



Fig. 12.51. Map of North America dating from 1692. L'Amérique Septentrionale divisée en ses principales parties, scavoir les Terres Arctiques, la Canada ou Nouvelle France, le Mexique, les Isles de Terre Neuve, de Californie et Antilles où sont distingués les uns des autres les estats comme ils sont possédés presentement par les François, Castellans, Anglois, Suedois, Danois et par les Estats Generaux des Provinces Unies ou Hollandois. N. Sanson; ed. H. Jalliot. Taken from [1116], map 18 (pages 34-35).

Central and South America, are drawn in detail, with plenty of names indicated all across the map. However, the Europeans in general and their cartographers in particular appear to have possessed no access to the North-West of America for some mystical reason.

Let us proceed to the map of 1726 ([1116], see fig. 12.55). The geography of California and the American North-West remains the same, likewise the blank spot. California is still an island; the blank spot is covered by lavish artwork in a rather embarrassed manner – palm trees, dark-skinned natives and a jolly feast underneath the palm trees (in the north). The rest of the American continent is covered by a multitude of geographical details, there is barely enough place to contain them all. We neither see banquets, nor palm trees here.

The next map dates from 1739 (see fig. 12.56). California finally assumes its natural shape of a peninsula. However, the blank spot remains, although its borders have moved northwards a little. This had revealed the fact that California is connected to the continent, and marked a great success in the history of the European and American cartography.

Finally, we have a map of 1740 (12.57). California is already a peninsula; however, the blank spot remains, and the coastline further North from California remains unknown.

Oddly enough, the next map in the atlas ([1116]) dates from 1837. It looks almost modern; we don't see any blank spots anywhere.

One might well wonder about the reasons why the fundamental atlas ([1116]) would fail to mention the maps of North America published between 1740 and



Fig. 12.52. Map of America. Dates from the post-1698 epoch. *Novissima et Accuratissima Totius Americae Descriptio*, N. Visscher. Taken from [1116], map 19 (pages 36-37).



Fig. 12.53. Map of North America dating from 1710. H. Moll. Taken from [1116], map 20, page 38.

1837. This period of “geographical silence” coincides with the fragmentation of Muscovite Tartary and the naissance of the USA, which had comprised its American part.

Let us complement the picture that we get with the data from the book on the history of cartography ([1007]). It contains two other maps of North America absent from [1116]. The first one comes from the

atlas of the “ancient” Ptolemy (see fig. 12.59). The “ancient” Ptolemy must have been well familiar with the geography of the American coast. America is called “Terra Nova”, or “New Land”. This must be an old XVI-XVII century map from the Horde, published under Ptolemy’s name.

Another map of North America, allegedly dating from 1593, is reproduced in fig. 12.60. Odd as it might



Fig. 12.54. Map of North America dating from 1720. *Totis Americae Septentrionalis et Meridionalis novissima Repraesentatio, quam ex singulis recentium Geographorum Tabulis Collecta luci publicae accomodavit J. V. Homann.* Taken from [1116], map 21, pages 40-41..

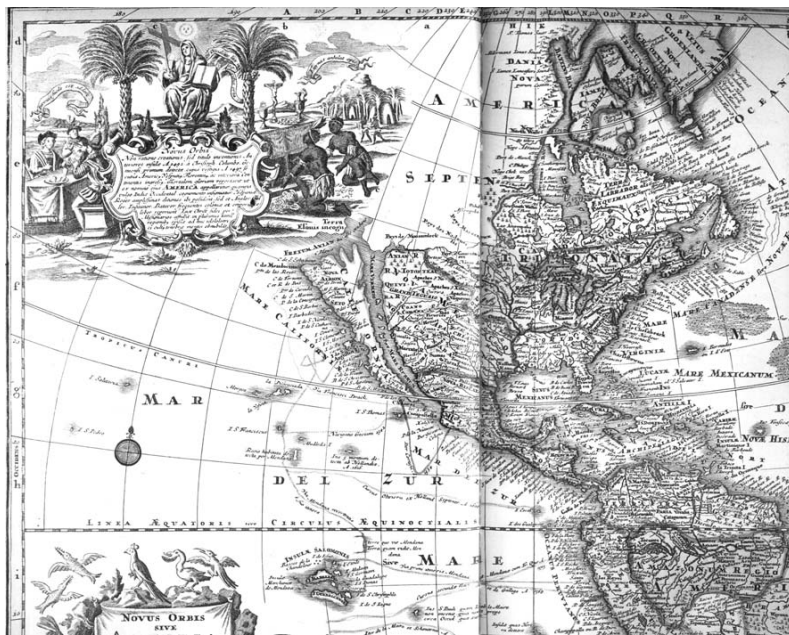


Fig. 12.55. Map of America dating from the post-1726 epoch. *Novis Orbis sive America meridionalis et septentrionalis per sua regna, provincias et insula juxta observations et descriptions recentiss[imas] divisa et adornata.* M. Seutter. Taken from [1116], map 27, pages 48-49.