



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Portuallia Portugal

Stock#: 76697mp2
Map Maker: Metellus
Date: 1598
Place: Cologne
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 9.5 x 6 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Portugal in the Final Years of the Sixteenth Century

Rare and early map of Portugal, published in Cologne by Johannes Matalius Metellus, also known as Jean Matal. Matal's cartographic works are quite rare and are seldom seen on the market.

The west-oriented map shows Portugal split into bishoprics by dotted lines. A strapwork cartouche carries the title in Latin and Portuguese, while a large sailing vessel decorates the Atlantic Ocean.

The present map is one of several maps of Portugal published in the sixteenth century based on a lost manuscript drawn in 1560 by Fernando Alvaro Seco. The original manuscript map of Alvaro Seco was taken to Rome and given as a diplomatic gift to the Holy See following the installation of Pope Pius IV in January 1560. It was carried to Rome by the Portuguese humanist and writer Achilles Estaço, who served as librarian to Cardinal Guido Sforza and as secretary to Pope Pius IV.

The Alvaro Seco map was perhaps the single most important and influential map of Portugal of the sixteenth century. It continued to be the basis of maps of Portugal in manuscript and printed forms until the appearance of Pedro Teixeira Albernaz's map of 1662—nearly a full century later.

As noted by Alegria et al.:

The well-known map of Fernando Álvaro Seco is known through rare impressions of two versions. One was engraved by Sebastiano di Re, published by Michele Tramezzino with papal and Venetian senatorial privilege, and printed in Venice sometime after 1561. The other was engraved by Joannes



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van Doetecum, published by Gerard de Jode in Antwerp, and dated 1565. Both were dedicated to Cardinal Sforza by a Portuguese humanist, Achilles Estaço....

The Seco map gained even more importance when a version of it appeared in Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (1570). It also appeared in De Jode's atlas, *Speculum orbis terrarum* (1578).

Cologne School

This work is from the so-called Cologne School of mapmaking, the members of which made a concerted, though largely unsuccessful, attempt to supplant Antwerp (and to a lesser extent Amsterdam) as a mapmaking hub in the 1590s and first decades of the seventeenth century. Cologne's role as a mapmaking center was boosted by Dutch and Flemish refugees fleeing persecution and war, just as that of Amsterdam was boosted by those leaving Spanish-controlled Antwerp after 1588.

Rarity

Metellus's maps are very rare on the market. This is the first time we have handled this map and we find no examples of this 1598 issue in any standard map databases.

Detailed Condition: