

Mediterranean Cartoheritage

2000 years of maps and graphs

HARALD GROPP⁵⁶

Introduction - This paper will discuss maps and map-like documents who focus on the Mediterranean Sea, starting from the ancient and Greek and Roman times. The maps of the past will be seen with the eyes of today, but also with the eyes of intermediate periods and from different geographical and cultural perspectives. Among others will be considered the Tabula Peutingeriana, the Albi map, various maps in the Ptolemaic tradition, and early modern maps.

Maps and Graphs -The objects of cartographic heritage such as maps, but also globes and sea charts are also related to more schematic diagrams and pictorial representations of parts of the earth. At the end of this spectrum there are graphs as mathematical objects as new geometrical sets of vertices and edges in a geometry independent of the traditional Euclidean geometry. For instance, the Tabula Peutingeriana is much more a graph than a map, and the Albi map is rather a schematic map than a map of the Mediterranean Sea in the usual sense.

⁵⁶ Heidelberg University (Germany).

Maps and History - However, the focus of this talk will not be theoretical discussions about the classification of map-like objects. More interesting seems to be the evolution of maps through time (Peutingeriana or the Ptolemaic atlases) and, of course, the transfer of knowledge from East to West and from West to East. Of particular importance are events in the 8th century and in the 15th century where in different parts of the Mediterranean political and also religious developments lead to interesting transfers of also cartographic knowledge.

8th century - The Albi map was probably drawn in the middle of the 8th century in a Visigothic cultural context. This leads to a closer look at what is now the South of France, in particular on the emirate of Narbonne between 719 and 759 and the influence of the Franks under the rule of the Carolingians, and the possible trade and cultural relations between the East and the West in the Mediterranean Sea.

15th century - During the synods held in Italy in order to unite the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church until the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire in 1453 there was a second exchange of ideas and manuscripts and maps between East and West which strongly influenced the later development of history and cartography.

End - Instead of a conclusion some further maps from other centuries which further illustrate Mediterranean cartographic heritage.