

Parma

Biblioteca Palatina

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Ms Parmense 1008

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Basinio da Parma, *Astronomicon*

2/2 15th c (1458?)

Italian

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text

ff. 1r-18v

Basinio da Parma, *Astronomicon*

inc.: BASINII PARMENSIS ASTRONO  
MICON LIBER PRIMUS.

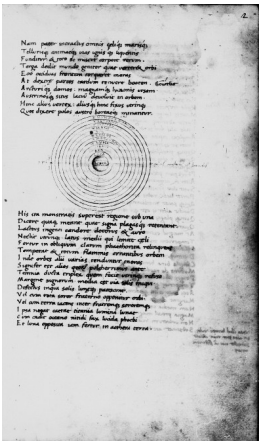
Hetherios orbis subiectaque templa deorum —

fol. 12r Nexa tenet cursu semper  
volventis Olympi. BASINI PARMENSIS ASTRONOMICON LIBRI PRIMI  
FINIS.

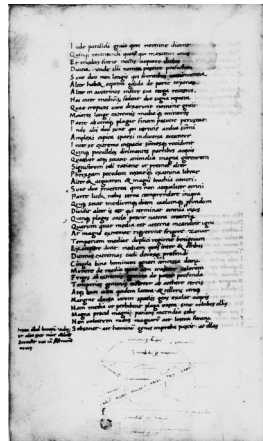
fol. 12v BASINI PARMENSIS ASTRONOMICON LIBER SECUNDUS, inc.  
QUINQUE vagas etiam nec non pulcherima mundi

fol. 18v Templi cano atque vias semper volventis Olympi. FINIS. MCCCCLVIII  
VIII KL SEXTILIS EGO PETRUS MARIUS ARIMINI  
SCRIPSI ·D·S·AET·OPTUMO Q: LAUS HO. ET GLO.  
(added by a later hand: Epitaphium Basinii ab ipso paratum ante  
mortem editum: Parma mihi patria est: sunt sydera, carmen et  
arma.)

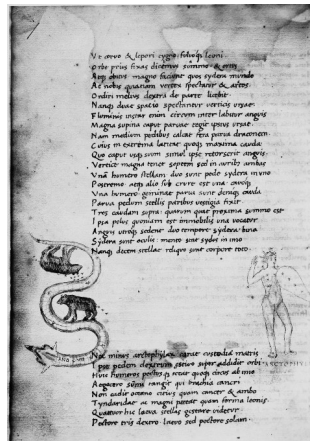
# illustrations



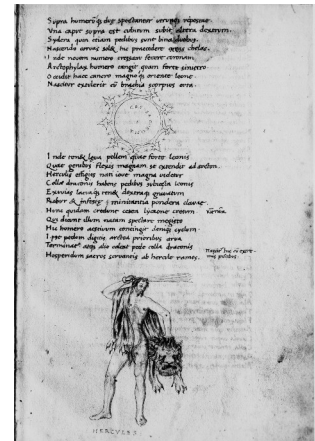
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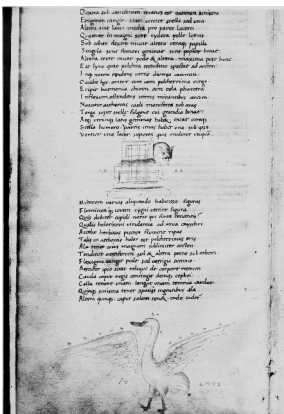
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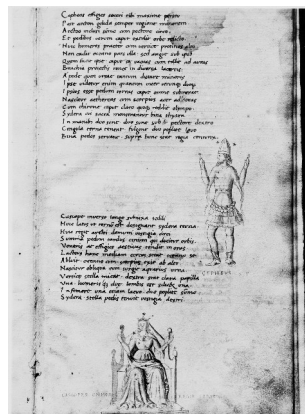
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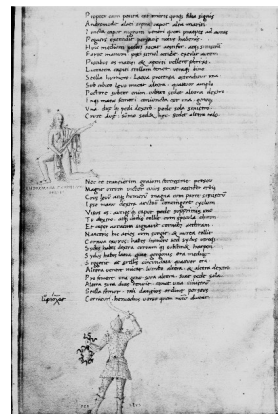
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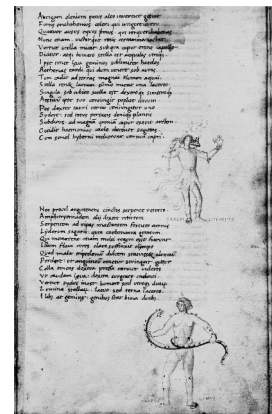
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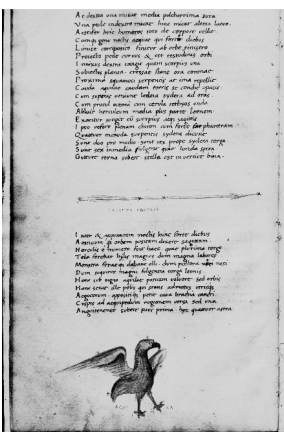
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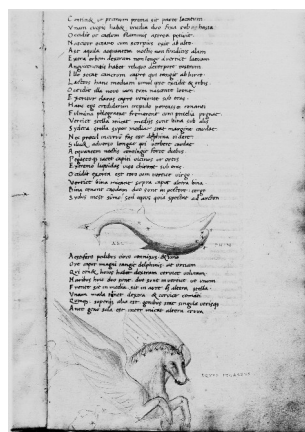
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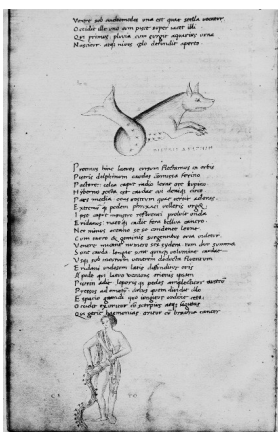
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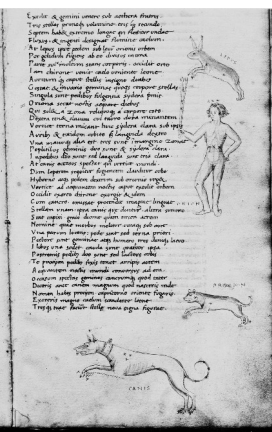
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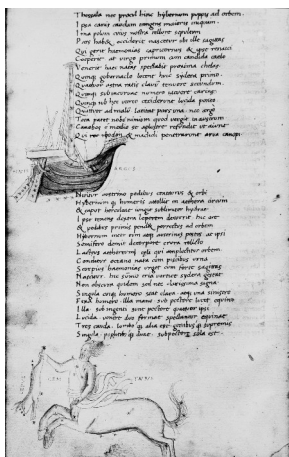
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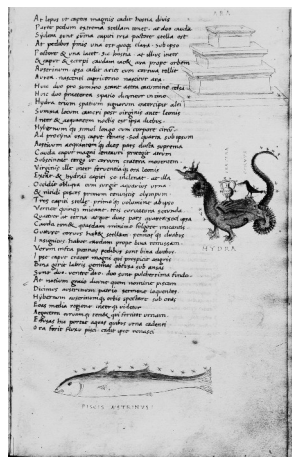
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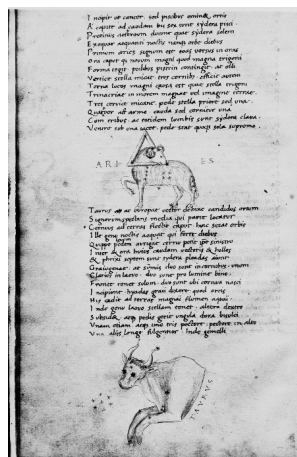
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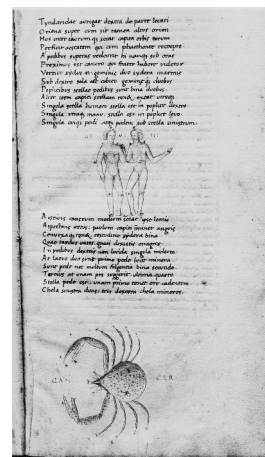
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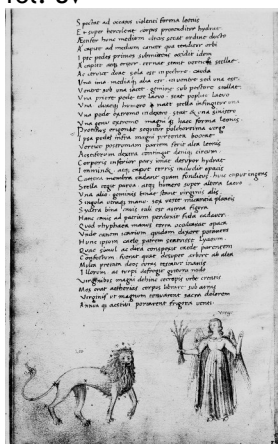
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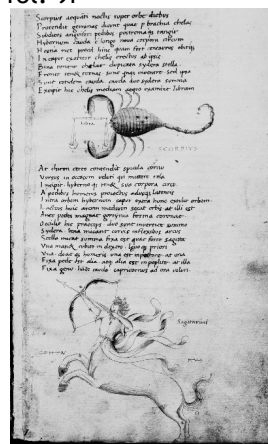
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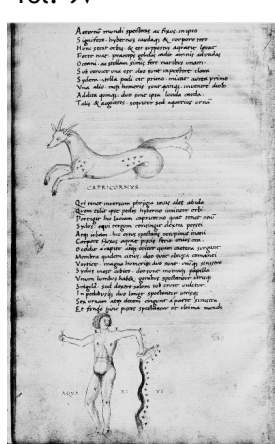
fol. 10r



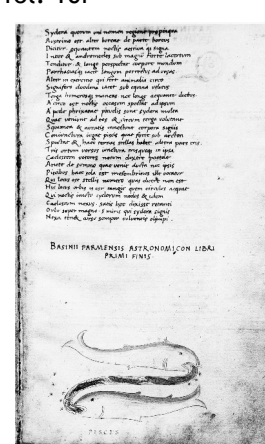
fol. 10v



fol. 11r



fol. 11v



fol. 12r

fol. 2r Diagram with the orbs of the planets (with POLUS and BOOTES on the left)

fol. 2v Diagram of the climes with the diagonal band of the zodiac.

ff. 3v-12r Illustrations of 45 constellations in ink with a faded colour wash and stars marked in red.

fol. 3v **DRACO INTER ARCTOS** with **DRACO** (labelled: ANGUIS) depicted as a snake with pointed ears and a body with three bends with its head towards the bottom of the page. The Bears are placed back-to-back, facing into the body of the dragon, with **URSA MINOR** (labelled: URSUS MAIOR) in the first bend and **URSA MAIOR** (labelled: URSUS MINOR) in the bend. Draco has 5 stars on the head and 10 on the body, or 15 stars in all. Ursa Minor has 3 stars on the tail and 4 on the feet, or 7 stars in all. Ursa Maior has 12 stars in the head and 5 on the back feet, or 17 stars in all.

**BOOTES** (labelled: ARCTHOPHYLAX) is nude and stands facing the viewer. He raises his right hand and his left arm is covered by a feminine ovate shield. He has 1 star on the

head, 1 on each shoulder, 4 in the chest, 1 on the right elbow, 4 on the shield and 1 on each foot, or 14 stars in all.

fol. 4r **CORONA BOREALIS** (labelled: CRESSA CORONA) is a circle with floral designs around the outside. It has 9 stars.

**HERCULES** (labelled: HERCULES) stands facing the viewer and is nude with a lion's skin (4 paws, tail and face visible) over his right shoulder, with its head held in his left hand. The hero has a beard and holds a long white fan/palm raised in his right hand so that it runs behind his head. He has a number of stars, including 1 star on his head, 2 on the chest, 1 on each elbow, 1 on the left hip, 1 on the left foot and 4 in the lion's skin.

fol. 4v **LYRA** (labelled: LYRA) is a stepped zither-like instrument with 3 sets of 4 strings and a monster with its tongue sticking out peeking out from the right side. It has 8 stars.

**CYGNUS** (labelled: CYGNUS) is a swan that faces to the left with its wings outstretched. It has 1 star in the head, 2 in the neck, 5 in each wing and 1 on the tail, or 14 stars in all.

fol. 5r **CEPHEUS** (labelled: CEPHEUS S.P.) is facing towards the viewer and walks to the left with his head in profile. He wears a conical hat, and is dressed in a short, fitted garment with a dropped waist and long bits of drape falling from the elbow. He has 2 stars in the head, 1 in each hand, 2 on his right breast, 3 at the waist, 2 on the left knee and 1 on each foot, or 13 stars in all.

**CASSIOPEIA** (labelled: CASIOPES CONIUNX REGIA PERSEI) is seated in a high-backed, throne with her arms held out to the side in a 'W' shape. She wears a crown and a dress with tight sleeves with a mantle caught at the neck. She has a number of stars, including 1 star on the head, 4 in the chair, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on the right breast, 1 on the left knee and 1 on the left foot.

fol. 5v **ANDROMEDA** (labelled: ANDROMEDA . F. CEPHEI. UXOR PERSEI) kneels to the left and is nude except for a robe that is draped over her left arm, which she raises behind her, and she holds the drape in front of her genitalia with her right hand. She has a number of stars, including 1 star on her head, 1 on each shoulder, 4 in the chest, 1 on each elbow, 1 on each hand, 1 on the right knee and 3 on the right foot and 2 on the left foot.

**PERSEUS** (labelled: PERSEUS) faces away from the viewer and is dressed in Renaissance armour. He raises a scimitar in his right hand above his head and holds the Medusa's head by its snaky hair in his left hand. He has a number of stars, including 1 star on his head, 1 star on each hand, 1 on each shoulder, and 1 on each thigh. His feet are cut off by the edge of the page.

fol. 6r

**AURIGA** (labelled: ERICHTHONIUS) faces the viewer and wears a tunic with a hem made of curling strap-like pieces of fabric. He holds a 3-thonged flail behind his head with his raised right hand and holds two goat's heads in his raised left hand, there is also a small goat's head peering out from behind his left shoulder. He has 1 star in the head, 1 on each shoulder, 1 on each elbow and 1 on the right foot.

**OPHIUCHUS** (labelled: TRIPTOLOMUS) is nude and stands frontally, facing the viewer. He holds the **SERPENS** horizontally so that it circles once around his waist, with the Snake's head to the left, facing the man. He has 1 star in the head, 2 on each shoulder, 2 at the waist, 3 on the right leg, 2 on the left leg and 3 on the left arm, or 15 stars in all. The Serpens has 4 or 5 stars in the head and 18 in the body.

fol. 6v

**SAGITTA** (labelled: SAGIPTA ERCULIS) points to the right and has 4 stars.

**AQUILA** (labelled: AQUILA) faces to the right and has its wings stretched back to the left. It has 1 star in the head, 1 on each wing and 1 on the tail or 4 stars in all.

fol. 7r

**DELPHINUS** (labelled: DELPHIN) is shaped like a dolphin. It is placed on its back, with the nose to the right. It has 4 stars on the head, 2 on the body and 2 on the tail, or 8 stars in all.

**PEGASUS** (labelled: EQUUS PEGASEUS) is depicted as 3/4 of a white horse (cut-off by the page through the hind flanks), facing to the right, with its front legs drawn up. It has some stars in the head, at least 5 in the neck, 1 in the left wing behind the neck, 1 in each knee, 1 in front of the left knee, 1 on the belly and 1 on the left hind thigh.

fol. 7v

**CETUS** (labelled: PISTRIS DELPHIN) is a monster with a dog's front parts and a curling fish's tail. He has 6 stars in the belly and 7 in the tail, or 13 stars in all.

**ERIDANUS** (labelled: CETO) is nude and faces slightly to the left, wearing a mantle over his right shoulder and holding an urn, with his left hand on the base and his right hand on the handle, so that it pours water to the left. There are 13 stars in the water.

fol. 8r

**LEPUS** (labelled: LEPUS) is leaps nearly vertically to the left. It has 1 star in each ear, 1 in the chest, 1 on the trunk and 1 in each front foot, or 6 stars in all.

**ORION** (labelled: ORION) is nude and stands slightly to the left. He rests his left hand on his left hip and holds a long fan/palm (?) vertically in his right hand. He has 3 stars on his head, 2 in his hair, 3 on the 'club', 1 on his right elbow, 1 on his right hand, 3 at his waist, 1 on each knee and 1 on each foot, or 17 stars in all.

**CANIS MINOR** (labelled: PROCYON) is a small dog that leaps to the left. He has 3 stars.

**CANIS MAIOR** (labelled: CANIS) is a sleeker dog that leaps to the left. It has a collar around its neck. It has 1 star in the head, 1 in each ear, 1 on the mouth, 3 on the shoulder, 3 on the front feet, 1 on the belly, 4 on the tail and 1 on each hind foot, or 17 stars in all.

fol. 8v

**ARGO** (labelled: NAVIS ARGO) is a full ship that sails to the right. It has a large main mast with a crow's nest and rigging and two steering oars. There are 4 stars in the mast, 5 in the keel, 5 below the keel and 5 in each oar, or 24 stars in all.

**CENTAURUS** (labelled: CENTAURUS) is depicted as a centaur rushing to the left, with the human half wearing a long-sleeved, tight-fitting shirt with long, fluttering straps coming from the waist and a strap across his chest. He holds **LUPUS** (labelled: LEPUS = a rabbit) in his outstretched right hand and holds his left hand down by his side. He has 1 star in each shoulder, 4 in the chest, 1 on the left hand, 2 on the equine chest, 1 on each front knee, 1 on the equine body, 2 on the belly, 1 on each hind knee and 3 in the tail, or 18 stars in all. Lupus has 3 star in the head, 1 on the front feet, 2 or 3 on the tail and 1 on the hind feet.

fol. 9r

**ARA** (labelled: ARA) is a 4-stepped altar, without flames, but with 4 stars.

**HYDRA** (labelled: HYDRA) is a two-legged dragon with a curl in its neck and a curl in its tail. It has a 2-handled **CRATER** (labelled: CRATERA) on its back with a **CORVUS** (labelled: CORVUS) facing forward behind it. Hydra has at least 10 stars; Crater has 8 and Corvus has 4 stars.

**PISCIS AUSTRINUS** (labelled: PISCIS AUSTRINUS) is a large fish, swimming to the left with 12 stars along its back.

- fol. 9v      **ARIES** (labelled: ARIES) walks to the left, but turns its head back to face the right. Its head is 'intra triangulum'. It has some stars in the head, 4 on the right shoulder, 1 on the raised right front foot, 4 on the body, 1 on the belly, 1 on the right hind foot and 4 on the tail. **TRIANGULUM** has 3 stars.
- TAURUS** (labelled: TAURUS) is depicted as  $\frac{1}{2}$  a bull, facing to the left with its front legs out in front of the body. It has 2 stars in each horn, 1 in each eye, 1 on the forehead, 7 in front of the nose, 4 on the chest, 1 on each front knee, and 1 on the right front foot, or 21 stars in all.
- fol. 10r      **GEMINI** (labelled: GEMINI) are depicted as two nude youths, who stand knee-to-knee. The right Twin places his right hand on the left Twin's shoulder and they both point to the right with their left hands. with their inner shoulder overlapping. The stars seem evenly distributed between them, with 1 star on each Twin's head, 4 in between their two shoulders, 1 on the left Twin's right elbow and 1 on the right Twin's right hand, 1 on each of the 4 knees, and 1 on each of the 4 feet, or a combined total of 16 stars.
- CANCER** (labelled: CANCER) is a teardrop-shaped crab facing to the left with 2 big claws and 4 smaller segmented legs on either side. It has 3 stars in the right claw, 2 in the left, 2 on the shell, 6 on the bottom legs and 4 on the top legs, or 15 stars in all.
- fol. 10v      **LEO** (labelled: Leo) walks to the right, with his left front leg raised. He raises his tail. He has a number of stars, including 5 stars in the head, 2 on the back, 3 on the chest, 2 on the leg, 3 on the tail and 3 between his 4 feet.
- VIRGO** (labelled: Virgo) stands facing the viewer and is winged. She is dressed in a long robe with a long mantle and her hair is exposed. She holds both her hands raised and holds flowers in her right hand. She has many stars, including 1 star in her head, 1 on each wing, 1 on each shoulder, at least 5 on her skirt and 1 on each foot.
- fol. 11r      **SCORPIO** (labelled: SCORPIUS and Libra) faces to the left and has 2 large claws and 6 smaller, segmented legs and a long, segmented tail. He holds the Scales in his right claw in front of his face. He has 2 stars in each claw, 3 stars on the face, 5 on the body, 5 in the segments and 2 stars on the sting, or 19 stars in all. The Scales do not have stars.
- SAGITTARIUS** (labelled: ~~CENTAURUS~~ and Sagittarius) is a centaur that rushes to the left. His human half wears a g top, with copious, strap-like pieces of fabric coming from the waist. He holds the bow in his right hand and pulls the string with his left. He has

numerous stars, including 2 stars in the head, 2 in the bow, 1 on the right front leg and 1 on the hind legs.

fol. 11v **CAPRICORN** (labelled: CAPRICORNUS) faces to the left, with a long tail with a curl in it and short, horns. He has 1 star on the nose, 1 on the neck, 1 on each front foot, 5 on the chest, 2 on the belly, 7 on the tail and 2 on the tip of the tail or 19 stars in all.

**AQUARIUS** (labelled: AQUARIUS) is nude and stands to the left, with his right hand raised and holding the handle of a water-pouring urn with this left hand. The stream is green. He has at least 12 stars on his body, 5 on the urn and 11 in the water.

fol. 12r **PISCES** (labelled: PISCES) are two fish, swimming in opposite directions with both their backs upwards, connected at the mouths by a stream. There are no stars on the top fish, 6 on the stream, 3 to the left of the stream and none on the bottom fish.

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### notes

On paper. The explicit indicates that the ms was written in 1458 by Pietro Mario Bartolelli, a doctor from Fano, who was linked to the court of the Malatesta and was the younger brother of the more famous Giovanni Peruzzo Bartolelli, copyist and calligrapher of the luxury ms, Parmense 195, which contains the *Liber Isottaeus*.

BLUME/HAFFNER/METZGER says it is considered to be the ‘most authentic copy of the *Astronomicon*’, which was completed in 1456 (viz a letter to his friend, Roberto Orsi, where he says he has given a copy to Paolo da Sassoferrato and the text is being widely disseminated).

The iconography of the ms recalls the work of Pisanello and his influence in the Po River valley.

CHISENA 2016 notes a number of oddities in the labels of the constellation figures, suggesting that Basinio had already died when the ms was being prepared (and groups the ms with Parma 27, Oxford and Venice mss). BLUME/HAFFNER/METZGER note a slight problem with the inadequate space left by the scribe for several of the illustrations.

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## bibliography

AFFÒ-PEZZANA, tomo VI (parte I) pp. 184-185; tomo VII, p. 316.

AFFÒ 1789, p. 223.

CAMPANA, p. 95.

F. ODORICI, 'Mem stor della Naz Bibl di Parma', *Atti e Mem delle RR Deputazione di S P per le provincie modenesi e parmensi*, III, 1865, p. 436.

ODORICI 1873, p. 38.

SOLDATI 1906 pp. 74-104.

SAXL 1915, plate III, fig. 6 (fol. 7v Eridanus).

RICCI 1924, p. 60 no. 74.

MITCHELL 1956, pp. 97-101;

CIAVARELLA 1962, p. 74;

MCGURK 1966 IV, p. 77-79

3/4 XV (1458?); illus in pencil with stars shown, close to Bodl 646; ff 3v-12r

inc (1r): Basinii Parmensis Astronomicon liber primus. Hetherios orbis subiectaque templa deorum

expl (18v): Temple cano atque vias semper volventis olympi. Finis MCCCLVII KL. Sextilis Ego Petrus Marius Arimini scripsi D.S. aet. Optumoque laus honor et gloria.

*Western Manuscripts & Miniatures, auction cat. Sotheby's, London 1992, p. 84.*

A. CERUTI BURGIO, Basinio Basini humanist of Parma, «Bulletin of the Bodonian Museum of Parma» 7 (1993), pp. 65-72.

MARIANI CANOVA, *Le illustrazioni*, pp. 190-191 e 213-233.

suggests Matteo de'Pasti as the illuminator (p. 185); also suggests that the iconography of the constellations represents the influence of Guariono da Verona on account of the fact that labels are included;

A. M. ANVERSA 'Ermetismo e astrologia nei manoscritti della Biblioteca Palatina di Parma', Malacoda, LXXXVII, Anno XV, 1999, pp. 3-46.

LOLLINI 2001, pp. 310-311.

F. BACCHELLI, *La Cappella dei Pianeti nel Tempio Malatestiano di Rimini*, in *La cultura letteraria nelle corti dei Malatesti*, a cura di A. Piromalli, Rimini 2002, pp. 179-198.

FRIOLI 2006, p. 248 n. 22.

FRIOLO, For the biography of Pietro Mario Bartolelli, copyist a Rimini, *Romagna art and history*, 83 (2008), pp. 5-20.

E. COLOMBI - S. MAGRINI, *Cometographia Palatina*, ed A. M. Anversa, Parma 2013, pp. 83-85.

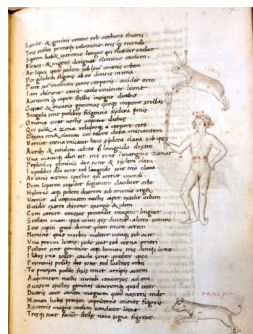
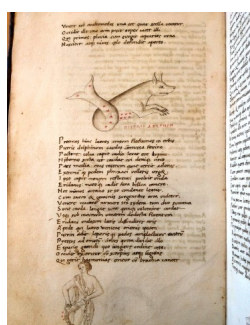
CHISENA 2016, pp. 55-58.

BLUME/HAFFNER/METZGER 2016, II, 2, (cat. 94) pp. 99-100, 661-63 and figs. 849-51.

Assessed as the 'most authentic' and 'oldest' surviving copy of the text (p. 657, which was written in Rimini in 1658 by Pietro Mario Bartolelli.







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