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**Jobi Ludolfi Habessinia seu Abassia Presbyteri Johannis Regio perperam dicta, ad exemplum Tab. Chorographicac P. Balth. Tellezii quanta fieri potuit formata correctis multis nominibus male scriptis: plurimisque locis passim insertis ex Gregorii Habess: fida relationa, illorum situ non ubiq. Æque certo**

**Stock#:** 75004  
**Map Maker:** Ludolf  
  
**Date:** 1683  
**Place:** Frankfurt  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 22 x 16 inches  
  
**Price:** \$ 1,600.00



**Description:**

***Remapping Prester John's Ethiopia by "the most illustrious name in Ethiopic scholarship"***

Rare first state of Hiob (or Job) Ludolf's rare map of Ethiopia and the Upper Nile, one of the most important 17th Century maps of Ethiopia.

Highly important map of Ethiopia, by one of the most important Ethiopian scholars of the 17th Century. The title of the map (translated here) is instructive:

*Job Ludolf's Habessinia or Abassia - **wrongly called the 'Kingdom of Prester John'** - here based on the information given in the **maps of Father Balth[azar] Tellez**, with corrections as careful as possible of many wrongly written names, with the addition of many localities here and there from the trustworthy account of **Gregorius the Abyssinian**, even though their position is not so sure everywhere. Year 1683.*

The map provides a detailed treatment of Ethiopia and the Eritrean coast, which has been synthesized from manuscript maps drawn by Fra. Balthazar Tellez and information derived from Ludolf's contacts with



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Abba Gorgoryos (Gregorius the Abyssinian), while the two were together in Rome.

A noted by Clapham,

*the mapping of Ethiopia [was] entirely transformed with the publication in 1683 of Job Ludolfs revolutionary 'Habessiniae seu Abassiae Presbyteri Johannis Regio perperam dicta'. Engraved by Ludolf's son Christian from a manuscript map by his father . . . , this placed the spatial awareness of the country on a completely new footing. Most obviously, the Ptolemaic lakes have completely disappeared, and in their place the Abbay (described as 'Nilus seu Abawi) is shown as flowing from the south-east corner of Lake Tzana or Dembea in its familiar curve around Gojam, before heading north.*

*Ludolf locates the source of the Nile in Gojjam, south-west of Lake Tana, not far from where it was 'discovered' by Bruce some ninety years later. More important still, he accurately places Ethiopia's latitude, as lying between 8° and 16° north of the equator, in the process confining the country to a relatively small corner of north-east Africa, instead of spreading it over much of the continent as previous cartographers had done. The longitude lies between 62° and 74° east; although at first sight this is puzzling, it is accurate by the convention of the time, which divided the globe into two hemispheres, and placed the prime meridian through the centre of the Atlantic Ocean.*

*Though much remained to be sorted out in the internal mapping of the country, fixing the basic co-ordinates enabled this to be far more accurately depicted than before. The Mareb is shown as rising to the east of Asmara, before curling round to the south and north-east (in a manner that echoes the Abbay), rather than broadly eastwards. Axum is shown well to the north of its actual location, almost due west of Massawa, with Adawa (noted for the first time) directly south of it. Although Massawa (Matzua) and Arkiko are stated to be occupied by the Turks, Ethiopian territory is shown as extending to the Red Sea coast, down to what would now be north-west Somaliland. The Danakil depression is identified as 'Terra Salis' (land of salt), illustrated by a herd of camels bearing saltpacks. Gondar (Guender) is shown as the tented encampment of the emperor, east of the northern end of Lake Tana, while strangely Kuara, which previous maps placed relatively correctly to the west of the lake, is shown by Ludolf to the north.*



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*Extensive improvements are made to the mapping of southern Ethiopia, with the Galla shown for the first time as occupying much of the region (the name Oromo was not widely used until the 1970s), together with Guraghe, 'Cambat', Hadya, and other southern regions including Alaba, Buzama, Sugamo and Bahargamo. 'Zendero' is clearly associated with Gingiro, and the river Zebée which flows through it, . . . is shown by Ludolf as flowing southwards, and clearly corresponds to the Omo. The Awash (Hawash) likewise appears, flowing eastwards towards Adel, while the (actually non-existent) river Hanazo runs parallel to the Hawash to the north. The monasteries noted include Bizen, St. Stephen at Haik, and Debra Líbanos, while the princely prison is now placed at Amba Gishen, near Haik.*

*This is also the first map on which I have been able to find a clear reference to Lalibela, though Sanson noted a place called Lulibella. The cartouche acknowledges the work of Balthasar Tellez, and notes that a very large number of place names have been inserted on the authority of Gregory the Abyssinian ('Gregorii Habess:'). The imperial insignia in the top left corner shows the lion bearing a double-headed cross, the Ge'ez motto, Moa Anbessa Zaimnagada Yihuda.*

The information contained in the map would be taken by Coronelli and others, influencing the mapping of the region for future decades.

**Rarity**

While the 18th Century edition of the map by Valk & Schenk appears occasionally on the market, this original by Ludolf is extremely rare.

**Detailed Condition:**