



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## Exacta & Accurata Delineatio cum Orarum Maritimarum tum etjam locorum terrestrium quae in Regionibus China . . . The trew description of all the Coasts of China, Cauchinchina Camboya, Malaca, Arracan and Pegu . . . 1598

**Stock#:** 31527  
**Map Maker:** Van Linschoten / Wolfe  
**Date:** 1598  
**Place:** London  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 20.5 x 15 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

Rare pirate edition of this fantastic 16th Century map of China, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, the Philippines, Straits of Malacca, Borneo, Java and Beach, engraved by Robert Becket for John Wolfe's English translation of Linschoten's *Itinerario*.

The extends from Marco Polo's Beach, Java, Timor and part of Nova Guinea in the south to Japan, the Island of Korea and China in the north and includes a tremendously detailed treatment of the region, displaying a marvelous blend of mythical cartographic detail and contemporary Portugese knowledge in the region, embellished by Sea Monsters, indigenous animals, 2 compass roses and sailing vessels.

Linschoten's original map, published in 1596, was the first published map of the Far East to be prepared primarily from Portuguese sources. Because of its tremendous success, as described below, it was copied by Wolfe in 1598 for the so called "Pirate Edition" of Linchoten's work, published in London. The present map is an entirely different plate, which faithfully copies Linschoten's original map, with a number of minor differences.

The map is emblematic of the end of the Portuguese monopoly on the East Indian trade and was among the most important sources of information on Southeast Asia during the 16th Century. The map is oriented with west at the top. While based primarily on Portuguese portolan charts, Linschoten also drew on the cartographic work of Plancius. Southeast Asia and Japan are based on the cartography of Fernão Vaz Dourado, and China on the map of Barbuda. The Philippines is drawn from de Lasso with the curious



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orientation of Palawan.

Linschoten also depicts information from the travel account of Marco Polo, including the location of the mythical land of Beach provincia auriferain the region where Australia would eventually be discovered. On the mainland, the course of the Mekong is placed too far west, significantly distorting the region. The four large lakes in the interior are based on Chinese legend. Korea is shown as a large circular island.

Linschoten's maps are styled after Portuguese portolan charts of the 16th Century, upon which the map is based. Even in printed form, these maps retain the lush decorative flourishes of their sources. Linschoten acquired most of the information for the map while serving as the secretary to the Portuguese archbishop in Goa, India from 1583 to 1589. Of particular value were the sailing guides he obtained that not only provided the best sailing routes to the East Indies and its lucrative spice trade but also showed the way from port to port once there. Upon his return to the Netherlands, Linschoten published these documents with accompanying maps and his own descriptions of the area in his monumental *Itinerario*. Few books have had greater influence on historical events.

The extensive details of coastal and other navigational points are likely based on portolan charts of the Portuguese, especially those by Bartolomeu Lasso. Linschoten was "one of the pathfinders for the first Dutch voyages to the East" (Schilder, p. 195). He was in the service of the Portuguese as Secretary to the Portuguese Archbishop of Goa in India from 1583 to 1589. Here, he had access to many Portuguese portolans as well as other valuable commercial information, especially as Goa at this time was the commercial and political center for the Portugal Empire in the East. Van Linschoten left Goa for home in January 1589. On the way to Portugal, his ship was pursued by an English fleet and lost its cargo in a storm while anchored off the Azores. After the loss of the cargo, Van Linschoten was persuaded to stay and help recover it; he spent two years on Tercera, working and preparing his notes from Goa. Van Linschoten eventually arrived in Lisbon early in 1592, and then sailed home to The Netherlands. His account of his experiences is one of the most important travel works of the period.

Linschoten's *Itinerario*, was one of the most important books for the European exploration of Asia and helped catalyze the founding of both the Dutch and the English East India Company. Because of its success, in 1598 an English language translation was published in London by John Wolfe. Issued without Linschoten's consent, it has come to be known as the "pirate edition". The copperplates were engraved by Roger Becket, one of the best British engravers of the day. This book immediately motivated the founding of the British East India Company and English Company ships bound for the East Indies, had a copy on board of this English Linschoten. The book was so accurate, especially the sailing instructions, that even



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late 18th Century captains of the Company write that their "Jan Huyghen" has proven very useful.

**Detailed Condition:**

Narrow upper margin, with slight nick to decorative border and minor offsetting.