



The first map of the continent of America

MUNSTER, Sebastian.

Tavola dell'isole nuoue, le quali son nominate occidentali, & indiane per diversi rispetti.

Basle, c.1558. Italian text edition. Coloured woodcut, image size 270 x 340mm.

£6,250

Munster's landmark map of the Americas, the first to attempt to show America as a continent, yet demonstrating how little was known. First published in 1540, it shows a narrow isthmus dividing the Atlantic and Pacific in the region of the Carolinas, based on Verrazzano, and the Yucatan is an island. The large island of Zipangri off the west coast is not California but Japan, based on the narrative of Marco Polo, a few years before any recorded visit to the islands by Europeans. The Philippines appear as an 'archipelago of 7448 islands'. The large vignette ship is the 'Victoria', the only survivor of Magellan's fleet of four. Burden lists three Italian editions (1558, 1571 & 1575), all of which used maps printed in 1558. A very fine example.

BURDEN: 12, state 8 of 13, "very attractive woodcut map".

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