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Cosmographie: oder Beschreibung aller Länder herrschaften vnd fürnembsten Stetten des gantzen Erdbodens ... /

Stock#: 70577
Map Maker: Munster
Date: 1578
Place: Basel
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 8.75 x 13.5 inches
Price: \$ 29,500.00



Description:

The Enlarged 1578 Edition of Munster's Cosmographia.

The work that "sealed the fate of 'America' as the name of the New World" and the first German-Language Description of the World.

This milestone 1578 edition of Sebastian Munster's *Cosmographie* is notable for being the last edition of that work to include the double-page maps pulled from the original Munster woodblocks and the last edition issued during the lifetime of the publisher Henrich Petri, who took the project over after Munster's death. This is the last edition to contain Munster's map of the Americas, the first printed map of the continent.

Munster's *Cosmographia*, first issued in 1544, was one of the most successful and influential descriptions of the world published during the Renaissance. The *Cosmographia* was published alongside Munster's *Geographia* (first issued in 1540) and grew to include numerous city views and other maps over its publication run. After 1552, the *Cosmographia*, which was constantly updated and refreshed with new information, absorbed the *Geographia*. Following the final issue of the *Geographia* in 1552, many of the double-page maps it contained (including Munster's map of the Americas) were published as part of the *Cosmographia* and can be found at the start of this book. These double-page maps include a modern and Ptolemaic world map, both highly prized as individual maps, and the first modern map of Asia.

The maps and woodblocks included in the book cover a wide variety of subjects. From Munster's



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wonderful and fantastic depiction of sea monsters to his map of the Americas (the first printed map of the continent), his work is full of the Renaissance quest for knowledge that intermixed scientific endeavor and exploration with superstition and bias.

The superlatives and accomplishments achieved by Munster with this work are extensive. His was the first description of the world from a German perspective, compiling the most exhaustive work on the world and its history published to date. The artistry of his work was also notable, with some 120 artists working on the book, including Hans Holbein the Younger, Hans Rudolph, David Kandel, Urs Graf, and Manuel Deutsch.

This edition of the *Cosmographia* includes numerous double-page woodcut views of cities, as well as some folding city views. This represents a major augmentation of the compliment of double-page maps that occurred in the early editions of *Cosmographia* and Munster's *Geographia*.

Munster's Map of the Americas

Munster's map of America is the earliest map to show all of North and South America in a true continental form. The first edition of the map appeared in Munster's *Geographia*, first published in 1540. However, it was the map's inclusion in the 1544 edition of Munster's *Cosmographia* that forever caused America to be the name of the New World, perpetuating Waldseemuller's choice of names in a popular and widely disseminated work.

Munster's map is the earliest map to show all of the continents of America and the first to name the Pacific Ocean (Mare Pacificum). The depiction of North America is dominated by one of the most dramatic geographic misconceptions to be found on early maps-the so-called Sea of Verrazzano. The Pacific cuts deeply into North America so that the part of the coastline at this point is a narrow isthmus between two oceans. This was the result of Verrazzano mistaking the waters to the west of the Outer Banks, the long barrier islands along North Carolina as the Pacific. The division of the New World between Spain and Portugal is recognized on the map by the flag planted in Puerto Rico, here called Sciana.

The map includes a host of firsts, too many to include in this description. It includes a very early appearance of the Straits of Magellan, along with his ship *Victoria* in the Pacific. It also includes the earliest appearance of Japan on a map, predating European contact and basing its presence solely on the legends of Marco Polo and others. The Yucatan Peninsula is shown as an island. Lake Temistan empties into the Caribbean. The map depicts cannibals in South America and names Florida. The misinformation provided by Verazanno is perpetuated. The map depicts cannibals in South America and names Florida.



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Munster's Sea Monsters

Munster's map of sea monsters is one of the most famous images to be added in later editions of his work. The image was derived from Olaus Magnus's famed, and unobtainable *Carta Marina* of 1539.

The majority of the image shows a seascape populated by a motley, monstrous crew. To the left is a whale. Based on Magnus, it is identifiable as a marine mammal thanks to the two spouts on the top of its body, which are the same as the double blowholes of baleen whales. Another spouted creature, but with the head of a cat, is to the right. Between these menaces is a ship desperately trying to escape by jettisoning its cargo. Below this scene is a giant lobster with a man in its claw. While the lobster is identifiable to modern eyes, it was most likely was meant to be an octopus.

Munster was a pioneer in shifting the style of sea monsters. Previously, monsters were drawn in flat profile with little movement indicated. During the sixteenth century, however, monsters began to be shown as three-dimensional, thanks to shading, with implied movement and dynamism. Cartographers also harkened back to Classical sources for zoological imagery, rather than Medieval antecedents. One of Münster's early world maps, engraved by Hans Holbein the Younger, in Simon Gyrnaeus and Johann Huttich's travel collection, *Novus orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum*, shows this emerging Renaissance style. This style is, again, visible on the present woodlock.

History of Publication

The *Cosmographia* was originally a derivative of Munster's *Geographia*, but proved to be the more long-lasting of the two. First published in 1544, the work initially comprised only some 700 pages and was separate from the *Geographia*. Munster published several later editions concurrently with his *Geographia*, but the work would become the predominant publication only after his 1552 death.

Following Munster's death, the publication was taken over by Heinrich Petri. Petri kept the compliment of 25 double-page woodblocks engraved during Munster's lifetime at the start of the book, adding only a single map in 1574. Over the two-and-a-half decades during which he published the book, Petri vastly expanded the work to include additional city views, fold-out maps, and many additional illustrations. By the time this present edition was published in 1578, the work was more than double its original size, comprising over 1400 pages.

Heinrich Petri was succeeded by his son, Sebastian Heinrich Petri, who decided to re-cut all of the double-page maps using Ortelius as his primary source. This and numerous other changes were effectuated, greatly changing the nature of the book. That work, using these later maps, continued to be published



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until the middle of the 17th century.

Conclusion

The work is, overall, an incredible work of craftsmanship and science, a representation of the Renaissance worldview and known world in the 16th century.

Collation:

a6, a6, 26 double-page woodcut maps, A-E8, F6, G2, H4, I-O2, P4, Q8, R4, S2, T-X8, Y4, Z2, Aa2, Bb8, Cc4, Dd6, Ee4, Ff-Ii2, Kk6, Ll-Mm8, Nn-Oo2, Pp-Yy8, Zz4, AA4, BB-CC8, DD6, EE2, FF-GG4, HH6, II8, KK6, LL-MM8, NN4, OO-PP2, QQ4, RR2, SS4, TT-ZZ2, AAa8, BBb4, CCc2, DDd-EEe8, FFf4, GGg6, HHh-KKk4, LLl-MMm8, NNn6, OOo8, PPp-RRr4, SSs2, TTt8, UUu6, XXx2, YYy6, ZZz4, Aaa6, Bbb2, Ccc-Ddd8, Eee4, Fff2, Ggg6, Hh2, Iii4, Kkk-Nnn8, Ooo-Ppp6, Qqq4, Rrr2, Sss8, Ttt6, Uuu4, Xxx-Zzz8, AAA-CCC8, DDD4, EEE2, FFF-GGG8, HHH6, III4, KKK-NNN8, OOO2, PPP8, QQQ6, RRR4, SSS5 (of 6). Lacking the final (colophon) leaf.

Detailed Condition:

Quarto. Later (18th century?) full vellum. 26 double-page woodcut maps, 4 folding city plans, and many other double-page city views. Large portion of CCc [dccij] (view of Cologne) torn away in lower left of image. [KKKviii] [dccc xv] with loss to top gutter and bottom partially affecting woodcuts and text. [SSSi] [Dcccxxv] with bottom two-thirds of the page torn away. Marginal losses to SSSiii and v. Lacking final leaf [SSSvi]. Some other minor tears and marginal losses, particularly to first few and final few leaves, including the title page. Minor staining to some sheets, but overall very clean.