



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
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**Isole che son da Venetia nella Dalmazia, et per tutto l'Arcipelago, sino a Costantinopoli,  
con le loro fortezze, e con le terre piu notabili di Dalmazia: nuouamente poste in  
disegno a beneficio de gli studio si di geografia**

**Stock#:** 92108  
**Map Maker:** Pinargenti  
**Date:** 1573  
**Place:** Venice  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 7.5 x 11 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



**Description:**

***The William Stirling Maxwell Copy -- Complete with Title Page and Rare Text in French. The Completest Example to Have Appeared on the Market.***

***The First of the Isolarios to Focus on the Ottoman Wars.***

One of only two known examples of Simon Pinargenti's beautiful and important *isolario* to bear the collation of maps called for in the introduction.

Pinargenti's *Isole* is the first of a small and very rare group of *isolarii* (island books) to eschew traditional collations and instead focus on telling the story of the Ottoman-Venetian War (1570-1573). While traditional *isolarii* follow the tradition established by Cristoforo Buondelmonti in 1421 of showing the known "islands of the world," this work illustrates the battles and important places of the war.

Of note, this example contains an exceedingly rare page of text in French that describes each of the 53 maps in the book in the same order as they appear. This copy is the only known example of the book with the author's intended collation in the correct order. The only other example complete with 53 maps and a title page is in the BNF, although in that example the maps are in an order that is somewhat different than suggested in the introduction. There is also an example in the National Library of Israel which has several maps not called for in the introduction and appears to have been "extra completed."

The title page is only present in a few known examples of the work, and the text page in even fewer. The text page directly addresses the reader, describing both the idylls of voyaging in the Mediterranean as well as the endless sieges conducted by both Venice and the "capital enemy of Christianity." The text is



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well-written and, though brief, contains nuanced references to the history of the Eastern Mediterranean and its Classical travelers, namely Ulysses. In consultation with Stefano Bifulco, a leading scholar of Italian 16th-century cartography, we surmise that the French text may reflect an intended dedication to a French noble based on its style and the unusual use of French.

#### **A Brief History of Isolarii**

The *Isolario* genre dates to the 1420s, when Cristoforo Buondelmonti first executed his *Liber insularum archipelago* following six years of travels through the eastern Mediterranean. While not always the most accurate, Buondelmonti's work was widely reproduced, with some changes made, and dominated the market for island-books for most of the rest of the 15th century. The first printed *isolario*, by Bartolomeo da li Sonetti, was heavily derived from Buondelmonti's work.

The sixteenth century saw the *isolario* genre expand out of a Mediterranean focus, with the first "global" *isolario* appearing in Venice in 1528. It was this genre of *isolario* that dominated into the 17th century.

These island-books were remarkable for a number of reasons. Firstly, they displayed a remarkable interplay between manuscript and printed versions, with each format heavily influencing the other. Secondly, the books were not intended as a purely geographical work, and many were staggeringly inaccurate. They were, instead, supposed to be objects of contemplation from their inception, meant to spur the Medieval and Renaissance mind into imagining far-flung portions of the world. This was apparent in the earliest manuscript and printed *isolarios*. Da li Sonetti's incunable version of Buondelmonti's text was published in *terza rima* following Dante's *Commedia*, and the Pinargenti *isolario* harks back to this in its lyrical introduction.

Pinargenti's work represents one of the rare deviations from this tradition of *isolarii* by focusing on telling the story of a war, rather than simply listing known islands. The Ottoman-Venetian War was uniquely suited to this, being fought on many islands in the greater Aegean region. In addition, the War was one that united Europe against Ottoman aggression, and would prove to be an internationally compelling story, as suggested by the French-language introduction to the Italian work.

In describing this genre of island-book, George Tolia notes that Pinargenti's work is part of a new style of *isolarii* and the first to focus on a specific conflict.

*Between about 1565 and 1575 a number of small-format composite isolarii appeared,*



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*containing pictures of towns and fortresses as well as island maps. These popular publications incorporated material that had been previously published as loose leaves. . .*

*. . . A . . . compilation of maps, mostly of the Greek islands, was put together by the engraver Simon Pinargenti in 1573 . . . Th[is isolario] . . . differ[ed] significantly from [its] predecessors. First, they were no longer intended for practical use or general edification: instead, they provided topical information about the theaters of the Venetian-Turkish war and the situation prevailing there. Second, the subject matter was different. Among the maps of the islands—which are, incidentally, arranged in random order, to the great confusion of the reader—one finds pictures of fortresses and towns and scenes of fighting between the Christian and Ottoman forces. Third, these isolarii contained only pictorial matter, uninterrupted by any narrative. The only words . . . are the [map] titles. . . . Finally, there was a noticeable change in the style of the maps. Improvements had been made in the technique of copperplate engraving, and the publishers of these books were among the best engravers of the sixteenth century. Each island was now a self-contained, microscopic landscape framed by its cursorily drawn coastline and depicting wooded hills, valleys, rivers and roads, animals and villages, castles, harbors, ships, and monasteries. . . .*

#### **Census**

Bifolco notes that the known examples of the Pinargenti “Isole” contain varying numbers of maps and most examples seem to lack a title page. The National Library of Florence copy has a title page and 49 maps, the two examples at the British Library have 51 maps and 43 maps, plus a title page. The copy at the National Library of Israel contains 59 plates and is likely extra-illustrated.

The Bibliotheque National de France has two examples. The first has an identical number of maps (slightly different order) and also includes text page from the author in French, but with a different text setting (although the text is apparently identical). The second has only 51 maps and lacks the text page in French from the author.

#### **Rarity**

Pinargenti's *Isole* is very rare. We note two examples at auction, Sotheby's, May 12, 2005, Lot 47 (lacking the title page but with a manuscript index and 50 maps) and Sotheby's May 21, 1984, Lot 145 (title page and 42 maps, plus 12 maps by Camocio).



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#### **Provenance**

The book includes the bookplate of noted Scottish bibliophile Sir William Stirling Maxwell, 9th Baronet of Pollok, as well as his arms embossed in cloth on the front cover. Maxwell was considered a pioneer Spanish art historian and an avid book collector, who succeeded to the title and estates of his uncle, Sir John Maxwell, in 1865 when he took the surname Maxwell. His important library of emblem books and other material was left to the University of Glasgow by his son Sir John Stirling Maxwell. His albums of prints after Spanish masters were sold at Christie's on the 28th of April, 1978.

The book also bears the signature of P. Marischal (?) on the title page, possibly a descendent of George Keith, 5th Earl Marischal or perhaps Marischal College.

#### **Maps**

1. Venetia
2. Gulf of Cattaro / Ragusa / Castel Novo / Cataro
3. Arcipelago Mare Mediterranean
4. Dulcigno
5. Curzola
6. Antiveri
7. Istria
8. Il disegno dela provint di Albania
9. Durazzo
10. Valona
11. Margaritin
12. La Gra Forteza De Corfu
13. [Corfu Insula]
14. Golfo Di Lepanto
15. Morea
16. S. Maura
17. Zafalonia
18. Zante
19. La vera Copia et dissegno del'sitto di modone . . .
20. Cita De Modone
21. Brazzo de maina fortezza del gran turco nella Morea . . . Candia



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22. Il vero disegno di Napol di Romania . .
23. Isola De Cerigo
24. Negroponte (Island)
25. Negroponte (City and Port)
26. Insula De Nicsia
27. Sicilia Insula
28. Isola De Scio
29. Insula De Samo
30. Insula De Metileme
31. Insula Di Tenedo
32. Isola De Rhodi
33. Rodi Citta
34. Costantinopoli
35. Scutari
36. Zara
37. Sebenico et contado citta nella...
38. [Sebenico]
39. Sebenico Porto
40. Liesena Insula
41. Nicosia
42. Fortezza Di Soppoto
43. Tine
44. Palmosa
45. Cita De Trav In Dalmacia
46. Spalato
47. Clissa Fortezza
48. Candia
49. Cipro
50. *Famagosta*
51. Scarpanto Insula
52. [Europa]
53. Africa

**Translation and Transcription of the Introduction**



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The French introductory text leaf reads as follows:

***Au Lecteur S[imon]***

*C'est a bonne & iuste cause que le prince d'Poetes baille a Ulisses pour le premier & plus affet re titre de vertu, la louange d'avoire veu tant a pais, & congnu les moeurs & facons differente d'iceux. Aussi, a bien parler, la plus ferme & folio prudence, est celle qui s'acquiert par usage & pas voyageur. Mais il advient bien souvenet que beau coup de gentils esprits n'ont pas le moye ou le commodities des voyager, quoy qu'ils en suffen grandement desireux: & que de ceus qui voyagent, les uns sont cotraits de courir, & user d'un telle diligence en leu chemin, qu'il ne leur reste qucun toisir de voir le pia, ny y remarquer ce qui en est digne. Aus uns & aux autres apportent grande soulas & contentement les chartes & descriptions chorographiques. Entre telles descriptions ne doit pas tenir le dernier liue celle de l'Archipelague pour les frequent sieges, recontres, courses, invasions & autres actes d'hostilite, qui 'sy commenttent, tant par le capital ennemi de la Chrestiante, que par l'illustrissime seigneurie de Venize. Ie te le present donc icy, & te prie de le recevoir d'aussi bon visage, comme de bon coeur i'offre mon labeur au public. Premierement ie t'ay mis la riche ville de Venize avec ses golfes prochains. . .*

*A la fine ie t'ay adjouste deux petites cartes d'Europe & d'Afrique pour ton plus grande contentement. Tu prendas en gre nostre labeur, & iouiras d'iceluy. A Dieu.*

**Translation**

***To the Lector S[imon]***

*It is for good reason that the Prince of the Poets yawns at Ulisses for the first and most obvious title of virtue, the praise of having wanted so much peace, and known the customs and ways different from them. Also, to speak well, the most firm and solid prudence, is that which is acquired by use and by traveler. But it often happens that many kind spirits do not have the means or the conveniences to travel, that they are greatly desirous of it: and that of those who travel, some are forced to run, and use a such diligence on their way, that there is nothing left for them to see the country, not to notice there what is worthy of it. To the ones & to the*



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*others bring great solace & contentment the chorographic charters & descriptions. Among such descriptions should not take the last link that of the Archipelago for the frequent sieges, encounters, races, invasions & other acts of hostility, which are commented on, as much by the enemy capital of Christianity, as by the illustrious seignury of Venice. I therefore present it to you here, and beg you to receive it with as good a face, as with good heart my labor offers to the public. First, ie you put the rich city of Venice with its next gulfs. . . [this is followed by a list of the maps in the book].*

*At the end of the day, you have added two small maps of Europe & Africa for your greater satisfaction. You will take charge of our labor, and rejoice from it. Farewell.*

**Detailed Condition:**

Octavo. Early-20th-century ¼ brown calf over maroon cloth, with the Maxwell arms tooled on the front cover (leather somewhat scraped). Engraved title and 53 engraved maps on 52 sheets. (Title, first few leaves, and some other leaves scattered throughout, with expert remargining, most often at the bottom margin. This work was most likely done by an expert early-20th-century German or British paper restorer.)