



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

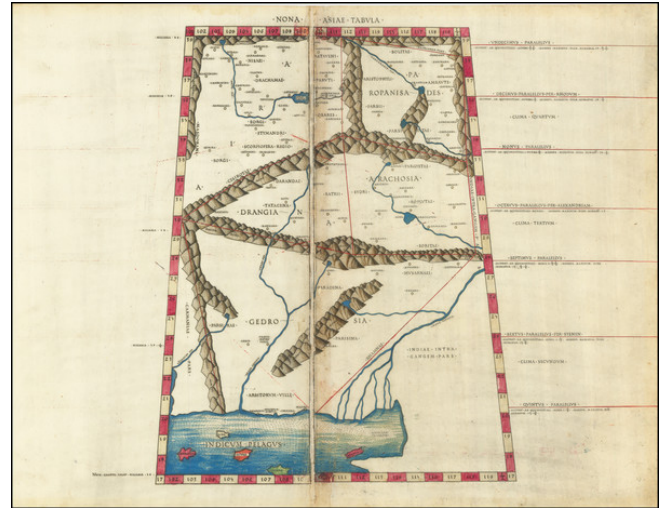
7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

## (Exquisite Hand Coloring) Nona Asiae Tabula [Pakistan, Afghanistan, India]

**Stock#:** 96464  
**Map Maker:** Ptolemy  
**Date:** 1490  
**Place:** Rome  
**Color:** Hand Colored  
**Condition:** VG+  
**Size:** 18.5 x 15.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

***The Finest Example of this Map of Which We Are Aware. A Superlative of Incunable Hand Coloring.***

A truly exceptional example of the second map ever produced of the region now known as Pakistan, from the all-important 15th-century Rome Ptolemy atlas.

While the map is highly desirable in its own right, even without coloring, this example possesses fantastic early hand coloring. Colored examples of maps from the Rome Ptolemy are of the utmost rarity to begin with, but even when present, this coloring tends to be primitive and of limited detail. The coloring on this example represents one of the most finely colored 15th-century printed maps we have ever seen. The shading of mountains, coloring of rivers, and graticulated border are the work of a superb colorist making a premium example of the map for an important recipient.

Not only is the coloring of this map excellent, but there is evidence that it was gold heightened and painted with lead white. Robert Peerlings, the leading expert on the Rome Ptolemy atlas, has identified a few examples of maps from the same atlas. Having subjected these maps to x-ray spectroscopy, he concluded that the maps were heightened in gold and had lead white paint applied. He states about the maps that:

*"We now know that these maps belong to the second edition of the Rome Cosmography published in 1490 by Petrus de Turre. During our research we found very few coloured examples in all studied atlases. If they were coloured at all, it was fairly basic . . . Thus, it can be concluded that these map*



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*belong to the 1490 edition of the Rome Cosmography, that they were old or contemporary coloured and that they were gold heightened. This makes these maps very special or rather unique."*

Peerlings further demonstrates that the maps were either contemporarily colored (e.g., in 1490) or colored in the first half of the 16th century. His full analysis can be read [here](#).

The Rome Ptolemy was first published in 1478, immediately after the rudimentary Bologna Ptolemy in 1477, the first atlas ever published. The Rome edition was produced by the German master engraver Conrad Swenheym who had established the first printing press in Italy and had devoted the final years of his life to producing this work. It was published posthumously by Swenheym's assistant Arnold Buckinck, first in 1478 and then reissued in 1490, 1507, and 1508. The different editions of the maps can be identified through the watermarks, with this map dating to 1490. The work was massively influential and copies made their way throughout Europe, with one example of the work known to have provenance to Christopher Columbus himself.

While produced in the 15th century, the geography shown dates to the 2nd century geographer Claudius Ptolemy. His system of co-ordinates was lost to Western scholars for some twelve centuries before being translated into Latin by Jacopo Angeli in 1406 as a key early Renaissance development. This translation was accompanied by a set of maps derived from the coordinate system, which showed parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia. This map shows the region around Pakistan, stretching from the Indus River Valley to the east to the hills of Arabia to the west.

In conclusion, this map is important not just for its representation of the region but for the marvelous coloring it displays. Hand-colored incunables are always of the utmost rarity, with a few notable exceptions, but an incunable colored with this level of care and lavishness is all but unheard of on the modern antiquarian market.

#### **Detailed Condition:**

Copperplate engraving on 15th-century laid paper with superb early (first half of the 16th century) hand color in full. Cardinal's hat watermark and fleur-de-lys countermark.