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Carte Generale Des Indes Orientales et des Isles Adiacentes . . .

Stock#: 78418
Map Maker: Mariette

Date: 1650
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 18.5 x 15 inches

Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Earliest French Maps to Focus on India and Maritime Southeast Asia

Fine early map of Southeast Asia, India and the Philippine Islands, published separately by Mariette (sometimes also attributed to Du Val).

The map stretches from the Maldives and India to Japan, extending south through the Marianas (here *Islas de Ladrones*) to New Guinea and suggestions of the northern coast of Australia. The Philippines are shown in particularly nice detail for this period, with a number of islands and towns named.

The Paracel Islands (*El Pracel*) are included as an area full of navigational obstructions. Singapore (*Sinca Pura*) is named, as is Siam and the *Golfe de Sian*.

This map gives a good visual depiction of the treacherous nature of sailing through the Straits of Sunda and navigating the islands farther east, with four sailing ships depicted following a southerly course. A sea monster lurks near the entrance to the Strait of Malacca.

Framed by the northwest corner of the map is the *Empire du Grand Mogol*, or the Mughal Empire. The Mughal Empire began when Babur (r. 1526-1530), originally from Central Asia, established himself in Kabul, Afghanistan and marched south into India via the Khyber Pass. His descendants consolidated power and fought off rivals. Particularly under the rule of Akbar (r. 1556-1605), the Mughal Empire developed an imperial structure characterized by tolerance of religious differences and a competent administrative elite.

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At the time this map was made, the empire was growing and it would reach its greatest extent in 1707.

There are unfinished coastlines in the southwest. *Terre de Papous* and New Guinea have several Dutch toponyms each. These stem from the circumnavigation of Willem Schouten, whose name is on islands nearby, and Jacques Le Maire (1615-17). On this voyage they not only explored the coast of these islands, but they also found a new route into the Pacific that avoided the Straits of Magellan. Instead, they passed through the Straits of Le Maire and around Cape Horn, the first European ship to do so.

The compass rose and scale bar are set close to a coastline stretching southward. This is the shore of northern Australia, specifically Queensland, then known as New Holland. This was the site of the first known European contact with the continent, the voyage of the *Duyfken* in 1605-06. Under the command of Willem Janszoon, the *Duyfken* explored the eastern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria, just below the Cape York Peninsula.

Near the neatline of the map in the south are the barest outlines of a shore. This is the result of Dutch interaction with the west of Australia, encounters that took place due to the Dutch trying to reach their trade center at Batavia by sailing through the raucous waters of southerly latitudes known as the Roaring Forties. This map includes the findings of the voyage of Gerrit Fredericsz De Wit in 1628.

Nearby are the Trial Islands. The name comes from a shipwreck, that of the *Trial*, an English East India Company ship. Commanded by Captain John Brookes, this was Australia's first recorded shipwreck, in 1622. The ship ran into the reefs near what today are the Montebello Islands. 45 members of the crew managed to get to Batavia in two longboats, but many more crewmen were left behind.

Lake Chiamay

In the interior of Asia is a large lake with five rivers flowing from it southward. This is Lake Chiamay. Lake Chiamay first appeared on a map in 1554 when it was included on the *terza tavola* in the second edition of volume one of Ramusio's *Delle navigationi et viaggi*. Drawn by Giacomo Gastaldi, this map of South and Southeast Asia shows a massive lake from which four rivers flow; these are commonly interpreted as the Chao Phraya, Salween, Irrawaddy, and a branch of the Brahmaputra, but also sometimes include other rivers.

Reports of the lake came from two Portuguese sources: a geographer, João de Barros, and an explorer, Fernão Mendes Pinto. Pinto wrote letters describing a great lake. Barros likely saw these letters. He, in turn, compiled a history of Asia, *Décadas da Ásia*, that mentioned the lake; Ramusio included Barros' work in his own compilation of travel and exploration.

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Barros describes a lake that begat six rivers, but the map in Ramusio's work shows only four. However, Gastaldi's 1561 map, *Tertia Pars Asiae*, shows six rivers leaving and two entering the lake. After appearing in such an authoritative work, the lake was taken up by other mapmakers. Many used the Ramusio/Gastaldi model. Others innovated on the theme of this geographic chimera, as no such lake exists in the area.

Luis Jorge de Barbuda's 1584 map shows the lake farther to the north and with a different river pattern. His model was taken up by Hondius in *India Orientales* (1606) and thereafter by many others. The Jesuit Martino Martini gathered information from his travels in eastern and northern China to compile *Imperii Sinarum Nova Descriptio* (1655). Martini included the lake, but added the Red River and had the Chao Phraya originate from a different lake. Around 1570, other maps appeared that gave Lake Chiamay only two outlets.

As more Jesuit knowledge of Southeast Asia filtered back to Europe, mapmakers such as Guillaume Delisle began to question the veracity of the lake. It last was added to a map by Vaugondy in 1751; it was reprinted in map reissues, however, until at least 1783. By the early-nineteenth century, the feature was understood to be nothing more than a cartographic myth. By the early-twentieth century, expeditions had definitively proven that no such lake existed.

Detailed Condition: