

# The Illuminated Manuscripts of Pierre Bersuire's *Ovidius Moralizatus*

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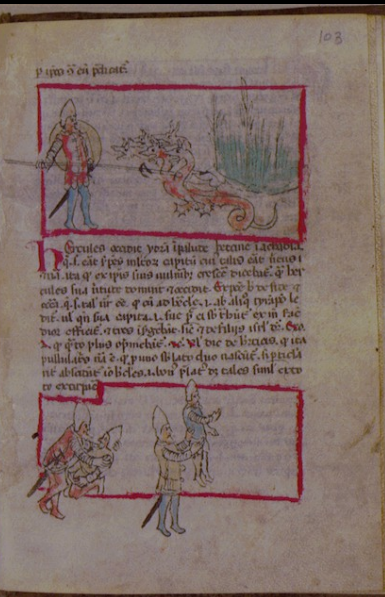
Gotha: Forschungsbibliothek, MS. Membr. I 98.



Oxford: Bodleian, MS Rawlinson B. 214



Holkham: Holkham Hall, MS 324.



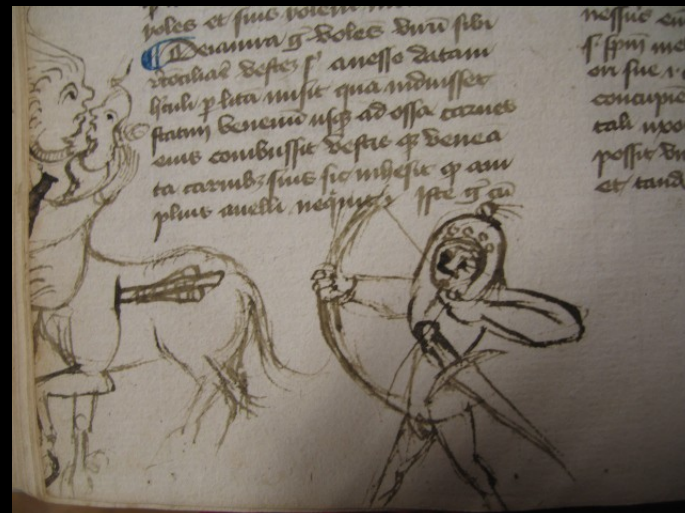
Bergamo: Biblioteca Civica 'Angelo Mai', MS Cassaforte 3.4



Treviso: Biblioteca Comunale, Ms. 344.



Ghent: Cathedral Library, MS 12.



Paris: BnF, MS Lat. 5703.

Despite the huge numbers of extant Ovidian commentaries in manuscript form – Frank Coulson and Bruno Roy list no fewer than 345 extant manuscripts with copies of commentaries connected to the *Metamorphoses* alone – figural images are only found in a small fraction of the codices. The principle commentators as identified by Jane Chance in the *Medieval Mythography* v. 2 (2000), namely Arnulf of Orléans, John of Garland, Manegold of Lautenbach, Petrus Berchorius, Ralph of Beauvais, Thomas of Walsingham, Giovanni de Virgilio, and the third Vatican mythographer – are responsible for 213 of the extant manuscripts, twelve of which are illuminated. Of these twelve, seven are connected to the text of *Ovidius Moralizatus*, written by the Benedictine monk and the aide to Cardinal Pierre de Prés at Avignon, Pierre Bersuire, otherwise known as Petrus Berchorius. Thus, these seven manuscripts form the significant portion of the corpus of illuminated commentaries on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and they have yet to be studied in their entirety.

My doctoral project seeks to examine each of these seven manuscripts in turn. Attention is paid not only to the illuminations but also to the modifications and variations of the text of each codex as a means of investigating the intellectual and cultural climate surrounding the manuscript's creation. Additionally, I seek to locate these manuscripts within the historical context of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in order to gain an understanding of how a contemporary reader was using Berchorius's commentary, and how that use changed when the manuscript was illuminated.