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Northern Italy, s. XVI^{1/4}

Christopher Columbus, *Epistola de insulis de novo repertis*

1. ff. 1r-4v [front cover, r:] § Epistola de insulis repertis de novo. [f. 1r:] § Epistola Christofori Colom, cui etas nostra multum [muntus *ms.*] debet, de insulis Indie supra Gangem nuper inventis, ad quas perquirendas octavo antea mense auspicii et ere invictissimi Fernandi Hispaniarum regis missus fuerat, ad magnificum dominum Raphaellem Sanxis, eiusdem serenissimi regis tesararium, missa, quam nobilis ac litteratus vir Aliander [Alinader *ms.*] de Cosco ab Hispano ideomate in Latinum convertit tercio Kalendas Maii, M.CCCC.XCIII, pontificatus Alexandri VI anno primo. Quoniam suscepte provincie rem perfectam me consecutum fuisse gratum tibi fore scio, has constitui exarare, que te uniuscuiusque [uviuscuiusque *ms.*] rei in hoc nostro itinere geste inventeque admoneant ... Letemur et nos, tum propter exaltationem nostre fidei, tum propter rerum temporalium incrementa, quorum non solum Hispania, sed universa Christianitas est futura particeps. Hec ut gesta sunt sic breviter enarrata. Vale. Ulisbone, pridie Idus Marcii. Christoforus Colom Oceane classis prefectus. [coat of arms].

Christophorus Columbus (Christopher C., 1451-1506), *Epistola de insulis de novo repertis*. Relation of his first voyage to America (1492-1493), addressed to Raphael Sanchez and translated into Latin by Leander de Cosco, dated 14 March 1493. Probably copied from the edition Paris, [Guy Marchant, after 29 April 1493], GW 7175, variant (a): this is the only edition which has the first title in the same form as our manuscript. The text too is the same (including the misspelling “uviuscuiusque” in the opening sentence), but the subscription at the end is not found in the incunable.

2. ff. 5r-6v [f. 5r otherwise blank:] § Copia de la informatione de Bartolamio Colombo de la navigatione nel Mondo Novo. [f. 5v blank; f. 6r:] § Copia de la informatione de Bartolamio Colombo fratello de Christoforo de la navigatione di Ponente e Garbin di Beragua nel Mondo Novo. Del 1506 essendo Bartolamio Colombo, fratello di Christophoro Colombo, da poi la sua morte andato a Roma per haver lettere del pontefice al re di Spagna, che'l volesse esser contento di darli caravelle in ordine di quel bisognava et spetialmente di frati docti in philosophia et theologia et in la Sacra Scriptura ... di poi non navicoron più oltri et voltoron la proa (**prora?**) per Levante verso la Cuba et la Spaniola, per esser le lor nave male in aseto che eron abisate. Finis. Laus Deo. In Venetia 1508.

Bartholomaeus Columbus (Bartholomew C., c. 1460-1514), *Descrizione della navigazione nel Mondo Nuovo*. H. Harrisse, ed., *Bibliotheca Americana vetustissima. A Description of Works relating to America Published between the Years 1492 and 1551* (New York, 1866; reprint Leipzig, 1921), pp. 471-474; more recent is *Raccolta di documenti e studi pubblicati dalla R. Commissione Colombiana*, v. 3.2 (Rome, 1893), pp. 217-219. The text is in the wrong order, being probably copied from an *exemplar* in four pages, of which pages 2 and 3 were inverted.

The manuscript should be read in the following order: (1) p. 1, lines 1 to 20 *asai*; (2) p. 2, lines 6 *lavorate* to 28 *vidono di*; (3) p. 1, line 20 *dismontar* to p. 2, line 6 *corazze*; (4) p. 2, line 29 *bambaso* to the end.

Paper, ff. 4, 315 x 225 mm. Watermark: cardinal's hat, var. Briquet 3409 ... (1519-1527??).

Γ⁴, in a contemporary paper bifolium.

Invisible ruling, art. 1 for two columns of 46 lines, 230 x 175 mm., art. 2 for one column of 46 lines, 230 x 145 mm.

Copied by one hand in *Gothica Hybrida Formata* verging to the *Semitextualis*, with a "typographic" outlook (but totally different from the printing type used in the presumed *exemplar*).

Paragraph marks, flourished initials (5 ll. f. 1r, 3 ll. f. 5r) and Columbus coat of arms all in the same brown ink as the text. The arms closely resemble those found in the Genoa codex of his *Book of Privileges*, as reproduced in J.B. Thacher, *Christopher Columbus. His Life, his Work, his Remains*, v. 2 (New York, 1967, reprint of the 1902 ed.), after p. 540.

Unbound. Placed in a boardpaper portfolio and leather-backed boardpaper slip-case.

At the top of the first page the supposed autograph ownership inscription of "Sigismondo Pandolfo de Malatesta" (1498-1543?), son of Pandolfo Malatesta **check**. From the Gritti family archives.

The cardboard-like paper of two different thicknesses, with the badly visible watermark, and the brown ink used for the text *and* the decoration give this manuscript a strange appearance, which makes one doubt its authenticity.

R 19.02.09