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Latium. Ex Contaibus Geographicis Abrah. Ortelij Antverp.

Stock#: 56336
Map Maker: Ortelius
Date: 1624
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 18 x 14 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Remarkable Example of Ortelius' Map of Ancient Latium, Including Rome

Fine example of Ortelius' map of the region of Latium, the ancient region which included Rome, from Ortelius' *Parergon*, an atlas depicting the ancient world. The *Parergon* was generally published as an appendix to Ortelius' magnum opus, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, which is considered the first modern atlas. However, the *Parergon* was also published as a separate atlas on a few occasions, including in 1595 and 1624.

Oriented northward, this map extends from the Tyrrhenian Sea (*Maris Tyrrheni*) in the south to the region of Umbria in the north, showing the entire region of Latium as well as parts of the regions of Tuscany (*Tusciae pars*) and Campania (*Campaniae pars*). Cities are depicted by individually drawn buildings, in typical Ortelian style.

Rome (*Roma*) is given particular attention with its encircling wall and various inner buildings that resemble the actual edifices of Rome, such as the Coliseum. Also present, depicted with simple lines, are a number of early Roman roads.

The natural features of the map are also neatly rendered. Mountain ranges and winding rivers cross the territory and trees dot the map at various points. The Fucine Lake (*Fucinus Lacus*) as well as the sea to the south of the Italian coast are filled in with careful stippling. Along the southern coast of Latium and Campania, Ortelius has added marshlands to give the viewer a better sense of the area's geography.



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Three beautiful cartouches adorn the map. In the northeast corner, the title cartouche is particularly ornate. A simpler cartouche in Tuscany dedicates the map to the historian and patrician Marcus Velser Augustanus. The third cartouche contains an inset map of Mount Circeo (*Mons Circaeus*), and a note indicates that this depiction was done by Angelo Breventanus. This cartouche also contains a simple compass rose, as its orientation is different from the larger map. The strapwork cartouches employ texture and shading which give them a vivid appearance.

Certain details in this map emphasize the history and mythology associated with this region. In the Tyrrhenian Sea (*Maris Tyrrheni*), a ship sails complete with oarsmen, soldiers, and two artillery weapons, reminding the viewer of the Roman Empire's military might. The ancient home of the sorceress Circe, who features heavily in Homer's *Odyssey*, is noted at *Circaeium*. There is also a small description at the Fucine Lake (*Fucinus Lacus*), indicating that the lake contains eight-finned fish, according to Pliny. Both myths and real historical figures are well represented, which makes this map particularly interesting among some of the others in the *Parergon*.

The Growth of Rome

There are a number of myths that tell of the founding of Rome. One well-known legend tells of twin brothers, Romulus and Remus, who were abandoned on the Tiber River (*Tiberis flu.*) and raised by a she-wolf. They founded the city in 753 BCE, and when they argued over who would rule it, Romulus killed his brother and named the city Rome, after himself.

However, another myth claims that Rome was founded by Aeneas and the Trojans who fled Troy after the Trojan War, as told in Virgil's *Aeneid*. In this version, Aeneas was an ancestor to Romulus and Remus, linking the legends and giving Rome a connection to the mighty kingdom of Troy.

Regardless of its founding myth, Rome quickly grew as a trading town on the banks of the Tiber River. The Romans were influenced by Greek culture, architecture, and religion as their city expanded. They also learned the skills of trade from the nearby Etruscans around 600 BCE. The Romans expanded and improved upon these influences, creating their own culture. Eventually, Rome's governing system was reformed and the Roman Republic was established in the sixth century BC.

Rome's power and wealth came not just from trade, but also from war. Rome defeated Carthage, its trade rival across the Mediterranean Sea, in the Punic Wars of the second and third centuries BCE. However, with the growth of the Republic came division, particularly between social classes. After much political and military conflict, Julius Caesar took control of Rome and the city prospered under his strong, dictatorial government. When he was killed, his nephew became the first Roman Emperor, Augustus (r. 27BCE-14CE).



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Parergon

Although best known for his world atlas, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, the *Parergon* was a project of personal interest and the work that Ortelius himself considered his greatest achievement. He had a deep interest in classical antiquity which spurred him to create the *Parergon* maps, and the amount of time and detail he put into each map is clearly evident. Ortelius hand drew each map of the *Parergon*, which required considerable skill and knowledge of the area's history and geography. It is considered the first historical atlas.

Parergon means supplementary and, accordingly, the first three *Parergon* maps were published as supplements to the 1579 edition of the *Theatrum*, which had already been in print for nine years. Over time, successive editions of the *Theatrum* were supplemented with more *Parergon* maps, and there are 55 known plates overall. The *Parergon* was also published as its own atlas separate from the *Theatrum* on two occasions, once in 1595 and again in 1624.

The *Parergon* was highly successful both as a supplement to the *Theatrum* and on its own. It was variously translated into French, German, Italian, and English and regularly printed until 1612. Further editions were more sporadic but still popular, such as the 1624 edition which was published twenty-six years after Ortelius' death in 1598.

The impressive weaving of myth and history has created a beautiful map, and the level of detail present speaks to Ortelius' skill as a mapmaker. This would be a valuable addition to a collection of Italian or Mediterranean maps, Ortelius maps, or maps of classical antiquity.

Detailed Condition: