



Chet Van Duzer and Ilya Dines. *Apocalyptic Cartography: Thematic Maps and the End of the World in a Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*

Chet Van Duzer and Ilya Dines. *Apocalyptic Cartography: Thematic Maps and the End of the World in a Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015. ix, 251 p., ill. ISBN 9789004304536. €135.00 (hardcover).

This book focuses on a manuscript in the Huntington Library, located in San Marino, California (Ms HM 83), an unstudied fifteenth-century German codex that contains not only the largest but also the most curious collection of *mappaemundi* in any one document. After describing HM 83 in the first chapter, the authors, Chet Van Duzer and Ilya Dines, discuss the historical context of fifteenth-century Lübeck, very likely the hometown of this manuscript (Chapter 2). Subsequently, they identify the anonymous author, who can now be regarded as one of the most original cartographers of the fifteenth century, as Baptista, a man appointed by Pope Pius II to take care of pilgrims such as the traveller Felix Fabri at the Franciscan monastery on Mount Zion (Chapter 3). Interestingly, Van Duzer and Dines focus their attention on the parts containing maps, which correspond to the last two as well as the longest chapters in the manuscript: a geographical treatise (ff. 1r-8r) and a section with material on astronomy and geography (ff. 13r-18r) are analyzed in Chapter 4; and an account of the Apocalypse (ff. 8v-12v) is examined in Chapter 5.

Apart from offering a detailed description of each of the maps, and including Latin transcriptions and translations into English with comments on the most relevant excerpts, this monograph pertinently addresses the uses of maps, a fundamental subject in the history of cartography and one that also interested the author of HM 83 (it is discussed on ff. 48-58 in the book). The co-authors also invite us to consider the existence of thematic mapping before the seventeenth century, a period accepted by specialists as instrumental in the rise of this genre (80-93). Van Duzer and Dines navigate with ease throughout the cartographic context that frames the maps featured in this manuscript and, clearly, they devoted considerable efforts to finding the textual and iconographical sources of HM 83. As a result, these authors are in a position to assert that, apart from the codex at the Huntington Library, there was also a lost autograph manuscript (58). In fact, they succeeded in finding another copy with maps, now at Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 442 Helmst., a discovery that demonstrates that the work circulated and underwent revision (196-218).

This study makes a significant contribution not only to the history of cartography but also to apocalyptic studies. HM 83 constitutes a distinctive effort to use maps to illustrate the sequence of changes to the Earth at the end of history, and interestingly the events selected



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to be described are far from being popular motifs; instead, it emphasizes the chronology, mechanics, geography, and cartography of the Last Days. Thus, this book will be of interest to scholars working not only on the history of cartography and Apocalypticism, but also on the history of art, religious studies, and manuscript studies.

Without any doubt, just a glance at the maps of HM 83 will tempt the reader to download all the images available online at <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/digitalscriptorium/huntington/HM83.html>, as Chet Van Duzer recalls having done many years before researching the manuscript (vii). The digitization of library and archival material has turned our computers into real treasure chests of book culture, and HM 83 is a primary example of the cultural richness that such discoveries yield. This book offers the key to fully understand the meaning of this unique cartographical collection.

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