



A scarce 17th century map of China by a French Jesuit

LE COMPTE, Louis.

A Map of the XV. Provinces and CLV. Capital Cities in ye Empire of China, The Christian Churches and Residences of Jesuits are thus Marked +.

London: Benjamin Tooke, 1698. 290 x 210mm.

£1,600

An important map of China, published to illustrate an account of Jean de Fontaney's mission to China, 1687-91. It marks the major towns and where the Jesuits had missions, with an engraved text listing facts about each province. The Great Wall is depicted and Korea is shown as an island, although only separated from mainland Asia by a river. Louis Le Compte (1655-1728) participated in the mission and first published his memoir in 1696, as 'Nouveau mémoire sur l'état présent de la Chine'. His favourable account of Confucian Rites (including honouring ancestors) was perceived by many non-Jesuits as contrary to Catholic belief, causing the Paris Parliament to order the book to be burned. The first English edition was published in 1697, as 'Memoirs and Observations Topographical, Physical, Mathematical, Mechanical, Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical, Made in a Late Journey through the Empire of China'. However this map wasn't included until the second edition in 1698.



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