Barry Lawrence Ruderman
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(First Printed Map of Asia) Neuw India / mit vilen anstossenden lendern / besunder Scychia /Parchia / Arabia / Persia etc.

Stock#: 70582
Map Maker: Munster

Date: 1544
Place: Basle
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 13.5 x 10.5 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare early German edition of the first printed map of Asia, by Sebastian Munster, from an early edition of Munster's *Cosmographia*.

The map shows Asia from the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf to the Pacific. The Pacific Ocean shows an archipelago of 7448 islands, a forerunner to the better understanding of Southeast Asia, which is largely unrecognizable, although Java Minor and Major, Porne (Borneo), Molucca, and several other islands are named. The map does not include Japan, which appears on the map of America. The northeastern coast of Asia is also omitted. The map also includes a large sea monster and mermaid type creature.

Although largely based on Ptolemy's work, the map incorporates some of the more recent Portuguese discoveries. The outlines of the Indian subcontinent, between the Indus and the Ganges rivers, are now in a more recognizable form, with "Zaylon" (Sri Lanka) correctly shown as an island. The Portuguese outposts of Goa and Calicut, the first place where Vasco da Gama landed in 1497, are depicted. Further to the east "Taprobana" is also designated as "Sumatra.". The Portuguese trading port of "Malaqua" is shown. Java is depicted as two separate islands. "Moloca," center of the spice island trade, and the object of considerable conflict between Spain and Portugal, is shown. The resolution of the dispute was the official purpose of Magellan's epic circumnavigation. The treatment of "Cathay" (China) is consistent with the writings of Marco Polo and other Venetian travelers.

The first edition can be distinguished by the single decorative printer's device, to the left of the title.

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Munster's *Geographia* was a cartographic landmark, including not only Ptolemaic maps, but also a number of landmark modern maps, including the first separate maps of the 4 continents, the first map of England and the earliest obtainable map of Scandinavia. Munster dominated cartographic publication during the mid-16th Century. Munster is generally regarded as one of the most important mapmakers of the 16th Century.

Sebastien Munster was a linguist and mathematician, who initially taught Hebrew in Heidelberg. He issued his first mapping of Germany in 1529, after which he issued a call for geographical information about Germany to scholars throughout the country. The response was better than hoped for, and included substantial foreign material, which supplied him with up to date, if not necessarily accurate maps, for the issuance of his *Geographia* in 1540.

The present map appeared in the 1544 and 1545 edition only, with the title changed in later editions.

Detailed Condition: