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## Transfer of Knowledge: Mappae Mundi Between Texts and Images

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## Transfer of Knowledge: *Mappae Mundi* Between Texts and Images<sup>1</sup>

By Bettina Schöller, Universität Zürich

During the Middle Ages, the geography of the world could be described either as a text or as a map. These two possibilities of representing terrestrial space have different medial qualities and make use of different strategies to convey geographical knowledge: While the text presents information in a linear order, the map is a two-dimensional hybrid of textual and graphical signs.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, reading a text or comprehending a map requires different methods. Nevertheless, geographical texts and maps were closely connected: most medieval maps are parts of manuscripts and therefore in a close relationship with texts.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following article shows one aspect of my forthcoming thesis “Wissen speichern, Wissen ordnen, Wissen übertragen. Schriftliche und bildliche Aufzeichnungen der Welt im Umfeld der Londoner Psalterkarte.”

<sup>2</sup> Ingrid Baumgärtner, “Graphische Gestalt und Signifikanz. Europa in den Weltkarten des Beatus von Liébana und des Ranulf Higden,” *Europa im Weltbild des Mittelalters* (eds.) Ingrid Baumgärtner and Hartmut Kugler (Berlin, 2008), pp. 81–132, esp. p. 82; Hartmut Kugler, “*Imago Mundi*. Kartographische Skizze und literarische Beschreibung,” *Mediävistische Komparatistik. Festschrift für Franz Joseph Worstbrock zum 60. Geburtstag*, (eds.) Wolfgang Harms and Jan-Dirk Müller (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 77–93, esp. p. 83; Winfried Nöth, “Die Karte und ihre Territorien in der Geschichte der Kartographie,” *Text – Bild – Karte. Kartographien der Vormoderne*, ed. by Jürg Glauser and Christian Kiening (Freiburg i. Br./Berlin/Wien, 2007), pp. 39–68, esp. pp. 60–65.

<sup>3</sup> According to David Woodward, 900 of the then known 1100 maps were part of a manuscript, see Woodward, “Medieval Mappaemundi,” *The History of Cartography*, vol. 1. *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, (eds.) John B. Harley and David Woodward (Chicago, 1987), pp. 286–370, esp. p. 286; Evelyn Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers viewed their World* (London, 1997), pp. 12–13.

This relationship has already been widely discussed. In this context, the so-called cartographic textbooks turned out to be of great interest.<sup>4</sup> These autonomous geographical treatises have been produced during the whole Middle Ages, but in the twelfth century, they have been modified: As Patrick Gautier Dalché showed in his comprehensive editions and commentaries,<sup>5</sup> these treatises were mainly based upon existing world maps. The *Expositio Mappe Mundi*, for example, shows some literal analogies with the famous Hereford map, which originated around 1300, a fact also pointed out by Scott Westrem.<sup>6</sup> These parallels were explained by suggesting that the *Expositio* and the Hereford map were based on a similar cartographic model.

Westrem first carefully broached the possibility that these textbooks could have been used again as sources of maps.<sup>7</sup> Others then criticized the current view, which holds that maps were always copied from other maps, for example Hartmut Kugler. His most substantial argument is that this view requires an implausible quantity of lost world maps. Therefore, he concluded that copying from maps was not the only method of producing new maps, and he proposed textbooks as additional sources.<sup>8</sup> Many recent studies confirm this

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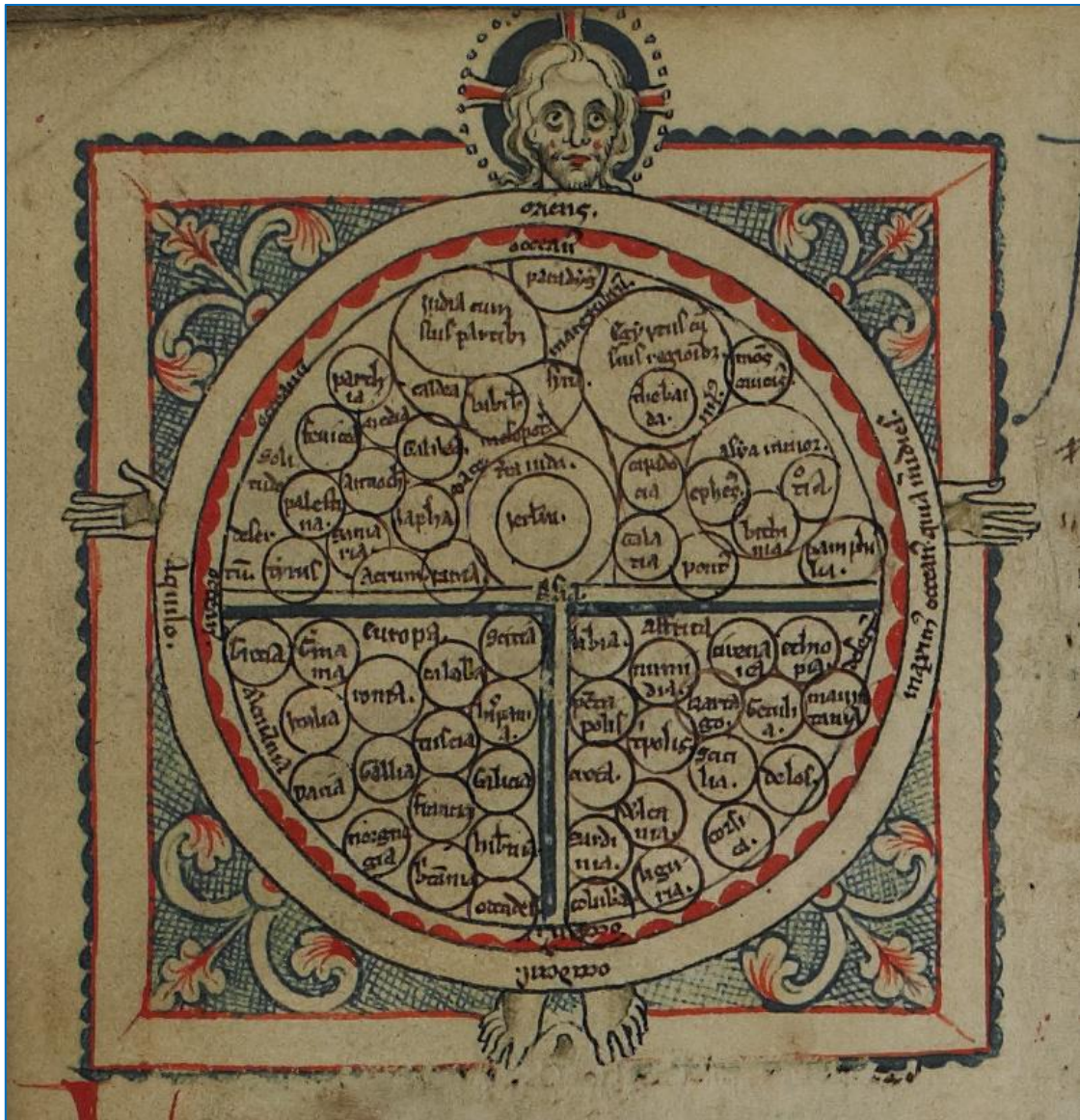
<sup>4</sup> This is a translation of Hartmut Kugler's term „kartographische Textbücher“, see Kugler (Ed.): “Die Ebstorfer Weltkarte, Band 2: Untersuchungen und Kommentar“ (Berlin, 2007), esp. p. 55.

<sup>5</sup> See for example Patrick Gautier Dalché, “Carte et enseignement de la géographie, durant le haut Moyen Âge: l'exemple d'un manuel inédit,” *Du copiste au collectionneur: mélanges d'histoire des textes et des bibliothèques en l'honneur d'André Vernet* (eds.) Donatella Nebbiai-Dalla Guarda and Jean-François Genest (Turnhout, 1998), pp. 49–56; Gautier Dalché, *Du Yorkshire à l'Inde. Une “Géographie” urbaine et maritime de la Fin du XII<sup>e</sup> Siècle (Roger de Howden?)* (Geneva, 2005); Gautier Dalché, Eucher de Lyon, Iona, Bobbio: “Le Destin d'une *Mappa Mundi* de l'Antiquité tardive,” *Viator. Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 41 (2010), pp. 1-22; Gautier Dalché, *La “Descriptio Mappe Mundi” de Hugues de Saint-Victor. Texte inédit avec introduction et commentaire* (Paris, 1988); Gautier Dalché, “Maps in Words: The descriptive Logic of medieval Geography,” *The Hereford World Map. Medieval World Maps and their Context* (ed.) Paul D. A. Harvey (London, 2006), p. 223–242; Gautier Dalché, “Situs orbis terre vel regionum: un traité de géographie inédit du haut Moyen Âge,” *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 12/13 (1982–1983), pp. 149–179.

<sup>6</sup> Gautier Dalché, *Roger of Howden*, pp. 143–164; Scott Westrem, “Making a *Mappamundi*: The Hereford Map,” [http://www.sochistdisc.org/2002\\_articles/westrem.htm](http://www.sochistdisc.org/2002_articles/westrem.htm) (Accessed 14–1–2013).

<sup>7</sup> “If it is not the recipe for making a *mappamundi*, EMM [*Expositio Mappe Mundi*] is certainly a careful record of the content of an existing one (so careful, in fact, that even if it was originally composed only as a *descriptio*, it could have been used to produce another)”, see Westrem, “Making a *Mappamundi*.”

<sup>8</sup> Kugler, *Imago Mundi*, pp. 80–81; Kugler, *Die Ebstorfer Weltkarte*, pp. 53–56.



**Figure 1** Lambeth Map, 13<sup>th</sup> century, London, Lambeth Palace, MS 371, folio 9v. Photo: Lambeth Palace, by permission of the Trustees of the Lambeth Palace Library.

argument, showing the transfer of textual knowledge on maps, for example those of Ingrid Baumgärtner, Martin Foys, Margriet Hoogvliet, Marcia Kupfer, Felicitas Schmieder and Antje Willing.<sup>9</sup> Bruno Reudenbach pointed out that not only geographical, but also biblical knowledge could be transferred into maps.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ingrid Baumgärtner, "Die Welt im kartographischen Blick. Zur Veränderbarkeit mittelalterlicher Weltkarten am Beispiel der Beatus-tradition vom 10. bis 13. Jahrhundert," *Der weite Blick des Historikers. Einsichten in Kultur-, Landes- und Stadtgeschichte*. Peter Johanek zum 65. Geburtstag (eds.) Wilfried Ehbrecht, Angelika Lampen, Franz-Joseph Post and Mechthild Siekmann (Köln, 2002), pp. 527–549, esp. pp. 527–528; Baumgärtner, "Reiseberichte, Karten und Diagramme. Burchard von Monte Sion und das Heilige Land," *Geschichtsvorstellungen. Bilder, Texte und Begriffe aus dem Mittelalter* (eds.) Steffen Patzold, Anja Rathmann-

In this study, I present another remarkable example of a transfer of knowledge from text to map. It is noteworthy because the map concentrates the information of three different texts standing in the same manuscript. A register of marginalia that turns out to be a link between map and texts completes this particular arrangement.

The so-called Lambeth map is a very small illustration from a thirteenth-century manuscript in the collection of Lambeth Palace, London (**Figure 1**). The texts that frame the map are the following: an excerpt of the *Elucidarium* written by Honorius Augustodunensis, a geographical chapter of the *Historia Brittonum*, formerly attributed to Nennius, and the first part of the *Imago Mundi*, also by Honorius, which includes a detailed description of the world. I intend to demonstrate not only the influence of these texts on the Lambeth map, but also the ways in which they complement each other. I do not deny the consensus that geographical knowledge was transferred from map to map, but I propose that texts could have an intermediary function.

After providing a short description of the manuscript, I compare the geographical content of the *Imago Mundi* to the Lambeth map. I then examine its analogies with the *Historia Brittonum* and the *Elucidarium* and conclude that the map is a specific organization of knowledge: between three different texts, the map arranges the textual information in a new way and connects these texts in one diagram.

MS 371 is a manuscript of the thirteenth century, produced in the Benedictine Abbey of Reading near London. Since the seventeenth century, the manuscript has been in the

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Lutz and Volker Scior (Wien, 2012), pp. 460–507, esp. pp. 472–473; Martin Foys, *Virtually Anglo-Saxon: Old Media, New Media, and Early Medieval Studies in the Late Age of Print* (Gainesville, 2007), esp. p. 122; Marcia Kupfer, “Medieval world maps: embedded images, interpretive frames,” *Word & Image* 10 (1994), pp. 262–288, esp. p. 271; Margriet Hoogvliet, *Pictura et Scriptura. Textes, images et herméneutique des Mappae mundi (XIIIe-XVIe siècles)* (Turnhout, 2007) (Terrarum Orbis 7), esp. p. 147 and p. 286; Felicitas Schmieder, “Anspruch auf christliche Weltherrschaft: Die Velletri/Borgia-Karte (15. Jahrhundert) in ihrem ideengeschichtlichen und politischen Kontext,” *Herrschaft verorten. Politische Kartographie im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (eds.) Ingrid Baumgärtner and Martina Stercken (Zürich, 2012), pp. 253–271; Antje Willing, “Orbis apertus,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 86 (2004), pp. 283–314.

<sup>10</sup> Bruno Reudenbach, “Die Londoner Psalterkarte und ihre Rückseite. Ökumenekarten als Psalterillustrationen,” *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 32 (1998), pp. 164–181.

collection of Lambeth Palace.<sup>11</sup> From 1647 to 1664, the whole collection was temporarily transferred to Cambridge, where the archbishop of Canterbury, William Sancroft, newly arranged many manuscripts.<sup>12</sup> In 1972, Edward Bill studied the collection of Lambeth Palace and numbered MS 371 among the manuscripts that were cut to a specific size and newly bound, but not changed in content.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, in the thirteenth century, the three texts and the map were conceived of as an entity. Furthermore, two of the texts are probably written in the same hand that drew the map, and map and texts belong to the same quire.<sup>14</sup>

The Lambeth map has a side length of only 6½ cm. Scott Westrem published the map first in his article “Geography and travel” as an example of a diagrammatic and idealized world map.<sup>15</sup> The map was reproduced again in Alessandro Scafi’s study of paradise in maps, and finally in an article by Chet van Duzer and Sandra Sàenz López Pérez, where it was introduced as a map accompanying the *Historia Brittonum*, including a figure of Christ showing similarities with the Christ in the Ebstorf map.<sup>16</sup>

The circular map is framed by a square, and leaf ornaments fill the spaces. Christ’s head, hands and feet are depicted at the positions of the four cardinal directions. The map is illuminated in black, red and blue ink. The map is a T-O diagram: the circular earth is surrounded by the ocean and divided by a structure in the form of the letter T, symbolizing

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<sup>11</sup> For the history of the collection see Alan Coates, *English Medieval Books. The Reading Abbey Collections from Foundation to Dispersal* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 61–80.

<sup>12</sup> Edward G. W. Bill, *A Catalogue of Manuscripts in Lambeth Palace Library. MSS. 1222-1860* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 3–4.

<sup>13</sup> Bill, *A Catalogue*, pp. 5–17.

<sup>14</sup> While the second quire begins with the *Elucidarium*, about one third of the *Imago Mundi* belongs to the third quire. For a more detailed description of LPL MS 371 see James Montague Rhodes, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace. The Medieval Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 503–513.

<sup>15</sup> Scott Westrem, “Geography and Travel,” *A Companion to Chaucer* (ed.) Peter Brown (Oxford, 2000), pp. 195–217, esp. pp. 206–208.

<sup>16</sup> Alessandro Scafi, *Mapping Paradise. A History of Heaven on Earth* (London 2006), p. 131; Chet van Duzer and Sandra Sáenz López Pérez, “*Tres filii Noe diviserunt orbem post diluuium: The World Map in British Library Add. MS 37049*,” *Word and Image* 26/1 (2010), pp. 21–39, esp. p. 30.



**Figure 2** Psalter Map recto, 13<sup>th</sup> century, London, British Library, MS Add. 28681, fol. 9r. Photo: By permission of the British Library.

the Mediterranean Sea and the rivers Don and Nile which separate the three known landmasses of Asia, Africa and Europe. The continents are filled with labeled circular vignettes, symbolizing provinces or towns. The larger circles in Asia represent superior provinces, including smaller regions or towns. No other medieval map uses similar circular

vignettes. Therefore, we can distinguish three different map layers: first, the T-O diagram, based on a transfer of pictorial cartographical knowledge; second, the apparently original layer of the continents filled with circles; and third, the figure of Christ, who appears in variations of this pose on the two Psalter maps, **(Figure 2)** the Ebstorf map, and other maps of the thirteenth century.

On the same double page as the Lambeth map are the prologue and the table of contents of the *Imago Mundi*. This text was written by Honorius Augustodunensis, one of the most important writers of his age, in the first third of the twelfth century. It was extensively copied, and also translated into several vernacular languages.<sup>17</sup> The first book of the *Imago Mundi* includes a detailed description of a world map, beginning at paradise in the east, then describing Asia, Europe, Africa and finally the islands of the Mediterranean Sea. It very systematically lists provinces: first the natural borders are named, followed by towns, rivers, mountains and people.

MS 371 organizes the *Imago Mundi* in two columns. The five pages containing the geographical description show a greater number of rubricated marginalia than the majority of the manuscript. **(Figure 3)** These marginalia were most likely written before the manuscript was bound in the thirteenth century, since they are partly hidden in the binding. It would

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<sup>17</sup> For an edition of the *Imago Mundi* and a commentary see Valerie I. J. Flint, "Honorius Augustodunensis *Imago Mundi*," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* XLIX (1982), pp. 7–47. About Honorius see, for example: Flint, "The 'Elucidarius' of Honorius Augustodunensis and Reform in Later Eleventh Century England," *Revue Bénédictine* 85 (1975), pp. 178–189; Flint, "Henricus of Augsburg and Honorius Augustodunensis: Are they the same Person?" *Revue Bénédictine* 92 (1982), pp. 148–158; Marie-Odile Garrigues, "L'oeuvre d'Honorius Augustodunensis: Inventaire critique I–III," *Abhandlungen der Braunschweigischen Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft* 38 (1986), pp. 7–136; Dagmar Gottschall, *Das "Elucidarium" des Honorius Augustodunensis. Untersuchungen zu seiner Überlieferungs- und Rezeptionsgeschichte im deutschsprachigen Raum mit Ausgabe der niederdeutschen Übersetzung* (Tübingen, 1992); Marlies Hamm, *Der deutsche "Lucidarius"* (Tübingen, 2002); Hermann Menhardt: "Der Nachlass des Honorius Augustodunensis," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 89 (1958/1959), pp. 23–69; Loris Sturlese, "Zwischen Anselm und Johannes Scotus Eriugena: der seltsame Fall des Honorius, des Mönchs von Regensburg," *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi* vol. 2, (eds.) Burkhard Mojsisch and Olaf Pluta (Amsterdam, 1991), pp. 927–951.



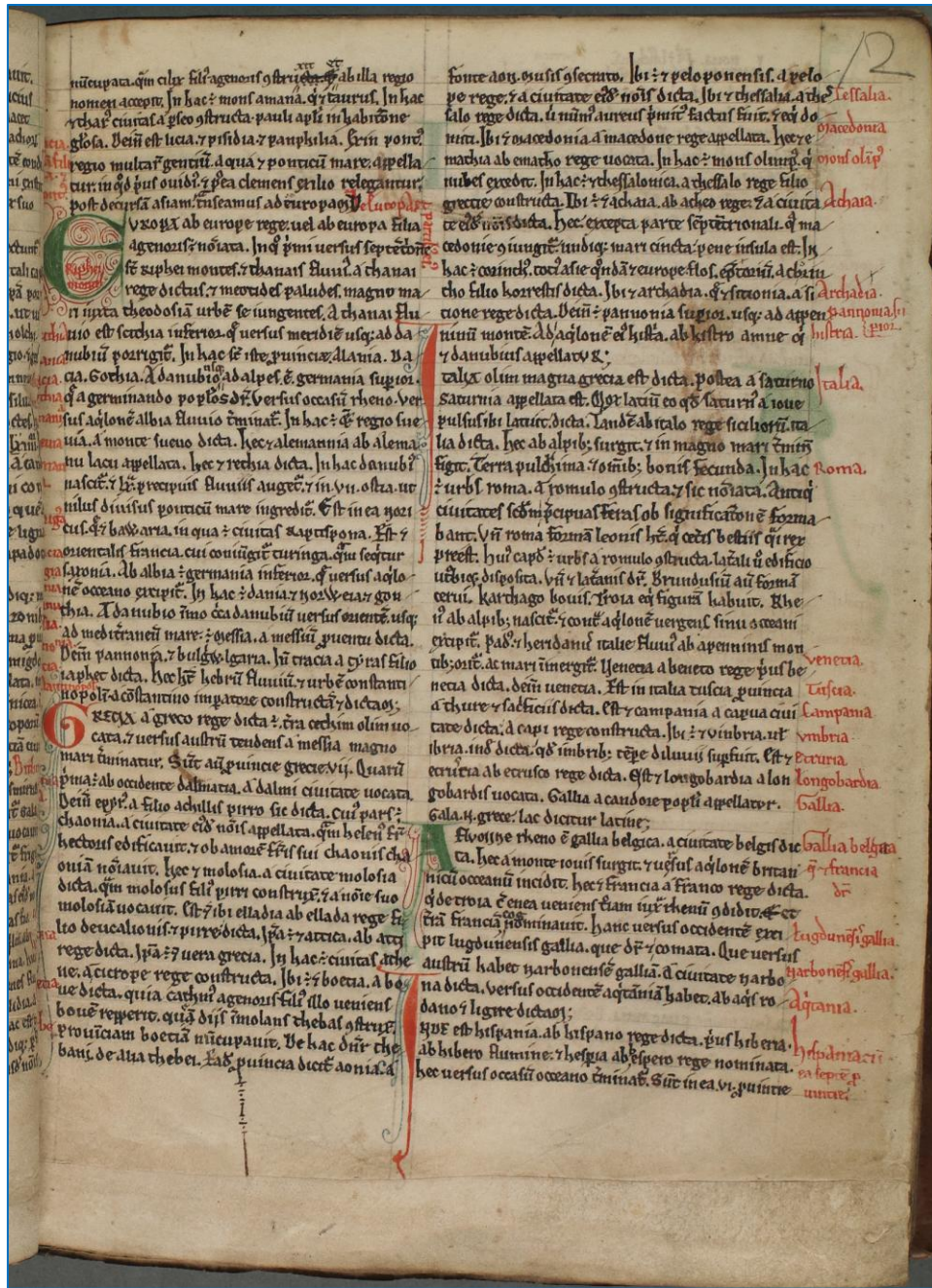
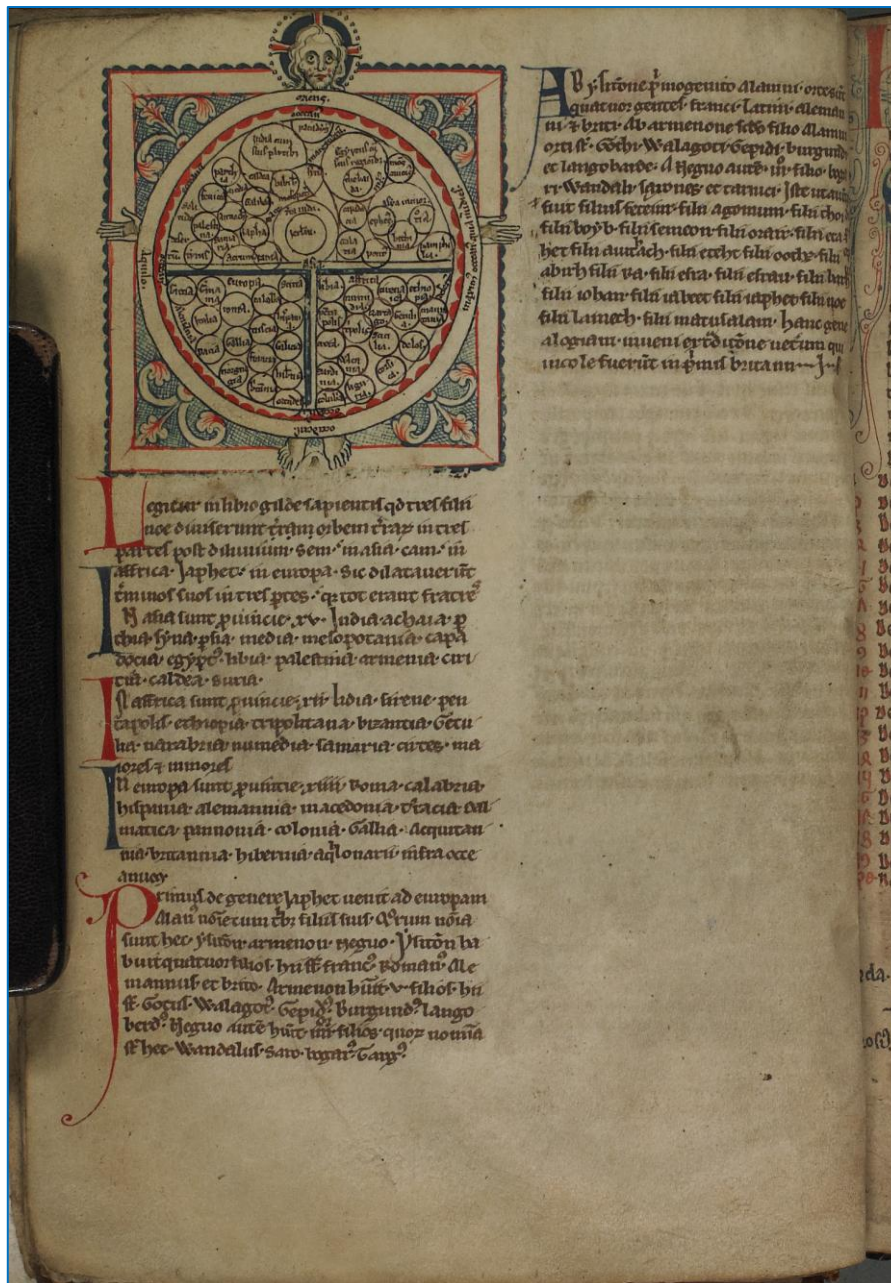


Figure 3 *Imago Mundi*, 13<sup>th</sup> century, London, Lambeth Palace, MS 371, fol. 12r. Photo: Lambeth Palace, by permission of the Trustees of the Lambeth Palace Library.

appear that the scribe selected several regions and towns that seemed to be of importance to him, and that he repeated and highlighted them in the geographical register in the margin.

There is a remarkable correlation between the *Imago Mundi*, the marginal register and the



**Figure 4** Lambeth Map and *Historia Brittonum*, 13<sup>th</sup> century, London, Lambeth Palace, MS 371, folio 9v. Photo: Lambeth Palace, by permission of the Trustees of the Lambeth Palace Library.

Lambeth map: 63 of the map's 68 toponyms are mentioned in the text,<sup>18</sup> and 53 are repeated in the margin. Assuming that text, marginalia and map were produced at the same time, and before the manuscript was bound, the following procedure is the most probable: after the

<sup>18</sup> Not mentioned in the *Imago Mundi* are the following toponyms on the Lambeth map: *iapha*, *acrum*, *solitudo desertorum* and *calabria*. In addition, there is a hardly legible toponym in the southwest portion of the map.

transcription of the *Imago Mundi*, the scribe made a selection of geographical names to be transferred to the map.<sup>19</sup> Then the map was sketched in the space that had been left free, based on the current T-O diagram. In a third step, the circles were inserted, probably inspired by the explicit demarcation of provinces in the *Imago Mundi*. Finally, the toponyms were added with the help of the marginal register. Due to the small size of the map, another shortening of the register was necessary.

Some details support this thesis. For one thing, the positioning of the toponyms within the T-O map does not primarily depend on geographical factors. In what follows, I focus on Asia, by way of example. Some cartographic conventions of the thirteenth century can be observed, like the position of the earthly paradise at the top or the centering on Jerusalem. In addition, a roughly vertical line running from Syria to the Mediterranean divides the continent. This line could be interpreted as a Syrian border. All circles to the left are Syrian towns or regions, according to the *Imago Mundi*. From a geographical point of view, Tyre and Acre – just above the bar of the T-O's 'T,' toward the east – are correctly depicted as seaports. In contrast, the large circle denoting Asia Minor is on the right side of the map, a very unusual position for this region; on medieval maps, it is commonly sketched on the other side. See, for example, the Psalter Map. **(Figure 2)** This could be because the map is a direct transcription of the marginal register and reflects the linear textual order. Like the text, the map is divided into two columns, marked by the vertical line. The mapmaker first filled in the toponyms on the left side from top to bottom, then on the right side, following the description of Honorius. This procedure generated the following order: Paradise, India, Parthia, Syria and his regions, then Egypt, the Orient and Asia Minor. Even the microstructure of Asia Minor

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<sup>19</sup> There is some evidence that the texts (including the major part of the *Imago Mundi*), the map and the marginalia were written by the same scribe. This was the usual procedure, as there were no specialized map makers during the Middle Ages and scribes were often responsible for the production of maps. See Kugler, *Imago Mundi*, p. 80; Woodward, "Medieval *Mappaemundi*," p. 286.

reflects this method of transcription: Ephesus, Bithynia and Troy are written in the linear reading order from left to right.

In addition to the information he took from Honorius, the mapmaker probably added information from his own stock of knowledge. This would explain the positions of Tyre and Acre at the Mediterranean. Beyond that, Acre and Jaffa, written in the circle above, do not even appear in the *Imago Mundi*. The mapmaker had probably heard of these towns because of their importance during the crusades.

That the textual order has an influence on the map's positioning of toponyms is supported by another fact. The mapmaker places the Mediterranean islands onto Africa. The *Imago Mundi* describes these isles right after the African continent. Because the mapmaker adopted this textual order, he situated the islands after the African provinces and, consequently, they are located in Africa. In summary, the Lambeth map is a concentrated *Imago Mundi*, with the locales of the world arranged graphically, but according to their original textual order rather than their traditional geographical distribution.

Despite the close correlation between map and *Imago Mundi*, the map stands at the top of a page containing the seventeenth chapter of the *Historia Brittonum*. **(Figure 4)** This text, previously ascribed to Nennius, is today ascribed to an unknown British compiler of the ninth century.<sup>20</sup> The *Historia* is a compilation of several older texts, including the writings of Gildas, whose name is mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. The account of the division of the earth among the three sons of Noah, a well-established topos in medieval cartography, follows this. Then, preceding a detailed genealogy of the British people, is a list of the provinces of the earth: 15 in Asia, 12 in Africa and 14 in Europe. This geographical list does not correspond to the map or the *Imago Mundi*. It is another textual recording system, probably easier to read than the map, but not visualized graphically.

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<sup>20</sup> For an edition and commentary of the *Historia* see Ferdinand Lot (ed.), *Nennius et l'Historia Brittonum. Étude critique suivie d'une Édition des diverses Versions de ce Texte* (Paris, 1934).

The reason for inserting a third geographical recording system next to the Lambeth map and *Imago Mundi* is difficult to determine. I would like to propose, first, that it was meant to complement the *Imago Mundi*, which mentions the division of the earth, but does not provide a Noachide explanation for it; and, second, that the text of the *Historia* connects the world map to British history. The *Historia* quotes a genealogy beginning with Japhet, son of Noah and ancestor of the European people. Therefore, map and text together allowed British readers to locate themselves within geography, history, and the divine order of the world.

The aspect of salvation is further emphasized by the image of Christ surrounding the world. Originally, the figure of God or Christ was a motif found in mostly cosmological schemes, adopted by some maps of the thirteenth century.<sup>21</sup> The figure around the Lambeth map recalls the Ebstorf map, which includes Christ in the world's circle, as well as the verso side of the Psalter map, where Christ embraces the world, expressing his power and his mercy. Therefore, Christ or God surrounding the map is a motif of some standing in the pictorial tradition. Yet, analogies can also be found to the *Elucidarium*, the third text accompanying the Lambeth map.<sup>22</sup> This text was written by Honorius Augustodunensis around 1100, and is a dialogue between a master and his pupil on aspects of Christian faith.

MS 371 includes an excerpt of the first book, extending over the three pages preceding the map. One article is of particular importance for the Lambeth map. The pupil desires clarification of the following paradox: God's presence is everywhere at any time, but at the same time, God cannot be located. The master's answer: God is said to be everywhere,

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<sup>21</sup> Barbara Bronder, "Das Bild der Schöpfung und Neuschöpfung der Welt als orbis quadratus" *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 6 (1972), pp. 188–210, esp. fig. XVI–XVII; Hartmut Kugler, "Symbolische Weltkarten – der Kosmos im Menschen. Symbolstrukturen in der Universalkartographie bis Kolumbus," *Gutenberg und die neue Welt* (ed.) Horst Wenzel (München, 1994), pp. 33–58, esp. pp. 48–52.

<sup>22</sup> For an edition and commentary see Yves Lefèvre, *L'Elucidarium et les Lucidaires. Contribution, par l'Histoire d'un texte, à l'Histoire des Croyances religieuses en France au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1954).

because his power has the same strength in all parts of the world. He continues to explain that God cannot be located in any given place, because “place” is physical and God is not physical. The passage closes as follows: “In nullo loco continetur deus cum ipse contineat omnia, in quo ‘vivimus, movemur et sumus.’”<sup>23</sup> The last words are cited from the Acts.<sup>24</sup>

By mentioning east and west, Honorius refers to a spatial cartographic visualization. The words “vivimus,” “movemur,” and “sumus” define this space as the area where human beings live and act. The mapmaker depicts God’s omnipresence by surrounding this space with the figure of Christ. Therefore, the world here is not to be understood as the body of Christ, because Christ is not physical, as Honorius wrote. Rather, the figure symbolizes the omnipresence of God, unifying the world in divine order.

To sum up, the connections between the Lambeth map and its textual environment lead to the conclusion that medieval world maps did not develop solely in a pictorial tradition and they were not independent from texts. Lambeth map is not only an example of a medieval world map that mediates between verbal and pictorial sign systems, but also, one that proves the use of information from a text in the spatial layout of a map. Therefore, texts have to be considered as playing an active role in the transmission of cartographical knowledge.

On the Lambeth map, the T-O format is a traditional element of medieval cartography. By contrast, the arrangement of circular provinces within it is probably an original invention influenced by the *Imago Mundi*. Christ surrounding the world pictorializes his divine omnipresence and the order expressed by the *Elucidarium* and reveals a synoptical view of the world and of God’s almightiness. Finally, the *Historia Brittonum* allows the

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<sup>23</sup> “No place contains God, since everything is contained in Him. ‘For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.’” MS 371, fol. 8r. According to Chapter 12, pp. 362–363, in Lefèvre, *L’Elucidarium*.

<sup>24</sup> Acts 17:27-28: “That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being ... ”

reader to determine his position in time and space. Therefore, the map and its textual environment reflect three fundamental themes of the Middle Ages: the description of the physical world, the interpretation of the transcendental world and the historical passage of time.

The Lambeth map is related to synoptical diagrams of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. On the one hand, it collects and concentrates the extensive information of three different texts in one clearly arranged scheme. The map, as a newly arranged composition, combines textual and pictorial elements. On the other hand, the map expresses a particular interpretation of the texts, and was probably meant to guide the reader to this particular understanding of the world and its transcendental order. As a result, the map and the three texts as different medial forms stand in a discursive relation to each other, with the map functioning as an overall summary.