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Chinae, olim Sinarum regionis nova descriptio auctore Ludovico Georgio . . . 1584

Stock#: 37985
Map Maker: Ortelius
Date: 1584
Place: Antwerp
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 18.5 x 14.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Rare first state of Ortelius' map of China, the first western map of China.

Ortelius' map of China is taken directly from reports of the Portuguese mapmaker Luis Jorge de Barbuda (Ludovicus Georgius) who made a manuscript map of China which reached Ortelius via Arias Montanus. First published in 1584, Ortelius' map of China is the earliest printed map to focus on China and the first to illustrate the Great Wall of China. Tooley referred to the map as the standard map of the interior of China for over sixty years. With its three lushly designed cartouches and many illustrations of indigenous shelters, modes of transportation and animals, this is one of Ortelius's richest engravings.

When this map appeared, it was by far the most accurate representation of China to appear on a printed map. Japan is shown on a curious curved projection reminiscent of Portuguese charts of the period with Honshu dissected along the line of Lake Biwa. The Great Wall is shown, but only a relatively small section, its length is significantly underestimated. The Tartar "yurts" are dotted across the plains and steppes of Central and East Asia.

The Portuguese Jesuits established a mission in China in 1577. Although the map's Portuguese maker, Barbuda, was himself not a Jesuit, his sources for the map were Portuguese Jesuits. The Chinese characters found in the text on the verso of the map were the first introduction to Chinese language for many educated Europeans of the time.

The present example is the first of three states of the map, pre-dating the inclusion of the words "Las Philippinas" above Sinus Magnus, which first appeared on the map during the publication of the 1587



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French edition (second state). In the third state, there is additional cross hatching in one of the wind wagons, which first appeared on the map during the publication of the 1595 edition.

Detailed Condition:

Old Color. Expertly repaired tear at top left, entering printed image. Repaired fold split and minor repair to the right of Xiamxii, all expertly repaired on verso. Some minor cracking from the old color, which has been expertly backed and stabilized on the verso.