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Tabula Geographico-Hydrographica Motus Oceani Currentes, Abyssos, Montes Igniuomos in Universo Orbe Indicans, Notat Haec Fig, Abyssos Montes Vulcanios.

Stock#: 78273
Map Maker: Zahn
Date: 1696 circa
Place:
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 16.5 x 14 inches
Price: \$ 1,900.00



Description:

Fascinating World Map Showing Entrances to a Subterranean Realm

Striking seventeenth-century map of the world, illustrating volcanos, underground passages ocean currents and subterranean networks of the globe.

Shown on a Mercator projection, the continents are splayed widely, displaying with their great abysses and volcanoes.. Abysses, chasms or whirlpools leading to underground rivers and reservoirs, are in the world's oceans and lakes; a few volcanoes are also in the seas.

The North Pole is shown covered in a large landmass or ice sheet, while the South Pole is home to a massive *Terra Australis Incognita*. New Guinea and the Straits of Magellan are prominent.

This unusual map is a very scarce example of early thematic cartography. It depicts ocean currents, volcanoes and deep-sea chasms; each is marked. The magnificently decorative title cartouche is formed within a florid pediment supported by cherubs. The map is based on Happel and Kircher's theories of 1675. Zahn was a philosopher of the Praemonstratensian order at Wurzburg who wrote a number of pseudo-scientific works.

The *Mundus Subterraneus* of Athanasius Kircher



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The map comes from Kircher's famous work, *Mundus Subterraneus*, which explored the subterranean world. Kircher was deeply interested in the unseen workings of the underground world. He had researched volcanoes extensively, observing eruptions at Etna and Stromboli. He also had himself lowered into the crater of Vesuvius to view the effects of an eruption, only years after the volcano had killed over 4,000 people in an explosion.

These observations led Kircher to develop theories about the world's underground, arguing that subterranean passages fed the world's volcanoes via sulphureous spirits. There were supposedly rivers and streams under mountains ranges; these linked with the world's oceans. The swirling waters fed the fires of the volcanoes, while the fires kept the water from freezing; mountains were reservoirs for these forces.

The center of this global network was a massive whirlpool off of Norway (there actually is a whirlpool system in this area, the *Moskenstraumen*), where water entered the system. It exited near the South Pole. Giants had once lived in these underground chambers, and dragons still supposedly dwelled there.

These ideas were gathered in *Mundus Subterraneus*, a two-volume treatise and atlas published in Amsterdam in 1665. Vol. I explained "the admirable structure of the terrestrial globe", while vol. II told people how to capitalize on the world's resources. Together, the books laid "before the eyes of the curious reader all that is rare, exotic, and portentous contained in the fecund womb of Nature."

In addition to ideas about spontaneous generation of animals and diatribes against mendacious alchemists, as well as ideas about the location of the lost island of Atlantis and the source of the Nile, there are charts showing the currents of the subterranean passages. These were some of the first charts to show oceanic currents, albeit in a fantastic way. The books also included a series of lunar maps and continental maps like this one that showed the connections between subterranean and surface waterways.

Detailed Condition:

Minor soiling.