

Marianne Moore's "Sea Unicorns and Land Unicorns": The "Unreal realities" of Early Modern Maps and Animals



Figure 1: Olaus Magnus's Scandinavia 1539. Facsimile (1996) of Olaus Magnus, Carta Marina, Venice, 1539. Colored facsimile, 67.3 x 86.4 cm (26 1/2 x 34 inches); the original map, created from nine woodcuts, is 4 x 5 1/2 feet. A tapestry of shapes, the Carta Marina is packed with the animals and peoples native to northwestern Europe. Courtesy of Wychwood Editions.



Figure 2: Detail from the Carta Marina showing the sea serpent (at BD, between the most northerly compass-rose and the whirlpool) and the sea unicorn south of Iceland (left, by the symbol for 73° north latitude). Courtesy of Wychwood Editions.



Figure 7: Peter Apian, the celestial map in his *Astronomicum Caesareum*, Ingolstadt, 1540. Hand-colored woodcuts: *volvelle*, 30.5 cm (12") in diameter; plate, 47 x 31.8 cm (18 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches). Pegasus appears among the other forty-seven constellations at 12 o'clock, below the sea monster Cetus and the oval scale used to determine stellar precession. Opposite Pegasus at 6 o'clock are the long-tailed bear (Arctus Major, i.e., the Big Dipper) and the lion (Leo), both familiar from Moore's poem. Missing from this copy of the celestial map are the silk thread and the seed pearl once attached at the end of the thread. The New York Public Library purchased Apian's celestial atlas in 1919, five years before Moore published "Sea Unicorns and Land Unicorns." Courtesy of the Rare Books Division of The New York Public Library--Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations: NYPL *KB+++ 1540.



Figure 8: Andreas Cellarius, *Haemisphaerium Stellatum Boreale cum Subiecto Haemisphaerio Terrestri* ("Northern hemisphere of stars with a terrestrial hemisphere below"), from his *Atlas Coelestis seu Harmonia Macrocosmica*, Amsterdam, 1660. Hand colored engraving on paper, 44 x 52 cm (17 x 20 1/2 inches). Monoceros appears at 6 o'clock, accompanied by *Canis Major* (below) and *Canis Minor* (above) and to the right of blue-caped Orion. This 1660 edition of Cellarius's atlas has belonged to the British Library since before 1757. Courtesy of the Map Library of The British Library: Maps C.6.c.2.