



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

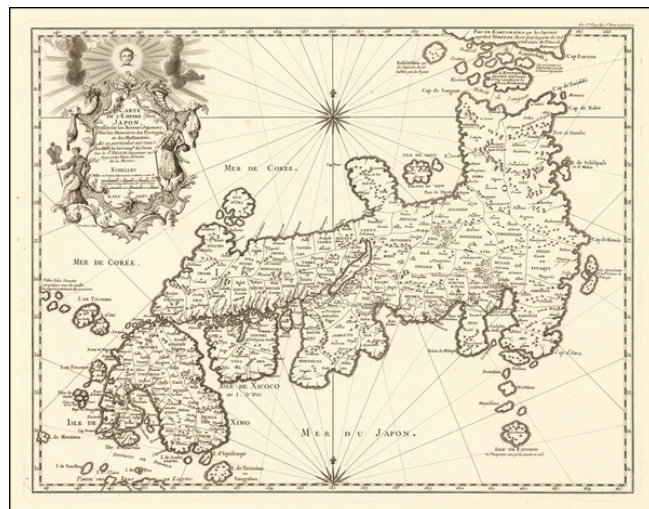
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## Carte de l'Empire du Japon, Dressee sur les Auteurs Japonois, sur les Memoires des Portugais et des Hollandois. Et en Particulier sur ceux des RRPP. de Compe. de Jesus . . . M.DCC XXV.

**Stock#:** 62648op  
**Map Maker:** Bellin  
**Date:** 1735  
**Place:** Paris  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 21 x 16.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### ***Bellin's Influential Map of the Japanese Empire***

This map, the first state of which was published by prominent French cartographer Jacques-Nicolas Bellin in 1735, depicts the natural and political features of the Japanese empire under the Tokugawa Shogunate.

It was originally published in Pierre de Charlevoix's *Histoire et Description Generale du Japon*, a book that was an influential source of information about the country for Europeans. Japan was of immense interest to Europeans at the time because, while Europe was increasingly trading with Asia, Europeans were barred from entering Japan due to their isolationist policies.

This map shows the extent of the Japanese empire, from the islands of Okinawa and Amami (the Islands of Liqueio) up to Kamchatka, which Bellin believed to be the same as Hokkaido. The map places an emphasis on the coastlines and water features of the area, including the Korean Sea (Mer de Coree) and the Sea of Japan (Mer du Japon). The various islands are represented in great detail.

The map is adorned with two compass roses, which are both adorned with a *fleur de lis* as a north arrow. The map also features a shield-shaped cartouche with ornate figures and ribbons in the upper left-hand corner.

Bellin cited both Jesuit and Portuguese sources in the creation of this map. He also used a wider variety of



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sources, including Dutch, Russian, and Japanese sources. However, his main source of information for the map was German traveler Engelbert Kaempfer, who was one of the foremost experts on Japan and Persia in the seventeenth century. Kaempfer was likely excluded from the citation due to Charlevoix's Jesuit background and preference for Jesuit sources. While acknowledging Jesuit sources, Bellin presents a more modern image, advancing beyond the Jesuit cartographic model of Blancus-Moreira type to adopt a new model.

#### **Europe and the Tokugawa Shogunate**

This map was published during the Tokugawa shogunate (also known as the Edo period), which lasted from 1600 to 1868. This shogunate was the last feudal military government in Japanese history.

While Europeans had been aware of the existence of Japan since the mid fifteenth century, they did not set foot in the country until a group of Portuguese sailors were shipwrecked off the country's southern coast in the mid-sixteenth century. Soon after, the Dutch and Portuguese began to establish trading relationships with the Japanese. Between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries, the Portuguese established a rather lucrative silver trading relationship with Japan, along with a successful mission to convert Japanese citizens to Catholicism.

As more Japanese citizens converted to Catholicism at the hands of the Portuguese missionaries, the shogunate became more concerned that missionaries were using religion as a means of colonization, as had happened across many other areas of Asia. The government declared three exclusion decrees in the 1630s and Christianity was banned from the country. Beginning in 1635, most Japanese citizens were forbidden from leaving the country and foreign trade was limited to select Dutch and Chinese traders in the Port of Nagasaki. This policy, known as *Sakoku*, lasted until 1853.

#### **De Charlevoix's *Histoire du Japon***

Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix (1682-1761), the publisher of *Histoire du Japon*, was a French Jesuit missionary who spent his earliest years exploring Canada, the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River, and the Bahamas. In his later years, he returned to France where he served as a director of the *Journal de Trévoux*, through which he created a series of histories of non-European countries; *Histoire du Japon* was the first of this series. In addition to maps such as Bellin's, De Charlevoix compiled a variety of illustrations showing material culture objects including musical instruments, costumes, ships, and plants to paint a portrait of life in *Sakoku*-era Japan for European readers.



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**States of the map**

There are two states of this map, in addition to editions released by the London-based Emanuel Bowen:

First State (1735): The southern tip of Kamchatka is present in the upper right hand corner.

Second State (1754): The coordinates are slightly changed from the first state. Six islands north of the *I. de Matsumay* have been omitted. The southern tip of Kamchatka is no longer visible.

Bowen's editions (1744, 1747, 1766): Between the two states of Bellin's map, Welsh cartographer Emanuel Bowen published his own map of Japan, which Bowen acknowledged as drawing heavily on Bellin's work.

**Detailed Condition:**