

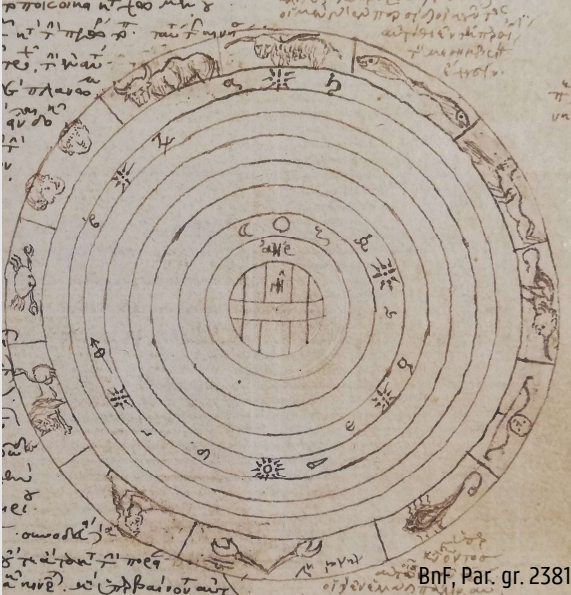
DEPARTMENT OF LITERARY STUDIES – GREEK SECTION; SARTON; GCLA

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## COSMOPOET – TEACHING THE COSMOS IN POETRY AND PROSE:

### ARATUS' *PHAENOMENA* AND CLEOMEDES' *THE HEAVENS* IN LATE BYZANTIUM

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BnF, Par. gr. 2381

#### THE CORPUS

Aratus, *Phaenomena* (d. before 239 BCE)

Cleomedes, *The Heavens* (first century CE)

Didactic Poetry and Prose

140+ medieval manuscripts

Byzantine Commentaries

"The total number of the fixed bodies is immense, but only seven planets have become known to us, although it is unclear whether there are still more. [...] All these planets have a motion opposite to the heavens, and so are seen in different [positions] at different times, yet they do not effect a disorderly course, that is, they do not go through random parts of the sky but through what is called "the zodiac," though without going beyond it."

Cleomedes, *The Heavens*, Tr. Todd

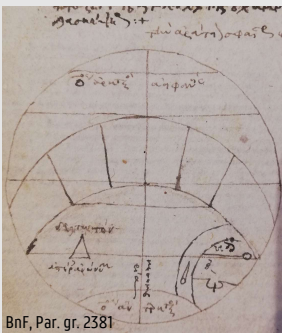
#### Two Works, Two Modes, One Universe, Many Curricula

##### How to Explain the Cosmos through Literary Means?

COSMOPOET elucidates the practices of teaching cosmology and elementary astronomy in Byzantine advanced education.

COSMOPOET proposes a **new methodological model** for the study of the history of science in Byzantium which includes the study of the use of didactic poetry and versification in organising knowledge.

COSMOPOET incorporates the Byzantine evidence in the history of polymathic medieval **European education**.



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"It can be well worth while, if you are watching for daybreak, to observe when each twelfth of the Zodiac rises, for the sun itself always rises with one of them. It will be best if you can identify them by looking at the actual constellations; but if they are darkened by clouds or obscured by a mountain when they rise, you must find for yourself reliable pointers to their rising. The ocean itself can give you on both its horns the many constellations with which it garlands itself, whenever it brings up each twelfth of the Zodiac from below."

Aratus, *Phaenomena*, Tr. Kidd

##### COSMOPOET studies the didactic use of:

- Formal literary features (e.g. rhythm);
- Graphic elements of discourse (layout, diagrams);
- Paratexts (epigrams, scholia);
- Commentaries.



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