



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

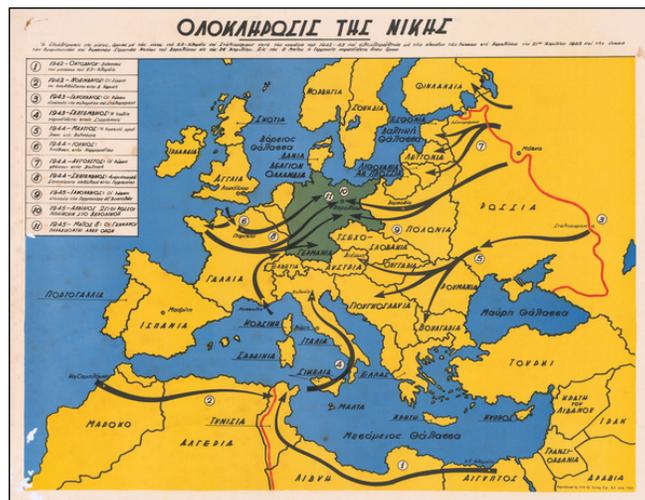
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ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΩΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΝΙΚΗΣ,...[Series of 8 WWII Greek Language Propaganda Maps]

Stock#: 58893
Map Maker: 514th Survey Company
Date: 1945
Place: Alexandria, Egypt
Color: Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 22.5 x 17.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Striking Anti-Axis Propaganda Maps in Greek from 1945

Rare set of anti-Axis propaganda maps, targeting the Greeks, made by the 514th Survey Company of the Royal Engineers in May and June of 1945.

The brightly colored maps show various current and historical configurations of Europe, all of which underline the aggression of Germany. They also highlight the brave actions of the Allies which led to victory across Europe, from Britain to Greece.

At first glance these maps appear educational, but their production in May and June 1945 point to their role as propaganda. The Allies, on the verge of victory, wanted to ensure that the Greek people, who had been occupied by the Axis Powers for years and were on the brink of civil war, understood their version of how the war was won.

The maps mark out the history of German expansion, and their recent contraction. One shows German consolidation into a unified German state in 1870 (Map 8), while a series (Maps 3-5) highlight the rapid expansion of German-controlled land in the 1930s and, from 1939, as part of the Second World War. Maps 6 and 7 show the German retreat, while the final two (Maps 1 and 2) triumphantly show Germany's defeat at the hands of the Allies.

British Survey Companies in WWII



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Field Survey Companies, part of the Royal Engineers, served in all theaters of the Second World War. They conducted triangulation and field surveys, drew maps, and printed maps with mobile printing units. They also performed aerial photography and distributed their works to soldiers and approved civilians.

The 514th Survey Company served in the Western Desert theater, deployed there in the winter of 1940-41. Initially, they mapped for the operations planned against Italy in Eritrea. By mid-1941, they were carrying out large surveys near Matruh, in Egypt. In early 1942, they were working near Benghazi, where they worked on astronomical control points in the desert.

Next, the 514th worked in Syria, where they revised and improved existing maps. While retreating with the Eighth Army back into Egypt in June 1942, they still managed to maintain an active print division. Despite moving five times, the mobile print unit produced over 1,000,000 maps for army use.

The 514th, both its printing unit and surveying details, were then stationed at Alexandria, under the control of A.D. Survey Desert Force. They performed preparatory work at El Alamein which later proved important in the battle of the same name in late 1942. By the end of the year, the 514th was working in Palestine. Later in the war, the 514th helped prepare maps for the invasions of Sicily and mainland Italy.

By the end of the war, when these maps were made, the 514th seems to have ramped up its print production to provide not battle maps, but propaganda maps to ensure that the peace went as Britain hoped. That is, they and their American allies hoped the peace would usher in stable democracies across Europe, as opposed to communist-controlled governments as their ally Russia would have liked. The Cold War was already on the horizon, with Greece as its first battlefield.

These maps were likely distributed in Greece at the end of the war. The British Ministry of Information is known to have produced similar propaganda in various languages, but little to no research is available about the role of the Royal Engineers Survey Companies' role in the creation and distribution. The British Library has no record of similar output by the 514th and they appear to be exceedingly rare survivals.

World War II in Greece

Greece was pulled into WWII by regional tensions. Italy, an ally of Germany as part of the Axis Powers, was tasked with bringing the Balkans and Greece under Axis control. The Italian Army invaded via Albania in late October of 1940. The Greek Army, reinforced by a small contingent of British, Australian, and New Zealand troops, resisted heartily and managed to push the Italians back across the Albanian border.

This resistance was inspiring to the Allies, but it also brought the wrath of Nazi Germany upon the Greek peninsula. The German Army invaded Greece and Yugoslavia in April 1941, overrunning both within a



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month. The British forces and the Greek royal family fled to Crete and then Egypt. Crete remained as the last free Greek territory until May, when it fell to the Axis Powers thanks to the first large-scale airborne invasion in history.

In Greece, several Field Survey Companies had been sent in with the British troops. Unfortunately, many of their personnel were taken prisoner when Greece was lost to the Axis powers. However, the 514th was not one of the units dispatched in the country.

Although they had enacted heavy casualties on the Axis Powers, especially on the Germans in Crete, Greece was now an occupied state. The Germans, Bulgarians, and Italians split the country in three and set up a puppet government in Athens. The King and his government operated in exile from Egypt. Resistance movements began almost at once, although they were small in scale until mid-1942.

In 1943 and 1944, the resistance factions claimed back large portions of the interior of Greece, particularly in the poorly-policed Italian section of the country. However, the resistance fighters also clashed with each other, as various groups had differing political views. Some wanted a communist country after the war was over, others preferred a return to a monarchical system. Their internal discontent would erupt into the Greek Civil War of 1946-9.

Mainland Greece was released from Axis rule in October 1944, when the German Army pulled back its troops due to the Russian Army's Baltic Offensive, the Allied advance in Italy, and the loss of Bulgaria as ally. The country the Axis troops left behind was devastated; the economy was shattered and the infrastructure was in ruins. 400,000 Greek people had perished; the Jewish population had been almost completely wiped out as part of the Holocaust. Sadly, a little over a year later, fighting would resume in the Civil War, which pitted American and British-backed conservative fighters against leftists supported by Russia.

The role of the British in promoting their version of history and government are implicated in these maps. They are fascinating historical artifacts that have received little to no scholarly interest despite the larger literature on propaganda maps. They are rare and certainly worth further study; they would make an impressive addition to any collection of wartime and propaganda maps.

Below are the translations of the title and text of the eight maps:

Map 1:

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE VICTORY



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The accomplishment of the victory, began with the victorious battles of El Alamein and Stalingrad during the winter of 1942-43 and concluded with the advance of the Russians in Berlin on 21 April 1945 and the joining of American and Russian troops south of Berlin on 26 April. On 8 May Germany capitulated unconditionally.

(1) 1942 - October: Collapse of the front in El Alamein
(2) 1942 - November: The Allies invade North Africa
(3) 1943 - January: The Russians break the siege of Stalingrad
(4) 1943 - September: Italy capitulates to the Allies
(5) 1944 - March: The Russians advance in the Balkans
(6) 1944 - June: The Normandy Landings
(7) 1944 - August: The Russians reach the Baltic Sea
(8) 1944 - September: American troops invade Germany
(9) 1945 - January: The Russians strike Germany from the East
(10) 1945 - April 21: THE RUSSIANS ENTER BERLIN
(11) 1945 - MAY 8: THE GERMANS SURRENDER UNCONDITIONALLY

Map 2:

The Allied Armies Crush Germany

Surrounded on the West, South and East by the advancing Allied troops and hammered by the Allied Air Forces, the Germans on 15 October 1944, were feeling the net tightening from all directions. The yellow regions indicate territories occupied by the Allies. The neutral countries are marked with green color.



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Map 3:

***TERRITORIAL GAINS OF GERMANY UNDER HITLER
DURING 1933-1939***

Hitler[,] having remedied all losses suffered by Germany under the Treaty of Versailles[,] started to bring under the authority of the Third Reich all German-speaking peoples[;] hence the attacks against Austria and Sudeten Czechoslovakia. Upon completion he adopted the watchword of Lebensraum to offer justification for the absorption of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Hitler had successfully utilized the encirclement tactics in favor of Germany against Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Map 4:

***AXIS OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
BY THE END OF 1940***

The black-marked regions indicate the Axis occupied territories by the end of 1940, after 16 months of war during which Poland, Denmark, Norway, France, Holland and Belgium were occupied. Italy had entered the war while Romania had taken a stand for Germany.

German borders in the outbreak of the war in 1939 are marked by a white line.

On 1 September 1944 the Allies were tightening this line.

Map 5:

***THE MAXIMUM RANGE OF GERMAN EXPANSION
DURING THE WAR THAT IT [GERMANY] LOST***



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The black-marked regions indicate the maximum range of occupations during the war that started in 1939.

In 1942 the enemy had already reached Stalingrad, overtaken the Baltic States, invaded Egypt and [then] it was threatening Alexandria.

On 1 September 1944 the German Troops started withdrawing in confusion to their original sortie strongpoints.

Map 6:

GERMANY REDUCED TO ITS PRE-WAR

SIZE

The black-marked regions indicate the commencement of its [Germany's] confinement [to its pre-war borders] on 1 September 1944. Overwhelming allied victories drove Germany off Russia, the greater part of France, Poland, Italy and the Baltic States while the Enemy Troops retreated to the former borders marked by a white line. In the Balkans Romania turned against its former partner while Bulgaria was actually knocked out of the battle.

Map 7:

THE ALLIED VICTORIES FORCE THE GERMANS TO RETREAT

The black-marked regions indicate German occupied territories until 3 September 1943 subsequent to the German expulsion from North Africa and Sicily and the most advanced point of Stalingrad.

On the same date the invasion of Italy took place. A year after its commencement the German retreat turned into a disorderly flight towards their [meaning the German troops'] original borders marked by a white line.



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Map 8:

THE GERMAN EMPIRE

1870-1914

Based on the military tactics "by fire and sword" and a string of short campaigns against Denmark[,] Austria and France[,] Bismarck [Otto von Bismarck] succeeded in incorporating the German statelets into one German Empire in 1870 under the emperorship of the King of Prussia. Rapid commercial expansion followed shortly after [while] a great war industry was established thanks to the iron ledges of Lorraine[.] A powerful fleet was built and in 1914 Germany was ready to challenge all humankind[.]

Rarity

The maps are extremely rare. This is the first set we have ever seen on the market.

Detailed Condition: