
Ms Anton. 27

ps-Bede, *De stellis celorum (De signis caeli)*

Verona ?

early 10th c (post 881)

text

ff. 130v-133v ps-Bede, *De stellis celorum*

fol. 130v Helix arcturus maior. hab& autem in capite stellas obscuras .vii. In spatula .i. super pectus .una. In pede .i. in dorso .i. ... (cf. Maass 1898, p. 582)

fol. 133v [ARGO] ... in velo .iiii. in costa. navis .v. Sunt omnes xxvi. (cf. Maass, 1898, p. 591)

note: last page has been mis-bound so that recto and verso are reversed, making Navis the last constellation in the series as it is currently arranged. The real explicit is:

Anticanis dicitur subter geminos bene parere. Habet stellas .iii. quarum unam splendidior est c&eris. & ideo anticanis vocatur eo quod contraria sit cani . (cf. Maass 1898, p. 594)



fol. 130v



fol. 131r



fol. 131v



fol. 132r



fol. 132v



fol. 133r



fol. 133v

illustrations

- ff. 128r Zodiacal rota in brown and orange ink
- ff: 130v-133r Pen drawings of 40 constellations groups; the pictures are set between the chapters, which are written in two columns; in several cases, the text runs around pictures, so was probably added after drawings were positioned; there are no stars marked
- fol. 130v **URSA MAIOR** stands to the left with its head dipped and its mouth open; it has a short tail
- URSA MINOR** stands to the right; its head is lowered and turned so that it faces left towards his right foreleg; it has a short tail and its mouth is open
- DRACO** is a worm-like snake sliding to the right with its head raises; the body has four bends and a series of dots down its length
- HERCULES** is nude and kneels to left with his back towards the viewer; he holds the lion's skin (with a face and 4 legs visible) draped over his left arm, which is extended in front of him; he holds his club behind his head in his right hand
- CORONA BOREALIS** is a leafy wreath
- fol. 131r **OPHIUCHUS** is nude and stands to the left, apparent with his back to the viewer (note the curl of the buttocks); he lifts his left leg as if to step forward; he holds **SERPENS** so that it forms an X over the lower part of his back; the tail falls downwards from his right hand and the head of the Snake turns to face the man, touching tongues with him
- SCORPIO** is teardrop-shaped and faces to the right; there are four muscular arms on each side of the body, with bifurcated claws; there is a band separating his head from his body and one running the length of his body; he has circular eyes and a large 'smile', the tail is segmented at the end and ends ends in a hook.
- BOOTES** (Arcas) stands facing the viewer, dressed in a *tunica exomis* with his left shoulder uncovered; he stands frontally and turns his head to left both arms are extended, slightly bent at the elbows; he holds his right palm is open and facing upwards and in his left hand, he holds a leafy plant.

VIRGO stands facing the viewer; she has large, outspread wings and is dressed in a *peplos*-like, belted garment that flairs out at the lower hem; she has a trefoil headdress and holds a plant upraised in her extended right hand; her left arm hangs down by her side, resting on her hip

fol. 131v **GEMINI** are both nude, but covered by long, voluminous ankle-length cloaks that are clasped with a circular disc on their right shoulders; both seem to have pillows (?) resting on their mantle-covered left hands; the right Twin holds a harp on that 'pillow' in his left hand and drapes his right arm over the shoulder of the left Twin; the left Twin holds his right hand on his hip; both Twins look at each other

CANCER has shield-shaped body that faces to the right; it has three sets of whiskers coming from his mouth and three single whiskers coming from his rear; it has round eyes and two claw-like front legs, with three similar legs on each side; the shell is marked by a band at the Crab's 'neck' and down the length of its shell

LEO runs to left with its forefeet raised and its mouth open; the tail is very long and hangs downwards (there is a second, later sketch of Leo's head in the left margin)

AURIGA (Agitator) stands in a *quadriga* so that his body is visible from the waist up; he faces to the front, but turns his head to look behind him; all four horses are rearing up and pulling the chariot to the right; he holds a round shield with a central spike in front of him and holds a lance vertically in right hand; he wears chain mail and has a cloak pinned at his right shoulder so that it covers the left side of his body

TAURUS is depicted as half a bull facing to the left; his left leg bent and right one extended; he has short curved horns and marked ridges showing the folds of skin on his neck; the cut-off co-incides with the edge of the page at the right

CEPHEUS stands facing the viewer wearing a loose calf-length, sleeveless tunic belted at the waist; his arms are upraised in W-form and his palms facing the viewer; he carried an empty case on a strap which is slung across his chest from his right shoulder; the conical cap of the case is held on by a string; he looks to the left

fol. 132r **CASSIOPEIA** is seated on a square stick throne; she seems to be nude to the waist (but has a very hairy chest (?) or the bones of her sternum are marked); she has a wide band around her hips and seemingly a furry pelt or cape over her left shoulder; her long hair may be exposed; she holds her arms out in a W-shape

ANDROMEDA stands facing the viewer and is nude to the waist; she wearing a knee-length skirt, which has an elaborate knot at waist; she also has a long cloak over her left shoulder; there seems to be some confusion of=ver breasts and her rib cage; her arms are stretched to either side at shoulder height and her hands rest upon two piles of rocks; there are stylised lines at her feet that may be water; her hair is uncovered

PEGASUS is half a winged horse that faces to the left; he turns his head back to the right (proto-biting ?) and his mouth is open; he right front leg is extended in front of his and the left front leg is bent back; there is some confusion in the drawing of the right wing, but the left wing begins at his shoulder joint and is fully opened; the cut-off is a straight line (there are indications of a double-contour, as if the figure was traced by a later hand)

ARIES stands to the right, with his front legs together; he looks backwards to the left; he has outward curling horns and a curly girdle around his waist; his tail is very long and hangs down

TRIANGULUS looks as though it is depicted in three dimensions and is a decorated tetrahedron

PISCES swim in opposite directions (top fish to the left and bottom fish to the right) with their backs towards the top, they are connected at their mouths by a single line

fol. 132v

PERSEUS is nude and he walks towards left his left leg leading; his lower half is in profile (with the curve of the buttock to the right), but the orientation of his upper half is not clear - though it may be a front view if one compares it to the drawing of the shoulders in the figure of Aquarius nearby); he has a cloak pinned on his following shoulder that covers the other shoulder and then a swag of it crosses in front of his body and flutters off to the left; he has large wings on his feet; he holds the Medusa's in front of him by its hair and he holds the *harpe* behind his upper back

LYRA is depicted as a lyre with a floral decoration on the body, slightly curved uprights and sixteen strings with pegs

CYGNUS stands to the left with wings opened upwards behind him; his long neck has a kink in it

AQUARIUS stands facing the viewer, but turned slightly to the right with his left leg bent; he is nude to waist, but wears loose pantaloons; he holds an upturned vase in the crook of his right elbow near his waist; it is unclear but he seems to be holding some instrument in his left hand near the mouth of the urn from which a frothy stream (?) flows to the right

CAPRICORN faces to the left with both forelegs extended; it has long straight horns and triple corkscrew tail that ends in an acanthus-shape

SAGITTARIUS is a centaur prancing to left with his front legs raised; his human half appears to be facing away from the viewer, with the idea that his right arm is held so that it is hidden behind his body - or he is facing the viewer and his left arm is a stump (which suggests that the artist has not understood the original drawing); there is a furry fringe where the two halves meet; he holds the bow in his left (?) hand

fol. 133r (page mis-bound; see above)

CETUS faces to the left with a dog's face extended on a long neck; it has pincers on its forefeet; a humped back and a triple and a corkscrew tail that ends in an acanthus-shape

ERIDANUS (Eurus) is a bearded classical river god seated above a river which flows from an urn upon which Eridanus rests his right elbow; he is dressed in a long toga that exposes his right shoulder and chest and his left knee is bent so that he can rest the palm of his left hand on it; he holds a plant in his right hand, which rises upwards and rests on his shoulder

PISCIS AUSTRINUS is a fish swimming to left with a large smile on its face

ARA (sacrarium) as two oddly-shaped boxes, stacked one on top of the other

CENTAURUS prances to right with his forefeet raised; he looks back shoulder to the left; his left hand is held straight out in front of him and he holds **BESTIA / LUPUS** (a dog?) on its back with its feet pointing upwards in the left hand; he holds his right hand in front of his chest and has a leafy plant in it

HYDRA is wormlike and faces to the left with its tongue sticking out

CRATER is a bottle placed on the middle of the Snake's body

CORVUS is a duck that sits on HYDRA's tail and faces away from the head

CANIS MINOR (Anticanis) runs to the right (his front feet are cut off by damage to the page); he has a halo on his head and very pointed ears and snout

fol. 133v (page mis-bound; see above)

AQUILA stands facing to the right, but with its head turned back over its shoulder to the left; it has a duck's bill that rests on the top of its left wing (proto-biting?); it stands on **SAGITTA** , the tip of which points downwards to the left

DELPHINUS is a crudely rendered classical dolphin that swims to the right with long beard; a long horn on its head and an acanthus tail

ORION faces the viewer and is a short-haired youth striding to the right with his left leg bent; he is dressed in a knee-length *tunica exomis* that exposes his right shoulder and has short boots on his feet; he holds a long sword upraised in his right hand and rests his left hand on the top of scabbard, that is slung on a string from his right shoulder

CANIS MAIOR (Canicula) stands to the left with its right front leg raised; it turns its head back to the right; it has a halo and rays coming from its head and expels 'star-breath' from his mouth; its hind quarters are disproportionately large

LEPUS bounds to left and has very short ears a long whiskers on its face

ARGO is depicted as half (?) a ship with its cut-off on the right; there is a mast with a large sail hanging from the yard arms on the right side of the ship and a and a curved stern on the left; there is a mast on the end and some misunderstood streamers arising from this curved end; there are nine rowing oars arranged vertically along the hull

notes

The drawings here conform to the **DSC I** family, which includes Oxford Laud 644 and Venice VIII, 22. The text omits 41 and places 28-33 after 34-40.

bibliography

McGURK IV 1966, p. xiv, xv: diffuse and rambling schoolbook, which includes an illustrated catalogue of the stars; pp. 64-72: early 10th c, after 881 AD; possibly from Verona; illustrations accompany text from ps-Bede (Maass, pp. 582-94) = ff 130v- 133r

PAGNIN 1958, I, pp. 29-41.

dell' ERA 1979, p. 271: says beginning 10th century