The Tabula Peutingeriana has been studied primarily as an image of the Roman Empire and, in particular, of its network of roads; the identification of place names and of the itineraries represented there have been the object of innumerable studies. Yet one all too often forgets that it was also a document of the Middle Ages and Renaissance that can be examined as such from the perspective of cultural history. Although it may be difficult to evaluate its significance with precision, the Tabula certainly influenced several works of descriptive geography produced during the Middle Ages, and it is really thanks to a medieval copy that we are familiar with it. From the time of its discovery by Konrad Celtes, and despite his own desire to make it rapidly available to the public, it was used by German humanists only in a sporadic and limited way until the edition of M. Welser, which appeared in 1598. It has not been noted, however, that even before Celtes’ discovery, there was already an exemplar of the Tabula that was known from a direct witness and from a partial copy. The history of the Tabula’s reception is therefore much more complex than has been thought and often far from the ingenious reconstructions formulated starting in the XVIIIth century on the basis of what were, for the most part, unfounded hypotheses.

I. The Medieval Influence of the Tabula Peutingeriana

Some time ago close correspondences were discovered between the content of the Tabula and a very unusual text composed in the eighth century, the Cosmographia of the Anonymous of Ravenna. This treatise describes the whole of the world largely in the form of a list of ciuitates, which present numerous analogies with the Tabula as far as the drawing, the order of exposition, and even the vignettes.

The Anonymous cites many sources, among which there appears a certain Castorius, which is mentioned dozens of times in passages in which the use of a map of roads is clearly evident. Konrad Miller deduced from this that this
Castorius was the author of the *Tabula*, which he dated to the fourth century.\(^1\) The problem is to determine whether the persons mentioned by the Anonymous are real authors or he invented them to give more weight to his words, which is much more likely. Today, Miller’s hypothesis has been abandoned. Nevertheless, among all those cited, Castorius has the greatest claim to be considered a real author. The large number of references can lead one to think that a person of this name composed a description of the world using a map similar to the *Tabula* but more complete and less deformed.\(^2\) But it would have been the text of Castorius which the Ravenna author would have used, and not the map, for it would otherwise be impossible to explain several glaring mistakes: for the most part, routes close by to one another, which are distinct on the *Tabula*, have sometimes been confused. Castorius could be identified —but in a purely conjectural way—with the *notarius* and *diaconus* mentioned in the correspondence of Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) or with a bishop of Rimini of the same name (592-595).\(^3\) To wish to introduce other details on his work means to enter into the realm of pure speculation.\(^4\) It is likewise mistaken to attribute to the Ravennate author a knowledge of all the “philosophers” whom he cites: it has already been shown that in most cases we are dealing with quotations from ancient authors that have been poorly interpreted by the Ravennate author.\(^5\)

There is another area in which one can easily affirm that a map like the *Tabula* exerted a lasting influence: the *mappaemundi* which, during the whole of the Middle Ages, were used to represent the known world. Konrad Miller, the first scholar to be interested in these medieval maps in a systematic and deep way, had already observed this, when he asserted that all *mappae mundi* derived from the map which he attributed to Castorius.\(^6\) In fact, there are clear analogies in the legends and, in some cases, in the vignettes, but they are not such as to produce such a neat conclusion. But the fact remains that many *mappaemundi* possess legends similar to those of the *Tabula*. Here we shall only offer a few examples. The informative remarks on India: *In his locis elephanti nascuntur* (In

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\(^3\) K. Miller, *Mappaemundi. Die ältesten Weltkarten VI*, p. 36.


these places elephants are born) and *In his locis serpentes nascuntur* (In these places serpents are born); those pertaining to the *Desertum ubi quadraginta annis errauerunt filii Israel ducente Moyse*” (the desert where the children of Israel wandered for forty years with Moses as their leader); and to the *Saline immene que cum luna crescent et descrescunt* (Immense salt flats that rise and fall with the moon) are all found to be almost identical on the most complete (and hence closest to the archetype) of the maps transmitted in the text of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* which the Spanish monk Beatus of Liébana composed in 776 (fig. 1).\(^7\) One might of course think that, to the contrary, such legends were added to the *Tabula* over the course of its medieval transmission, perhaps in order to imitate a *mappamundi*. But such an explanation does not hold when the correspondences also include place names without particular significance. This is the case for the most fully elaborated *mappamundi* of Beatus where dozens and dozens of place names, insignificant for an inhabitant of eighth-century Spain, correspond to those of the *Tabula*.\(^8\) The similarities with the map of Beatus do not seem to be accidental, and one is therefore justified in concluding that Beatus used a map which was very much like the *Tabula*, at least in content.\(^9\) This is not the only example. On the *mappamundi* described by Hugh of St Victor around 1130-1140 some cities on the coast of Africa present the same form as those of the *Tabula*: *Circacolis* and *Capsacolim* are the interpretations of a medieval scribe of *Cirta colon[ia]* and *Capsa colon[ia]* which must have appeared in a copy of the *Tabula* to designate *Cirta Constantina* in Numidia and *Capsa* of Bizacena; the *Tabula* has *Capsa colonia* and *Cirta colonia*.\(^10\) In addition to the numerous place-names like those of the *Tabula*, the map described by Hugh of Saint-Victor also preserved traces of an *itinerarium pictum*, which are visible in the succession of cities in northern Italy and, in particular, in the sequence *Regium-Placentia-Papia-Mediolanus-Augusta*.\(^11\) The type of vignette that could be described as a circle of walls from a bird’s-eye point of view is found in another *mappamundi* of the eleventh century which is, without question, closer in form and structure to the Roman cartographic tradition (British Library, Cotton Tib. B V, f. 56v).\(^12\)

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\(^7\) Miller, *Itineraria Romana*, p. xxxvii.


\(^11\) Ibid., p. 177.

A systematic examination would surely reveal a rather larger number of correspondences, but it would be naive, given the actual state of our knowledge, to wish to formulate more precise conclusions. The number of late antique and medieval texts which copy each other or which are transcriptions from maps is too high for neat and clean lines of dependence to emerge from this mass of place-names. Furthermore, the transmission of *mappaemundi*, beginning with graphic and textual models going back with certainty to late antiquity, is too complex ever to be able to hope to sum it up in a genealogical stemma. Nonetheless, it is certain that one or more maps of content and perhaps even an appearance similar to that of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* influenced the cartography of the *mappaemundi*.

II. The Medieval Transmission

That the *Tabula* had its own life in the Middle Ages may be deduced, obviously, from an examination of the copy that has come down to us by way of Konrad Celtis. Just as with any product of the medieval *scriptoria*, it deserves to be considered on its own terms, as evidence of intellectual activity and not as the simple reproduction of an original intended to inform historians of antiquity. Unfortunately, on this point there have been few studies because the conditions of transmission and conservation have never allowed a full and accurate investigation of the entire document.

*The script and the methods of reproduction*

A physio-chemical analysis of the pigments and the inks would allow a more precise dating of the copy. For a long time its has been placed in the XIIIth century but only because of an erroneous identification of the author, as we shall have occasion to show. Although the script has never been subjected to an in-depth paleographical examination, at present the inclination is consider it a late caroline minuscule, which is not later than the beginning of the XIIIth century and stems from the region of Alemannia (Swiss-German) and Bavaria. Several differences in the production might lead one to imagine the collaboration of many different hands, but the calligraphy remains the same throughout, as A. and M. Levi have rightly observed: for example, it seems that folio IV had

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vignettes that were more consistently drawn than those of folio IX.\textsuperscript{14} Nonetheless, it is possible that the copyist was different from the draftsman, as often happened in the scriptoria of the Middle Ages.

It is certain that the folia of parchment were not filled individually and that the copyist worked on the entire strip that had been assembled from folia attached one to another. Indeed, there is no break in continuity between the drawn elements on one folio and those which complete it on the next: roads and place-names are written down without interruption.\textsuperscript{15} The copy was probably produced by beginning from the outlines of the regions and continents; on the rest, the opinions of scholars diverge. One claims that the vignettes were drawn first, and only at a second stage were the lines which represent the roads added. Then, the mountains and rivers were incorporated, and in a third phase, the place names with the annotations on distances, the later perhaps transcribed by a second copyist: in fact, some streets have been omitted, while the corresponding distances do appear. The names of the peoples would have been included last.\textsuperscript{16} But all the oddities observed in the Tabula as it has reached us could have been found already on the model. According to another scholar, it was created in the following order: the coastal outline, the islands, the mountains and the rivers, then the vignettes, and finally the itineraries.\textsuperscript{17} The principal argument seems weak: if the itineraries had been drawn first, nothing would have in fact prevented the copyist from locating the name of a river near a station of the same name.

\textit{Modifications to the model}

As in any copy, it is necessary to suppose that its creation brought with it some changes with respect to the model; these, nevertheless, turn out to be difficult to identify with precision. And since we cannot use the model, we cannot reach certain conclusions on this point. Therefore with all the necessary precautions we shall try now to divide up these alterations into three categories: actual errors in the drawing, additions, and changes in the vignettes.

a) various errors and omissions\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{17} Bosio, \textit{La Tabula Peutingeriana}, p. 36.
\textsuperscript{18} See, in general, Miller, \textit{Itineraria Romana}, pp. xviii-xix.
It has already been noted that certain place-names are not found in their proper place, that is to say, where the lines that indicate the itineraries show an interruption; sometimes the indication of distance is also missing. Some place-names are badly separated, such as Divo. Durimedio. Matricorum is written Divoduro Mediomatricorum (III, 1), or they are transcribed badly; it has also been noted that some routes are repeated. More interesting are the corrections because they seem to attest to the fact that the copy was made with care and was trying to reproduce the model as faithfully as possible. Certain areas are erased, such as the final piece of the Tiber, near Rome (V, 5), and a watercourse that links the fl. Ticenum and the fl. Ambrum (IV, 2).

b) More or less certain additions

Some vignettes do not correspond to the system of conventional signs. The crypta neapolitana—the subterranean passage that allowed one to go from Naples to Pozzuoli—is depicted with a cupola where two openings correspond to the two entrances: it is possible that we are dealing with a medieval addition. The question of the Christian legends is more complex. First of all, as has already been mentioned, a lesson concerning Sinai is also found in the map of Beatus; near it there is another one of them: «Hic legem acceperunt in monte Syna». The only Christian element, however, is the basilica of San Pietro, placed in the region of Rome and marked by the vignette for a sanctuary and, most of all, by the rubricate label, which is written in a script usually reserved for place-names and important legends. These traces of Christian influence are not numerous, and they could have been introduced into the map as much in Late Antiquity as in the Middle Ages. Finally, it has hitherto not been observed that the names of the “barbarous” regions located in the extreme north of Europe, beyond the Rhein, could not have been placed in this form in Antiquity; where we would expect Franci, Suevi, Alamanni, just as for all the other peoples noted on the map, we have Francia, Suevia, Alemannia. The use of these regional names in the Middle Ages begins long after the definitive settlement of the barbarians, and only a medieval copyist can have transformed these peoples into regional names. But the fact that this change involves only these names can probably offer useful information for localizing the copyist in an area inhabited by these same peoples (Swabians or Alemanni), that is, in southwest Germany or in Switzerland.

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19 Bosio, La Tabula Peutingeriana, pp. 170-171.
20 Bosio, La Tabula Peutingeriana, p. 37 and note 44; fig. 21, p. 84; fig. 13, p. 57.
21 Bosio, La Tabula Peutingeriana, p. 132.
c) probable alterations

These last modifications concern, in the first place, the vignettes. The majority of scholars have seen in the various types—buildings with two towers, polygonal town walls with towers, temples, thermal complexes—a system that must originally have served the practical use of the map. A. and M. Levi have isolated the cases in which the relatively sober drafting, which is that of the major part of the vignettes, takes on a different appearance. Thus, some of the roofs of buildings with two towers are not depicted with the usual triangle, for example Cosedia (II,2), Curua Cesena (V, 1), Ad Horrea (VI, 2) or Megara (VII, 5). In other cases the variations in the drawing produce an aberrant result in comparison with the usual type, as in, for example, the building which corresponds to Aquis Tatelis (III, 4-5).22 Thus several vignettes present a pronounced decorative appearance which seems to have been determined by a particular taste for ornament, a taste opposed to the end achieved through the use of conventional symbols (see in particular Ad Matricem (VI, 5). That a medieval copyist could pass with ease from one type of symbol to another is further indicated by the example of Cabillione, where one clearly sees that a vignette with two towers has been easily transformed into a “temple” vignette (II, 5).23 It is also commonly agreed that the personifications of the cities are among the alterations introduced by the medieval copyists: the androgynous symbols of Rome and Constantinople recall more the figure of a medieval emperor than that of the ancient tychai.24

A second type of modification has undoubtedly left its mark much more on the appearance of the Tabula. As has been mentioned, the Cosmograph of Ravenna used the textual description of a similar map but with a substantial difference: it seems that his had some Greek legends or, in any case, derived from a model with legends of this kind.25 We can imagine that the scholar or scholars who created the copy of a similar model strived to remove the traces of a Greek origin which were considered pointless. Now, as we shall see, we have documentary proof that an ancient copy of the Tabula included some legends in Greek. On the other hand, if the Tabula was altered in just this way, it happened

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22 A. and M. Levi, Itineraria picta, p. 159; Bosio, La Tabula Peutingeriana, p. 171.
23 This observation is from Arnaud, “L’origine, la date de rédaction et la diffusion de l’archetype de la table de Peutinger,” p. 306 and note 10; Bosio, La Tabula Peutingeriana, fig. 14, p. 63.
25 Arnaud (“L’origine, la date de rédaction et la diffusion de l’archetype de la table de Peutinger,” p. 316 and note 42) has rightly emphasized this aspect, even we cannot accept the gratuitous hypothesis of a Castorius, author of a geographical description created based on this model.
in all probability in the Carolingian period, in the VIIIth or IXth century, as the names of peoples were being transformed into regional names.

A Model at Reichenau in the IX-XI centuries?

A carolingian phase in the transmission of the Tabula has already been postulated.\(^{26}\) The preceding observations on changes to the model offer therefore a point of departure for examining the hypothesis that the immediate model for the copy discovered by Konrad Celtes was located in the IXth century in the library of the monastery of Reichenau on Lake Constance.\(^{27}\) Two arguments have been put forward. First, the unusual mention of the Black Forest (\textit{silua Marciana}, IV, 5-V,1), which is attested in Antiquity only in Ammianus Marcellinus in a slightly different form (\textit{siluae Marcianae}), is used again in chronicle of Reichenau from the XIth century.\(^{28}\) Second, the catalog of the library of Reichenau, redacted in 821/22, mentions a «\textit{mappa mundi in rotulis II}» (or «in rotulo I» according to another version),\(^{29}\) which might correspond to the appearance which the Tabula must have had. This is the only truly compelling argument. Although it was not read in the Middle Ages, manuscripts of Ammianus Marcellinus were available in the monasteries of Fulda and Hersfeld, which were in contact with Reichenau; yet the mention of the \textit{silva Marciana} could have reached the author by a completely different route which remains unknown to us. Furthermore, some circular \textit{mappae mundi}, painted on different pieces of parchment, could have been rolled in the same way when they were not being used in teaching, for which one does not need to demand much explanation. Some indications, in texts from the VIIIth and IXth centuries arising from Franconia and Bavaria, could also make one think that the map or its model were located at that time in these regions; but we are dealing with trivial

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\(^{28}\) Hermannus Contractus, in MGH SS V, p. 121: \ldots cum Erust\ldots eiusque complicis \ldots praedis circa siluam Marcianam infestarent\ldots

\(^{29}\) \textit{Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands und der Schweiz} I, München 1918, p. 248. According to K. Preisendanz (“Erkundliche Spuren im Kloster Reichenau,” in \textit{Festgabe der Badischen Landesbibliothek Karlsruhe zur Begrüssung des XXII. deutschen Geographentages}, Karlsruhe: Badische Landesbibliothek 1927, p. 9), the differences in number might be due to the fact that the monastery at a later time acquired another mappamundi.
details.\textsuperscript{30} All in all, it would be imprudent to exclude the possibility that a copy of the \textit{Tabula} was located on the imperial island; but this has not, in fact, been proven.

By and large, we can only make posit hypotheses of a general character on the reasons which lead to the creation of the exemplar which has come down to us (or its Carolingian model). A fundamental characteristic of medieval geography is the idea, repeated by many authors from the Carolingian period on, that the world had already been perfectly described by the Roman geographers, since their military conquests stretched across the entire \textit{orbis terrarum}.\textsuperscript{31} A document like the \textit{Tabula} demonstrated the reality of this perfection: the itineraries that extended to the limits of the \textit{oikoumene} were the concrete proof of the extent of the name of Rome. From this perspective, the existence of a copy in the Carolingian period is very likely. The \textit{Tabula} corresponded to the ideology of the \textit{renouatio imperii}, in presenting the enormous extension of the empire as an ideological model of the universal dominion over space and undoubtedly also as an image of power.\textsuperscript{32} The suppression of the model’s Greek forms, in this hypothesis, would be perfectly comprehensible, given the rivalry between Charlemagne and the empire of the East.

\textit{A conjecture to discard: the «monk of Colmar»}

Notwithstanding definitive criticisms, scholars continue to repeat from time to time, with K. Mannert, that the preserved copy of the \textit{Tabula} was probably copied in 1265 in the Dominican convent of Colmar by the author of the \textit{Annales Colmarienses}.\textsuperscript{33} It is therefore necessary to examine in detail this thesis to

\textsuperscript{30} H. Koller, “Der \textit{mons Comagenus},” Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 71 (1963): 237-45, esp. 243-245; except for the arguments based on place-names, the arguments offered by the author are of no value.


\textsuperscript{32} It is clearly excessive to speak of the “enormous success” with respect to its ancient and medieval diffusion (Arnaud, “L’origine, la date de rédaction et la diffusion de l’archetype de la table de Peutinger,” p. 319).

\textsuperscript{33} K. Mannert, \textit{tabula Itineraria Peutingeriana, primum aeri incisi et edita a Franc. Christoph de Scheyh MDCCCLII, denuo cum codice Vindoboni collata, emendata et nova, Conradi Mannerti introductione instructa, studio et opera Academiae Literarum Regiae Monacensis, Lipsiae: Libraria Hahnania 1824}, p. 9; E. Desjardins, \textit{Géographie historique et administrative de la Gaule romaine}, IV, Paris: Hachette 1893, p. 73. For Bosio (\textit{La Tabula Peutingeriana}, p. 167), this hypothesis is the most “alluring”; it is considered as “possible” by A. and M. Levi (\textit{Itineraria picta}, p. 22) but also refuted by them elsewhere (p. 162). It has, however, been rejected in a manner that must be considered definitive by Miller (\textit{Mappaemundi} III, p. 151 and \textit{Itineraria romana}, p. xivff, and then by R. Hotz, “Beiträge
In 1265 the author writes: *anno 1265 mappam mundi descripsi in pelles duodecim pergamen.* 34 The reference to twelve folia of parchment has immediately led scholars to think of the twelve folia that the *Tabula* must have originally included. A simplistic argument seemed to confirm this view: the Vosges (*silua Vosagus*) and the Black Forest (*silua Marciana*) were the only places that appeared with trees (which were stylized): these would have been the ones that the “monk of Colmar” saw from the window of his cell, as has sometimes been naively argued! Let us observe, first of all, that the date does not correspond to the script, which is closer to caroline than to gothic. This would already be enough to discard the hypothesis. But when we continue to read the *Annales*, we learn that the author, in 1276, corrected (without further specification) the same *mappamundi*. Besides, even supposing that the quoted passage was referring to the *Tabula*, it is through an error that Mannert and his followers concluded from this that it was copied at Colmar. As the author himself informs us, he spent the years 1265-1277 in the Dominican convent in Basel before being transferred to Colmar in 1278. The manuscript of the *Annales*, from the XVIth century, was copied from an older Colmar manuscript containing two texts that described Alsace and Germania. These are probably by the very author of the *Annales* and they also talk about a *mappamundi*. But this *mappamundi*, which must therefore have been located in the Dominican convent of Colmar in the XIIIth century, has nothing to do with the *Tabula*. In particular, it says: *Teutonia is located on the coast of the ocean, between the Rhine and the Elbe, as is depicted on the mappamundi, and it is placed near the wind which is called circinus or thracia*” (which means to the northwest). 35 This observation could refer only to a circular *mappamundi* with the twelve winds around it as points of reference—of which numerous examples are known—and not to the *Tabula*.

As we shall see, the fact that in the XIIIth century the *Tabula Peutingeriana* was placed in the area of Basel would fit perfectly with what can suppose from the circumstances of its discovery. Unfortunately, the information furnished by the Dominican of Colmar must be considered absolutely irrelevant to the problem and therefore useful for any further clarification on this point.

### III. Renaissance Transmission

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34 MGH SS XVI, p. 186.

35 *Sita est Theutonia in littoribus Oceani, inter Rhenum et Albam fluuios, ut in mappa mundi depingitur, et apponitur uento, qui circinus seu Tracia nominatur...* (MGH SS XVII, p. 238).
Studies on the history of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* have always mentioned only one copy: that which, going back to the end of the XIIth century or the beginning of the XIIIth century, was discovered by Konrad Celtes, given to Peutinger, and edited by M. Welser before it then passed into the collections of the Imperial Library of Vienna. Now, between 1431/1449 and 1481, there existed another copy that was older and more complete and perhaps even the model going back to Late Antiquity, of which only a partial copy is preserved today. At issue is information that has already been published —although only partially—the importance of which has until now not been recognized nor its links with the *Tabula* studied in detail.

*The copy of Jacopo Zeno: from the Council of Basel (1431-1449) to the bishopric of Padua*

In the first autograph volume of the *Historiae Ferrarienses*, the humanist Pellegrino Prisciani (†1518) includes on a double page his own copy of a «Cosmographiae quaedam antiquissima» which depicted the space from Verona to Ravenna, bounded by the lower course of the Po. We are discussing a map wholly similar to the *Tabula*, with very few differences (fig. 2): it presents the addition of two tributaries on the left and one on the right. The succession of place-names and the distance references are the same. At the halfway mark between Hostilia and Ravenna, at the confluence of the tributary on the right with the Po, is found *Forum Alieni*. The indication of the distance between Hostilia and Ravenna, which is clearly incomplete on the Tabula, is completed here: *Ab Hostilia per Padum* (the *Tabula* [IV, 5-V, 1] stops here) *LIII; item ab Foro Alieni per Padum Ravennam LIII*. In two boxes at the bottom of the page and in the margins of the manuscript, Pellegrino Prisciani repeatedly furnishes precious details on the appearance of this map: “it is difficult to read in different places and is written in Greek letters in many of its parts.” These letters, just as the

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fuller content of the part copied by Pellegrino Prisciani, lead us to think that we are dealing with a different Tabula different from that which has come down to us, older and partially in Greek, and this accords with the hypothesis formulated above on the basis of the preserved copy and its analogies with the Cosmographer of Ravenna. Among his many activities—antiquary, astrologer, cartographer, administrator, and ambassador—Pellegrino Prisciani was archivist and librarian of the House of the d’Este from 1488 on; he was, without question, capable of evaluating correctly the age of this «cosmographia vetustissima».

Of course, in the age of Annius of Viterbo, we cannot completely exclude the possibility that we are dealing with a forgery. We might imagine that Pellegrino Prisciani, when informed of the existence of Celtes’ copy, planned in fact to make use of it and to complete it in order to demonstrate the identification of Ferrara with the obscure Forum Alieni mentioned by Tacitus. This is, however, not very likely, given that he makes only occasional use of the map and moreover giving precise and circumstantial information on its origin. This map was attached to the antechamber of the bishop of Padua. Several Venetian ambassadors had received it as a gift at the Council of Basel (1431-1449) thanks to the authority and mediation of Pope Eugenius IV. Later it had been given to the bishop of Padua Jacopo Zeno (1460-1481) who left it to the bishopric upon his death. Unfortunately, we then lose all record of it. Jacopo Zeno, prelate and humanist of Venetian origin, owned a very rich library which numbered a thousand volumes. After his sudden death, the majority of the books disappeared, and his successor Pietro Foscari succeeded in reassembling only a few more than 300 which he gave to the chapter in 1482; the map does not appear there, nor in the inventory of books in the possession of Pietro Barozzi, bishop from 1487-1507. At present, we do not possess any evidence of the gift of the map to the bishopric.

38 See RE, XIII, cols. 63-64; Foralieni is present in the Cosmographer of Ravenna (J. Schnetz, Itineraria Romana, II: Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia et Guidonis geographica, Stuttgart: Teubner 1940, p. 67).
39 Vespasiano da Bisticci, Vite di uomini illustri del secolo XV, I, ed. L. Frati, Bologna: Romagnoli-Dell’Acqua 1892, p. 208: ...eo defuncto. depredantibus necessaritis externis episcopium... (dedicatory epistle of Santo Vener to the Vite summorum pontificum of Jacopo Zeno, in Città del Vaticano, ms. Vat. lat. 5942, f. 1v); G. Degli Agostini, Notizie storico-critiche intorno la vita e le opere degli scrittori viniziani I, Venezia 1752, p. 303.
This evidence leads us to reconsider the “discovery” made by the German humanist Konrad Celtes and the role of his friend Peutinger. In truth, we do not know its circumstances. All that we know derives from the humanist’s will, dated 24 January 1508, which reads: “I leave to Konrad Peutinger the Itinerary of Antoninus Pius, which is currently in his possession; I nonetheless wish and request that after his death it be made available to the public, for example in a library.” Notwithstanding the expression used by Celtes, he must have been referring to the map and not to the *Itinerarium of Antoninus*, as is shown clearly by the inventory of Peutinger’s library where concrete details are provided which leave no doubt: the itinerary left by Celtes is described as “in charta longa.” We do not know anything about the occasion on which Celtes left the *Tabula* with Peutinger.

Beginning in 1493, Celtes had been charged by the Emperor Maximillian I to acquire manuscripts to establish a library; furthermore, he was interested in ancient geography and maps. But, just like Peutinger, it is precisely at Padua that he would have been able to learn about the copy displayed in the antechamber of the bishop. For, during the years of his education, Celtes had in fact journeyed to Italy, from 1487-1489, and in fact passed right through Padua. As for Peutinger, he had enrolled at the University of Padua already before 14 April 1482. His period of study in Italy ended at the beginning of 1488, and in 1491, on the occasion of an official visit to Rome, he took the examination necessary to obtain the title of doctor in civil law in the presence of the vicar general of the successor of Jacopo Zeno, since the bishop was the chancellor of

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43 It occurred perhaps in 1507: according to a letter of Pirckheimer to Johannes Trithemius on 1 July of that year, Celtes was staying in Augsburg (cf. von Scheyb, *ibid.*, p. 34).

the University. We may also legitimately suppose that one or the other of the two men had different opportunities to become informed on the conditions of the discovery of this *cosmographia antiquissima* during the Council of Basel, obtaining precise details on the place in which it was preserved, without doubt not far from the city. When he returned to Germany, Celtes could then have known of the existence of a copy and, then, have acquired it.

Regarding the place in which Celtes found this copy various hypotheses have been formulated but all of them are valueless and it is therefore pointless to linger over them. We may also legitimately suppose that one or the other of the two men had different opportunities to become informed on the conditions of the discovery of this *cosmographia antiquissima* during the Council of Basel, obtaining precise details on the place in which it was preserved, without doubt not far from the city. When he returned to Germany, Celtes could then have known of the existence of a copy and, then, have acquired it.


46 Here I limit myself merely to noting the hypotheses which are not based on documents: thus, Reichenbach is mentioned by F. Wawrik, s. v. Tabula Peutingeriana, in the *Lexikon zur Geschichte der Kartographie* II, Vienna: F. Deuticke 1987, p. 802; Corvey is indicated without any further detail on an Internet site for lovers of the Middle Ages.


48 *Epist. Familiares* XLI (J. Trithemii... opera historic..., Ilm Frankfurt 1601, p. 533); according to A. and M. Levi (*Itineraria picta*, p. 21), Celtes found the *Tabula* in Worms; this “*orbis terrae*” has been interpreted as a terrestrial globe: cf. K. Arnold, *Johannes Trithemius* (1462-1516), Würzburg: Kommissionsverlag F. Schöningh 1971, p. 197.

49 Plantin 1584, p. 15.


century in the cathedral of Speyer which was well known to humanists of the
time and contemporary philologists: a carolingian manuscript (written at the
beginning of the Xth century) contained various geographical works including
the *Itinerarium Antonini* along with a treatise from the beginning of the IXth
century, Dicuil’s *De mensura orbis terrae*. The latter work records repeatedly the
measurements taken in all the provinces of the empire by the agents of the
Emperor Theodosius II.52 The learned carolingian attributed this undertaking to
Theodosius because he deduced it from the verses which close a late antique
work of geography, the *Divisio orbis terrarum*.53

An analogous error has been committed, originating from a work of Felix
Malleolus (Hemmerlin) (1388/1389-ca. 1460), a canon of Zürich. In his *Tractatus
de nobilitate*, several passages drawn from an *Itinerarium urbis Romae* can at first
sight lead one to think of an itinerary map, and people have not failed to see the
*Tabula* in this *Itinerarium*.54 In reality, the passages are drawn from a late antique
text, the *Cosmographia* of Pseudo-Aethicus (and this is the same in the
*Speyerensis*).55 We must therefore be content to remain in ignorance of where
Celtes discovered the *Tabula*. Nothing allows us to claim with certainty that this
happened along the banks of the Rhine, although the hypothesis of Reichenau
remains at present the least improbable. But this does not exclude the possibility
that one day this can be overcome through the discovery of new documents.

*The Tabula passes to Peutinger*

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52 On the ms Spirenisis, see P. Schnabel, “Der verlorene Speirer Codex des Itinerarium Antonini,
der Notitia dignitatum, und andere Schriften,” *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der
Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann 1959, pp. 186-228; two folia of the Spirensis have been found which
reproduce the *Itinerary of Antoninus* (Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. I.2, 2° 37; they have
been reproduced in *Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg. Wertvolle Handschriften und Einbände aus dem
ehemaligen Oettingen-Wallersteinschen Bibliothek*, Wiesbaden: Dr Ludwig Reichert Verlag 1987, n. 4,
p. 40.

53 Most recently, L. Bieler, J. J. Tierney, *Dicuili liber de mensura orbis terrae*, Scriptores Latini
Hiberniae 6, Dublin: The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies 1967, p. 23; P. Gautier-Dalché,
“Tradition et renouvellement dans la représentation de l’espace géographique au IXe siècle,”
*Studi Medievali* 24 (1983): 126 (repr. in *Géographie et culture. La représentation de l’espace du VIIe au

54 von Scheyb, *Peutingeriana tabula*, pp. 31-32; Hotz, “Beiträge zur Erklärung und Geschichte der
Peutinger Tafel,” pp. 219ff.

55 On this text, see P. Gautier-Dalché, “Les « quatre sages » of Jules César et la « mesure du monde »
selon Julius Honorius, II: La tradition médiévale,” *Journal des Savants* (1987): 184-209 (repr. in
*Géographie et culture. La représentation de l’espace du VIIe au XIIe siècle*, Collected Studies Series,
Initially, Peutinger had intended to have the map published according to the wishes of Celtes. In the 1511, he sought a privilege to be able to have it printed. As a means of proof, he had produced two different partial copies of the first folium; it would seem that the project would have required 18 folia.\textsuperscript{56} In 1531 Christoph Scheurl related to Peutinger the desire of Johannes Eck that an edition make available to the public this \textit{Germanicam chartam}, and this designation is interesting.\textsuperscript{57} But various commitments prevented Peutinger from completing the project; the edition was not done and the page-proof were not printed by Michael Walser until 1598.\textsuperscript{58}

In the meantime, an acquaintance of Peutinger’s, Michael Hummelberg, was involved, at the request of the Alsatian humanist Beatus Rhenanus, in the production of an exact copy of the so-called \textit{Itinerarium Celticum}. Peutinger had agreed to provide him with the manuscript on condition that produce a transcription of it “\textit{ad usum publicum}” that was faithful to the original to the point of reproducing obvious errors. On 5 May 1526 this copy was almost finished and Michael Hummelsberg was hurrying to have it printed in Augsburg,\textsuperscript{59} but he died one year later, before bringing his edition to completion. In 1912, Konrad Miller saw in a manuscript of the Museo San Martino di Napoli five double folia representing the part of the \textit{Tabula} from IV.4 to IX.5 and identified them as coming from this copy.\textsuperscript{60} Unfortunately these fragments have not been published and studied in a manner that would allow one to define exactly there place in the history of the \textit{Tabula}’s transmission.

Two late additions to the \textit{Tabula} (Regenspur, Salzpur [IV.4]) derive from the hand of Peutinger himself; some other corrections have been attributed to him but, in truth, these assignations are without much substance.\textsuperscript{61} In Peutinger’s own works, in fact, very few traces of his consulting the \textit{Tabula} can be fund. In an essay on the origin of the name of the city Thérouanne (in northern

\textsuperscript{56} In a letter to Beatus Rhenanus (2 November 1525) M. Hummelberg, to whom we owe these details, explicitly claims: “...\textit{ab incepto desistit, sic XVII reliquae chartae sub praelum nondum venere.” (A. Horawitz, K. Hartfelder, \textit{Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus}, Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von B. G. Teubner 1886, n. 244, p. 341).
\textsuperscript{57} E. König, \textit{Konrad Peutingers Briefwechsel}, München: C. H. Beck 1923, p. 461; Peutinger’s correspondent thought that the \textit{Tabula} had perhaps been stolen from Celtes.
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Fragmenta Tabulae antiquae in quis aliquot per Romanas provincias itinera, ex Peutingerorum bibliotheca...} Venice 1591; reproduced in Weber, \textit{Tabula Peutingeriana}, Abb. 3 and 4.
\textsuperscript{59} See the letters of Beatus Rhenanus nn. 250 (13 January 1526), 256 (6 April 1526), 257 (20 May 1526) (\textit{Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus}, pp. 352, 364, 366).
\textsuperscript{60} The manuscript had the signature R 35, and the paper had a watermark with an ass surrounded by a circle topped by a B or by a R (\textit{Itineraria Romana}, pp. xxi-xxii).
\textsuperscript{61} Weber, \textit{Tabula Peutingeriana}, p. 9.
France) that remained incomplete, Peutinger mentions the *Itinerary of Antoninus* and the “manuscript itinerary, a copy of venerable antiquity, which the poet Konrad Celtes left to us in his will,” along with Ptolemy, Strabo, and other ancient geographers.

This manuscript in Peutinger’s library drew the attention of scholars outside German lands. Based on a letter of Michael Hummelberg to Beatus Rhenanus, the ambassador of the king of France at the imperial court supposedly offered 60 crowns for it. Peutinger refused, declaring that he would not sell it any price, thereby meriting the compliments of Emperor Maximilian. Probably in 1530, on the occasion of the Diet of Augsburg, Peutinger wrote to Matteo Casella, guest of the Duke of Ferrara, in which he assembled all that he had been able to discover in ancient texts and itineraries about the *via Emilia* and its extensions as well as on the antiquity of the city of Modena, the duke’s possession of which the pope was Contesting. From the letter we learn what Peutinger thought of the map. In his view, the Tabula was an copy “satis vetusto charactere” of the *Itinerary of Antoninus*, whose original form had been lost. He gave its dimensions: almost a foot in width and more than 22 feet in length; he noted that it showed “the streets and the itineraries starting from Rome, with the aid of red lines and distances expressed in miles in a fairly careful manner, though not with extreme precision but more as an approximation, in the manner of the ancients.” He then cited these itineraries: Rome-Aquileia, Ravenna-Bologna-Tortona, Pisa-Genova, Genova-Tortona, and Genova-Vada Sabatia (Vado Ligure).

Although the existence of the “Itinerarium Celticum” was therefore rather well known perhaps, the citations which bear witness to direct consultation of it remain very few. In the works of some of Peutinger’s humanist contemporaries from first half of the XVIth century, allusions to an ancient *Itinerarium* can be found but only in two cases are we in fact dealing with the Tabula. The

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63 *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, p. 352.
64 *Peutingers Briefwechsel*, p. 446ff; was it at this time, in Ferrara, that the connection was made between the map owned by Peutinger and the exemplar found in Padua in the antechamber of Jacopo Zeno?
65 *Peutingers Briefwechsel*, p. 453.
66 In 1509 the humanist Blasius Hölzl, secretary of Maximilliam, wrote to Peutinger to ask when he would be able to obtain “the maps”, in its actual or reduced dimensions, so that he would be able to use it for a military campaign (E. von Oefele, “Briefe von und an Konrad Peutinger,” *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akad. der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Kl. 2 (1898), p. 443; Miller, *Itinaria Romana*, p. xv); it is very implausible that this map was the *Tabula* and that the secretary considered using it for military purposes.
“clarissimi viri Conradi Peutingeri, Protonotarii Augustensis civitatis aliud itinerarium vetustissimum”, mentioned by Hermannus Nuenarius in his Commentariolus on Gallia Belgica is probably something different from the Tabula: the forms of the place-names does not correspond to those of the Tabula and we know from M. Hummelberg that Peutinger also possessed a “vetustum quoddam itinerarium” which he had lent to Beatus Rhenanus and which we wanted to recover: but it was a text, not a map.67 The same situation pertains in the case of the Exegesis Germaniae of Franciscus Irenicus (1518) who refers to two itineraries: “Antoninus or, more accurately, the Itinerary of Antoninus and an Itinerarium Augustanum or nuper Augustae repertum.68 Beatus Rhenanus, who, at the time, was working on his Res Germanicae on the origins of the Germanic peoples, was informed by M. Hummelberg about the nature of this work, although the question remains if he was talking about the Tabula or another map like it. According to Peutinger himself, the adjective Augustanum added by Irenicus was explained by the fact that the itinerary had been written by the emperor (augustus) Antoninus Pius.69 A little while later, Beatus Rhenanus’ correspondent concluded that “the itinerary referred to by Irenicus is not, in fact, that of Celtes.”70 In reality, the place-names studied by Irenicus are not all present in the Tabula, while those in common with it often have a different form.71 On the other hand, Irenicus says explicitly that this itinerary “reached him recently”: this implies direct consultation, which is impossible in the case of the Tabula because it never left Peutinger’s residence.

The only two authors whom we know without question to have consulted the Tabula directly were Gerard Geldenhouwer of Nijmegen (1482-1542) and Beatus Rhenanus. In his Historia Batavica, which appeared in 1530, Geldenhouwer mentions for only one place-name (Castra Herculis [II, 4]) the «charta illa vetustissima» shown to him by Peutinger in which he saw a

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67 Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus, n. 244, p. 341.
68 Antoninus in Itineraio ac Itinerarium nuper Augustae repertum (Germaniae Exegeseos volumina duodecim IV, 33, Hagenoae: Th. Anshelm 1518, f. cxvii v: Pervenit nuper ad nos Itinerarium quoddam, ut antiquum, ita festivissimum, quod Augustanum vocabant, ubi repertum fuisse dixerunt. (IX, 7, f. clxxxviii r); the same mention also recurs in books XI and XII (f. ccix and cccxiv).
69 ... Peutinger quo scripsi tuo iussu, sed noram tacito. Nihil is de eo novit. Putat vero Irenicum id, quod est Antonini est, Augustanum vocare, quod ab Augusto illo Pio sit conscriptum. (Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus, n. 244, p. 341).
70 “Celticum omnino non est, quod Ω4∆0<46∈Η allegata (Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus, n. 352, p. 352).
71 Arae Ubiorum (IV, 33), Cheniteri (XI), Solidurnium (XII), Traiana legio and Hellum/Heluetum (IX, 5) are not on the Tabula; Bregetomagnum corresponds, for example, to Borgetomagi of the Tabula.
document for military use. But the only one to use the Tabula critically was Beatus Rhenanus, who knew of the existence of the «vetustissima Peutingeri charta» since 1523. After the failed undertaking of Michael Hummelberg, the humanist of Sélestat had the opportunity to see it in Augsburg in Peutinger’s possession. In his Res Germanicae he informs us that the «charta provincialis» or «charta itineraria» found by Celtes in «in quadam bibliotheca» was created under the last emperors. In his attempt to make sense of the migrations of the Germanic peoples and to identify their original settlements, Beatus Rhenanus used a particular sector of the map on two occasions — that on which, beyond the Rhine, are written the words Francia, Alemannia, Suevia — to define the territory of the Swabians, Alemani, and Franks. The Tabula is thus associated, in these investigations of historical geography, with other authors who have discussed these same questions, namely Caesar and Tacitus. One may note in particular the precision with which the erudite Rhenanus describes the sector which interests him (he furnishes the exact location of the place-names) and criticizes it. In his opinion, the painter placed Suevia next to the silva Marciana instead of in its proper place, but he did so for two reasons. One was material: the lack of space; the other was intellectual: Germany was of very little interest to him, while his principal preoccupation was to describe the «provinciae», that is to say, the Empire.

For Beatus Rhenanus the tabula preserved in Peutinger’s house was thus revealed to be the best aid to the research in historical geography to which the German humanist dedicated himself, following the example of Konrad Celtes, in order to give historical and cultural legitimacy to the Germanic nations. And it is all the more strange that it was, all in all, so little used. The principle reason for this was the absence of an edition that would render it more easily available for consultation. Peutinger’s death in 1547 provoked its unexpected disappearance; its rediscovery occurred in two phases. The rediscovery (1587) by Marc Welser, a distant relative of Peutinger, and then the edition (1591) of the two folia printed on his initiative, rekindled in scholars the desire to have access to the entire work

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73 A letter of M. Hummelberg, dated 19 April 1523, contests the identification of a place-name with the help of the Tabula which is so described (Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus, n. 230, p. 317).

74 Beati Rhenani Selestadiensis rerum Germanicarum libri tres, Basel: Frobenius 1531, pp. 35-51f.

75 Sed posuit in latere pictor ille quod trans sylvam melius locasset, ni vettusset angustia membranae, et Germanica velut aliena duxisset modice attingenda, provincias tantum describens. (Rhenani Selestadiensis rerum Germanicarum libri tres, p. 52).
available to them. In 1597 Marc Welser rediscovered the original while making an inventory of his library and Abraham Ortelius produced an edition of it which appeared on the turning of 1598, after his death, at the press of J. Moret, heir of Plantin.