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Guinea Propria, Nec Non Nigritiae Vel Terrae Nigorum . . . Aethiopia Inferior . . . 1743

Stock#: 67635
Map Maker: Homann Heirs / Haas
Date: 1743
Place: Nuremberg
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 22 x 20 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Strikingly-Illustrated Eighteenth-Century Atlas Map of West Africa

Dynamic example of this highly decorative and detailed antique map of West Africa, published by the Homann Heirs in 1743. This is one of the best atlas maps of the region made during the mid-eighteenth century.

While its main focus is Guinea, the map extends from Cape Blanc and Senegal to *Guinea Inferior* and the Cacongo and Barbela Rivers. It also includes Ghana Lake on the Niger River. On this map, the territory directly north of Guinea is labeled *Aethiopia*. The Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea is also referred to as *Oceanus Aethiopic*. While it contains more detail in the African interior than many contemporary maps, the scarcity of information underlines how little Europeans knew of Africa away from the coastline.

Latin, French, and Dutch are used for place names on the map. Notes adorn the map as well, providing a wealth of detail about trade opportunities, local peoples, and geographic features. For port cities, a letter is used to indicate which country controls which port: English (A), Dutch (H), Danish (D), and French (F). These factories, as they were called, were used as clearing houses for trade goods and human beings destined for transport in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The map is embellished with a stunning, large vignette in the bottom left corner showing a native village scene. A key in Latin at the bottom identifies various peoples and styles of living. The first image in the vignette, *A*, refers to a bunker constructed of the red earth commonly found in Guinea. *B* corresponds to



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the kitchen, and *C* refers to the hut used for processing and cooking rice and millet. The label, *D*, indicates the building used for negotiations, and *E* labels the atrium. *F* shows a public location in the village. The label *G* refers to the outfit of the King along the Gold Coast of Benin, and *H* the same for the Queen. The last item on the key, *I*, points to a straw structure as seen on the voyage of Chev. Des Marchais in Guinea.

Interestingly, there are three different scale bars featured along the elephant tusks in the bottom left of the vignette. There is one German, one French, and one Italian scale, each on its respective tusk. The northern Guinea coast, as well as the ivory and gold coasts, were prime locations for European traders to obtain ivory.

The title, in both Latin and French at the top of the map, mentions that it was based on the work of Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville (1697-1782), renowned French cartographer and illustrator. D'Anville compiled his work from a variety of sources, including news of Marchais' voyages to West Africa. The Chevalier des Marchais, a French cartographer employed by the King of France, captained a slave ship and travelled extensively to West Africa, as well as French Guiana and the West Indies, in the early eighteenth century.

Finally, the title text mentions that the map is based on Professor Haas' projection. This refers to Johann Matthias Haas (also sometimes Hase) (1684-1742), Professor of Mathematics in Wittenberg. Haas worked for the Homann firm, as well as developing his own geographic materials. He is credited with the invention of the stereographic horizontal projection, as well as a treatise on mapmaking and several maps (most published posthumously).

Colonizing West Africa

By the fifteenth century, European sea traders had arrived at the coastline of Guinea. 1445 marked the first European trading post in the region, established at Arguin Island by the Portuguese, off the coast of present-day Senegal. The Portuguese soon discovered gold, bauxite (used in aluminum ore), iron, ivory, and diamonds. Though natural resource extraction of rare materials was common among European traders in the region, Guinea's economy largely consisted of subsistence agriculture at the time.

Guinea's wide coastline along the Atlantic Ocean makes it a prime trading location, accessible to both Europe and the Americas. There are three major rivers in Guinea that are abundant in resources: the Gambia, the Niger, and the Senegal. But because no African rivers reach very far inland from the western coast, the ivory and gold trade were largely confined to the coastal regions.

Europeans quickly integrated themselves into and grew the elaborate slave trade that existed throughout the region. Not until Columbus' voyage to the Americas did the Atlantic Slave Trade begin to accelerate. A



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number of European nations picked up the slave trade in the sixteenth century, including France and Holland, further catalyzing the exploitative trade. It reached its peak in the mid-1700s, when this map was drawn.

Detailed Condition: