



# **Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf Manuscript**

*Andy Orchard*

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Monsters and the monstrous, whether from the remote pagan past or the new world of Christian Latin learning, haunted the Anglo-Saxon imagination in a variety of ways. In this series of detailed studies, Andy Orchard demonstrates the changing range of Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards the monstrous by reconsidering the monsters of *Beowulf* against the background of early medieval and patristic teratology and with reference to specific Anglo-Saxon texts.

The immediate manuscript context of the monsters in *Beowulf* is analysed, shedding light on the poet's treatment of the theme of the monstrous and its integration into his work, and a series of parallel discussions consider a range of medieval treatments of the same theme in a variety of analogous texts (all provided with translation), in Latin, Old English, Middle Irish, and Old Icelandic.

The twin themes of pride and prodigies are suggested by tracing changing attitudes towards the concept of pride and establishing a close link between the proud pagan warriors depicted in Christian tradition and the monsters they fight, and with whom they become increasingly identified.

An appendix contains new editions and translations (some for the first time in English) of the *Liber Monstrorum*, *The Letter of Alexander to Aristotle*, and *The Wonders of the East*.

Originally published in 1995 by Boydell & Brewer.

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