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[Beijing] Vue de Peking tiree de Nieuhof

Stock#: 38934
Map Maker: Nieuhof
Date: 1764 circa
Place: Paris
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 10 x 7 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

An attractive view of the Chinese imperial capital of Beijing, shown as it appeared during the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, from the drawings of the German adventurer Johann (Jan) Nieuhof, who was in the employ of the Dutch East India Company (the VOC).

This fine view captures Beijing from the countryside, showing the city as it rises above its massive ancient walls. When Nieuhof visited Beijing in the 1650s, the city was newly installed as the permanent capital of the Qing Dynasty, as this role was no longer to be shared with Nanjing, as it had been during the recently fallen Ming Dynasty (Beijing means 'Northern Capital' and Peking is a western corruption of this name). The city had a population of around 700,000, roughly tied with Istanbul as the World's most populous city. One can make out the great Tianning Pagoda (built around 1120) in the far left and near the center, the red towers of the Forbidden City (the Emperor's sacred domain).

Johannes Nieuhof (1618-72) was a German-born diplomat and adventurer in the service of the VOC, who was perhaps the most widely traveled individual of the seventeenth-century. His experiences included important expeditions to various locations in Brazil, Africa, India, Indonesia, and China. From 1655-57, Nieuhoff made an epic 2,400 mile trek through China, from Guangdong to Beijing.

During his Chinese expedition, he made numerous drawings of the sites he encountered, including the port town of Chau Cheu Fu, in the southern province of Guangdong, which was the basis for the present print. Nieuhoff's important written account, along with engravings of his drawings, was first published as *Legatio batavica ad magnum Tartariæ chamum Sungleium, modernum Sinæ imperatorem* (Amsterdam, 1668). The present view was published as part of a subsequent Dutch-language edition of his work, *Het Gezantschap der Neêrlandtsche Oost-Indische Compagnie, aan den grooten Tartarischen Cham, den*



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tegenwoordigen Keizer van China... (Amsterdam, 1749). His illustrations proved to be highly influential, as they did much to spawn the genre of chinoiserie in European art and design.

An important early view of Beijing, by one of the leading European explorers of China.

The present example appeared in a French publication, *Prevost d'Exiles*.

Detailed Condition: