



The atlas volume from Humboldt's important description of New Spain

HUMBOLDT, Alexander von.

Geographischer und Physischer Atlas von Neu-Spanien. gegründet auf astronom: trigonom: und Barometer Messungen [old ink mss.].

Tubingen bey J.C. Cotta, 1810 [old ink mss.]. Folio, contemporary half calf with marbled boards, maroon morocco gilt title label on front board; title in old ink mss on front endpaper. Plates numbered 1-20 (6-8 on one sheet): a two-sheet folding map, 4 double-page maps, 6 single page maps, 4 double-page cross sections with hand colour, 2 sepia aquatint views of volcanos, 1 engraved table. With the bookplate of Gustav Parthey. Two Prussian passports for Parthey, dated 1858 & 1867, loosely inserted.

£32,500

The complete set of plates from Humboldt's famous 'Atlas Géographique et Physique du Royaume de la Nouvelle-Espagne', the plate volume of his 'Essai politique sur le royaume de la Nouvelle-Espagne'. It has a German translation of the title in manuscript with the name of Cotta, publisher of the true first edition of the 'Essai politique', which was suppressed by Humboldt himself because of a dedication to Charles IV of Spain, who had been forced to abdicate by Napoleon in 1808. The 'Essai politique' was an account of Humboldt's expedition to Mexico in 1803-4 with botanist Aimé Bonpland. During the trip he accurately measured the longitude of Acapulco (plate 18), drew the two-sheet 'Carte Generale du Royaume de la Nouvelle Espagne' the most accurate map of Mexico (and Texas) and the four-sheet profile of Mexico, the first



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complete profile of any country. The bookplate is of the library of Gustav Friedrich Konstantin Parthey (1798-1872), art historian, owner of the Nicolaische Buchhandlung in Berlin, and correspondent of Humboldt's. He wrote an extensive transcript of Humboldt's 'Kosmos' lectures at the Berlin University, 'Vorlesungen über physikalische Geographie', 1827-1828. Parthey also compiled a catalogue raisonné of the etchings of Wenceslaus Hollar in 1853, a reference still in use today. He joined Humboldt as a member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences in 1857.

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