



Large lithographed wall-map in 12 sheets (each sheet 480 by 650mm).

“THE FOURTH PART OF THE EARTH, WE HAVE DECIDED TO CALL AMERIGE”

Mapa Universal de 1507 (Primero con el nombre de America). Reproduccion reducida y comentarios por Carlos Sanz

Author

WALDSEEMULLER, Martin; and Carlos SANZ

Publication date

1959.

Publisher

Graficas Yagues, S.L. Plaza Conde Barajas,

Publication place

Madrid,

Physical description

Large lithographed wall-map in 12 sheets (each sheet 480 by 650mm).

Dimensions

1440 by 2600mm. (56.75 by 102.25 inches).

Notes

A faithful full-sized facsimile of Waldseemuller's iconic 1507 woodcut map: "Universalis Cosmographia Secundum Ptholomaei Traditionem et Americi Vespuccii Aliorumque Lustrationes", the only known example of which is now on display at the Library of Congress.

Waldseemüller's map is the first to name the separate continent of the New World "America", and the first map, printed or manuscript, to depict clearly a separate Western Hemisphere and a separate Pacific ocean. Until the printing of this map the world was understood to consist of only three parts: Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Martin Waldseemüller (1470-1521) was a German scholar and cartographer. He studied under Gregor Reisch at the University of Freiburg, and then moved to Basel in the late 1490s, where he met the printer Johannes Amerbach. In 1506 he moved to Saint-Dié in Lorraine, where Duke René II had established a humanist academy, the *Gymnasium Vosagense*. There he read about Amerigo Vespucci's voyage to the Americas, and Portuguese accounts of circumnavigating Africa. Together they proved that the Indian Ocean was not landlocked. He and his colleagues decided to create a map which compared Vespucci's geographical information with Ptolemy's, along with an explanation of why they had deviated from Ptolemy's precepts.

This work, '*Cosmographia introductio*', was published in 1507. It contains the first printed instance of the name 'America' being applied to the discoveries over the Atlantic: "The fourth part of the earth, we have decided to call Amerige, the land of Amerigo we might even say, or America because it was discovered by Amerigo". The book was accompanied by a set of small woodcut map gores, the first known printed gores for a terrestrial globe ever made, which showed a landmass meant to represent South America labelled as 'America'. The globe gores were a companion to the '*Universalis cosmographia*', the great world map in twelve sheets by Waldseemüller. It was unusually large for a woodcut map, and drawn using an adaptation of the second method of projection advocated by Ptolemy. It shows the Americas as one contiguous continent, and was the first map to give this name to the new discoveries.

Waldseemüller himself was reluctant to identify America as a continent, and would never use the name America in any of his later work. When he finally published his edition of Ptolemy in Strasbourg in 1513, he labelled South America "Terra Incognita". However, nearly every significant mapmaker for the next quarter of a century relied on his work, popularising his geography and terminology. Although 1,000 copies of the '*Universalis cosmographia*' were printed according to Waldseemüller, only one survives. It was sold to the Library of Congress for \$10 million in 2003.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £4000

Inventory reference: 12839