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A rare set of visiting cards published in Italy features pretty little maps of all parts of the world. Each card is about 105 x 70 mm. and the maps about 85 x 55 mm., with a blank panel for the signature of the caller. They were printed on thick paper with plain backs. Some have traces of lines on the edges, indicative of the usual practice for producing cards: with many engraved together on a plate and the printed sheets then cut up

Information on these Venetian calling cards has slowly come to light over many years. Some maps in very good condition were on sale in London during the 1990s but it is uncertain how many, and they were later passed on to another London dealer. Nothing was known about them other than they had traces of erasures beneath the two lines under their titles and just the map of France had the signature 'G. Bonatti fece' beneath the panel at bottom right. Therefore it seemed likely that there was an earlier state and possible that Giuseppe Bonatti engraved the set. About the turn of the century a signed card with a map of the province of Roussillon in the south of France was seen at an Ephemera Society Fair in London. Underneath its title was a tiny imprint which was thought to read 'Venezia 1794 App'o. P. Zaricen', but with the last word not clear.

Subsequent research revealed that Lajos Szantai included *L'Ungheria* in his book on the mapping of Hungary, but gave the name in the imprint as 'Zancen': *Atlas Hungaricus 1528-1850*, Budapest, Akademiai Kiado, 1996. Notwithstanding the uncertainty over the publisher's name, it now seemed that there were two editions with the imprints removed on the second one. Also around this time a collector was able to acquire the map of Scotland from a dealer in Germany, who is thought to have acquired about seventy cards of the second issue at auction, but further information was unforthcoming. Eighteen cards in the second state, but not in very good condition, appeared in the Königstein salerooms of Reiss & Sohn in May 2017 (lot 2090).

By 2018 thirty titles had been recorded in the public domain but two years later a major discovery was made by a dealer in Rome: three slipcases housing seventy-two cards. These consisted of three undated title-cards (*Tomo I, II & III*), sixty-six maps in their first state and three duplicates: *Lo Stato Veneto da Terra*; *L'Africa Settentrionale*; *La Guinea Occidentale*. The title cards revealed the series title and also that Giacomo Zatta was the publisher of this 'Pocket atlas for the ladies', whereas the maps revealed thirty-nine new titles to be added to those already known. Details of the titles of sixty-nine of the maps have been acquired or gratefully received from several different sources. Nearly three quarters of them relate to Europe including many provincial ones:

Mappamondo‡; *Europa*; *L'Asia*; *L'America Settentrionale*; *L'America Meridionale*;

Li Regni di Spagna e Portogallo divisi nelle sue Prov.e†; *La Francia divisa ne' suoi dipartimenti Secondo la nuova Costituzione*‡; (Luxembourg)‡; *Le Flandre Austriache, e Francesi*; *L'Olanda*†; *La Inghilterra*†; *La Scozia*; *La Svezia*; *L'Italia Divisa Ne' Suoi Stati*†; *Il Regno di Napoli divisa nelle sue Provincie*; *Li Svizzeri Divisi ne' suoi Tredici Cantoni e suoi Alleati*†; *La Germania Divisa ne' suoi Circoli*†; *Turchia d'Europa*; *L'Ungheria*†; *La Polonia*; *La Russia Europea*;

*L'Asolano**; *Bellegarde*†; *Il Bellunese**; *Il Bergamasco**; *Il Bresciano**; *Piano del Porto di Brest*†; *Il Cadorino**; *La Cargna**; *L'Isola di Corsica Divisa nelle sue Provincie*†; *Il Dogado**; *Il Feltrino**; *Il Friuli**; *Piano del Porto di Genova*†; *Stato di Genova e Parte del Piemonte*†; *L'Istria**; *Il Ducato di Mantova*†; *Il Ducato proprio di Milano*†; *Il Ducato di Modena*†; *Il Padovano**; *Piemonte e Savoia*†; *Il Polesine**; *Lo Stato Pontificio diviso nelle sue Provincie*†; *Il Rossiglione*†; *L'Isola di Sardegna divisa ne' suoi Distretti*†; *L'Isola di Sicilia Divisa nelle sue valli*†; *Baja e Porto di Tolone*†; *La Toscana divisa nelle sue Provincie*†; *Il Trevisano**; *Lo Stato Veneto da Terra*†; *Il Veronese**; *Il Vicentino**;

Turchia d'Asia; *L'Arabia*; *La Persia*; *Il Gran Mogul*; *L'Indie*; *La Russia Asiatica*; *La China*; *Il Giapone*;

L'Africa Settentrionale; *le Coste di Barbaria*; *L'Egitto*; *La Guinea Occidentale*; *La Guinea Orientale*; *L'Africa Meridionale*;

Il Canada; *Il Messico*; *Il Perù*.

This very important breakthrough by the Rome dealer finally resolved the issue of the name in the imprint but provided much more information too. Although Pietro Zancon's name appeared on twenty-four maps†, the rest of them had that of Zatta. There were two exceptions: the one of Luxembourg‡ had neither title nor imprint and the world map‡ had no imprint just like its later issue (see Introduction 3). One can only speculate about the relationship between Zancon and Zatta: it may well be that they were partners or that Zatta took over the project which Zancon had started.

Most of the imprints were dated 1794 but fifteen were dated 1795*, presumably when the cards were issued. The only engraver's signature present was that of Bonatti on just the map of France as in the second state, so it became even more likely that he engraved the set. However, one question still remains because the Rome set was incomplete, lacking at least three: *La Scozia*; *La Guinea Orientale*; *L'Africa Meridionale*. The number of cards in a full set is still unknown but might reasonably be expected to include at least Ireland, the United States of America and a map of the whole of Africa, although it has to be said, this is an unusual series.

Atlante tascabile per le dame. Venice, Giacomo Zatta, (1795); (Venice, 1799).



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