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Tabula Asiae VI [Arabia and Persian Gulf]

Stock#: 56423
Map Maker: Munster

Date: 1545
Place: Basle
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 13.5 x 10 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

Nice example of Munster's map of the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf.

The map is unchanged from the 1540 edition.

Fascinating Ptolemeic map of the Arabian Peninsula region, with Ethiopia on the left-hand side of the map and Persia on the right. The map is centered on the Arabian Peninsula. The map includes and names all the major cities, including terrestrial features such as mountains and rivers of the region. The map also locates and names all the islands of the Persian Gulf and the red sea that surround the Peninsula.

In the 16th century, the Ottomans added the Red Sea and Persian Gulf coast to the Empire and claimed suzerainty over the interior. One reason for this was to thwart Portuguese attempts to attack the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Ottoman degree of control over these lands varied over the next four centuries with the fluctuating strength or weakness of the Empire's central authority.

When the Ottomans conquered Mamluk territory in 1517, the role of the Ottoman sultan in the Hijaz was first to take care of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina and provide safe passage for the many Muslims who traveled to Mecca in order to perform the Hajj. Regional administration of Mecca and Medina was left in the hands of the Sharifs, or the stewards of Mecca since the Abbasid caliphate. The Sharifs maintained a level of local autonomy under the rule of the Sultan; however, in order to balance the local influences, the Sultan appointed the kadis and lesser officials in the region. The central Ottoman government controlled caravan routes to Mecca, and was obligated to protect pilgrims along these routes. However, political alliances and conflicts shaped the routes that were opened or closed. Particularly in the case of

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the Safavid Empire, the Ottomans closed the shortest route from Basra that would have allowed Shi'i pilgrims to cross the Persian Gulf into the Arabian Peninsula. Pilgrims were instead required to use the official caravan routes from Damascus, Cairo or Yemen. From the Mughal Empire, sea routes were blocked by the presence of Portuguese ships in the Indian Ocean.

Portuguese expansion during the early 16th century in the Indian Ocean saw battle with the Ottomans and Persians up the coast of the Persian Gulf. In 1521, a Portuguese force led by Commander Antonio Correia invaded Bahrain to take control of the wealth created by its pearl industry. On April 29, 1602, Shāh Abbās, the Persian emperor of the Safavid Empire, expelled the Portuguese from Bahrain. With the support of the British fleet, in 1622, 'Abbās took the island of Hormuz from the Portuguese; much of the trade was diverted to the town of Bandar 'Abbās, which he had taken from the Portuguese in 1615 and had named after himself. The Persian Gulf was therefore opened by Persians to a flourishing commerce with the Portuguese, Dutch, French, Spanish and the British merchants, who were granted particular privileges.

Munster's Geographia was a cartographic landmark, including not only Ptolemaic maps, but also a number of landmark modern maps, including the first separate maps of the 4 continents, the first map of England, and the earliest obtainable map of Scandinavia. Munster dominated cartographic publication during the mid-16th Century. Munster is generally regarded as one of the three most important map makers of the 16th Century, along with Ortelius and Mercator. Munster was a linguist and mathematician, who initially taught Hebrew in Heidelberg. He issued his first mapping of Germany in 1529, after which he issued a call for geographical information about Germany to scholars throughout the country. The response was better than hoped for, and included substantial foreign material, which supplied him with up to date, if not necessarily accurate, maps for the issuance of his Geographia in 1540.

Detailed Condition:
Minor wormholes at centerfold, expertly filled.