



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

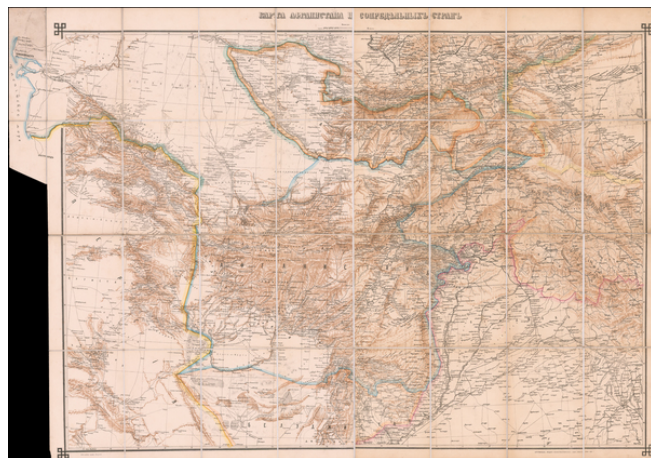
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(Afghanistan) Карта Афганистана и Сопредѣльныхъ Странъ [Map of Afghanistan and the Bordering Countries].

Stock#: 59123
Map Maker: Bolshev
Date: 1881
Place: [Saint Petersburg]
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 44 x 30.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Russian Military Map of Afghanistan - Dating from The Great Game.

Historically significant, rare military Russian map of Afghanistan and surrounding countries, compiled in the midst of the Great Game in Central Asia and outlining the new Russian lands annexed after the campaign against the Tekke Turkomans in what is now Turkmenistan in 1880 – January 1881. The map was compiled under the general guidance of General Andrey Bolshev, a member of the Russian Geographical Society and editor-in-chief of all maps issued by the Department since 1877.

The map was published by the most authoritative cartographical office of the Russian Empire, attached to the Military Topographical Department of the Russian Imperial General Staff. Compiled on a scale of 50 verst (1 verst is ca. 1,0688 km) to an inch, the map is highly detailed, especially when showing the regions already conquered by Russia or the adjacent lands, and is evidently based on the military surveys carried out during the Russian conquest of the Khanates of Khiva and Kokand, the Emirate of Bukhara in the 1806-1870s, and the 1880-81 Tekke Turkomans Campaign.

The map shows the territories between Khiva and Tashkent in the north to Kalat (Pakistan) and Delhi in the south, from Krasnovodsk (Turkmenbasy), Astrabad (Gorgan), Kerman in the west to Yarkant, Kashgar, and Leh in the east, thus covering the territories of modern-day Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, and parts of Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Pakistan, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China, and even Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab in India. Thorough and detailed in terms of topography, the map shows the complicated relief with larger and smaller mountain ranges, rivers, lakes, and deserts, marks settlements from the major centers up to “reconnaissance posts” (e.g., the one near



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Panjdeh/Kushka on the Afghan border), gives the names of the geographical regions, provinces, local tribes and outlines the main roads and caravan routes. The map also shows the first railway line in Turkmenistan, built during the Turkoman Campaign and going from the Caspian coast inland.

The Great Game

The Great Game is a term used to describe the confrontation between the British and Russian Empires over territory in Central Asia. The region was seen as an integral buffer zone by both Britain and Russia; for the British, Russian control of Central Asia posed a risk of invasion to British India; whereas the Russians were eager to combat the expansion of the British Empire from India up to the southern border of the Russian Empire.

Additional Historical Context

The other two major events book-ending the publication of the map are the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1877-78) and the Panjdeh/Kushka Incident (1885). The latter was a diplomatic crisis that almost resulted in war between Great Britain and Russia and led to the first official border delimitation between Russia and Afghanistan in 1885-88.

On this map, the borderline between the lands of the nomad Turkmens and Afghanistan is not completed in the area near Panjdeh, which led to the diplomatic crisis of 1885 and consequent border delineation.

Overall a very interesting rare map giving the Russian outlook on the disputed regions of Central Asia in the middle of the Great Game.

Detailed Condition:

Large folding color-lithographed map ca. 78x112 cm (ca. 30 ½ x 44 in), dissected into 32 sections and linen-backed. Map published within a decorative lithographed border, with the title on the upper margin and lithographed name of the publishing organization and the editor on the lower margin. Pencil inscription in Russian in the pre-1918 spelling on the linen on verso. Map slightly age toned, the linen of the outer compartments slightly soiled, but overall a very good map