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A Ilha e Cidade de Goa Metropolitana da India E Partes Orientais que esta en 15 Graos da Banda da Norte

Stock#: 68139
Map Maker: Linschoten
Date: 1596
Place: Amsterdam
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 31 x 22 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

16th Century View of Goa, India.

A detailed birdseye view plan of Goa, showing the various streets and buildings of the city, the city's riverine harbor, and the fields surrounding the city. Several decorative features are added. The view was by Baptista van Deutecum in Amsterdam for Linschoten's *Itinerario*.

Linschoten served 6 years as the bookkeeper for the Archbishop of Goa (1583-89). While in Goa, as a result of his position, Linschoten had access to secret information, including the nautical maps that were well guarded for over a century. Misusing the trust in him, he began meticulously copying these maps. In 1587, the Archbishop of Goa died while on a trip to Lisbon to report to the King of Portugal, ending Linschoten's stay in Goa. He set sail for Lisbon in January 1589, passing by the Portuguese supply depot at St. Helena in May 1589.

The mapping of Goa as a single city is of particular interest. Goa now refers to a state in western coastal India which was a Portuguese colony until 1961, and the name Goa was conferred to several different cities historically. In modern times, the term Old Goa has been bestowed on several different areas, though historical use of this term within the state is limited. No modern Goan city has the same layout as that which is shown in this map, though clues can help identify what this view likely was meant to show.

"Ilha de Dyvar" is almost certainly Divar Island, which lies several miles upriver along the Mandovi of the modern-day capital of Goa, Panaji. An adjacent peninsula that lies upriver is named Narve, though its low topography and marshes could lead to it being confused for an island. Charao [likely "A Ilha. de Chorao"]



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on the map] is another place name in the immediate area of the Mandovi. A modern view from across these islands would leave one looking at the area now known as Old Goa, "Velha Goa," which at present comprises several churches and other historic buildings scattered around an area mostly dominated by fields and forests.

Several landmarks in this map are recognizable, for example, there is a Church of St. Francis near the water, and a shrine sits on the hills to the east, though it is now dedicated to Our Lady of the Mount. This area used to be one of the central trading hubs of Portuguese Goa, encompassing a population of up to 200,000, until it was abandoned in the 18th century due to a plague. The palace of the Viceroy of Goa ("As cazas do Vizorey") was moved in 1759 to Panaji, a city then known as "Nova Goa." Works such as this birdseye view, alongside a few surviving scattered buildings and archeological sites, are all that remain of this once great city.

The view extends to a river in the background, likely the Zuari which outflows near Vasco de Gama. A modern view such as this would pass through an area now confusingly known as Goa Velha, "Goa the Old." This was another old capital of Portuguese Goa, predating Velha Goa, of which even less is known. It is possible this second town was incorporated into this view.

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.

The image includes a compass rose, an index of forty-three points of interest, the name of the city, and a coat of arms. The coat shows St. Catherine's wheel, with the saint herself portrayed above holding a sword and a book. This was the coat of arms of Goa from at least 1596 and perhaps even earlier, with some evidence suggesting that it was created during the brief sixty-year interval of Spanish rule in Goa.

Detailed Condition:

Old folds, as issued. Ample margins.