

Austin, Texas

Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center
University of Texas at Austin

Ms HRC 029

De ordine ac positone stellarum in signis (excerpted from the Aachen Compilation of 809-812/
Libri computi)

Southern Germany (Tegernsee, Bavaria)
early to mid-11th century

An illustrated version of the *Libri computi* which shares several pictorial features with St Petersburg Q. V. IX no. 2 and Paris BN n.a. 1614 (GROUP III), though there are a number of small differences within the group. The Austin illustrations have a certain charming awkwardness that often results in rather idiosyncratic details.

The library reports that the scribe of the manuscript is named as Abbot Ellinger of Tegernsee (975/980 - 1056). The manuscript was formerly in the collection of Sir Thomas Phillips.

text

ff. 27r-31r *De ordine ac positone stellarum in signis*

ff. 25v-26v Duo sunt extremi vertices mundi quos appellant polos septentrionis et austri ... effusionem urnae aquarii que ad ipsum decurrit accipiens. (*Excerptum de Astrologia Arati*, cf. Maass 1898, pp. 309-12)

ff. 26v-27r Est quidem hic ordo et positio siderum quae fixa caelo plurium coacervacione ... eo quod ab ipso est ordine digesta descriptio proferatur. (cf. Maass 1898, p. 312)

fol. 27r Helice arcturus maior habet stellas in capite septem, in singulis humeris singulas, in armo i, in pectore i, in pede priori claras ii, in summa cauda claram unam ... (cf. Maass p. 1898, p. 312, St P, p. 240)

fol. 31r [A]nticanis habet stellas iii.

fol. 31v Followed by the following lines of verse:

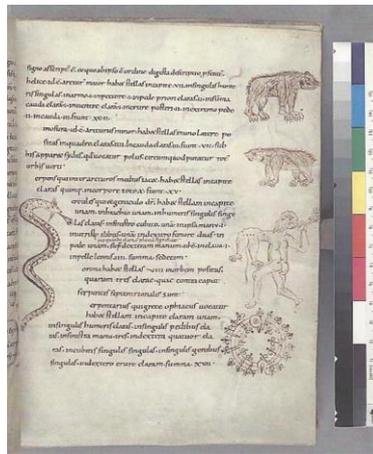
Ad boree partes arcti vestuntur et anguis
Post has artophilax pariter que corona genumque...
Udrus chyron teribulum quoque piscias & ingens
Hinc sequitur pistris simul eridanique fluenta.

(= Ausonius, [redacted] ([redacted]); see also fol. 61v of the Monza compilation and [redacted].

illustrations



fol. 25v



fol. 27r



fol. 27v



fol. 28r



fol. 28v



fol. 29r



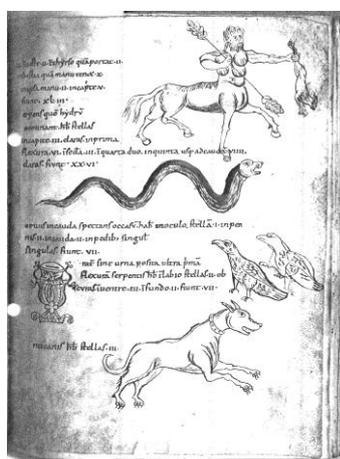
fol. 29v



fol. 30r



fol. 30v



fol. 31r

fol. 25v **DIAGRAM - DRACO** faced to the right and set within circles of the sphere

ff. 27r-31r A set of 43 pen drawings of the constellations, mostly in the margins but sometimes between paragraphs of text (suggesting that the text was written afterwards). The stars marked with red dots in some of the first constellations, but not continued through the series.

fol. 27r **URSA MAIOR** and set in profile, facing to the right and is marked by stars

URSA MINOR (CINOSURA) faces to the left in profile and is marked by just a few stars both bears with in profile with exaggerated toenails

DRACO faces to the right and is a fire-breathing snake with 4 bends in the body and without legs; it has a pointed beard on the chin and a comb along the top of its head and is marked by a large number of stars

HERCULES is nude and bearded, walking to left with right leg extended in front; he is seen from the rear holding the lion-skin (complete with back paws and tail) in front of him so that it covers his left arm up to the forearm; he holds a knotty club behind his head in his right hand; he is marked by at least 15 stars

CORONA decorated like a filigree brooch with 8 stars marked

fol. 27v **OPHIUCHUS (SERPENTARIUS)** is nude and seen from the rear, he walks to the left with snake twisted twice around his middle; the snake faces away from the man and has its tongue out; the man and snake are marked by about 23 stars

SCORPIO is an earwig-like creature with front claws positioned in a circle; it has a segmented tail; six small legs and is marked by more than 15 stars

BOOTES faces the viewer with his face turned towards the left; he stands with left leg bent and right leg straight; he wears a *tunica exomis* with his right shoulder exposed; holds his right arm raised and outstretched to the side with open palm held upwards; in his right outstretched hand, he holds a curved knobby plant upside-down; he is marked by more than 12 stars

VIRGO stands facing the viewer and looks to her right; she wears a belted toga with her right breast exposed; she is winged and holds her right hand down and to the side; her mantle lies across her left elbow and in the raised hand she holds the scales; she not marked by stars

fol. 28r **GEMINI** are nude soldiers with short curly hair, with long capes over their shoulders, but their male genitalia exposed; they each hold a spear vertically in the outside hand; and gesture to each other with their inner hands (left Twin pointing down and right Twin pointing up); not marked by stars

CANCER is positioned vertically with its head towards the top; it has a scalloped body, two curving front legs with two long, curving claws on each; and 4 small legs on either side; no stars are marked

LEO walks to left in profile, open mouth and frowning brow; tail raised, no stars marked

fol. 28v **AURIGA** stands in a sledge-shaped *biga* with two wheels driving to the right; he is dressed as a charioteer with X-bands across his chest and wrappings around his wrists; he holds a two-thong flail in his upraised right hand with the thongs floating out in front of him towards the horses; there are two small kids facing each other on his outstretched left arm, and there is a goat behind him facing to the right; no stars marked

TAURUS is a full bull, lying down with his right leg bent so that the knee is placed near his head and the lower leg is crossed under the left one; his horns curve inwards and his tail curls up so that the end lies on his back; no stars marked

CEPHEUS stands lunging to the left; he is dressed in short tunic without a cape and with his arms outstretched with a scabbard hung at his waist from a strap that hangs from his right shoulder; he has short curly hair and knee boots; no stars marked

CASSIOPEIA is dressed in a long gown and mantle with her head covered; she sits frontally on a rectangular block with her arms outstretched to either side; no stars marked

fol. 29r **ANDROMEDA** hangs between two pollarded trees, with her arms outstretched and attached to the top of the trees by ropes; she wears a long, defined at the waist

and her feet are bare; her head is uncovered; no tars marked

PEGASUS (EQUUS) is ½ a winged horse, facing to the right in profile with both his forelegs stretched out in front of him; his body is cut off by the inner margin of the page; no stars are marked

ARIES stands to the right, slightly climbing; he looks forward (to the right); his horns curl outwards; he has a long tail and he has a studded belt around his middle; no stars are marked

TRIANGULUS is depicted by two equilateral triangles with arcs drawn in the inner angles (probably not stars)

PISCES both face to the right and both have their backs upwards; they are connected by a single wavy line mouth-to-mouth and placed slightly at an angle with the lower fish's tail hitting the upper one's stomach; no stars are marked

fol. 29v

PERSEUS is nude and walks to the right with buttocks exposed wearing a cloak that flows out behind him; he has no shoes or boots; he holds a small female head by the top-knot in his left (?) hand just behind his buttocks; he holds a *harpe* vertically in front of him in his left hand; no stars marked

LYRA is a bi-partite lyre with the top half framed by 'bull's horns' and a top-piece that ends in a curl at the right; there are with 14 strings; the bottom half is oval and appears to end in a stand; no stars marked

CYGNUS as a very long straight neck and flies to left; both wings are held back and two webbed feet are visible; feathers are marked, but star are not

AQUARIUS is nude and stands frontally, slightly to the right; he has short curly hair and wear a long mantle across his shoulders, held at his right shoulder with a broach; the ends of the cape seem to be held by his right hand; he holds hold a water-pouring urn in his left hand with the water pouring towards him; no stars are marked; there is a second trial head drawn to the upper right of the figure

CAPRICORN faces to the left with a goat's front with long curved horns, a long mane and beard on his chin; he has a corkscrew tail with three curls and the tail ends in a fan; both front legs are outstretched forward; no stars are marked

fol. 30r

SAGITTARIUS s a centaur leaping to right with both front legs raised, he faces the viewer and does not have any attributes save the stretched bow he holds bow in his left hand, as he pulls the string with his right; no stars are marked

AQUILA is an eagle with wings raised and outstretched; it faces to the right, but looks backwards over his shoulder to the left; he stands with both feet on an arrow; no stars are marked

DELPHINUS is a long, slim fish with a long porpoise-like snout; he swims to the left and has a single horn on head, and long feathery fins like beards on his chin and near his gills; his tail ends in a frilly fan; no stars are marked

ORION stands frontally, facing the viewer and wearing in calf-length tunic and cloak; he clasps the cloak at his neck with his right hand and he grasps the pommel of his long sword (which he appears to have stuck into his own left thigh) with his left hand; he looks to the right; no stars are marked

CANIS is a has short upright ears and a long, pointed snout; he leaps to right with his tongue sticking out; he wears a heavy tubular collar and has a slim curved tail; no stars are marked

LEPUS leaps to right with front legs raised and ears back; no stars marked

[There is a second drawing of a dog in the bottom margin, leaping to the right, with round ears and a snub nose and his tongue sticking out.]

fol. 30v **ARGO (NAVIS)** with three-pronged bow with a series of circlets on each prong; it appears to be sailing to the right (?) with the sail unfurled from the mast and two sections of rope or the rigging running from the mast to the deck; there is a circlet and a streaming pennant at the top of the mast and the stern of the ship has a circlet with three curls coming from it; there are two steering oars at the back; no stars marked

CETUS as a classical sea-monster swimming to the left, he has a canine face with a long snout, tufted ears held vertically and the traces of a tufted beard; his front legs are flippers and are held in front of his body; the tail is corkscrewed with three curls and ends in a fan shape; no stars are marked

ERIDANUS (FLUVIUS) is a river god, with a long beard and long hair, reclining above his stream; he is dressed in a long toga from the waist down; he rests his chin on his left hand which is propped up by his lap; his legs are crossed; the urn (looking like 4 circles) is placed beside him upside-down and a stream flows from it towards the right; no stars marked

PISCIS swims to the left with a large, gaping open mouth; no stars marked

ARA is a boxy, square structure with a larger bottom plinth; there are two holes in the top surface from which flames issue; no stars marked

fol. 30r **CENTAURUS** walks to right, with his left foreleg stretched out in front; he has a bifurcated tail and holds a lance or stick leafy forms on both ends in his right hand in front of his chest; in his outstretched left hand, he holds a beast (rabbit / hare?) out in front of him by its hind legs; no stars marked

HYDRA is a snake with five bends that slithers to the right (without Corvus and Crater),

CRATER as elaborately decorated, two-handled urn

CORVUS is a crow with its wings closed and its beak pointing up to the left; there is a second poor copy of the bird in the right margin; no stars marked

CANIS MINOR (ANTICANIS) is a has short upright ears and a long, pointed snout; he leaps to right and bares his teeth; he wears a studded collar and has a slim curved tail; no stars are marked

notes

This stellar table is probably taken from the *Libri computi*, also known as the compilation in 7 books originally created between 809-812 in Aachen.

The cycle of illustrations in the *De ordine* star catalogue in this manuscript has the characteristics

of **GROUP III**, that are also seen in St Petersburg Q.v. IX no. 2 and Paris n.a. 1614., though there are a number of small differences within the group.

The library reports that the scribe of the manuscript is named as Abbot Ellinger of Tegernsee (975/980 - 1056): 'Abbas indignus ego Ellinger peccator istam glossam scripsi...'.

bibliography

SOTHEBY & CO, LONDON: *Biblioteca Phillipa. Medieval Manuscripts*, n.a. 3rd part, 28 November 1967, pp. 18-23.
 as 10th or second half 11th century, *Aratea* with 42 illustrations on ff. 25v-31v.

GLAUCHE 1979, pp. 734-863, 748 and 768.

BLUME, HAFFNER, METZGER 2012, pp. 188-90.

219 x 195 mm; mss also contains sections from Bede *De natura rerum*; Plato's *Timaeus*; the *Excerptum de Astologia Arati* (ff. 25v-26r); ps-Priscian, *De duodecim signis* and other texts.

says iconographic parallels with St Petersburg (French (St Germain des Près)), end 11th century) and Vat Reg lat 309 (St Denis, second half 9th century).

At the end of the codex, there is slightly later hand of the texts of Bern of Reichenau (died 1048).

notes the provenance inscription: 'Abbas indignus ego Ellinger peccator istam glossam scripsi ...'.

See also UCLA Berkeley - Scriptorium =

<http://dpg.lib.berkeley.edu/webdb/ds/search?MsID=40035@MsPtID=40052>

<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/scriptorium>

Columbia University - Clio = <http://www.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/dlo?obj=TEXAS.DS.197>

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