



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

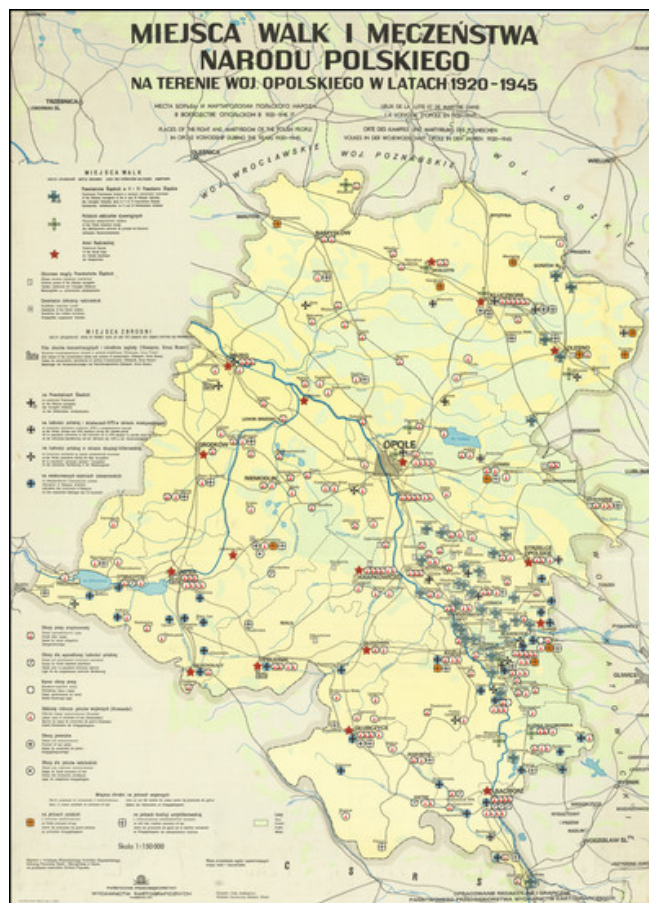
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(Second World War - Holocaust) Miejsca walk i męczeństwa narodu Polskiego na terenie woj. Opolskiego w latach 1920-1945 [Places of fights and martyrdom of the Polish nation in the province Opolski in the years 1920-1945]

Stock#: 82707
Map Maker: Państwowe Przedsiębiorstwo
Wydawnictw Kartograficz
Date: 1974
Place: Warsaw
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 32.5 x 45.5 inches
Price: \$ 1,500.00



Description:

From a Series on Hitler's Crimes in Poland Produced by Poland's Nazi-Hunting Commission. The Opole Voivodeship on the Czech Border.

Haunting and very rare map of the Opole voivodeship during the 1940s, locating Nazi atrocities and Polish resistance efforts throughout. Produced as part of a series of wall maps regarding "Hitler's crimes in Poland" this 1971-issued piece shows the Soviet tendencies in interpreting the crimes perpetrated during the Second World War. This map is particularly interesting as it starts mapping atrocities from 1920 when the Polish minority in Opole was subject as part of the Prussian Free State.



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This map shows the region around Opole in southwestern Poland, charting the locations of concentration camps, mass execution sites, the razing of cities, work camps, POW camps, and more. However, this map, like the other regional maps in the series and unlike the wall map of Poland produced as part of this series, also shows the locations of acts of resistance, such as battlegrounds of the Red Army, the Polish Army, Polish guerrillas, anti-fascist groups, and acts of sabotage. All told, hundreds of symbols line the map, showing an in-depth analysis of the course of the war that was compiled through years of research and work.

Text on the map is printed in five languages, including Polish, Russian, English, French, and German, speaking to the fact that while these maps were often issued to schools, they were also intended to have a wider international audience as well. The map was issued in 1710 examples but proves extremely rare today given its primary use in Soviet-era schools, most of which have been replaced.

This map was commissioned by the Główna Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, the Chief Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation. The map reflects research conducted in the 1960s and '70s that was critical to preserving knowledge of the Holocaust. Prior to this period, heavy censorship and economic deprivation prevented the study of these issues, and the 1980s were again a recessive period, meaning that 1971 was in the middle of the golden years for war-crime research in Poland.

Polish Reinterpretations of the Holocaust

Studying the effects of German occupation in Poland is a delicate subject. While it is certain that Poland suffered at least as badly as any other European nation during the Second World War, reinterpretations of the Holocaust in the country have also been used to satisfy nationalistic tendencies. It has become evident to Western observers in the last several years that there is a strong nationalist movement in Poland that seeks to place blame for the Holocaust solely on the shoulders of non-Polish actors, a movement originally fostered under Soviet rule. This movement has gone so far as to limit freedom of speech, criminalizing (with a three-year sentence) the suggestion that Poland or its citizens (in any form) participated in the murders committed by Nazis. As such, the term "Polish concentration camps" has been deemed unacceptable, with the government-approved term being "concentration camps on Polish territory."

All lines of evidence show that this map was produced using the most accurate and impartial historical sources. The language on the map is simple, naming only "Hitler's Atrocities," and there is no evidence of a clear anti-German bias. However, it is impossible to separate this map, one of the most important



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productions of the remembrance movement during this period, from the social situation in which it was produced. Maps like these can easily be converted into propaganda instruments, and today's Polish leaders, most of whom grew up during Soviet occupation, will have formed their understanding of the Holocaust through maps like these.

Soviet Censorship

While the content of the map appears to have been produced free from bias, the map still had to go through Soviet censorship. Mentioning prisoner of war camps, in which primarily Soviet troops were interned, would have been a prerequisite condition upon which the publication of the map rested. Further, the lack of mention of any Soviet killings or camps requires no explanation. In addition, the Warsaw Ghetto is not referred to at all, with only general symbols used around Warsaw.

The map, unlike many later maps, makes no differentiation between the populations who suffered at the various camps. This represents the Soviet agenda that all nations suffered, fought, and won equally, which sought to limit divisions in this post-identity state.

Rarity

The map is rare. OCLC notes no examples outside Europe.

Detailed Condition:

Minor weaknesses in paper strengthened on verso. Some minor creasing. Minor dampstaining in upper right.