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A New Map of India & China From the latest Observations

Stock#: 54181
Map Maker: Senex
Date: 1721
Place: London
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG
Size: 23 x 19 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Fine Example of Senex's Map of Southeast Asia

Striking map, in a dark impression, of Southeast Asia from England's foremost mapmaker of the eighteenth century, John Senex. The area portrayed extends from Japan and a peninsular Korea to New Guinea and Timor in the east and to India in the west.

The map is centered on China and the Malay Peninsula, with the Indian subcontinent and the islands of Southeast Asia filling the rest of the space. The Maldives are lined up just next to the western border. Japan is relatively horizontal in orientation and the many islands of Southeast Asia are individually labeled, an attempt to capture the archipelagic complexity of this region that was so interesting to Europeans in the early eighteenth century.

However, many unknowns remain; for example, New Guinea, "Inhabited by the Papuas," is incomplete, with no eastern border. Similarly, the north of Japan is open. Peeking out of the northern border just north of Japan is an unlabeled coast line, perhaps a suggestion of one of the vast islands thought to fill the area, a misunderstanding of the outline of Hokkaido.

In the water east of the Philippines and Taiwan ("I of Formosa or Tayoan") is the decorative cartouche. The title is enclosed within a frame that is topped with abundant fruit. Sitting in front of the cartouche is a putti holding silks and a fan and surrounded by ivory tusks, a vase, and other treasures. All of these signify the resources and luxuries that Europeans sought when they sailed to Asia. Two opulently dressed men,



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one turbaned and one with a conical Chinese hat, are on either side of the cartouche. Behind is a tropical scene with a monkey, elephant, and tiger. Together, these images show how Europe saw the Asian continent and islands: rich and exotic.

The East India Company

The dedication in the cartouche explains that this map is dedicated to the Directors of the East India Company (EIC), which makes sense as the map shows the area in which the Company operated. The EIC was founded in 1600, when Queen Elizabeth granted a Royal Charter to a group of merchants and gentlemen led by the Earl of Cumberland. The Charter granted the EIC a monopoly over the lucrative trade with all countries east of the Cape of Good Hope and west of the Straights of Magellan. The Company was overseen by a governor and 24 directors assembled in a Court of Directors, the men referenced by Senex in the dedication.

The Company established trading bases across the area shown here, including Surat, Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. Under Charles II, the Company was granted the ability to mint their own money, to acquire territory autonomously, to command armies and fortresses, make war, and exercise civil and criminal jurisdiction—in effect, the EIC was a state actor working from its many bases. Their power was immense; by the time this map was published, the EIC had fought or merged with all competition and was lending the British government money.

John Senex and his sources

The toponyms throughout the map are dense, and Senex includes many comments about his sources. These include Sir Robert Dudley, the illegitimate son of the Earl of Leicester. Unable to establish his legitimacy in England, he fled to Tuscany, where he completed the *Dell'Arcano del Mare* (1645-6), the first maritime atlas to cover the entire world. Dudley and the *Arcano* are cited, for example, on the small islands north of the cartouche.

In the Indian Ocean, Senex mentions that his source was Teixeira. Domingos Teixeira was a Portuguese geographer who made the Teixeira planisphere in 1573. It was one of the first world maps to show the route to the East Indies and was the inspiration for many other maps, including this one. Here, Senex marks the multiple islands "douro", of gold, in the Indian Ocean. These are just two examples of the many sources Senex mentions on his map.

Detailed Condition:

Minor fold split at lower centerfold, repaired on verso.