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An incunable map of the Caucasus according to Ptolemy

BERLINGHIERI, Francesco de Nicola.
Tabula Tertia d Asia.

Florence, 1482. Two sheets joined, as usual, paper size 430 x 560mm.

£5,500

One of the earliest available printed maps, showing the Caucasus according to Ptolemy, with parts of modern Southern Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and parts of Turkey and Persia. It was published in 'Septe Giornate della Geographia di Francesco Berlinghieri' ('The Seven Days of Geography of Francesco Berlinghieri'), the third edition of Ptolemy's Geography to have printed maps (only five years after the first), the first to be printed in the vernacular and the first with 'modern' maps'. Francesco Berlinghieri (1440-1501), an Italian scholar and humanist, started work on a revision of Ptolemy in 1464, updating the Ptolemaic maps, supplementing them with modern maps (France, Italy, Spain and the Holy Land) and writing a commentary in Italian verse. The maps were engraved by Nicolaus Laurentii, a German printer known in Italy as Niccolò Tedesco. Unusually the maps had equidistant meridians and parallels, and rectangular borders rather than trapezoid.

Stock ID :22695