



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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### Imperii Sinarum Nova Descriptio

**Stock#:** 41186  
**Map Maker:** Blaeu  
**Date:** 1655 circa  
**Place:** Amsterdam  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 23.5 x 18 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



#### Description:

#### *A Landmark 17th Century Map of China*

"Imperii Sinarum Nova Descriptio" or "A New Description of the Chinese Empire" is a crucial map of China, Korea, and Japan, brilliantly crafted by Johannes Blaeu and published in Martino Martini's *Atlas Sinensis*. This work is considered the first Western atlas of China and represents a pinnacle in the Golden Age of Dutch cartography.

This map is the result of the collaborative effort of Eastern and Western knowledge. Martino Martini, a Jesuit missionary from Italy, was based in Hangzhou, China. This location offered him access to extensive indigenous and Jesuit surveys across China. His geographical discoveries, combined with those of João de Goma and Maarten Gerritsz Vries, were incorporated into the "Imperii Sinarum Nova Descriptio."

The map itself is notable for several reasons. Firstly, Korea, which was previously depicted as an island in earlier maps, is now shown connected to the mainland, marking an important correction in Western cartography. Another significant feature of Blaeu's map is its depiction of Hokkaido (Ezo), recognized for the first time as an island north of Honshu, the main island of Japan.

China, the map's primary focus, is depicted with considerable accuracy for the 17th century. The Great Wall of China, one of the country's most famous landmarks, is clearly identifiable, marking a significant improvement in geographic understanding.

Martini brought his extensive knowledge and collected surveys back to Europe in 1654, where they were



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synthesized into the "Imperii Sinarum Nova Descriptio" by Blaeu. This map thus represents a significant advancement in Western knowledge of East Asia, reflecting the enriched cross-cultural exchanges of the 17th century.

**Detailed Condition:**

Repaired tear at right lower margin, extending several inches into the printed image. and minor fold split at lower centerfold, expertly repaired on verso.