



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

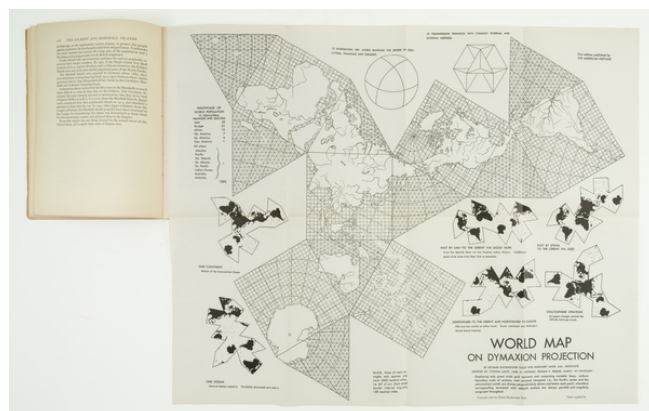
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[Dymaxion World Map] World Map on Dymaxion Projection. Fluid Geography [in:] The American Neptune: A Quarterly Journal of Maritime History . . . April 1944.

Stock#: 88899
Map Maker: Fuller
Date: 1944
Place: Salem, Massachusetts
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 28 x 20 inches (map)
Price: SOLD



Description:

Early Appearance of Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion World Map

One of the earliest, and arguably the best for serious Fullerians, appearances of Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion World Map.

The present example, noted as "patent pending," and styled the "First edition," is one of the first appearances of the map in print, differing significantly from the example printed in the March 1, 1943 *Life* magazine article, which was intended to be cut and assembled. The folding map sheet is accompanied by a fascinating eighteen-page article titled *Fluid Geography*, in which Fuller expounds on his novel world map projection and how the "air ocean" is where "all men are, so to speak, now in the same boat and are necessitous among other items, of a precise means for seeing the world from the dynamic, cosmic, and comprehensive viewpoint." He also describes how he evolved the map projection from a few earlier cartographic efforts.

The Dymaxion World Map

The Dymaxion map or Fuller map is a projection of a world map onto the surface of an icosahedron, which can be unfolded and flattened to two dimensions. The flat map is heavily interrupted in order to preserve shapes and sizes.

The March 1, 1943, edition of *Life* magazine included a photographic essay titled *Life Presents R. Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion World*. The article included several examples of its use together with a pull-out section that could be assembled as a "three-dimensional approximation of a globe or laid out as a



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flat map, with which the world may be fitted together and rearranged to illuminate special aspects of its geography." Fuller applied for a patent in the United States in February 1944, the patent application showing a projection onto a cuboctahedron. The patent was issued in January 1946.

The Dymaxion projection is intended only for representations of the entire globe. It is not a gnomonic projection, whereby global data expands from the center point of a tangent facet outward to the edges. Instead, each triangle edge of the Dymaxion map matches the scale of a partial great circle on a corresponding globe, and other points within each facet shrink toward its middle, rather than enlarging to the peripheries.

Fuller claimed that his map had several advantages over other projections for world maps, including:

- Less distortion of relative size of areas, most notably when compared to the Mercator projection; and less distortion of shapes of areas, notably when compared to the Gall-Peters projection.
- The Dymaxion map does not have any "right way up". Fuller argued that in the universe there is no "up" and "down", or "north" and "south": only "in" and "out". Gravitational forces of the stars and planets created "in", meaning 'towards the gravitational center', and "out", meaning "away from the gravitational center". He attributed the north-up-superior/south-down-inferior presentation of most other world maps to cultural bias.

In his own words: "[the Dymaxion Sky-Ocean Projection] was to provide a satisfactory means for humanity to see correctly the entire surface of the globe all at the same time... for the first time in history, humans can see their whole planet Earth's geography displayed on one flat surface without any visible distortion" - *Critical Path*, page 164.

Fuller intended the map to be unfolded in different ways to emphasize different aspects of the world. Peeling the triangular faces of the icosahedron apart in one way results in an icosahedral net that shows an almost contiguous land mass comprising all of Earth's continents - not groups of continents divided by oceans. Peeling the solid apart in a different way presents a view of the world dominated by connected oceans surrounded by land.

The text on the Dymaxion Projection map sheet contains the following explanation:

Employing only great circle grid reference and comprising variable focus, uniform boundary scale of sections, and universal viewpoint; i.e., Earth's center and the astronomical zenith are always perpendicularly above and below each point, wherefore corresponding terrestrial and celestial sections are always parallel and angularly congruent throughout.



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Showing the continents as "one island earth" also helped Fuller explain, in his book *Critical Path*, the journeys of early seafaring people, who were in effect using prevailing winds to circumnavigate this world island.

The word Dymaxion is based on the words "dynamic," "maximum," and "ion," and became synonymous with many of Fuller's projects, which often intended doing more with less. Some of his other inventions include the three-wheeled Dymaxion Car, and several architectural projects such as the Dymaxion Deployment Units intended to house U.S. military units stationed in remote areas, and even a Dymaxion Bathroom.

Though perhaps counterintuitive to most people, the Dymaxion world map continues to fascinate map experts, as well as artists - viz. the 1967 Jasper Johns painting titled *Map (Based on Buckminster Fuller's Airocean World)* - and iconoclasts from a wide variety of fields.

Detailed Condition:

Octavo. Original printed wrappers. A very nice clean copy. With the folding sheet containing the Dymaxion world map (measuring 24 3/4 x 19 3/4 inches) in flawless state.