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Opusculum de ratione sphaerae (= Hyginus, *Recensio interpolata*)

English

mid-12th century

text

fol. 1v-16r Calendrical and comptistical information and tables (for details, see Saxl-Meier III 1953, 1, pp. 313-14.)

fol. 16v blank

fol. 17r (blue and white first initial and then sepia) Sol dum ignee nature sit. prenimio motu – quoniam dum patris currus imprudenter regeret terras incenderit. (= excerpt from Isidore, *Etymologia*, III, 49ff.)

(red first initial, then sepia) Luna dicta est. eo quod a sole lumen accipiat. – Ipsum vero circulum cencies maiorem esse tellure. (= excerpt from Isidore, *Etymologia*, III, 76, 56 with *scholia Sangermanensia*; cf. Breysig 1867 p. 200, line 15).

ff. 18r-22r De signis zodiaci: contains Hyginian excerpts on the zodiac signs and constellations (taken mostly from the *De Astronomia*, Book II), which are conflated with readings from Isidore, *De natura rerum* and the *scholia Sangermanensia*.

note: There are two sets of numbers at the top of the recto page: one written rather floridly in 'copperplate' pencil and one smaller number in ink. The larger, florid numbers have been used throughout since the smaller numbers only pertain to the illustrated section.

- ff. 17r-22r (with blue first initial and then black, with each chapter signalled with a red chapter heading and a blue first initial)
 Sciendum itaque est deum in ipso firmamento xii. domicilia que signa vocamus – Coniunctio eorum habet omnino stellas . xii. secundum modum prenotatum.
- ff. 22r-22v (in red) De vii. Planetis. (in black) INTER cęlum et terram certis discreta spaciis. – eadem peragit spacia. Que Saturni sydus. XXX. (= section on the 7 planets; see comments, below)
- fol. 22v (in red) De inter vallum planetis. (red first initial, then black) Intervallum a terra ad lunam musica ratione Phytagoras appellat tonum – et constat passibus · C · XXV. Millarium vero. Passibus · I · (= section on intervals between planets; see comments, below)
- ff. 23v-33v De signis coeli: contains Hyginian excerpts on the extra-zodiacal constellations (taken mostly from the *De Astronomia*, Book II) and conflated with readings from Isidore, *De natura rerum* and the *scholia Sangermanensia*.
- (in red) De involutione spere. Duo igitur sunt extremi vertices mundi quos polos appellavimus – quo beneficio simulachrum piscis. (short paragraphs on the constellations, taken from Hyginus, the *scholia Sangermanensia*, Isidore, *Etymologia* and William of Conches; cf. Saxl-Meier III 1953, 1, p. 315 and comments, below.)
- fol. 34r Cometes autem latine vocantur. quia in modum crinium flammas – ad voluntatem creatoris ad aliquid designandum accensus.
- His signis siderum notatis. si plura videas. vitio scriptoris deputa.
- (first initial in blue) Caveat itaque omnis cui forte huius opusculi de syderum ratione figurati modum transformare placuerit. ne quicquam horum signorum aliter quam hic continetur depingat. nec punctos stellarum extra prenotata loca disponat. quia in singulas notis figurarumque distinctionibus et formis. subtilis continetur intellectus. Sola vero brevitatis causa eorundem signorum formaturę stellarum que determinata loca hic scriptis nominatim non distinguuntur. (cf. Saxl-Meier III 1953, 1, p. 315; see also the notes at the end of this entry.)
- ff. 34v (first intial red) Notandum est a quatuor principalibus climatibus cęli – qua de causa tanta diversitas qualitatis in ęthere efficiatur. perpendere quis poterit.

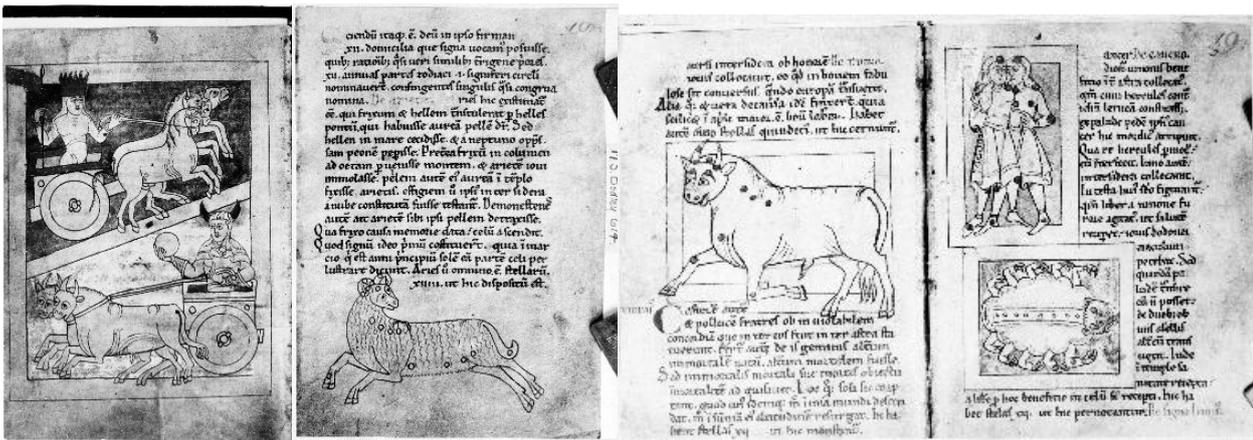
(on the 12 winds; cf. Saxl-Meier III 1953, 1, p. 316)

fol. 35r (first initial blue) Cum calor solis humorem elevat – ex eius splendore ita irradiatur. Quod diversi colores in eo apparent. (= William of Conches, *De philosophia mundi*, III, 7; cf. M. p. 172, line 77)

fol. 35v (first initial red) In aere videntur stelle aliquando cadere nulla cadente. – quia cum in alia loco quam ante esset videtur. alia stella putatur. (= William of Conches, *De philosophia mundi*, III, 12; cf. M. p. 172, line 79)

ff. 36r-51v (first initial red and blue) Colonia est intium ab antimolima – post finem vero anni omnes morte defecerunt. (*De rebus in Oriente mirabilius*; cf. Saxl-Meier, III 1953, 1, p. 316 and comments, below)

illustrations

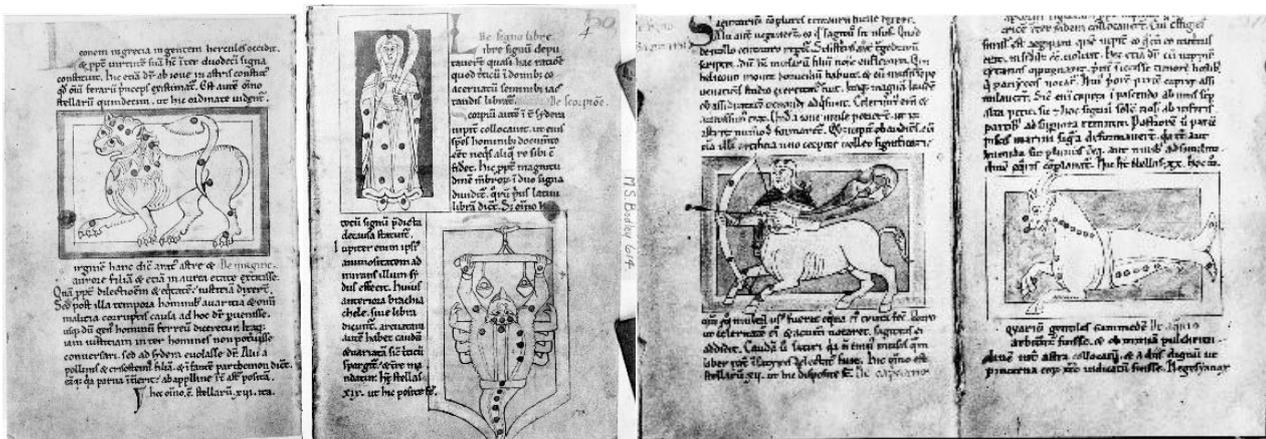


fol. 17v

fol. 18r

fol. 18v

fol. 18r



fol. 19v

fol. 20r

fol. 20v

fol. 21r



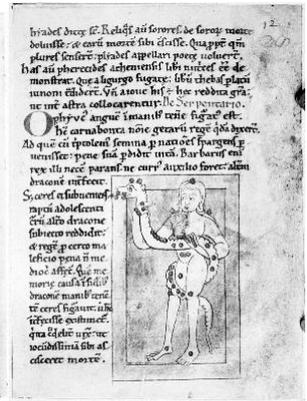
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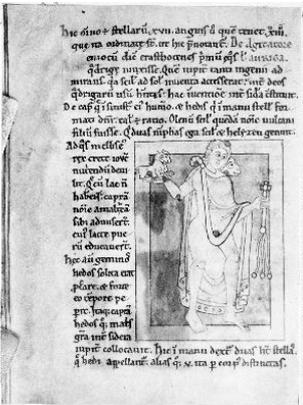
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fol. 27v



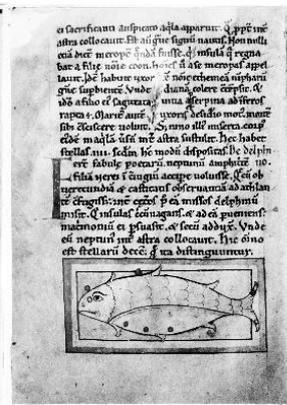
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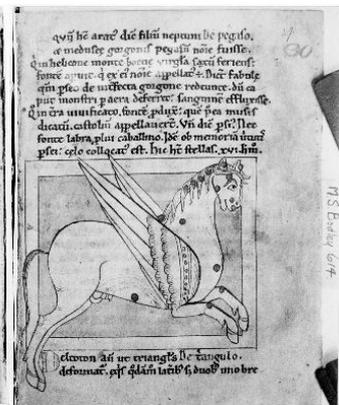
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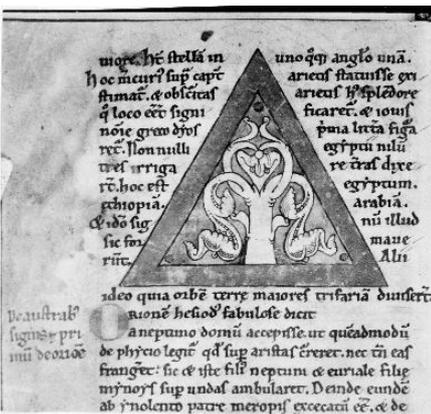
fol. 29r



fol. 29v



fol. 30r



fol. 30v



fol. 31r



fol. 31v



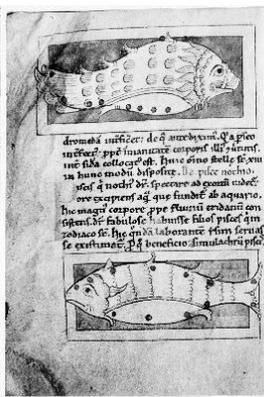
fol. 32r



fol. 32v



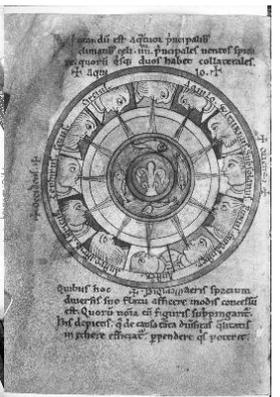
fol. 33r



fol. 33v



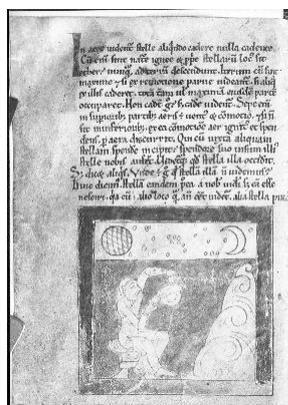
fol. 34r



fol. 34v



fol. 35r



fol. 35v

ff. 1v-2r

pictures of authors/astronomers seated in chairs, 2 per page. On fol. 1v, the top one has a crown (Ptolemy?) and the bottom one has a scroll. On fol 2r, the top one has the Moon above his left raised hand and the bottom one is measuring a **circles** above his head using a Y-shaped stick.

ff. 2v-14r

calendar with Labours of the months (pictures only for Jan. (3r: Janus eating by a fire), Feb. (4r: man warming feet by a fire and a servant with bellows) and March (5r: cutting vines) with the rest as blank frames.

fol. 17v

Sol and Luna set within a single frame, but separated by an inclined bar. Sol with a golden crown standing in a *quadriga* with a gold top and blue interior that drives to the right. He is nude and holds a spear vertically in his right hand and the reins in his left. The background is red. Luna drives to the left in a *biga* drawn by oxen. She has a veil on her head with a gold crescent moon-like horns

coming from her head. She holds a sphere in her right hand and the reins in her left hand. The background is blue.

ff. 18r-22r Coloured drawings of the 12 zodiacal constellations, with the stars marked either with open black circlets or gold dots. Some of the figures are set within frames.

fol. 23r Depiction of the 5 planets as heads set within circular frames Sol with gold two torches and a gold crown, Luna with a crescent moon on her heads and a torch and Mercury with wings on his head. The planets are labelled in red.

ff. 23v-33v Coloured drawings of 23 extra-zodiacal constellation groupings, with the stars marked with black-outlined gold dots. ARA, HYDRA, CORVUS and CRATER are missing, but there are depictions of the PLEIADES and the HYADES.

The text of both sections on the constellations wraps around the frames in such a way as to suggest that it was written after the space for the pictures was blocked out. The constellations of the southern hemisphere do not follow the normal Hyginian order. For more information, see the comments, below.

fol. 34r Picture of a golden comet set within a double-framed circle against a red background.

fol. 34v 12 winds blowing on a central Earth. All are labelled in red except for the northern wind, which is in blue.

fol . 35r A rainbow in full colour (gold, red, pink, gold, yellow, dark green, blue, green).

fol. 35v Picture of an astronomer studying the Sun, stars and Moon with an astrolabe.

ff. 37r-51v Numerous drawings of fantastic animals, etc. from the East

fol. 18r **ARIES** leaps to the left, but turns its head back to the right and looks upwards. He has tightly curled horns, a fleecy coat and a long tail. He has 6 black circlets in the head, 4 on the shoulder, 3 in the belly, 1 on the right forefoot and 1 on the left haunch and 1 in the tail, or 16 stars in all.

fol. 18v **TAURUS** is framed and is a full bull that trots to the left with his left foreleg bent under him. He has 1 gold star in each horn, 1 at the base of each horn, 1 in

its head, 1 above each eye, 3 on the back, 1 in the chest, 1 on each knee and 1 on the right forefoot, or 14 stars in all.

fol. 18r **GEMINI** are framed against a yellow background and are depicted as two young men in three-quarter length tunics, who stand so closely together that their legs over lap. They hold their heads together and have their inner arms around each other's shoulder. The left Twin raises his right hand in salutation and the right Twin points at the left Twin with his left hand. The left Twin has 1 star in the head, 1 in the left shoulder, 1 in the right elbow, 1 in each knee and 1 on his right foot, or 6 stars in all. The right Twin has 1 star in the head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on each nipple, 1 in the left elbow, 1 on each knee and 1 on each foot, or 10 stars in all.

CANCER is framed in yellow against a green background is a 12-lobed oval-bodied creature with a lion's face. It has 5 muscular claws on each side and a pronounced anus. It has 1 star on its mouth, 2 on its head, 3 stars in its right front claw, 2 in its left front claw, 1 on his first three right feet, 2 on the first left leg, 1 on the second left leg and 1 on the third left leg, or 15 stars in all.

fol. 19v **LEO** is framed in red against a blue background and walks to the left with his right forepaw raised. His mouth is open and his tail curled between its legs. He has 3 stars in its head, 2 on the neck, 3 on the shoulder, 1 on the chest, 1 on the right forefoot, 1 in the right forefoot, 1 in the haunches, 2 in the left hind leg and 1 in the middle of the tail and 1 at the end of the tail, or 15 stars in all.

fol. 20r **VIRGO** is framed against a red background and stands facing the viewer dressed in a long robe with a hooded mantle over her head. She raises her left hand in a gesture of salutation and holds a palm frond in front of her chest with her left hand. She has no wings. There is 1 star in her forehead, 1 in each hand, 2 in each sleeve, 5 on her dress and 1 on each foot, or 14 stars in all.

SCORPIO is framed in blue against a green background and is placed so that his head faces the top of the page. He has two human arms instead of claws and a dragon's face with its tongue sticking out. He has 4 legs on each side and a tapering tail. He holds the Scales in his front hands with the pans coming towards his head. He has 1 star in each hand, 1 in each shoulder, 3 in his head, 5 on his back, and at least 7 on his tail (which is cut off at the end of the page), or at least 19 stars. There are also two open circlets in the pans of the Scales which may be stars.

- fol. 20v **SAGITTARIUS** is set within a green frame against a yellow background and prances to the left. He is bearded and wears a tight-fitting green shirt on his human half. He also has a long red cloak that flutters out behind him. He holds the bow in his right hand and pulls the string with his left. He has 2 stars in the head, 1 on the right elbow, 1 on the right hand, 2 in the bow, 1 in the arrow, 1 on each front knee and 1 on each front hoof, 1 on the tail and 2 in the cloak, or 14 stars in all.
- fol. 21r **CAPRICORN** is framed and set against a green background. He faces to the left and raises his right forefoot. He has curved horns and a fringe along his jaw line. His posterior part is shaped like a fish. He has 2 stars on the nose, 7 in the neck, 2 on the chest, 5 on the belly, 2 at the end of the tail and 2 on the right fore foot, or 20 stars in all.
- fol. 21v **AQUARIUS** is set within a yellow frame against a blue background and crouches/sits facing the viewer and looks to the right. He has long hair and his torso is nude. He wears a drape around his hips. He holds the vase in his lap, resting his right hand on its base and his left hand on its neck. It pours water to the right, which then snakes back under his feet. He has 2 stars in his head, 1 above each shoulder, 1 on each nipple, 2 on his right hand (the star which ought to be below the right nipple has migrated to the right hand), 1 on his left elbow, 1 on his lap, and 1 on each foot, or at least 12 stars in all.
- fol. 22r **PISCES** are framed and set against a red background. They are swimming in opposite directions both with their backs upwards. They are connected at the mouth with a cord. There are 17 stars in the top fish, 12 in the cord and 10 on the bottom fish, or 39 stars in all.
- fol. 24r **DRACO INTER ARCTOS** is set within a circular frame and against a gold background. **DRACO** has a dragon's head and 4 bends in his body. He has pointed ears, a ruff around his chin an open mouth with sharp teeth and faces to the left. The Bears are back-to-back, face in opposite directions and both face outwards from the body of **DRACO**. **DRACO** has 5 stars in his head and 10 in his body, or 15 stars in all.
- URSA MINOR** has a long tail and is set within the third bend. **URSA MINOR** has 3 stars in his tail and 1 in the thigh of each leg, or 7 stars in all.

URSA MAIOR also has a long tail is set within the fourth bend, standing on Draco's tail. URSA MAIOR has 9 stars in the head, 4 in the body, 6 in the legs and 3 on the tail, or at least 19 stars.

BOOTES stands to the left of the circular frame holding *DRACO INTER ARCTOS*, but holds his left hand out in front of him so it seems that he is like a ring master, presenting his act. He stands facing the viewer, wearing a knee-length tunic with long loose sleeves. He has a beard and holds a club above his head with his right hand. He has 1 star in his head, 1 in each shoulder, 1 on each nipple, 1 on his belly, 2 in his left hand, 1 in his right elbow and 1 on each foot, or 11 stars in all.

CORONA BOREALIS is a circle of 10 stars that is surrounded by a circular frame. It is held in the left hand of a standing female figure, whose hair is covered with a wimple and has a halo around her head. She holds a plant in her right hand. She resembles a depiction of VIRGO. The female figure is set within a rectangular frame and has gold on her plant and the insides of her sleeves.

fol. 24v

HERCULES is set within a red frame against a green background and stands to the right wearing a knee-length tunic with loose sleeves. He faces the viewer and raises his left leg as though he is trying to balance himself. He holds a knobby club upraised in his right hand and in his left hand, he holds a small dragon by its belly, so that its head faces downwards and its back is towards the hero. The dragon is winged with a long curved tail and two legs. It opens its mouth towards Hercules. Hercules has 1 star in his head, 1 in each shoulder, 1 in his right elbow, 1 in his right hand, 2 in his waist, 4 in his skirt, 2 in his right knee and 1 in each foot and 4 in the dragon, or 19 stars in all.

fol. 25r

LYRA is not framed and is shaped like a *bucranium*, though the curves do not make much sense, with curled upper supports and 10 strings attached to pegs. There are two sounding holes. It has 1 star on the tip of each arm, 2 in the middle, 1 on each side of the shell, 1 on each shoulder and 1 at the base, or 9 stars in all.

CYGNUS is framed and against a blue background standing in profile to the left with its very long neck bent so that the head is carried quite low. Its wings are raised above its head. There are 2 stars in the left wing and 3 in the right one, 1 star in the head, 1 in the neck and 1 in the tail, or 8 stars in all.

fol. 25v **CEPHEUS** sits within a frame against a red background in a low-backed throne on a pillow with gold trim. He wears a gold crown and holds a gold sceptre vertically in his left hand. He wears long robes and has a mantle fastened with a pin at his neck. His mantle hangs over his shoulders and down over his throne. His arms are held out to either side, but bent at the elbow. He has 2 stars on top of his crown, 1 above each shoulder, 3 in his belt, 1 in left knee, 3 in each foot, 1 on his right elbow and 1 on his right hand, 1 on the right side, 3 at his waist, 1 in the left knee, 3 in each foot, and 1 at the bottom of his sceptre (which might have migrated from the left hand), or at least 18 stars.

fol. 26r **CASSIOPEIA** sits within a frame against a yellow background in a low-backed throne on a pillow. She wears a gold crown with a wimple underneath and a long robe with a mantle that hangs over her shoulders and falls down over his throne. She holds her hands out to either side, but her arms are bent at the elbows so they form a 'W'. She may have 1 star in her head (but it is lost within the gold of the crown), 1 on each corner of the throne, 1 in each shoulder, 1 in her right breast, 1 in her lap (or navel), 1 on her left knee, and 1 on right foot, or at least 10 stars.

fol. 26v **ANDROMEDA** is set within a frame against a green background and stands facing the viewer. She is nude to the waist with her breasts and ribs displayed. She wears a long skirt that has a knotted belt at the waist and decorative panels down the sides. Her elbows are held out to her sides, with her forearms and hands hanging vertically downwards. There is a rope that runs horizontally at the level of her waist (but is not connected to anything) that knots around each wrist. Her head is exposed. She has 1 star in her head, 1 in each shoulder, 4 above the rope and 2 in the rope, 1 on each elbow, 1 on her left forearm, 1 on each hand, 1 on each knee, and 1 on each foot, or 18 stars in all.

PERSEUS is set within a frame against a blue background and stands facing the viewer, twisted slightly to the left. He wears a knee-length tunic and has a long cape pinned at his right shoulder that flutters out in front of him. He has wings on his head and on his feet. In his right hand, he raises a large *harpe* up behind his head and holds the snake-haired Medusa's head lower, behind him, with his left hand. He has 2 stars on his waist, 1 on the left thigh, 1 on the left knee, 2 on the lower left leg, 2 in his lower right leg and 1 on his right foot and 4 in the Medusa's head, or 13 stars in all.

- fol. 27r The **Pleiades** are depicted as the busts of 7 women set within circular frames all of whose heads are covered except for the central one, which has red hair. The whole group is then framed within a single circular frame. They are labelled: MEROPE CELENA ASTEROPE, MAYA, ALTIONE, TAYGETE and (in the middle) AELECTRA. Each has a star on her head.
- fol. 27v The Hyades are the busts of 7 women set within circular frames all of whose heads are covered. They are labelled: ANBROSIA, EUDORA, PHYDYLE, CHRONIS, PLYXO PHYETO and (in the middle) THYENA. Each has a star on her head. (Hyginus's edited text provides: Ambrosia, Eudora, Pedile, Coronis Polyxo, Phyto and Thyone)
- fol. 28r **OPHIUCHUS** stands within a yellow frame against a green background and facing the viewer, but slightly to the left. He is nude and holds the **SERPENS** in a complicated way. He holds its head up with his right hand (its dog-face faces away from him), it then runs down his right side and crosses in front of his chest, here he holds its body with his left hand. It then curls over his left forearm and back, behind his hips, and then around the front of his right thigh, passing between his legs and ending in back of his right thigh and foot. The Serpent-holder has 1 star on his head, 1 each shoulder, 2 on his belly, 1 on his right thigh, 1 on each knee, 1 on each foot, 4 in his right hand and 3 on his left hand, or 17 stars in all. The Serpent has 2 stars on the top of his head, 4 around his tongue, 5 on the body in the first curve, 5 in the middle of the body, 6 in the curve towards the tail, or 22 stars in all.
- fol. 28v **AURIGA** stands within a frame and against a yellow background and facing the viewer, turned slightly to the right. He is nude except for a long mantle that is caught in a bunch on his right shoulder and covers the left part of his chest and much of his left arm. He holds two small goats upraised in his right hand and, in his left hand, he holds a flail with three thongs upside-down. On his left shoulder, there is small animal's head that appears in profile. **AURIGA**'s body is drawn in red ink, and the rest in black ink. He has 1 star in his head, 2 on each shoulder, 1 in his right elbow and 2 in the right hand and 1 in his cape, or 7 stars in all.
- fol. 29r **SAGITTA** is a red arrow that flies to the right with 4 stars marked.

AQUILA is within a frame against a blue background and stands facing the left with its wings raised to either side. It has 1 star in its head, 1 in each wing and 1 in its tail, or 4 stars in all.

fol. 29v **DELPHINUS** is set within a yellow frame and is a fat fish that swims to the left. It has 3 stars in its head, 3 in the belly, 1 on the back and 2 on its tail, or 9 stars in all. There is a smudge beneath its belly that may be another star.

fol. 30r **PEGASUS** is set within a frame against a pink background and it is a full-bodied, winged horse that leaps to the right. Its wings are decorated at the shoulder. It has 1 star in each ear, 2 on the snout, 1 on the head, 1 at the jaw, 4 in the mane, 1 on the shoulder, 1 on the back, 1 in its chest, 1 on each front knee and 1 on its belly or navel, or 16 stars in all.

fol. 30v **TRIANGULUM** is two-concentric gold triangles with a leafy plant inside. It has 3 stars, 1 in each corner.

fol. 31r **ORION** is set within the central arc of a 3-arched architectural structure with small turret on the outer arches (compare illustrations of this constellation in the **Cicero manuscripts**). The inside of the central arch is blue and there is a good deal of gold detailing in the architecture. He stands facing the viewer and turned slightly to the right. He is dressed a long robe with a long mantle that is caught with a pin at his breast. He holds a knobby club above his head with his right hand and holds his left hand in front of his chest. He wears a belt and a sword and scabbard at his waist. He has 3 stars in his head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 in his right elbow, 2 at his waist, 3 in the sword, 1 in each knee and 1 in each foot, or 15 stars in all.

fol. 31v **LEPUS** is set within a frame against a red background and leaps upwards to the right. He has 2 stars in each ear, 2 in his hind feet, 1 on his back, 1 on his neck and 1 on his tail, or 7 stars in all.

CANIS MAIOR is set within a green frame against a yellow background and leaps to the right. His mouth is open and he has a studded collar. He has 1 star in his mouth, 1 on his forehead, 1 in each ear, 3 on his back, 2 in his chest, 3 on his left foreleg and 1 on his right foreleg, 1 on his genitals, 1 in his right hind leg and 4 on his tail, or 19 stars in all.

- fol. 32r **CANIS MINOR** is placed vertically within a red frame and against a blue background with its mouth open. It has 3 stars on its belly.
- ARGO** is not framed and is half a ship whose timbers have clearly been cut half-way through the hull at the right side. It has a mast with a full sail and a rope between the mast and the stern. There are 2 steering oars and an animal's head on the tip of the stern. The hull and cross beams are yellow. It has 5 stars on the deck, 1 on the first steering oar, 4 on the second steering oar, 4 along the keel, and 3 in the mast, or 21 stars in all.
- fol. 32v **ERIDANUS** is framed and set against a yellow background. He crouches to the right. He is nude, but has a long drape around his lower half. He holds the upturned red urn in his lap, holding the base with his right hand and the neck with his left. It pours green water in front of him, which then turns back under his left and then under his right foot. Beneath his feet, there is a large gold star within a circular frame against a green background and it is labelled: **STELLA CANOPUS**. Eridanus has 3 stars in his urn, 3 stars at the first bend of the water and 7 from the second bend to the last bend, or 13 stars in all.
- fol. 32r **CENTAURUS** is framed and walks to the left with his right foreleg raised. He is bearded and his human part is nude, except for an animal-skin cloak (complete with head and two front legs) that flows from his shoulders. He has a band where his two halves meet. He holds a flowering stick vertically in his left hand and, in his right hand, he holds an upside-down **LUPUS** (a rabbit?) extended in front of him by its heels. He has 3 stars in his head, 1 on each shoulder, 2 in the animal skin (at the point where it connects to the shoulders), 2 in chest, 1 on his left elbow, 1 on his left hand, 1 in the horse's chest, 1 in each foreleg, 1 on the horse's belly, 2 on each hind leg and 3 in the tail, or 22 stars in all. **Lupus** has 2 stars in its hind legs, 2 on its tail, 3 on its head and 2 on its right forefoot, or 9 stars in all.
- fol. 33v **CETUS** is set within a frame against a red background and is a very fat fish with tusks coming from his lower jaw and he swims to the right. He has 6 stars below the belly, 5 on the back, 2 in the end of the tail, or 13 stars in all.
- PISCIS AUSTRINUS** is a fat fish that swims to the left. It has 12 stars.

notes

The section on the twelve zodiacal constellations precedes the rest of the constellations (unlike **Digby 83**, where they follow the Hyginian order). The constellations of the southern hemisphere do not follow the normal Hyginian order, with CETUS being misplaced and ARA, HYDRA, CRATER and CORVUS missing.

Also, note that this text does not actually mention the position of the stars, but the scribe certainly had access to a star catalogue that is not included in this manuscript. Saxl-Meier notes the ‘same texts’ appear in **Oxford Digby 83** [not exactly] and say it represents an amalgam of sources.

They also draw attention to the notes added to fol. 34r:

Caveat itaque omnis, cui forte huius opusculi de syderum ratione figurati modum transformare placuerit, ne quicquam horum signorum aliter quam hic continetur depingat, nec punctos stellarum extra pernotata loca disponat, quia in singulis notis figurarumque distinctionibus et formis subtilis continetur intellectus. Sola vero brevitatis causa eorundem signorum formatura stellarumque determinata loca hic scriptis nominatim non distinguntur.

(Those who might be inclined to change the art and nature of this small illustrated treatise on the order (*ratio*) of the stars should be aware not to present these constellations differently from how they are shown here, and also not to place the points of the stars outside the accurately marked places, because each mark with regard to order and shape of the figures has been obtained by careful consideration (*subtilis intellectus*). For the sake of shortness only have these constellations and the precise places of the stars not been described explicitly in the text).

Dieter Blume (forthcoming, chapter 5) notes that Oxford Bodl 614 is the older ms; notes that the figures are framed and that the stars are added in gold. He also notes the iconographic similarity to the **Sagra di San Michele**. [only in the Scorpio with the Scales, as far as I can see] Referring to the above citation, he suggests that the images and not the text have primacy of attention here. Both the shapes of the figures and the positions of the stars are more important.

The text on the zodiacal signs is from Hyginus, *De Astronomia*, II, Isidore, *De natura rerum* and *scholia Sangermanensia*. Making a closer examination of just the first four zodiacal constellations, however, one can see it is slightly more complicated than that:

black = cannot find another source

red = Hyginus II

yellow = Hyginus III

blue = Isidore

green = scholia Sangermanensia

fuschia = scholia Stroziana

_____ - not sure of reading

Aries (fol. 18r): *Aries hic existimatur esse. qui frixum & hellem transtulerat per helles pontum. qui habuisse auream pelle dicitur. Sed hellen in mare cecidisse. & a neptuno oppressam peonem peperisse. Preterea frixum in columnam ad oetem pervenisse montem. & arietem iovi immolasse.* Pellem autem eius auream in templo fixisse arietis. effigiem vero ipsius inter sidera a nube constitutam fuisse testantur. Demosthenes autem ait arietem sibi ipsi pellem detraxisse. Qua frixo causa in memorie data: celum ascendit. Quod signum ideo primum constituerunt. Quia in marcio qui est anni principium solem eam partem celi perlustrare dicunt. Aries vero omnino est stellarum xviii. ut hic dispositum est.

Taurus (fol. 18v): [T]aurum inter sidera ob honorem iovis collocavit. eo quod in bovem fabulose sit conversus.¹ quando europam transvexit. Alia quoque & vera de causa idem finxerunt. Quia scilicet in aprili maior esse bovum labor. Habet autem omnino stellas quindecim.² Ut hic cernuntur.

Gemini (ff. 18v-19r): Castorem autem & pollucem fratres ob in violabitem concordiam que inter eos fuit inter astra statuerunt. Fertur _____ de is geminis alterum immortalem natum, alterum mortalem fuisse. Sed immortalis mortali sue mortis obiectu immortaliter ad qui _____. Loc quoque soli sic coaptant. quod unius idemque mo in intra mundi descendat. mo in summam aius altitudinem resurgat. Hi habent stellas xii. in hic monstratur.

¹ The phrase: *quod in bovem fabulose sit conversus* also appears in the *scholia Stroziana*, *scholia Sangermensia* and in Bede, *De natura rerum*, (PL, XC, col. 0232a

² In Hyginus, the *Revised Aratus latinus* and the *scholia Stroziana* and *scholia Sangermanensia*, Taurus is given 18 stars. The only sources that give him 15 stars are the *scholia Basileensia* and the *De ordine ac positone stellarum in signis*.

Cancer (fol. 19r): **Dicitur iunonis beneficio inter astra collocatus. qm cum Hercules contra idram lerneam consticisset. Ex palude pedem ipsius cancer his mordicus arripuit. Quare Hercules permortum eum interfecit. Iuno autem inter sidera collocavit. In testa huius ideo** figurantur quam libera á iunone furore agitatus. Ire salutem reciperet. **iovis dodonei oraculum** petebat. **Sed quandam paludem transire eum non posset. de duobus obviis asellis** alterum transverxerit. Inde in templo ____ recepta a libero per hoc beneficio in celum ____ recepti. Hic habet stelas xii. ut hic pernoscantur.

And if one also examines the sections on the extra-zodiacal constellations, a slightly different mix reveals itself.

Engonasin quem eratosthenes herculem dicit fabulose paratus as cercandum conspicitur. Dum enim ab euristheo ad hesperidum ortum poma mitteretur. Serpentem cuius oculis nunquam calvis ____ fuisse existimabantur interfecit. **Quorum pugnam iupiter ad miratus inter astra constituit.** Hic in manu dextra .i. stellam **habet qua claram dicitur. In sinistra vero iiii quas pellem leones nonnulli esse dixerunt.** & alias .xv. per corpus secundum h__c modum dispositas.

Lyra ido__ dicitur **inter siderum** collocata esse. Quia primum **facta a mercurio de testudine: orpheo tradita est. qui calliope & oagri filius. Huius rei maxime fuit studiosus. Existimatur etiam sua modulatione feras ad se audiendum provocasse.** Qui apud inferos mortuam **uxorem eurydicen querens descenditur & ibi deorum progeniem suo carmine laudavit excepto libero patre. Hunc enim oblivioni tradidit. Postea Orpheus ut complures dixerunt in olympo monte qui macedoniam dividit a thracia sedens.** cum cantu delectaretur. vidit eum **liber et obiecit bacchas quae illum** interficerent et membra discernerent. Inde muse ad eum accesserunt. Ut **membra ipsius collecta sepulture** traderent. Lyram vero cuius maxime beneficio potens ex ____ inter sidera stellis figurate constituerunt. Tamen **iovis q__ apollinis** assensu. Sunt in lyra stellę. ix. In hac modum annotatę.

Hunc cignum greci sic appellavertur. Latini vero olorem. **Quem complures propter ignotam illis historiam communi nomine avium appellaverunt omni. Memorie est hec prodita est causa.** Iupiter cum nemesym diligeret nec ab ea copiam sui inpetraret. Hac arte se ab amore illo expediri temptavit. **lubet enim venerem** in aquila converti. sequi ipsum in aera convertit. Cum solum in eum rapax aquila in petum fecisset. Ad nemesym configitur et in ipsum gremio se collocabit. Quę non aspernata amplexus ipsius sino ____ consopit ____ & ab eo compressa ____ quo complexu **nemesy iovum procreavit quod mercurius spartam detulit & ledę in gremium proiecit ex quo helenam** genitur. quam ____ **leda filiam suam** appellavit. Alii

iovam cum leda in specie cigni dicitur *concupisse*. Quod ne falsum videretur incipoter in celo cignum volantem & aquilam sequentem collocvit. Hinc omnino sunt stellę. viii. Its dispositę.

In the section on the extra-zodiacal constellations, there is very little evidence of the author having taken material from either Isidore or any of the *scholia*. But, as with the section on the zodiacal constellations, most of the text has been taken or adapted from Book II of the *De Astronomia*, with some of the star descriptions lifted from Book III. By-in-large, though, it would seem a mistake to describe this text as being merely ‘Hyginian excerpts’. Indeed, the way in which this material has been restructured and amplified sets it quite apart from its model and places it on a par with the other medieval compilations, such as the ps-Bedan *De signis caeli*, the text of *De ordine ac positone stellarum in signis* or, for that matter, the *Revised Aratus latinus* itself. One only has to compare the processes involved in creating the text for this set of manuscripts with that used to create a compilation such as the true ‘Hyginian *excerpta*’, Vat Reg. Lat 123. In the latter, appropriate phrases from a number of authors are brought together under the headings for each constellations. They are not abridged, the ordering of the words is not changed and there is no new material. The author of the Oxford manuscripts, however, seems to have been intent upon creating something new. In recognition of this effort, one should probably make a plea that this piece be recognised as a kind of ‘*Hyginus recensio interpolata*’.

bibliography

GUNTHER 1923, II, pp. 4, 28, 221.

JAMES 1929, *passim*.

PANOFSKY-SAXL 1933, pp. 238, 240-41, fig. 15.

classical origin of the figure is less recognizable and it ‘hardly differs from a Romanesque Saint Michael fighting the dragon or a decorative figure on a contemporary capital’.

WEBSTER 1938, p. 173.

BOASE 1951, pls. 8 and 10.

BOASE 1953, p. 86

SAXL-MEIER III 1953, 1, xxvi, xxliii, 313-16.

first half 12th c, English, parchment, 51 ff, 14.5 x 10 cm; Numerous parts of the contents are shared with Digby 83

SAXL 1957, p. 99.

'**Harley 647** is a ms purely classical character which was brought over from France' it was copied into **Cotton Tib BV**; **Cotton Tib C I**, **Harley 2506**, **Bodley 614** and **Digby 83**; (p. 108) written and illuminated in the 1st ½ of the 12th c both it and Digby 83 (in the neighbourhood of Winchester about 1150) preserve modernised versions of Cicero, but also both have the information on the missing constellations taken from Hyginus (he illustrates **Walters W 734**), and at the end, the author 'says explicitly that these images are not to be drawn indiscriminately as they indicate certain positions of the stars in the sky and should therefore be carefully copied'. Text is a new concoction of several sources, mainly from Hyginus; contains some passages from William of Conches; impressed with the new discoveries in Spain that passed via France, centralised in Chartres (where William taught); (p. 109) in Digby 83, the material is better arranged and the chapters that precede the constellation are entirely new and untraditional with mention of Arabic names of the 28 lunar mansions; Hebrew and Arabic names of the planets; and a reference to astrological theory; illustrations are more refined than Bodley 614, but pretty conventional throughout; the new parts are not illustrated at all; he says this marks an end point of the great classical tradition, which began at the monastic reform.

MALONE 1963, p. 115.

McGURK IV 1966, xxiii.

shares generic qualities with other *Hyginus excerpta*, Digby 83; shows variation in the conformism of Hyginus illustrations, but text they accompany are only partly from Hyginus

PÄCHT and ALEXANDER 1970, I, no 156.

British, 12th c middle; copies a prototype of eleventh century, probably BM Cotton Tib BV; prov. Ralph Hopwoode, 16th century

VIRÉ 1981, p. 162, n. 1.

a Hyginus fragment, beginning 12th century; copied into Amiens 222.

BLUME (forthcoming = see notes above).

consulted 22.10.04