



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
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**(Lafreri School Maps of the Continents) La Universal Fabrica del Mondo La Universal Fabrica del Mondo dell'eccell. m. Lorenzo Anania della citta di Tauerna cosmografo, et teologo ; doue s'ha piena notitia de i costumi, leggi, città, fiumi, monti, prouincie, & popoli del mondo.**

**Stock#:** 95384  
**Map Maker:** d'Anania / Cacchij dell' Aquila  
**Date:** 1573  
**Place:** Naples  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 10 x 8 inches  
**Price:** \$ 25,000.00



**Description:**

***With an Extraordinarily Rare Set of Lafreri School Maps of the Continents.***

This rich and understudied volume, *La Universal Fabrica del Mondo*, written by Giovanni Lorenzo d'Anania and first published in Naples in 1573, presents an ambitious endeavor to catalog the world's geography, cultures, laws, cities, rivers, mountains, provinces, and peoples. The inclusion of a mysterious set of Lafreri School maps of the continents, notable for their exceptional rarity with only two known sets in existence, underscores the volume's significance in the cartographical and geographical scholarship of the 16th century.

**The Maps**



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The work includes four engraved maps on unwatermarked laid paper. The maps are unsigned and undated but are titled in banners at the top of each sheet.

Because of their extreme rarity (only two sets are known: the present and another Biblioteca Nacional de España, formerly in the Palacio Real, Madrid), the maps have eluded definite attribution and in-depth analysis. The best treatment thus far comes from Burden (43).

The maps are clearly from the so-called Lafreri School of mapmaking, which is to say, they bear the hallmarks of maps produced by Italian mapmakers in the middle of the 16th century. The stippled sea, boats, sea monsters, and other decorative elements, the typography, and even the treatment of the graticulations all point to these maps having been produced in Italy between the 1550s and 1570s. Their inclusion in a Neapolitan publication raises questions, as there were no known mapmakers working in that city during this period nor would there be for many years after this publication. It seems more likely that the maps were produced in Rome or Venice and imported to Naples for the book. However, if they were genuine endogenous products of Naples, this might go some way to explaining their rarity today.

A possible attribution of the maps' authorship feels at once tantalizingly close and also probably out of reach. Stylistically, the engraving overlaps with the output of several famous makers from this period, including Forlani, Duchetti, Nelli, and Camocio, to name just a few. However, the makers employed a variety of engravers, and it could be one of their unnamed hands that we are seeing here. In any event, these maps represent an exotic variation within the well-studied realm of 16th-century Italian cartography.

There are numerous idiosyncratic elements to the maps. Burden points out that their unusual trapezoidal project is redolent of Ptolemy. Additionally, banner-titling of maps had largely fallen out of favor in Italy by the 1560s, with most examples coming from the 1540s or '50s.

### 1. **EVROPA**

Interestingly, in Italy no mention is made of Rome, Venice, nor any of the other important northern cities or regions. In the south, however, we have "Napoli," "a pruso," "terra dotrani," and "calabria." This emphasis on Naples and the south could lend circumstantial support to genuine Neapolitan authorship.

The author seems unsure about the nature of Greenland, calling it an island ("GROTLANDA isola") but also including a hint of a land bridge from the northern part of Scandinavia to the island. This



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convention has its roots in the 15th century but was carried on in printed maps into the middle of the 16th century.

## 2. **ASIA**

The map of Asia includes numerous printer's creases, many more than are usually seen in Italian maps of this period. Such a slip-up in quality control might be attributed to a publisher working on the periphery or outside of traditional map- and print-publishing centers.

The map shows both "giapan isola" and south of the Equator "cipangu," a rather strange and noteworthy double appearance of Japan. Korea is not yet shown and the details in China and Japan suggest that the map pre-dates the earliest Jesuit information.

## 3. **AFRICA**

Not in Betz. This map's unusual projection and certainly its engraving style bring to mind Livio Sanuto's atlas of Africa, published in Venice in 1588, which is thought to have been engraved by his brother Giulio Sanuto (see Betz, page 146). The considerable 15-year discrepancy between the publication of the 1573 Neapolitan Anania and the publication of Sanuto would seem to rule out any direct connection; however, Sanuto's work was probably mostly done between 1561 and 1575, before his death in 1576 (see Skelton's introduction to the 1965 ToT facsimile). In other cartographical and decorative respects, the map is redolent of the 1560s works of Gastaldi and Camocio in both folio and wall map form. However, it seems there is no signature element strong enough to establish its lineage.

## 4. **PERU** (America)

Burden 43. This map was produced in the window during which Italian mapmakers were ambivalent about the existence of a land bridge connecting North America with Asia. This indecision occurred during the 1550s and '60s and can be traced through their world map production in those years. Indeed, the manuscript world map output of Agnese during this time provides a comprehensive survey of the progression of ideas about the northwest coast of America in Italian mapmaking.

This map of the Americas bears some intriguing similarities with Giovanni Francesco Camocio's untitled nine-sheet map of the Americas, published around 1569. The two large lakes in the southern interior of South America, the elaborate configuration of islands representing the Canadian Maritimes, the strange rendering of California, and other characteristic features resemble elements



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of Camocio's unusual multi-sheet map of the Americas.

### **The Book**

The extreme rarity and unusual nature of the maps in this work can overshadow the importance of the text, which is certainly worthy of close examination. The text includes many of the earliest known references in print to regions, peoples, and cities of Africa, Asia and the Americas.

The work consists of a series of treatises describing the cosmography of the four parts of the World, with the final 40-page section discussing the New World. At the time the book was published, Naples was under the rule of the Spanish, and Anania consequently could have had access to information from the New World.

In a 2021 essay, Alessandra Russo highlights several passages in which Anania discusses artifacts of Mexican antiquity that have made their way to Europe.

The book was re-issued in 1576 in Venice and then again in 1582 with entirely different maps.

### **Rarity**

The work is not recorded in most of the standard bibliographies apart from Minieri Riccio; only the 1576 edition is recorded in the British Library.

In his extensive analysis of the map of America from this book, Philip Burden located two known examples of the 1573 edition with maps (Palacio Real, Madrid, and the private collection of Doctor Fritz Hellwig in Germany, which we believe to be this example), along with several more lacking the maps.

OCLC records one separate copy of one of the maps in the National Library of Spain, although it appears from its description to be bound into the book.

OCLC lists only the copy at the Bibliotheque National de France, [lacking the maps](#).

This likely represents the only opportunity that a collector of continental maps would have to obtain an example of these wonderful Lafreri School treatments of their region.



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**Detailed Condition:**

First edition. Four parts in one volume. Quarto. Contemporary limp vellum, yapp fore-edges, title in manuscript on the spine (Chipped with minor loss at the foot of the spine. Book block separated from the spine along the internal front hinge.) Collation: A4-I4, K4-P4, Q1, Q3-Q5, R4-U4, X1-X2, A1-I4, K4-L4, A4-F4, A4-E4. Title-page with decorative half-page woodcut border and printer's device, 4 pages dedicatory epistle and poem, 2 pages authors consulted, 4 pages errata, Europe 82 numbered leaves, Asia 44 numbered leaves, Africa 23 numbered leaves, [1 leaf blank], and America 20 numbered leaves, 4 fine folding engraved maps on trapezoidal projections, 4 historiated 11-line woodcut initials, one 9-line, one 7-line, and one 3-line, woodcut head- and tail-pieces (some browning and a few pale mostly marginal stains). (Map of Europe with repair to fold split at the center and laid down. Map of Asia with numerous printer's creases.) Overall a handsome book in a contemporary binding.