



Engraved map, Latin text on verso.

## VAN KEERBERGEN'S EDITION OF ORTELIUS' MAP

**Iaponia Insvla.**

## Author

ORTELIUS, Abraham

**Publication date**

1601].

## Publisher

Johannes van Keerbergen,

### Publication place

[Antwerp,

## Physical description

Engraved map, Latin text on verso.

## Dimensions

120 by 163mm. (4.75 by 6.5 inches).

## Notes

The first Latin edition of Keerbergen's edition of Ortelius's pocket-sized version of his larger double-page map of Japan, originally published in his 'Theatrum' from 1595. This smaller map appeared in the 'Epitome Theatri Orbis Terrarum', published from 1601 to 1612 in Latin, French, Italian, English and German.

The first pocket-sized version of the 'Theatrum' was published in 1577, by Peter Heyns, with maps engraved by Filips Galle. Initially, and romantically, titled 'Spiegel der Werelt', or 'Mirror of the World', it was later renamed 'Epitome' in 1588. There were ten editions of this little atlas before the map of Japan was introduced in 1598. In this edition, the plates are newly engraved by the Arsenius brothers, Ambrosius and Ferdinand. A straight line frame replaces the strapwork cartouche, and graticule scales with latitude and longitude markings have been added. The geography is a direct copy of the Galle/Heyns issue, but the engraving is superior.

The map shows three of the main islands of Japan, and reiterates mistakes first included on the larger map: "'Hizumi', 'Inaba', 'Tamba', in west Honshu and 'Hiechigen', 'Vllnomy' and 'Hinga' in east Honshu. The island of 'Bacasa' to the west of the Noto peninsula has been omitted and the islands to the east, 'Sisima' and 'Sando' have been erroneously named 'Bacasa' and 'Sisimi'" (Hubbard).

Armando Cortesao, in his 'Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica', quotes a letter written by Teixeira to Ortelius telling him that he is forwarding "... two pieces of the descriptions of China and Japan, the new ones that have just arrived, truly drawn as they show". He goes on to say that "Luis Teixeira was one of the outstanding personalities in a family of cartographers that followed this profession through five or six generations". He was the son of Pero Fernandes, maker of charts, and both of his sons, Joao and Pedro Teixeira also became cartographers, working in Portugal and Spain. "Teixeira was examined by Royal order, on 18 April 1564 and his patent of office was issued on 18 October 1564; there are records mentioning Teixeira as late as 1613, so his experience as cosmographer was extensive. He is known to have travelled to, and charted parts of, the coast of Brazil as well as having surveyed the Azores but there are no records of his ever having visited Japan. Teixeira's sources remain unknown, all the more surprising when we study any of the surviving portolan chart of the time, none of them being as close to reality as was this one".

Ortelius first published his 'Theatrum', in 1570, with 70 seventy copper engravings on 53 double-folio pages. A businessman native to Antwerp, Ortelius compiled the best existing maps, re-engraved them on a standardized format, and included them with the text in one volume. But, by 1570, he had been dealing in maps and charts for more than twenty years. The death of Ortelius' father in 1535, who had been a wealthy merchant, seems to have placed his family in financial difficulties. When Ortelius was as young as 19 he is recorded as having joined the Guild of St. Luke as 'afsetter' "or colourist of maps and prints. He seems to have reached a very advanced level of skill in this craft, as some customers continued to insist on buying atlases coloured by him personally at a time when he had already developed into a publisher and cartographer/merchant... Ortelius [also] became a trader in books, prints and maps. Much of this trading had to do with the house of Plantin [subsequently publisher of the 'Theatrum']... Soon he was attending the book fair in Frankfurt to buy and sell books, maps and prints for others as well as for himself. He first met Gerard Mercator there in 1554, which marked the state of a life-long professional relationship and personal friendship... " (van den Broecke p.14).

## **Bibliography**

Hubbard 10.02; van der Krogt 333:01.

## **Provenance**

## **Price:**

## **Inventory reference:** 15888