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Maris Pacifici quod vulgo Mar del Zud



Stock#: 46873
Map Maker: Ortelius

Date: 1596
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 20 x 13.5 inches

Price: SOLD

Description:

The First Printed Map of the Pacific

Striking example of Ortelius' *Maris Pacifici . . . ,* the first printed map of the Pacific Ocean.

Ortelius's *Maris Pacifici* map was first issued in 1589. It was included in Ortelius influential atlas, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, in 1590 and it was the earliest map to focus exclusively on the Pacific Ocean. It chronicles the first 75 years of European interaction with the world's largest body of water. The Pacific had first been sighted by a European in 1513, when the conquistador Vasco Nuñez de Balboa looked at its waters from Panama. He named it the *Mar del Sur*, the South Sea. Less than a decade later, Magellan led an expedition south to try to find a rumored passage to the Spice Islands. When he finally emerged from the straits that would come to bear his name he rejoiced at the calm waters than awaited him, a pacific sea that would become the Pacific after his ship's (but not his) return in 1522. More information about the Pacific trickled back to Europe from Spanish expeditions which, by 1566, had forged a circular trade route from Acapulco to Manila.

Ortelius combined both names for the ocean in the title of the map, "A very new description of the peaceful sea, commonly called South Sea with the regions lying around it, and its islands, scattered everywhere". These islands are not randomly scattered, rather they are meticulously placed based on the information available to Ortelius at the time. The map is based upon Mercator's world map of 1569, with details from 25 Portuguese manuscript maps by Bartolomeo de Lasso which Plancius obtained and later used for his own world map. Ortelius also used travel accounts, including those of the Magellan circumnavigation by Maximilianus Transylvanus (Cologne, 1523) and Antonio Pigafetta (Paris, 1525 and circulated in manuscript with 23 maps). English travel writer Richard Hakluyt also provided Ortelius with

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place names from recent discoveries in North America, unpublished as yet for political reasons.

On the map, the viewer's eye is immediately drawn to a large ship which dominates the open waters of the Pacific. It is Magellan's *Victoria.* Tierra del Fuego, first sighted by Magellan, is the tip of a southern land, *Terra Australis, Sive Magellancia, Nondum Detecta*, which extends westward in an ascending slope toward a large, insular *Nova Guinea*. New Guinea appears much different than on Ortelius' world map of 1588, suggesting he may have drawn additional information from an unrecorded voyage. Among other notable features, it is detached from *Terra Australis*. Ortelius thought of the southern continent as *nondum*, "not yet" detected-a geographic certainty that only awaited further European exploration.

Ortelius shows the Moluccas and the Philippines, an area contested at the time by the Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese. The Moluccas in particular were a spot of contention between the Iberian kingdoms; the 1529 Treaty of Zaragoza granted the spice-rich islands to Portugal in return for Portuguese capital to finance Charles V's wars against the Protestants and Ottomans in Europe.

Ortelius includes a mis-projected Japan. An odd Isla de Plata appears above Japan. Further south, Guam (*Restiga de Ladrones*) is also shown. The reference to thieves, *ladrones,* in the name resulted from Magellan's perception of the islanders as robbers, but in reality there was a cultural misunderstanding between the Europeans and the islanders about property rights.

The Solomons are located to the east of New Guinea, as are some of the islands of Micronesia. Information about the Solomons would come from the voyage of Álvaro de Mendaña. In November 1567 Mendaña sailed west from Callao. By February 7, 1568, he and his men had arrived at Santa Isabel in the Solomon Islands, labeled as Isabella in Ortelius' map. The islands would be revisited in another expedition led by Mendaña and his wife in 1595, but thereafter the exact location of the islands was muddled, leaving them as wandering islands in subsequent Pacific maps.

In a deviation from his previous maps, including *Typus Orbis Terrarum,* Ortelius did not include the Strait of Anian skirting North America, the possible entrance to a Northwest Passage, in this map. The treatment of America and most notably the Northwest Coast is reminiscent of Hondius' depiction of America. This map and the Hondius/Le Clerc's map of 1589 (known only in the 1602 edition) have a curious and not fully understood relationship as to which is truly the first map of the Pacific, although because no example of the 1589 Hondius/Le Clerc has been discovered, this map retains primacy.

Maris Pacifici appeared in later editions of Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. Originally published in 1570, it is widely regarded as the first modern atlas. At the time of its publication, it was the most expensive book ever produced. Between 1570 and 1612, it was issued in 31 editions and 7 languages.

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The map reflects a much smaller body of water than the true size of the Pacific. The treatment of America and most notably the Northwest Coast is reminiscent of Hondius' America. This map and the Hondius/Le Clerc's rare map of 1589 (known only in the 1602 edition), have a curious and not fully understood relationship as to which is truly the first map of the Pacific, although because no example of the 1589 Hondius Le Clerk has been discovered, this map retains primacy.

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Detailed Condition:
Old Color. Minor repairs along centerfold and in lower margin.