



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

## **(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety]**

**Stock#:** 66562  
**Map Maker:** Ahmed  
**Date:** 1559 (early 20th Century)  
**Place:** Venice  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 22 x 25 inches if joined  
**Price:** \$ 2,400.00



### **Description:**

***Rare Early Photograph on 4 Sheets -- One of the Most Significant Achievements of Early Modern Cartography -- The First Map and Geographical Treatise Created in a Western European Workshop for a Non-Western Audience***

Fine early 4 sheet photographic example of the Hajji Ahmed world map, "Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety," made in Venice in 1559. The map is a towering landmark of contemporary geographical knowledge, incorporating the most up to date geographical information from 1559, as well as the earliest geographical treatise in the Turkish Ottoman language.

This 4 sheet photographic image is from the collection of Edward Luther Stevenson (1859-1944), noted map scholar, whose papers now reside at Yale University.

Created in an unknown Venetian workshop, the Hajji Ahmed (Haci Ahmet in Turkish) cordiform map of the world is the earliest known Turkish language work of any kind to be designed for publication and sale in the Ottoman market. With the exception of two earlier charts by the famous cartographer Piri Re'is



---

**(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety]**

(d.1554), which now survive only in fragmentary form, the Hajji Ahmed map also ranks as the oldest stand-alone Turcophone world map (Casale, 80). The copious text surrounding the map, intricately and painstakingly inscribed along the map's outer margins, is among the most extensive original Turkish-language geographical treatises to have survived from the sixteenth century.

One of the map titles reads:

*Whoever wishes to know the true shape of the world, their minds shall be filled with light and their breast with joy.*

As noted by Casale, the map and its surrounding text should be read as an original and remarkably compelling work of geography, presenting a picture of the Ottoman state that is defined both geographically and historically through its relationship to the twin legacies of ancient Rome and Alexander the Great.

**Cartographic sources**

While the earliest scholars of the map assumed that it was compiled independently from any known sources, it was established at a relatively early date that the map was drawn using Johannes Werner's cordiform projection and could best be described as a larger, geographically updated and improved version of Oronce Finé's cordiform map of 1534, which was first printed in 1536 (surviving in two examples).

The Hajji Ahmed map represented a significant cartographic improvement from Finé's cordiform map, including greater cartographic detail and accuracy. The improvements are especially evident in the New World, where the appearance of an advanced depiction of California and the Northwest Coast of America was particularly impressive for 1559, as are the revisions and improvements to the geography and place names in South America.

While several early writers suggested that the Giacomo Franco cordiform map may have been an intermediate source, this conclusion was based upon an erroneous dating of the Franco map to circa 1550, rather than the current dating of 1587. In fact, despite its having been prepared prior to the cordiform maps of Giovanni Cimerlino (1566) and Giacomo Franco (1587), it is by far the most cartographically advanced of all cordiform maps and the only map to provide the updated cartographic information along



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### **(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety]**

the west coast of North America derived from Ramusio and Gastaldi.

The map was clearly the subject of a great deal of effort and composition. As noted by V.L. Ménage, the source for the place names in the British Isles was George Lily's map of 1546. Other sources included Hayton's *Flower of the Histories of the East* and volume two of Ramusio's *Navigazioni et Viaggi*, printed in Venice in 1556, shortly before the creation of the Hajji Ahmed map. Ménage concludes that much of the improved information in the map derives from Ramusio, based upon certain errors in Ramusio's translation of *Leo Africanus* (from volume one of his *Navigazioni et Viaggi*) which are repeated in the Hajji Ahmed map.

The single cordiform is surrounded by a border of puffing winds, with an ancillary sphere and two star charts below it. Bordering the practically-square (115 x 111 cm) print is an intricate frieze with a flower design. Equally important is the text filling the space between border and map. As noted by Casale:

*Like the map, the text is divided into several discrete sections. Parallel to the map's visual content, the text's longest component is a comprehensive overview of the world, which includes...descriptions of both the eastern hemisphere, well known to the ancients, and the newly discovered territories of the western hemisphere. This overview begins with a segment devoted to each of the world's "four continents" (Africa, Europe, Asia, and the New World), followed by passages dedicated to its seven most powerful rulers and twelve most important kingdoms. These subsections, while consisting of historical, geographic, and economic details about the lands in question, are woven together by an underlying organizational schema based on astrology, each of the seven rulers being associated with a planetary body and each of the twelve kingdoms with one of the twelve signs of the zodiac. In this way, the author neatly draws together his text, the accompanying "cordiform" world map, and the three smaller maps that depict the celestial as opposed to the terrestrial world. At the same time, the resulting set of associations among rulers, lands, and heavenly bodies serves a larger didactic purpose: through the interplay of astrology and geography, and of text and image, Hajji Ahmed uses his map to impose a hierarchical order on world history - one configured in such a way as to place the Ottoman sultan, because of his particular location in space and time, at the celestial apex of world rulership (81-3).*

### **Origins of the Hajji Ahmed Map**

The origins of the map, while now relatively well known and understood, were once a thing of legend. At



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### **(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety]**

the time of the rediscovery of the printing blocks for the map, it was believed that the map had been made in the Islamic World, not Venice. In the 19th century, the legend of the map grew and it was for many years described as having been found aboard a Turkish galley captured by Morosini in 1664—a story which was still being repeated in *Baedeker's Northern Italy* as late as 1913 (Baedeker, 365).

However, scholars now know that the map was made in Venice and intended for an Ottoman audience. In the 1550s, the sons of Süleyman the Magnificent, leader of the Ottoman Empire, were fiercely competing amongst themselves for the succession. Ultimately, Selim, the future Selim II, would survive while his elder brother, Mustafa, was assassinated in 1553, and a third brother, Bayezid, was executed in 1561. Their jockeying for power involved not only violence, but the possession of knowledge, specifically geographic knowledge in the form of maps. There is evidence to show that each of the three Ottoman princes were interested in attaining printed world maps from Venice, a recognized leader in cartography at the time. Their curiosity built on that of their predecessors who, since at least Mehmed I in the 15th century, had collected charts and maps, the most famous of which is the Piri Re's world map presented to Selim I in 1517. The Ottoman court of the mid-16th century highly prized geographic knowledge and it is in this context that we can place Hajji Ahmed's "Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety."

The map is dated in the year of the Hijra 967, suggesting it was created in or after October 1559 (October 1559 to September 1560). According to a brief autobiographical sketch included in the map's text, Hajji Ahmed was a Tunisian Muslim, trained in a Moroccan madrasa, who had the misfortune of being captured by pirates and sold as a slave to a Venetian nobleman, with whom he subsequently collaborated to create the map in exchange for the promise of freedom.

Despite this provocative story, it is unlikely that the map's architect was Hajji Ahmed, or at least that someone with that name was the lone contributor. Based on the numerous grammatical errors in the text, it is clear that the author was not, as he claims, an educated man from Tunis. Close study of the text by Arabic-speaking scholars has revealed that the text was most likely composed by a non-native Turkish or Arabic speaker, someone passably familiar with those languages as well as Latin and Italian. Who, then, is responsible for this extraordinary map?

Clues come from a struggle over publishing rights in the late 1560s, which were recorded in the records of the Venetian Council of Ten (the Doge). In 1568, one Marc Antonio Giustinian was given permission to publish an Arabic world map by a 'Cagi Acmet,' which had been translated by 'Membre et Cambri' (Ménage, 308). Membre refers to Michele Membré, a dragoman stationed in Venice who hailed from Cyprus and who had worked for years as a translator in the Venetian *bailo* in Constantinople. His assistant



---

**(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety]**

was Nicolò Cambi. Ménage argues that it is likely that Membré was the chief architect of the map. Casale has investigated Membré's intellectual circle and found that it is likely he worked in concert with a cohort of European-born, non-native Turkish speaking officials and bureaucrats who were determined to cement their relationships with the strong Ottoman state.

In his recent study of the Hajji Ahmed map, Arbel points out that the great Venetian mapmaker Giacomo Gastaldi was commissioned to create one of the Ottoman prince's maps in the 1550s and it is possible that Gastaldi himself was engaged in the composition of the Hajji Ahmed map as well. Moreover, as noted above, the details within the map reveal a connection to Giovanni Battista Ramusio, who also served for many years as the Secretary or Chancellor of the Council of Ten. The authorship of the map was therefore a group effort prepared for an elite Ottoman market. While all the individuals may never be identified, what is clear is the importance of Venice as a multi-cultural node where those with experiences of Ottoman lands and intellectual trends could gather and where Ottoman elites could order their geographic materials. Venice was the singular cross-roads where a unique object like the Hajji Ahmed map could be created.

**The worldview of the Hajji Ahmed Map**

What makes the Hajji Ahmed map so unique is not its rarity or its status in printing history. Rather, it is the particular worldview articulated in the images and text of the map. As noted above by Siebold, the text describes the four continents, the twelve great countries of the world paired with signs of the zodiac, as well as the seven greatest rulers in the world paired with planets. The Ottoman Sultan is likened to the Sun, i.e. the universal ruler. The Sultan is connected to other rulers, both European and Eastern, but he is central to all of their existences. In the section on the continents, Europe is also compared to the Sun, which implies that Süleyman is a great European ruler, or at least one intimately tied to Europe. This sort of reasoning stems from the intellectual circle of Membré, as described by Casale. Together these relative outsiders of the Ottoman court espoused a historical geography that connected Süleyman to past leaders like Alexander the Great and argued that Süleyman was destined, like Alexander the Great, to rule *from* Europe a grand empire *beyond* the borders of continental Europe (Casale, 84).

The Hajji Ahmed map was crafted in the hopes of appealing to other like-minded officials in the Ottoman court. However, by the late 1550s, such ideas, which had flourished under the Vizierate of Ibrahim Pasha (1523-36), were on the wane, as was the power of foreign-born officials in the Ottoman court. Other authors, from Muslim families long-associated with the Ottomans, preferred a less-inclusive worldview based upon Ptolemy. They chose this more limited geographic scope for political reasons, not due to



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### **(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety]**

ignorance of the wider world. Thus, the Hajji Ahmed map represents a particular moment of struggle within the intellectual landscape of the Ottoman court, a moment which illuminates just how dynamic and outward-facing the Ottoman Empire was in the mid-16th century.

#### **History of the printing blocks and printing**

Unfortunately, we will never know precisely what the intended audience thought of the map, as there is no evidence that the Hajji Ahmed map ever circulated in Constantinople in the 16th century. As previously mentioned, Giustinian, who specialized in Hebrew publications, managed to attain permission to publish the Hajji Ahmed map in 1568, after ensuring the return of the wood blocks which the Council of Ten had seized from his publishing house. A ruling by the Council of Ten on February 6, 1568 notes:

*Since our dear nobleman Marc'Antonio Giustinian has done no harm in his world maps (mappamondi), neither to Christianity nor to our State, as has been revealed in the material presented in his defense, the said world maps and other things confiscated from his house should be returned to him, on condition that he would not publish them [non dia fuori] without first obtaining permission and privilege, according to law.*

On May 13, 1568, the Senate further ruled:

*that nobody but [Giustinian], or somebody empowered by him, would be authorized to print, cause to be printed by others or sell in this city and in any other town or place of our dominion the world map in Arabic, with the gradation of provinces and cities according to Sultan Ismael (sic), assembled by Cagi Acmat (sic) and translated by Membre and Cambi, and brought to perfection at last after long delay.*

It is unclear how Giustinian first came by the blocks, but it is possible that he either presided over their creation or acquired them in the trading of plates and blocks that was customary between publishers in Venice in this period.

Giustinian clearly had plans to sell the Hajji Ahmed map to the Ottomans by using his position as the governor of Cephalonia to transport the maps easily to the nearby Ottoman territory of Morea. However, the map printing blocks were never returned to Giustinian, who was again in trouble with the authorities by 1570, when the Inquisition was investigating him for some of his Hebrew publications (Arbel, 25). In any case, political events would soon put a permanent end to the prospects of selling the map.



---

**(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its Entirety]**

The Council of Ten had originally seized the wood blocks due to fears that they contained politically and religiously-sensitive information. While they may have worried that an Arabic map would contain content that attacked the Catholic Church, it is also likely the officials were concerned that it held sensitive geographical information that could help the Ottomans. After nearly thirty years of peace, in the late 1560s Venice was worried that the Ottomans were again setting their sights on Cyprus. War broke out between the empires in 1570, the Third Ottoman-Venetian War, which witnessed the Ottoman capture of Cyprus and then their defeat at the Battle of Lepanto.

Although the Council of Ten officially ordered the blocks returned to Giustinian, there is no evidence suggesting the blocks were ever returned and they remained in the Council's archives until, around 1795, when they were rediscovered. Menage notes that at the time of the rediscovery of the printing blocks in the archives of the Council of Ten, the Council ordered Pinelli, the official printer, to have 24 copies of the map printed and thereafter that the printing blocks should be transferred to the Public Library (San Marco). At the time, Simone Assemani, Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of Padua was asked to describe the map. His comments were published in a 4 page pamphlet entitled, *Dichiarazione d'una mappa turchesa incisa in quattro tavole di pero, ritrovate nell' archivio dell eccelso Consiglio de' Dieci* (the pamphlet refers to 4 sheets as the size of the map--the other two sheets contain only text). The *Dichiarazione*, was presumed by Menage to have been printed in a run of only 24 copies, but later writers have questioned this conclusion, although only 4 surviving examples were known to Menage in 1958.

The map was printed from six pear wood blocks, which still survive in the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice. However, they have been split and are damaged beyond repair so that the blocks are no longer useable for printing the map. The damage to the blocks was described as early as 1865 by D'Avezac as being cracked and worm eaten and in no condition for further printing. Stefano Bifulco reports that in 2010 the Marciano Library commissioned the restoration of the pear blocks, which are now framed and on display in the Library as of 2016.

There are no surviving examples of the map printed in the sixteenth century. Of the surviving copies of the 24 printed in 1795, about half are known to survive.

**Photographic Reproductions**

The V L Menage Article 'The Map of Hajji Ahmed' and Its Makers in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 21, No. 1/3 (1958), pp. 291-314 references several early



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman  
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

**(Early Photographic Facsimile of the Mappamundi of Tunuslu Hajji Ahmed) Kemāl ile  
Naks Olinmis Cümle-I Cihân Nemunesi [Fully Illustrated Exposition of the World in Its  
Entirety]**

reproductions, including one done for the British Museum in 1929.

**Detailed Condition:**

Photo-facsimile printed on four overlapping sheets. (Digitally-composited as shown.)