Double-page and folding woodcut map, two closed tears crossing the image extending from the left-hand margin, lower left-hand margin renewed.

ONE OF ONLY A FEW MAPS OF THE PERIOD CREATED FROM FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE

Qvarte Partie dv Monde.

Author
THEVET, Andre

Publication date
1575].

Publisher
L'Huillier,

Publication place
[Paris,

Physical description
Double-page and folding woodcut map, two closed tears crossing the image extending from the left-hand margin, lower left-hand margin renewed.

Dimensions
365 by 480mm (14.25 by 19 inches).

Notes
From the first edition, of the fourth volume of Thevet's 'Cosmographie universelle', 1575, here in a state not recorded by Burden, corresponding to his first state, but without the title above the

neatline, even though there is a wide and untrimmed top margin.

Although the geography of the map is mainly derived from that of Ortelius, Thevet, in his accompanying text, claims to have based his map of America on his own first-hand observations. Thevet did in fact visit America, returning from Brazil in 1555, and the map contains some interesting information not found in other maps of the period. Thevet has added placenames along the northeastern seaboard of North America. The map's depiction of southwest south America is a sort of compromise between maps showing the bulge in Chile, first depicted by Mercator in 1569, and subsequent maps that have corrected it, first by Ortelius in 1570.

"The region in Brazil where France dabbled in trade and prostelytizing is appropriately called 'France Antartique', as dubbed by Villegagnon, who considered himself to be 'King of America'. Here Thevet, long anticipating most mapmakers, introduces the name 'r. Janairo'. Directly inland, Thevet's missionary role in the New World is reflected in his knowledge of various Indian peoples. Most prominent is 'Toupinambaux', the Tupinamba Indians known to us mainly through the adventures of the German adventurer Hans Staden, whom they had held captive shortly before Thevet's second trip. Thevet and Staden appear to have witnessed similar rituals in Tupinamba life; e.g., both offer a similar description of a Tupinamba burial (unless the apparent corroboration is an illusion resulting from plagerism on the part of Thevet)" (Suarez).

In a break from tradition, the great landmass to the south, "Partie de la Terre Antartique Incongneve", teams with life: people, animals and lush vegetation. Thevet fudges the relationship between Terra Australis and New Guinea by placing his explanatory text, addressed to the "amiable reader", within a large strapwork cartouche there.

André Thevet (1516-1590), "was a Franciscan monk who travelled extensively in Europe and made a reputed short journey to South America. Upon his return he records that he sailed along the eastern coast of North America /… The fine map /… relies largely on the Mercator model of 1569, most noticeably with the bulge to the north-west coast of North America. The southern continent, 'Partie de la Terre Antartique Incogneue', is full of descriptions of natives hunting, fishing and socialising. The geography and nomenclature of North America are largely derived from other sources. The quality of this block is very high and it is a shame that it is not more easily found" (Burden 46).

Bibliography

Alden-Landis 575/31; Borba de Moraes II, 859; Nissen ZBI 4110; Ronsil 2906; Sabin 95335; Suarez, Shedding the Veil, 32

Provenance

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