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Tabula Itineraria Ex Illustri Peutingerorum Bibliotheca Quae Augustae Vindel. Est Beneficio Marci Velseri Septemviri Augustani In Lucem Edita.

Stock#: 51066
Map Maker: Ortelius / Peutinger
Date: 1598 (1624)
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 20.5 x 15.5 inches (each)
Price: SOLD



Description:

Ortelius' Edition of One of the Most Famous Maps of Ancient Rome—The Peutinger Table

Fine example of Ortelius's four-sheet map of the famous Peutinger Table, based on a thirteenth-century manuscript document once owned by Konrad Peutinger, which now resides in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. This version was published by Ortelius' for his historical atlas of the ancient world; it is the most reliable representation and one of the earliest obtainable printed examples of the important Peutinger Table.

Ortelius' Peutinger Table (Tabula Peutingeriana) is an illustrated *itinerarium* (an ancient Roman road map) showing the layout of the Roman Empire's road network, known as the *cursus publicus*. The map stretches from Europe, excluding Britain and the Iberian Peninsula, through North Africa and parts of the Middle East, Persia, and India. It also includes a simple cartouche in the first segment, naming the map and dedicating it to Marcus Welser (the owner of the original Peutinger Table) in the name of the cartographer Abraham Ortelius, who had recently died.

Each sheet contains two segments, and each segment is labeled at the top (e.g. *Segmentum Primum*), which gives the reader their order. Because the intention of the map is to show the roads of the Roman Empire, the landforms and water bodies are somewhat distorted from the typical, fairly accurate depictions of the time. The long, thin water body that stretches along the bottom of the first six segments is, in fact, the Mediterranean Sea, recognizable by the islands of Sardinia and Corsica found in the second



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segment.

As is typical of an Ortelius map, cities are characteristically drawn with clusters of buildings, ranging in size from one or two towers to large castles and rectangular edifices. Notable cities are Rome (*Roma*) in the fourth segment, Constantinople (*Constantinopolis*) in the sixth segment, and Antioch (*Antiochia*) in the seventh segment, all of which are marked by a robed figure. In addition, Rome is the meeting point of over ten named roads, giving credence to the popular saying, "All roads lead to Rome."

This version of the Peutinger Table is notable for the amount of information present and its attention to detail. Rivers and mountain ranges are present throughout the map, and some places are particularly highlighted by notes about their geography or history. For example, in the bottom right of the sixth segment a note identifies one area as the desert in which the Israelites roamed for forty years after the Exodus from Egypt. In the bottom right of the eighth segment, a small note tells the reader that elephants live there.

From Agrippa to Ortelius

Though it is not entirely certain, the Peutinger Table is generally thought to be a surviving copy of a map created under the direction of the Roman architect and general Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa near the start of the first millennium. Agrippa was a good friend to the emperor Augustus, and when Agrippa died in 12 B.C. Augustus (along with Agrippa's sister) had the original map engraved in marble and displayed in the Porticus Vipsania in the Campus Agrippae, an area of Rome named in honor of the architect.

The American historian Glen Bowersock supports this dating, based particularly on details of Roman Arabia found on the map that are inconsistent with a later creation date. Another important detail is the Roman town of Pompeii (*Pompeis*), near modern-day Naples, which was famously destroyed in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D. and never rebuilt. Its inclusion on the map indicates that the original was created before Pompeii's destruction.

However, there are also details suggesting a revision of the map in the fifth century, such as the inclusion of Constantinople, which was founded in 328, and of Ravenna, seat of the Western Roman Empire from 402 to 476. The presence of certain cities of Germania Inferior that were destroyed in the mid-fifth century also indicates the map's latest likely creation date.

This revised version was copied onto parchment in the thirteenth century and is the oldest surviving copy today. It was found in a library in Augsburg by Konrad Celtes, who left it to the collector Konrad Peutinger, whose name it now bears. After his death, it went to Peutinger's relative Marcus Welser. After



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this, the map was passed down within the Welser family, largely lost from view, until 1714, when it was recovered and now it is one of the treasures of the Vienna National Library. This surviving manuscript is damaged and lacking the first sheet, showing the Iberian Peninsula and Britain.

Welser sent new manuscript copies of the Peutinger example to Ortelius in 1598 at Ortelius' request. This is why Welser is subsequently honored in this copy's cartouche. Welser was actually the first to publish a printed version of the Peutinger Table, in Venice in 1591. However, Ortelius was displeased with the quality of the engraving and desired to improve it. He had been interested in the Peutinger Table for at least twenty years by the 1590s, and he used these accurate manuscript copies to create his own beautifully-rendered version, an ambitious project. When joined, the eight strips shown on the map stretch approximately four meters (about 13.3 feet) long. This was one of Ortelius' last projects. He oversaw the engraving until his death in 1598.

The Ortelius Peutinger was published separately by Moretus in 1598. Bertius also included the prints in *Theatrum Geographiæ Veteris* in 1619. It then appeared in the 1624 edition of Ortelius *Parergon*. This atlas of the ancient world was a project of great personal interest and the work that Ortelius himself considered his greatest achievement. The 1624 edition was one of the only *Parergon* editions to be published completely separately from his modern atlas, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. It was highly successful as indicated by its continued printing 26 years after Ortelius' death.

Ortelius' work on the Peutinger Table is masterful, and the detail present shows his skill and dedication to accurate historical representation. The original Peutinger Table, now residing in the Vienna National Library, is heavily damaged. Therefore, Ortelius's four-sheet engraving is generally considered to be the best surviving and one of the earliest obtainable representations of the original Roman map.

Detailed Condition:

4 sheets. Margins extended at left and right sides.