



A previously unrecorded carte-à-figures map of Africa

TODESCHI, Pietro.
Africae Nova Tabula...

Bologna: Francesco Sabatini, c.1670. 455 x 560mm.

£5,000

A very rare and fine carte-à-figures map of Africa engraved by Pietro Todeschi, with panels containing local costume down the sides and city prospects top and bottom, some of which are engraved in reverse. These are Alexandria, Mozambique (unnamed), Algiers, Tunis, Tangier, Ceuta, Cairo, Elmina, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Kilwa, 'Tzassin', and Cefala (Ras El Djebel, Tunisia). This map is dedicated to a Bolognese nobleman, Marchese Andrea Paleotti, and his wife Christine Dudley, Duchess of Northumberland, grand-daughter of Sir Robert Dudley, the famous Elizabethan mariner and chart-maker, who was exiled to Florence in the early seventeenth century. Christine was born in 1649, and married Paleotti in 1663. A legendary beauty, she had a scandalous love-life, partly encouraged by her husband, who died in 1689. Published by Sabatini, one of the many fringe figures in Italian map-making and publishing in the late seventeenth century. Unfortunately, even accurate dates for his life and death elude us, while his work life can be established only by the rough dating of his maps dependent on the dedications on those maps bearing them, but he was apparently active as a printer and publisher (and possibly engraver) in the 1670s, probably in Bologna. This is a late piracy of Dutch cartes-à-figure maps, popularised in the first part of the seventeenth century, although it seems likely that



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the map was plagiarised from intermediate Italian copies, perhaps by Stefano Scolari, an engraver and publisher (or possibly two different men) active from the 1640s to 1660s.

This example is now listed in BETZ: Mapping of Africa, addenda.

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