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Fezzae et Marocchi Regna Africae Celeberrima . . .

Stock#: 91226
Map Maker: Jansson
Date: 1645
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 20 x 15 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Morocco on the Eve of the Alaouite Dynasty

A striking map of Morocco, oriented with West at the top, showing large fortified towns of Marakesh (Marruecos), Taradante and Fez, towns, mountains, rivers, lakes, etc. Tanger, Cueta and Rio Rabata also appear.

Published by the Dutch cartographer Jan Jansson and credited to the earlier cartographer Abraham Ortelius, the map offers a fascinating visual record of the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco during a transformative period in their history.

In the early 16th century, Morocco was divided into two Berber dynasties: the Wattasids in the north, ruling from Fez, and the Saadians in the south. Fez, one of the world's oldest university cities and a center for Arab culture and learning, was represented prominently on the map. The Wattasids maintained control over Fez until 1549 when the Saadians took over, uniting the kingdom under a single rule.

As indicated on the map, the Saadian era, particularly in the late 16th century, was a time of economic prosperity and architectural flourishing in Morocco. It was during this period that the Saadians successfully repelled the Portuguese invaders in the Battle of the Three Kings in 1578.

However, by the early 17th century, the Saadian Dynasty was in decline, weakened by internal strife and conflict. In 1666, the Alaouite Dynasty took power, beginning a reign that would continue into the present day.



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The city of Marruecos (Marakech) stands out as one of the significant urban centers. Marakech was established by the Almoravids in the 11th century and rapidly grew into a cultural, religious, and trading center for the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa. During the Saadian period (16th to 17th century), Marakech regained its status as the capital of the kingdom, and significant architectural works were completed, including the Ben Youssef Madrasa and the Saadian Tombs. Its position on the map underscores its importance and hints at the rich cultural life that made Marrakesh the vibrant city it is known as today.

"Taradante emporium" likely refers to the city of Taroudant, sometimes referred to as 'Little Marakech.' Located in the Sous Valley in the southern part of Morocco, it was a bustling market town and an important stop on the caravan trade route. As an emporium, it was likely a vibrant hub of commerce, with goods from Africa, Europe, and the Middle East passing through, an aspect that would have drawn significant interest from European traders and, consequently, cartographers.

The reference to "Specus perpetuo ignem evomens," which translates to "cave perpetually emitting fire," is particularly intriguing. This phrase likely refers to a geographical feature resembling a volcano. However, Morocco isn't known for its volcanic activity, especially in the 17th century. It's possible this could be a depiction of a mythical or misunderstood natural phenomenon. Cartographers of the era, despite their increasing accuracy, still grappled with the limitations of knowledge about distant lands, and maps sometimes included elements of local lore, travelers' tales, or misinterpretations.

Detailed Condition: