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Cyprus Insula [with] Candia, Olim Creta

Stock#: 44109
Map Maker: Ortelius
Date: 1581
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 17 x 14.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Striking example of Ortelius' first map of Cyprus and Crete, from Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, the first modern atlas of the World.

The map is based upon earlier maps by Bordone (1528) and Camocio (1564).

During the time of the map's creation, both of these islands had just become part of the Ottoman Empire. The island of Cyprus was annexed into the Ottoman Empire in 1571 as the Eyelet of Cyprus. It was a sub-province of the Eyelet of the Archipelago from 1670 to 1703, and again from 1784 onwards; a fief of the Grand Vizier; and again an eyelet for the short period from 1745 to 1748.

The island of Crete was declared an Ottoman eyelet in 1646, after the Ottomans managed to conquer the western part of the island as part of the Cretan War, but the Venetians maintained their hold on the capital Candia until 1669. The offshore island fortresses of Souda, Granbousa, and Spinalonga would remain under Venetian rule until in 1715, before they too were captured by the Ottomans.

During the Venetian rule, the Ottomans often raided Cyprus, pillaging and taking captives to be sold into slavery. Fearing the ever-expanding Ottoman Empire, the Venetians had fortified Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kyrenia, but most other cities were easy targets.

In the summer of 1570, the Turks struck again, but this time with a full-scale invasion rather than a raid. About 60,000 troops, including cavalry and artillery, landed unopposed near Limassol, and laid siege to



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Nicosia. The city fell and 20,000 Nicosians were put to death. Word of the massacre spread, and a few days later, Mustafa took Kyrenia without having to fire a shot. Famagusta, however, resisted with the Siege of Famagusta and put up a defense that lasted a year. The fall of Famagusta marked the beginning of the Ottoman period in Cyprus. The previous Latin elite were destroyed and the first significant demographic change since antiquity took place with the formation of a Muslim community. Soldiers who fought in the conquest settled on the island and Turkish peasants and craftsmen were brought to the island. The Ottomans abolished the feudal system and applied the millet system to Cyprus, under which non-Muslim peoples were governed by their own religious authorities. Two months later, the naval forces of the Holy League, composed mainly of Venetian, Spanish, and Papal ships, defeated the Turkish fleet at the Battle of Lepanto in one of the decisive battles of world history. The victory however, came too late to help Cyprus, and the island remained under Ottoman rule for the next three centuries.

The Ottomans conquered Crete in 1669, after the siege of Candia. Islamic presence on the island, aside from the interlude of the Arab occupation, was cemented by the Ottoman conquest. During the Cretan War (1645-1669), Venice was pushed out of Crete by the Ottoman Empire. Most of the island fell in the first years of the war, but the capital Candia (Heraklion) held out during long siege which lasted 21 years, possibly the longest siege in history. The last Venetian outposts, the island fortresses of Souda, Gramvousa and Spinalonga, fell in the Ottoman-Venetian War of 1714-1718.

In 1644 the Knights of Malta attacked an Ottoman convoy en route from Constantinople to Alexandria, which was bound for Mecca. The knights slaughtered and enslaved the pilgrims which enraged the Ottomans. The Ottomans accused the Venetians of deliberate collusion with the Knights. The incident was a perfect pretext for war with a weakened Venice. An expedition was quickly assembled with over 50,000 troops and reputedly 416 vessels. The Ottoman armada sailed from the Dardanelles, heading towards the harbor of Navarino in the Peloponnese. The fleet's target was not announced, but the Ottomans, to allay Venetian fears, implied that it would be Malta. After the loss of Cyprus to the Ottomans in the fourth Ottoman-Venetian War (1570-1573), the island of Crete was the last major overseas possession of Venice. Its important strategic position made it an obvious target for future Ottoman expansion. Its size and fertile ground, together with the bad state of its fortresses, made it a more tempting prize than Malta. The Venetian side was weak militarily and was dependent on uninterrupted trade, which caused them not to provoke the Ottomans. By the early 17th century, Venetian power had declined considerably. Its economy, which had once prospered because of its control over the Eastern spice trade, had suffered as a result of the opening of the new Atlantic trade routes, and from the loss of the important German market because of the Thirty Years' War. In addition, the Republic had become embroiled in a series of wars in northern Italy-like the Mantuan War-and was further weakened by an outbreak of the plague.

Detailed Condition: