



The World Map, 1300--1492: The Persistence of Tradition and Transformation (Center for American Places)

Evelyn Edson

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In the two centuries before Columbus, mapmaking was transformed. *The World Map, 1300--1492* investigates this important, transitional period of mapmaking. Beginning with a 1436 atlas of ten maps produced by Venetian Andrea Bianco, Evelyn Edson uses maps of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to examine how the discoveries of missionaries and merchants affected the content and configuration of world maps.

She finds that both the makers and users of maps struggled with changes brought about by technological innovation -- the compass, quadrant, and astrolabe -- rediscovery of classical mapmaking approaches, and increased travel. To reconcile the tensions between the conservative and progressive worldviews, mapmakers used a careful blend of the old and the new to depict a world that was changing -- and growing -- before their eyes.

This engaging and informative study reveals how the ingenuity, creativity, and adaptability of these craftsmen helped pave the way for an age of discovery.

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