



42 engraved playing cards, with red pattern to verso, two black tax stamps to Skiz.

SLOVAKIAN PLAYING CARDS

[Hungarian Tarock deck from Slovakia]

Author

JÄGER, Lud[wig] Jos[eph]

Publication date

[c1850].

Publisher

Publication place

Pressburg,

Physical description

42 engraved playing cards, with red pattern to verso, two black tax stamps to Skiz.

Dimensions

100 by 52mm (4 by 2 inches).

Notes

The Maker

The Jack of Clubs is bearing a plate which the name of the maker is given: "Lud. Jos. Jäger" of Pressburg, now Bratislava. Other extant cards by Jäger show that he produced decks in a variety of formats, using French and German suit systems. The Skiz card in the present deck has two tax stamps, which were in use between 1850 and 1856, providing a mid-nineteenth century date for these

cards.

The Cards

The Hungarian variant of the Tarock family of card games originated in nineteenth century from an Austrian version. It is thought that the 48 points required to win the game may be a reference to the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, suppressed by the Russians under Ivan Fyodorovich Paskevich, after whom the game is sometimes known as 'Paskievics'. The Hungarian Tarock deck is made up of trumps (I to XXI, and a Skiz, or Fool), court cards of King, Queen, Cavalier and Jack, and then in the black suit a 10 pip card, while in the red an Ace. The present deck was made by a Slovakian card-maker in Bratislava, which was then part of the Austrian Empire, and soon after the Austro-Hungarian empire.

The court cards are double-figures and traditionally dressed in royal garb. The trump cards, with the exception of the Skiz, which shows a double-figure character holding symbols and the I, which depicts a double-figure mandarin character, all show double-sided illustrations of famous and important buildings and places within the Austrian Empire. Card VII, for example, shows a vista of Baden on one side, and Schönbrunn Palace on the other.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £5000

Inventory reference: 21535