



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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(Cologne, Germany) Prodomus Geographicus hoc est Archiepiscopatus Coloniensis Annexarumq[ue] et Vicinarum Aliquot Regionum descriptio nova [Geographical Introduction, that is, a new description of the Archbishopric of Cologne, its annexes, and some neighboring regions.]

Stock#: 84456
Map Maker: Gigas / Hogenberg
Date: 1620
Place: Cologne (?)
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: Good
Size:
Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Most Unusual Atlases of the 17th Century.

An exceptionally early regional atlas and the earliest such atlas for this part of Germany, this eleven-plate survey of the Archbishopric of Cologne represents a rare outlier in German 17th-century cartography.

Perhaps nothing heralds the downfall of the Cologne School of cartography so much as this atlas: it is the first regional atlas of Cologne, yet most scholars conclude that it was published in nearby Munster.

The *Prodromus Geographicus* combines seven original regional maps by Johannes Gigas with four plates and a title page from Braun and Hogenberg's *Civitates orbis Terrarum*. Gigas gained access to the Braun & Hogenberg plates through his close association with Ferdinand of Bavaria, Bishop of Munster and Archbishop of Cologne. Gigas was Ferdinand's personal physician and dedicated the present work to him.

Johannes Gigas

Johannes Gigas was born around 1582 in Lügde near Pymont, the son of a Protestant preacher and teacher. At the age of 15, he enrolled at the University of Helmstedt and later moved to Wittenberg and Basel to continue his medical studies, earning his Doctor of Medicine in 1603. After marrying the same year, he taught medicine, possibly mathematics, and physics at the high school Arnoldinum in



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Burgsteinfurt, and unsuccessfully ran a pharmacy. In 1616, he moved to Münster, converted to Catholicism, and served as the personal physician to the Bishop of Münster. His work in Münster primarily focused on medicine, but he also published works on various subjects, including astronomy and chronology, and created maps. Considered a universal scholar of his time, Gigas's interests extended to cosmology, as evidenced by his publications, including two annual calendars and a two-volume introduction to cosmology. After 1625, his publication activity decreased, and he focused on medical practice. He died at about 55 in Münster.

Cartography as Control

Gigas's atlas represents one of the earliest regional atlases ever published, and certainly one of the most detailed. While world atlases were often published in the spirit of advancing cartographic knowledge, regional atlases oftentimes had a more specific, concrete purpose. For example, in the case of Saxton's atlas of England, the atlas, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, was meant to improve the understanding of coastal defenses.

Gigas's high level of accuracy allowed for those who controlled the lands shown -- namely, the Archbishop of Cologne -- to be able to quantify the size and distribution of his territory. Bergmann notes how accurate the *Prodromus Geographicus* was when compared with the modern geography of the Ruhr region, and states that this level of resolution was necessary for improved governance of the region.

Bergmann also notes the progressive depiction of roads shown on the map, noting how rare showing roads on maps was at the time. Given the Franz Hogenberg was an early proponent of mapping roads, this heritage makes sense for Gigas. However, the roads that Gigas shows are limited - these seem to be only roads that emanate from Munster (where Gigas resided) or those with proximity to his hometown of Lügde.

Rarity

The atlas is very rare, with Kleinn's 1981 survey locating just ten copies. Of these copies, only seven were bound with the additional four plates from Braun and Hogenberg, suggesting some variance in how the atlas was issued. In addition, a few copies have been recorded with Gigas's important *Pauluskarte*, which shows Munster in the shape of the Apostle Paul. Bergmann suggests that the atlas was published specifically for the Archbishop and that the book's limited introduction suggests Gigas did not intend to



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produce a commercial publication; this goes some way in explaining why there are very few extant copies. Furthermore, the Council of Munster paid a high price for their copies of the atlas, which were personally delivered by Gigas, further confirming Bergmann's hypothesis.

CLC locates the following examples: Danish Royal Library; Staatliche BIB Provinzialbibliothek; Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg; Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Köln; BnF; British Library (listed as an internet resource but probably reflective of an actual holding). Kleins noted that he inspected 10 extant copies, of which 7 possessed the additional city views. An additional copy not inspected by Klein is located at the Amberg Provincial Library according to Bergmann.

Some sources claim that not more than 20 copies of the atlas were printed. It is very unlikely that this was the case given the remaining number in circulation and in institutions. That said, the work is rare. An example was sold at Reiss & Sohn in 1998 for €11,760. In 1989, Sotheby's London offered the atlas with a low estimate of £12,000, calling it "extremely rare".

We are not aware of any other copies of this atlas in North America.

Collation

[Engraved title]; [Dedication]; A1-A4; B1-B2; C1-C3; D1; [Set of four double-page engraved maps]. With the usual collation of seven maps by Gigas and four maps by Braun and Hogenberg, lacking the extremely rare *Pauluskarte* that sometimes appears with the atlas. While no formal collation has emerged for the atlas due to its rarity and variance, the book must be considered complete without the *Paulusakarte* given its extreme rarity, and even the maps by Braun and Hogenberg may be considered extra-illustrations.

Murer (*Atlantes Coloniensis*, page 43) notes that the title page for the Gigas Atlas is simply the title page for *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* volume IV with new text pasted over.

Detailed Condition:

Folio. Contemporary vellum, covers ruled in blind (quite stained and worn, with spine split and lacking much vellum). 11 double-page engraved maps or views, all of which in original hand-color, extraillustrated with 4 double-page engraved views, also in original hand-color. Engraved title (original hand color, worn and stained at right edge with some minor loss of printed image and reinforcement on verso, text pasted down as always), letterpress dedication, and four leaves of letterpress text.