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(Atlas) *Theatrum orbis terrarum* [with] *Parergon* [and] *Nomenclator Ptolemaicus*

Stock#: 49333
Map Maker: Ortelius
Date: 1579
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 17.5 x 12 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

First Printing of the First Plantin Edition of the "First Modern Atlas", and the First Edition with the Parergon.

Folio, handsome contemporary full calf tooled in blind (almost entirely unsophisticated but for artful reinforcement of the head and foot of spine.)

Hand-colored engraved title page, portrait of Ortelius.

93 double-page engraved maps in full original hand-color (i.e., world map, 4 maps of continents, North Atlantic map, 73 maps of European subjects, 7 of Asian subjects, 2 of Africa, 2 of America, and 3 of the Old World in the *Parergon*; all of which in beautiful old hand-color.)

"Plantin may have decided to publish this atlas as part of a campaign to persuade the Spanish court and its adherents that he was still loyal to them, despite his sojourn in the anti-Spanish, Calvinist city of Leiden between April 1583 and October 1585." (Bowen-Imhof, *Book illustrations in 16th cent. Europe*, 291).

Theatrum Orbis Terrarum

Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (or "Theater of the World") is widely considered to be the first true modern atlas. The *Theatrum* was the best available summary of 16th-century cartographic knowledge, covering much of the exploration of the world in the century following the discovery of America.

The atlas was first published in 1570 in Antwerp, and it was published consistently until 1612. Recent



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research has unearthed examples of the atlas with maps dated to 1640.

Ortelius was the artist of all of the maps; he drew them by hand, and those drawings were interpreted into prints by his engravers Frans Hogenberg, Ambrosius Arsenius, and Ferdinand Arsenius.

The broad appeal of the *Theatrum* saw demand from many consumers who preferred to read the atlas in their local language. Thus, in addition to Latin, the book was published with text in Dutch, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and English.

After Ortelius's death in 1598, the copper plates for his atlas passed to his heirs. They, in turn, sold the collection to Jan Baptist Vrients (1522-1612) in 1601. Vrients added new maps and published the atlas until his death in 1612. Vrients's widow then sold the plates to the Moretus brothers, who were the successors of Christoffel Plantin.

Detailed Condition:

Old color. Contemporary full calf. Contents generally very clean and bright. Engraved title remargined (with small loss of right corners reinstated). Ball-point pen remark to A2 and small stain. Some reddish blurring to portrait and following page. Repaired tears to centerfolds of many maps, few larger ones affecting images. A few small marginal tears, partly repaired. Poland map with brownish waterstains to top of image.