

Double-page engraved map, with hand-colour.

SPEED’S MAP OF GREECE

Ελλας – Greece.

Author
SPEED, John

Publication date
1626, [but 1627-1632].

Publisher
are to be sold by Geo: Humble,

Publication place
[London],

Physical description
Double-page engraved map, with hand-colour.

Dimensions
390 by 510mm. (15.25 by 20 inches).

Notes
A map of Greece and the Aegean, from the first atlas compiled and published by an Englishman, Speed’s ‘Prospect’. The map is distinctive in that it lacks the decorative borders along the top and the sides so characteristic of Speed’s carte-à-figure style.

Accompanying text in English, ‘The Description of Graecia’, is printed on the reverse, which

eulogizes classical Greece: ‘the wisest of any people’ in politics; ‘the mistresse almost of all Sciences; ‘shee bred some of the most famous Artists that ever the world had’.

John Speed (1552-1629) was the outstanding cartographer of his age. By trade a merchant tailor, but by proclivity a historian, it was the patronage of Sir Fulke Greville, poet and statesman, that allowed him to pursue this interest in earnest. His ‘Theatre of Great Britain’, first published in 1611 or 1612, was the first large-scale printed atlas of the British Isles. The ‘Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World’, from which the present work is drawn, appeared in 1627, bound with the ‘Theatre’, and is the first world atlas compiled by an Englishman to be published in England. Engraved in Amsterdam, many of the maps are anglicized versions of works by Dutch makers in distinctive carte-à-figure style, featuring borders with figures in local costume and city views.

Bibliography
Chubb, XXV; Shirley [Atlases], T.SPE-2a; Zacharakis, 2014.

Provenance

Price: £700

Inventory reference: 21915

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