

Double-page engraved map of the world, with German text on verso, a bit brown, in fine, full, original hand-colour, light toning to paper.

FIRST ISSUE OF THE FIRST COMMERCIALLY AVAILABLE MAP TO SHOW DUTCH DISCOVERIES ALONG THE NORTHERN COASTLINE OF AUSTRALIA

Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Geographica Ac Hydrographica Tabula. Auct: Henri: Hondio.

Author
HONDIUS, Henricus

Publication date
1630, but from 1633.

Publisher
Henricus Hondius,

Publication place
Amsterdam,

Physical description
Double-page engraved map of the world, with German text on verso, a bit brown, in fine, full, original hand-colour, light toning to paper.

Dimensions
383 by 546mm (15 by 21.5 inches).

Notes

Faced with increasing competition from the large cartographic house of Blaeu, Johannes Janssonius and his business partner Henricus Hondius set about revising the Mercator – Hondius atlas, and in particular the world map, which had remained unrevised for thirty-five years long years of exploration and discovery.

A magnificent example of this brand new, double-hemisphere map of the world, published in the 'Gerardi Mercatoris et I. Hondii' atlas from 1633 until 1658. It is the first dated map, "1630", to show Dutch discoveries along the northern coastline of Australia, and therefore, the first commercially available map to show the full extent of Willem Janszoon's voyage in the 'Duyfken'. In 1606, Willem Janszoon, the captain of the 'Duyfken', sailed down the south coast of New Guinea and named a small piece of land "Duyfkens Eylant", sailed across the Torres Strait, down the west coast of Cape York peninsula, as far as the Arukun Wetlands, assuming that it was still part of New Guinea.

Unlike Johannes Janssonius map, 'Indiae Orientalis Nova Descriptio' (1630), which shows only the New Guinea portion of Janszoon's discoveries, the current map includes the area the 'Duyfken' sailed along the west coast of the Cape York peninsula. It also adds the discoveries of Jan Carstensz in command of the 'Pera' during his voyage of 1623, which followed the route of the 'Duyfken', and continued into the Gulf of Carpentaria. However, it omits, probably intentionally, the discoveries of Willem Joosten van Colster, in the 'Arnhem', and Dutch discoveries of the western Australian coastline of 1616 – 1627. Instead Hondius retains the "Beach" of Marco Polo, and only a vague outline for "Terra Australis", still a mythical southern continent.

The map is more often noted for the extravagance of its decoration. The two hemispheres are surrounded by a complex border combining astronomical and physical cycles in order to link the earth in the centre to wider ideas of balance within the cosmos. The sun and moon appear in the cusps between the hemispheres. At the bottom is a representation of the continents of Africa, India and the Americas offering tribute to the enthroned Europe. At the top there is a celestial globe garlanded with fruits and flowers. In each corner are portraits of well-known cartographers: Julius Caesar, Claudius Ptolemy, Jodocus Hondius, and Gerard Mercator. Hondius has pointedly left out his contemporary Abraham Ortelius in favour of Ortelius's competitor Mercator, and his own father who republished Mercator's work.

Next to the portraits are personifications of the four elements shown as classical deities, along with animals at home in those elements. Fire is represented by Apollo driving a sun chariot, holding a phoenix and accompanied by a salamander and a dragon. Air is represented by Selene, surrounded by a pair of cranes and an eagle, and holding a chameleon, who was thought to live on air. Earth is represented by Demeter holding a cornucopia, with the exotic accompaniment of an elephant, camel and lion. Water is shown by Poseidon (or a river god) with a sea serpent and a whale.

The mapmaker
After Jodocus Hondius I's death in 1612, his widow, Jodocus Hondius II and his brother, Henricus Hondius II (1597–1651), continued publishing atlases under his name until 1620. Unfortunately, in 1621 Jodocus Hondius II split with his brother, creating a rival publishing house. Henricus continued his father's business with his brother-in-law, Joannes Janssonius (1588–1664), who had married twenty-four-year-old Elizabeth Hondius in 1612. After 1619, the Atlas was published under the name of Henricus Hondius, Jodocus Hondius's son, but by 1629, the Blaeu family were becoming serious rivals to the publishing partnership of Janssonius and Hondius.

Bibliography
Literature: Clancy, 'The Mapping of Terra Australis', 1995, 6.2; Clancy, 'So Came They South', pages 72-74; Shirley, 'The mapping of the world: early printed world maps, 1472-1700', 336.

Provenance

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