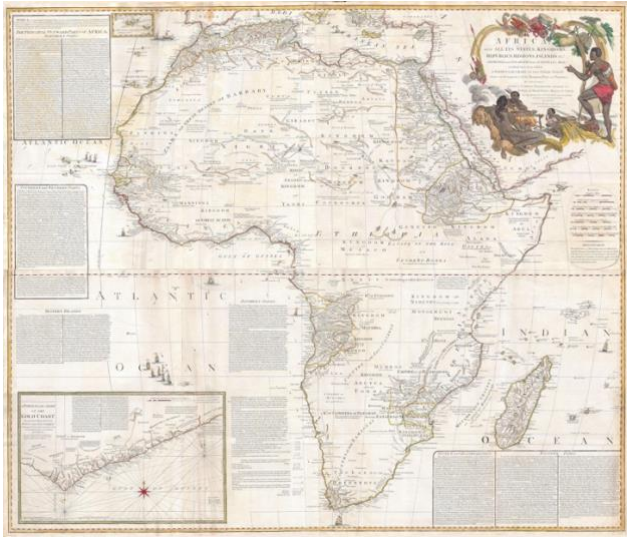


Map Information Sheet

Africa, with all its States, Kingdoms, republics, Regions, Islands, etc



Author:	Samuel Boulton
Date of Publication:	1787
Publisher:	Robert Sayer of London, England
Original Size:	48cm x 41cm

Description

Samuel Boulton's **1787** map of **Africa**, published by Robert Sayer as *Africa, with all its States, Kingdoms, Republics, Regions, Islands, &ca.*, is one of the most important 18th-century maps of Africa. It is a monumental work of late 18th-century commercial cartography that incorporates all of the scientific knowledge of Africa at the time and blends geography with trade and ethnography. Issued in both large four-sheet wall map and two-sheet atlas formats, it follows d'Anville's earlier restrained style, depicting well-charted coasts and leaving interiors cautiously annotated, while ocean currents, an Azores inset, and especially a detailed inset of the Gold Coast underscore its maritime and commercial purpose. Long textual panels along the margins describe Africa's natural products, trade, and customs, effectively turning the map into a handbook for merchants and readers interested in exploration and commerce. Published in the very year Britain's abolitionist movement formally organized, the map captures the stark tension of its moment: the height of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, meticulously documented through forts and trading posts, on the eve of growing humanitarian opposition. Its enduring influence was reinforced by subsequent reissues in atlases and by Laurie & Whittle after Sayer's death, preserving it as one of the key late-Enlightenment depictions of the African continent.

Cartographic Content

- **Full title & imprint.** *Africa, with all its States, Kingdoms, Republics, Regions, Islands, &ca. Improved and enlarged from D'Anville's Map; to which have been added a Particular Chart of the Gold Coast ... and also a Summary Description relative to the Trade and Natural Produce, Manners and Customs of the African Continent and Islands.* London: Printed for Robert Sayer, Fleet Street, "as the Act directs," 6 January 1787.
- **Format & size.** Issued as a very large wall map (engraved on four sheets, c. 104 × 122 cm) and also as a two-sheet atlas map (c. 52 × 121 cm). Both versions show ocean currents, include an inset of the Azores, and carry the Ferro prime meridian (the Gold Coast inset uses London).
- **Insets & annotations.** A substantial "Particular Chart of the Gold Coast" pinpoints European forts and factories, while long side-panel texts summarize trade, natural products, and manners & customs across regions - features that emphasize commerce and ethnographic "handbook" utility.
- **Style & sources.** The geography is explicitly "improved and enlarged from D'Anville." In Enlightenment fashion, Boulton follows d'Anville's restraint, leaving parts of the interior relatively blank or cautiously annotated, rather than filling them with speculative detail.

Historical Context

- **Commercial cartography at a turning point (1787).** Sayer issued the map at the height of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the same year Britain's abolitionists founded the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade (1787) - a tension reflected in Boulton's meticulous Gold Coast inset of European forts alongside the map's extensive trade notes.
- **Publishing history and afterlife.** Boulton's Africa circulated both as a wall map and within Sayer's atlases; a late-1780s printing appears in Thomas Kitchin's General Atlas. After Sayer's death, Laurie & Whittle re-issued the plates in 1794, keeping the title and overall conception.
- **State of geographic knowledge.** The map embodies the d'Anville method that dominated mid- to late-18th-century Africa mapping: accurate coasts and maritime information, prudent interior delineation, and heavy use of sourced notes. Its issue predates Mungo Park's Niger expeditions (1795–97), so key inland river systems (Niger, Nile, Congo) remain unresolved here.

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