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Ovidius Pictus: Afterlives of the *Metamorphoses* in Europe, from Books to the Arts

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A non-Ovidian Myth in the *Ovidius moralizatus*: The Double Parthenogenesis of Pallas and Vulcan according to Petrus Berchorius

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the analysis of Fable II of Book IV of *Ovidius moralizatus* written by Petrus Berchorius (*c.* 1290-1362), in order to highlight its uniqueness. I will discuss how Berchorius combined three mythological motifs – Juno's gynogenesis of Vulcan as a direct response to the parthenogenesis of Pallas from Jupiter's head, Vulcan's fall at Lemnos, and his marriage to Venus – and how he interpreted them allegorically. The first part of the paper will address the literary fate of these three motifs. An examination of textual sources demonstrates that Berchorius combined a minor mythographic tradition with two more popular ones, resulting in an original narrative not found in either Ovidian *Metamorphoses* or in Berchorius's predecessors and contemporary moral commentaries. Secondly, the figurative tradition of the fable will be explored, unveiling the interrelation

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between text and images. In particular, the focus will be placed on the illuminated Gotha and Bergamo manuscripts, which translated the Berchorian fable into images. After studying the iconographical fate of these motifs, it will be argued that the above-mentioned miniatures are the only medieval iconographical sources of the non-Ovidian myth of double parthenogenesis, thus testifying to the undeniable originality of the case study.

1. *The fabula secunda of Book IV of* Ovidius moralizatus*: between tradition and innovation*

Amongst the 14th century moralizations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*[1], the remarkable originality of *Ovidius moralizatus* comes to light when one examines the Fable II of Book IV concerning the double parthenogenesis of Pallas and Vulcan.

The author, Petrus Berchorius (*c.* 1290-1362), is well-known among scholars of medieval literature for having compiled the *Reductorium morale*, an encyclopaedic dictionary intended for theologians and preachers. Commissioned by his patron, Cardinal Pierre de Prés, the Benedictine monk begun his work in the 1340s (redactions A^1 and A^2) and completed it in Paris in the 1350s (redaction P).

The Book XV – entitled *De reductione fabularum et poetarum poematibus* – has been circulating independently for centuries under the title of *Ovidius Moralizatus*[2]. More than a moral commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the text was enriched with several non-Ovidian details and episodes in order to considerably increase the number of Christ-centered allegorical interpretations[3]. Berchorius, in fact, was well-versed in classical mythology[4], and his

[1] A wide-ranging bibliography is provided on Ovid's reception in medieval and early-modern Europe, in particular on moral Latin and vernacular adaptations of the *Metamorphoses*. For the purpose of this discussion, in addition to A. Warburg, F. Saxl, E. Panofsky and J. Seznec, it will be sufficient to mention Guthmüller 1997, pp. 56-60, 2008, pp. 62-203 and 2009, pp. 14-41; Ginsberg 1998; Cieri Via 2003, pp. 3-14; Ardissino 2006; Keith, Rupp 2007; Coulson 2007 and 2011; Fumo 2014; Balzi 2021, pp. 6-25; Capriotti 2022, pp. 262-263; Noacco 2022, pp. 7-55.

[2] For information about Berchorius and his work see Hexter 1989; Rivers 2006; Venturini 2018; Evdokimova 2019; Cerrito 2020; a list of references also in Evdokimova 2019, p. 183, nn. 1-2. Throughout the paper, quotations from the Latin text are taken from the recent edition by D. Blume and C. Meier (Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2) and English translations from the edition by W.D. Reynolds (Berchorius ed. 1971).

[3] Venturini 2018, pp. 117-119; Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 1, pp. 27-28.

[4] Apart from Ovid, other primary sources are explicitly listed in the *Prologus*: Cicero, Augustine, Fulgentius, Isidorus, Rabanus Maurus and the *Third Vatican Mythographer*. For the last Parisian redaction, Berchorius referred also to the anonymous *Ovide moralisé* and John Ridewall's *Fulgentius metaforalis*: Venturini 2018, p. 21. Finally, it is pivotal to mention Francesco Petrarca, one of the Berchorius' closest friends during his time at Avignon: Fenzi 2003, pp. 233-234; Monaco 2023, pp. 3-4. A further insight into his cultural background is provided in Samaran 1962, pp. 320-322.

knowledge was probably enhanced by access to both the private library of cardinal Pierre de Prés and to the papal one[5].

A significant departure from the original text is found in the so-called *fabula secunda* from Book IV, between the fable of Pyramus and Thisbe – *fabula prima* – and the one about the adultery of Venus and Mars, *fabula tertia*. This discrepancy is based on the unique combination of three narrative motifs that feature the god Vulcan as the protagonist: Juno's parthenogenesis due to her quarrel with Jupiter after Pallas's birth in the first section – which, due to its length, is the main one – and his fall from Mount Olympus followed by his marriage to Venus in the second section[6].

Before proceeding with the analysis of these myths, it is worth considering what captured the medieval author's interest in the Ovidian text. In Book IV of the *Metamorphoses*[7], Ovid identifies the divine blacksmith betrayed by Venus with the matronymic "*Iunonigenaeque*"[8]. In order to explain this term, Berchorius developed an entirely new narrative focused on the origin of the god, which runs as follows:

Cum Iuno de Iove nil parere posset, Iupiter timens, ne in ipso defectus esset, causa ex perimenti caput suum concussit. Per quam concussionem Pallas de eius cerebro nata est et in terram armata prosiliit. Iuno autem indignata volens ostendere, quod ipsa non esset causa sterilitatis, vulneravit se et concutiens vulvam suam Vulcanum sine usu masculi peperit. Qui Vulcanus quasi de vulva cadens dictus fuit. Iste tamen, quia turpis erat facie, de celo proiectus est in terram et claudus factus est. Et in Lemno insula fuit absconditus et nutritus et tandem Veneri in matrimonium datus[9].

Because Juno bore him no children, Jupiter feared that there was some fault in him. To test this, he struck his head and because of this blow Pallas was born from his head and leapt to earth fully armed. Juno was indignant and wanted to show that she was not the cause of their sterility. She raised herself and, striking her womb, bore Vulcan without the intervention of a man. He was called Vulcan as if from "falling from the womb". Because Vulcan was ugly in appearance he was hurled from heaven to earth and was lamed. He was hidden and nourished on the island of Lemnos and was at last given in marriage to Venus[10].

[5] Cardinal Pierre des Prés is known to have encouraged Berchorius' literary activity, giving him access to his personal library. Furthermore, it is believed that the author – as a protégé of the papal vice-chancellor – used the library of the papal palace too: Venturini 2018, pp. 8-10.

[6] For an in-depth analysis see Ivi, pp. 196-200.

[7] Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IV, 173-174: «indoluit facto Iunonigenaeque marito / furta tori furtique locum monstravit» (Shocked at the sight, he revealed her sin to the goddess' husband, Vulcan, Juno's son, and where it was committed): the Latin text and translation are taken from the Loeb edition (Ovid ed. 1916, pp. 190-191).

[8] It would be no exaggeration to say that the matronymic is an absolute hapax, used with the specific intention of associating Vulcan with his mother Juno, the typical example of a betrayed wife: Castellani 1980, p. 47, n. 18; Ovid ed. 2022, p. 454.

[9] Berchorius, *Ovidius moralizatus*, IV, 2 in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, pp. 215-216.

[10] Berchorius ed. 1971, pp. 203-204.

As previously stated, the Berchorian fable is mainly concerned with the first motif: the gynogenesis of Vulcan as a direct response to the parthenogenesis of Pallas from Jupiter's head[11]. The origin of this tradition can be traced back to Hesiod's *Theogony*, which recounts that Hera, in a sort of rivalry with her spouse, generated the most skillful artificer of all of Uranus' descendants all by herself[12]. However, Berchorius did not invent this story himself; rather, his text differs from the ancient epic on which it is based in a number of details[13].

Most of these details concern Pallas – born fully armed[14] from her father's brain[15]– and Vulcan, whose name is etiologically connected with birth from his mother's "*vulva*"[16].

The second part of the Berchorian fable brings attention to the other two

[11] The divine birth in classical mythology has been the subject of numerous studies: Laager 1957; Loeb 1979; Schefold 1981; Arafat 1990, pp. 30-63; Beaumont 1998, pp. 57-67; Woodford 2003; Boardman 2004; Clier-Colombani 2011; Stark 2012. Specifically, Juno's gynogenesis has been investigated by Detienne 1976, pp. 75-81; Rigoglioso 2012, pp. 198-200; whereas Jupiter's parthenogenesis was analysed by Kalinski 1998; Bonnard 2004, ch. 1; Leitao 2012; Cianci 2018.

[12] «αὐτὸς δ' ἐκ κεφαλῆς γλαυκώπιδα γείνατ' Ἀθήνην, / [925] δεινὴν ἐγρεκύδοιμον ἀγέστρατον ἀτρυτώνην, / πότνιαν, ἥ κέλαδοί τε ἄδον πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε· / Ἥρη δ' Ἥφαιστον κλυτὸν οὐ φιλότητι μιγεῖσα / γείνατο, καὶ ζαμένησε καὶ ἤρισεν ᾧ παρακοίτῃ, / ἐκ πάντων τέχνῃσι κεκασμένον Οὐρανιώνων» (He himself gave birth from his head to bright-eyed Athena, terrible, battle-rouser, army-leader, indefatigable, queenly, who delights in din and wars and battles; but Hera was furious and contended with her husband, and without mingling in love gave birth to famous Hephaestus, expert with his skilled hands beyond all of Sky's descendants): Hesiod, *Theogony*, 924-929 in Hesiod ed. 2018. Cf. also fr. 343 M.-W. in Ercolani 2002, pp. 188-196; Filoni 2018, par. 1.3.4.A.

[13] This demostrates n. 3. Although it cannot be ruled out that the author had some rudimentary knowledge of Greek, it is unlikely that he would have read the *Theogony* and the *Iliad* in the original language. Instead, it is widely accepted that he knew their contents through the Latin version: Venturini 2018, p. 197.

[14] Cf. *Homeric Hymns*, XVIII, To Hermes, 1-9.

[15] This mythographic version combines the consideration of Pallas as the patron of wisdom and intelligence with thebelief that *ingenium* is located in brain: Venuti 2009, p. 84. Cf., amongst others Heraclitus, *Homeric Problems*, XIX. Similarly, the goddess is re-sematised according to the *interpretatio Christiana* as contemplative *Sapientia* during the Middle Ages: Hodapp 2019, pp. 81-82. E.g., Fulgentius, *Mythologiae*, II, 68: «Primam vitam theoreticam, quam nos in contemplandae sapientiae honore dicimus; ideo De Iovis vertice natam dicunt, quia ingenium in cerebro positum sit, ideo armatam, quod munita sit» (The first or intellectual life we name in honour of contemplative wisdom; thus, they say that she was born from the head of Jove, because the intellect is situated in the brain; and she was armed, because she is full of resource): Fulgentius ed. 1971, p. 65. Unlike Berchorius, few sources report that Pallas was born from the mouth, the organ of *logos*: P. Herc. 1428 fr.23 in Henrichs 1972, pp. 94-96; fr. 908-909 von Arnim, 352-353 in SVF II, pp. 256-258; the *First Vatican Mythographer*, CLXXIII (cf. n. 29).

[16] For more etymologies of the name "Vulcan" see Giovanni del Virgilio ed. 2022, p. 339, n. 80.

motifs, which are both Homeric: Vulcan's fall at Lemnos[17]– caused by his mother's reaction to his lameness[18] – and his marriage with Venus[19].

Finally, some attention will be given to the fate of these three motifs through time. Vulcan's fall and his marriage to Venus seem to be well documented in textual sources of all historical periods[20], as well as in Berchorius' prose. For instance, the author quoted them in the introductory section of the *Ovidius Moralizatus* – the so-called *De formis figurisque deorum* – in the chapter titled *Forma Vulcani*[21]. Likewise, in the *Prologus,* he interpreted Vulcan's fall and traditional lameness through the lens of natural philosophy in order to illustrate how pagan mythology can convey a "*veritas naturalis*" underlying its literary expression[22]:

Latet igitur quandoque sub fabulis veritas naturalis sicut exempli gratia patet de Vulcano, qui a Iunone dicitur genitus et de paradiso in terram proiectus et quia de alto cecidit, fingitur claudus factus. Iuno enim aerem significat, qui revera Vulcanum, id est istum ignem, quem hic habemus, generat et eum per elisionem nubium de alto eicit. Qui pro eo claudus dicitur, quia flamma semper tortuose incedit[23].

Therefore, some natural truth is hidden beneath the fables as, for example, in the case of Vulcan who is said to have been begotten by Juno, hurled from Paradise to earth, and made lame because he fell so far. Juno signifies the air which produces fire (here represent-

[17] Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, I, 585-594. Here, however, it is Jupiter who causes Vulcan's fall (cf. Apollodorus, *The Library*, I, III, 5). Moreover, Homer mentions "Sinti", the inhabitants of Lemnos who would have taken care of Vulcan. On this last detail, Boccaccio – while interpreting Servius (cf. *Commentary on Virgil's Aeneid*, IV, 62) – deduced "*a simiis*" instead of "*a sintiis*" (cf. *Genealogia deorum*, XII, 70): Bertozzi 1999, p. 66.

[18] According to Homer, Vulcan is crippled at birth: Homer, *Iliad,* XVIII, 391-409.

[19] Cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, VIII, 266-369.

[20] On Vulcan's fall cf. *Homeric Hymns*, III, To Apollo, 318; Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, I, XX, 3; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XIII, 313; among medieval sources, cf. Servius, *Commentarius in Aeneidos*, VIII, 454, in which the origin of lightning bolts from the lowest atmospheric region is explained by Vulcan's birth from Juno's thigh (Chance 1945, p. 320); *verbatim* Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, VIII, XI, 39; the *Second Vatican Mythographer*, LII; Rabanus Maurus, *De rerum natura*, XV, VI, 20-21; the *Third Vatican Mythographer*, X, 4; among modern sources, to cite just a few examples, cf. Giraldi, *De deis gentium,* XIII; Conti, *Mythologiae,* X, De Vulcano physice. On the other hand, on the marriage between Vulcan and Venus, cf. Plato, *Politics*, II, 390c; Aristotle, *Politics*, II, 1269b; Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica,* III, 36-38; Cicero, *De Natura Deorum,* III, 59; Ovid, *Amores*, I, IX, 39-40 and II, XVII, 19; Hyginus, *Fabulae,* 148; Juvenal, *Satires*, IV, X, 311-314; 7, 25; Servius, *Commentarius in Aeneidos*, VIII, 373; Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca*, XXIX, 328-330.

[21] Petrus Berchorius, *De formis figurisque deorum*, XV in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 130.

[22] In ancient and medieval cosmology Juno is assimilated to air, whereas Vulcan is associated with lowly and material fire. Cf., e.g., Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, II, 66; Heraclitus, *Allegories to Homer*, XLI, 6-12.; Philo, *On Providence*, II, 41; among medieval sources, *Ovide moralisé*, XI, 1402-1417.

[23] Petrus Berchorius, *Prologus* in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 56.

ed by Vulcan) and hurls it from on high by forcing it from the clouds as lightning. Vulcan is said to be lame because lightning always moves along a jagged course[24].

While the above-mentioned motifs used by the author correspond to the most widespread version in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance[25], the same cannot be said of the Hesiodic myth on double parthenogenesis. Before Berchorius, in fact, the only sources that mention a quarrel between Juno and Jupiter seem to be Apollodorus[26] and, in the post-classical period, Hyginus[27], Junius Philargirius[28] and the *First Vatican Mythographer*[29].

In brief, it can be stated that Berchorius combined two common mythographic traditions with a minor one, resulting in a distinctly original fable.

2. *Parallel mythographic traditions*

Unlike the case study, textual sources generally recount Vulcan's and Pallas's births as two separate narratives. The following paragraph will emphasize the presence of some Ovidian exegetes who lived between the 12th and the 14th century: Arnould d'Orléans, Jean de Garlande, Giovanni Bonsignori and, perhaps surprisingly, Berchorius himself[30].

Specifically, Vulcan is often said to be the result of Juno's premature or unsuccessful childbirth[31], but neither the parthenogenesis nor his sister Pallas are explicitly mentioned[32]. Some evidence is provided by Arnould d'Orléans, who

[24] Berchorius ed. 1971, p. 33.

[25] Panofsky 1939, pp. 42-44.

[26] Cf. Apollodorus, *The Library*, I, III, 5.

[27] Cf. Hyginus, *Fabulae*, *Praefactio*, 21-22.

[28] Cf. Philargyrius, *Explanatio in Bucolica Vergilii*, II, 61.

[29] Cf. «Iuppiter et Iuno voluerunt intimare suam divinitatem, et genuerunt sine coitu: Iuppiter de sua barba Minervam, Iuno de suo femore Vulcanum progenuit. Is deformior factus, ideoque praecipitatus est a caelo» (Jupiter and Juno wanted to make their divinity known, and they produced offspring without sexual union. Jupiter brought forth Minerva from his beard, and Juno brought forth Vulcan from her thigh. Vulcan was deformed and thus was hurled from the sky): the *First Vatican Mythographer*, CLXXIII in the *Vatican Mythographers* ed. 1987 with translation from the *Vatican Mythographers* ed. 2008, p. 76. It testifies to the amalgamation of the Hesiodic tradition of the double birth with the Homeric tradition of the fall, as in Berchorius: Chance 1945, p. 319. Cf. also the *First Vatican Mythographer*, CCI.

[30] By contrast, the anonymous *Ovide Moralisé* does not contain any documented references.

[31] Focusing on one possible symbolic meaning, the outcome of the motherhood – although a divine one – could only have been monstrous as it occurred without a male's approval or contribution: Filippini 2021, p. 22.

[32] Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, XIV, 166, XVIII, 391-409 and XXI, 330, 366-367, 378-379; *Homeric Hymns*, III, To Apollo, 305-330; *scholia* on *Iliad*, XIV, 296; Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica*, I, 859; Lucian, *De Sacrificiis*, 6; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IV, 173; Servius, *Commentarius in*

inserted a digression on the theogonic event before describing the birth of Erythonius in the fable of the Crow and Minerva in Book II of his *Allegoriae* (*c.* 1175)[33]. Giovanni Bonsignori qualified Vulcan as the «figliuolo de Giunone»[34] within the myth of Venus's adultery in his *Ovidio Metamorphoseos Vulgare,* the first Ovidian moralization in the Italian vernacular (*c.* 1375-1377). Similarly, he briefly mentioned Juno's wrath – caused by the ugliness of her newborn son – in the chapter dedicated to the myth of Semele, titled *Come Semele fu odiata da Giuno* (*How Semele was hated by Juno)35*. In the same vein, Berchorius underlined the parental bond in the *Prologus* of *De formis figurisque deorum*: «a Iunone dicitur genitus»[36].

In addition, a less common mythographic tradition worth mentioning is the one that features Vulcan as the son of Jupiter[37]. Fragments of the story have been preserved by Bonsignori, who testified as follows: «De Giunone ingenerò Giove un figliuolo chiamato Vulcano» (By Juno, Jupiter had a son named Vulcan)[38].

Aeneidos, VIII, 454; for other references see n. 20. Amongst others, one of the most problematic sources may be identified in the *Homeric Hymns* to Apollo. In this text, the initiative for solitary procreation seems to come from Juno, who «alone engendered» Vulcan without having been provoked by Jupiters' parthenogenesis: Loraux 1981, I, 3. Lucian's statement is problematic as well, since he describes Vulcan as "*hypènémios*", perhaps alluding to the fact that his mother gave birth without a sexual partner: Detienne 1976, p. 76.

[33] Cf. «Iuno vulvam suam percussit, inde natus est Vulcanus qui a celo expulsus propter turpitudinem suam in Lenno insula a simiis est nutritus. [...] Iuno enim, id est terra, vulvam suam percussit, id est, se conceptivam viciorum, sicut vulva conceptiva est puerorum. Inde fuit Vulcanus natus, id est fervor libidinis, qui propter turpitudinem suam de celo fuit expulsus» (Juno struck her vulva, from which Vulcan was born and, having been expelled from heaven for his ugliness, was raised by monkeys on the island of Lemnos. [...] In fact, Juno, the Earth, struck her vulva, which implies that she is the source of vice, just as the vulva is the source from which children are produced. This is the origin of Vulcan, or in other words, the ardour of desire, who was cast out of heaven for his wickedness): Arnould d'Orléan, *Allegoriae*, II, VIIIc in Arnould d'Orléan ed. 2022, p. 110 with translation by the author. In comparison with Berchorius' words, there is a key difference which should be clearly emphasized: the identity of those who "raised" Vulcan at Lemnos is revealed.

[34] Bonsignori, *Ovidio Metamorphoseos Vulgare*, IV, VIII, 3 in Bonsignori ed. 2001, p. 220.

[35] Cf. Bonsignori, *Ovidio Metamorphoseos Vulgare*, III, VII, 5.

[36] Petrus Berchorius, *Prologus* in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 56.

[37] Cf. Homer, *Iliad,* I, 577-594; XIV, 338; *Odyssey*, VIII. 312; Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, VIII, LIII, 5; Apollodorus, *The Library*, I, III, 5; Cicero, *De Natura Deorum,* III, IX, 22; among medieval sources, Martianus Cappella, *De Nuptiis,* I, 42; Servius, *Commentarius in Aeneidos,* IV, 62; the *First Vatican Mythographer*, CXXV, *scil.* «Vulcanus, eo quod deformis esset, a parentibus suis, id est Ioue et Iunone, spretus est et in insulam Lemnum precipitatus illicque a Sintiis nutritus» (Since Vulcan was misshapen, he was rejected by his parents, Jove and Juno, and cast down onto the island of Lemnos. He was raised there by the Sintians): the *Vatican Mythographes* 2013, p. 60; Rabanus Maurus, *De Universo*, XV, VI, 20-21; Cristoforo Landino, *Comento di Cristophoro Landini Fiorentino sopra la Comedia di Dante Alighieri poeta Fiorentino*, *Inferno*, XIII.

[38] Cf. Bonsignori, *Ovidio Metamorphoseos Vulgare*, *Exordium*, III, 48 with translation by the author. Cf. also *Ovide Moralisè en prose*, I, 17.

As far as the birth of Pallas is concerned, however, only a few written sources report that she was conceived by Metis – the Greek goddess of wisdom[39] – before Zeus swallowed her and gave birth to the child himself[40]. Yet it is predominantly documented as a kind of *male asexual reproduction*[41]. Among the rewritings of the *Metamorphoses*, the latter tradition comes to light when examining the chapter *De ortu Palladis* from the *Integumenta super Ovidii "Metamorphoses"* by Jean de Garlande (*c.* 1234)[42]. The passage is concise but relevant because it anticipated a very common interpretative pattern in Renaissance literature: the birth of Pallas as a metaphor for the writer's act of creation[43]. A century later, a reference to the same version could be found in the chapter titled *Forma Minerve* from the *De formis figurisque deorum*: «Minerva dea sapientie et de cerebro Iovis nata, que et Pallas dicta est, pingebatur a poetis in similitudinem unius domine armate, cuius caput iride circumcictum erat, cassis sive crista desuper eam tegebat» (I say that Minerva signifies wisdom and the life of a wise man which is born from the brain of Jove – i.e. from the divine mind itself – and is derived from the father of lights. Ecclesiasticus 1:1: «All wisdom is from the Lord God»)[44].

[39] On Metis see Detienne, Vernant 1974.

[40] Cf. Hesiod, *Theogony,* 886-900; *Homeric Hymns,* III, To Apollo, 307-323; *Homeric Hymns,* XVIII, To Hermes, 1-9; Pindar fr. 30 Sn.-M. 1-5; frr. 908-909 von Arnim, 352-353; Aeschylus, *Eumenides,* 736; Apollodorus, *The Library*, I, III, 6; Cornutus, *Theologiae Graecae Compendium*, 35-36.

[41] Cf. Pindar, *Isthmian Odes*, VII, 58-70; Euripides, *Erechtheus*, fr. 370, 63-65; Euripides, *The Phoenicians,* 662; Philostratus, *Imagines*, II, 27; Cicero, *De natura deorum,* III, 53; Ovid, *Fasti,* III, 835-842. More precisely, Ovid recognises the so-called *Quinquatrus* – on the 19th of March – as Minerva's *dies natalis* and the day of consecration of *Minerva Capta* temple on Mount Caelian, linking the event with the goddess's role of *patrona artium*: La Bua 2010, p. 46. Among medieval sources, cf. Servius, *Commentarius in Bucolicon*, II, 61 and *Commentarius in Aeneidos*, VIII, 454; Macrobius, *Saturnalia,* I, XVII, 70; Fulgentius, *Mythologiae,* II, 68; Augustine, *De civitate Dei,* XVIII, 12; Martianus Capella, *De nuptis,* VI, 567; Gregorius Nazanzienus, *Invectiva contra Iulianum,* V, 50; Pseudo Nonnus, *Historiae*, 27; Boccaccio, *Genealogie deorum gentilium*, II, III, 23b. Among modern sources, it is sufficient to mention Vincenzo Cartari, *Le imagini degli dei degli antichi*, XI.

[42] «De cerebro trahit hec ortum, fontem colit; hec est / Rivos dispergens summa sophia tuos. / Iste poetarum fons est quia fama perhennis Illos perpetuum nomen habere facit» (This one originates from the brain of Jupiter, it honours this fountain, she, the supreme wisdom pouring out your waters in all directions. This is the fountain of poets, because eternal fame gives poets endless fame): Jean de Garlande, *Integumenta,* 239-242 in Jean de Garlande ed. 2022, pp. 254-255.

[43] Cf., for istance, Giambattista Giraldi Cinzio, *Carteggio epistolare*, XXV in Giraldi Cinzio 1996, pp. 172-173; Torquato Tasso, *Lettere,* 1452; Pierre de Ronsard, *La lyre*, LXV, 22; in parodic terms also Erasmus of Rotterdam, *In Praise of Folly,* LIII. An obvious example in the visual arts is Paolo Fiammingo, *The Birth of Athena from Zeus' Head*, 1590, Prague, Art Collections of Prague Castle: A. Tamvaki, in Schoon, Paarlberg 2000, pp. 206-207. On the metaphor of poets' and philosophers' spiritual parthenogenesis, see Rigotti 2010, par. 2.1; Leitao 2012; Cianci 2018, par. 3.4.

[44] Petrus Berchorius, *De formis figurisque deorum*, VIII in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, pp. 96-97 with translation in Berchorius ed. 1971, p. 79. *A latere*, the singularity of a modern source

Yet a particularly influential tradition is worth mentioning: in some accounts Vulcan assumes the role of a midwife by splitting Zeus's head with an axe to release Pallas[45]. In this case the order of births would obviously be reversed[46].

3. *"Moraliter"*

After examining the fate of the mythografic traditions – both major and minor – the following paragraph will attempt to draw a general overview of the moral allegorical meanings given by the author to the fable. In order to fully comprehend the case study, it is imperative to highlight how the fable is allegorically interpreted and re-semantized from a Christian perspective.

The Berchorian *moralisatio* – displayed in the *descriptio longa*, right after the mythical narrative – focuses on four interpretations, each supported by several biblical quotations. In the first one, the complementary relationship between Jupiter and Juno is explained through the fundamental faculties of humans, *intellectus* and *affectus*. Hence, their children are respectively seen as wisdom[47] and concupiscence[48]. In the light of this, Berchorius also offered moral explanations of what happened to Vulcan: his fall is interpreted as the abandonment of the straight path in favour of avarice, his congenital lameness

deserves being mentioned. Ludovico Dolce – the writer of *Trasformationi*, an Italian vernacular translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1553) – revives the theogonical prodigy in his moralistic-pedagogical work titled *Dialogo della istitutione delle donne*. In fact, the author referred to Pallas as an *exemplum* of purity, since she was born from the brain of Jupiter. Cf. Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo della istitutione delle donne*, I, 22-23.

[45] In this case, visual arts precede literature: Boardman 2004, p. 104. In fact, Vulcan first appears in iconographic evidence between the late 7th and early 6th century BC: e.g. the pithos of Xomburg (Simon 1982, p. 36), the bronze shields from Olympia (Cassimatis 1984, nn. 361-362), the Attic black-figure pinake from the Acropolis (Karoglou 2010, n. 122) and – amongst numerous examples – the Attic black-figure amphora from Vulci, in which Vulcan is even visibly portrayed as a cripple (Brommer 1978, Pl. 13.3). On the other hand, it is only later that he appears in textual sources: first, in Pindar's *Isthmian Odes*, VII, 58-70.

[46] Fineberg 2009, p. 276.

[47] As already mentioned – see n. 15 – the Old Testament tradition re-semantised Pallas as *Sapientia*, the spiritual creature generated by the mind of God, capable of inspiring *Amor* in humans and leading them to contemplative life. Pallas-*Sapientia* was even identified with the figure of Christ, *Verbum Dei*, in the Old Testament tradition due to her close connection to the Father. A list of textual sources on these allegorisms is provided in Newman 2005, pp. 194-203; Hodapp 2019, pp. 21-32, 44-45. Cf. also, for instance, Petrus Berchorius, *De formis figurisque deorum*, VIII; among the Ovidian exegetes, cf. Arnould d'Orléan, *Allegoriae*, VI, I; Jean de Garlande, *Integumenta,* 149; Giovanni del Virgilio, *Allegoriae*, VI, I, VI, XXVII and VI, XXX.

[48] Vulcan is allegorically associated withthe fire of passion. Cf. The *Third Vatican Mythographer*, X, III. Again, Vulcan's amorous pursuit of Minerva is similarly interpreted. Cf., first, Fulgentius, *Mythologiae,* II, XI. For more on the matter see Brumble 1998.

as a sign of malignity, and his marriage with Venus as the satisfaction of lust. A brief account of this is provided in the following passage:

Iupiter, id est intellectus, igitur de cerebro imaginationis sue Palladem, id est sapientiam produxit, Iuno vero, id est affectus, Vulcanum deum ignis, id est ardorem concupiscentie generavit, qui scilicet in terram cecidit per avaritiam et Veneri fuit coniunctus per luxuriam. Et semper claudicat per sinistram intentionem et malitiam[49].

Jupiter from the head of his imagination produced Pallas – that is wisdom – but Juno – that is desire – generated Vulcan the god of fire – that is the ardour of concupiscence. He fell to earth because of avarice, was joined to Venus because of luxury, and is always lame because of his sinister intention and malice[50].

Moving on to the second interpretation, Berchorius portrayed Jupiter and Juno as soul versus body[51]. As far as these first two interpretations are concerned, a similarity with the so-called *Sexta transmutatio est de Vulcano* written by the Italian university master Giovanni del Virgilio in his *Allegoriae* cannot be ignored[52].

By contrast, the third interpretation is distinguished by its originality[53], reading as follows:

Vel dic, quod Iupiter est bonus prelatus, Iuno vero malus, quia bonus semper solet Palladem, id est sapientes personas, in ecclesia generare et et etiam in suis officiis et beneficiis collocare. Econverso vero malus prelatus vel princeps malas personas in beneficiis et officiis collocat et producit[54] .

Or say that Jupiter is a good prelate and Juno a bad one because a good prelate is always accustomed to beget Pallas – that is wise persons in the Church or in the land – and place

[49] Petrus Berchorius, *Ovidius moralizatus*, IV, II, 15-21 in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 216.

[50] Berchorius ed. 1971, p. 204.

[51] «Dic, quod Iupiter est animus, Iuno caro, quia scilicet animus deam armatam, scilicet sapientiam, generat, caro vero econverso Vulcanum ardentem, id est malum desiderium, creat, quod per malitiam claudicat» (Or say that Jupiter is the soul and Juno the flesh because the soul generates Pallas, the armed goddess of wisdom; but, on the contrary, the flesh produces burning Vulcan – that is evil desire – and what it creates it lames through evil): Petrus Berchorius, *Ovidius moralizatus*, IV, II, 4-12 in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 217 with translation in Berchorius ed. 1971, p. 205.

[52] «Nam per Vulcanum intelligo hominem sapientem, per Palladem intelligo sapientiam. Per Vulcanum velle concubere cum ea intelligo hominem sapientem aliquando affligi a luxuria, ubi multa pugna et rara victoria» (The sixth transformation is that of Vulcan. By Vulcan I mean the wise man, by Pallas I mean wisdom. By Vulcan, who wishes to lie with her, I mean that the wise man is sometimes overcome by lust, where the struggle is continuous and the victory rare): Giovanni del Virgilio, *Allegoriae*, II, VI in Giovanni del Virgilio ed. 2022, p. 314 with translation by the author.

[53] It would be no exaggeration to say that the widespread – or even systematic – presence of social explanations within Berchorius' commentary distinguishes him from his predecessors and contemporary Ovidian moralizators: Evdokimova 2019, p. 191.

[54] Petrus Berchorius, *Ovidius moralizatus*, IV, II, 16-23 in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 217.

them in high offices and benefices. On the contrary, a bad prelate or ruler places and advances bad people in benefices and offices[55].

The social allegory concerns both couples of gods: Juno and Jupiter, and Vulcan and Pallas. Pallas symbolizes good men, fostered by equally good prelates – represented by Jupiter – whereas Vulcan symbolizes evil men, fostered by powerful prelates who are equally evil, represented by Juno. Just like in the previous allegories, Berchorius stressed the importance of Vulcan's lameness[56] and his marriage[57].

The *descriptio longa* reaches its climax in the fourth and final exegesis, in which Vulcan is figuratively associated with absolute evil, the "*diabolus*"[58].

In light of these four interpretations, it can be reasonably deducted why Berchorius developed a fable of such originality: the three mythographic motifs associated with the figure of Vulcan – the birth in contraposition with Pallas, the fall, and the wedding with Venus – are combined to assume specific allegorical meanings in the moral *apparatus*. The author's choice seems to be perfectly suited for achieving his goal.

4. *The iconographical tradition of the fable: from text to images*

The Berchorian narrative finds its figurative translation in the only illuminated copies of *Ovidius Moralizatus*, which include Gotha, Forschungs biblio-

[55] Berchorius ed. 1971, p. 204.

[56] «Tales enim solent claudicantes plus diligere [...] quia mali superiores libenter in domibus et officiis inducunt pauperes, qui carent virtutum oppulentia, debiles, qui carent fortitudine et constantia, cecos, qui carent spirituali sapientia, claudos, qui carent rectitudine et iustitia» (Such men are accustomed to love the lame more […] For bad superiors place in homes and functions poor men who lack the riches of virtue, weak ones who lack fortitude and constancy, blind ones who lack spiritual wisdom, and lame ones who lack rectitude and justice): Petrus Berchorius, *Ovidius moralizatus*, IV, II, 24-31 in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 217 with translation in Berchorius ed. 1971, p. 205.

[57] «sicut etiam videmus de malis officialibus et iudicibus, qui more Vulcani in terram per avaritiam cadunt et Veneris per luxuriam coniuges fiunt» (We see that evil officials and judges, like Vulcan, fall to earth because of avarice, become mates of Venus because of luxury): Petrus Berchorius, *Ovidius moralizatus*, IV, II, 31-34, 1 in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, pp. 217-218 with translation in Berchorius ed. 1971, pp. 205-206.

[58] «Vel Vulcanus est diabolus, qui propter peccati turpitudinem de celo est eiectus et intellectu et affectu claudus. Hic in terra cum peccatoribus habitare est compulsus et insule ardenti, id est inferno perpetuo condemnatus» (Or say that Vulcan is the devil who because of sin and infamy was hurled down from heaven and who was lame in intellect and will. He was expelled to earth with sinners and was condemned to a burning island that is hell forever): Petrus Berchorius, *Ovidius moralizatus*, IV, II, 3-8 in Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 2, p. 219 with translation in Berchorius ed. 1971, pp. 206-207.

thek Ms. I 98 (mid-14th century) and Bergamo, Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai Cassaf. Ms. 3.4 (late 14th century)[59].

The following paragraph will analyse the interrelation between image and text, in terms of both similarities and discrepancies.

In the Gotha manuscript, the mythical illustration is articulated in three sequences, from top to bottom, corresponding to the three narrative motifs (Fig. 1). Conversely, the Bergamo codex adopts a two-sequence representation, depicting only the double parthenogenesis on the left, and the marriage on the right (Fig. 2). In both miniatures, the first subject is the double parthenogenesis, represented by means of the same narrative-iconographic scheme: Jupiter and Juno are both depicted in a standing position[60], the figure of a midwife is missing, and Pallas and Vulcan are miniaturised so as to indicate their infancy[61].

In the Gotha miniature, however, the pictorial approach is much richer in detail. Against a blue backdrop of sky with the sun, moon and golden stars, the two parturients are turning slightly towards each other. Both are helping their respective children to be born: Jupiter, in the guise of a doctor wearing a red cloak and a headdress, is striking his own head with a rod, while Juno is holding up a flap of her dress, using birthing forceps[62]. Pallas emerges fully armed as literary tradition recounts[63], whereas Vulcan's foetus is more realistically expelled from Juno's womb *in pedibus secundum naturam*[64].

In contrast, the Bergamo illustration follows a more concise figurative code, in which the characters are immediately recognisable by their iconographic attributes. In particular, Vulcan is depicted with the typical conical pileus and his distinctive lameness is emphasised[65]. Moreover, an element worth under-

[59] Venturini 2018, p. 199; Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 1, pp. 127-128. Treviso, Biblioteca comunale Ms. 344 (before mid-15th century), will not be taken into account since illuminations here are limited to the *De formis figurisque deorum*: Venturini 2018, pp. 365-368. For further insight into the tradition of *Ovidius moralizatus* see Blänsdorf 1995; Horn 1995; Lord 1995 and 2011, pp. 270-275; Venturini 2018, pp. 73-256; Zanichelli 2022.

[60] Standing up during childbirth is generally considered as a sign of pride or strength: Filippini 2017, par. 3.3. As a consequence of this, the above-mentioned representations may express the quarrel between the divine couple. More commonly, in the iconographical tradition of childbirth scenes, female parturients sit composedly, thus indicating a miraculous birth which takes place without pain. Otherwise, parturients are depicted in a lying or semi-reclining position and *velatae capite*, which expresses physical discomfort and emotional turmoil. For more details on this topic, see Demand 1994, pp. 122-127; Beaumont 2012, pp. 3-11, 46-47; Bettini 2018, par. 1.1. On childbirths in general see Foscati 2023.

[61] Beaumont 1995, p. 351.

[62] Venturini 2018, pp. 199.

[63] Cf. n. 14.

[64] Marchetti 2017, p. 20. For a possible iconographic comparison, see the miniatures depicting the so-called birth of Papessa Giovanna: Frugoni 2021, pp. 256-270.

[65] Broadly speaking, Vulcan is portrayed as a robust blacksmith characterized by a bearded face, broad neck, hairy chest and crippled legs. He is usually wearing the exomis and the conical pileus, holding pincers, hammer and anvil in his hands: Brommer 1978, p. 18.

lining is that Pallas seems to be born from the mouth and not – as Berchorius stated – from the brain of her father[66].

Aside from the analysis of the theogonic sequences, it is important to focus on the other subjects as well. The Gotha manuscript depicts the fall of Vulcan in the lower part of the miniature, within a naturalistic setting. Conforming to the Promachos type, Pallas is standing beside him, near the sacred olive tree, and is wearing a crested helmet, peplos, aegis, shield and spear[67].

At the end of the figurative cycle, both vignettes illustrate the wedding of Vulcan and Venus. In the Gotha codex, the scene is staged on a raised floor in the presence of witnesses, while in the Bergamo codex Vulcan is again distinguished by his lameness.

What emerges from this analysis is that the only departures from Berchorius' narrative are found in the physical characterisation of the parturients in the Gotha codex, and in the birth from Jupiter's mouth in the Bergamo codex. Aside from these two aspects, there are no other incongruities between image and text.

Considering the whole cycle of miniatures, there is another final point which merits a brief discussion. As previously mentioned, in Book IV of both manuscripts, Fable II is followed by the so-called *fabula tertia*, which is actually derived from Ovidian *Metamorphoses*, and narrates the betrayal of Venus discovered by Vulcan. However, only the Gotha codex illustrates this third fable. Thus, by depicting only the second fable, the illuminator of the Bergamo Codex stressed the importance of a non-Ovidian myth within the *Ovidius Moralizatus*.

5. *Iconographic evidence of the birth of Pallas and Vulcan: from ancient to medieval times*

The next crucial step is to investigate the resonance that these three subjects have had beyond the *Ovidius Moralizatus*, as they have not experienced the same iconographic fate.

[66] This discrepancy becomes even more significant in comparison with the *First Vatican Mythographer*, in which Pallas's birth takes place «de sua barba»: cf. n. 29.

[67] The same typology can be found in other manuscripts containing the *De formis figurisque deorum* and the *Ovidius Moralizatus*. E.g. Bergamo, Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai Cassaf. Ms. 3.4, f. 2v (*c.* 1390); Treviso, Biblioteca comunale Ms. 344, f. 5r (before mid-15th century). See also Colard Mansion's *Ovidius Moralizatus* in Lille Bibliothèque Municipale Inc. F 5, f. 20v (1484); *Ovide moralisé* in Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Reg. Lat. 1480, f. 133r (15th century); *Ovide moralisé* in Copenhagen, Det Kgl. Bibliotek Coll. Thott 339, f. 028v (15th century). For further comparisons see the synoptic table in Venturini 2018, p. 290.

In particular, there is no doubt that the fall of Vulcan is the most common of those three subjects, evidenced by numerous examples through various historical eras[68].

The exact opposite applies to the wedding. In fact, except for the two miniatures, no other attestations of the divine marriage are known, although there is a vast number of images which suggest their relationship[69].

Moving on to the theogonic motif, there is only one surviving image preceding the miniatures: a fragment of the famous Ostia-Berlin frieze currently housed in the Archeological Museum of Ostia (inv. 148)[70]. According to the current interpretation, on the right side the artefact shows the birth of Pallas, with Jupiter helping his daughter to emerge from his brain. On the left, Juno is giving birth to Vulcan attended by a nurse (Fig. 3).

The topic of this frieze is clearly the double parthenogenesis, although certain differences can be observed between this and the Berchorian ones. The former is characterised by a naturalistic language and contains some compositional-iconographic elements which are absent in the latter: Jupiter assumes the typical pose of the parturient during the classical-Hellenistic period[71], while Pallas is realistically portrayed with the features of a newborn child. Pallas's half-length figure – now headless – is nude and her arms are outstretched. Next to them, Juno – *velato capite* – is sitting on a wide seat, looking at her son Vulcan. He is as naked as Pallas, stretching out his chubby arms towards an old nurse[72]. Finally, a draped female figure in the middle acts as a *trait d'union* between the two scenes: the most convincing hypothesis indentifies her as Ilithyia, the goddess of births[73].

The next fragment of the frieze (inv. sk 912) depicts Vulcan's fall from Olympus caused by the anger of his mother (Fig. 4). We can easily recognise the infant Vulcan, portrayed as a blacksmith wearing a short tunic and work cap, with hammer and tongs[74]. Jupiter and Juno are represented behind him in

[68] E.g. Bergamo, Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai Cassaf. Ms. 3.4, f. 4r (*c.* 1390). For other comparisons see Davidson Reid 1993b; the synoptic table in Venturini 2018, p. 298.

[69] E.g. depictions of Venus visiting Vulcan's forge, either as his wife or as a supplicant for Aeneas's armour: Davidson Reid 1993b.

[70] The fragment is a part of a larger frieze composed of three more pieces. They focus on various mythological episodes about Pallas and Vulcan, in order to celebrate the patron god of shipwrights in Ostia: Zevi, Micheli 2012.

[71] Cf. n. 60. An example is the Attic red-figure pelike, attributed to the painter of the Birth of Athena, found at Vulci (mid-5th century BCE): Schefold 1981, n. 7; Arafat 1990, pp. 35-36.

[72] Zevi, Micheli 2012, p. 46.

[73] Ivi, p. 44. Ilithyia is the goddess, daughter of Hera, who presides over births. Her role is ambivalent, as she can can both facilitate and hinder childbirths as the divine midwife. From an iconographic perspective, Ilithyia is often portrayed with her hair loose on her shoulders, simply adorned with a *pólos* or a *tainía*, touching the parturient or raising her hands as a symbolic gesture of good luck: Pingiatoglou 1981, pp. 95-97; Bettini 2018, par. 4.3.

[74] Cf. n. 65.

a half-length pose, while at the centre, the Promachos-type Pallas is standing in front of the sacred olive tree. At the edges of the frieze there are two female figures identified as the Oceanid Eurynome and the sea-goddess Thetis: respectively, the first one is lying beside a pistrix, while the second one is standing and holding the shield of Achilles[75].

As pointed out by Venturini, it is safe to conclude that – apart from the obvious stylistic differences, partly related to different historical contexts – there is a close resemblance to the miniature in the Gotha Codex: both artworks offer evidence of and record the birth and fall of Vulcan successively (Fig. 5). Knowing that it must have been impossible for the illuminator to have seen the Roman frieze, this strong similarity could stem from common literary sources or a figurative model that is currently unknown[76].

Before concluding this discussion, however, another important aspect should be examined: just like in the previously mentioned literature, in visual arts Vulcan's birth is also portrayed exclusively in association with Pallas's birth. There is ample evidence that this last theogonical prodigy is one of the favourite subjects of Attic ceramographers of the archaic-classical period, as well as the subject of the east pediment of the Parthenon[77]. This iconographic theme is much more rarely encountered in later historical periods[78], with only three examples dating back to the Middle Ages. The first one is from the Byzantine codex Taphou 14 – housed in the Patriarchal Library in Jerusalem (11th century) – which contains the *Historiae* of the late exegete of Gregory of Nazanzian named Pseudo-Nonnus (Fig. 6)[79]. The second one can be found in the Diagram

[75] The presence of the two female figures can be explained in the context of the Vulcan myth. According to the *vulgata*, when the crippled child fell down from Olympus, he was rescued by the Oceanid Eurynome and the sea-goddess Thetis. In fact, for nine years he lived in a cave by the sea, practising his craft and making jewellery for his benefactresses: Zevi, Micheli 2012, p. 46.

[76] Venturini 2018, pp. 199-200.

[77] On the iconographic sources of Pallas's birth see Brommer 1961; 1978, p. 10; Balmuth 1963; Aebli 1971, pp. 83-86; Loeb 1979, pp. 14-27; Schefold 1978, pp. 12-20; 1981, pp. 19-23; Cassimatìs 1984, s.v. Athena, pp. 985-990; Arafat 1990, pp. 33-39; Beaumont 1995, pp. 349-351; Chamay, Rey-Bellet 2000; Simantoni-Bournia 2004, pp. 83-95; Boardman 2009, s.v. Athena, p. 116; Stark 2012, pp. 104-121.

[78] The subject of Pallas's birth has gone largely unnoticed so far by scholars of history of images. A notable exception is Davidson Reid 1993a. Based on my survey, only a handful of instances dating from modern times appear in both major and minor artworks. To cite some examples: Antonio Lombardo's marble relief at the State Hermitage museum (1508) (Zaretskaia, Kossareva 1975, Pl. 11); Hans Holbein the Elder's engraving in Erasmus of Rotterdam, *Moriae encomium seu laus stultitiae,* Basel (1515) (Cartari ed. 1996, p. 396); Giovanni Stradano's painting at Museo di Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (*c.* 1557-1562); Bolognino Zaltieri's engraving in Vincenzo Cartari, *Le Imagini de i dei de gli antichi*, Venezia (1571), f. 56; Gèrard de Jode's engraving in Laurentius Haechtanus Goidtsenhovius, *Mikrokosmos*, *IV,* Antwerp (1579); René Antoine Houasse's painting at Musée national des châteaux de Versailles (*c.* 1689-1706).

[79] Two subjects are portrayed: on the left, Pallas's birth from Jupiter's head in front of Vulcan; on the right, the amorous pursuit. It should be noted that Vulcan is grasping his "obstetri-

of the Muses from codex Add. 57529 – housed in the British Library in London (15th century) – which contains the *Liber Collectionum*, the inspirational treatise of Boccaccio's *Genealogiae* written by Paolo da Perugia[80] (Fig. 7).

Finally, the third image appears in Jean d'Outremeuse's *Tresorier de philosophie naturelle des pierres precieuses,* within a codex owned by Raphael de Mercatellis, a famous Flemish collector who lived in the 15th century (Fig. 8)[81]. This image is an outstanding iconographical source, since the re-semantisation of Pallas's birth is in perfect accordance with the same Christian sapiential tradition recounted by Berchorius[82].

This review of the iconographic evidence constitutes further proof of what has already emerged from the analysis of the written sources: the double parthenogenesis represents a much less successful mythographic tradition, which is precisely why its survival – at least in the medieval age – is worth noting. The uniqueness of the Berchorian fable becomes even more significant when its figurative tradition is taken into account. In fact, the Gotha and Bergamo manuscripts are the only illuminated examples of *Ovidius Moralizatus*. As such, they are the only medieval iconographic sources of the non-Ovidian myth of double parthenogenesis, which makes them fundamental pieces of the puzzle in the history of images.

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cal" instrument with his left hand and performing the gesture of the Aristotelian *computatio* with his right. This last detail is interpreted as a sign of conversation with Jupiter to request his daughter in marriage: Weitzmann 1984, pp. 50-52 and 79.

[80] The work consists of a mythological *summa* based on the genealogical criteria. It is accompanied by tree diagrams to visualize parental bonds among protagonists of the ancient pantheon: Gambino Longo 2008; d'Urso 2020. For general information on the *Liber Collectionum* and its manuscript tradition see also Hankey 1989.

[81] Arnould 1988, pp. 200-201.

[82] The inscriptions explicitly clarify the allegorical meaning behind the image. The letters between the arms of the sceptre stand respectively for *philosophia naturalis*, *supernaturalis* and *moralis* – the three branches of philosophy in the medieval *curriculum* – while the letters among the luminous rays behind Minerva's head abbreviate the seven Liberal Arts. In addition, the creatures at the base of the throne – eagle, pelican and griffin – symbolising *Intelligentia*, *Voluntas* and *Memoria*, the three powers of the soul and the three virtues associated to the Trinity: *ibid*.

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Appendix

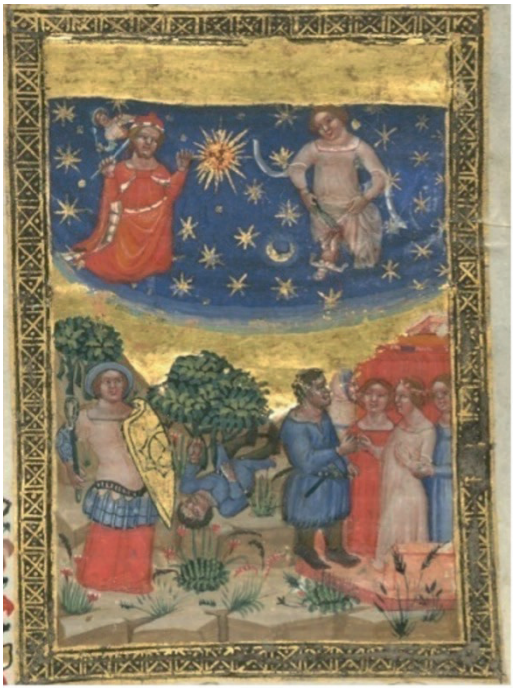

Fig. 1. Birth of Pallas and Vulcan (top), fall of Vulcan and marriage of Vulcan with Venus (bottom), in Gotha, Forschungs bibliotheck Ms. I.98, f. 21r, Bologna *c*. 1350 (Berchorius 2021, vol. 1, Fig. 27)

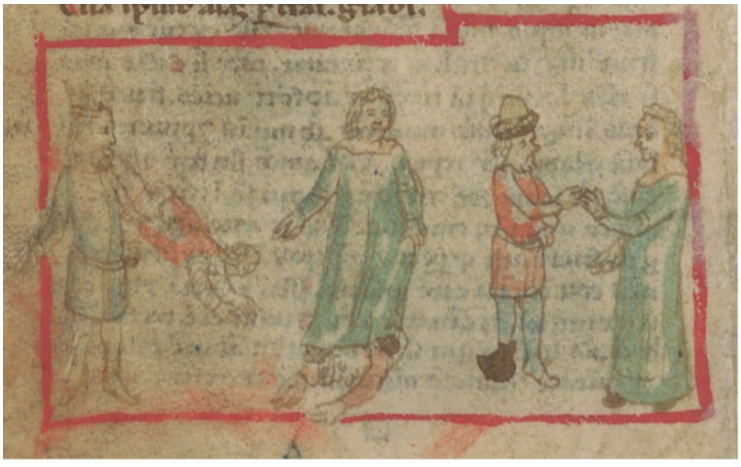

Fig. 2. Birth of Pallas and Vulcan (left), marriage of Vulcan with Venus (right) in Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica Angelo Mai Cassaf. 3.4, f. 41v, Padova *c*. 1390 (Biblioteca Digitale Lombarda)

Fig. 3. Frieze *Ostia-Berlin* (inv. 148), mid-2nd century CE, marble, Museo Ostiense (Zevi, Micheli 2012, Fig. 1)

Fig. 4. Frieze *Ostia-Berlin* (inv. n. 912), mid-2nd century CE, marble, Staatliche Museen Berlin (Zevi, Micheli 2012, Fig. 3)

Fig. 5. Frieze *Ostia-Berlin* (inv. nn. 912 and 148), mid-2nd century CE, marble, Museo Ostiense (Zevi, Micheli 2012, Fig. 9)

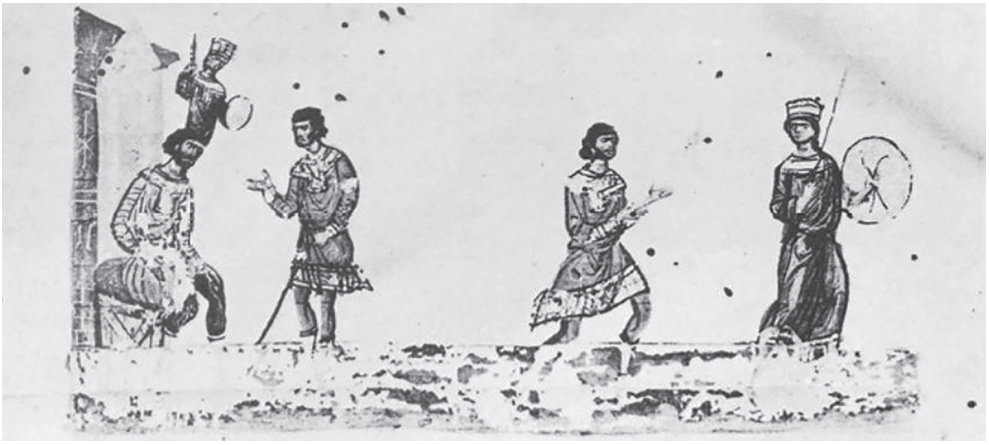

Fig. 6. *Birth of Pallas from the head of Jupiter* (left), *Vulcan's amorous pursuit of Pallas* (right), in Jerusalem, Patriarchal Library Cod. Taphou 14, f. 312, 11th century (The Index of Medieval Art) (Weitzmann 1984, Fig. 59)

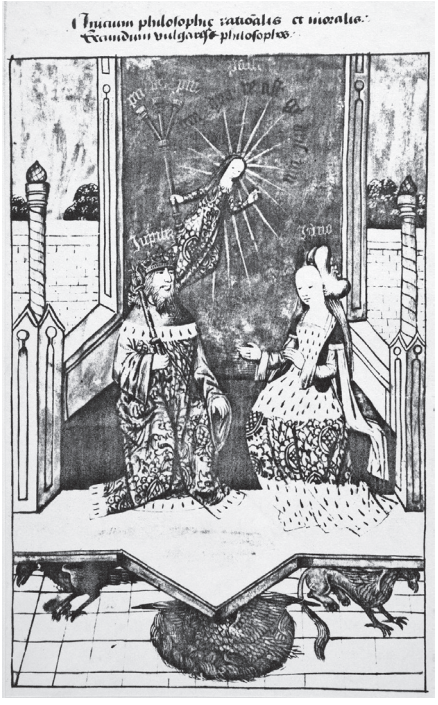

Fig. 7. Master of the Genealogiae deorum Add. 5729, *Birth of Minerva from the head of Jupiter*, in London, British Library Cod. Add. 57529, fol. 4v, *c.* 1374 (Berchorius ed. 2021, vol. 1, Fig. 272)

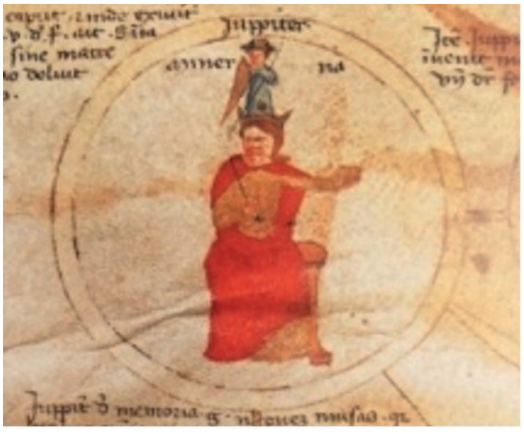

Fig. 8. Flemish Master Raphael de Mercatellis, *Birth of Pallas/Sapientia from the head of Jupiter in Ghent*, St Bavo Ms 16A, f. 8r, *c.* 1508 (Arnould 1988, Pl. 23, Fig. c)

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