Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps

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From dragons and serpents to many-armed beasts that preyed on ships and sailors alike, sea monsters have terrified mariners across all ages and cultures and have become the subject of many tall tales from the sea. Accounts of these creatures have also inspired cartographers and mapmakers, many of whom began decorating their maps with them to indicate unexplored areas or areas about which little was known. Whether swimming vigorously, gamboling amid the waves, attacking ships, or simply displaying themselves for our appreciation, the sea monsters that appear on medieval and Renaissance maps are fascinating and visually engaging. Yet despite their appeal, these monsters have never received the scholarly attention that they deserve.

In *Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps*, Chet Van Duzer analyzes the most important examples of sea monsters on medieval and Renaissance maps produced in Europe. Van Duzer begins with the earliest *mappaemundi* on which these monsters appear in the tenth century and continues to the end of the sixteenth century and, along the way, sheds important light on the sources, influences, and methods of the cartographers who drew or painted them.

A beautifully designed visual reference work, *Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps* will be important not only in the history of cartography, art, and zoological illustration, but also in the history of the geography of the "marvelous" and of Western conceptions of the ocean.

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