



star positions need to be re-checked

Vienna

ÖNB

Ms Vindob 12600

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

Prüfening Abbey (nr Regensburg)
1150

text

ff. 23r-26r *De ordine ac positione* (excerpted from the Aachen Compilation of 809-812 / *Libri computi*, a.k.a. the 'Compilation of 810 in 7 books')

fol. 23r Est quidem hic ordo ac positio syderum que fixa celo plurimum coacervatone stellarum in signum aliquod formata ... (cf. Maass 1898, p. 312)

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

fol. 26r Anticanis habet in toto corpore stellas iii.

The manuscript has the usual texts belonging to this compilation, including:

ff. 1r-6v Annales Ratisponensis

ff. 19r-21r Hermannus Contractus, *De mensura astrolabii* (with illustrations)

ff. 22r - 23r Ps.- Bede, *Libello de loquela per gestum digitorum et temporum ratione* (with illustrations)

ff. 32r-41v Calendar with necrology from Prüfening



illustrations

- fol. 20v plate of an astrolabe with projection
- fol. 21r astrolabe rete with a table of degrees for the major stars in the zodiac
- ff. 22v-23r 18 purple roundels illustrating counting gestures; below is the figure of a man with his hands on his head
- ff. 23r-26r 42 fully coloured and shaded drawings in heavy pigment of the constellations, set within text, which is arranged in three columns; in a number of instances, the pictures overlap the text, suggesting they were added later; the stars are marked as heavy impasto small red dots **[star positions need to be checked]**
- fol. 27r diagram of the order of the planets
- fol. 29r diagram of the winds
- fol. 30r diagram of four animals as the four elements



fol. 23r



fol. 23v



fol. 24r



fol. 24v



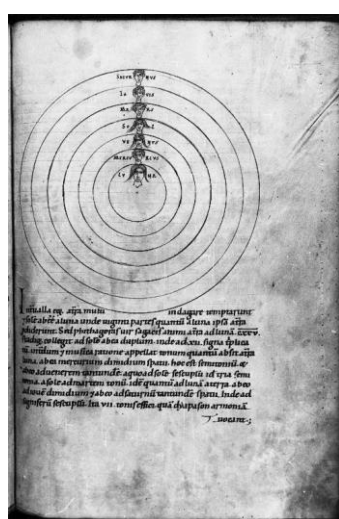
fol. 25r



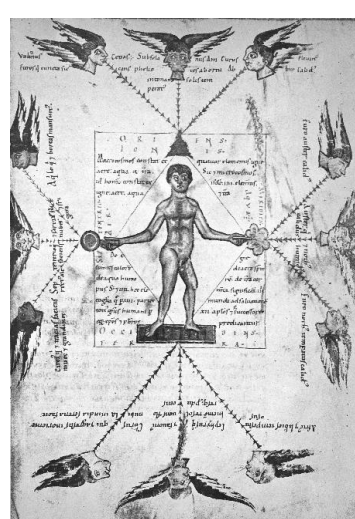
fol. 25v



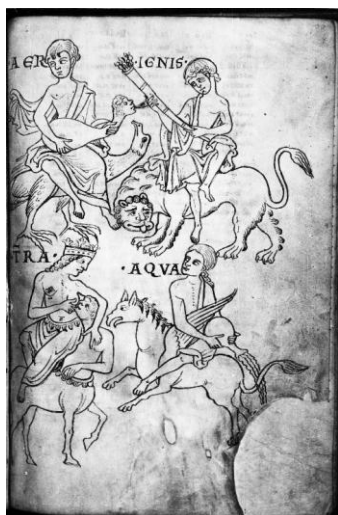
fol. 26r



fol. 27r



fol. 29r



fol. 30r



fol. 23r **URSA MAIOR** with a large hump on its front shoulders walks to the left with its head lowered, no tail and with its claws extended

fol. 23v **URSA MINOR** is slightly smaller, and has a large hump on his shoulder and walks to the right; claws visible

DRACO is a green snake set vertically on the page and facing to the right; he has a large, red fin-like comb on his head and a large red fin-like beard; his tongue is sticking out and is red

HERCULES faces the viewer and is nude; he kneels to the left on his left knee and his right knee is bent at 90°; he holds his blue, baton-like club raised in his right hand and his head overlaps it; draped over his extended left arm, hand he holds a red lion-skin (with a face and four legs); he has brown hair and the text cuts off his right foot

CORONA BOREALIS is a leafy, blue and red wreath

OPHIUCHUS kneels to the left on his left knee with his right knee bent at 90°; he is apparently facing the viewer; he is nude and the green **SERPENS** is wrapped once around his waist so that it crosses his chest; the Snake opens its mouth and faces towards the man, while its tail drops after the man's right hand

SCORPIO is depicted on its own as a fat, olive-green paisley-shape with tapering tail the front claws are larger and end in two pincers; there are three legs on each side which are also divided in two; it has a red triangular mouth and small red lines issuing from it

fol. 24r **BOOTES** walks to right facing the viewer; he wears a short *toga exomis* that exposes his chest and right shoulder; his cape is draped over his extended left forearm showing both its blue external side and its red lining; he wears a red cap and a very wide belt; he holds a red stick shaped like a hockey stick vertically down by his side in his right hand (the curved end is caught in the margin) and he holds his left hand aloft with its palm upwards; the text cuts across his forehead and cuts off both his feet

VIRGO is dressed in a long, tight blue toga with a pink undershirt; she holds her red and green wings slightly open; the extreme shortness of her brown hair suggests that she may be male; she holds the **SCALES** (with green pans and a blue balance) down by her right thigh in her right hand and she holds a blue palm horizontally in her left hand

GEMINI are two youths in long cloaks and tunics; the left Twin holds a U-shaped lyre in his right hand and is chucking the right Twin under the chin; the text cuts both figures at mid-thigh

CANCER is a segmented red crayfish holding his front claws to the right side; he has four legs on each side and blue eyes



LEO bounds to the right with his forefeet raised; he sticks out his tongue and his tail is raised, ending in an ivy-leaf shape

fol. 24v

AURIGA rides in a boxy *biga*/cart drawn by two horses (one white and one blue) to the right (the further blue horse turns to look back at the Charioteer); he is dressed in a tight-fitting robe; he has his left arm outstretched in front of him and holds a stick flail with two thongs vertically; the two goats are perched at his elbow, facing each other (one pink, one tan); his right arm trails behind his body and is enveloped in his flowing green cloak, which has a red lining; there is another goat with very long horns behind the cart, facing it

TAURUS is depicted as a full pink bull, lying to left with left foot tucked under his body and the right foot extended; the tail is wrapped between his hind legs and emerges in front of his belly

CEPHEUS stands facing the viewer with his arms outstretched and he has no attributes, though he wears a green tunic and red cape; the text cuts off the figure at the hips

CASSIOPEIA is seated on a boxy throne inset with decorative panels; it has no back, but does have a cushion; she is dressed in a long tunic with a long cape and has some kind of red tassels swinging from her hair; she holds her arms outstretched at shoulder height with the palms facing upwards; the text cuts off the top of her head

ANDROMEDA is oddly angled from the side of the page; it is difficult to determine if she is facing towards or away from the viewer as either breasts or shoulder blades are very prominent beneath a transparent blue robe but, as her buttocks also seem to be visible, it suggests she is facing away from the viewer; the sleeves of her under-tunic are tight and she wears a wide tri-coloured belt; her face is presented in left profile and she raises her right arm, bending it at the elbow and pointing upwards with her index finger; the left arm is held down by her side; her lower legs are cut off at the knee by the gutter of the page; **note**: this posture is much closer to the type found on globes than to this manuscript tradition

PEGASUS is depicted as half a blue winged horse; the wings are red and white; it faces to the right with its forefeet extended and his tapered tail tucked under his body

fol. 25r

ARIES bounds to left with head turned to look backwards over his shoulder to the right; he has curled golden horns, a long tail and green fleece

TRIANGULUS is a series of nested red triangles that have a slightly longer base

PISCES are red and green and they swim in opposite directions (top right and bottom left), both with their backs facing upwards; they are connected at their mouths by a blue, white and red stream that forms an unusual backwards S-shape; they are set at an angle within their space

PERSEUS is also set at an angle within his space and only his top half is visible due to the constraints of the text; he seems to be facing away from the viewer (note the



position of the fingers and the hair (?) trailing down his back; he is dressed in red armour and holds the decapitated Medusa's head in his left hand in front of him; he has curved sickle (with a green handle and blue blade) in his right hand

LYRA is a red and orange tulip-shaped lyre with a small base and four blue strings; it is depicted upside-down

CYGNUS is a yellow duck, flying to the upper left; it is seen from the back and its wings are outspread and his legs splayed

AQUARIUS faces the viewer and is nude with a red mantle over his left shoulder; he runs to the right with his right arm trailing behind him; his left hand holds an upside-down, handle-less urn by the neck, from which green water pours; his hair is tied with blue and red tassels and his hair is blue-grey;

fol. 25v

CAPRICORN faces to the left with very long, slightly wavy vertical golden horns and a beard; he holds his forefeet in front of him; there is a strong demarcation between the blue goat-like front half and the red serpentine back half; he has a double corkscrew tail that splits into two parts at the end

SAGITTARIUS is a green satyr facing the viewer, but rushing to the right with his raised left knee leading; he holds the bow held in his left hand in front of him and pulls the string with the index and middle fingers of his right hand; his tail is long and horse-like and the text cuts off his legs below the knee

AQUILA stands facing slightly to the right, but looking back over its shoulder to the left; its body is blue and its wings are red; there are odd ♂-shaped symbols on the shoulders of his wings; it stands on **SAGITTA**, the tip of which points to the right.

DELPHINUS is blue and swims to the right with a huge golden tusk rising vertically from his lower lip; it has a beard and a trefoil tail

ORION stands facing the viewer and rushing to the left; he looks to the upper left above his head; he is dressed in a red tunic and a blue cloak; he holds a straight sword in his left hand with the green blade downwards along his side and his right side completely covered by his cloak

CANIS MAIOR has a pointed nose and pointed ears; it leaps to the left and wears a large blue collar

LEPUS is pink and appears to be crouching and faces to the right; its long ears are held vertically

ARGO (NAVIS) has the bow lost in the binding margin, but the stern of the vessel has two steering oars and a curved end with the *aphlaston* at the end (drawn slightly like a trefoil); it has a tent-like structure hanging over the cross-beam of the mast

CETUS is a green and red sea monster with blue flippers, pointed ears and sharp teeth; it is faced towards the left and the twisting tail is lost in the inner margin



fol. 26r **ERIDANUS** is a nude male seated facing towards the left; he is nude from the waist up and appears to have a drape wrapped around his hips and legs; he sits placed behind a horizontal handle-less red urn, upon which he rests his left hand; water pours upwards (!) from the urn; in his right hand, he holds a spear the tip of which rests above his left shoulder

PISCIS AUSTRINUS is a large green fish with a large red and blue dorsal fin, swimming to the right with its head slightly dipped

ARA is a square red, blue and green altar on a square base with flame coming from the top

CENTAURUS faces towards the viewer and seems to be crouching to the right (the leg positions probably reflects the lack of space allowed by the text); his body is blue and green and he holds a trident in his right hand, the forked end of which rests upon his right shoulder; he looks back over his shoulder at the tip of the trident He holds a rabbit (**LUPUS**) by the heels in his left hand in front of him and the rabbit flips forward in a C-shape

HYDRA is depicted as a snake moving to the right three humps

CRATER is a blue and red two-handled urn placed on the second hump and decorated with a diagonal band

CORVUS stands on the third hump, faces forward and pecks at the Hydra's body

CORVUS² stands to the left with its wings closed

CRATER² is a blue and red two-handled decorated with a horizontal band across the belly of the vessel

CANIS MINOR is a snub-nosed dog that raises its forepaws in the air to the right; it has short floppy ears and a large studded collar

notes

According to Borst (1995²), the illustrated star catalogue *De ordine...* in this manuscript is an excerpt from the *Libri computi*, a compilation in 7 books originally created between 809-812 in Aachen.

The pictorial cycle in this manuscript has a number of the defining characteristics of the cycle **De**



ordine II.

bibliography

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KING 1969, p. 122f : says dated c. 1150.

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Mon germ, XVII, p. 578.

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consulted October 1996