



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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Tabula Moderna Poloniae Ungariae Boemiae Germaniae Russiae Lithuae

Stock#: 75082
Map Maker: Salamanca
Date: 1548
Place: Rome
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 20.5 x 15.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Earliest Modern Maps of Central and Eastern Europe

Fine example of this rare and important map of Central and Eastern Europe, published by Antonio Salamanca in Rome.

The map is from several important early sources, none of which are available to modern collectors. The map is derived from the iconic manuscript map of Central Europe by the German humanist, Cardinal Nicolaus de Cusa (1401-1464), and more directly from Marcus Beneventano and Bernard Wapowski, who collaborated to create the 1507 edition of the Rome Ptolemy, before Wapowski's return to Crakow. The information for Poland is drawn from the 1526 map of Sarmatia of Wapowski, who is considered among the most important Polish chroniclers of the 16th century, and "the father of Polish cartography" Bernard Wapowski, only fragments of which are known to survive.

The map covers the area from just west of the Rhine River and Lake Geneva, showing most of Central and Eastern Europe including the Black Sea and Lithuania. It includes significant detail throughout, with finely engraved features of towns, forests and mountains and the watersheds of the rivers Rhine, Danube and Elbe.

The image is bound on the north by the Baltic and North Seas and covers much of the area once controlled by the cities of the Hanseatic League, which was diminishing in power at this time. To the south are the Alps and the Gulf of Venice.



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To the left, beyond the latitude scale, another column marks the Ptolemaic parallels. These denote the length of the day at the summer solstice. In addition, one parallel denotes the border between climes 6 and 7. Ptolemy developed a series of parallels based on the length of the day, eventually settling on seven divisions. These corresponded with the changes in climate between the equator and the poles, which led thinkers from the classical to the modern period to theorize as to how climate determined human appearance and behavior in frigid, torrid, and temperate zones.

Nicholas of Cusa

As mentioned above, the map is derived in part from the manuscript map of Nicholas of Cusa (1401 – 1464). Also known as Nicholas of Kues and Nicolaus Cusanus, he was a Germanic humanist known for his work in philosophy, law, astronomy, and theology. He experimented on atmospheric humidity and discussed how to measure fevers and pulses, leading to conclusions about systematic measurements that would be intelligible across borders. He is perhaps best remembered for his spiritual writings on “learned ignorance,” a theory about the infinity and unknowability of God. Interestingly, this work included a fascinating hypothesis about the cosmos. He reasoned that, because the universe is infinite, it cannot have a center except for God. Therefore, the Earth cannot be the center of the universe as was commonly thought at the time.

Cusa also dabbled in ecclesiastical politics, serving as a mediator in the struggle for power between Rome and the Holy Roman Empire. He was a papal legate to Germany from 1446. In 1488 Pope Nicholas V elevated him to the position of cardinal and then to Prince-Bishop of Brixen in 1450. In 1459, he was named vicar general in the Papal States.

In the history of cartography, Cusa is noted for penning the first modern map of Central Europe, the source material for this map. His map showed the area between Flanders and the mouth of the Danube, between Jutland and the Po. Influenced by Strabo, this map framed a cohesive region centered on the ancestral lands of the Germanic peoples. It proved quite influential for later mapmakers like Salamanca. Unfortunately, however, we only know of Cusa from other works. His own map is lost and his specific sources unknown.

States of the map

The map is known in two states. However, the present example seems to be a virtually unknown state, which likely falls between state 1 and state 2. Bifolco identified the following two states:

- Ant. Sal. Excu.1548
- Salamanca name removed.



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Rarity

The map is very rare. Prior to the appearance of this map in 2020, we note only a single example at auction and no dealer records in the past fifty years.

We note examples at the British Library, the Newberry Library, the BNF, and the Biblioteka Narodowa.

Detailed Condition: