



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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## L'Asie Suivant les Dernres Observons. des Mosovites . . . 1747

**Stock#:** 62355  
**Map Maker:** Le Rouge  
**Date:** 1747  
**Place:** Paris  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 25 x 19.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### *Fine Map of Asia Showing the Mer de Corée (Sea of Korea)*

Detailed map of Asia, including the naming of the Sea of Korea (*Mer de Corée*), by the skilled French cartographer George-Louis Le Rouge.

Created in 1747 during Le Rouge's prolific years in Paris, this finely rendered map reflects France's growing interest in Asia as a place of trade and colonialism.

This map extends from England (*Anglet[er]re*) and Spain (*Espagne*) down to Africa (*Egypte*, *Nubie*) in the west and then across to eastern Russia (*Tschuktschi*) and the Philippines (*Isles Philippines*) in the east. The coastlines are detailed and nicely formed, creating a remarkably accurate picture of Asia to that date. When compared to a modern map, perhaps the most irregular regions are the Philippines and Japan, but these islands are nevertheless easily recognizable.

Cities are generally depicted with small circles, though the more important urban areas such as Moscow (*Moscou*), Mangaluru (*Mangelor*), and Tokyo (*Yedo*) are represented with miniature views. Countries are divided by dashed lines, indicating political and colonial boundaries.

The map shows a number of natural features such as rivers, mountains, and lakes, though not all are labeled. Standouts include the *Yangtze* and *Amur* rivers as they are particularly wide and detailed. The Caspian Sea (*Mer Caspiene*) is also well formed, and it is noted in the key that this elongated, north-south shape of the Caspian Sea is very different from (and more accurate than) its shape on ancient maps.



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### **L'Asie Suivant les Dernres Observons. des Mosovites . . . 1747**

Along the righthand side of the map is a panel providing the divisions of Asia, both political and religious. It indicates the four main Asian empires—Persian, Mongol, Chinese, and Japanese—as well as established locations for European colonizers throughout Asia. The Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch control the largest number of cities, mostly found in present-day India and Southeast Asia. The key also lists the languages spoken in Asia, divided into three categories: general (*Langues generales*), particularly well-known (*Lang. Particulieres les plus connues sont*), and foreign (*Langues Etrangeres*).

The title cartouche takes up the lower left corner of the page. The title is emblazoned on a stylized frame which is surrounded by plants. Behind the cartouche, a beautifully detailed camel carries a number of goods on its back including weapons, a shield, cloth, and wheat. These images indicate to the reader France's dual colonial and trade interests in Asia at this time.

#### **Naming the Sea of Korea**

One interesting area on this map is the water body between Japan and Korea. This map names it the Sea of Korea (*Mer de Corée*), which was a common, though not exactly standardized, name for that water body from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Other names included the Eastern Sea or Sea of Japan, particularly by the Dutch who had had more contact with the Japanese than other European powers at the time.

During the nineteenth century, Japanese militarism and imperialism made Japan a huge power in Asia. The Japanese used "Sea of Japan" on their maps, particularly after their victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894. This name displaced "Sea of Korea" on European maps around this time as well. Even after Japanese colonial rule of Korea ended in 1945, Western maps took significant influence from Japanese cartography and international standardization meant that the name "Sea of Japan" stuck. However, the debate over this water body's name is ongoing today.

#### **Cartographic Sources and Influences**

A few paragraphs in the upper right corner of the map give the reader additional information, such as the differences in longitude between this map and older ones. This change came from the latest astronomical observations of the Russian Academy in Moscow, which allowed the Russians to more accurately map their country. Russia was, in fact, 45 degrees wider in longitude than cartographers had previously thought.

The note also cites Jean-Baptiste d'Après de Manneville, an officer of the French East India Company. D'Après was born the son of a sea captain and educated in sailing from a young age. He accompanied his father on a trip to India at the age of twelve, and later studied math and astronomy in Paris. He then participated in a number of sea voyages to the Americas, Africa, and Asia. He is known as the first



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navigator to use Halley's sextant, which allowed him to accurately determine longitude by measuring the angular distance between the moon and the horizon.

D'Après published his best-known work, *Neptune Oriental*, in 1745, which was likely where the reference for this map came from. The atlas contained charts of India and China, along with sailing directions. Between d'Après' work and the Russian Academy's astrological measurements, Le Rouge was able to create an impressive representation of the Asian continent.

This map provides a detailed glimpse into France's knowledge of and interest in Asia during the mid-1700s.

**Detailed Condition:**