



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Planisphaerium Arateum Sive Compages Orbium Mundanorum Ex Hypothesi Aratea In Plano Expressa

Stock#: 59680
Map Maker: Cellarius
Date: 1661 (1708)
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 20.5 x 17 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A 17th-Century Representation of an Ancient Helio-Geocentric Theory

A fine example of Cellarius's chart illustrating the Greek Astronomer Aratus' model of the universe, from Andreas Cellarius's *Harmonia Cosmographica* . . . The *Harmonia* is considered to be the greatest celestial atlas ever published, and one of the great works of the Dutch golden age of cartography.

The presented map of the Solar System shows most of the planets orbiting the Earth, with the exception of Venus and Mercury, which orbit the Sun. This depiction is credited to Aratus, a 3rd century B.C. philosopher, whose *Phainomena* describes the Solar System. This plate is perhaps the most interesting published by Cellarius, showing a model in which Venus and Mercury orbit the sun, but the rest orbit the earth. While Cellarius relies on the works of Ptolemy, Tycho Brahe, and Nicholas Copernicus to explain the workings of the Solar System, here Cellarius dives into alternate models. While heliocentric theories are most commonly attributed to Copernicus, Cellarius is blunt in his recognition that the presented non-heliocentric models are not new. He goes so far as to state that:

This type of cosmography sketched in plano, the same that Brahe hypothesizes. . . were not invented by Tycho Brahe, nor worked out by him, but dug out of darkness (?) from ingenious labors . . . from Aratus, that most learned Greek poet. . .

In short, "*Hypotheses Brahe & Copernicana non sunt nova*" (Brahe's and Copernicus's hypotheses are not



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new).

However, the attribution of this concept to Aratus's *Phainomena* is false, as the poem is more of an artistic work discussing the gods, and modern scholarly readings of the text show little connection with heliocentrism. Modern readings of this model suggest it as originating to the fourth-century Roman astronomer Martianus Capella and is one of many classical non-fully geocentric theories. His formulation of the universe was depicted in a ninth-century [Carolingian manuscript](#) alongside Aratus's poetry. This work, termed the *Leiden Aratea*, appears to have convinced Medieval and Renaissance scholars that the model shown in the map is Aratean, a hypothesis Cellarius evidently subscribed to. The depiction in the manuscript linked above is nearly identical to Cellarius's. The first known engraved edition of this depiction is credited to Hugo Grotius, published in 1600 in Leyden, albeit on a much smaller scale.

Cellarius's charts are the most sought after of celestial charts, blending the striking imagery of the golden age of Dutch Cartography with contemporary scientific knowledge.

Detailed Condition:

Old Color. Double thick sheet.