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Mapa de Cabo Frio t?e a Rio de Janeyero | Mapa da Parayba da Sul do Natazia do VisConde da Seca

Stock#: 56822
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1728 circa
Place: Braiz
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: Good
Size: 32 x 12 inches
Price: Not Available



Description:

Early Manuscript Map of Brazil, Made in Brazil Charting the Coast from Rio de Janeiro to Paraíba do Sul

Extraordinary early 18th-century manuscript map of Brazil, a rarity of colonial cartography from this period and a piece of special importance for in fact having been made in Brazil, in the very region it depicts. The map was apparently produced as an administrative overview of the area between Rio de Janeiro and São João da Barra, with internal information about shifting borders in these lands suggesting a date of about 1730 (see below). Pictorially vibrant and including charming, even somewhat naïve depictions of the extensive marshy plain around the lower reaches of the Paraíba do Sul river, the region's distinctive rock outcroppings and serrated mountain ranges, thick inland forests, and numerous villages and churches, the map is quite clearly from the hand of an educated draftsman familiar with the conventions of map-making and the terrain he is mapping, although not himself a professional cartographer. The level of mastery exhibited here of the various elements that go into mapmaking along with the map's emphasis on the numerous churches in the region, points to an ecclesiastical origin for the piece, and likely to a Jesuit interested in accounting for the dynamic shifts in power then ongoing in this area between sacred and secular authorities (captains, pioneers, prominent landowners, Jesuits, and Benedictine monks).

The area covered by this map - corresponding to the contemporary administrative Captaincies of Rio de Janeiro, Cabo Frio, and Paraíba do Sul - had proven particularly difficult for the Portuguese to settle in the 16th century, owing largely to fierce revolts launched by the Goytacazes tribe in response to European slaving raids. The now-extinct hunter-gatherer Goytacazes (also called Goitacá, Waytaquazes, Ouetacá, or Waitaká) were revered for their physical prowess and feared for their ferocity toward both settlers and their neighboring Tupi rivals. At the time of the map's creation in about 1730, the Goytacazes were



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retreating inland and becoming ever scarcer, victims of smallpox and organized campaigns against them. The town of São Salvador, which is given considerable emphasis on the map, commemorates these natives through its modern name of Campos dos Goytacazes.

A key at the left of the map refers to 32 features (towns, rivers, lakes, capes, etc.), and several other buildings and settlements are labeled on the landscape itself. A banderole at the top of the map identifies the regions depicted and notes that the Captaincy of Paraíba do Sul was then held by the Visconde de Asseca (here, '*Seca*'), a title first granted by King Alfonso VI in 1666. Captaincy of the area was established first in 1536 under Pero de Góis (d. 1559), was undone by Goytacazes Indian attacks in 1545, handed back to the crown in 1619, and for more than a century thereafter Paraíba do Sul remained a contested region.

The present map, although idyllic in appearance, reflects these conflicts. The first lines of the key identify the shifting boundaries of Visconde de Asseca's administrative area, with the third line (C) showing the boundary as established in 1728 ("*Em 728*"), making this date the *terminus post quem* for the map. The year 1728 marked the reincorporation of the Captaincy (after fourteen years in possession of the Portuguese Crown) and its conferral to Martim Correia de Sá e Benevides, 4th Visconde de Asseca (1698-1778), a political development which alarmed other power brokers in the region (see Ramelli, *passim*). Indeed, the present map was likely the work of a Jesuit (or one especially interested in Jesuit matters), as several churches and '*colegio*' are prominently depicted (e.g. Sant'Anna atop a hill at Macaé), and the Jesuit stronghold at São Salvador (Campos dos Goytacazes), founded 1677, is given much pictorial emphasis, with the town shown in a level of detail that provides valuable information about the early layout of the city. The inclusion on the map of the Visconde's plantation, located just to the west of São Salvador, serves as a reminder that in this period the region was in transition from an economy based on sugarcane and cattle to one in which labor (both African and native) was being relocated across the mountains to exploit the newly discovered mineral wealth in Minas Gerais.

Another indicator of Jesuitical influence (and a further clue to the map's date) is found in the last item of the key, which is written out in a different but still contemporary hand and refers to the conferral on Jesuits of administrative rights for the area between Cabo Frio and Macaé, an event known to have occurred in 1731 (Feydit, pp. 128-29). That this administrative change was noted only after the initial labeling of the sheet perhaps suggests that the map had been completed before 1731.

Martim Correia de Sá e Benevides (1698-1778) was the 4th Visconde de Asseca, and the 4th of that line to be Captain Donatary of Paraíba do Sul under a system in which a single nobleman became owner-administrator of the region and controlled it in the manner of a hereditary fiefdom. These open-ended land



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grants, intended to encourage settlement in Brazil at relatively little cost to the Portuguese Crown, were ended in 1754 when the last of the privately granted captaincies reverted to the Crown.

Detailed Condition:

Toned and soiling, with areas of staining and loss.