



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Americae Sive Novi Orbis Nova Descriptio

Stock#: 89306
Map Maker: Munster
Date: 1588 (1598)
Place: Basel
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 14 x 12.5 inches
Price: \$ 1,800.00



Description:

The enduring legacy of Sebastian Munster's *Cosmography* was maintained well beyond his death in 1552, initially by Henri Petri and, following Henri's passing in 1579, by his son, Sebastian Petri. In 1588, undertaking the monumental task of modernization, Sebastian Petri initiated a project to revise the outdated woodblocks, one of which depicted the Americas. The result is this striking woodcut map titled *Americae Sive Novi Orbis Nova Descriptio*, a testament to late 16th-century cartographic understanding, serving as an impressive representation of the Americas at the end of that momentous century.

The map's prominent features include two oval cartouches that traverse its top, presenting descriptions of the "New World," its discovery in 1492, and its vast geographical expanse. Further, these cartouches shed light on the territorial claims of the time, referencing the Portuguese dominion over Brazil and the French control over "Nova Francia," with the rest belonging to the Spanish king. These annotations speak volumes about the colonial aspirations and geopolitical dynamics of the European powers during the Age of Discovery.

Following the death of Henri Petri, the original publisher of Munster's successful book "Cosmographie," his son Sebastian took over and began updating the woodblocks with more contemporary examples. A significant point of focus was the map of America, which had become outdated. The updated map draws upon the copperplate map of America by Abraham Ortelius, yet, intriguingly, it maintains the southern bulge on the Chilean coastline, even though Ortelius himself removed this feature by 1587. The map also replicates the typical Ortelian western coastline of North America and the large, unexplored southern



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continent. Despite the attempt to update, the map paradoxically held onto the older portrayal of South America. The map, therefore, serves as a fascinating testament to the era's cartographic advancements and missteps, illustrating the evolving understanding of the "New World" amidst the transitional period of geographical exploration.

Detailed Condition: