



Double-page and folding engraved map on two joined sheets, small losses at old folds, laid down on archival tissue.

THE ROUTE OF THE FIRST DUTCH VOYAGE TO THE EAST INDIES, FROM AMSTERDAM TO BATAVIA

Descriptio Hydrographica accommodata ad Battavorum navigatione in Javam insulam Indie Orientalis 1595... 1597... **Eygentliche vnd avsfvhrliche Mappa de orientallischen Indien,**

Author

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Physical description

Double-page and folding engraved map on two joined sheets, small losses at old folds, laid down on archival tissue.

Dimensions

355 by 650mm (14 by 25.5 inches).

Notes

"The dreams and labors of Plancius and Linschoten culminated in Cornelis de Houtman's pioneering voyage to Southeast Asia of 1595-97, which initiated Dutch presence in the Indies" (Suarez)

This extremely important map of Africa and Asia, from the east coast of Brazil to Japan, was published in Theodore De Bry's 'Peregrinationum in Indiam Oriental et Indiam Occidentales. Petits Voyages', part III: 'Tertia Pars Indiae Orientalis', shows the route of the first Dutch voyage to the East Indies, from Amsterdam to Batavia.

Portugal's key to its stronghold on European trade with the Indies was its control of Malacca, which it had captured in 1511. As long as it held that important port on the southwest of the Malay Peninsula, it effectively controlled the Malacca Strait between Malaya and Sumatra — and thus could cause enormous problems for any would-be European competitors attempting to reach the Indies by way of Africa.

By the 1590s, Spanish vessels had long been sharing in the profits to be made in the Indies by sailing west from Europe, traversing the Magellan Strait, and crossing the Pacific. But when Dutch commercial interests wanted to have some of the trade, they looked for a route around Africa that would avoid the Malacca Strait.

In 1592, a group of investors from Amsterdam sent Frederick de Houtman to Lisbon to learn what he could about the spice trade. In the same year, Jan Huyghen van Linschoten reached Lisbon en route home to Holland after having travelled to Goa with the Portuguese. When de Houtman returned to Holland two years later and began preparing for an exploratory commercial venture to the Indies, he and his backers followed Linschoten's advice on the best market to acquire spices: Bantam, on the northwest coast of Java, just west of what is now Jakarta.

Frederik de Houtman accompanied his brother Cornelis, who commanded the first Dutch voyage to the Southeast Asia, between 1595 and 1597. As the map shows, they further heeded Linschoten's advice, and entered the region by way of the Sunda Strait. "De Houtman, in fact, carried aboard a copy of Linschoten's 'Reysgheschrift' in manuscript and probably relied heavily on it for sailing directions. Though the financial returns of the voyage were meager, de Houtman nonetheless established trade with the great pepper port of Banten, near which the Dutch colony of Batavia would soon be founded. The façade of Portuguese invulnerability was quickly eroding; as the great English imperialist Hakluyt observed in 1599, 'their strength is nothing so great as heretofore hath been supposed'. The de Houtman expedition gave Holland first-hand data about the Sunda Strait, the northern coast of Java, and the island of Bali" (Suarez).

Bibliography

Literature: Suarez, 'Early Mapping of Southeast Asia', 1999, page 180; Clancy, 'The Mapping of Terra Australis', 1995, 5.15

Provenance

Price:

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