



Medieval Woodblock T-O World Map

£16,500

Additional Information

Cartographer	Anonymous.
Date	1543
Extra Info	[Untitled circular world map from a woodblock of 1491.]
Publication	Paris, Nicolas Couteau, 1543. Woodblock, two sheets joined. Circular map, diameter 300mm, letterpress in borders.
Condition	A fine example.
References	SHIRLEY: Mapping of the World, 17.

Product Description

A scarce circular woodblock world map, first issued in the 1491 edition of 'La Mer des Hystoires', published in Lyon. It follows the T-O format with east at the top of the map, so Asia filling the top half, Africa bottom right and Europe bottom left, with Jerusalem at the centre. The map shows different countries and cities as hills or islands, with the Pope shown behind the walls of the Vatican and England Ireland on the edge just left of the centre. Other vignettes include the Devil, the Tree of the Sun and the Moon, dragons and a phoenix.

'La Mer des Hystoires' was a French translation of the 'Rudimentum Novitiorum', 1475, an encyclopaedic world history based on medieval theology, which contained the first detailed maps ever printed, pre-dating the illustrated editions of Ptolemy.

Although this map is smaller than the 1475 original a number of mistakes were corrected and the text is much clearer than in the previous editions. Campbell calls it 'the work of a thinking individual'.