

Oxford

Bodleian Library

Can class lat 179

Hyginus, *De astronomia*

North Italian

third-quarter 15th century

textff. 1r-41v Hyginus, *De astronomia*, Books I- IV (with Book III illustrated).

The books are not in the correct order, running:

Book I, preface and chapters

Book II, preface and chapters

Book III, last line (not eliding into the next section, which is clearly demarcated)

Book IV, chapters

Book III, chapters (which are incomplete and in the wrong order, see below)

(note: even though the end of Book IV is clearly marked FINIS on fol. 27v, it is difficult to see how the chapters of Book III could have been included within this volume. Book I flows into Book II on fol. 3v; Book II flows into the misplaced line from Book III and the beginning of Book IV on fol. 19v and this runs uninterrupted until the end of Book IV. As the quality of the vellum for ff. 28r-41v (the chapters for Book III) is slightly more yellow than those forming ff. 1r-27v and the handwriting is different (lighter colour, denser script, with different forms for the abbreviations), it seems likely that this fragmentary and disorganised section was taken from a different manuscript altogether and was appended to the preceding folii to make up for the fact that they lacked the chapters of Book III.)

- ff. 1r- 1v (first initial gold with white vine decoration and red, blue and green infill, then to black)
 ET SI te studio grammaticę artis inductum non solum versuum moderatione – et intium rerum demonstrabimus. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, I, preface; cf. Viré 1992, pp.1-4)
- ff. 2r-3v (first initial red, then black with alternating red and blue capitals for the beginning of each chapter) MUNDUS appellatur is qui constat ex Sole et Luna – in simili causa posse constitui suspicamur. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, I, 1-9; cf. Viré 1992, p. 5-13)
- ff. 3v-4r (first initial blue, then black with alternating red and blue capitals for the beginning of each chapter) Sed quoniam quę nobis de terrę positione dicenda fuerunt – ad delectationem afferent lectori. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, II, preface; cf. Viré 1992, p. 14.)
- ff. 4r-19v (first initial red, then black with alternating red and blue capitals for the beginning of each chapter) IGitur ut supradiximus initium est nobis arctos maxima – Nos autem omnium corporum deformationem dicere instituimus. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, II, 1- 43; cf. Viré 1992, p. 15-94)
- fol. 19v Quę ad figurationem syderum pertinent. ad hunc finem nobis erunt dicta. Reliqua protinus dicemus. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, III, 40: cf. Viré 1992, p. 124)
- ff. 19v- 27v (first initial gold with green, blue and red background, then to black with alternating red and blue capitals for the chapters) QUoniam initio sperę circuli .v. – Annum autem volverunt esse sum Sol ab ęstivo circulo redit. FINIS. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, IV, 1- 19; cf. Viré 1992, pp. 125-57)
- ff. 28r-41v IGITUR incipiens apolo boreo protinus dicere – et ita est omnino numerous stellarum decem et novum. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, III, 1-23; cf. Viré 1992, p. 95-111)

(note: the text and the pictures of Book III are wildly out of order. The current order of the text is as follows, with the proper order in brackets:

- fol. 28r Ursa Maior [1], Ursa Minor [2]
 fol. 28v Draco [3], Bootes [4]

fol. 29r	Hydra [41] Crater [42] Corvus [43]
fol. 29v	Piscis Austrinus [44]
fol. 30r	Sagittarius [27]
fol. 30v	Capricorn [28]
fol. 31r	Cetus [31]
fol. 32v	Eridanus [32]
fol. 32r	Canis Maior [35], Canis Minor [36]
fol. 32v	Navis [37]
fol. 33r	Lyra [6]
fol. 33v	Cygnus [7]
fol. 34r	Cepheus [8]
fol. 34v	Cassiopeia [9]
fol. 35r	Andromeda [10]
fol. 35v	Perseus [11]
fol. 36r	Auriga [12]
fol. 36v	Ophiuchus and Serpens [13, 14]
fol. 37r	Corona [4]
fol. 37v	Hercules [5]
fol. 38r	Sagitta [15], Aquila [16]
fol. 38v	Delphinus [17]
fol. 39r	Centaurus and Lupus [38, 39]
fol. 39v	Ara [40]
fol. 40r	Pegasus [18]
fol. 40v	Triangulum [19] and Aries [20]
fol. 41r	Cancer [23]
fol. 41v	Leo [24]

There is no text for: TAURUS, GEMINI, VIRGO, SCORPIO, AQUARIUS, PISCES, LEPUS and ORION.

One can see how, with the exception of ff. 33r-36v, all of the sheets have been inserted to odd places as individual folios. This hypothesis is upheld by the physical make-up of the manuscript:

ff. 29 r-v, 31r-v, 32r-v are single sheets

ff. 28r-v and 40r-v are integral sheets

ff. 30r-v and 39r-v are integral sheets

ff. 37r-v and 38r-v are integral sheets

ff. 34r-v and 35r-v are integral sheets, placed within the integral sheets of 33r-v and 36r-v

ff.41r-v appears to be connected to ff.27r-v, but actually is a single sheet that has been pasted to the end of the other section at a later date)

(The original explicit for Book III can be found on fol. 29v: cum piscibus sed est stellarum omnino duodecim. (= Hyginus, *De astronomia*, III, 40; cf. Viré 1992, p. 124))

illustrations



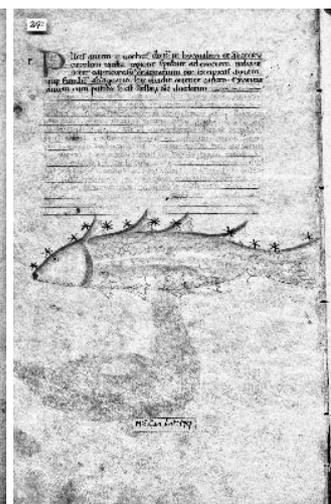
fol. 28r



fol. 28v



fol. 29r



fol. 29v



fol. 30r



fol. 30v



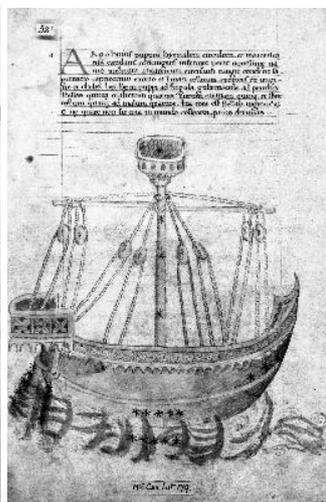
fol. 31r



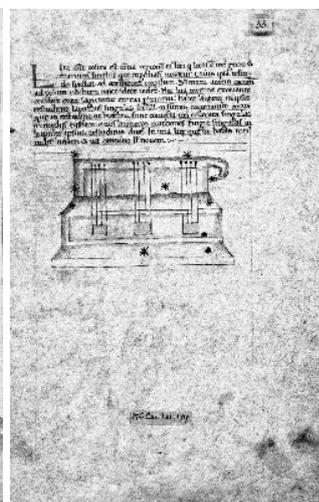
fol. 31v



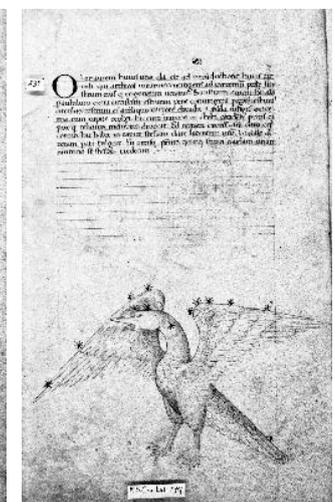
fol. 32r



fol. 32v



fol. 33r



fol. 33v



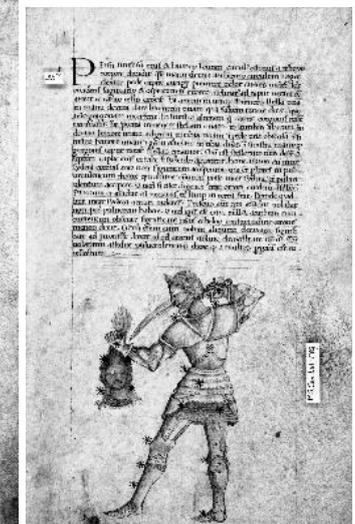
fol. 34r



fol. 34v



fol. 35r



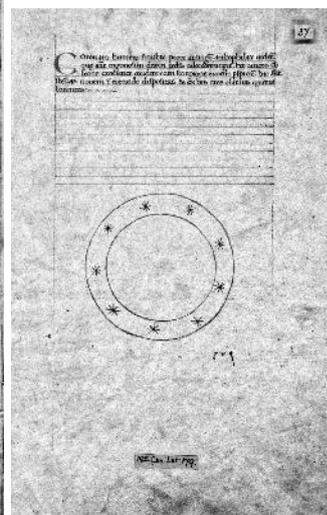
fol. 35v



fol. 36r



fol. 36v



fol. 37r



fol. 37v



fol. 38r



fol. 38v



fol. 39r



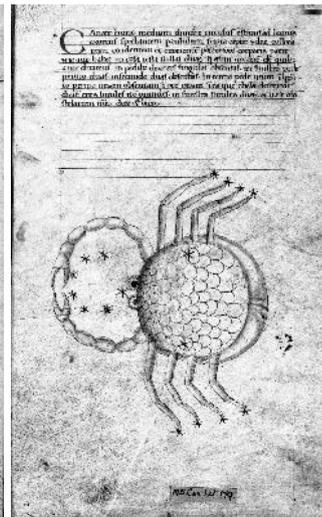
fol. 39v



fol. 40r



fol. 40v



fol. 41r



fol. 41v

ff. 28r-29v

Coloured pen drawings of 29 constellation groupings with the stars marked with red star shapes. There are no depictions of TAURUS, GEMINI, VIRGO, SCORPIO, AQUARIUS, PISCES, LEPUS and ORION. In general, each illustrated page is devoted to a single constellation (the exceptions being *DRACO INTER ARCTOS*, *HYDRA/CRATER/CORVUS*, *CANIS MAIOR/CANIS MINOR*, *SAGITTA/AQUILA* and *TRIANGULUM/ARIES*) with the relevant texts from Book III. The confused order of the pictures, therefore, follows the text as outlined above.

fol. 28r

DRACO INTER ARCTOS with **DRACO** (green and blue with a pink tongue) depicted as a dragon-headed snake with 3 bends in his body and a small curl at the end of his tail. His head placed towards the bottom of the page. His head faces to the left and has a pointed snout, pointed ears and his pink tongue is sticking out. The bears are set back-to-back and face into the curves. They are both about the same size. Both have short tails.

URSA MINOR (pale tan) stands in the second bend and **URSA MAIOR** (pale tan) stands alongside the third bend. **DRACO** has 5 stars in the head and 10 along the body, or 15 stars in all. **URSA MINOR** has 4 stars in its feet and 3 on its tail, or 7 stars in all. **URSA MAIOR** has 2 stars on the snout, 5 above the head, 4 above its neck, 2 in its right forefoot and 3 in its hind feet, or 16 stars in all.

fol. 28v

BOOTES faces the viewer and is standing to the right wearing a short blue jerkin and crimson leggings with the yellow lacings of the leggings visible. He has blonde hair and holds a curved green club behind his head with his right hand

and has a teardrop-shaped tan shield in his left hand that is held out in front of him so that it covers his arm from his elbow to his hand. He rests his left foot on a tan box. He has 1 star in his head, 1 above each shoulder, 1 in his right elbow, 3 in his chest, 1 in each foot and 4 in the shield, or 13 stars in all.

fol. 29r **HYDRA** is depicted as a two-legged green and blue dragon facing to the left. Its wings are held close to its body, and it has clawed feet, a pointed nose and long pointed ears and it sticks a red tongue out. **HYDRA** has 9 stars in the neck, 6 in the middle of the back, and 5 in the tail, or 20 stars in all

CRATER is a tall blue vase with 2 handles resting on Hydra's back. **CRATER** has 2 stars on the rim, 2 at the centre of the bowl, 2 below the handles, 2 on the base, or 8 stars in all.

CORVUS (also blue) stands on its haunches facing forward. **CORVUS** has 1 star below the beak, and 6 in the remainder of the body, or 7 stars in all.

fol. 29v **PISCIS AUSTRINUS** is a blue-green fish with pink gills that swims to the left. It has 12 stars.

fol. 30r **SAGITTARIUS** is depicted as a centaur prancing to the right. His human half is nude and he has blonde hair. He holds the bow with his left hand and pulls the string with his right. He has 2 stars on his head, 1 on his right shoulder, 1 in his right elbow, 1 in his right upper arm, 1 in his breast, 2 in the bow, 1 on the tip of the arrow, 1 on each front knee, 1 on his tail and 1 on his left for hoof, or 13 stars in all. In addition, there are 7 stars in the circlet beneath his forefeet, which represents **CORONA AUSTRINUS**.

fol. 30v **CAPRICORN** faces to the left, has straight horns, a beard, a twist in his tail and the tail ends in 3 pointed fins. He has 1 star on his nose, 1 on his head below his left ear, 6 on his neck, 3 on his chest, 2 in his right hoof, 6 along his belly and 2 on the end of the tail, or 21 stars in all.

fol. 31r **CETUS** has dog-like face, body and fore-legs. His tapering body has a curl and ends in a trilobe. He faces to the right with an open mouth and his red tongue sticking out. He has 6 stars in his belly, 4 stars in his tail and 3 on the end of his tail, or 13 stars in all.

- fol. 31v **ERIDANUS** is depicted as a nude female with blonde hair, who faces the viewer, but turns slightly to the left. She holds the urn out horizontally in front of her to the left, holding its base with her left hand and its neck with her right. There are 3 stars in the urn and 10 in the water, Or 13 stars in all.
- fol. 32r **CANIS MAIOR** is a sleek hound that bounds to the left with his tongue sticking out. He wears a pink collar and has 1 star on his pink tongue, 1 on his forehead, 1 on each ear, 2 in his chest, 3 in his shoulder, 3 on his right fore paw, 1 in its haunch, 1 on each hind foot and 3 in its tail, or 18 stars in all.
- CANIS MINOR** is a hound that leaps to the left and has his pink tongue sticking out. He has 1 star in his head, 1 on his shoulder and 1 on his haunch, or 3 stars in all.
- fol. 32v **ARGO** is a full ship with numerous pictorial details, such as a mast with a crow's nest, 4 sets of rigging with pulleys running from the deck to the yard-arm, two steering oars and a decorated and raised poop deck. The whole ship sails to the right on green water. It has 3 stars on the mast and 1 in the crow's nest, 3 stars in the bow, 5 stars in the body of the ship, 5 along the keel and 9 on the steering oars, or 26 stars in all.
- fol. 33r **LYRA** like a two-stepped zither with a curl at the right side with 3 sets of 4 strings and 8 stars.
- fol. 33v **CYGNUS** stands facing to the left with wings outspread and its pink tongue sticking out. It has 2 stars in its head, 1 in its neck, 5 in each wing and 1 on its tail or 13 stars in all.
- fol. 7r **CEPHEUS** stands facing the viewer in a short blue tunic with a full skirt, that is belted at the hips. He wears a blue and yellow hat shaped like a bishop's mitre and has his hands extended to each side, with the elbows bent so they form a 'W'. He has yellow boots. He has 2 stars in his head and 2 on his chest, 1 in each hand, 1 in his right elbow, 1 at his waist on the right side, 3 on his belt, 2 on his hem and 3 in each foot, or 19 stars in all.
- fol. 34v **CASSIOPEIA** sits on a boxy throne with a step on which she rests her feet. She is dressed in a long pink robe and has a blue mantle with a yellow inner lining that is held by a flower clasp at her breast and then is brought round her hips to cover her legs. Her head is uncovered and she holds her hands out to either side

bent at the elbow so they form a 'W'. She has 1 star in her head, 1 in each shoulder, 1 in her breast, 1 in her lap, 1 beside her left hip, 2 in her left leg, 1 on her right foot and 4 on her throne, or 13 stars in all.

fol. 35r **ANDROMEDA** faces the viewer and walks to the left, but looks over her shoulder to the right. She is nude to the waist and wears a long pink skirt, which she holds with her right hand in a bunch at her right hip. Her left arm is held out horizontally behind her with its palm open. Her head is not covered and she has blonde hair. She has 1 star on her head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on each elbow, 1 in each hand, 4 above her waist, 3 at her waist, 1 on each knee and 2 on each foot, or 20 stars in all.

fol. 35v **PERSEUS** is seen from rear wearing a suit of bluish Renaissance armour, but without a helmet on his head. He is standing turned to the left and looking down at the Medusa's head which he holds by its blonde hair in his left hand. He holds a long curved sword raised so the blade runs behind his head and its tip almost touches the Medusa's head. He has 1 star on each shoulder, 1 in each hand, 2 on his hip and 2 in his upper thighs, 3 along his left leg, 1 in his right leg and 1 on his right foot, with 4 in the Medusa's head, or 17 stars in all.

fol. 36r **AURIGA** stands facing the viewer in a short tan garment with ragged and frayed edges. His leggings are also frayed and his feet and head are bare. He holds a flail with 3 beaded thongs upraised in his right hand and two goat's heads in his left hand. There is a third goat's head coming from the left side of his head. He has 1 star on his head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on each elbow, 1 on his left wrist and 1 on his left hand, or 7 stars in all.

fol. 36v **OPHIUCHUS** is nude male with short, curly blonde hair that walks to the left facing the viewer, and holding the green **SERPENS** so that it wraps once around his hips and turns to face him, sticking its pink tongue out. He has 1 star on his head, 1 star in each shoulder, 2 at his waist, 1 in his lower right arm, 3 in his right hand, 3 on his left hand, 1 on each knee, 1 on the right shin, and 1 on each foot, or 17 stars in all. The **SERPENS** has 5 stars in its head, and 18 along its body, or 23 stars in all.

fol. 37r **CORONA BOREALIS** consists of two concentric circles with 9 stars marked.

fol. 37v **HERCULES** faces the viewer and advances slightly to the left, though he looks down to the right, where the lion's skin is held. He is dressed in a short, loose

crimson tunic with blue inner lining that is gathered at the waist. He wears blue tights. He looks youthful and holds a knobby tan club over his head with his right hand and has a lion's skin draped over his left arm (with the face, tail and the front paws visible). He has 1 star in his head, 1 over each shoulder, 1 at each elbow, 2 in his chest, 2 at his groin, 2 in his right knee, 2 in his right shin, 1 on his right foot and 5 in the lion's skin, or 19 stars in all.

fol. 38r **SAGITTA** points to the right and has 4 stars.

AQUILA stands to the right and has both his wings outstretched on either side. His beak is open and his pink tongue is sticking out. He has 1 star in his head, 1 in each wing and 1 in his tail, or 4 stars in all.

fol. 38v **DELPHINUS** is placed up-side down, on his back, and with his head to the right. He has a pointed beak with sharp teeth and a waddle beneath his chin. He is light blue with a pin mouth. He has 4 stars on his head, 4 on his body and 2 on his tail, or 10 stars in all.

fol. 39r **CENTAURUS** is a centaur that leaps to the left. He has long blonde hair and his human half is nude. He holds **LUPUS** (a rabbit) upside-down by its heels in his right hand. He holds his left hand by his side. He has 3 stars in his head, 1 on each shoulder, 4 in his breast, 2 in his belly, 1 on his left elbow and 1 on his left hand, 1 in his horse's breast, 1 on his left foreleg, 2 in each hind leg and 3 on his tail, or 22 stars in all. **LUPUS** has 1 star in hind feet, 1 on its belly, 2 in its tail, 3 on its head and 3 on its forefeet, or 10 stars in all.

fol. 39v **ARA** is a round, two-level altar with 3 niches in the base and 6 niches in the second level and flames coming from the top. It has 4 stars.

fol. 53v **PEGASUS** is depicted as half a winged horse. He faces to the right and wears a bridle and frilly reins. His legs are extended in front of him. He has 2 stars in his ears, 3 in his head, 4 on his neck, 1 on his wing, 2 on each leg and 1 black star (later?) on his belly, or at least 14 stars.

fol. 40v **ARIES** is walking to left with his head turned back to the right. He is depicted **intra Triangulum** ('... et exoriens caput infra triangulum') and bites the right edge of the triangle. He raises his right forefoot. He has 43 stars in his right horn, 1 in his left horn, 4 in his chest, 3 in his rear haunch, 1 on his belly, 1 in

his right forefoot, 1 in his right hind foot and 1 on his tail, or 15 stars in all. The TRIANGULUM has a star at each corner, or 3 stars in all.

fol. 41r **CANCER** is a round-bodied crab that faces to the left. He has two large claws and 4 legs on each side. He has a crescent shape along his bottom. He has 7 stars in front of his nose, 2 stars on his body, 1 star in each upper leg and 1 star in each lower leg, or 17 stars in all.

fol. 41v **Leo** stands to the right, but turns his head towards the viewer. His tail held out horizontally and he has a luxurious mane. He has 5 stars in his head, 6 (?) in his chest, 1 on his left forepaw, 1 in the middle of the belly, 1 below the belly, 1 on his rectum where the tail meets the body, 1 in the hind knee, 1 in the right hind foot, 1 in the middle of the tail and 1 at the end of the tail, or 19 stars in all.

notes

i (paper) + 41 + i (paper)

bibliography

SAXL-MEIER III 1953, pp. 327-28.

third-quarter 15th century, Italian, parchment, 41 ff, 29.1 x 20.1. 40 drawings; notes the crazy order of the texts and pictures, but says that has similarities with Can misc 46 re: Sagitta and then Heniochus (???)

PÄCHT and ALEXANDER 1970, II, p. 88, no 180.

North (?) Italian, 3/4 15th century; coloured miniatures; humanistic script; ms initials like BM, Add C 169 (Rome 3/4 15th century)

VIRÉ 1981, p. 171: 15th century, Italian (North?), ff 1-41 = 4 books

consulted 22.10.04