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Fantastic Beasts: A Look into Medieval Geographical Stereotypes Depicted in the Bestiary, MS Bodley 764

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Download date	2026-04-12 12:34:36
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/10267/33452

TRAVEL IN
RELATION TO THE
BESTIARY,
BODLEY 764



Depiction of Eagles, Bodley 764

Katie Cynkar

Outline

- I. Thesis
- II. Historical Context
- III. What is a Bestiary?
- IV. Ownership
- V. Authorship
- VI. Bodley 764
- VII. Significance

Thesis

Out of 134 animals described in Bodley 764, 39 have locations associated with them. These descriptions reveal certain beliefs held by Europeans in the early 13th century about these locations and the people who lived there

Historical Context

- Ögedei Khan comes to power in 1229
- Pope Innocent IV sends John of Plano Carpini and 3 other messengers to learn who these Mongols are in 1245
- In Ethiopia, the Zagwe Dynasty is in it's last few decades
- England is in between the First and Second Barons' Wars

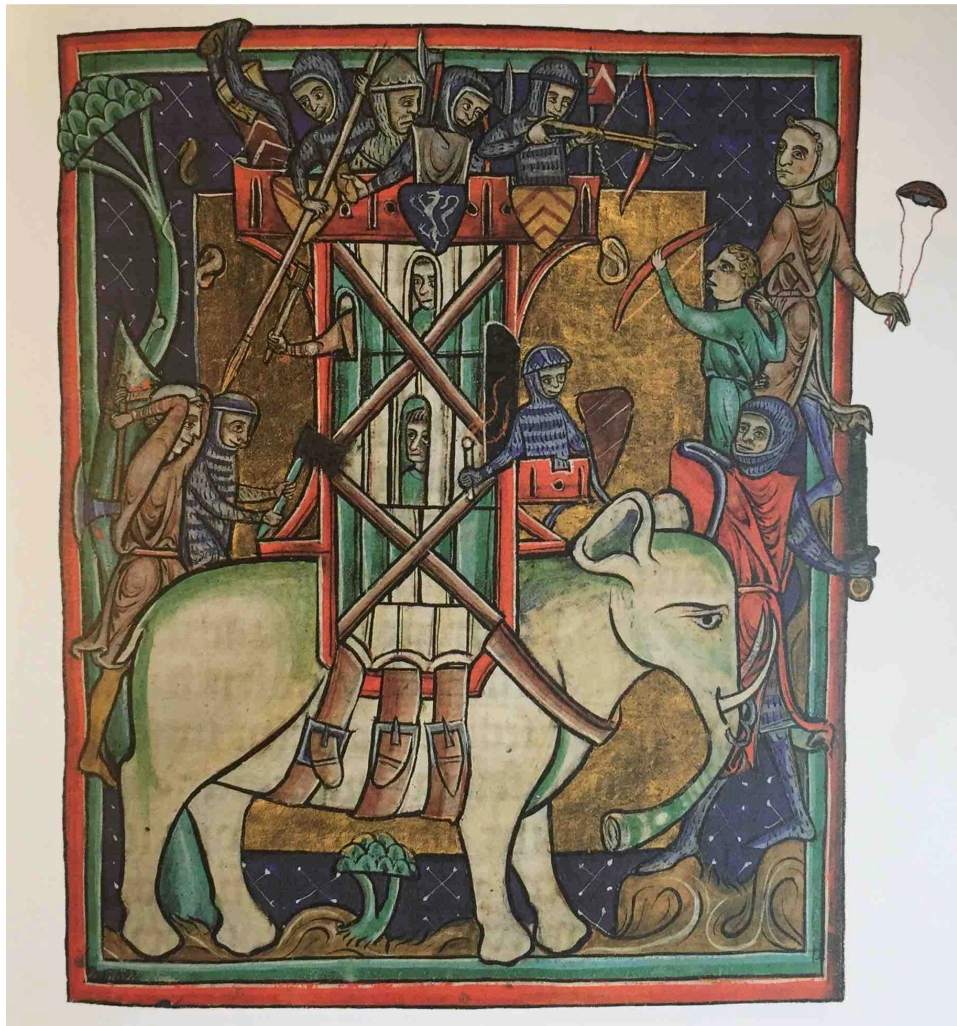
What is a Bestiary?



Depiction of Cat, Bodley 764

- Bestiary: An encyclopedia of animals that examines their natural characteristics in order to create allegorical lessons.
- Physiologus

Ownership



Depiction of Elephant, Bodley 764

Authorship

- Passages from:
 - Rabanus Maurus' "On the Nature of Things"
 - Gerald of Wale' "Topography of Ireland"
 - Hugh of Fouilloy's "The Aviary"
 - Peter of Cornwalls "Pantheologus"



Depiction of Gryphon, Harley 4751



Depiction of Gryphon, Bodley 764

Bodley 764

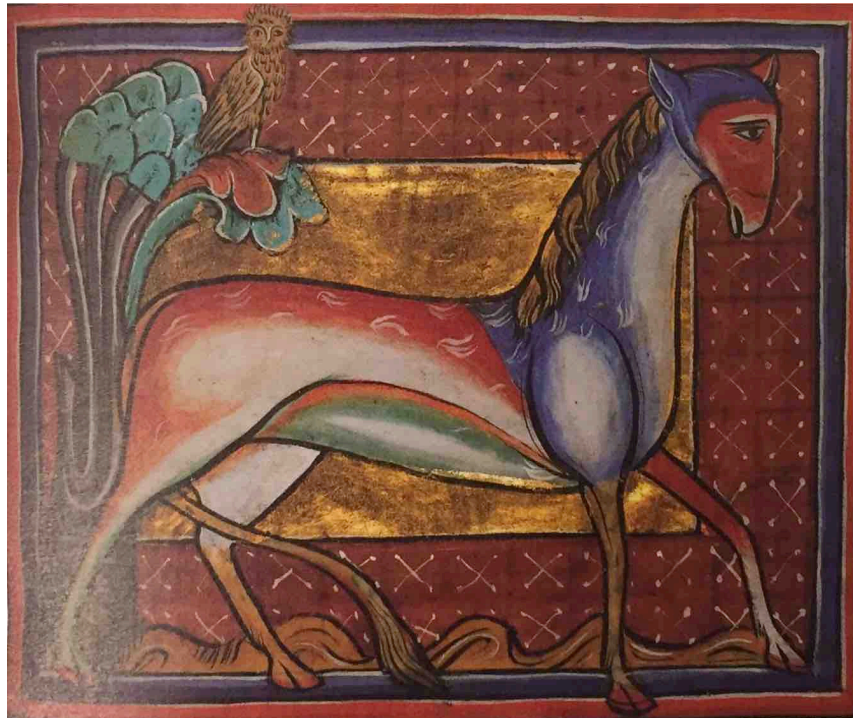
- For each groups of animals in each location, they have similar moral symbolism
- Follows Mappamundi didactic guidelines
- Fits historical context



11th c. Mappamundi

Significance

- The descriptions of animals are used to reflect the world-view of different people in medieval society.



Depiction of the mythical creature, the Chameleon, Bodley 764

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