



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

[Duchy of Franconia] Franckenlandt am Mein/beschriben nach aller gelegenheit in stetten/wassern/bergen/walden und antossenden landeren

Stock#: 78340
Map Maker: Munster
Date: 1550 circa
Place: Basle
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 13.5 x 10 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the earliest obtainable modern maps of the Franconia Region

Sebastian Munster's "Franconia XII Nova Tabula" is more than just an early regional map of Germany. It serves as a testament to the burgeoning blend of art, science, and curiosity that characterized cartography during the Renaissance era. The map, centered on Bamberg and the Main River, offers a fascinating snapshot of the Franconian region and provides invaluable insights into the geographical and socio-economic realities of the time.

First published in 1540, the significance of this map is evident in its antiquity. As one of the earliest obtainable modern maps of the Franconian Region located east of what is present-day Frankfurt Am Main, it provides historians and enthusiasts alike with an invaluable resource for understanding the past. The fact that it predates many of the standardized conventions of modern cartography, like the northward orientation, gives it a distinctive quality, as it is oriented with the south at the top.

The region depicted in Munster's map is dense with urban centers that held immense historical importance. Cities like Würzburg, Bamberg, Nuremberg, Wertheim, and Fulda were not just mere geographical points; they were pulsating hubs of commerce, culture, and intellectual exchange. The clarity with which these cities are represented shows their significance during this period, and the network of rivers linking them signifies the primacy of waterways as routes for trade and communication.

A deeper look into the map reveals a meticulous detailing of the region's rivers, with the Main, Tauber,



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Regnitz, and Pegnitz flowing like arteries, sustaining life and enabling movement. Such detailing was crucial for traders, travelers, and planners of the time as it provided them with essential information for navigation and commerce.

Yet, one of the most captivating aspects of Munster's map is its depiction of the Franconian region's natural landscapes. The region, celebrated for its lush forests and undulating hills, is brought to life through the map's artistry. The forests, represented in dense clusters, and the sporadic representations of mountains provide a tantalizing glimpse into the topographical nuances of the region. This not only served a practical purpose for travelers but also encapsulated the region's beauty and ruggedness.

Franconia in the 16th Century: A Nexus of Power and Transition

The 16th century marked an era of profound change throughout Europe, with the German region of Franconia being no exception. The Middle Ages were giving way to the Renaissance, and as with much of the Holy Roman Empire, Franconia saw religious, political, and social upheavals that would shape its destiny and the broader European landscape.

As part of the Holy Roman Empire, the region was under the overarching rule of the Emperor, yet it retained significant autonomy thanks to its collection of smaller territories governed by these local rulers. In the middle part of the 16th century, one could not discuss the empire without acknowledging Charles V, who ruled from 1519 to 1556. Under his reign, the empire expanded its territories and faced the transformative impacts of the Protestant Reformation.

The Reformation, ignited by Martin Luther in 1517, had profound implications for Franconia. With religious reform came social and political consequences. The Peace of Augsburg in 1555, a treaty signed within the Holy Roman Empire, allowed rulers of the German states to choose between Lutheranism and Catholicism, leading to further fragmentation and tension. Franconia, with its patchwork of territories, witnessed a mosaic of religious choices, creating a complex tapestry of Lutheran and Catholic regions.

Several local rulers stand out in Franconia's history. One notable figure was Albrecht Alcibiades, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach. A Protestant, he became embroiled in the tumultuous religious wars of the time. The Schmalkaldic War (1546-1547), which saw Protestant princes of the Schmalkaldic League face off against the Catholic Emperor Charles V, drew in figures like Alcibiades. Although the war concluded with a Catholic victory at the Battle of Mühlberg, it set the stage for further religious confrontations in the empire.

Economic growth and development also characterized Franconia in the 16th century. The region's cities,



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such as Würzburg, Bamberg, and Nuremberg, grew in prominence as centers of trade, art, and education. Nuremberg, in particular, rose as a hub of the Northern Renaissance, with artists like Albrecht Dürer playing pivotal roles in making the city a beacon of culture and innovation.

Detailed Condition: