



Engraved map on two sheets joined, some loss lower left corner and lower centre margin, skilfully repaired, minor loss to lower centre skilfully repaired in facsimile, both sheets with watermark of a lamb Paschal with straight standard within a double circle, similar to Briquet 55, not in Woodward.

ONE OF ONLY TWO EXTANT EXAMPLES

Universale descrittione di tutta la terra conosciuta fin qui.

Author

BLANCO, Cristoforo

Publication date

1599

Publisher

Cesare Capranica,

Publication place

Rome,

Physical description

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Dimensions

570 by 830mm. (22.5 by 32.75 inches); (plate) 410 by 720mm (16.25 by 28.25 inches).

Notes

This magnificent map by the French engraver Christoforo Blanco is based on Forlani's fourth map of

the world, printed in collaboration with Carlo Duchetti in 1570 in Venice.

Duchetti's map is very similar to Forlani's third map of the world, although slightly smaller, and with all four corners now devoted to text. Here Blanco has omitted Duchetti's text in the upper left corner.

The work is on an oval projection, showing North and South America with great accuracy, although North America is still shown joined to Asia; the oceans are populated by wonderful sea monsters and many sailing ships. The large southern continent is shown and labelled 'Terra Incognita', and populated with imaginary topographical features.

By 1565, Forlani's maps of northern North America included the label 'Nueva Franza' to recognize the growing French role in exploring what was still a little-known continent. Despite Gastaldi pioneering the idea of separate Asian and American continents with the addition of the Strait of Anian in 1562, Forlani disregards this advance. Many of the eastern coastal features compare well with modern maps; proof that Forlani was skilled at incorporating the latest knowledge about North America's shape from existing charts and explorers' descriptions. Florida and Cuba, for example, are quite accurately positioned.

To the upper right corner is a brief description of how to measure the distance between two places on the map, lower right the duration of the day and the night in different latitudes, and the lower left a list of countries.

Cristoforo Blanco (fl1593-1619) was a French engraver and print publisher, and Cesare Capranica (fl1589-1602) was a print dealer and publisher, both active in Rome. The map does not appear in Blanco's list of plates from 1620

Rodney Shirely in his cartobibliography of world maps, mistakenly categorises the present work as the seventh state of Forlani's third world map (Shirley 115 state 7; Bifulco TAV. 22). Bifulco in his work on sixteenth century Italian maps, corrects the error, by clearly stating that Blanco's work is based on Forlani's fourth world map (Shirley 121; Bifulco TAV. 27).

The map is exceptionally rare. We are unaware of another example appearing on the market, and Bifulco records only one institutional example, held at the BnF.

Bibliography

Bifulco TAV. 33; Pagani, L'inventario dei rami dell'incisore Lorenese Cristoforo Blanco, 1620 (2016); (Shirley wrongly identified as 115 state 7).

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 17534