

London
Wellcome Institute

WMS 122

Basinio da Parma, *Astronomicon*

Italian
c. 1475

text

(note: The recto of each folio is numbered twice. The older numbering runs from 120r-153r; the newer numbering from 1-36 (including fly leaves). The newer numbering is used in this description.

ff. 2r-33v Basinio da Parma, *Astronomicon*

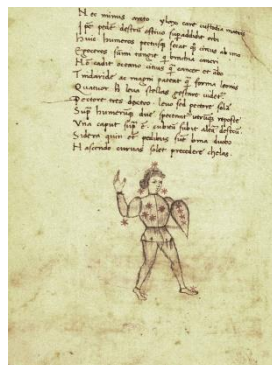
- inc: Aetherios orbis, subiectaque templa derorum
 Musa cane. Atque vias semper volventis olimpi –
- fol. 23r: Nexa tenet cursu semper volventis olimpi. [end of Book I, v. 706]
- fol. 23v: Book II begins imperfectly with II, v. 2:
 Lumina bina canam rapido contraris celo
 quae faciunt cursus, variasque feruntur in oras,—
- expl: Qui nunc astrorum motus subiectaque divum
 Templa cano atque vias semper volventis olimpi.
-

illustrations

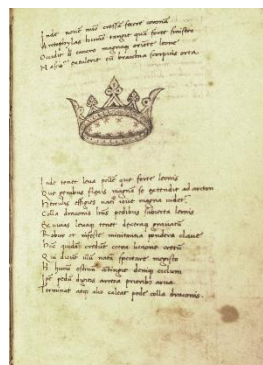
ff.5r-23r Unframed illustrations of 38 constellation groupings (46 constellations) in brown ink and wash with stars marked in pale red ink as six-pointed stars in red. Sometimes, the stars are marked with a cross, which appear to be in a slightly darker ink, so may indicate corrections.



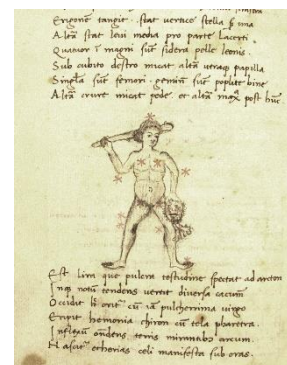
fol. 5r



fol. 5v



fol. 6r



fol. 6v



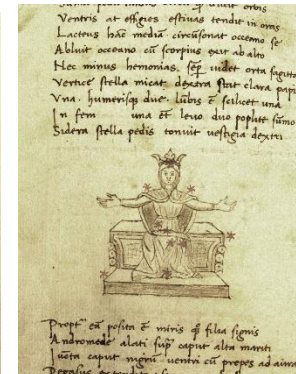
fol. 7r



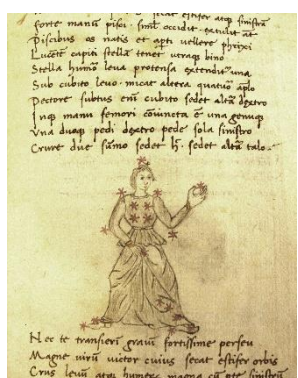
fol. 7v



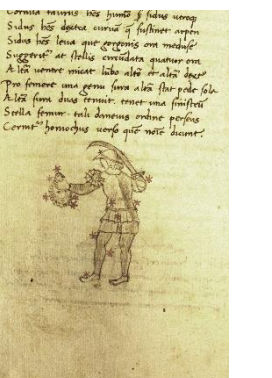
fol. 8r



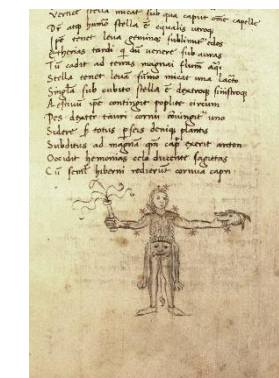
fol. 8v



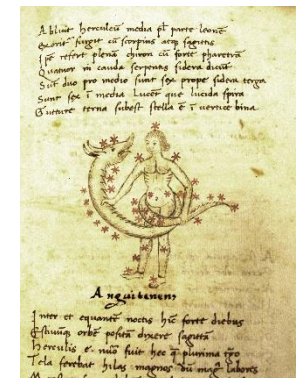
fol. 9r



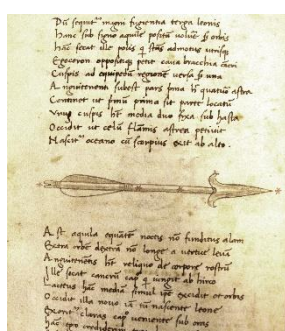
fol. 9v



fol. 10r



fol. 10v



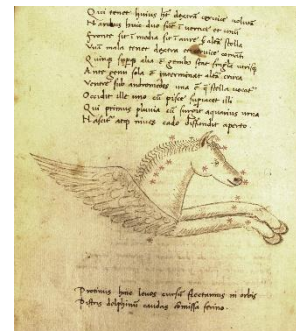
fol. 11v



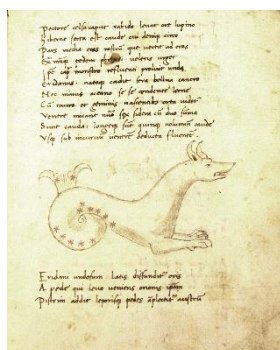
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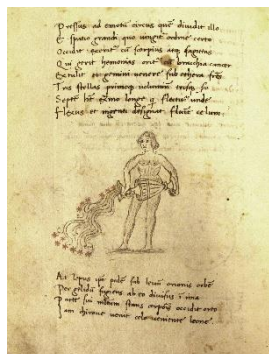
fol. 12v



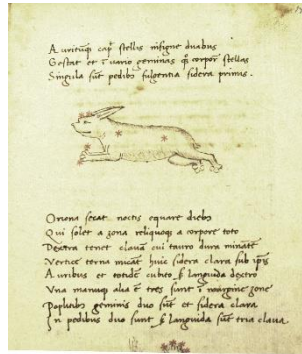
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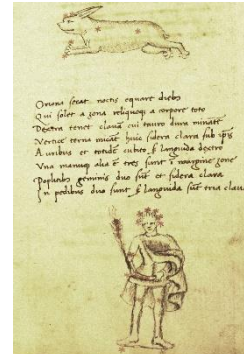
fol. 13r



fol. 13v



fol. 14r



fol. 14r



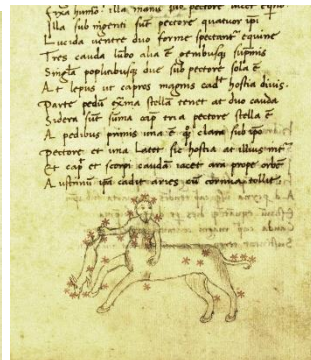
fol. 14v



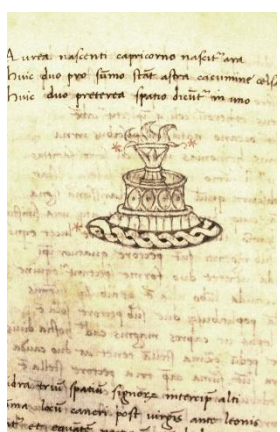
fol. 15r



fol. 15v



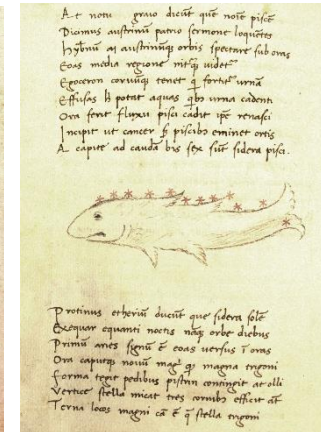
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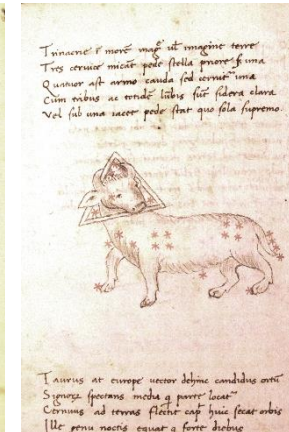
fol. 16v



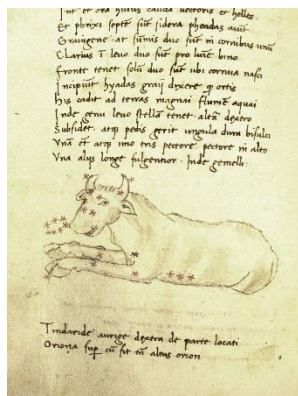
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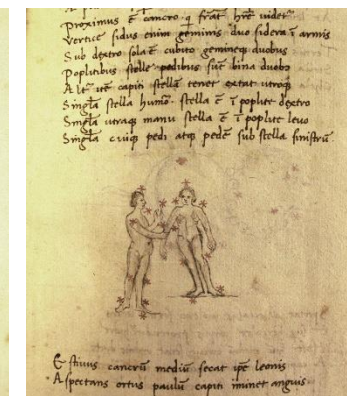
fol. 17v



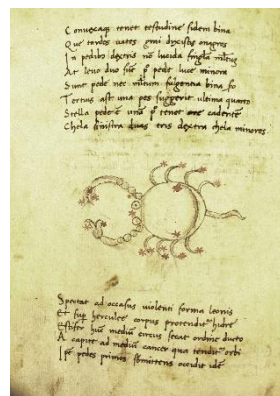
fol. 18r



fol. 18v



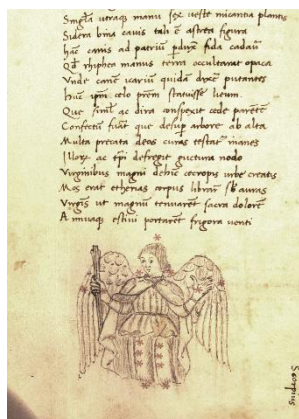
fol. 19r



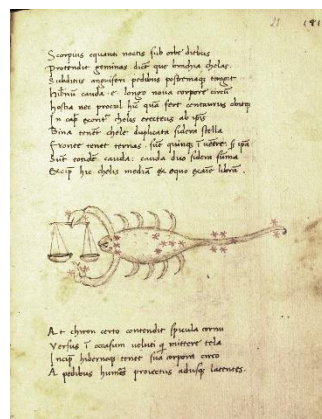
fol. 19v



fol. 20r



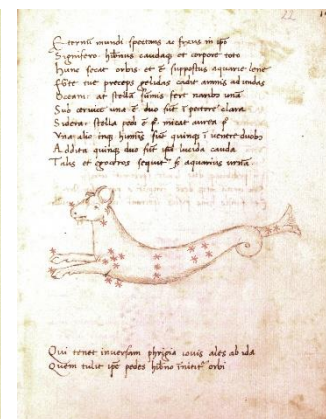
fol. 20v



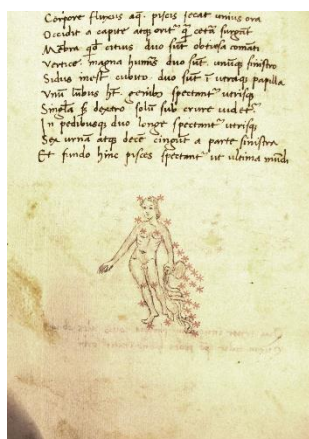
fol. 21r



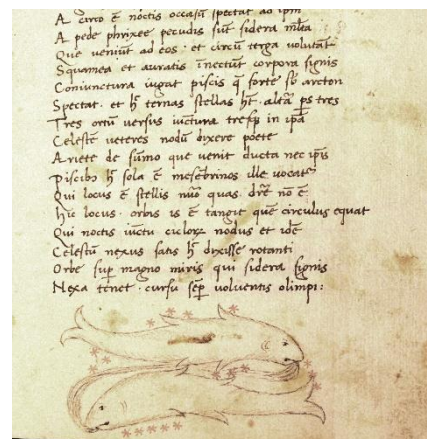
fol. 21v



fol. 22r



fol. 22v



fol. 23r

fol. 5r

DRACO INTER ARCTOS with **DRACO** with his head toward the bottom of the page with a long curved and pointed nose, floppy ears, an open mouth and teeth visible. His body has 3 main bends in his body. **URSA MAIOR** and **MINOR** are placed back-to-back, facing into the curves in the third and fourth bends. **URSA MINOR** is slightly larger. **DRACO** has 1 star in his chin, 4 in his head and 10 in his body, or 15 stars in all. **URSA MINOR** has a short tail and walks to the left. It has 3 stars in the back and 1 in each foot or 7 stars in all. **URSA MINOR** walks to the right. It has a short tail and has 9 stars around the head, 1 in the front right foot and 1 on the back, or 11 stars in all.

fol. 5v

BOOTES stands facing to the right. He is dressed in a short tunic with leggings. He holds a feminine ovate shield in his left hand so that it covers the whole of his left arm. He raises his right hand. He has 1 star in his head, 1 in each shoulder, 4 in his chest, 1 on his right elbow, 4 on his shield and 1 on each foot, or 14 stars in all.

- fol. 6r **CORONA BOREALIS** is a crown with 9 stars.
- fol. 6v **HERCULES** stands facing the viewer with his legs spread. He is nude. He holds a lion's skin (head and 2 paws visible) in his left hand down by his side and raises a knobby club behind his head with his right hand. He has 1 star in his head, 1 on each breast, 1 on each elbow, 2 in his groin, 2 on his left knee, 1 on his right knee and 1 on his left foot and 4 on the lion's skin, or 15 stars in all.
- fol. 7r **LYRA** is two-stepped zither with 3 sets of 4 strings and 7 stars.
- fol. 7v **CYGNUS** is stands to the left, with a bent beak and its wings outstretched to either side. It has 5 stars in the right wing, 5 in the left wing, 1 in the head, 1 in the neck and 1 in the tail, or 13 stars in all. There is also a small cross above its head.
- fol. 8r **CEPHEUS** stands facing the viewer, dressed in a short, tight-fitting doublet and hose. He has a mitre-shaped cap and holds his arms out to either side with palms facing forward and the arms slightly bent so they form a 'W'. He has 3 stars in his head, 2 on the chest and 3 at the waist, 1 on each hand, 2 in his left knee, and 1 in each foot, or 14 stars in all.
- fol. 8v **CASSIOPEIA** is seated on a low throne, facing the viewer, with her arms outstretched to either side with her elbows slightly bent. She wears a long dress and mantle closed at her neck. She wears a crown. She has 1 star on her head, 1 on each shoulder, 2 on her lap, 2 on her left knee and 1 on her right foot and 2 stars on the throne, or 10 stars in all.
- fol. 9r **ANDROMEDA** stands facing the viewer with her legs splayed. She holds her dress with her right hand at her genitals and raises her left arm to the side. She has 1 star and one cross on her head, 1 star in each shoulder, 4 in her chest, 1 on each elbow, 1 on each hand, 5 in the left lower leg and 2 in the right foot, or 19 stars in all.
- fol. 9v **PERSEUS** stands with his back to the viewer and facing to the left. He is dressed in a full suit of armour. He raises a slightly-curved sword above his head with his right hand and, in his left hand, he holds the head of the Medusa's (male?) head in front of him by the hair. He has 1 cross-shaped star on his head, 1 on each hand, 2 at his waist, 1 on his left buttock, 1 on his left thigh, 1 on his left knee, 1 on his left foot and 4 in Medusa's head, or 13 stars in all.

- fol. 10r **AURIGA** stands facing the viewer, dressed in a tunic made from animal skins, with two paws dangling down by the side, a lion's face near his groin and a lion's tail between his legs. He holds both his arms extended to the sides, with a flail in his right hand and 2 animal heads in his left. He has 1 cross and 1 star on his head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on each elbow, 1 on his right forearm, 1 in his left hand, or 8 stars in all.
- fol. 11r **OPHIUCHUS** (labelled: Anguitenens by a later hand) is nude and faces the viewer. He holds the **SERPENS** so that it crosses his body in front of his genitals and its head is to the left. **OPHIUCHUS** has 1 star on his head, 1 each shoulder, 2 on his waist, 1 on each knee, 1 in the right shin, 1 on each foot, and 3 around his left elbow, or 13 stars in all. The Serpent has 21 stars.
- fol. 11v **SAGITTA** points to the right and has 4 stars.
- fol. 12r **AQUILA** faces to the right with his wings outstretched to either side. He has 1 star in his head, 1 in each wing, and 1 in his tail, or 4 stars in all.
- DELPHINUS** is placed upside-down with its back facing toward the bottom of the page and its head to the right. It has a long, pointed snout with pointed teeth. It has 4 stars in its head, 1 cross on the nose, 2 stars on the gills, 1 star on its dorsal fin and a cross on his ventral fins and 2 stars in the tail, or 11 stars in all.
- fol. 12v **PEGASUS** is the front part of a winged horse that faces to the right with its front legs stretched out straight in front of him. He has 2 stars on nose, 2 on his forehead, 1 on the cheek, 1 cross and 1 star on his mane, 4 on the neck, 1 below his wing, 2 on each knee, or 16 stars in all.
- fol. 13r **CETUS** is a dog-faced monster with a curled tail. He faces to the right and has pointed ears and an open mouth with sharp teeth. There are 6 stars on the belly, 5 on the tail and 2 on the tip of the tail, or 13 stars in all.
- fol. 133v **ERIDANUS** is a nude male figure, standing to the left, holding the urn across his body horizontally, with his left hand on the base and his right hand on the neck. Water flows to the left and has 13 stars on it.
- fol. 14r **LEPUS** bounds to the left. It has 2 stars in the head, 2 on the front paws and 2 on the body, or 6 stars in all.

ORION stands facing the viewer, dressed in a short tunic that has a wide belt at the hips, in which he rests the thumb of his left hand. He also wears a short cloak and holds a straight sword vertically in his right hand. He has 6 stars around his head, 4 at the waist and 1 in the right elbow, 3 in the sword, 1 on each knee, and 1 under each foot, or 18 stars in all.

- fol. 14v **CANIS MAIOR** is a greyhound that leaps upwards to the left. It has 3 stars on the head, 1 on the mouth, 3 on its front paws, 5 on the left shoulder, 1 on the flank, 4 on the tail, 1 in the left hind foot and 1 or 2 in the right hind foot, or 19 or 20 stars in all.
- fol. 135r **CANIS MINOR** has a snub nose and also bounds to the left, lifting its front paws. It has 1 star in the head, 1 in the torso and 1 on the hind feet, or 3 stars in all.
- fol. 135v **ARGO** is a full ship set in the water and it sails to the right. It has a broken mast and 2 steering oars. There are 4 stars on the mast, 5 on the hull, 1 in the stern, 8 in the steering oars and 5 in the water, or 23 stars in all.
- fol. 16r **CENTAURUS** is a male centaur that leaps to the left. He turns his human half to face the viewer and is nude. He holds **LUPUS** (a dog or rabbit) in his right hand in front of him by its heels and his left hand is held near his human waist. He has 3 stars in the head, 1 on each shoulder, 4 in the human chest, 1 on the right elbow, 2 on the right hand, 1 on the belly, 3 on the flank, 1 on the right front knee, 2 on the right front foot, 1 on each hind knee and 3 in the tail, or 24 stars in all. **Lupus** has 3 on the head, 1 on the belly and 2 on the tail, or 6 stars in all.
- fol. 16v **ARA** is an elaborate cylindrical altar with 3 flames at the top and with 3 stars marked.
- fol. 17r **HYDRA** is a two-footed dragon that faces to the left, with its wings tucked close to its body. It has a short beard and pointed ears. There is a two-handled, vase-shaped **CRATER** on his back and a small **CORVUS**, facing forwards on his lower back. **HYDRA** has 3 stars on its front, 3 on the neck, 2 on the chest, 3 on the belly, and 11 on the tail. **CRATER** has 8 stars and **CORVUS** has 8 stars.
- fol. 137v **PISCIS AUSTRINUS** is a large fish that swims to the left. It has 12 stars marked.
- fol. 138r **ARIES** is '*intra triangulum*', walking to the left with its head turned back to the right and with short, oxen-like horns. **Aries** has 2 stars on the top of its head, 1 on the cheek, 3 on its chest, 4 on the body, 1 on the right front foot, 4 on the

haunch, 1 on the belly, 1 on the left hind foot and 4 in the tail, or 21 stars in all. **TRIANGULUM** has 3 stars.

- fol. 18v **TAURUS** is depicted seemingly as a full bull with his tail and hind-quarters tucked under him. Both feet are stretched out in front of him. He has 2 stars in each horn, 3 in its forehead, 7 in front of its nose, 1 in the chest, 1 on the left front leg and 1 in each knee, 1 on the left hoof and 3 on the belly, or 22 stars in all.
- fol. 19r **GEMINI** are two nude youths. The left Twin grabs the right Twin's right arm and points upwards with his left hand. The left Twin has 1 star in the head, 1 in each shoulder, 1 on each hand, 1 on each knee, 1 on the right foot and 2 on the left foot, or 11 stars in all. The right Twin has 1 on the head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on the right elbow, 1 on each knee and 1 on each foot, or 8 stars in all.
- fol. 139v **CANCER** is a round crab, facing to the left with 2 large, segmented claws and 4 legs on either side. It has protruding circular eyes, a crescent along its bottom and a long tail. It has 1 star on the nose, 2 on the shell, 3 in the right claw, 2 in the left claw, 4 on the top legs and 6 on the bottom legs, or 18 stars in all.
- fol. 140r **LEO** stands to the right with his tail is raised. He has 3 stars in the head, 2 on the ear, 4 on the mane, 1 on the left front foot, 2 below the chest, 2 on the belly, 1 on the haunch, 1 on the right hind leg, 1 in each hind foot and 2 in the tail, or 20 stars in all.
- fol. 140v **VIRGO** stands facing the viewer with large wings and dressed in a belted gown, which is covered by a long mantle with a reverse. She holds something that looks like an inverted arrow in her right hand and holds the open palm of her left hand raised. She has short hair and the image is cut-off at the knees. She has 1 star in the head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on each hand, 1 on each wing and 4 on each leg, or 15 stars in all.
- fol. 141r **SCORPIO** faces to the left with two large claws and 4 legs on either side. He has a smooth, tapering tail. He holds the Scales in front of his face with his right claw. He has 3 stars in the face, 5 in the body, 5 in the tail, 2 in the sting and 2 in each claw, or 19 stars in all. There are no stars marked in the Scales.
- fol. 141v **SAGITTARIUS** is a centaur who rushes to the right. His human half is nude. He holds the bow with his left hand and pulls the string with his right. He has 2 stars in the head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on the right breast, 1 on each elbow, 2 on the

bow, 1 on the arrow, 1 in each front knee, 1 on the right front hoof and 1 on the tail, or 14 stars in all.

- fol. 142r **CAPRICORN** faces to the left. It has a cow's face with short, curved horns and a tapering tail. There are 2 stars in the face, 1 on each front foot, 5 on the chest, 2 on the belly, 7 on the tail, and 2 at the end of the tail, or 20 stars in all.
- fol. 142v **AQUARIUS** is a nude youth, who stands facing the viewer with his head turned slightly to the left. The right hand is empty and the left hand holds the base of an urn from which water pours. He has 2 stars in his head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on each nipple, 1 on each knee, 1 on the right shin, 1 on each foot and at least 17 in the water.
- fol. 143r **PISCES** swim in opposite direction with their backs both facing upwards. Their mouths are connected by a stream. The top fish has 4 stars, the stream has 9 stars the bottom fish has 5 stars.

notes

bibliography

S. A. J. MOORAT, *Catalogue of Western manuscripts on medicine and science in the Wellcome Historical Medical Library*, vol. I *Mss. written before 1650 A. D.*, London 1962, p. 85

KRISTELLER, IV, p. 223.

SOTHEBY'S, *Western Manuscripts and Miniatures*, 23rd June 1992, n. 72, pp. 81-84.

A. GARCÍA AVILÈS, *Arte y astrología en Salamanca a finales del Siglo XV*, «Anuario del Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte», vol. IV, 1994, p. 53 n. 63.

MARIANI CANOVA, *Le illustrazioni*, p. 207.

'of 'importanza minore' concerning the history of illustrations of iconography of astrological manuscripts.

CHISENA 2015, pp. 46-47.

dates to second half of 15th c = 1475?; humanist cursive in brown ink; sporadic annotations in Greek; suggests that perhaps was not completed, noting the absence of decorative initials, labels and the

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ancillary diagrams that appear in other mss; almost all the human figures are dressed, which points to a late version of the Hyginus illustrations.

BLUME/HAFFNER/METZGER 2016, II, 2, pp. 100, 692-94 and figs. 875-77.

Old pagination suggests the ms was originally part of a larger set of miscellanea (begins with p. 120 and has a notation of 9, perhaps suggesting that it was the ninth segment in a collection of works); large well-formed humanistic cursive; note that the ink is the same for the text and the images, so perhaps the scribe was also the illuminator; image stand outside of the usual Basinio iconographic tradition and suggest the influence of a Hyginus manuscript from northern Italy as the model; notes gaps on ff. 2v (opening initial?); 3v (for missing chart) and 23v (the luminaria at the end of Book I – compare Munich clm 15743, fol. 103r – or the opening line of Book II).

The mss is available on-line via the Wellcome Collections website at:
<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/gfpc2w2b>