



Tabula Peutingeriana. Die einzige Weltkarte aus der Antike. By Michael Rathmann. Darmstadt

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the frontispiece to *L'Homme et la Terre* (1905), showing a naked man sitting on a plinth, flanked by representations of Geography and History, gazing into space at the terraqueous globe of earth set amidst a star-strewn sky. Just 64 years later, a man would indeed be looking at the world set in the dark blue-black velvet of deep space from the moon. These images encapsulate the astounding technological advances of the twentieth century.

This intriguing book shows how maps can be objects of persuasion and power. Above all, it makes clear that it was the fusion of technological innovations with advances in cartographic education, which resulted in the promotion of public awareness of maps on a scale never before possible, that makes the twentieth century the watershed between maps for the few and maps for the many.

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Tabula Peutingeriana. Die einzige Weltkarte aus der Antike. By Michael Rathmann. Darmstadt: Philipp von Zabern, 2016. ISBN 978-3-8053-4999-4 (cloth); ISBN 978-3-8053-5023-5 (leather). Second edition 2017: ISBN 978-3-8053-5101-0. Pp. 112, illus. Facsimile. Euro €249.00 (cloth).

The *Tabula Peutingeriana*, preserved in the Department of Manuscripts, Autographs and Closed Collections at the Austrian National Library, Vienna (Codex Vindobonensis 324), and named after the German humanist Konrad Peutinger (1465–1547), is surely one of the most impressive cartographical documents reflecting the structure and network of the *cursus publicus* (the road and public transport system in Roman antiquity). However, as map historians well know, this manuscript parchment scroll—today divided into 11 sheets (in total nearly seven metres long, but only 34 centimetres high)—is a unique medieval copy, probably drawn on the monastic Reichenau Island in Lake Constance (southern Germany) around 1200 by one clerk and two illustrators from a now lost late-Antique original. Originally it covered all the Roman provinces and the territories in the east conquered by Alexander the Great, although unfortunately its first section (mainly northwestern Africa, the mythological island of Thule, Iberia and the British Isles) is missing. Altogether, more than 4,000 place-names are recorded on this remarkable map, which contains many insights for the history of the administration and economy of the Roman Empire. This is why, in 2007, the *Tabula Peutingeriana* was placed on the Memory of the World Register of UNESCO.

Since then many studies of the map have appeared, among which can be singled out Richard J. A. Talbert, *Rome's World: The Peutinger Map Reconsidered* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), with a digital version of the map at <http://www.cambridge.org/us/talbert/>; and, for a different angle, Emily Albu, *The Medieval Peutinger Map: Imperial Roman Revival in a German Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

With the present new edition of the *Tabula* (last restored in 2011), the German historian of Antiquity Michael Rathmann (Eichstätt University) provides us with a real 'aesthetic pleasure', a facsimile that brings us closer to the map's original format. The book is divided into two parts. Thirteen illustrated short chapters,

sometimes no longer than a note, touch on various aspects of the map, such as the history of its study, its place in antique geography, the handwriting (only marginally discussed), the copying process, and the larger vignettes. The second part comprises the facsimile of the *Tabula*. The generous dimensions of the book (34 × 36 cm) have allowed the eleven extant segments, each divided into three parts, to be reproduced at original size in colour. Each part is on one page with a monochrome version facing it, on which the most important toponyms are highlighted. The selection of these place-names seems somewhat arbitrary.

In his short, but informative introduction, Rathmann tells the reader the history of this unique map and its context in the history of antique map making. Therein he delivers a new theory with persuasive evidence that the archetype of the *Tabula* went back to a chorographic tradition already developed by the Hellenistic period (about 200 BC). For Rathmann, the archetype of the *Tabula* was an illustration to a chorographic text. The map was copied several times in Late Antiquity, before its last redaction in AD 435, as he demonstrates in a diagram in Figure 18. Rathmann surprises us here by referring to a not particularly well-known map of a similar nature ('*Cosmographia vetustissima*') with Greek lettering, which was seen by Pellegrino Prisciani (1435–1518) in the hallway of the diocesan office of the bishop of Padua in 1495. Extracts Prisciani copied from it are in his '*Historiae Ferrarienses*' (reproduced by Rathmann in Figures 14–15).

Rathmann's commentary deals with the process of copying the *Tabula* over the ages and the shift from papyrus to parchment. He also provides a short analysis of the larger vignettes. His argument is that it is likely that the various socio-political elites (such as Roman senators) possessed similar chorographic texts and maps. With these ideas, Rathmann is suggesting a redirection of established antique cartography, although some readers will miss the use of the term 'topogram', commonly employed in Germany, for a diagrammatic map or map in diagrammatic style. In other respects, however, his innovative presentation (in German), complemented by 69 endnotes and a bibliography, makes an easily read text.

All illustrations in Rathmann's *Tabula Peutingeriana* are of high quality, which is fortunate since only a short selection of place-names and legends is given. It may be suggested that the promotion of an unchanged and expensive second edition (the book was first published in 2016) is somewhat overblown, no doubt in line with the current emphasis on commercial publishing, since the map itself is freely available for study online. Such pressures might also explain the reluctance of the publishers to provide a hard copy of a highly prestigious book for review, a trend that inevitably discourages academics from offering their service as reviewers. Nevertheless, it should be said that Rathmann's scholarly study is to be welcomed by all German-language readers interested in antique cartography as well as by those looking for a text that can be usefully employed in teaching this interesting period of map history.

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