaysa in his attempt to possess Spain of those islands. Returning to Mexico Saavedra set a due easterly course for America, but after determined efforts to maintain it was compelled to return to the Moluccas. In his voyage eastward, however, Saavedra spent some time upon the coast of New Guinea, making the second discovery of the island first touched at by Meneses in 1526. In all there are recorded some five failures of Spanish vessels to reach Mexico from the Moluccas between 1528 and 1565. As the result of those failures it seems gradually to have become clear that the correct procedure might be to sail far enough north to escape the adverse conditions, and to meet the northwest winds prevailing in the forties. Two vessels returning separately from the Philippine Islands at the time of Legaspi's taking possession in 1565 followed this course, and, reaching Mexico in

safety, established the route followed thereafter for a long period. Man's knowledge of the Pacific was added to importantly by this discovery of the return route to Mexico. The indication of that route upon the universal map of the Indies in the Velasco manuscript is an early appearance of it upon a map, probably one of the earliest if we disregard the official maps placed in the hands of pilots in the government service. Other routes marked upon the map show the way followed by ships from Spain to Mexico and the West Indies, to and through the Straits of Magellan, northward to Lima and Mexico, and westward from Lima to the Solomons. At the time of composition of this map, however, the course from Lima to the Solomons had been sailed only once and then by Alvaro de Mendafia when he made his discovery of the islands in 1568. More than two hundred years were to pass before that route or any other leading to the group was again to be followed successfully.



1726 edition of Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas' general map of America, the Pacific Ocean and the Eastern part of Asia, from his Descripción de las Indias Ocidentales, first published as part of his important Historia general in Madrid in 1601.

Herrera's general map is derived from the manuscript map of Juan López de Velasco (ca. 1580), housed at the John Carter Brown Library. Originally suppressed as part of Spain's secretive approach to geographic knowledge, Velasco's manuscript map was latter printed with official approval in Herrera's landmark work as part of an opening of publication protocols under Spain's King Philip III.

The map illustrates the *Line of Demarcation* and the anti-meridian between the Spanish and Portuguese colonial claims (running through Brazil in South America and through China and the Malay Peninsula in Asia respectively). The islands of Maritime Southeast Asia are shifted tens of degrees to the east, placing them (not surprisingly) under Spanish control. These include the Moluccas, so important for their spices and under Portuguese control, as well as the Philippines, which were claimed and occupied by Spain.

Farther east are the *Ladrones*, or the Marianas as they are today known. New Guinea remains only partially and roughly outlined, with an open coastline toward the south. The Solomons, which had been contacted but not accurately charted by the Mendaña expedition of 1567-9, are near New Guinea. They also have open southern coastlines.

Korea is shown as an island, a common geographical hypothesis at this time. Japan is shown as a single large horizontal island with several tiny attendant islands; this horizontal orientation was also quite common in European maps well into the 17th century. In China, the only toponym is Canton, which was already an important trade port for Europeans.

The Americas contain many more place names and features, including the Andes and a few mountains scattered in the North American West. The Sierra Nevada Mountains act as a northern border of North America. California is named, as are the *Isle of Cedro* and *C. de Fortun*. Florida is named to the east, as is the Mississippi River. Mexico City is marked with a small building symbol, the only settlement to have this designation. To the south, the Straits of Magellan separate the continent from a large and unfinished island; Tierra del Fuego is suggestively part of a larger southern continent here, although the conservative cosmographer does not exaggerate what is known.

There is no sign of Australia, as Europeans had not yet contacted its shores when the map was originally drawn ca. 1580. There is a decorative cartouche in the South Seas with the title, "Between the two meridians indicated here are contained the navigation and discoveries for which the Spanish competed." Next to this is a diagram showing climactic zones.

The most important features on this map are the inclusion of the two meridians that supposedly enclosed the Spanish Empire. In the late-15th century, Portugal and Spain were the leading imperial powers who pioneered European expansion to the surrounding continents. They were especially interested in the East Indies and, of course, in the Americas.

This brought Spain and Portugal into conflict. In May of 1493, Pope Alexander VI, who was Spanish by birth, issued a papal bull that granted all land one hundred leagues west and south of the Azores to Spain. Portugal strenuously objected, not least because they had already encountered land in what is today Brazil.

To address Portuguese claims, Spain signed the *Treaty of Tordesillas* with their neighbor. This created a new line of demarcation 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, which were Portuguese. This granted Spain the majority of the Americas, but allowed for Portugal to claim the eastern thrust of Brazil. They were also allowed to claim land to the east, as they had already made significant strides in navigating around the coasts of Africa.

However, the line of demarcation was not enshrined in longitude and was therefore open to a wide degree of interpretation. Additionally, the line applied principally to the western hemisphere; it extended from pole to pole, not around the

world. Particularly after Magellan's circumnavigation, although Magellan himself died in the Philippines, it became clear to the Iberian powers that they would have to revisit demarcation yet again.

By the 1520s, the main prize was the Spice Islands, or the Moluccas. Both countries laid claim to this archipelago. Charles V of Spain, however, needed money to finance his European wars. He married Isabella of Portugal in 1526. In 1529, he signed the *Treaty of Zaragoza*, which established an anti-meridian to the line of demarcation decided by the *Treaty of Tordesillas*. Portugal paid Spain 350,000 ducats for the islands and the anti-meridian was set seventeen degrees east of them.

However, these treaties did not settle the matter. By the *Treaty of Zaragoza*, the Philippines were within the Portuguese sphere, but these were occupied by the Spanish. Additionally, there was continued uncertainty and debate over the precise location of the original line of demarcation due to differences in longitude calculations. These continuing debates are reflected in this map, which locates the islands far to the east to benefit Spain.

Juan Lopez de Velasco was a humanist who worked for the Spanish Crown. In 1571, he was appointed *cosmógrafo-cronista* of the *Consejo de Indias.* Earlier in his career as a secretary to the *Consejo*, Lopez de Velasco had begun compiling geographic descriptions of the colonies that had been sent to Spain as part of audits. A requirement of his new post was to write a general and natural history of the Spanish empire, while also reviewing and censoring other extant histories.

As mentioned above Velasco finished his main task in 1574 and the work was titled *Geografía y descripción universal de las Indias.* This nearly 700-page tome, however, remained in manuscript until the late 19th century. It was considered to contain highly valuable knowledge about the location and description of Spanish holdings, secrets that were tightly guarded by the officials and savants of the Council of the Indies (the *Consejo*) and the *Casa de Contratación* (the cartographic repository and dispensary).

In his *Geografía y descripción universal*, Velasco explains how hard it is to discuss the boundary demarcating Spanish and Portuguese imperial possessions. This is because the inland and precise coordinates of the coastline of Brazil was little known, and the precise longitude of the Moluccas and other islands was subject to debate. Velasco places Maritime Southeast Asia too far east by nearly forty degrees. While informed by several sources, this is also a political calculation on Velasco's part; it grants even more land and resources to Spain, his employer and country of origin.

To accompany his work, Velasco made several maps and charts, most likely including a version of the manuscript map upon which this printed version is based, a map of the entire Spanish empire that was meant as a general reference chart. The other maps included general maps of the North and South American continents, as well as maps of the *audiencias*, or administrative and judicial units, and *gobernaciones*, or subordinated provinces.

Unfortunately, the 23 maps that accompanied the original manuscript have since been lost. We know of them via the critique of the *Geografía y descripción universal* by Juna Bautista Gesio, a fellow cosmographer, and the captions Velasco intended to accompany the maps.

Velasco later wrote a shorter version of the *Geografía y descripción universal* called the *Sumario or the Demarcación y división de las Indias* (ca. 1580). Intended as a primer for new members of the *Consejo de Indias*, two copies of this manuscript survive, one at the

Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid and the other at the John Carter Brown Library in Providence. Many more copies were available in the late 16th century, however, and Velasco wrote several letters expressing his desire to keep the *Sumario* from circulation beyond the King's circle and the Council of the Indies.

The John Carter Brown Library example includes a set of maps; there are 14 reduced maps in all, a sampling of the original 23 mentioned in the *Geografía y descripción universal.* First among these is the *Carta de Marear,* a universal map of the Spanish Empire and the parent manuscript map of the present item.

The universal map of the Indies in the Lopez de Velasco codex portrays the Atlantic, the American continents, and the whole Pacific area as far as generally known at the time of its composition. Of chief interest among its features are these:

- running the eastern *Line of Demarcation* through the tip of the Malay Peninsula as drawn by Spain at the Congress of Badajoz in 1524, thus embracing within her hemisphere the Moluccas and the Philippines, Java, Borneo, part of Sumatra, Japan, and part of China;
- the portrayal of the Solomon Islands, discovered in 1568 by Alvaro de Mendafia;
- dotted-lines showing the routes, to and fro, between Acapulco in Mexico and the Philippines.

The maps became well known through the work of Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas. Herrera was the chronicler (historian) of the Council of the Indies from 1596. The position of cosmographer (geographer) had been split from that of chronicler since Velasco held the position. Herrera's *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano,* better known as the *Décadas* (Madrid, 1601-1615), was the official history of the Spanish conquest and possession of its American and Pacific holdings. Working under Philip III, Herrera and his fellow cosmographers were encouraged to publish their projects, in order to trumpet the achievements and claims of the Spanish Empire.

Herrera was even allowed to include maps, converting Velasco's manuscripts into printed schematic maps. They are part of the geographical introduction to the work, called the *Descripción de las Indias Ocidentales*. As with Velasco, they were meant to compliment the wider text, not to act as stand-alone or mathematically precise guides; indeed, they are not drawn to any scale. The *Décadas* were popular and reprinted several times; the map was re-issued with these later editions and became a well-known visual of the Spanish Empire.

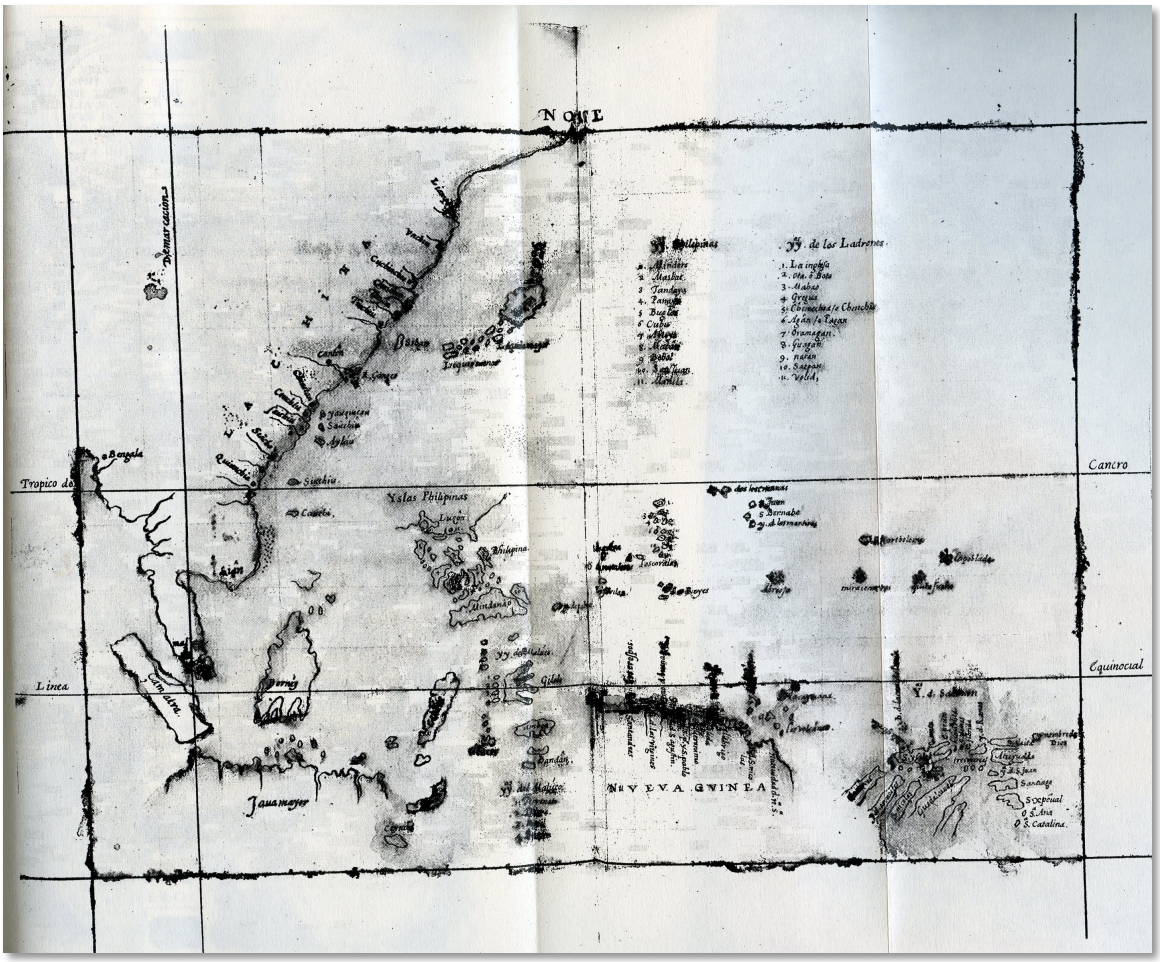
The known plates of the map are as follows:

- 1601 Herrera, text in South Pacific within cartouche, size 225 x 320 mm.
- 1622 Herrera, text in South Pacific without cartouche, size 220 x 315 mm.
- 1623 De Bry, two sections of text in both German and Latin in the South Pacific, size 175 x 300 mm.
- 1623, Hulsius, reduced in size, size 130 x 185 mm.
- 1723, Torquemada, diagram of climatic zones lower left & signature added below lower right corner, size 225 x 320 mm.
- 1726 Rodriguez, signature removed & shading added in the Gulf of California, size 240 x 300 mm.

Ricardo Padrón argues that we should not exaggerate the influence of López de Velasco's attempt to remap the Indies, and with them, the world. We must remember

that his map represents an ideological fantasy. Yes, the last quarter of the 16th century did see the establishment of a trans-Pacific trade route that linked the economy of the South China Sea to that of the Americas and Europe. Yes, the establishment of the Spanish Philippines did fuel aspirations to make the Castilian Pacific Rim a reality by evangelizing and even conquering the Asian nations on its western edge. But we cannot forget the historical realities about which the map remains silent. Spain's presence in the Philippines was problematic. Looking back on the colonial Philippines from a 20th century perspective, Katharine Bjork argues that they are better understood as a periphery of the Chinese world system rather than of an emerging European world system, one which remained ''Spanish'' only because of the commercial opportunities it presented for Mexican (not Peninsular Spanish) elites. From this point of view, the Pacific Rim that López de Velasco depicts, and depicts as ''Castilian,'' was little more than a pipe dream. Others recognized that the colony was a drain on royal revenues, and that it produced no wealth of its own in the form of precious metals or other commodities. There were repeated calls to abandon it, or to offer it to Portugal in exchange for Brazil.

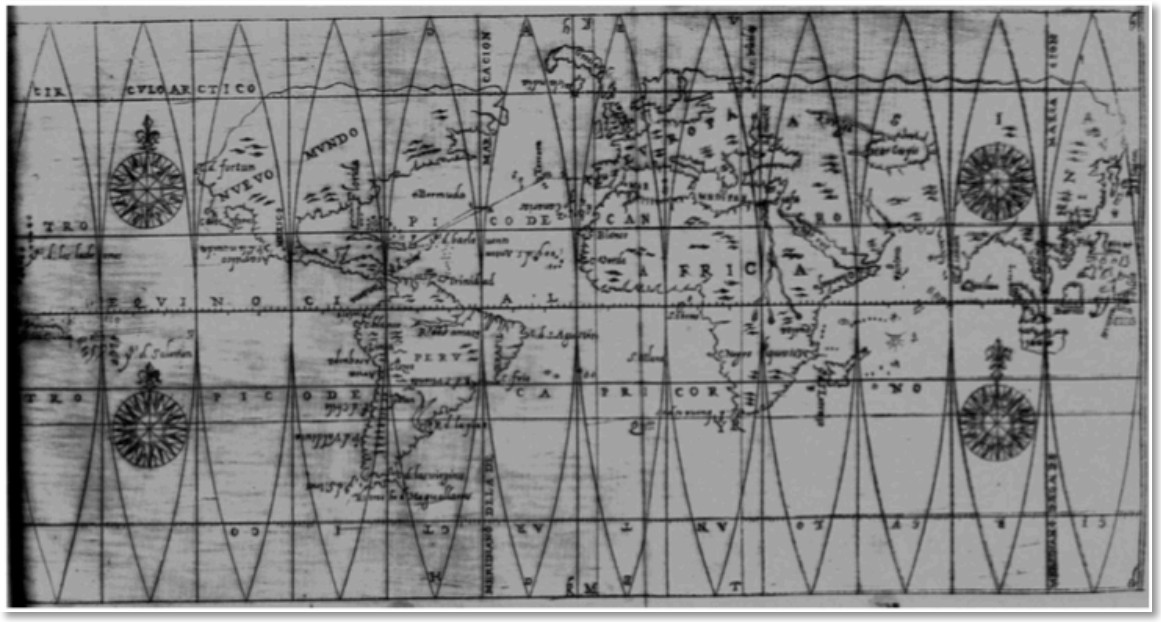
Nor does López de Velasco's ideological fantasy seem to have convinced other prominent mapmakers. Whatever debts, if any, Abraham Ortelius's 1589 map *Maris Pacifici* may have had to López de Velasco's cartography, or some similar Spanish map, we must remember that the *Maris Pacifici* works to de-Castilianize the Pacific Ocean. In fact, even one of López de Velasco's successors in the service of the Crown was to produce a map that illustrated both the need for the kind of project López de Velasco had attempted, and the difficulty of making it stick. In a 1606 treatise on hydrography and navigation, the cosmographer of the Indies Andrés Garcıa de Céspedes includes a map of the world meant to illustrate certain technical aspects of cartographic projections. It prominently depicts the line of demarcation and the anti-meridian, but it attaches the *Indias del Poniente* to the Asian landmass, and allows them to appear on the right-hand, eastern edge of the map image, divorced from the New World. Clearly, this map could never be excised from the technical setting in which it appears to do the sort of propagandistic work expected of the López de Velasco map. Its portrayal of Castile's territorial claims is accurate but embarrassing. The map clearly indicates the need for an alternative of the kind that the Seville cosmographers developed and López de Velasco perfected, but it also attests to the failure of that alternative to penetrate very deeply into the imaginations of even those whose careers were committed to advancing Spain's interwoven scientific, commercial, and political endeavors. Even more striking, perhaps, is the map that appears on the title page of a Latin translation of Herrera's *Descripción*, one that includes López de Velasco's maps. The map identifies the *Indiae occidentalis* of Herrera's title exclusively with the New World, divorcing it from that fragile Pacific Rim that López de Velasco had attempted to map. In the end, the Castilian attempt to map the Indies by remapping the East must be considered a failure. But it is a fascinating failure, one that provides a glimpse into a moment when the geographical imagination was able to defy tradition, not only to imagine a new world, but to imagine the world anew.



The Lopez de Valasco map of the East Indies shows the Solomon Islands in detail and gives place names to the northern coast of New Guinea

This map in the Lopez de Velasco manuscript entitled *Descripcion de las Y ndias del Poniente* provides a wealth of detail not found in the universal map of the Indies. It shows the Philippines in some fullness, locates Japan with unusual accuracy for the times, outlines the northern coast of New Guinea, runs the *Line of Demarcation* through the tip of the Malay Peninsula, and gives for the first time on any map I have seen a relatively full delineation of the Solomons, the islands newly discovered by Mendafia. Here, for example, the island of Guadalcanal is named many years before the first printed appearance of the Solomons upon the Ortelius world map of 1587. In short, the two maps of the Velasco manuscript which we have been considering, even though they leave unsettled the question of a northern boundary of the Pacific, may be thought of as bringing to an end one era in the cartographical history of that ocean, for in them its eastern and western bounds are pretty well established. Its width, furthermore, is displayed with some degree of understanding, though with considerable inexactness; the position of northern New Guinea is laid down; and the great empty spaces of the southeastern Pacific are partly filled with the island groups forming the archipelagoes that we call Malaysia and Melanesia. Most of the increase of knowledge between the time of Magellan and the date of the making of these maps had occurred as the result of

Spain's determination to get her share of the cloves of the Moluccas and the cinnamon and gold of the Philippines. This was Spain's heyday in Pacific exploration.



World map from Andrés Garcıa de Céspedes, Regimiento de navegacion (Madrid, 1606). Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia

Location: The John Carter Brown Library in a codex of the period 1575-1580. Four or five other copies of this manuscript are known to exist in Spanish libraries, and a printed publication was made of one of these in 1871.

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