Red Banner with Soviet State Emblem, 1923-29.

In Burgundy velvet with gold fringe. Measures 63" x 44" (approx. 5 x 3.5 feet). Front shows Soviet State emblem masterfully executed in embroidery and hand-sewn pieces of silk of multiple colors. The slogan "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" is embroidered in gold brocade in two lines, one at the top and one at the bottom. The same motto is repeated on the state emblem in silver in smaller font. Next to the state seal on the left and right are the letters "CCCP" ("USSR") embroidered in the same fashion as the larger slogan.

The embroidery is magnificent, a perfect example of the 1920s craftsmanship inherited from the imperial era, soon to become a forgotten art. The distinctive style of the embroidered writing, especially the angular font of the silver lettering on the state emblem, is typical of the Civil War era and the following few years. The materials used are also characteristic of the period, in particular the very long fringe in fine strands of twisted silk. The reverse of the banner is blank.

Note that the Soviet emblem is of very early style, with just six scrolls representing the number of republics in the Soviet Union (and later, for a short while, the number of national languages used in major republics). The USSR national emblem showed six larger scrolls only during 1923 - 1929 period; that number later increased to seven (with the larger scroll at the bottom representing RSFSR), reached 11 in 1937 reflecting the pre-WW2 increase in the number of republics, and eventually settled at 15 in 1956.

Condition of the banner is good, very respectable for a Soviet flag of such an early vintage. The are some small holes and tears from weathering to the background velvet, mostly on the reverse. None of them are too detractive; their edges have acquired dark, almost black color which blends with the similarly dark color of the more worn areas. Although there are some tears and loose strands in the central part of the state emblem depicting the globe, the artwork is overall intact. There are small tears and minor losses to the top and lower corners where the flag met the flagpole; additionally, there are a couple of areas on either side of the flagpole sleeve where small tears were crudely repaired with plain green thread - obviously something that was done decades ago. There is a loss of the fringe at the bottom edge along the length of approximately one inch. To reiterate, all the condition issues are relatively minor; the banner is in remarkably good condition for its age: a very impressive flag with tremendous amount of character.

Item# 37638

$1,700.00

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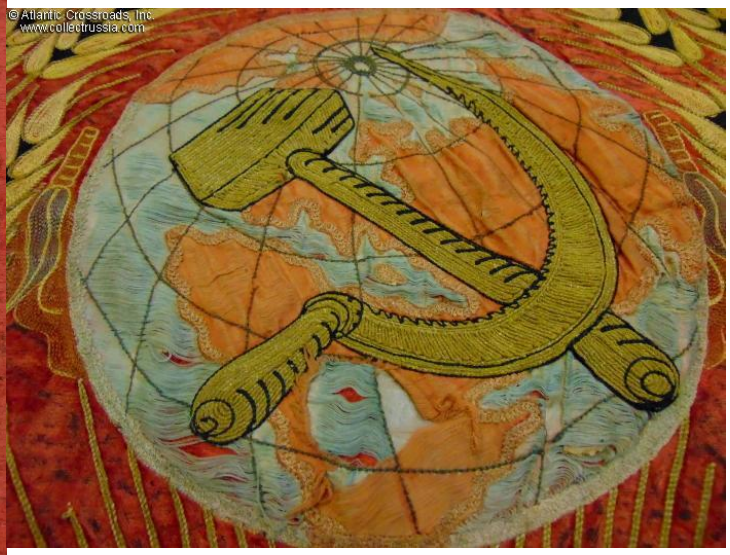
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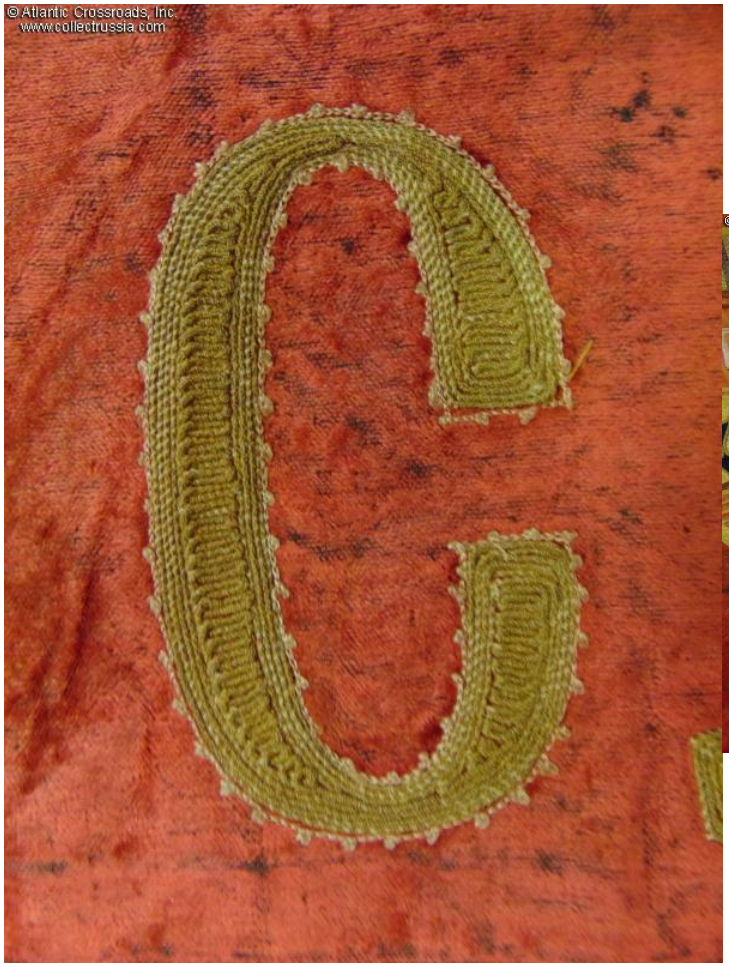
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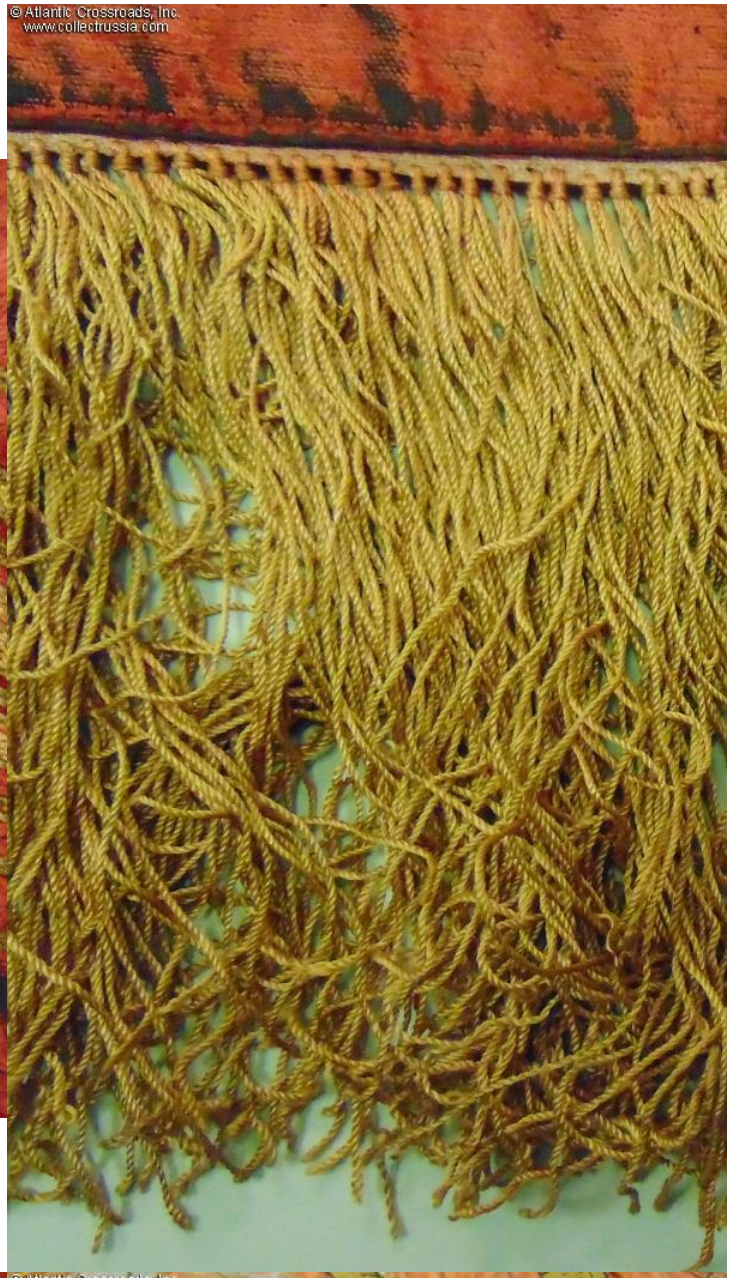
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