



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
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## **(Russia) Album of Original Illustrations Depicting the Peoples of the Russian Empire**

**Stock#:** 102134  
**Map Maker:** Heuser  
**Date:** 1840 - 1860s  
**Place:** v.p.  
**Color:** (See Description)  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 16 x 12.75 inches

**Price:** \$ 45,000.00

### **Description:**

***The Diversity of the Russian Empire in the 19th Century:***

***Mordvins, Tatars, Nanai, Bashkirs, Chuvash, Yukaghirs, Khanty, Tungus, Samoyeds, Korayks, Kalmyks, Cossacks, Lezgins, Armenians, Kyrgyz, Finns, and Ukrainians.***

***Including the peoples of northwest North America and the Aleutian archipelago.***

***With a Large Format 19th-century Photograph of a Russian Man and Woman in Traditional Clothing.***

A remarkable mid-19th-century album which showcases the diverse peoples of the Russian Empire during the reign of Tsar Alexander II, through 148 original watercolors and drawings by Baltic German artist J.M. Heuser and other artists. Spanning European Russia to the far east, including Siberia and the Amur River region, the album vividly captures the physiognomy, attire, habitats, and professions of various ethnic groups, from Mordvins and Tatars to Cossacks and Armenians. Several of the watercolors and drawings were executed from life, while others are derived from printed or photographic sources. The compilation not only reflects burgeoning Russian nationalism but also stands as a significant and extensive exemplar of the 19th-century ethnographic illustration tradition in Russia.

The album opens with a charming ca. 1860s photograph print depicting a Russian man and woman in native ethnic dress. This photograph sets the stage for the dazzling array of original pen and ink, watercolor and pencil sketches herein, which together form an impressive visual documentation of the richly varied ethnic groups of the Russian Empire. The regions represented here include European Russia, the Caucasus, the Volga River and the Ural Mountain regions, as well as the far east, including Siberia, the Amur River region, the Kamchatka peninsula, and more. Many ethnic groups are depicted,





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The present album dovetails with a deep tradition of Russian ethnographic illustration, from J.G. Georgi, Fedor Solntsev, Emelian Mikhailovich Karnejeff, Auguste Raffet, and the like.

#### **J. M. Heuser and Karl Ernst von Baer**

Heuser, of Baltic German descent, was associated with the prestigious St. Petersburg-based Imperial Russian Geographical Society and the Imperial Academy of Sciences. Established in 1845, the Geographical Society sought to encourage the study of Russia's geography, climate, languages, and people. The Society sponsored numerous research expeditions into the Empire's vast territories, often with accompanying artists who recorded through photography or drawings the various peoples and places they encountered. Heuser was most notably connected with the Society's co-founder and the first Chair of its Ethnography Division, the Baltic German naturalist-explorer, Karl Ernst von Baer (1792-1876). Baer was a pioneer of early Russian ethnographical studies, and carried out several important expeditions throughout the Russian Empire during the 1840s through the 60s.

The artwork in Heuser's album, which shows every indication of being his personal image bank of Russian ethnic images, likely influenced the illustrations featured in Theodore de Pauly's important survey of the Russian Empire, *Description ethnographique des peuples de la Russie* (1862). Indeed, the lithograph "Russes de L'Ukraine (Petits Russies)" (facing p. 72 in *Pueple Indo-Europeens*), is attributed to Heuser ("dessine d'apres les originaux de Mr. Heyser par Viale"). The color illustrations on leaves 53-55 of our album appear to be preparatory sketches for that plate and contain manuscript notes by Heuser describing the figure's dress.

Actually, the brainchild of Baer, Pauly's *Description ethnographique* was sponsored by the Geographical Society and published in 1862 to celebrate the millennium of the founding of the Russian Empire. Dedicated to Tsar Alexander II, the work was the first extensive survey of its kind, at least since J.G. Georgi's first ethnographic study of Russia, *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reichs* (1776-80). Pauly's work featured 62 chromolithographic plates executed by numerous artists, some drawn from life, but also after photographs and earlier sketches, as well as costumes from the Geographical Society's collections that were then worn by models.

Other works in our album also bear a resemblance to figures in Pauly's work. Five figures on leaves 2 and 3 appear in a composite plate "Tatares de la Crimée. Mollah" (signed "Ch. Huhn d'apres les originaux de la Societe geographique Imperiale de Russie par Sitnikoff"). Another figure drawn and signed by Heuser,



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on leaf 71, appears in a slightly altered version on the plate "Finnois" (signed "dessine d'après nature par Dzierzanovsky"). Several costumes featured on leaves 4 and 5 of our album appear in multiple plates: the dress of the central figure on leaf 5 in plate "Bashkirs" (signed "Desine d'après nature par Zakharoff"); the dress of the three figures at left on the same leaf appear in the plate "Tartare de Khiva" (signed "Dessine par Ch. Huhn d'après les originaux de la Societe geographique Imperale de Russie par Bahikoff"); the dress of the figure at right on leaf 4 herein appears in the plate "Femme Kirghize" (signed "les originaux et costumes de la Societe geographique Imperale de Russie"). The Lezgin man on leaf 30, executed in 1845 by Lucien Gottri, closely resembles the dress in the plate facing page 20 in "Peuples du Caucase" (signed "Dessine d'après nat par Teichel").

Still other drawings in the album appear to be based on notable 19th-century Russian travel surveys. Four physiognomic illustrations appearing on leaves 20, 22, 23, and 25, are copies of field sketches executed by Thor Branth, while that artist was on Baltic German explorer Alexander von Middendorf's expedition to the Taymyr Peninsula in Siberia, in 1842-44 (*Reise in den äussersten Norden und Osten Sibiriens...*, 1875). One watercolor on leaf 94 is found in Ivan Bulychev's 1856 account of Eastern Siberia, *Puteshestviye po Vostochnoy Sibiri Chast' 1-ya. Poyezdka v Kamchatku*, as plate "Koriaks Nomades." The costumes of leaf 4 have been attributed to 2nd Lieutenant Bibikov of the Russian Military Corps of Topographers, ca. 1845-46. One image on leaf 41 is a copy of Auguste Raffet's illustration "Berger du Bannat" from *Voyage dans la Russie méridionale et la Crimée...* Other images might be derived from ethnographic illustrations that first appeared 19th-century German periodicals.

### **Northwest North America and the Aleutian Archipelago.**

Significantly, the album includes 4 or 5 exquisite depictions of people from the Aleutian Archipelago and the Northwest Coast of North America. These appear on leaves: 99, 100, and 102 (left-hand image).

### **Heuser's steinpappe, papier-mâché sculptures of Russian Peoples**

Heuser was known for his papier-mâché sculptures of ethnographic figures, and it is likely that some of the artwork collected in our album was used as source material or models for the creation of his sculptures. In 1853, Prince Anatole de Demidoff of San Donato (1813-70) gifted a collection of 59 papier-mâché statues created by Heuser to the Russian Academy of Sciences. These intriguing sculptures represented the different peoples of Russia. In 1862, the same year as the publication of Pauly's work, Heuser was commissioned by Baer to create papier-mâché sculptures for Baer's publication *Types Principaux des Differentes Races Humaines Dans les Cinq Parties du Monde* (1862) - a now very rare photographically illustrated portfolio containing 12 original mounted photographs of various groupings of the sculpture busts.



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#### **Médaille de Bronze**

Some of Heuser's sculptures were exhibited in the Russian Pavilion of the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris, including statues of animals and "types des habitants de la Russie" (*Catalogue général exposition Universelle de 1867*, page 106). These sculptures are currently housed in the National Museum of Scotland, in Edinburgh, and several appear as illustrations in this album. The Paris Exposition Universelle de 1867 certificate accompanying the present album was awarded to Heuser, for "figures en carton-pierre." Such a category for "cardboard figures" likely encompassed the heads or busts sculpted in *steinpappe*, a papier mâché combined with precipitated calcium carbonate which resulted in a much stronger and finer material than plain papier mâché.

In sum, an extensive collection, in a luxurious and beautifully bound album, of exceedingly beautiful and original artwork, offering an unparalleled single-volume visual record of the peoples of the Russian Empire during a pivotal era. Its detailed illustrations and the breadth of its coverage elevate the album to a significant sourcebook for Russian history, ethnography, and art.

#### **Detailed Condition:**

Oblong folio. Full contemporary pebbled green morocco, elaborately stamped in blind, with "J. M. Heuser" stamped in gilt on front board, blue speckled edges, pink moiré silk endpapers. (Expertly rebaked in nearly matching green morocco. Scattered light wear to binding extremities.) 148 original illustrations executed in pen and ink, watercolor, and/or pencil, on 98 sheets (48 in full or partial color; 39 executed directly on album leaves and 109 mounted to same); album leaves and some mounted sheets with J. Whatman watermark, dated 1845 or 1848. Each sheet numbered in manuscript pencil in bottom corner; approximately 17 illustrations signed by Heuser, some signed by others ("Lucien Gottri, 1845", "A. Shirine, 1858", etc.), with the remainder unsigned; manuscript captions in two or more hands, in Russian and in German, in pen or pencil, below each image; some mounted illustrations with annotations on verso; one period photograph mounted at front, with annotations in German in pencil on verso. Illustrations measure from 2 3/4 x 1 3/4 in. (70 x 44 mm) to 12 1/2 x 10 1/2 in. (317 x 267 mm). Laid in: a printed Paris Exposition Universelle de 1867 certificate, awarded to Heuser ("Le Jury International decerne une medaille de bronze a Heiser (Russie.) Agriculture et Industrie. Group III.--Classes 14 et 15.--Figures en carton-pierre.")