Engraved map with original hand-colour.

TRACES OF THE SILK ROAD

Tartary

Author
THOMSON, John

Publication date
1817].

Publisher
John Thomson, John Cumming and Baldwin, Cradock and Joy,

Publication place
[Edinburgh, Dublin and London,

Physical description
Engraved map with original hand-colour.

Dimensions

Notes
A map of northern Asia and China, from Thomson’s ‘New General Atlas’.

John Thomson (1777-1837) was a Scottish cartographer and publisher, active in Edinburgh. He published a range of geographical works including historical atlases, travellers’ guides, and materials for use in schools. Most notable of his publications was the ‘New General Atlas’, which appeared in several editions from 1814 to 1821. Of the 56 maps compiled by Thomson for the work

was one showing northern Asia and China. It is entitled ‘Tartary’, using the name given in Western literature and cartography for the region bounded by the Caspian Sea, Ural Mountains, Pacific Ocean and northern swathes of China and India, much of which had been part of the Mongol Empire.

In the early nineteenth century, this vast area remained largely to European cartographers. A note in the Gobi Desert records “The Geography of these Parts is extremely obscure”, and Karakum, the supposed capital of Genghis Khan’s empire, is marked. A part of the Silk Road, from Lok Nor to China, is marked by a thin line.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 15813

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