



An early engraved map of southern Africa

SANUTO, Livio.
 Africae Tabula X.

Venice, Damiano Zenaro, 1588, 400 x 520mm

£3,000

A very finely engraved map of Southern Africa, showing the course of the Limpopo River and Great Zimbabwe, the capital of the Shona empire. Sanuto described the granite walls of the city 'the work not of humans but the devil', as they were better than the Portuguese fortresses on the coast. Livio Sanuto (c.1520-1576), a Venetian cosmographer, mathematician and maker of terrestrial globes, belonged to the prestigious Lafreri school of engravers, whose output signalled the transition between the maps of Ptolemy and the maps of Mercator and Ortelius. He and his brother Giulio planned a massive and comprehensive atlas to include maps and descriptions of the whole world, which he believed would be more accurate than any previously published. Unfortunately, he died in 1576 having only completed 12 maps of Africa, which were eventually published in 1588 under the title 'Geografia Di M. Livio Sanuto...'. For his maps Sanuto relied on Gastaldi's 1564 map and Portuguese sea charts for the mapping of the coasts and for the interior used accounts by Duarte Barbosa and João de Barros. After its publication in 1588 this work was copied by other leading map makers for nearly a century afterwards

NORWICH: 152; see BETZ 22.



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