



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

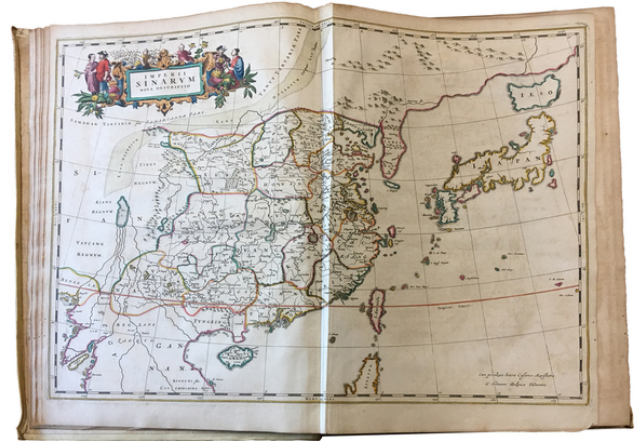
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(China Atlas) Novus Atlas Sinensis...

Stock#: blaeuchina
Map Maker: Blaeu / Martini
Date: 1655
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 21.5 x 14 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine Example of Blaeu's Atlas of China

17 engraved maps in original hand-color, and engraved title pages in original hand-color, heightened in gold. Text in Latin.

Folio, contemporary Dutch full vellum, paneled in gilt.

A Handsome Example of the First Atlas of China Published in the Western World--With Cartography Based on Domestic Chinese Sources.

This is the first western atlas of China, including sixteen engraved maps of Chinese subjects, and one general map of Japan, all in beautiful original outline hand-color.

The present work comprises Blaeu's volume of his Atlas Maior and is based on the surveying and compiling work of Father Martinus Martini, the Jesuit Superior of Hangzhou.

The seventeen maps are noteworthy not only for their accuracy, remarkable for the time, but also for their highly decorative cartouches featuring vignettes depicting regional Chinese dress, activities, and animals. In addition, it is one of the first true Sino-European publications, based on Chinese land surveys but presenting geographic data in a highly visual European cartographic format. - Reed & Demattè

Jesuit China Missions



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The Jesuit missions in China represented perhaps the most important conduit between West and East during the late Renaissance and early Age of Enlightenment. The Jesuits first attempted to reach China in 1552, when St. Francis Xavier reached the mainland. He died after only one year in Shangchuan. From that point until 1800, a total of 920 Jesuits participated in the China mission. 314 of the missionaries were Portuguese.

The Jesuit missionaries were particularly important in disseminating European cartographic information in China -- such as with Matteo Ricci's famed Wanguo Quantu 万国图, a large woodblock world map with Chinese characters -- a role which had long- and wide-reaching impact into the 19th century. The relay of information worked the other way too, probably most importantly with the efforts of Father Martini.

Martino Martini

Martino Martini (马提尼) (1614-1661), was born in Trento, in the Bishopric of Trent. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1631, after finishing his schooling. He had a strong interest in astronomy and math, and he was able to study under Athanasius Kircher. Martini continued his theological studies in Portugal, on his way to Rome, and was ordained in 1639.

He left Portugal for China in 1640, and arrived in Macau in 1642. He settled on the mainland in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, which he used as a base in his traveling around the country.

Martini had arrived in China at the very end of the Ming dynasty; in 1644, the last legitimate Ming Emperor, the Chongzhen Emperor, hanged himself. The Qing Dynasty then rose, and when Manchu forces came to the town where Martini was staying, he was asked to pledge his loyalty to the new dynasty. He agreed, and his head was shaved in the Manchu manner, and he adopted Manchu-style Chinese dress.

In 1651, Martini left China, taking an adventurous peregrination to Amsterdam by way of the Philippines and Bergen, Norway. He arrived in Amsterdam in 1653 and took his collection of manuscript surveys to Johannes Blaeu for publication.

The collection of maps that Martini imparted to Bleau is worthy of close examination. He carried with him a copy of the Ming dynasty manuscript atlas by Zhu Siben (compiled 1311/12), with revisions from the printed atlas by Luo Hongxian -- his "Guangyu tu" (enlarged terrestrial atlas, 1579). Martini was a capable cartographer and compiled the maps himself. In fact, he convinced Bleau to postpone the publication of other volumes in the Atlas Maior to work on the Chinese atlas.

Martini's goal was to return to Rome, and he took his time to make many stops along the way. He visited printers in Antwerp, Vienna, and Munich, relaying his discoveries about China, which were in turn



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published in books that made him famous. On this trip, he also met his 10-year old cousin, Eusebio Kino, who would go on to conclusively prove the falsity of the California as an Island myth.

Martini reached Rome in 1655 and left for China again in 1657. He died in Hangzhou in 1661.

Detailed Condition:

A very good copy of the atlas. Publisher's binding barely rubbed. Engraved title heightened with gold. Some oxidation of pigments, not causing any losses or cracking. Some minor offsetting.