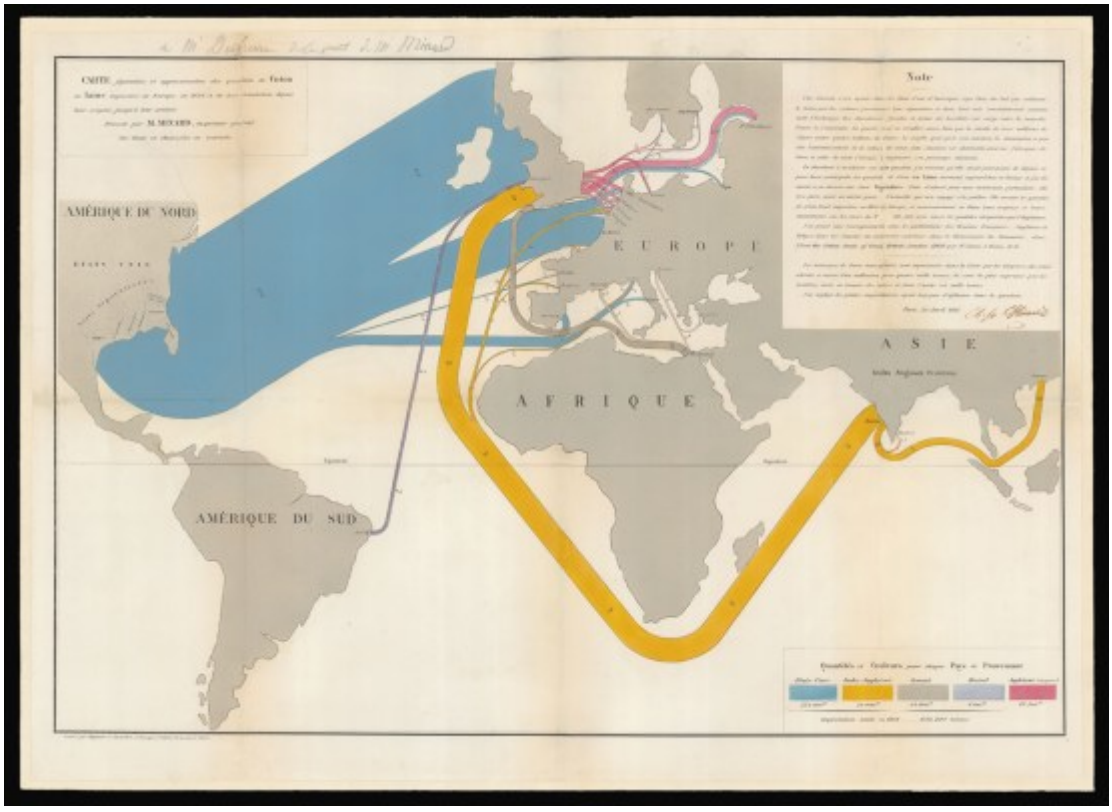


Lithographed map, signed “Ch. J. Minard” in ink to title and inscribed in pencil to “Mr. Dufresne a la part d.m. Minard “, mounted on linen.

EUROPEAN COTTON AND WOOL IMPORTS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Carte figurative et approximative des quantités de coton en laine importées en Europe en 1858 et de leur circulation depuis leur origine jusqu’à leur arrivée.

Author
MINARD, Charles Joseph

Publication date
1861.

Publisher
Regnier et Dourdet, 8 Passage Ste. Marie (R. du Bac),

Publication place
Paris,

Physical description
Lithographed map, signed “Ch. J. Minard” in ink to title and inscribed in pencil to “Mr. Dufresne a la part d.m. Minard “, mounted on linen.

Dimensions
528 by 740mm. (20.75 by 29.25 inches).

Notes
The map was produced in April 1861, after the war had begun and the Union had imposed a

blockade on Confederate ports, Minard clearly chose to look back on this date as representative of European cotton and wool imports before the beginning of the American Civil War. The vast majority of cotton comes from America, with much smaller amounts coming from India (although Indian exports only go into Britain), the Middle East and Brazil.

Only one recorded example – that held at ENPC: Fol 10975.

The map is inscribed to Minard's colleague Jules Auguste Dufresne (1809-1885), engineer, inspector general of the bridges and roads and senator of "La Manche" from 1879 to 1885.

Charles Joseph Minard (1781-1870) was "a true pioneer in thematic cartography and in statistical graphics" (Friendly). After completing his studies at the École des Ponts et Chaussées, (the School of Bridges and Roads) he began work as a civil engineer. The beginning of his career coincided with the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars, and he headed a project to repair the wet dock at Flessingue after it was destroyed by the British. He was then posted to Antwerp to oversee a project there and was caught in the siege of Antwerp in 1814, an experience that affected him greatly. He was named Superintendent of his alma mater in 1830. Six years later, he became Inspector of the Corps of Bridges. In 1851, he took mandatory retirement, although still working for the school in an advisory capacity, and undertook private research. This is when his cartographical career began in earnest.

Minard's genius lay in his realisation that maps could provide visually clear renditions of complicated statistics. He wrote that the aim of his work was not to convey statistical results, but to show the relations between them, which would otherwise have to be worked out by the reader. He would often alter geographical reality on a map in order to make a diagram clearer, and so added the term 'approximative' to the title of his works to explain his decision. He was possibly the first to use the flow-map technique (his writing indicates that he believed he had invented it) and he was certainly the first to use pie charts on a map. His work was "a combination of cartographic ingenuity and concern with the graphic portrayal of statistical data that was almost unique during the central portion of the century" (Robinson).

The importance of Minard's work was quickly recognised by the French government. He was awarded the Legion d'Honneur, and throughout the 1850s all Ministers of Public Works in France had their portrait painted with a Minard chart in the background. In 1861, his work was presented to Napoleon III. Minard's maps were not widely known in his lifetime outside of the intelligentsia and upper levels of government, suggesting that he published them privately (Robinson).

Minard continued to write and create maps in retirement, until the onset of the Franco-Prussian War. In 1870 Minard heard that the Prussians were marching on Paris. Determined to avoid a siege like the one he had suffered under in Antwerp 56 years before, he left for Bordeaux. The journey was too much for him, and he died six weeks later.

Bibliography
Friendly 31.

Provenance

Price: £20000

Inventory reference: 14870

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