



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

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Effigies ampli Regni auriferi Guineae in Africa siti, extensum inde ab. insulis Atlanticis, vulgo dictis, de Cabo Verde: ad flumen Benin usque, ad cujus ripam sita est Regia urbs et magna Benin, atque inde ad promontorium Lopi Gonsalvi, delineata per S.

Rovelascum, et politioribus lineamentis figurata per Lodovicum Texeram, protocosmographum Regis Hispaniarum, Eodem anno editus est liber, amplam harum regionum descriptionem continens per P.D.M.

Stock#: 75493
Map Maker: Allard
Date: 1650 circa
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 24 x 18.2 inches Including text
Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Great Early Maps of West Africa

Important antique Dutch map of West Africa showing the coastal region from the Canary Islands to the Bight of Benin and São Tomé and Príncipe.

The title cartouche attributes the map to an earlier manuscript sketched by Francisco Revelasco and drafted by Luis Teixeira ca. 1600; Teixeira was an important cartographer during the Iberian Union (1580-1640). The title reads in translation from the original Latin:

Depiction of the expansive and gold-rich kingdom of Guinea in Africa, which stretches from the Atlantic islands popularly called the Cape Verde Islands to the river in Benin on which the great and royal city of Benin lies, and from there to the promontory of Lopez Gonsalvez, drawn by S. Rovelasco and executed in fine line by Ludovicus Texera [Luis Teixeira], chief cosmographer to the Spanish King. A book with an extensive depiction of these regions was published in the same year by P.D.M. [Pieter de Marees]



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Based on reports and testimony from travelers like the merchant Menda Motta, the map shows a densely detailed coastline filled with rivers, fishing villages, great cities in Benin and Biafra, as well as what are referred to as castles—fortified positions from which Europeans traded with the interior according to rules largely set by local rulers. One of the first of these was erected by the Portuguese in 1482; it is known as Mina (or Elmina) and is located on the Gold Coast in what is today Ghana.

European castles, controlled variously by the Portuguese, Dutch, English, French, German principalities, Danes, and Swedes, dot the coastline, but that is where their influence, and geographic knowledge, stopped. To hide the lack of knowledge of and power over inland Africa, this map is augmented with two vignettes depicting scenes from the Gulf of Guinea region. They are framed in handsome strapwork. To the right is a procession of nobles entering the city of Benin, while to the left is a scene showing traditional music and dance.

These embellishments are joined by three grand thirty-two-point compass roses (and one sixteen-point half rose) placed in the Atlantic. Two large European ships patrol the waters, as does a stately sea monster. Both the title cartouche (right) and the scale (lower left) are framed in rich strapwork.

Europeans in Africa to the seventeenth century

The first Europeans to reach sub-Saharan Africa were the Portuguese, who sailed to the Senegal River in 1442. In the three decades prior to this voyage, the Portuguese had established several fortifications along the coast of Morocco. By the 1470s, the Portuguese had established trade relations with West African leaders from Senegal to Ghana. Initially, informal trade models, wherein Europeans settled in local communities in tiny numbers and created trading networks (often led by their African wives), were more common, but these quickly gave way to the factory system by the seventeenth century.

Elmina, established on the Gold Coast in 1482, was the prototype for the trading factory; it was a location for representatives of African kingdoms to meet with the Portuguese and trade, while the Portuguese could store goods and load their ships. This system kept the Europeans relatively contained on the coast. At this time, the Portuguese were especially interested in trading for gold and, increasingly, in enslaved persons.



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By the end of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese factories were threatened by Dutch incursions. By 1650, practically all of the Portuguese coastal castles were in Dutch hands. They were also interested in enslaved persons, as well as ivory, animal hides, and textiles. Other European nations followed suit in the later half of the seventeenth century. By this time, the trade in enslaved persons was coming to dominate European commerce with Africa. Eventually, 12.5 million Africans would be transported to the Americas as enslaved labor; many thousands more perished en route to the castles.

Sources for the map

The original manuscript upon which this map is based is credited to Luis Teixeira. Teixeira was one of the most prominent members of a famous family of Portuguese mapmakers. The family was headed by Pero Fernandes (two known charts from ca. 1525 and 1528), father of Luis Teixeira, Marcos Fernandes Teixeira, and (most likely) Domingos Teixeira. Luis has two cartographer sons of his own, João Teixeira Albernaz I and Pedro Teixeira Albernaz.

Luis has thirty-five charts attributed to him. While his place and date of birth are unknown, Luis took an exam to gain permission to make navigational charts in 1564. A permit from 1569 survives, detailing that Luis was responsible to providing the royal fleets with charts and instruments. He is also known for his surveys of Brazil and the Azores and a significant map of Japan. His reputation preceded him; he was admired by Abraham Ortelius and Jodocus Hondius in the Low Countries and Spanish officials (Portugal and Spain were united administratively from 1580 to 1640, which is why he is listed as a cosmographer for Spain in the title of this map).

Little is known about Francisco Revelasco beyond his work on this map. Revelasco and Teixeira created the manuscript version of this map ca. 1600.

States of the map

The map was originally intended to be published in 1602 in Pieter de Marees's *Beschryvinge ende Historische wtrhael rtnt Gout koninckrijck tan Gunea, andres de Goutczete de Mina genaemt* (Amsterdam, 1602). However, no known copy of this first printed state survives.



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The map was engraved by Dutch mapmaker Baptist van Deutecum and released in ca. 1650 (not before ca. 1643) by Hugo Allard. Carel Allard issued a later edition in about 1690.

Rarity

OCLC lists four institutional examples of this map (Harvard, Oxford, the British Library, the University of Amsterdam). To this, we can add an example at the University of Texas, Arlington, which we sold in 2021. This is only the second time we have handled the map, which

Detailed Condition:

Beautiful original hand-color in full. Faint centerfold toning and minor foxing in the blank margins.