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Ms 222

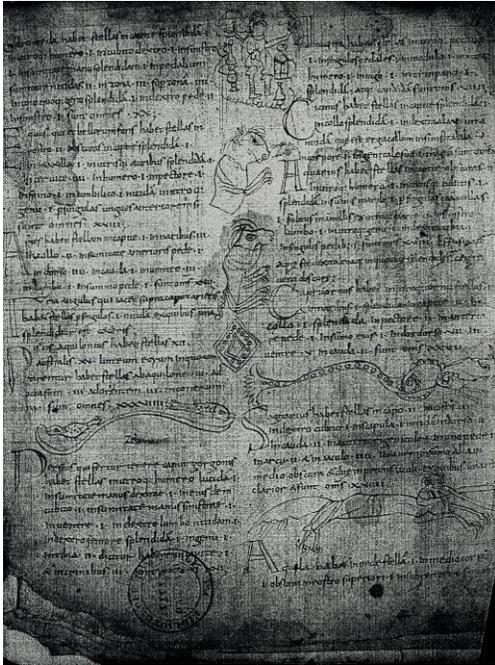
ps-Bede, *De signis caeli* (fragment)

Northeast France (Corbie?)

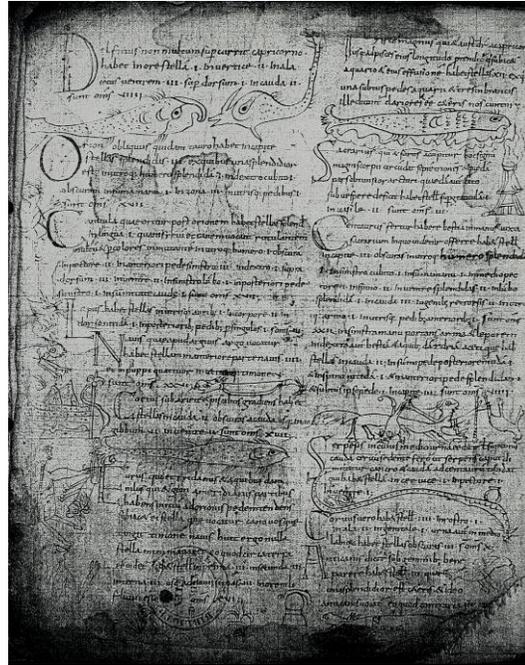
Late 9th century

The manuscript has a number of computistical texts into which a fragment of the ps-Bede text has been inserted. The text is illustrated with some extremely crude sketches of the constellations. There are also sections from Bede's *De temporum ratione* and vv. 320-31 of Cicero's *Aratea* (which is not illustrated).

- ff. 18r-18v fragment of ps-Bede, *De signis caeli* (includes only the description of the constellation in chapters 17-40 - ANDROMEDA to CANIS MINOR); there is no section on the planets
- fol. 18r (begins imperfectly): Andromeda habet stellam in capite splendidam. i, in utroque humero i ... (cf. Maass 1898, p. 587)
- fol. 18v Anticanis dicitur sub geminibus bene parere. Habet stellas iii quarum una splendidior est ceteris et ideo antecanis vocatur, eo quod contraria sit cani. (cf. Maass 1898, p. 594)
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fol. 18r



fol. 18v

illustrations

ff. 18r-18v Extremely crude pen drawings illustrating texts from ANDROMEDA to CANIS MINOR of with several repetitions and odd additions. The pictures are squeezed into spaces between text and in the margins, with several per page and with a number of duplications. Many are cut-off by the gutter or due to damage at edges of pages. For example, in addition to the missing images from the beginning of the text, there are no pictures for PERSEUS, LYRA, CYGNUS, AQUARIUS and AQUILA. As the pictures on this folio (fol. 18r) tend to run down the central margin between the two columns of text, it is possible that these pictures may have originally been placed in the extreme right margin of the page and were lost through subsequent trimming. There are no stars marked.

fol.18r **ANDROMEDA** is a standing, facing the viewer with her head turned to the left; her clothing is difficult to decipher, but her legs are visible and appear to be covered with legging-bands; her arms are outstretched to either side; there is a scalloped line beneath her feet (a ground-line?) and large curving lines on either side of her body, which are presumably rocks; they are covered with toilet articles (three vases (?) and one box)

PEGASUS (?) is a half-beast cut at the waist that is set vertically on the page; it resembles a stylised lion more than a horse; both of its long-clawed feet held in front of its body as if about to pounce on its prey

ARIES is a highly abstract animal placed vertically on page, with curved horns and four legs with clawed feet

TRIANGULUS is depicted as a series of nested diamonds with 13 circlets set in one of the bands

PISCES swim away from each other in opposite directions, so that their tails face inwards towards each other; the one on the left has its belly uppermost and one on the right with its back uppermost; they are connected at their mouths by a stream, which runs beneath both of their bodies

CAPRICORN faces to the right; he holds his front legs out in front of him and has short curved horns; the tail is extraordinarily long and has a single curl in it; the section after the curl is decorated with 16 circlets; it ends in an acanthus leaf shape

SAGITTARIUS is a centaur that leaps to the right with front legs stretched forward; all four feet have claws on them; his arms are elongated and he appears to have a bow in his hands (but the drawing is very cursory); its equine body is stretched across the column and his tail is full

fol. 18v **DELPHINUS** appears as the right-side half of pair of 'fish' depicted beneath the text dedicated to the dolphin; it is a stylised version of the classical depiction of Delphinus with a pointed beak and a pointed horn rising from its nose; it has a prominent belly fin and its tail is raised so that it is set at right angles to the rest of the body; the second 'fish' (on the right) resembles depictions of **PISCIS AUSTRINUS** with a hooked nose, large eye and prominent gills

ORION is little more than a stick figure that stands facing the viewer (?) and raises his left arm and hand

CANIS MAIOR runs towards the right and has short pointed ears and rays emanating from his head

LEPUS runs towards the right, has short pointed ears and a prominent eye

NAVIS is depicted as half a ship, cut off at the right side by the vertical line of the mast; the mast has a piece of cloth furled around it and there is a circlet with a *fleur-de-lis* at the top of the mast; there are two triangular structures on the deck and a curved stern; the boards of the hull are indicated by parallel horizontal lines between which there are a series of dots (nails?)

CETUS appears to be illustrated as two fish (?); above the text, there is a small fish with a dog's head and a curved (fish-hook) tail facing to the left; beneath the text, there is a larger fish with an elongated body facing to the right

CENTAURUS is depicted as a centaur and is running to right with his forelegs stretched out in front of him; he holds Bestia/**LUPUS** (a lion?) by its hind legs in what appears to be his right hand, which is held out straight in front of him

ERIDANUS (Eurus) is sitting (?) by stream facing the viewer; he raises his left hand and there appear to be several plants flanking him

PISCIS AUSTRINUS² (magnus) appears near its text as a fish with a curved beak (similar to the picture at the top of the right column, but less detailed); it swims to the right

ARA (sacrarium) is composed of two superimposed conical or triangular pieces (almost like a candelabrum) and has flames issuing from the top

CENTAURUS² appears beneath the text describing Centaurus, which is similar to the first, but more crudely drawn; he holds an animal (sheep?) by its hind leg in his extended left hand --- over which there appears to be hung a drinking vessel (?); there is also a banded vertical stick near his left wrist (a staff?); in his left hand, which he holds outstretched behind him, he holds another beast with a curled tail (dog?)

HYDRA is long, wormlike creature forming a very long, horizontal 'S' across the column; it has two short pointed ears on its head, which is at the right

CRATER is a small, round-bellied pot, placed near HYDRA's head

CORVUS is indistinctly drawn near the tail

CORVUS ² stands to the right in profile

CRATER is depicted as a pot with a handle (?)

CANIS MINOR runs to the left with its mouth open and has a collar around his neck.

notes

Owing to their fragmentary state and the lack of drawing skills on the part of the illuminator, it is difficult to connect the illustrations in this manuscript with those in the other *De signis caeli* manuscripts, beyond noting the inclusion of the toilet articles in the picture of ANDROMEDA. The attributes of the CENTAURUS ² are an odd appearance within this context.

According to Viré, the text is a copy of Oxford, Bodley 614 (Hyginus fragments).

bibliography

CATALOGUE GÉNÉRALE ... des bibliothèques publiques de France, Départements 1898, XIX, p. 105 (illustrates fol. 18).

THORNDIKE 1923, I , p. 634, no. 4.

JONES 1939, pp. 87, 92 and 111.

CORDIOLANI 1942, p. 55.

JONES 1943, pp. 77,149, 355, and 402.

LAISTNER/KING 1945, pp. 139 and 148.

BYVANCK 1949, p. 227, no. 94.

JONES 1975, p. 174.

dell' ERA 1979, p. 271.

10th century; *De signis caeli* between ff. 18r-18v (omits chaps 1-16 and 41)

VIRÉ 1981, p. 162, n. 1.

copy of Bodley 614 (Hyginus fragments); 15th century

MUNK OLSEN 1982, I, p. 335.

LE BOURDELLÈS 1985, p. 82.

also seems to suggest it is early, saying that it is from Corbie.

KASTEN 1986.

JEUDY and RIOU 1989, XV, pp. 33ff.

GANZ 1990.

BORST 1995², p. 158, n. 83.

Corbie before 900.

HAFFNER 1997, p. 174.

BLUME, HAFFNER, METZGER 2012, pp. 76 and 185-87.

from Corbie? / Northeastern France; end 9th century; compilation manuscript with Bede, Cicero excerpts, Martyrologium (PL 94, pp. 603-06), excerpts from Book II of the Libri computi; and computistic text; notes Borst placing the ms at Corbie and connection with Revised Aratus Latinus manuscript, Paris BN 12957; also notes Corbie connection to Paris BN 7886 re Aratus latinus/Revised Aratus latinus