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Hyginus, *De astronomia*

Southern France

12th century

text

- ff. 76r-112v      Hyginus, *De astronomia*, Books I-IV (with Book III illustrated)
- ff. 76r-79r      [H]IGINVS FABIO SVO SALVTEM; [E]tsi te studio gramaticę artis – in simili causa posse constitui suspicamur. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, I, preface-9, cf. Viré 1992, pp. 1-13)
- ff. 79r -95r      Sed quoniam quę nobis de terrę positione dicenda fuerunt – Nos autem omnium corporem deformationem dicere instituimus; (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, II, preface - 43, cf. Viré 1992, pp. 14- 94)
- ff. 95v-105r      [I]GITUR INCIPIEMUS APOLO BOREO PROTINUS DICERE QUA utreque arctō<sup>i</sup> nixe vehuntur – exoritur autem cum piscibus sed est stellarum omnino duodecem. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, III, 1- III, 40; cf. Viré 1992, pp. 95-124)
- fol. 105r      [Q]Uę ad figurationem siderum pertinent; ad hunc finem nobis erunt dūcta (with a dot beneath the second part of the 'u' to change the word to dicta) reliqua protinus dicemus. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, III, 40; cf. Viré 1992, p. 124)
- ff. 105r-112v      Quoniam in initio sperę circuli quinque quomodo efficerentur ostendimus – Annum volverunt esse cum sol ab estivo circulo descendens ccclxv dies suo cursu transigit (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, IV, 1- 19; cf. Viré 1992, pp. 124-57)
- ff. 112v-113v      [D]UO SUNT extremi vertices mundi quos appellant polos septemtrionis & austri. Quorum alter semper á nobis videtur – qui ad ipsum usque decurrit accipiens. (=

Excerptum de astrologia Arati; cf. Maass 1898, pp. 309-12)

illustrations



Quia quatuordecim sunt signa zodiaci... (Text describing the signs of the zodiac and their characteristics)



Quia quatuordecim sunt signa zodiaci... (Text describing the signs of the zodiac and their characteristics)

fol. 95v



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the ram sign and its characteristics)

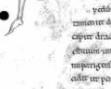


Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the woman figure and its characteristics)

fol. 96r



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the scorpion sign and its characteristics)

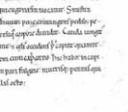


Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the scorpion sign and its characteristics)

fol. 96v



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the bird sign and its characteristics)



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the bird sign and its characteristics)

fol. 97r



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the human figure and its characteristics)



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the human figure and its characteristics)

fol. 97v



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the bull sign and its characteristics)



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the bull sign and its characteristics)

fol. 98r



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the human figure and its characteristics)



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the human figure and its characteristics)

fol. 98v



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the human figure and its characteristics)



Ad hoc signum... (Text describing the human figure and its characteristics)

fol. 99r



- ff. 95v-105r      Simple, but charming line drawings of 46 constellations in dark brown ink. LYRA is depicted twice. There are no stars marked.
- fol. 95v            **URSA MAIOR** faces to the left with the right foreleg raised. It has a curly coat of fur with stylized tufts of hair shown as V-shapes and a short tail.
- URSA MINOR** faces to the right with the left foreleg raised. It has a curly coat of fur depicted in the same manner and a short tail. Both bears have rather porcine features and are about the same size.
- fol. 96r            **DRACO** is depicted as a dragon facing to the left with 2 forefeet and a long corkscrew tail. He has a dog's head (with pointed ears and a long straight tongue), which faces backwards to the right. He also has a second head at the end of his tail with shorter pointed ears and a shorter tongue sticking out that faces to the right.
- BOÖTES** is standing slightly to the left and faces the viewer. He is dressed in a knee-length tunic with long bell sleeves. There is a cross-hatched decorative band around the neck and numerous dots and bands on the costume. He has a beard and long hair. He holds a curled object in his raised left hand (see the similar object in **HERCULES**'s hand), which is incomplete because the page has been cut off. His right hand is held with its palm open in front of him.
- fol. 96v            **CORONA BOREALIS** consists of two concentric circles with four arrows pointing from the center of the structure towards four directions, so that the whole looks like a compass rose. Between the outer rings, there are 9 small circular dots, presumably representing stars.
- HERCULES** is standing slightly to the left and faces towards the viewer. He looks upwards to the right and is bearded. He has a curved object that looks like a cross between a shawl and a yoke across his shoulders and wears a torque-like neck ornament decorated with dots. His chest is bare but he seems to be wearing tight-fitting trousers. His left hand disappears in his trousers and in his right hand he holds an object that is hard to identify but is not unlike the object held by **BOOTES**. He has the head of a monster between his thighs that appears to be biting his right thigh and his left leg is bent backwards so that the toes point upwards.

- fol. 97r **LYRA** is depicted twice. The first drawing consists of a trapezoid with 3 crossbars, the uppermost of which is decorated with animal heads. The other two crossbars seem to have small objects placed on top of them as if they were shelves and connected by two vertical bars. **LYRA**<sup>2</sup> The second picture is of an Irish harp with 11 strings and three sounding holes.
- CYGNUS** looks like a duck standing in profile to the right.
- fol. 97v **CEPHEUS** stands facing the viewer with his arms lowered so they flank his sides. He has a beard and long hair parted in the middle. He wears a tight-sleeved short tunic which ends on his knees and has decorative bands at the neck and waist.
- CASSIOPEIA** faces the viewer and is visible from the waist upwards. The bottom of her body is concealed by a mound of semi-circular objects, which may be clouds or rocks or water. Her right arm is raised and bent so that her right hand points to her head. Her left hand is in front of her breasts, which are depicted as long and pendulous (The figure bears some resemblance to the image of 'Tellus' in the *Exultet Rotulus*, Vat. Barb lat. 592 (fol. 1r). See Haffner 1997, p. 255, fig.93). She has very long bells to her sleeves. She has long hair parted in the middle.
- fol. 98r **ANDROMEDA** is depicted kneeling slightly to the left with her arms held out horizontally to either side. She has long hair parted in the middle and is dressed in a long robe and a mantle that is held by a clasp at her neck and falls over her shoulders behind her body to her knees. The inside of the mantle is decorated with scalloped bands. There are absurdly long bells to her sleeves that seem more like extended tendrils. Above her outstretched arms and around her head, there is a mound of semi-circular objects, which may be clouds or, perhaps, remnant of the plants or rocks that usually flank her body.
- PERSEUS** is standing slightly to the left and faces the viewer. He wears a short, tight-fitting tunic which ends on his knees. He holds a decapitated head by its hair in his left hand in front of him and the blade of a scythe or flattened sickle is held, upraised, in his right hand above his head. He is bearded and has short, tufted hair.
- fol. 98v **AURIGA** is standing slightly to the right wearing a short, tight-fitting tunic and with short hair. His right arm is held downwards, alongside his body. Two goats

are drawn near his right side and they clamber up to nibble on his right hand. In his left hand, he holds a U-shaped piece of skin or fabric which may be the remainder of reins or a badly-formed flail. A third goat climbs up on his right shoulder.

fol. 99r **OPHIUCHUS** is nude and stands with his lower body in left profile, but his upper body is facing the viewer, with his large nipples clearly visible. The **SERPENS** is wrapped once around his waist, so that it crosses in front of his stomach. It turns to face the man has its tongue out. The man is beardless and has long hair.

**SAGITTA** has its tip towards the right.

**AQUILA** is splayed in a quasi-heraldic fashion with its head turned to the right, and both wings and legs spread to the side. Its back is towards the viewer.

fol. 99v **DELPHINUS** swims to the left. It has two long tusks coming from its lower jaw and a plimsole line down his side.

**PEGASUS** is depicted as a whole horse, walking the right. He has a long tail. There are no wings.

fol. 100r **TRIANGULUM** consists of 2 concentric triangles, upside-down so that the base is on top.

**ARIES** is standing to the right. It has curly horns that curve inwards like an ox, a long tail and a curly fleece (denoted by S-shapes).

fol. 100v **TAURUS** is depicted as a whole bull that faces to the right. He has short curved horns and a long, bifurcated tail.

The **GEMINI** are depicted as two youths wearing short tunics that fall to their knees. They face towards each other and are either embracing or wrestling so that their respective hands rest on the other's lower back. They both have short hair.

fol. 101r **CANCER** faces towards the right and has two small semi-circular claws and 4 legs on either side. There is a stripe running in the middle of the body lengthwise and his eyes have quite prominent eyebrows.

**LEO** is lying down to the right. His tail passes between his hind legs.

fol. 101v **VIRGO** stands to the left wearing a long dress with a trailing hem and long trailing sleeves. She is not winged. She stretches both her arms to the left in front of her at chest height and holds a pair of Scales in her right hand. She has long hair parted in the middle.

**SCORPIO** faces to the right. He has two claws which touch each other so they form a lozenge shape in front of its mouth and 3, 2-toed feet on either side. It has a shield shaped body and a long, tapering tail, with heavy eyebrows over its eyes.

fol. 102r **SAGITTARIUS** is depicted as a centaur and rushes to the left. He wears a tight-fitting shirt decorated with bands on the torso and sleeves. He has a scalloped band where his human half meets his horse half. He holds his bow with his left hand and pulls the string with his right. He has a long tail.

**CAPRICORN** faces to the right and has long curved horns and a long tapering tail with a curl in it. He is bearded and holds his fore legs in front of him.

fol. 102v **AQUARIUS** kneels to the left and wears a shirt and trousers that are cropped at the calf. He has long hair, which is parted in the middle and tied in a pony-tail. He stands on his right leg and both legs are bent at right angles. In his left hand, he holds an upside-down urn decorated with parallel bands from which a stream of water is pouring. In his right hand he has a stick with a ball on top vertically.

**PISCES** swim in opposite directions, both with their backs towards the top, and are connected at their mouths by a wide band.

fol. 103r **CETUS** is a dragon-like monster facing to the right with short ears and a rumpled snout. He has two forepaws and large wings and a long tail that ends in a double corkscrew. He also has scales on his neck.

**ERIDANUS** is probably intended to depict a segment of a stream with bands of stylized water (possible Arabic influence?). In fact, it looks more like a worm formed in as S-shape.

**LEPUS** runs to the left. It has two long ears and a short tail and long whiskers.

fol. 103v **ORION** stands to the left and faces the viewer. He has a beard and is dressed in a short tunic with tight sleeves that has bands around the upper body. In his right hand, he holds out a straight sword horizontally in front of him, at his middle. In his left hand, which crosses in front of his right arm, he holds out a vertical stick with lumpy knobs at the end.

**CANIS MAIOR** runs to the right, with his tongue sticking out his mouth.

fol. 104r **CANIS MINOR** runs to the right.

**ARGO** is depicted as half a ship with the cut-off on the left side. It has a curved stern, a dome-shaped building on deck, one steering oar and a mast with a sail on it.

**CENTAURUS** leaps to the right with both his forefeet raised. His human half faces the viewer and it seems to be nude, though there are marks around his neck and down his torso that are either muscles or decorative pattern on a very tightly-fitting shirt. He has a band demarcating his human and animal parts. In his left hand, he holds a **LUPUS** (a wolf ?) upside-down on its back so its feet stick upwards into the air. His right arm is raised behind him and in that hand he holds a long, curved stick which extends over his head and along the feet of Lupus, touching the latter's feet and nose.

fol. 104v **ARA** is a cup-like object with flames coming from the top, set on or in front of a highly decorated square, which might be the base of a square altar or a rug of some sort.

**HYDRA** is depicted as a monstrous snake with a dragon's head, but no legs. It faces to the left and sticks out its tongue.

**CRATER** is oddly constructed as a diamond-shape set upon a circular shape and then resting on a trapezoidal foot.

**CORVUS** stands on Hydra's tail, facing towards Hydra's head, and not pecking.

fol. 105r: **PISCIS AUSTRINUS** swims to the left and has a long bottle-nose and an open mouth.

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**notes**

12th century; pages are vellum and scored and blocked; most of the script is miniscule but many of the passages have extended majuscule sections at the beginning or end. Also, there is a tendency to add horizontal flourishes or extend the lettering to fill the line to end paragraphs or sections. Contents are not in the same hand and, especially in the Firmicus Maternus sections, the quality of the vellum changes throughout the manuscript so that sometimes the ink looks very dry and sometimes it looks wetter. The earlier sections have a different style in the illustrations (though of the same period) and have flourished, index marks and chapter marking in red.

iii + ii (paper) + ff. 1r-2v: fragment of Euclides  
 ff. 3r-74r: Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis*  
 ff. 74v-75v: blank pages;  
 ff. 76r-112v: Hyginus, *De astronomia*, Books I-IV  
 ff. 112v-113v: *Excerptum de astrologia*.  
 fol. 114r: blank  
 fol. 115r: blank (with [\_\_\_\_\_] *liber De mathesi'* and at top)

The library has excellent reproductions of the whole manuscript on its website.

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**bibliography**

VIRE 1981, p. 168.

12th century; south of France?, ff. 76r-112r: all four books

**Notes from the Leiden website:**

<b>Shelfmark</b>	VLQ 92
<b>Title:</b>	1 (f. 1-2): Euclides, Elementa: fragmenta, latine, intermixtis nonnullis ex libro [etc.]
<b>Contents:</b>	1 (f. 1-2): Euclides, Elementa: fragmenta, latine, intermixtis nonnullis ex libro Boethii qui dicitur Geometria, quae Boethiana linea rubra transversa, deleta sunt; exstant figurae geometricae marginales.

2 (f. 3-115): Iul. Firmicus Maternus, Matheseos libb. IV. - C. Iul. Hyginus,  
Astronomica

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**Literature** Cat. 1716, p. 384  
Cat. compend. I (1932), p. 12  
Cat. De Meyier (1975), p. 210-213  
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Zie MMDC  
Zie KB, Byvanck database

