

Lithograph map, hand-coloured, two areas of loss to old folds, skilfully repaired in facsimile.

FIRST JAPANESE PRINTED MAP OF TAIWAN

《實地踏測臺灣詳密地圖》 [Detailed Map of Taiwan Field Survey].

Author
[WALKER, John], MATSUMOTO, Nikichi and SHIMIZU, Tsunetaro

Publication date
1895.

Publisher
Nakamura Yoshimatsu 中村芳松,

Publication place
Osaka,

Physical description
Lithograph map, hand-coloured, two areas of loss to old folds, skilfully repaired in facsimile.

Dimensions
1030 by 735mm. (40.5 by 29 inches).

Notes
The first Japanese printed map of Taiwan and the birth certificate of Japanese-occupied Taiwan. An extremely scarce and important large-scale map of Taiwan issued near the end of the First Sino-Japanese War (August 1, 1894 – April 17, 1895), prior to the Treaty of Shimonoseki (April 17, 1895) and the Japanese invasion of Taiwan (May 29, 1895 – October 21, 1895). It was translated into Japanese by Nikichi Matsumoto (謙堂松本), and published by Nakamura Yoshimatsu (中村芳松).

This map was likely a diplomatic and propaganda ploy prepared in anticipation of the Shimonoseki treaty negotiations, which included an Imperial Japanese demand for the Qing cession of Taiwan.

The map does not represent contemporary Taiwan geography. The deviations from established Taiwan cartography, much of which was available to the Japanese, may indicate an insidious intent – a diplomatic deception intended to diminish the territorial significance of Qing administered Taiwan, then limited to the coastal lowlands west of the Central Mountain Range, while at the same time exaggerating the eastern ungoverned tribal regions and retaining the island's overall area.

The text next to the title claims that the cartography is adapted from a map made by a British naval officer John Walter, who seemed to have made his map before 1884, as the geography of Taiwan is depicted as a province under the Qing government. In particular, Tainan is depicted as the provincial capital, and military posts and railways constructed by the Qing are labelled on the map. It is unclear why an early Taiwan map was used when the Japanese had accurate European maps of Taiwan collected for the Japanese Punitive Expedition of 1874.

Japanese Occupation of Taiwan

Japan occupied Taiwan from 1895 to 1945. Japanese naval forces invaded Taiwan in May 1895, after it was ceded to them by Treaty of Shimonoseki (April 17, 1895) at the end of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894 – 1895). The occupation of Taiwan fit into Imperial Japan's Nanshin-ron (南進論) or Southern Expansion Doctrine, which argued that Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and the Philippines were essential to Japan's economic and territorial growth. Katsura Taro (1747 – 1913), a Yamaguchi Samurai, wrote of Taiwan's significance, "It is not only the most ideal location for expanding power to southern China, but also the islands of Southeast Asia". Although there were some indigenous attempts at resistance and self-governance, including the founding of the 'Republic of Taiwan', Asia's first republic, the Japanese were quickly able to suppress Taiwan nationalism. In less than six months, Japanese naval forces achieved, with the arguable exception of the tribal central highlands, full control of the island. Taiwan was Japan's first major extraterritorial holding, and Imperial Japan worked diligently to transform it into a showpiece 'model colony'. Japan lavished resources on the island's economy, including public works, industrial development, and cultural Japanization.

After an initial period of unrest, the Japanese were generally effective in Taiwan, where they were, for the most part, approved of by the Taiwanese, who appreciated the advanced technology and economic growth. Of course, the darker side of Imperial Japanese investment in Taiwan was its planned essential role in supporting Japanese military aggression in the Asia-Pacific.

The Mysterious Source: John Walter / Water

Text on the map claims the cartography is copied from work done by a former British Royal Navy officer named John Walter or Water (ジョン・ウォートル). We have been unable to trace Walter/Water or any survey work completed by this individual. Certainly, the British Royal Navy were active in the waters around Taiwan from 1817, and had successfully compiled a respectable map of the coast by 1867. By addressing this unidentified British officer on the map, it may be that the Japanese publisher wished to confer British legitimacy upon this map.

The Inset Maps
From just under the title block, the insets are, clockwise,
- 江蘇島 (Jiangsu Island)
- 海南島 (Hainan Island)
- 舟山島 (Zhoushan Island, off the coast southeast of Shanghai)
- 菲律賓群島 (Philippine Islands)

- 澎湖島 (Penghu Island)
- 竹山島 (Zhushan Island – south of 岱山島 Daishan Island)
- 崇明島 (Chongming Island – an alluvial island at the mouth of Yangtze River)
- 普陀山島 (Putuoshan Island – to the east of Zhoushan Island)
- 南澳島 (Nan’ao Island, small Island in Shantou County)

This map was published by Nakamura Yoshimatsu in Osaka, Japan, on February 1st, 1895 (Meiji 28) and released shortly thereafter on February 5th. This map is rare. We are aware of one example at the National Diet Library, Tokyo and another in that Taiwan National Archives.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 16282

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