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**Mató-Tópe. Indianer Geschmückt Mit Den Zeichen Seiner Kriegsthaten, Indien décoré
des emblèmes de ses faits d'armes [Mandan warrior chief Mató-Tópe, also known as,
Ma-to-toh-pe or Four Bears]**

Stock#: 94166
Map Maker: Bodmer
Date: 1839 - 1842
Place: Paris, Coblenz and London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 13 x 17 inches Plate
Price: \$ 9,500.00



Description:

A strikingly vivid portrait of the famed Mandan warrior, Four Bears, *Mato-Tope Geschmückt mit den Zeichen seiner Kriegsthaten. Décoré des emblèmes de ses faits d'armes* exemplifies the artistry of Karl Bodmer and offers a powerful testimony to Four Bears' warrior prowess and status among his tribe. The hand-colored aquatint, etching, and roulette print, presents a visually arresting rendition of the chief adorned in his distinctive warrior's paint and accoutrements symbolic of his numerous battlefield feats.

The 19th-century fascination with Native American cultures, primarily driven by westward expansion, resulted in a wealth of visual and ethnographic documentation. At the forefront of these efforts, artists like George Catlin and Karl Bodmer ventured up the Missouri River, documenting the lives and customs of the



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Native American tribes they encountered. Four Bears, a renowned Mandan chief, was a favored subject of both artists due to his stature and the rich narratives embodied by his adornments. This visual record offers an invaluable insight into a pre-reservation era culture and its distinctive traditions.

This rendering of Four Bears distinguishes itself through the meticulous detailing of his warrior's paint and symbolic artifacts. The red wooden knife in his hair signifies his victory over a Cheyenne chief, while the six wooden sticks and turkey feather depict the musket and arrow wounds he suffered. The stripes adorning his body narrate his various exploits, serving as a visual testament to his bravery. Additionally, the painting of his face and torso provide important insights into the Mandan tradition of body decoration, an area rich with cultural significance and interpretation.

The development of this print was heavily influenced by both the watercolor from Joslyn and the Glenbow's drawing, each contributing significant elements such as Mató-Tópe's pose and the ethnographic detail respectively. Tableau 14, however, stands unique in the atlas, being the only print that consistently lacks the printer's credit—a testament to the print's composition and Bodmer's discretion. This particular rendition of Four Bears is an embodiment of the exploration era's in-depth recording and understanding of Native American cultures.

Detailed Condition:

Aquatint, etching, and roulette, hand-colored and heightened with gum arabic. With the Bodmer blindstamp below center imprint line.