



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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[First State!] Novae Insulae XVII Nova Tabula

Stock#: 72797
Map Maker: Munster
Date: 1540
Place: Basle
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 13.5 x 10.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The First State of the First Printed Map of the American Continent.

The first state, first issue of Munster's map of America, 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 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 Castille and Leon flag planted in Puerto Rico, here called Sciana.

The map includes a host of firsts, too many to include in this description. Includes a very early appearance of the Straits of Magellan, along with his ship *Victoria* in the Pacific. The map includes the earliest appearance of Japan on a map, predating European contact and based solely upon legends, such as Marco Polo. The Yucatan Peninsula is shown as an Island. Lake Temistan empties into the Caribbean. The map



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depicts cannibals in South America and names Florida.

The misinformation provided by Verrazzano is perpetuated.

The first state of the map is rare on the market. A seminal map for American collectors.

Passage to the West and Verrazzano

Almost as soon as Europeans discovered the Americas, they eagerly searched for a passage that would allow them to traverse the continent by water. In the present map, North America is almost bisected by a large body of water jutting down through what is today Canada, leaving only a thin isthmus connecting it.

Münster's depiction of this misconception in the present map derives from Verrazzano's 1524 voyage. As he passed the Outer Banks of present-day North Carolina, Verrazzano thought he saw a vast "oriental sea," sometimes referred to as the Sea of Verrazzano, leading to Cathay and the Spice Islands. What he likely saw was the long sandbar from the Pamlico to Albemarle Sounds. This misconception is depicted in several sixteenth-century European maps, including Münster's.

This false idea of a vast eastern sea gradually transformed into the myth of a great Western Sea, centering on the story of Juan de Fuca, the Castilianized name of Greek navigator Ioánnis Fokás (Phokás). Little archival evidence survives of Fuca's career, but a chance meeting with an English financier, Michael Lok, in Venice in 1596 gave birth to rumors of Fuca's voyages in the Pacific. Fuca reported that he had been sent north from New Spain twice in 1592 in search of the Strait of Anian. Fuca supposedly traveled up a vast straight at the northernmost point of the west coast of America, around which he sailed for more than twenty days. The Spanish Crown failed to reward Fuca's discovery of an opening in the coast at roughly 47° N latitude and Fuca left the Spanish service embittered. His story lived on in Lok's letters and eventually was published in Samuel Purchas' travel collection of 1625. Fuca's account led to the depiction of a Western Sea in many maps of that time.

Publication of the map and states

The first state of the present map appeared in 1540 in Münster's edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia* in an added section of updated maps. Münster included a set of continental maps in this modern section, with this map representing America.

Münster then included it in his *Cosmographia*, starting in 1544, which was very popular, with nearly forty editions published in the following 100 years. Münster's *Cosmographia* was the first influential German description of the world. The present map in its various states was the best known and most widely



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circulated map of the Americas until Abraham Ortelius' map of 1570.

States of the Map

There are thirteen known states, with differences in the spelling of *Atlantica* in South America, the use of *Temistitan* and *Penuco* in Mexico, as well as several changes:

- State 1 1540 *Atlantica* *Temistitan* NOVVS ORBIS in North and South America
- State 2 ca. 1544 *Atlantica* *Temistitan* *Regio Gigantium* in South America moved to the east of the small river
- State 3 1544 *Atlantica* *emistitan* NOVVS ORBIS removed, *Die Nüw Welt* widely spaced
- State 4 1548 *Atlantica* *Temistitan*
- State 5 1550 *Atlantica* *Temistitan* *Die Nüw...* is moved lower down, and replaced by *Nouus orbis*
- State 6 1552 *Atlantica* *Temistitan* Latitude and longitude bars added outside the map
- State 7 1554 *Atlantica* (not present) Latitude and longitude bars removed
- State 8 1558 *Atlantica* (not present) *Sciona* from the foot of the flag is removed
- State 9 1558 *oua Insula...* (not present)
- State 10 1559 *oua Insula...* (not present) *Sciona* replaced, but in italics
- State 11 1561 *Nova Insula...* (not present)
- State 12 1569 *Nova Insula...* (not present) *Panuco* removed from the Gulf of Mexico
- State 13 1572 *Nova Insula...* *Temistitan* *Panuco* replaced

A significant addition to any collection of the Americas.

Detailed Condition:

Minor loss around the top of the hull of the sailing ship in the Pacific, expertly reinstated.