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van Keulen

*Paskaart van een Gedeelte van de AETHiopische Zee
strekkende van R. Sta Lucia ...*

Certificate of Authentication and Description

This is to certify that the item illustrated and described below is a genuine antique map, print or book that was first produced and published in 1726, today 299 years ago.

June 18, 2025

Cartographer(s)

van Keulen

First Published

Amsterdam, 1726

This edition

1726-1755

Size

cms

Technique

Copper engraving

Stock number

19729

Condition

excellent

Description

Van Keulen's contiguous rare sea charts covering the eastern and central Indian Ocean (the "Aethiopean Sea").

The northern sea chart occurs only in the Zee-Fakkel Part VI, the 1753 secret atlas of the VOC.

It covers latitudes 18 degrees north to 10 degrees south, from the Red Sea to Cabo del Gado below Zanzibar, covering the northwest corner of the Indian Ocean, up to the Maldives in the east. It covers large swaths of islands and cliffs, including the island of Diego Garcia. This chart was of particular relevance to the VOC because of the coffee trade with the port of Mocha, or ships that would be on the way to Dutch Ceylon or Malabar. The chart measures 49.5x 57.5 cms, scale ca 1:6,000,000. The van Keulen cartography Appendix 6 (Zee Fakkel Part VI) chart 347 p 214.

The southern chart is of utmost rarity because it was only issued as a loose navigation chart.

It covers latitudes 9.5 degrees south to 28 degrees south, from Cabo del Gado in the north down to Rio de Santa Lucia in the south.

While a less wide version of the navigation chart is included in van Keulen's 1753 Part VI, the secret atlas of the VOC, the version here is the chart extended in the eastern direction that was issued as a loose chart between 1726-1755, that has a large eastern area appended to it, to cover the central Indian Ocean, including Reunion, Mauritius, Diego Rodriguez and St Brandao, as well as many reefs and shoals in the central Indian Ocean. In the west, the chart covers the African coasts from Suuthern Africa up to Mozambique. It shows all of Madagascar, as well as swaths of islands including the Seychelles. This extended chart is never in the market.

The extended chart measures 50 x 89 cms, scale ca 1:4,000,000. The van Keulen Cartography chart 346 p 214 (the non-extended version in the Secret Atlas) and the extended chart here Appendix 5 (Loose printed charts) chart 215.

Rarity

The northern chart is of utmost rarity, occurring in van Keulen's 1753 Secret Atlas of the VOC only. The southern extended chart is unobtainable and lacking in all collections, it was issued as a loose chart only between 1726 and 1755.

Condition

Minor mending, strong imprints of the copperplates, wide margins, overall in excellent collector's condition.

Johannes van Keulen (1654-1711)

Gerard van Keulen (son) (1678-c.1727)

Johannes van Keulen II (grandson) (active 1726-1755)

The Dutch produced a remarkable number of enterprising and prolific map and chart makers but not even the Blaeu and Jansson establishments could rival the vigour of the van Keulen family whose business was founded in 1680 and continued under their name until 1823 and in other names until 1885 when it was from wound up and the stock dispersed at auction.

Throughout the history of the family, the widows several of the van Keulens played a major part, after their husbands' deaths, in maintaining the continuity of the business. The firm was founded by Johannes van Keulen who was registered as a bookseller in Amsterdam in 1678. In 1680 he published the first part of his 'Zee Atlas' which, over the years, was expanded to 5 volumes and continued in one form or another until 1734. More ambitious and with a far longer and more complicated life was his book of sea charts, the 'Zee-Fakkel', first published in 1681–82, which was still being printed round the year 1800. A major influence in the development of the firm was the acquisition in 1693 of the stock of a rival map publisher, Hendrik Doncker.

Although the firm was founded by Johannes van Keulen, he was primarily a publisher; it was his son, Gerard, a talented engraver, mathematician, Hydrographer to the East India Company, who became mainspring of the business which not only published charts but also books on every aspect of geograpy, navigation and nautical matters,

(Moreland and Bannister)

It was grandson Johannes van Keulen (II) who in 1753 produced Volume VI of the Zee-Fakkel for the VOC East Indiamen, containing printed charts for the navigation covering the waters from the Cape of Good Hope to Nagasaki . The atlas was not commercially sold and only for use on board of VOC ships, therefore it is also refered to as the 'secret atlas' of the VOC. The engraving quality and craftsmanship surpasses that of all earlier printed sea charts.

Sea charts from the secret atlas are among the rarest and most desirable sea charts for collectors.