



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## Asia. Tanto e grande l'Asia. . .

**Stock#:** 75023  
**Map Maker:** Arnoldi / Florimi  
**Date:** 1600 circa  
**Place:** Siena, Italy  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 19 x 15 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### ***Arnoldi's Map of Asia—One of the Earliest Accurate Depictions of Luzon***

Fine continental map of Asia encompassing Maritime Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Japan, and Arctic Russia. This is only the second Italian map to accurately depict the shape of Luzon in the Philippines.

The map is part of Arnoldi's series of separately-issued continental maps, all of which are very rare and highly sought-after.

The map is detailed, with blocks of text sharing ethnographic and geographic information about Tartary, which has few cities; China, whose provinces are ruled by one powerful Emperor; and Japan, with a mixed political system and some Christian converts. There are also cartographic curiosities here, like Lake Chiamay in the northeast of what is today India.

The ornate title cartouche in the lower left includes a paragraph about the continent. It explains its great size (as big as Europe and Africa combined), not to mention the many surrounding islands that are themselves nearly the size of Europe. It also explains that Asia is the location of earthly paradise and the Holy Land. The people are thought to be ingenious and the monarchies long-lived.

The map includes the Spice Islands, the Moluccas, in detail, as well as the tip of *Terra Australe*, the mysterious Southern Continent. Of particular interest is the configuration of the Philippines. Unlike Ortelius and Mercator, which only show the southern islands, this map includes the northern islands, specifically Luzon. The latter island is shown in its correct configuration, only the second time this



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occurred on an Italian map, after Mazza's important map. Compare, for example, the recognizable configuration here with that of [Rughesi](#), published only a few years before the present map.

For its cartographic sources, Arnoldi clearly draws on Ortelius for some areas, like Japan, which appears on the Teixeira model, as it does on the Ortelius map of the continent. However, the Philippines are drawn much more exactly here than on the Ortelius. For that area, as mentioned above, Arnoldi draws primarily on Giovanni Battista Mazza's rare map of Asia, published ca. 1590. This was part of Mazza's own exceptionally rare set of continental maps; he was also the engraver of a ten-sheet world map by Rascicotti in 1597. While relatively little is known about Mazza, he clearly benefitted from well-placed sources in Rome as his map incorporates information which would only have been available to connected individuals and would not generally appear on other maps until the seventeenth century.

Because of the rarity of Mazza's map of Asia, very little historical analysis has been done, other than an article by Richard Casten and Tom Suarez the *Map Collector* (issue 70, 1995). Casten and Suarez note that among other important firsts in the map of Asia, it was the first map to accurately depict the shape of Luzon in the Philippines. Therefore, this is the second Italian map to capture the correct morphology of this important island.

While the map itself does not include Arnoldi's name, we can date and identify it thanks to biographical and stylistic evidence. Its visual style is in line with Arnoldi's other continental maps. His name does appear on the map of Europe, along with his printer's, Matteo Florimi. Florimi and Arnoldi's partnership was only forged at the end of Arnoldi's life, from ca. 1600-1602. The continental maps were dedicated to Scipione Bragaglia, a writer and patron of Arnoldi's.

### **Rarity**

All of Arnoldi's works are very rare, either in institutional collections or on the market. This map is held by the British Library, the BNF, Stanford, and the Herzog August Bibliothek. The Library of Congress and the John Carter Brown Library have complete sets of the four continental maps.

### **Detailed Condition:**