



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## **Relacion del Viage, que por orden de su magestad, y acuerdo de el real consejo de Indias, hicieron los Capitanes Bartholome Garcia de Nodal, y Conzalo de Nodal, Hermanos...**

**Stock#:** 56647  
**Map Maker:** Nodal  
  
**Date:** 1766  
**Place:** Madrid  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:**  
  
**Price:** Not Available



### **Description:**

#### ***Second Edition of Nodal's Important Work, Including Teixeira's Suppressed Map of the Straits of Magellan***

Nice example of Pedro Teixeira's suppressed map of the Straits of Magellan, published in Garcia de Nodal's *Relación del viaje hecho por los capitanes Bartolomé García de Nodal y Gonzalo de Nodal, hermanos, naturales de Pontevedra, para el descubrimiento del nuevo estrecho*, published in Madrid in 1621.

The map shows southern Patagonia and the Straits of Magellan separating the continent from the island of Tierra del Fuego. The real innovation of the map, however, is the small Strait of San Vicente to the east, which cuts between Tierra del Fuego and a small island that extends into the right hand border. This strait, discovered by the Dutch in 1616 and more commonly known as the Strait of Le Maire, proved that Tierra del Fuego was an island, not a part of the vast southern continent. More importantly, the strait provided an alternative outlet to the lucrative China trade and made the Spanish ports of western South America potential targets for rival empires.

The map is criss-crossed with rhumb lines. The land is dotted with hills and trees. Place names come from previous voyages, like Magellan's. Both the title and the scale are placed within scrollwork cartouches that have bearded faces guarding them. At sea, west of Tierra del Fuego, are two ships cruising, suggesting that the Spanish are watching the area. Decorative compass roses complete the embellishment of the map.

#### **Nodal and Le Maire: Navigating Around the Straits of Magellan**



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This map illustrates one of the most important discoveries in the history of world trade, the discovery of the Strait of Le Maire or, as the Nodal brothers christened it, the Strait of San Vicente. The Nodal expedition was a reconnaissance mission sponsored by King Philip III of Spain in 1619. The purpose was to confirm the recent discoveries of Jacob Le Maire and Willem Schouten of a passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific to the south of Tierra del Fuego.

The expedition was led by the brothers Bartolome and Gonzalo Garcia de Nodal, who were accompanied by cosmographer Diego Ramirez de Arrellano, who served as the chief navigator. The expedition departed from Lisbon on September 27, 1618 and by January 22, 1619 the two ships entered the strait discovered by Schouten and Le Maire between Tierra del Fuego and Staten Island. The expedition named the Strait "San Vicente." The pair reconnoitered the region to the south of Tierra del Fuego including the Drake Passage, before returning to Spain on July 7, 1619.

Le Maire and Schouten, sponsored by independent Dutch merchants, had circumnavigated via the new-found strait from 1615 to 1617. The importance of their find lay in the fact that Spain preferred to operate a closed sea policy in the Pacific; they claimed that their ships were the only vessels allowed to ply Pacific waters. Other nations did not agree with this policy, but the difficulty and distance in passing via the Straits of Magellan prevented many from attempting to enter the Pacific.

Additionally, the Straits were claimed as proprietary territory of the Dutch East India Company, which gave them a veritable monopoly over the passage and prevented non-company ships from passing through, even though the waters were seldom if ever patrolled. The new strait provided a legal avenue for ships of all nations to enter the Pacific, a situation feared by the Spanish whose ports on the western side of South America, already proven vulnerable to sacking by the likes of Francis Drake, were again at risk.

The Nodal expedition was meant to provide the Spanish with vital geographic information about the crucial, yet little known, area around the Straits of Magellan. The brothers established the navigability of the passage and found the Diego Ramirez Islands, which remained the most southerly point visited by Europeans until Captain James Cook sailed in the area in 1775.

#### **Spanish geographic knowledge management and secrecy**

The brothers subsequently published their report of the expedition, which was intended to be accompanied by a map created by Diego Ramirez de Arellano. This map was prepared with the assistance of Pedro Teixeira, a royal cosmographer of King Philip III and, after 1621, Philip IV. However, after publication, it is believed that the map was suppressed, such that most examples of the book do not



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### **Relacion del Viage, que por orden de su magestad, y acuerdo de el real consejo de Indias, hicieron los Capitanes Bartholome Garcia de Nodal, y Conzalo de Nodal, Hermanos...**

include the map.

Only fragments are known of Teixeira's life, although it is evident that he enjoyed royal favor and was respected as a cosmographer. This is Teixeira's earliest known work. Born in Lisbon ca. 1595 (d. 1662), Teixeira hailed from a family of cosmographers. His father, Luis, (active 1564-1613) was a royal cosmographer as well. Pedro's brother, Joao, was also a royal cosmographer before siding with Portuguese nationalists during the revolt begun in 1640.

Pedro was a royal cosmographer by 1620, when he began work on this map. Other surviving works include a manuscript atlas of Spain's principal ports, which has three copies of an accompanying written description. In Spanish archives are manuscript maps of the Basque regions and Navarra, and a map of Portugal was completed and displayed at the Royal Palace in Madrid in the 1630s. It was printed posthumously. He became a knight of the Order of Christ in 1632. In the early 1640s, Pedro surveyed for the Crown during the revolts in Portugal and Catalonia. In 1656, he drew a large map of Madrid that was printed in Antwerp and hung in the principal palaces of the Spanish empire in Europe.

The full title of this map is:

*Reconocimiento De Los Estrechos de Magallanes y San Vicente Mandado hazer por Su Mdg. en el Real Consejo de Indias partieron de Lisboa en 27 de Setiembre de 1618 y llegaron de buelta a SAn Lucar a 9 de Julio de 1619. Cabo de dos Caravelas Bartolome garcia de nodal y Capitan Boncal de nodal. Cosmographo Diego Ramires, piloto Iuan manco.*

*Echa por don Pedro teixeira, Ealbernas, Cosmographo du Su Mdg.*

Why might Spain want to suppress Teixeira's map, especially when it trumpeted new discoveries and re-situated the strait as their own? Spain wished to limit the number and nationality of vessels who entered the Pacific Ocean. However, their naval capacity did not allow for constant monitoring of the Straits of Magellan and Cape Horn. Instead, they preferred to constrict the spread of geographic and navigational information that might help a merchant or state to mount a Pacific voyage.

This limiting of geographic knowledge was part of a larger strategy of censoring and controlling the circulation of sensitive information about their far-flung empire. Information brought back from Spanish voyages was locked in the *Casa de la Contratación*, founded in 1503 to regulate commerce and navigation with overseas possessions. The *piloto mayor*, head of the *Casa*, was charged with updating the master chart of the world, the *padrón real*, and with dispensing and collecting charts used by pilots on Spanish



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vessels.

While it is true that the *padrón real* was kept in a chest locked with three keys, it is more accurate to characterize the geographic knowledge collected by the *Casa* as closely monitored, not truly clandestine. Pilots sometimes did not return charts and word of mouth spread certain geographic discoveries. Additionally, the Crown allowed some publications that were thought to augment the reputation of the Spanish Empire. Cosmographers at the *Casa* pioneered the genre of the navigational manual, for example.

During the reign of Phillip III (r. 1598-1621) in particular, cosmographers like Teixeira were encouraged to publish their works, although such publications had to undergo a careful vetting process. It is likely that the Nodal voyage account, and its accompanying map, was subject to such vetting. However, after publication in 1621, and perhaps due to the change in monarch, it was decided that the map shared too much valuable information and it seems to have been removed from almost every surviving copy of the book. There exists a second printing of the book in 1769, when Spain again sought to advertise their geographic prowess, with a reduced and re-engraved version of the map.

#### **Provenance**

Ink stamp of "Biblioteca Pirucho" on title verso.

#### **Rarity**

The first edition of Nodal's work was described by Sabin in the 1860s as "one of the rarest books of its class." He goes on to note that the map "is almost always wanting." Borba de Moraes comments, "This first edition, particularly with the map, is very rare and in fact is considered one of the rarest travel books of the seventeenth century. Copies containing the map are so rare that it is believed to have been withdrawn [in accordance with the official Spanish policy of secrecy] ... [the book] is of great value as a work of navigation." We note copies in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, the British Library, the John Carter Brown Library, and Yale.

#### **Detailed Condition:**

Small quarto. Contemporary limp vellum. Title, [2], [14], 162, [2], 45 pages. Engraved folding map.