

MAP 15

FILIPPO PIGAFETTA, *TABULA GEOGRA[PHICA] REGNI CONGO*, LATIN EDITION BY DE BRY, FRANKFURT, 1598

This is the other map contained in the *Relatione del Reame di Congo*, the earliest detailed cartographic representation of the Congo and Angola regions. An impressive largely east-west oriented fluvial system is in evidence to the south of the major waterway, here named *Flu[vius] Zairi* upstream and *Flu[vius] Congi* towards its river-mouth. Nineteen river islands reveal part of the obstacles to navigation the first Portuguese caravels encountered, apart from the cataracts not shown on the map (but mentioned in the text). The principal lake of the area, here marked as *Lago Aquiluda*, receives, as we have seen, a stream from the southern central lake and is at the same time the source for most of the rivers in this area. The capital of the Congo empire, the *Cita S. Saluatori* (San Salvador), is one of 33 seemingly fortified places and there are some mountain ranges with evocative names, such as *Montes Cristali*, *Montes do ferro*, or *Montes Sancti Sp[irit]us*. Among the fourteen plates illustrating daily life in the Congo and at the royal court two will be shown, one depicting the arrival of a Portuguese delegation whose leader presents its members to the king (Fig. 4), the other illustrating a sample of animals to be found in the Congo (Fig. 5).

There is an abundant literature on Pigafetta's account and the maps it contains, but many questions remain to be answered. Some authors state that Lopez had written a draft of his Report which Pigafetta then edited and translated into Italian. Others believe Lopez also composed the maps and Pigafetta only arranged them for publication. The fact is that he is the author of some well-known maps, for example of Paris (1591, having participated in Henri IV's siege of 1590), and of Vicenza (1591), a map Ortelius integrated into his *Theatrum*, published posthumously in 1608. Pigafetta also translated the *Theatrum* for an Italian edition which appeared in 1608. Considering his cartographic involvement, the authorship of these maps of Africa becomes entirely plausible.



MAP 15. Filippo Pigafetta, *Geographical Map of the Kingdom of Congo*, Latin edition by de Bry, Frankfurt, 1598. Copperplate engraving, 31 x 38 cm. HO.2002.47.2, RMCA Collection, Tervuren.



FIG 4. Subject no. II – ‘The Portuguese pay their respects to the King of Kongo and present him their legation. Of which more in Book 2, Chapter 2.’ (Scene at the court of San Salvador). HO.2002.47.1, RMCA Collection, Tervuren.



FIG 5. Subject no. XI – ‘Some other various animals unknown in our countries, about which also more in Book 1, Chapter 10.’ (Described in the book: aggressive buffaloes, dragons, elephants bathing in the river, a wolf running away with a gourd of palm oil on its back, monkeys imitating humans, here shown putting on stolen shoes, and pythons of monstrous size.) HO.2002.47.1, RMCA Collection, Tervuren.

In any case, worth retaining is the fact that this particular map had an enormous impact on the work of later cartographers, thanks also to the large distribution of a reduced image in Ortelius’ later *Theatrum* editions (see Fig. 2 under Map 12). Indeed, its hydrographic system assumed model character and is prevalent, with slight variations, in the maps of Africa throughout the 17th century.

MAP 16

ARNOLD FLORIS VAN LANGREN, *TYPUS ORARUM MARITIMARUM GUINEAE, MANICONGO, & ANGOLAE [...]*, AMSTERDAM, 1596

Dutch-born Jan Huygen van Linschoten (1562-1611) in 1583 set sail for the East Indies and travelled widely in that region, then under Portuguese control. For six years he was based in Goa and collected a great amount of information on trade, maritime navigation, and also on the flora and fauna of Asiatic lands he visited or heard about. On his return to the Netherlands his travel account, the *Itinerario, Voyage ofte Schipvaert, van Jan Huygen naer Oost ofte Portugaels Indien [...]*, was published in Amsterdam in 1596 by Cornelis Claesz (ca. 1546-1609), the most important Amsterdam publisher of geographical works at that time. Among much other cartographic material (for example coastal views), it contains this and the following map.

Arnold Floris van Langren (ca. 1571-1644), a Dutch engraver and globe maker, drew and engraved both maps. Blending elements of sea charts with terrestrial map design, his work stands out among the decorative cartographic images of this late sixteenth century for the pictorial quality in the cartographic embellishments. The empty space of the southern Atlantic is filled with three scrollwork cartouches: an indication of scales (at the top), a listing (centre, with the Portuguese coat of arms) of the coasts and islands in Latin, from which we derived the nominal title of the map, followed by the text in Dutch, and finally views of Ascension Island and St. Helena (bottom). Compass roses, a sea monster, three Portuguese caravels, and Tritons and Sirens in the western Ptolemaic lake add to this artful composition.



MAP 16. A.F. van Langren, *Map of the Coasts of Guinea, Manicongo and Angola [...]*, Amsterdam, 1596. Copperplate engraving, 39 x 53 cm. HO.1955.83.1.

MAP 17

ARNOLD FLORIS VAN LANGREN, *DELINEATIO ORARUM MARITIMARUM, TERRAE VULGO INDIGETATAE TERRA DO NATAL [...]*, AMSTERDAM, 1596

In direct continuation from the preceding scene, this map covers the eastern half of Africa and the western Indian Ocean. Again, in the vast expanse of the sea, here reaching up to the Maldives and Ceylon in the top right-hand corner, there are three caravels flying different flags, two sea monsters and a school of fish, plus three and a half compass roses. To the right of the scale cartouche is the one listing the main geographical features of the coasts and the islands, in Latin and in Dutch. As the map has no title we have again used the beginning of the Latin text. Neither of the two maps have longitudes marked, a precaution used by some map makers at a time when such measurements were difficult to establish. It was much easier to obtain latitudinal positions by astronomical observations with some degree of accuracy. One may assume that the presence of scales was meant to validate van Langren's claim to accuracy of geographical positions and extent of landmasses, as stated in the descriptive cartouches.

The marginal blemishes visible in this map are due to the fact that these two maps were printed on thin paper and folded into the *Itinerario* book. They have generally suffered some damage from repeated folding and unfolding over the centuries. Maps destined to be bound into atlases were usually printed on stronger paper, giving the map a much better chance of survival.



MAP 17. A.F. van Langren, *Outline of the Coasts of the Land commonly called Terra do Natal [...]*, Amsterdam, 1596. Copperplate engraving, 39 x 55 cm. HO.1955.83.2, RMCA Collection, Tervuren.