

Double-page engraved map.

ORTELIUS’S RARE MAP OF THE PACIFIC, ASIA, AND AMERICA

Maris Pacifici, (quod vulgo Mar del Zur)

Author
ORTELIUS, Abraham

Publication date
1595].

Publisher

Publication place
[Antwerp,

Physical description
Double-page engraved map.

Dimensions
345 by 495mm. (13.5 by 19.5 inches).

Notes
The Maris Pacifici map was first issued in 1590. It is based upon Gerard Mercator’s world map of 1569, with details from 25 Portuguese manuscript maps of Bartolomeo de Lasso which Plancius obtained and later used for his own world map. Ortelius shows the Moluccas and the Philippines, already the site of considerable Dutch activity and a misshapen Japan. An odd ‘Isla de Plata’ appears above Japan. Guam (‘Isla de Ladrones’) is shown. New Guinea appears very different to 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. The Solomons, or Melanesia, are located, as are some of the islands of Micronesia. This was the first map to focus on the Pacific Ocean. 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 and Le Clerc 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 Clerc has been discovered, this map retains primacy.

Ortelius' 'Theatrum Orbis Terrarum' 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 seven languages. The present example is the first state of the map, appearing in the 1595 Latin edition.

Bibliography
Van den Broecke 12.1; Burden 74: van der Krogt [0600:31], from van der Krogt 31:051.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 12905

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