



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

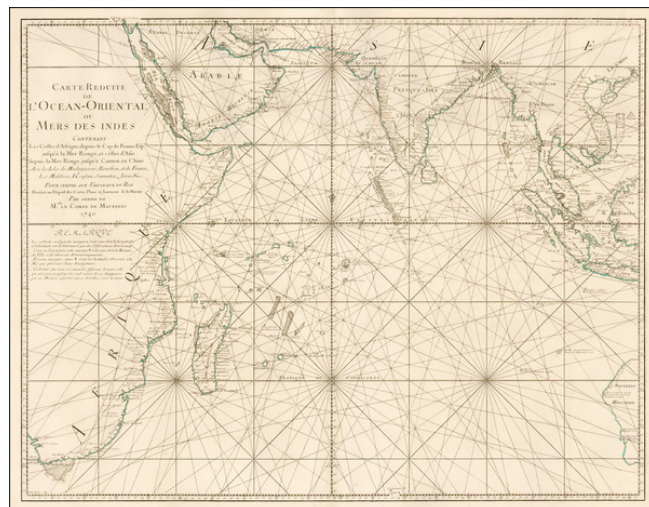
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Carte Reduite de l'Ocean Oriental ou Mer des Indes Contenant Les Costes d'Afrique, depuis le Cap den Bonne Espce. jusqu'a a la Mer Rouge, et celles de'Asie, depuis la Mer Rouge, jusqu'a Canton en Chine . . . Par Ordere de Mgr. Le Comte de Maurepas 1740.

Stock#: 37822
Map Maker: Bellin
Date: 1740
Place: Paris
Color: Outline Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 31 x 24 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The first edition of Jacques-Nicolas Bellin's chart of the Indian Ocean, one of the most important maps of the region of the 18th Century.

This attractive and detailed work was by far the most accurate general chart of the Indian Ocean published during the mid-18th Century and, in this respect, represents a milestone of Enlightenment cartography, which strived for clarity and precision. The map embraces the entire Indian Ocean from around 38 degrees south up to its northernmost reaches (the Red Sea) at almost 30 degrees north; longitudinally, it extends from the Cape of Good Hope, in the west, all the way to include the shores of Western Australia in the east.

The overall impression is of an accurate general map, familiar to the modern eye. This was the result of the careful compilation of charts from the best sources, combined with recently acquired geodetic positions taken by the crews of French Navy vessels. The "Remarque" below the title describes the various forms of collected geodetic data and employs different symbols to accord to various positions on the chart. Generally, the mapping of India is taken from a variety of the best European sources, including French, Portuguese, Dutch, and English maps. The mapping of Africa and Arabia largely derives from Portuguese sources, and Dutch charts were used to delineate the shores of Southeast Asia and Western Australia.

This chart appeared at a critical time with respect to French involvement in the Indian Ocean and its basin, and therefore would have been considered highly useful by a variety of stakeholders. From 1742,



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the India division of the *Compagnie Perpétuelle des Indes* (essentially the French Colonial Company) was headed by Joseph-François, Marquis Dupleix, who would mount an aggressive campaign against the British and their Indian allies for control of the subcontinent. While his endeavors came to a precipitous end in 1754, Dupleix's activities were historically consequential and melodramatic.

Meanwhile, from 1735 onwards, the first French governor-general of the Mascarene Islands, Bertrand-François Mahé de La Bourdonnais, was undertaking endeavors to colonize Isle de France (now Mauritius), Île Bourbon (Réunion) and Séchelles (Seychelles). Madagascar was also of great interest, as from 1720, it had been the pirate capital of the world, preying on European, Arab and Mughal shipping.

The chart was prepared by Jacques-Nicolas Bellin (1703-72), the Royal Hydrographer to Louis XV, and one of the leading figures of Enlightenment cartography. From about 1740 to his death, his charts were generally considered to be the finest in the world. The present chart was issued separately and also included as part of a grand atlas of Jean de Beaurain's *Atlas géographique, Contenant les Hémisphères célestes et terrestres ; les Cartes marines du grand Océan* (Paris 1740). The present example is the first edition of the chart, and several other editions were issued over the coming decades.

A fundamental chart for any collection of the Indian Ocean basin.

Detailed Condition: