

Engraved map on two sheets joined, some loss to upper and lower left margin, skilfully repaired, just affecting border to lower left, both sheets with watermark of a lamb Paschal with straight standard within a double circle, similar to Briquet 55, not in Woodward.

RUGHESI'S INCREDIBLY RARE MAP OF AFRICA

Africa.

Author
RUGHESI, Fausto

Publication date
1597.

Publisher

Publication place
Rome,

Physical description
Engraved map on two sheets joined, some loss to upper and lower left margin, skilfully repaired, just affecting border to lower left, both sheets with watermark of a lamb Paschal with straight standard within a double circle, similar to Briquet 55, not in Woodward.

Dimensions
(sheet) 820 by 580mm. (32.25 by 22.75 inches); (plate) 530 by 700mm (21 by 27.5 inches).

Notes
Fausto Rughesi was a Tuscan architect active in Rome, famous for designing the façade of Santa Maria in Vallicella, or Chiesa Nuova, in 1605. His cartographic activity seems to be limited to a set

of five maps of the world and continents produced in 1597 for Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua (1587-1612).

The map printed on two large folio sheets, bears Rughesi's dedication to Gonzaga in a cartouche at the upper left, and the Gonzaga arms on the upper right. Rughesi has used the most up to date sources for his map, lncluded Gastaldi, Mercator, and Ortelius.

For the outline of the continent Rughesi has taken his inspiration from Ortelius' 1570 map of Africa. However, the continents interior shows some marked contrasts with Ortelius, such as: the western Nile source lake of 'Zaire et Zenbre' being considerably further south than the eastern lake of 'Zaflan'; the lake which feeds the Blue Nile is placed on the equator; and the western Nile source lake is the source for both the Zaire (Congo River) and the un-named Zembere Rive, which then divides into the 'Cuama' and the 'Spirito Santo' Rivers further south.

Rughesi has also taken parts from Mercator's map of the continent, including the placement of lake 'Loana' in the Congo region, although unlike the Mercator's depiction its tributaries do not flow into the Congo, Zembere, or Nile Rivers. Madagascar (marked here 'Lorenzo') is depicted both shorter and wider on the present map, than on either of Ortelius' and Mercator's works.

Rughesi's cartographic output is incredibly rare with only one complete set of the world and continents having survived – held at the Vatican Library, although these are in very poor condition.

Betz in his cartobibliography of African maps records two states. Bifolco in his cartobibliography of Lafreri maps records a further third state.

State 1 – postulated by Betz as the second state shows evidence of erasures. No known extant examples.

State 2 – the present work dated 1597. Two known examples: The Vatican Library, and The University of Texas, part of the Kraus Map Collection.

State 3 – the dedicatory cartouche and coat of arms have been cut out. It has been suggested that this was carried out following the Duke's failure to pay for the maps' production. The only know example appeared on the market in 2015.

Bibliography
Bifolco 100, state 2; Betz Africa 36 state 2

Provenance

Price: £40000

Inventory reference: 17532

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