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(First World War - Ottoman Empire) Nouvelle Carte générale des Provinces Asiatiques de L'Empire Ottoman (sans L'Arabie) . . . 1884. Chemins de fer d'après l'état de 1912. (manuscript updates to late 1914)

Stock#: 66187
Map Maker: Reimer & Keipert

Date: 1912 (updated to 1914)
Place: Berlin
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 63 x 38 inches

Price: Not Available



Description:

The Railways of the Middle East on the Eve of World War I, with Detailed Manuscript Annotations Showing the Hejaz and the Berlin-Baghdad Railway.

Large, color-lithographed map of the Ottoman Empire and its railroads published just before World War I and updated in German manuscript to show the most important regional railways during the buildup to war. These Middle Eastern railways were a cornerstone of Germany's colonial aspirations in the region specifically, but also to the world more generally; the so-called Berlin-Baghdad railway was intended to pave the way for Germany opening a major port in the Persian Gulf.

The manuscript key of railway lines shows French, German, English, and Turkish lines "im Betrieb" (operational), as well as French and German lines "projektiert" (projected), and German lines "im Ban" and "Eröffnung bis Ende 1914" (opening by the end of 1914). The last note proved nothing but aspirational, as the Germans were unable to complete the line to Baghdad during the war.

Hejaz Railway

The map shows the Hejaz Railway, east of present-day Israel, which was repeatedly attacked by the guerilla forces of T.E. Lawrence during the First World War.

Berlin-Baghdad Railway

The main focus of the manuscript additions to the map is the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, which here is shown extending (in theory) from a completed line on the Euphrates then to Mosul, Baghdad, and, as a projected



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line, to Basra. Four projected tributary railways are shown feeding into the arterial Berlin-Baghdad route, highlighting the German hope that the line would open up the region generally. The continuation of the railway to Basra denotes the German desire that the railway would connect Berlin to a major port with access to the Indian and Pacific Oceans, circumventing the Suez Canal.

Germany's intentions to extend its influence in the Middle East and gain access to the Indian Ocean without the intermediation of the Suez Canal was a major geopolitical risk for the French and British. As part of its effort to thwart this expansion, Great Britain had established Kuwait as a British protectorate in 1899.

The Ottoman-German alliance was made public one day after Germany declared war on Russia.

The Germans failed to complete the railway during the First World War; their inability to finish the project hampered Ottoman efforts to capture British territory in the Middle East. It was not until 1940 that the project was completed.

Detailed Condition:

Dissected and laid on linen. Slight peeling from linen backing, most noticeable in top sections. Pinhole above 41 degrees in border at left and .25" tear in top border by 33 degrees. Minor rust spots in top and bottom margins and borders. 1.25" tear above 34 degrees at left border, extending into image with a small hole through the backing. Minor soiling in Black Sea.