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[Chinese Voyages To America, etc.] Memoires De Litterature, Tires Des Registres De L'Academie Royale Des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres Depuis l' annee M. DCC. XVIII. julques & compris l'annee M. DCC. XXV Tome Quarante-Neuvieme

Stock#: 101296
Map Maker: Royal Academy of France
Date: 1772
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 4.25 x 7.25 inches (binding)
Price: \$ 1,800.00



Description:

Research on the Chinese Voyages To America, etc.

Bound volume of essays presented to the Royal Academy of France, including an essay by Joseph de Guignes regarding Chinese Voyages to America and the people of eastern Asia.

Illustrated with two maps, including a copy of the famed Hans Sloan map and a map showing a Chinese voyage to America in 458 A.D., de Guignes explores the historical navigations of the Chinese beyond their traditional borders. It highlights that the Chinese ventured across deserts and mountains to the north and sailed the Indian and Japanese seas to the east and south, driven by motives of trade and empire expansion. This study underlines the significant contributions of the Chinese in the fields of history and geography through their voyages. It mentions that Chinese generals commissioned maps of explored territories and historians documented valuable itineraries, showcasing the breadth of Chinese exploration and observation.

Chinese Expedition to the Northwest Coast of America .

The first map, covering North America, Northeast Asia and the contiguous parts of the Pacific Ocean, illustrates the route of a Chinese expedition to the Northwest Coast of America in 458 A.D., to the (mythical) region known to the Chinese as Fousang.

The map was first published to illustrate a presentation made by Buache to the French Royal Academy of Sciences. The map depicts an expedition by sea from Northeastern China to Fousang, based upon the contemporary report of Joseph de Guignes, a member of the French Royal Academy of Sciences, first



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presented in August 1752. The map attempts to reconcile this voyage with other contemporary geographical information and myth, including the Sea of the West and several very exotic proposals for the Northwest Passage, along with information concerning the Russian expeditions in 1723 and 1741.

Joseph de Guignes (1721 - 1800) was a French orientalist, sinologist and Turkologist. He succeeded Étienne Fourmont at the Royal Library as secretary interpreter of the Eastern languages. His *Mémoire historique sur l'origine des Huns et des Turcs*, published in 1748, earned him admission to the Royal Society of London in 1752, and he became an associate of the French Academy of Inscriptions in 1754.

The present map illustrated a presentation which he made to the Royal Academy of Sciences and which would become the subject of his later printed work, *Recherches sur les Navigations des Chinois du Cote de l'Amerique, et sur quelques Peuples situés a l'extremite orientale de l'asie*, published in 1761.

Guignes was part of a school of French orientalists who believed that the Chinese had visited America in the 5th century A.D, prior to Columbus. Fusang or Fousang is a country described by the Buddhist missionary Hui Shen in 499 CE, as a place 20,000 Chinese li (about 7,000 to 10,000 kilometers) east of Da-han, and also east of China. Da-han is described as a place north-east of the country of Wo (southwestern Japan). Hui Shen went by ship to Fusang, and upon his return reported his findings to the Chinese Emperor. His descriptions are recorded in the 7th century Book of Liang (History of the Liang Dynasty) by Yao Silian. An earlier account, from the annals of the Han dynasty, also declares that in 219 BCE emperor Shi Huang sent "an expedition of young men and women to a wonderful country lying far off to the east, across the ocean, called Fu-Sang.

The map, with a slightly different title, as later published in the *Considerations Geographiques*, one of Buache's most important (if often erroneous) works.

According to some historians, beginning with Joseph de Guignes, the distances given by Hui Shen (20,000 Chinese li) would locate Fusang on the west coast of the American continent, when taking the ancient Han-period definition of the Chinese li. This is one of a small number of 18th century European maps which show Fusang along the Northwest Coast of America.

Kaempfer-Sloane Japanese Map of the World

The first map is a fascinating map created by Philippe Buache, illustrating the details gleaned from a manuscript map of the World in the possession of Sir Hans Sloane, which showed knowledge of the coastlines on either side of the Behring Straits.



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While seriously questioned by later scholars as more likely a later compilation of information from European sources, the Sloane map was part of the contemporary debate regarding the existence and location of the Northwest Passage and Polar navigation in general.

This map was used by Buache to illustrate and discuss the information which appeared in a Japanese map, brought back to Europe by Engelbert Kaempfer from Japan in 1695 and later sold to the private collection of Hans Sloane in London, which showed the transfer of information from the Russians to the Japanese with respect to the regions shown in this map, and was part of the unpublished manuscript information purchased by Sloane at the time of Kaempfer's death. It was intended to illustrate Buache's overall thesis on the various sources of information available to modern mapmakers with respect to the mapping of these regions and the proper synthesis and reconciliation of the information available.

The map first appeared as map VI in the Article CXV of the *Mémoires pour l'histoire des sciences et des beaux arts*, published by the French Royal Academy in November 1758, which constitutes the presentation of Philippe Buache on the topic of the mapping the Northwest Coast of America, Northeast Coast of Asia and contiguous polar regions, as part of the greater search for a Northwest Passage. The title of Buache's article is:

Considerations Geographiques & Physiques sur les nouvelles decouvertes au Nord de la Mer, appelee vulgairement la Mer du Sud; avec des Cartes qui y sont relatives.

Buache's article immediately follows Article CXIV in *Mémoires pour l'histoire des sciences et des beaux arts*, published by the French Royal Academy, which constitutes the presentation of Joseph Nicholas De L'Isle to the Academy, the title De L'Isle's article is

Nouvelle Cartes des decouvertes de l'Amiral de Font, & autres Navigateurs Espagnols, Portugais, Anglois, Hollandois, Francoise & Russes, dans les Mers Septentrionales, avec leur explication; qui comprend l'Histoire des Voyages, tant par Mer que par Terre, les Routes de Navigation, les Extraites des Journeaux de Marine, les Observations Astronomiques, & tout ce qui peut contribuer au progres de la Navigation; avec la Description des Pays, l'Histoire & les mœurs des Habitans, le Commerce qu l'on y peut &c.



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Detailed Condition: