
COLLOQUIUM BY RICHARD TALBERT

THE WORLD VIEWED FROM ROME: MAKING SENSE OF THE PEUTINGER MAP

TIME: 5:00-6:00 PM, WEDNESDAY, 30 MAY 2018

VENUE: ACADEMIC BUILDING 1079

The World Viewed from Rome: Making Sense of the Peutinger Map

Speaker: Richard Talbert, Kenan Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Abstract:

The colourful but puzzling “Peutinger” map - a medieval copy on parchment of an ancient original - offers the sole surviving physical and cultural representation of the known world produced by Romans. It attracts attention from multiple perspectives. Although its left-hand end is lost, the full map (oriented North) no doubt spanned from the Atlantic to India, and Rome itself probably occupies the center-point. The dimensions of the frame are extreme: about 8 metres (25 ft) long, yet with a height of only 33 cm (13 ins). Hence much sea is contracted into narrow channels (the Mediterranean especially), and landmasses are remolded to fit. Even so, Western scholars have persistently opted to regard the map as a practical tool or highway guide. Richard Talbert, by contrast, interprets it as cartographic artwork, a creative celebration of the world-rule claimed by Rome, with its civilized benefits of peace, urbanism and connectivity overland. As such, Talbert proposes, the map is likely to have been commissioned for display at an imperial court.

BIO:

Richard Talbert is from England. He is a Cambridge classics graduate (PhD 1972) who first taught ancient history in Northern Ireland, and then in Canada. For the past 30 years he has been Kenan Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Here he has

established an Ancient World Mapping Center (awmc.unc.edu), and has published widely on ancient cartography, travel and worldview. In addition to the collaborative *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (2000; App for iPad 2013), his books include *Rome's World: The Peutinger Map Reconsidered* (2010) and *Roman Portable Sundials: The Empire in Your Hand* (2017). He edited *Ancient Perspectives: Maps and their Place in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome* (2012).

This event is open to all. For any queries email yg73@duke.edu or call 3665 7149.