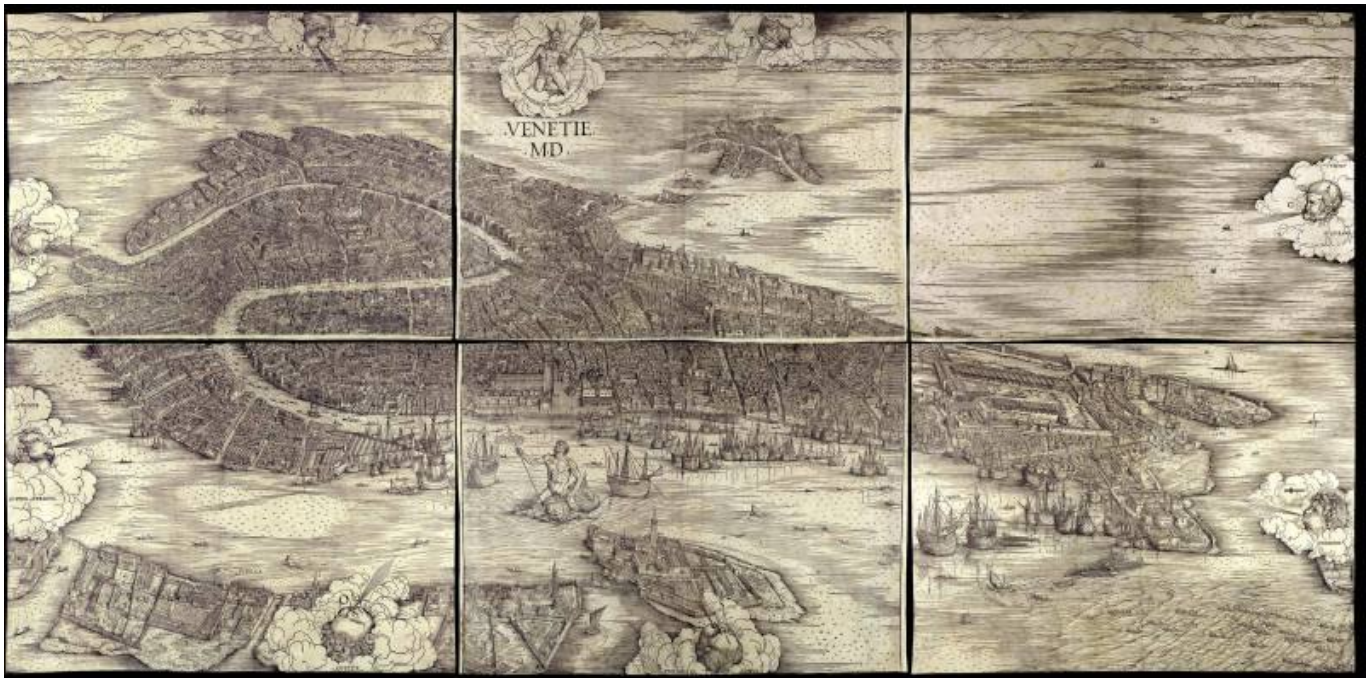


First edition, second state. Woodcut map, printed from twelve blocks on twelve sheets, joined in pairs. A fine impression. Areas of marginal repairs to each sheet, holes in engraved surface of “Iudeca”, and above St Marks in-filled with skilful facsimile of lost printed surface, a few small repaired tears etc., but otherwise in exceptionally fine condition.

“ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR ACHIEVEMENTS OF RENAISSANCE PRINTMAKING”

Venetie M.D.

Author
BARBARI, Jacopo de

Publication date
1500.

Publisher

Publication place
[Venice],

Physical description
First edition, second state. Woodcut map, printed from twelve blocks on twelve sheets, joined in pairs. A fine impression. Areas of marginal repairs to each sheet, holes in engraved surface of “Iudeca”, and above St Marks in-filled with skilful facsimile of lost printed surface, a few small repaired tears etc., but otherwise in exceptionally fine condition.

Dimensions
1340 by 2818mm (52.75 by 110.5 inches).

Notes
De Barbari’s landmark bird’s-eye view of Venice. The map is a masterpiece of cartography, an important historical record of one of the most powerful states on earth at the time, and “one of the

most spectacular achievements of Renaissance printmaking" (British Museum Catalogue).

Geography
The map is an idealized aerial view of Venice from a vantage point somewhere above San Giorgio Maggiore, and shows the city on the day of regatta. Whilst the view may be idealized in its perspective, De Barbari does not shrink from detail and the vast scale of the work allows him to show the Sestiere teaming with ramshackle buildings and signs of day-to-day life. Some 220 "Abbaini" or dormer windows are shown, along with numerous "Altane" – a type of loggia or terrace built over a building for domestic use. In fact, by comparing the map with paintings by artists such as Bellini, Carpaccio and Mansueti art historians have been able to show that many works by those painters depict a real-life Venice and not an ideal one. Frescos can be seen on some of the buildings, such as the coats of arms and lions shown in Piazza San Marco, and on the door of the Arsenal. In the sestiere of San Polo there are statues, including a human figure as high as the window and a character on a horse. One topical element of the scene is the temporary flat roof on the great bell tower in St Mark's Square, which was erected after a fire in 1489. The wood blocks were later altered to show restoration work done in 1511-14, thus making first editions of the view rather easy to identify.

People
At first glance, it appears that the only human life visible on the map are those people shown in boats. However, close inspection reveals a population involved in all the activities associated with ship-building, navigation, fishing and rowing. The only two exceptions to this maritime theme appear to be a man wheeling a wheelbarrow in Riva degli Schiavoni, and the rather gruesome image of the former "Secretario di Pregadi", or Senate Secretary, Antonio Landi hanging by his neck in Canal de San Secondo as a warning to anyone else who might be considering revealing the secrets of the state.

Boats
67 boats can be seen on the map. In addition to the familiar gondolas, identifiable by their size and number of occupants, merchant ships of various shapes and sizes can be identified, as well as "Burchi" – boats used to transport goods, and, in the Arsenal, the "Bucintoro", the Doge's ship built in 1462. A regatta between eight boats is shown taking place at the lower right of the image, and, ahead of the main group, a "caorlina" with a pendant; possibly the prize for the winner. Near the regatta can also be seen a "tarana"; a small fishing boat.

The city is surrounded by what appear to be waves, or even birds (!) in diagrammatic form. These small inverted 'v's are, in fact, representations of the debris washed-up on the "arzere" (sand bars) and "paludi" (marshes) that surround the town.

Decoration
In the centre, towards the top of the map and seated on a cloud is the messenger god Mercury. He looks down on Neptune, who is shown with his trident astride a sea monster in the mouth of the Grand Canal. Surrounding the map on all four sides are clouds containing wind heads with all bar the northeast wind as putti. The presence of Mercury, Neptune and the eight main winds symbolize La Serenissima's stature in both commerce and maritime activities.

It was traditional for mapmakers to depict the north wind as an ugly old man. In the present map, however, the north wind is shown as a blinfolded figure, and it is the northeast wind (incorrectly named "Fulturnus" instead of "Vulturnus") that appears as a bearded older figure. The significance of these departures from traditional iconography is unclear, although Pignatti suggests that the northeast wind head may show a portrait of the mapmaker.

Biography

Surprisingly little is known of the life of Jacopo de Barbari (c.1440-c.1514). Estimates of his date of birth vary from 1436-1475, and there is little or no firm evidence as to his place of birth, where he learned his skills, or who was his master. What is known is that he was described as Venetian by his contemporaries, including Albrecht Dürer, Marcantonio Michiel, and Geldenhauer Noviomagus, and that he moved to Nuremberg in 1500 to work for Emperor Maximillian I as a portrait painter and miniaturist. In doing so, de Barbari became the first significant Italian renaissance artist to work in northern Europe.

De Barbari is documented as working in Wittemberg in 1503 for the Great Duke Frederick the Wise of Saxony. In 1504 he met Dürer in Nuremburg and the pair discussed drawing human proportion, although an unpublished draft version of Dürer's own work on the subject reveals that the Dürer thought the Italian was holding back on him:

"…I find no one who has written anything about how to make canon of human proportions except for a man named Jacob, born in Venice and a charming painter. He showed me a man and a woman which he had made according to measure, so that I would now rather see what he meant than behold a new kingdom… Jacobus did not want to show his principles to me clearly, that I saw well". (as quoted in Levinson 'Early Italian Engravings from the National Gallery of Art')

In the same year, de Barbari was paid 254 Florins by the emperor for an unknown work made for Anton Kolb. He then moved to the court of the Elector Joachim I of Brandenburg at some point between the years 1506 and 1508. By March of 1510 he was in the employ of Archduchess Margaret in Brussels and Mechelen. In January 1511 he fell ill and made a will, and, in March, the Archduchess gave him a pension for life on account of his age and weakness. He was dead by 1516, leaving the Archduchess with his stock of 23 engraving plates.

History of publication

A document held by the Archivio di Stato de Venezia, dated 30th October 1500, shows that the German Anton Kolb comissioned the map and was granted copyright and permission to sell copies of the map for the price of three ducats; well beyond the budget of all but the richest Venetians. The map took three years to make and, undoubtedly, many people were involved in its production.

Ernst Hazen, in 1855, was the first art historian to suggest that the map was the work of Jacopo de Barberi. This opinion was supported by Passavan in 1860, and again by Kristeller in 1896. It is now nearly universally acknowledged that De Barbari was the principal artist involved.

De Barbari's often signed his works with a caduceus, the staff of the messenger god Mercury, and, with the towering figure of the Mercury on a cloud above the title, the present map is no exception. Here, however, de Barbari's staff has wings not present on his other works. Balistrieri suggests that de Barbari chose the caduceus to signify that he was the herald of a new art. With his bird's-eye view of Venice this was certainly the case: never before had an engraver tackled a cityscape in such detail and on such a scale. Indeed, de Barbari's view would remain the largest wood engraved map for over a century after its production. Amazingly, the present map is de Barbari's earliest documented work. It is almost impossible to conceive how an artist could receive such a commission without previously having established his credentials, and so it is tempting to conclude that the figure of Mercury heralds a new name or direction for an artist who, having earned his spurs as an apprentice or in a different field, is for the first time given licence to express the full extent of his vision and talent.

Rarity

In their 2009 survey, Balistreri et al were able to trace 12 extant examples of the first edition of the

map, and a further six each of the second, 1514, edition, and the third, later sixteenth century edition. They were not aware of the existence of the present map. The other examples are located as follows:

First edition, 1500.
Hamburg, Boston (Museum of Fine Arts), Cleveland (Museum of Art), London (British Museum), Nuremburg (Germanisches National Museum), Paris (BNF), Venice (Fondazione Scientifica Querini Stampalia), Venice (Museo Correr, 3 examples), Venice (Nuseo Navale), Berlin (Staatlichen Museum).

Second edition, 1514 (?).
London (British Museum), Venice (Biblioteca Marciana), Venice (Museo Correr), Vienna (Albertina), Washington (National Gallery of Art), Los Angeles (University of California).

Third edition, late sixteenth century.
Florence (Private collection), Venice (Museo Correr), Venice (Private collection), Vienna (Albertina), Amsterdam (Rijksprentenkabinet), Austin (University of Texas).

The twelve original woodblocks survive in the Museo Correr.

Bibliography
Balistreri, Emiliano et al., 'Venezia Città Mirabile – Guida alla veduta prospettica di Jacopo de' Barbari', Cierre Edizioni, 2009; Romanello, Giandomenico et al., 'A volo d'uccello Jacopo de' Barbari e le Rappresentazioni di città nell'Europe del Rinascimento', Arsenale editrice, 1999; Levinson, J.A. (ed), 'Early Italian Engravings from the National Gallery of Art', National Gallery of Art, 1973.

Provenance
Provenance

1. André Masséna (1758-1817), 1er duc de Rivoli, 1er prince d'Essling.
André masséna, Duc de Rivoli, Prince d'Essling was a leading French general of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars.

Orphaned at an early age, Masséna enlisted in the Royal Italian regiment in the French service in 1775. At the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, he was a sergeant at Antibes. He soon became a captain in the Revolutionary government's army of Italy at Nice, and in December 1793 he was made general of a division.

He became Napoleon's most trusted lieutenant during the Italian campaign of 1796–97, and won the Battle of Rivoli on 4 January 1797. Napoleon granted him the title of prince d'Essling in January 1810. Three months later Masséna, in poor health, was given command of the French forces that were fighting the British in Portugal. The British commander, Arthur Wellesley, duke of Wellington, defeated him at Buçaco, Port., on 27 September 1810, and at Fuentes de Oñoro, Spain, on 5 May 1811. Masséna was then relieved of his command. He was in Paris in 1815 but took no part in the Hundred Days of Napoleon; instead he supported the restoration of King Louis XVIII to the French throne.

2. François Victor Masséna (1799-1863), 2e duc de Rivoli, 3e prince d'Essling (1821), fils du précédent.
3. Victor Masséna (1836-1910), 3e duc de Rivoli, 5e prince d'Essling, fils du précédent.
4. André Prosper Victor Eugène Napoléon Masséna (1891-1974), 4e duc de Rivoli, 6e prince d'Essling, fils du précédent.

5. Victor André Masséna (b.1950), 5e duc de Rivoli, 7e prince d’Essling, fils du précédent.

Price:

Inventory reference: 1000

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