



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
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**Atlas Minor Sive Geographia Compendios Qua Orbis Terrarum Per Paucas Attamen
Novissimas Tabulas Ostentditur.**

Stock#: 69931
Map Maker: Visscher I / Visscher II
Date: 1685
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 13.5 x 21 inches
Price: \$ 1,350,000.00



Description:

One of the Most Spectacular Atlases in Existence

A superlative example of Nicolaes Visscher's *Atlas Minor*, comparable to the Paul Mellon-Yale Center for British Art example, which has been called "***the most spectacularly illuminated atlas known.***"

Bound in two volumes, the atlas is composed of two engraved allegorical frontispieces and 226 double-page engraved maps (95 in volume I, with original hand-numbering in ink, 1 to 94 (the first map unnumbered); there are 131 maps in volume II, numbered 1 to 129 with map 14b and 14c). Each volume has two handwritten index sheets. Maps 14b and 14c of the second volume are captioned by hand.

All maps are fully hand-colored and finished in gold by a contemporary hand. The resplendent original hand-coloring and gold-leafing of the maps are far beyond what is encountered in other Dutch atlases of this period and it embodies the finest output of the Dutch Golden Age map colorists (called *meester afsetter* in Dutch). The combination of this quality of hand-coloring and the size of the book elevates this *Atlas Minor* far beyond what has appeared on the market in decades.

Visscher's Atlas Minor

Visscher's *Atlas Minor* was produced in widely varying configurations and compliments of maps. The least elaborate examples of the atlas include a couple dozen uncolored maps. The largest examples (of which there are only two known) have over 225 maps with full hand-coloring and extensive gold illumination. The present atlas belongs to the latter group; it is one of the two largest known *Atlas Minors* produced by the Visscher firm. This atlas includes 226 maps, the other, from the Mellon Collection and now in the Yale



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Center for British Art, has 227.

The coloring of the present atlas and the Mellon atlas is quite similar and was possibly completed by the same workshop. The gold-leafing of the maps in the Mellon atlas is so impressive that Cornelis Koeman, the noted Dutch atlas scholar, described it as "the most spectacularly illuminated atlas known". Having compared the present atlas with the Mellon example, it is clear that, if anything, there is more gold-highlighting on maps in the present atlas than the Mellon atlas. The coloring of both atlases is differentiated from the work of the famous Dutch colorist Dirk Jansz. van Santen by the lack of a yellow-and-red border around the neatlines of all of the maps. Furthermore, in some cases, the colorist of the Visscher atlases preferred to use more gold illumination than even van Santen. For instance, we can see from comparing the *Novi Belgii* map in the present atlas to that in the *Atlas Blaeu Van Der Hem* in the Austrian National Library (the greatest work attributed to van Santen), that there is more gold on the present map than in that atlas. Indeed, the colorist of the present atlas used gold to lavishly heighten the neatlines, graticulated borders, cartouches, titles, costumes, ships, cities, the tropical and equatorial lines, coast lines and major geographical and political borders.

Aside from the gold, the hand-coloring is fantastic. The subtlety and attention to detail far exceeds that of even the great class of "standard" seventeenth-century Dutch colorists; mountains are individually and varyingly picked out in a range of appropriate colors, with the rusty, brown, and blue summits sloping into green plains that extend far beyond the lines laid down by the engraver. The spires and battlements representing towns are all carefully filled in in deep red, often finished with gold. For the cartouche of Jansson's *America Pars Meridionalis* map of South America, there are seven natives standing around it. Not one of the figures is painted with the same pigment as the one adjacent, each has a believable but different skin tone. This is not the paint-by-numbers composition of the usual hand-colored map; here the colorist subdues the engraver's work, rendering it the backdrop to astoundingly-illuminated watercolors.

Provenance and political context

Based on dating the maps included in the atlas, a publication date in the latter half of the 1680s is most likely. That was a time of colossal intra-European power struggles, the most relevant of which for this book was the formation of the Grand Alliance to counter France in 1689. It is probably within this context of great diplomacy that this atlas was produced. A few details in the book hint at the initial owners of the book.

Firstly, the publisher's gilt-leather bindings hold an important clue. The inner gilt-ruled borders on all of the books' covers have been emblazoned with additional gilt tools of the Habsburg crowned double-headed imperial eagle. These emblems would only have been placed on an atlas that was owned by the Holy



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Roman Emperor, another member of Habsburg family, or a subsidiary royal within the Holy Roman Empire. It is possible that the book was once owned by Leopold I himself, however, it seems more likely that it would have been a gift or purchase by someone like Prince Eugene of Savoy, who purchased the *Atlas Blaeu-Van Der Hem* in Amsterdam in 1730 and whose impressive collection of books and atlases was purchased by the Austrian state after his death in 1737.

The book must also be understood in the context of the Dutch *rampjaar* (or Disaster Year) of 1672, when much of the Dutch Republic was conquered by England, France, and an assortment of German principalities. This atlas makes an interesting study of one of the major events of 1672, the flooding of the defensive Dutch Water Line. In maps 14a-14c of the second volume, three variations of Visscher's *Ultraiectini Dominii Tabula* are presented each telling more of the story of the Water Line and its use against the French. The first map is a beautifully hand-colored, but otherwise standard, example of the map. Map 14b uses lavish blue and gold coloring to tell the story of which cities had been taken by France and which remained under the control of the Dutch state during this time. The map also shows the large section of Holland that had been flooded to halt further French encroachment towards Amsterdam. Map 14c goes a step further showing what areas of the Water Line had been flooded and what areas had been drained through the actions of the state.

The following notes elaborate on what we know about the provenance of the book.

- On each cover, the corners of the inner gilt-ruled border have been emblazoned with additional gilt tools of the Habsburg crowned double-headed imperial eagle. This suggests that the book was owned by a member of the Habsburg family or a royal within the Holy Roman Empire.
- Both front covers of the volumes bear blue-bordered nineteenth-century or early twentieth-century(?) paper sale labels on the front covers: "N. 1451 / 179 / 2 vol" (i.e., sale number 1451, lot number 179).
- From at least 1881 the book was owned by Marino Morandi, Padova, Italy. Green and black label: "Espositore: Commune di Padova | Proprieta: Marino Morandi di Padova." The atlas is recorded as Morandi's in the 1881 cartobibliography *Saggio di Cartografia della Regione Veneta*, entry 785. Morandi was a doctor who wrote a book in 1846 on medicinal plants: *Rhodigino Medicinae Lauream in Archigymnasio Patavino Consequenti*. His family might have come to Padova from Switzerland in the nineteenth century.
- Offered for sale on December 21, 2000. Sotheby's Italia (Milan), lot 1982.
- From the Library of the Count de Ribes, the Ribes family sale, December 12, 2019. Sotheby's Paris.

Notes on some of the maps



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The atlas contains a number of important maps and suites of maps, however the most noteworthy is probably the set of five wall maps including four of the continents (Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas) and a double-hemisphere world map from which the two hemispheres have been cut out and pasted onto leaves in the atlas.

The world map in two hemispheres appears to be a larger version of the ca. 1679 Visscher world map 'Novissima Totius Terrarum' Orbis Tabula, Auctore Nicolao Visscher (Shirley 486). The dating, by Koeman, makes sense for this atlas, and the fact that Shirley 486 appears in some examples of later *Atlas Minors* increases the chance that the present example is a larger version of that map. The fact the map is present here without any decorative borders and that it is not recorded by Shirley in his catalog of world maps suggests that the map was possibly never fully completed.

The large folding map of the Americas, titled simply *America*, has long eluded map catalogers. In his catalog of maps of North America, Burden (313) says of the map:

This extremely rare two-sheet map of America is by Jan Mathisz (1627-87), a relative unknown in cartographic circles... The life of this map is difficult to piece together, largely owing to the lack of surviving examples. It is a possibility that it might have been in the hands of the Visscher family, their catalogue of maps and prints in 1682 describes a set of four continents, in two sheets each... State 2, c. 1680 Presumed, by Nicolaas Visscher; no example known.

The wall map of the Americas included in this atlas is that lost map mentioned by Burden. In the cartouche in the upper right corner of the map is an imprint line reading "Gedruckt | T'AMSETEDAM, | bij | JAN MATHYSZ | PLAATSNYDER". The map is exceptionally beautiful, with two large scenes of European explorers and native peoples at the bottom. However, the cartography was largely out of date by the 1680s, when it was apparently issued.

Betz (84) was unaware of this state of the Africa wall map, saying of the title generally:

The map's history is not clear, largely due to its extreme rarity... It is possible that the Mathisz.' plates were acquired by Visscher in c. 1680, as Burden speculates, but this is impossible to prove as an example of this state is not known to exist. It is known that the Mathisz. plates re-appeared in c.1696 in the hands of Cornelis Danckerts II (1664-1717). In 1992, Sotheby's auctioned a set of wall maps of the continents bearing the imprint of Cornelis Danckerts, which had been found in a composite Danckerts atlas.

The Mathysz-Visscher maps of Europe and Asia, which are also in this atlas, are as rare as the maps of



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America and Africa; we have not been able to trace any other surviving examples of these maps.

Collation

Volume 1:

1. a. [Western Hemisphere] / b. [Eastern Hemisphere]
2. Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Geographica ac Hydrographica Tabula
3. Nova et Accurata Poli Arctici et terrarum Circum Iacentium Descriptio
4. Novissima Islandiae Tabula
5. Europa
6. ...Sueciae et Norvegiae nec non Maris Universi Orientalis
7. Regni Norvegia Nova et Accurata Descriptio
8. Regni Daniae Novissima et Accuratissima Tabula
9. Ivtia olim Cimbrica...
10. Fionia vulgo Funen
11. Zeelandia Insula Danicarum Maxima
12. Scania Vulgo Schoonen
13. Novissima Russia Tabula
14. Russiae vulgo Moscovia dictae. Partes Septentrionalis et Orientalis
15. Moscoviae Pars Australis
16. Tabula Nova Totius Regni Poloniae...
17. Tabula Prussia...
18. Typus Generalis Ukrainae...
19. Ukrainae Pars quae Pokutia...
20. Ukrainae Pars quae Kiovia Palatinatus...
21. Ukrainae Pars quae Podolia Palatinatus...
22. Ukrainae Pars quae Barclavia Palatinatus...
23. Danubius Fluvius Europae Maximus A Fontibus Ad Ostia...
24. Totius Regni Hungariae...
25. ...Hungariae...
26. Nova et Accurata Transylvaniae Descriptio
27. Walachia Servia Bulgaria, Romania
28. Karstia, Carniola Histria et Windorum Marchia
29. Sclavonia, Croatia, Bosnia cum Dalmatiae Parte
30. Totius Italiae Tabula...



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31. Insulabum Melitae Vulgo Malte et Gozae...
32. Regnum Siciliae...
33. Neapolitanum Regnum
34. Stato Della Chiesa Con La Toscana
35. Dominio Fioren Tino
36. Dominium Venetum in Italia
37. Stato di Milano
38. Liguria ò Stato della Republica di Genova
39. Tabula Generalis Sabaudiae
40. Montisferrati Ducatus
41. Pedemontium et reliquae Ditiones Italiae Regiae Celsitudini Sabaudicae...
42. Ductus Chablasius et Lacus Lemanus...
43. Tabula Germaniae...
44. Exactissima Helvetiae Rhaetiae, Valesiae...
45. Alpinae seu Foederatae Rhaetiae Subditarumque ei Terrarum nova descriptio
46. De Vallais Waliasserland (?)
47. Das Wiflisgur Gergow...
48. Zurichgow...
49. Argow cum parte merid. Zurichgow
50. Territory Basiliensis Nova Descriptio
51. Comitatus Tirolensis
52. Utriusque Alsaciae, ducatus Dupontii, et Spirensis Episcopatus...
53. Alsacia Superior cum Suntgoia et Brisgoia
54. Landgratiatus Alsacia Inferiora (?)
55. Totius Sueviae novissima Tabula
56. Nova Alemanniae sive Sueviae Superioris Tabula
57. Bavariae Superioris et Inferioris nova descriptio
58. Bavaria Ducatus Per Ger Mercatorem
59. Palatinatus Bavariae
60. Austria Archiducatus Auctore Wolfgango Lazio
61. Moraviae Nova et Post Omnes Priores Accuratis Sima Delineato...
62. Silesiae Ducatus...
63. Bohemia
64. Franconia Vulgo Franckenlandt
65. Nova Et Accurata Moguntini Archiepiscopatus delineatio
66. Wetteravia die Wetteraw



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67. Rhenus Fluviorum Europae celeberrinus cum Mosa Mosella...
68. Palatinatus Ad Rhenum
69. Saxonia Superior...
70. Marchionatus Brandenburgicus
71. Marchionatus Brandenburgici pars quae Marchia Vetus vulgo Altemarck dicitur
72. March Brandenburgici pars quae Marchia Media vulgo Mittesmarck audit
73. Marchionatus Brandenburgici partes duae, Nova Marchia et Uckerana
74. Marchionatus Brandenburgici partes duae, Ruppin Comitatus & Prignits Regiuncula
75. Pomeraniae Ducatus Tabulam
76. Meklenburg Ducatus
77. Ducatus Holsatiae Descriptio Novissima
78. Albis Fluvijs Germaniae celebris a Fontibus ad Ostia
79. Saxonia Inferior
80. Brema et Ferdiae...
81. Ducatus Lunebur Gensis
82. Ducatus Brunsvicensis
83. Thuringia Landgraviatus
84. Hassia Landgraviatus
85. Archiepiscopus Trevirensis
86. Coloniensis Archiepiscopus
87. Ducatus Iuliacensis Cliensis Montensis...
88. Iuliacensis Montensis Ducatus
89. Clivia Ducatus
90. Nova Totius Westphaliae Descriptio...
91. Westphalia Ducatus
92. Episcopus Paderbornensis...
93. Monasteriensis Episcopus
94. Osnabrugensis Episcopus

Volume 2 (Begins at Image #206):

1. Provinciarum Germaniae Interior
2. Belgium Foederatum
3. Frisiae Orienta Lis
4. Frisiae Groningae et Territorii Emdensis
5. Groningae...



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6. Drentia Comitatus
7. Domini Frisae Tabula...
8. Transisalanica Provincia...
9. Ducatus Geldria et Zutphania Comitatus
10. Ducatus Gelriae pars prima quae est Neomagensis
11. Ducatus Gelriae pars fecunda quae est Ruremundensis
12. Ducatus Gelriae pars Tertia quae est Comitatus Zutphaniensis
13. Ducatus Gelriae pars Quarta quae est Arnheimensis siue Velavia
14. a. [Ultraiectini Domini Tabula...] / b. [Ultraiectini Domini Tabula...] / c. [Ultraiectini Domini Tabula...]
15. Comitatus Hollandiae Tabula Pluribus Iocis Recens Emendata a Nicolao I. Visschero
16. 'T Hoogh-Heemraetschap Vande Uyt Waterende Sluysen in Kennemerlant Ende West-Frieslant
17. Rhenolandia Amstelandia...
18. Delflandia, Schielandia et circumiacentes Infulae ut Voorna, Overflackea, Goerea, Yselmonda...
19. Hollandiae pars Heridignalior vulgo Zuyd-Holland...
20. Comitatus Zelandiae
21. Noordt
22. Belgii Regii
23. Tabula ducatus Brabantiae continens Marchionatum sacri imperii et dominium Mechliniense
24. Prima pars Rabantia cuius capur Lovanium
25. Secunda Pars Brabantiae cuius urbs primaria Bruxelliae
26. Tertia pars Brabantiae qua continetur Marchionat SRI horum urbs primaria Antverpia
27. Quarta pars Brabantiae cuius capur Sylvanducis
28. Mechlinia Dominium et Aerschot Ducatus
29. Limburgi Ducatus et comitatus Valckenburgi
30. Leodiensis Episcopatus...
31. Flandriae Comitatus...
32. Vlaenderen (?)
33. Flandriae Tevtonicae ars Orientalior
34. Flandriae partes duae quarum altera Proprietaria altera Imperialis
35. Flandria Gallica Continens Castellanas...
36. Flandriae pars Occidentalis...
37. Cominatus Hannonia et Archiepiscopatus Cameracensis
38. Ducatus Lutzenburgi Novissima et accuratissima Delineatio
39. Comitatus Namurci
40. Geographica Artesiae Comitatus Tabula
41. Nova Totius Angliae, Scotiae, et Hiberniae



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42. Scotia Regnum
43. Anglia Regnum
44. Hibernia Regnum vulgo Ireland
45. Gallia vulgo la France
46. Picardia vera et Inferior
47. Normandia Ducatus
48. Le Gouvernement de L'Islande France
49. Champaigne et Brie, etc.
50. Lotharingia Ducatus
51. Utriusque Burgundiae, tum Ducatus tum Comitatus, Descriptio
52. Comitatus Burgundiae
53. Duche de Bretagne...
54. Pictaviae Ducatus Descriptio vulgo Le Pais de Poictov
55. Nova et accurata descriptio Delphinatus vulgo Davphiné
56. Comte et Gouvernement de Provence
57. Languedoc
58. Description du Guienne
59. Hispania et Portugalliae Regna
60. Biscaia et Guipuscoa Cantabriae veteris pars
61. Arragonia Regnum
62. Accuratissima Principatus Catalonia et Comitatus Ruscinonis et Cerretania Descriptio
63. Valentia Regnum
64. Veriusque Castellae
65. Galliaecia Regnum
66. Portulgalliae et Algarbiae Regna
67. Andaluzia continens Sevellam et Corduram
68. Granata et Murcia Regna
69. Africa
70. Barbaria
71. Fezzae et Marocchi Regna Africa
72. Insuliae Canariae, olim Fortunata Dictae
73. Insuliae Promontorii Viridis, Hispanis Issas de Caro Verde belgis De Soute Eylanden
74. Nigritarum Regio
75. Mar di Ethiopia vulgo Oceanus Aethiopicus
76. Guinea
77. Aethiopia Superior vel Inferior vulgo Abissinorum...



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78. Regna Congo et Angola
79. Aethiopia Inferior vel Exterior
80. Insulia S. Lavrentii vulgo Madagascar
81. Nova Aegypti Tabula
82. America
83. America Septentrio Nalis
84. Extrema Americae versus Boream, ubi Terra Niva Nova Francia
85. Novi Belgii...
86. Mar del Nort
87. Insulae Americanae in Oceano Septentrionali ac Regiones Adiacentes
88. Hispanolia et Cubae
89. Nova Hispania et Nova Galicia
90. Yucatan conventus Iuridici Hispanae Novae Prs Occidentalis, et Guatimala Conventus Iuridicus
91. America pars Meridionalis
92. Guiana fiue Amazonum Regio
93. Accuratissima Brasiliae Tabula
94. Peru
95. Mar del Zur Hispanis Mare Pacificum
96. Terra Australis Incognita
97. Asia
98. Turcicum Imperium
99. Greacia
100. Insula Candia olim Creta
101. Nova Persiae Armeniae Natoliae et Arabiae
102. Terra Sancta, sive Promissionis, olim Palestina...
103. Tabula Tartariae et majoris partis Regni China
104. Iaponia Regnum
105. Imperii Sinarum Noba Descriptio
106. Xantung, Sinarum Imperii Provincia Quarta
107. Pecheli, sive Peking Imperii Sinarum Provincia Prima
108. Xensi Imperii Sinarum Provencia Secunda
109. Xensi Imperii Sinarum Provencia Tertia
110. Honan Imperii Sinarum Provencia Quinta
111. Nanking sive Riangnan Imperii Sinarum Provencia Nona
112. Chekiang Imperii Sinarum Provencia Decima
113. Fokien Imperii Sinarum Provencia Undecima



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114. Kiangsi, Imperii Senarum Provencia Octava
115. Huquang, Imperii Senarum Provencia...
116. Suchuen Imperii Senarum Provencia...
117. Iunnan Imperii Senarum Provencia Decimaquinta
118. Queicheu, Imperii Senarum Provencia...
119. Quangsi Sinarum Imperii Provencia Decimatertia
120. Quantung Imperii Sinarum Provencia...
121. Indiae Orientalis nec non Insularum...
122. Mar di India
123. Insularum Moluccarum Nova Descripto
124. Insula Borneo et occidentalis pars Celebis
125. Insula Iavae cum parte insularum Borneo Sumatrae
126. Sumatrae
127. Magni Mogolis Imperium
128. Sinus Gangeticus vulgo Golfo de Bengala
129. Insula Zeilan olim Taprobana nunc incolis Tenarisim

Detailed Condition:

2 volumes. Large folio. Contemporary tawny calf, covers framed in gilt-tooled borders, interior border cornered with gilt double-headed eagle device, large gilt-tooled device at the center showing Atlas carrying an armillary sphere surrounded by foliate motifs. Covers with old (19th or early 20th century) inventory or sale labels ("1451/179 2 vols"); spine in 9 compartments separated by raised bands, titled in the second on red morocco label, numbered in the third on green morocco label. Some maps slightly browned in volume 2. Some of the folding maps with reinforced oxidation breakages.