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Seconda Tavola (Indian Ocean, India, Arabia, Maldives, Persia, Pakistan etc.)

Stock#: 37807

Map Maker: Bertelli

Date: 1565

Place: Venice

Color: Uncolored

Condition: VG+

Size: 16 x 12 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Finely engraved wide-margined example of Ferando Bertelli's rare map of the Indian Ocean, one of the earliest printed maps to focus on the region. The map is also sometimes attributed to Niccolo Nelli, the engraver.

The map shows the Indian subcontinent, the Strait of Hormuz, the eastern half of the Gulf, and the Indian Ocean, including the islands of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), the Maldives, Seychelles, the western tip of Sumatra and what must be the eastern tip of Somalia. Many of the topographic names in the Gulf region derive from the forms used by Portuguese explorers, but they can be identified, sometimes tentatively, from their place on the map and from the early accounts of voyages: "Cor. Dulfar" (Dhofar), the island "Macira" (Masirah), "C. Resalgate" (Ras el Had?), Galatia (the ancient site Qalhat), "Mazcate" (Muscat), the island "Quexumo" (Qeshm), "Ormus" (Hormuz) and there is even an unlabelled city close to present-day Abu Dhabi. Two of the ships are labelled with their destinations: "Calicut" (Kozhikode) on the Malabar Coast and "Moluche" (the Moluccas) in the East Indies.

The island of Baharen (Bahrain) is also shown, first visited by the Portuguese as early as 1485 by Duarte Barbosa.

Bertelli's map is based upon the first edition of Ramusio's map, which appeared in his *Delle Navigation e Viaggi*. It provides an update from Gastaldi's map of 1548, based upon new sources which became available during the intervening years.

A fire in the Ramusio print shop in November 1557 destroyed the woodblock that produced this map,



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shortly after Ramusio's death. As a result, few examples were printed before the destruction of the woodblock. In 1565, a copperplate edition of the map replaced the original woodblock. This map, issued in the same year as the second edition of Gastaldi's map (but is far rarer), with only a few examples located by bibliographers (not in Tooley). Even Suarez mis-dates the map as having been published in 1564.

The map is based on the latest Portuguese sources, whereupon the coastlines on the peninsula of the Indian Subcontinent and Sri Lanka take on a modern form. However, one will notice that the mouth of the Indus is too pronounced, and is located far to the east, on the wrong side of Gujarat. The map gives primacy to various details critical to the trade and commerce of the Portuguese Empire that dominated the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth-century. One will notice the key ports of Goa, Calicut, and Diu (in India), and Hormuz (in Persia), which were bulwarks of Lusitanian commerce. Plying the seas inhabited by sea monsters are Carracks following standard sailing directions. The vessels labelled "Vado a Calicut" follow a course by which Portuguese ships turned east from the Horn of Africa at around 14 degrees north and sailed towards Calicut, following the same winds and currents as did Vasco da Gama in 1497. The carracks labelled "Vado alle Moluche" are headed towards the Spice Islands, then a source of vast riches.

We note two appearances of the map at auction in the past 30 years and no copies in dealer catalogs. The present example has been trimmed to neatlines and re-margined, as issued in the 16th century, for inclusion in a Lafreri School Atlas.

Detailed Condition:

Trimmed to neatlines and re-margined, as issued in the 16th century, for inclusion in a Lafreri School Atlas.