



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

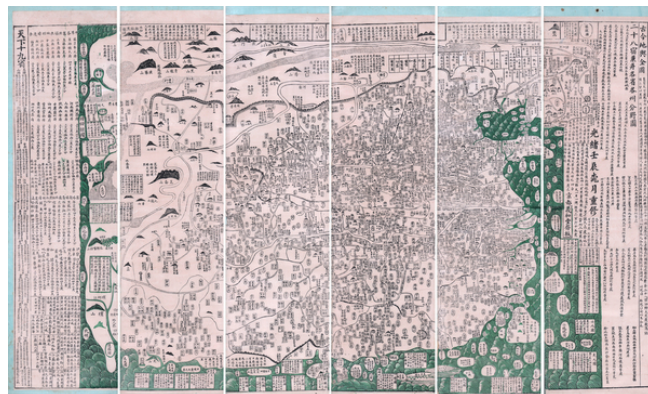
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[China] 中国全图 / Full Modern and Ancient Map

Stock#: 62437kb
Map Maker: Liu
Date: 1892 (Guangxu 18)
Place: Yangjiabu, Weifang, Shandong Province
Color: Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 72 x 47.5 inches (if joined)
Price: \$ 65,000.00



Description:

A Rare and Important Discovery -- The First Map of China Published For Commercial Use and Sale

Mingjie Liu's (刘明杰) (1857 - 1911) important 1892 (Guangxu 18) Qing Era xylographic (woodcut) map of China is the earliest known example of what is considered China's first commercial map and possibly the first Chinese comical map.

At the time of its creation, Liu's map was a revolutionary concept for Chinese printed maps, as it was neither an administrative map nor religious map. Instead, it was a commercially marketed folk piece, *mubǎn nianhua* (木版年画), created for traditional Yangjiabu Shandong New Year festivals.

The map shows all of China, as well as marginal inclusions in the form of tenuous mappings of foreign places including European countries, Southeast Asia, India, and apocryphal destinations.

Sources

Cartographically, Liu's map is loosely derived from the *DaQing Wannian Yitong Tianxia Quantu* / 大清万年一统天下全图, a map produced by Huang Qianren (黄千大, 1694-1771) in the late 18th century. Made for official Imperial use, the *DaQing Wannian Yitong Tianxia Quantu* is much grander and larger, but shares a similar coverage, iconography, geographical department, and style. Where the *Huang Qianren* map was made to administer an empire-wide tax system, the goal of Liu's map was informational and possibly humorous. Liu maintains the iconographic code established by Huang, but drops the map key. Instead, he incorporates extensive annotative text describing people and places peripheral to the Chinese Empire, set forth in folklorish and even humorous terms.



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On the Map

Some descriptions he draws from folklore and Chinese histories, others are rooted in truth, these include a variety of strange cultures, mythical islands, and an anthropomorphic peoples, among them:

- Land of Women (possibly the Aleutian Islands)
- Land of Small People (who are frequently eaten by seagulls)
- Land of Big People (who live on a large island in the Pacific)
- Land of Mermaids (enough said)
- Land of One-Armed People (men and women, each half a body, who merge into one)

Taiwan, or 'Terraced Bay' is named as such after Admiral Cheng Ho of the Ming court who first identified it as such in 1430. On the left-hand side of the map is a list of Chinese Provinces, their capitals, and their distance from Beijing based upon the speed of the horse, calculated in days, and the direction as positioned by degrees of the compass. To the far west, European countries, including England, Holland, and Russia, and the Atlantic Ocean are identified.

Rediscovery of the one Plate

In December of 2008, the rightmost of the 6 plate-panels for this exceptional map was rediscovered at Yangjiabu Woodcut Print Workshop (阳嘉布木刻印刷厂), located in Yangjiabu Village, Hanting District, City of Weifang, Shandong Province - near where Mingjie Liu was born and worked. A generations old print shop was being searched for old woodblocks to inspire new New Year prints when they found a partial woodblock for this map. The other panels remain lost.

Provenance

This map was first acquired in China in the late 19th century by Dr. Albert Peck (1848-1923). Peck went to China in 1880 as medical missionary, where he administered the Williams Hospital in Pangjiachuang (庞家川), Shandong Province (山东). After more than 20 years practicing medicine in Shandong, Peck entered into private practice working as, among other positions, Foreign Medical Attaché to the Beiyang or First Republic of China (1912 - 1928).

When Yuan Shikai (袁世凯) was elected president of China in 1912, ending 2000 years of imperial rule, Peck became his medical advisor. Dr. Peck was decorated with the Order of the Double Dragon by the Chinese Imperial government, and twice received the Order of the Bountiful Harvest under the Republic. The map, along with an assortment of other historical items relating to late 19th century China, was collected by Albert Peck during his service in China and preserved in the Peck family collections. Upon their return



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from China, the Pecks settled in Northern California. The maps were offered for sale in July 2019, as part of the liquidation of Peck's collection.

Publication History. Census and Rarity

The present example is the earliest known variant of this map. We are also aware of issues dated 1894 (Guangxu 20), 1895 (Guangxu 21), and 1899 (Guangxu 25). This map is rare and entirely unknown outside of China. Examples appear from time to time in the Chinese market, but all other known examples are in extremely poor usually fragmentary condition, missing large sections or whole panels. The present example is not only the earliest, but the finest example of Mingjie Liu's work known.

The map is extremely rare on the market, especially in such fine condition, and was apparently completely unknown outside of China until the discovery of this example in July 2019.

Map co-owned with Geographicus Rare Antique Maps.

Detailed Condition:

Mounted as six scrolls, as issued.