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The Iconography of the Mythological Characters in the *Divine Comedy* Manuscripts of the 14th-15th Centuries: Functions and Iconographical Sources*

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The history of illustration of Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the 14th-15th centuries rarely attracts the attention of researchers. Nevertheless, a careful analysis of some manuscripts would clarify the genesis process of specific iconographic schemes within the framework of a very specific task: illustrating a text replete with figures of speech and references to ancient sources that were often unknown to the iconography designer. This contribute is devoted to the iconography of mythological characters found in Dante's text and their visual sources based on a few manuscripts of the *Divine Comedy* dated from mid-14th and 15th centuries, six of which are fully illustrated (e.g. so-called *Budapest Codex*, *Egerton Codex*, *Chantilly Codex* and some others).

Introduction

In the 1330s, that is, just over ten years after Dante's death in 1321, the first illuminated manuscripts of the *Divine Comedy* began to appear – for example, the so-called *Budapest Manuscrip*t (Budapest, Eötvös Loránd University Library, Cod. ital. 1)[1] or the so-called *Dante Poggiali* (Florence, The Central National Library, ms Pal. 313, 1333-1345)[2]. Illustrating the text of the poem presented several difficulties for miniaturists and iconography designers because the narrative is full of elements that require the master to go beyond his everyday horizons. These include described mythological characters and numerous references to ancient texts (for example, Dante repeatedly refers to the *Aeneid* by Virgil and the *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, as well as to the *Nicomachean Ethics* by Aristotle, the *Pharsalia* by Lucan, plays by Terence, etc.). A further difficulty is the almost absence of illustrated texts which belong to the genre of visio.

The problem of illustrating Dante's manuscripts was introduced into scientific debate by the German researcher Ludwig Volkmann (1870-1947) in his monograph *Iconografia dantesca. Le rappresentazioni figurative della Divina commedia* (1898). Volkman traces the influence of the Last Judgment's iconography on the visualization of plots from the first *Cantica*, the *Inferno*. His approach is largely developed by the U.S. researchers Millard Meiss (1904-1975), Peter H. Brieger (1898-1983) and Charles S. Singleton (1909-1985) in the collective monograph *Illustrated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy* (1969). They expand the range of monuments iconographically associated with the scenes of the Last Judgment and describe in detail the iconographic schemes for the three *Cantiche* of the poem. However, both the study of Volkman and the work of Brieger, Meiss and Singleton, and more recently of Laura Pasquini, are mainly descriptive, and mostly the iconographical elements of the Last Judgment are singled out as possible sources for the manuscripts' iconographic program. Studies of the *Divine Comedy* manuscripts lack a closer iconographical approach and rarely seek to identify the genesis of iconographic schemes concerning a few *Inferno*'s characters.

This work is an attempt to summarize the previous approaches and, on this basis, to propose a methodology that would expand the range of visual sources and focus on the iconographic genesis of each selected mythological character. Ten manuscripts of the 14th century and the first half of the 15th were selected, which are most often referred to by the researchers indicated above: the *Budapest Manuscript* (see above); the *Egerton Codex* (London, British Library, ms Egerton 943)[3]; the *Dante Poggiali* (see above); the *Chantilly Codex* (Chantilly, Bibliothèque du musée Condé, ms 0597)[4]; the *Naples Codex*

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1   The Cod. ital. 1 or the *Budapest Manuscript* was made by an unknown Venetian master, and commissioned by Andrea Dandolo (1306-1354), the Doge of Venice, ca. 1333-1350. The manuscript contains 94 in-text miniatures. The illustration ends on *Purgatorio* XII; however, judging by the empty sections, it was supposed to be fully illustrated. See: Draskóczy 2020; Bibor, Németh, Kiszl 2022: 79-80.

2   The ms Pal. 313 was made in ca. 1333-1345. It contains 37 miniatures (32 of them illustrate the *Inferno*). The manuscript is the work of various hands – for instance, a master from the circle of Bernardo Daddi and a master from the circle of Pacino de Buonaguida could be identified. See: Brieger, Meiss, Singelton 1969, I: 245-246; Ferrante, Perna 2021.

3   The ms Egerton 943 was made in ca. 1320-1350 presumably in Padua by the Master of the Padua antiphonaries. It contains 261 in-text miniatures, and comments in Latin by an unknown author. See: Pegoretti 2009 and 2017.

4   The ms 0597 was made ca. 1330-1340 in a Pisan workshop – possibly, by the artist Francesco Traini (1321-1365). It contains 55 miniatures exclusively for the *Inferno*, placed in the bottom margins of the page and related to the commentary of Guido da Pisa (second half of the 13th-middle of the 14th centuries). See Brieger, Meiss, Singleton 1969, I: 61-62; Balbarini 2011, passim; Ferrante, Perna 2021.

(Naples, Biblioteca e Complesso monumentale dei Girolamini, ms CF.2.16)[5]; the *Marciana Codex* (Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, ms It.Z.54)[6]; the *Morgan Codex* (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, ms M. 676)[7]; the *Paris Codex* (Paris, BnF, ms It. 74)[8]; the *Yates Codex* (London, BL, ms Yates Thompson 36)[9]; the *Dante Urbinate* (Vatican, BAV, Urb. Lat. 365)[10].

We propose to consider the iconography of mythological characters acting as guardians of hellish circles in the first Cantica, the *Inferno*: Charon, Minos, Cerberus, Plutus, Phlegyus, Three Furies, Minotaur, Geryon. These were chosen because: firstly, the appearance of these characters in the art of Greek and Roman antiquity does not always coincide with their description by Dante, and secondly, not all guardians of the circles appear in the previous artistic tradition of the Western Middle Ages as under their own and other names[11]. Their most possible function in the role of guardians is the personification of the sin that is punished in the corresponding circle, as was already indicated by the first commentators on the poem's text (Jacopo Alighieri – 1322; Jacopo della Lana – 1324-1328; Guido da Pisa – 1327-1328, etc.)[12].

We will try to trace how the iconographic types of these characters were formed and to identify how often and in what way the authors of the iconographic program took into account that characters functioned as personifications. This study is intended to become an experience in the analysis of the associative connection between the text and the image in Italy in a certain period, a kind of link between the medieval allegorical approach[13] and the obvious antiquity of the visual materials in the second half of the 15th century.

Before moving on to the features of the visualization and functioning of personifications in the *Divine Comedy* manuscripts, it should be mentioned that the depiction of personifications has a rather long tradition, known in Italy from the frescoes by Giotto in the Lower Church of San Francesco in Assisi (ca. 1310) or by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena (1338-1339). However, the first examples can already be found in Romanesque and Gothic art in the form of vices and virtues personified, for example: the southern portal of the narthex in Moissac abbey – 1120-1135; the jambs' statues of the western portal of the Strasbourg Cathedral – 1280-1290; the reliefs of the plint of central

5 | The ms CF.2.16 was made in 1355-1360 in a Neapolitan Workshop. It contains 146 miniatures. See: Brieger, Meiss, Singleton 1969: 291-292; Ferrante, Perna 2021.

6 | The ms It.Z.54 was made in the last quarter of the 14th century and contains 38 miniatures. The first known owner is Jacopo Contarini (1536-1595). See: Volkmann 1892: 35 e 67; Ferrante, Perna 2021.

7 | The ms M. 676 was made in 1345-1355 in a Florentine workshop. It contains 127 miniatures placed in the top and bottom margins of the page. In the 15th century it belonged to Ferdinand I (1423-1494) – the king of Sicily and Naples. Its previous provenance is unknown. Papillo 2003. Collins 2018: 93-132.

8 | The ms It.74 was made in the 14th century by the Florentine painter Bartolomeo di Fruosino (1366 / 1369-1441). It was owned by Jean Cossa (1400-1476) – lieutenant general of Provence. It contains 34 miniatures. See: Brieger, Meiss, Singleton 1969: 314-316; Brilli, Fenelli, Wolf 2015: 406.

9 | The ms Yates Thompson 36 was made in ca. 1444-1450s presumably in Siena for Alfonso V of Aragon (1396-1458). The illustrations of *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* were made by the Sienese artist Priamo della Quercia (1400-1467), that of *Paradiso* by the Sienese artist Giovanni di Paolo (1403-1482). It contains 110 illustrations placed in the top and bottom margins of the page. See: Pope-Hennessy 1993; Fugelso 2010.

10 | The ms Urb. Lat. 365 was illustrated ca. 1480 and commissioned by the Duke of Urbino Federico da Montefeltro (1422-1482). The miniatures illustrating the *Inferno* may have been made by Guglielmo Girardi. Bertelli 2021, *passim*.

11 | Seznec 1961: 11-37.

12 | Brieger, Meiss, Singelton 1969: 81-82.

13 | Seznec 1961: 11-37.

western portail of Notre-Dame-de-Paris – 12th century[14]. The main source of inspiration for the visualization of some vices and virtues was the *Psychomachy* of the Roman poet Prudentius (348-405), the illustrated manuscripts of which had been known since the 9th up to the 13th century.

The description of the guards who personify vices in the text of the *Divine Comedy* will differ somewhat from the previously existing visual options. First of all, these images, as a rule, are not anthropomorphic, their visualization is based on verbal or visual (or both) information about the mythological character. It would seem that the author of the iconographic program, and after him the miniaturist, has an idea of both the history and appearance of the mythological character, since in most cases his relationship with a certain circle of Hell arises due to the peculiarities of functioning in the ancient texts, about which it would be noticed below. Accordingly, when visualizing guardians, the authors of the iconographic program and miniaturists are forced (depending on the degree of their awareness and / or on the availability of samples) either to directly follow the description in Dante's text, or to use the schemes of depicting the corresponding mythological characters known to them, or to make their images more standardized and comprehensible (for example, the demons from the scenes of the Last Judgment). Thus, we have to find out which of the three options was chosen illustrating the manuscripts.

Charon in *Inferno III* and its visual embodiment

After passing through the gates of Hell, Dante and Virgil get to the banks of the Acheron, where they see the souls of the indifferent and meet Charon. Charon in Ancient Rome is an old man who ferries souls across the river Styx or Acheron to Hades. In Virgil's *Aeneid* (Book VI: 298-304) which had a strong influence on Dante's *Comedy*[15], he is described as follows:

Portitor has horrendus aquas et flumina servat / terribili squalore Charon, cui plurima mento / canities inculta iacet; stant lumina flamma, / sordidus ex umeris nodo dependet amictus. / Ipse ratem conto subigit, velisque ministrat, / et ferruginea subvectat corpora cumba, / iam senior, sed cruda deo viridisque senectus.

[There Charon stands, who rules the dreary coast / A sordid god: down from his hoary chin / A length of beard descends, uncombed, unclean; / His eyes, like hollow furnaces on fire; / A girdle, foul with grease, binds his obscene attire. / He spreads his canvas; with his pole he steers; / The freights of flitting ghosts in his thin bottom bears][16].

In the *Divine Comedy* Charon transports souls across the Acheron River to the first Circle, the *Limbo*. In the description of the mythological character, the Italian poet has several intersections with the text of Virgil's *Aeneid* (*Inferno* III: 82-83, 97-99; *Aeneid*, Book VI: 300-302):

«Ed ecco verso noi venir per nave / un vecchio, bianco per antico pelo [...] Quinci fuor quete le lanose gote / al nocchier de la livida palude, / che 'ntorno a li occhi avea di fiamme rote».

[And here, advancing toward us, in a boat, / an aged man – his hair was white with years [...] Now silence fell upon the wooly cheeks / of Charon, pilot of the livid marsh, / whose eyes were ringed about with wheels of flame][17].

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14 | Seznec 1961: 149-160.
15 | Hollander 1968: 142-144. Terzoli 2016: 23-25, 45-48.
16 | Here and further: Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. by John Dryden.
17 | Here and further: Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. by Theodolinda Barolini.

1 Charon. London, BL, ms. Egerton 943, f. 7v

2 Charon. London, BL, ms. Yates Thompson 36, f. 6r

3 Charon. Budapest, Eötvös Loránd University Library, Cod. Ital. 1, ca. 1333-1350, f. 12

4 Charon. Chantilly, Bibliothèque du musée Condé, ms 0597, f. 50r

5 Charon (fragment of sarcophagus), c. 170. Museo Pio Clementino, Musei Vaticani

So, the presence of a «beard [...] uncombed, unclean», which the ancient Roman poet points to, turns into a «hair [...] white with years» in Dante, and the eyes which «were ringed about with wheels of flame's», that is, Charon acquires obvious demonic features, which is further indicated by the Author (*Inferno* III: 109): «Caron dimonio, con occhi di bragia» (The demon Charon, with his eyes like embers). With this definition, Dante himself gives a hint to the illustrator as we do not find any such epithets in Virgil (and we cannot find them).

Such a vivid description of the elder by Dante, coupled with clear indications that he is a demon, as it may seem should serve as an instruction for miniaturists. However, two possible iconographic variants of Charon's image are found: «Charon the man» and «Charon the demon». Interestingly, in the analyzed manuscripts, both variants are presented with an equal degree of frequency. This situation indicates the absence of a common iconographic scheme, a single developed version of Charon's visualization.

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So, *Egerton Codex*, f. 7v, *Yates Codex*, f. 6r and *Dante Urbinate*, f. 6v contains the first variant, while *Budapest Codex*, f. 12, *Chantilly Codex*, f. 50r and *Morgan Codex*, f. 7v contain the second. It is not known why the authors of the first three manuscripts depict Charon as a man (thus, deviating from Dante's text), but his depiction as a demon seems to be very reasonable. Most likely, the fact is that the miniaturists could have in mind the scenes of the Last Judgment, where all hellish characters, in any way connected with the torment of sinners, were depicted as demons.

In fact, mythological characters, since they are in Hell, also receive 'demonic' characteristics. In the case of Charon, this is also due to the text itself but further we will see that other mythological characters will be depicted in a similar way despite the absence of corresponding instructions in the poem. In most cases, images of the «Charon-demon» can be compared with the representation of anthropomorphic winged (sometimes horned) demons in Italian monuments of the first half of the 14th century; for example, in the composition of the Last Judgment by Lorenzo Maitani (Orvieto, Duomo, ca. 1310-1331) in his more «animal» form in *Chantilly Codex*, f. 50r. On the contrary, it evokes associations with the transalpine type of a demon, which, according to E. Williams, goes back to images of the Egyptian Demon or Pan and comparable, for example, with the characters of the Last Judgment of the tympanum of Saint-Lazare, Autun (1130-1145)[18] or, more precisely, with the horned demons of the Anglo-Norman tradition, like in the *Winchester Psalter* (1121-1161, London, BL, ms Cotton Nero C. Iv, f. 39r).

The reason for the spread of the anthropomorphic variant remains unclear (we will call it the second demonic variant). The most likely assumption seems to be that the authors of the manuscripts' iconographic program knew a manuscript or a certain sample depicting Charon as a person. This option is found, for example, in an ancient Roman
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sarcophagus (ca. 170, Musei Vaticani)[19]. It is interesting that none of the masters refers to the association of time with the elder Charon by endowing it with some stable attributes in accordance with the commentary of Pietro Alighieri (1300-1364), repeating the interpretation of Fulgentius (468-533): «Charon is for *ceron*, that is, time»[20]. Perhaps, in accordance with the association that goes back to Plutarch, and in the visual arts to the Pompeian frescoes and the Calendar of Philocalus, which combine the elder Saturn and the personification of Time, it is precisely his senile appearance that indicates the connection of Charon with time[21].

18 | Williams 2004: 9.
19 | Eisner 2021: 1-15.
20 | Brumble 1998: 71.
21 | Panofsky 1962: 69-95.

Thus, in the iconography of Charon, two possible iconographic versions of the image coexist: anthropomorphic and demonic, which, apparently, indicates the presence of a certain visual model for the first version (possibly associated with the image not so much of Charon himself as of Saturn), and the distribution of the second can be explained both by following the text and by the miniaturists' appeal to the scenes of the Last Judgment.

Minos in *Inferno V* and its visual embodiment

In the second Circle, in which voluptuous people are executed, travelers are met by Minos, the mythological king of Crete, also a legislator according to Homer and Virgil[22]. In Virgil's *Aeneid* (Book VI: 432-435) he is described solely as a judge so that his external characteristics are not mentioned:

Quaesitor Minos urnam movet; ille silentum / consiliumque vocat vitasque et crimina discit. / proxima deinde tenent maesti loca, qui sibi letum / insontes peperere manu lucemque perosi proiecere animas.

[Minos, the strict inquisitor, appears; / And lives and crimes, with his assessors, hears. / Round in his urn the blended balls he rolls, / Absolves the just, and dooms the guilty].

In *Inferno* V: 4-6 e 10-12, Minos is described as follows:

«Stavvi Minòs orribilmente, e ringhia: / essamina le colpe ne l'intrata; / giudica e manda secondo ch'avvinghia [...] vede qual loco d'inferno è da essa; / cignesi con la coda tante volte / quantunque gradi vuol che giù sia messa».

[There dreadful Minos stands, gnashing his teeth: / examining the sins of those who enter, / he judges and assigns as his tail twines [...] The depth in Hell appropriate to it (the soul); / as many times as Minos wraps his tail / around himself, that marks the sinner's level].

So, the Cretan king receives an interesting feature in the form of a tail, the origins of which are still disputed by researchers (Pseudo-Apollodorus, 1: IX), even if the suggestion of Herbert D. Austin seems to be the most convincing[23]. He points to the merger in the image of Minos of two underworld judges – Minos himself (*Aeneid*, Book VI: 432-433) and Rhadamanthus, the brother of Minos, who also acts as one of the judges of the underworld (*Aeneid*, Book VI: 564-569). The latter in Virgil defines execution for souls (executes – *castigatque*), which usually represents scourging (*accincta flagella*) by Tisiphone (*Aeneid*, Book VI: 570-573). Accordingly, the judicial function of Minos is 'superimposed' on the punitive of Rhadamanth and Tisiphone in such a way that the tail (as an instrument of scourging) becomes a rudimentary instrument of execution, which Minos can only use to determine the soul in a certain circle. However, such detail naturally becomes an important part of the way Minos is depicted. In the manuscripts his tail is usually shown wrapped several times around his body. At the same time, Minos is depicted as a demon everywhere, except for the 6 *Chantilly Codex*, f. 61r where the Cretan king is depicted as a man in judicial robes, and his tail falls in rings around his legs.

It is noteworthy that the text does not indicate whether Minos is a man, a monster or a demon, and there is no established previous iconography for this character. However, such an important detail like a tail, apparently, predetermined his image as a demon in 7, 8 the *Budapest Codex*, f. 14, *Egerton Codex*, f. 10r, *Dante Urbinate*, f. 12r. The fact is that in some examples of the Last Judgment a few demons are depicted with snakes wrapping

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22 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Book IX: 569. Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book VI: 432-434; Servius, *Virgilii Aeneidos*, Book VI: 566 (Brumble 1998: 222).

23 Austin 1932: 1-5. See also: Barolini 1996: 437-454.

6 Minos. Chantilly, Bibliothèque du musée Condé, ms 0597, f. 61r

7 Minos. Budapest, Eötvös Loránd University Library, Cod. Ital. 1, f. 14

8 Minos. BAV, Urb. Lat. 365, f. 12r.
Drawing by A. Tevdoy-Burmuli

10 Minos. Naples, Biblioteca e Complesso Monumentale dei
Girolamini, CF 2.16, f. 12r

9 Minos. London, BL, ms Yates Thompson 36, 1444-ca. 1450, f. 8v

around their body, which, apparently, can be taken for a tail (see, for example, the above-mentioned sculptures of the facade of the cathedral in Orvieto, Italy, 1310-1331). The judicial function of Minos is indicated by crowds of souls who kneel before him

9 with their arms folded (*Yates Codex*, f. 8v) or approach him in turn (*Egerton Codex*, f. 10r; *Dante Urbinate*, f. 12r). However, a serpentine tail in a demonic character does not contradict the allegorical commentary of Pietro Alighieri, who associates Minos with «reproaches of conscience» (remorsio concientiae, i.e. bites)[24]. The obvious evidence of such an influence would be the images of snakes digging into the bodies of sinners, as in the above-mentioned Last Judgment by Lorenzo Maitani in the Orvieto cathedral. Indeed, such a version exists in a miniature manuscript of the *Comedy* dating from

10 1355-1365 (*Naples Codex*, f. 12r), where Minos' tail is wrapped not around his body, but around a sinner!

Thus, under the influence of the poem's text (and possibly the first commentary on *Inferno*) miniaturists turn to the well-known images of demons with serpentine writhing tails taken from the Last Judgments. Apparently, this detail also caused the transformation of Minos into a tailed demon in some manuscripts (*Budapest Codex*, *Egerton Codex*, *Dante Urbinate*). In *Yates Codex*, the author of the iconographic program, trying to find a compromise between the known images of demons and the anthropomorphic image of Minos, depict him in human form, but with horns on his head.

Cerberus in *Inferno VI* and its visual embodiment

The guardian of the third Circle, in which gluttons are executed, is the three-headed dog Cerberus. His description in the *Divine Comedy* has much in common with Virgil's *Aeneid*. In an ancient Roman poem about Cerberus the following is said (Book VI: 417-423):

Cerberus haec ingens latratu regna trifauci / personat, adverso recubans immanis in antro. / Cui vates, horrere videns iam colla colubris, / melle soporatam et medicatis frugibus offam / obicit. Ille fame rabida tria guttura pandens / corripit obiectam, atque immania terga resolvit / fusus humi, totoque ingens extenditur antro.

[The triple porter of the Stygian sound, / Grim Cerberus, who soon began to rear / His crested snakes, and arm'd his bristling hair. / The prudent Sibyl had before prepar'd / A sop, in honey steep'd, to charm the guard; / Which, mix'd with pow'rful drugs, she cast before / His greedy grinning jaws, just op'd to roar].

In Dante (*Inferno* VI: 13, the dog as a whole retains the features indicated by Virgil («outlandish, vicious» / *fiera crudele e diversa*), but a number of new characteristics appear (*Inferno* VI: 16-18):

«Li occhi ha vermigli, la barba unta e atra, / e 'l ventre largo, e unghiate le mani; / graffia li spirti ed iscoia ed isquatra»

[His eyes are bloodred; greasy, black, his beard; / his belly bulges, and his hands are claws; / his talons tear and flay and rend the shades].

As we can see, in the poem, the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic features of Cerberus are combined in a single image. In the manuscripts we are considering, Cerberus retains his most obvious distinguishing feature – three mouths, heads or faces, united together. At the same time, the three heads of Cerberus, growing from

11, 12, 13 one body (*Budapest Codex*, f. 16; *Egerton Codex*, f. 12r; *Chantilly Codex*, f. 67r; *Morgan*
14 *Codex*, f. 11v) date back to early iconographic versions from the illustrated manuscripts
15 of the *Aeneid* (BAV, Vat. Lat. 3225, 5th century, f. 9r and f. 48v). It is important that,

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24 | Brumble 1998: 223.

11 Cerberus. Budapest, Eötvös Loránd University Library, Cod. Ital. 1, f. 16

12 Cerberus. London, BL, Egerton ms 943, f. 12r

13 Cerberus. Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Musée Condé, ms 0597, f. 67r

14 Cerberus. New York, The Morgan Library, ms M. 676, f. 11v

15 Cerberus. BAV, Vat. Lat. 3225, f. 9r and f. 48v. Drawing by A. Tevdoy-Burmuli

16
unlike Charon and Minos, who sometimes appear in their anthropomorphic form, the opposite process occurs with Cerberus in most manuscripts: he loses his original animal appearance, becoming an upright bipedal demon. Cerberus appears as a three-faced demonic creature without any signs of a canine nature in the *Marciana Codex*, f. 5v, and in the corresponding miniature of *Dante Poggiali*, f. 14r, where beard and clawed hands mentioned in the text are not depicted.

17
Cerberus became a dog with three muzzles and three tails only by the middle of the 15th century in *Yates Codex*, f. 11r, and in this case the three-faced Cerberus serves as a kind of antipode to the image of The Holy Trinity in the form of a 'trikefal', which is also expressed iconographically. So, for example, in *Yates Codex* all three faces of Cerberus are combined into one, just as it was done in the images of the three-faced Holy Trinity[25] (e.g. fresco depicting the Trinity, 13th century, former St. Agatha in Perugia, Italy). Lucifer is depicted in a similar way in this manuscript, having three faces, supposedly located on one head and very similar to the iconography of the Trinity (see also the representation of Lucifer in Giotto, ca. 1303-1305, Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, and in the mosaic of the dome of Florence Baptistery, 1260-1270).

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One more association is interesting: in Yates Thompson ms 36, instead of tails Cerberus has poisonous snakes, as in Greek vase painting and Roman mosaics (for example, Hercules and Cerberus, Llyria, 3rd century, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid).

15
On the contrary, in the *Vatican Virgil* (BAV, Vat. Lat 3225, f. 48v) snakes are only present near the necks of the monster, partly reminiscent of both an alternative version in the ancient vase painting tradition (Heracles and Cerberus, Caeretan black-figure hydria, 6th BC, Musée du Louvre), and later monuments – a demonic creature on the facade of San Pietro in Tuscania, Italy (12th century) and peripheral heads of Lucifer from mosaic of the dome of the Florence Baptistery.

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Not until the end of the 15th century, does the canine nature of Cerberus finally take precedence over associations with an anthropomorphic demon: he is depicted as a dog with three heads in *Dante Urbinate,* f. 15r, and very similar (apart from heads) to a thoroughbred hound in Giovannino de' Grassi's *Model Book* (Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica A. Mai, ms VII. 14, f. 17r, before 1398).

A separate problem is the voracity of Cerberus mentioned in the text. *Carnem vorans* («eater of bodies») he is already named in Servius's *Commentary on Virgil* (Book VI: 395), which allows both Servius himself and Dante's commentators to associate Cerberus with the earth[26]. In miniatures of the 14th-15th centuries he is depicted either eating limbs or standing on / among dead bodies, often with obvious bite marks (*Egerton Codex*, f. 12r; *Yates Codex*, f. 8v). Apparently, this refers to a parallel with the image of Lucifer on the frescoes of the Last Judgment, which, for example, in Giotto in the Scrovegni Chapel is depicted eating sinners and standing on them (mosaic of the dome of the Florence Baptistery, 1260-1270).

Thus, in Dante's text, there is a change in the function of Cerberus, based on the epithet «hungry» taken from the *Aeneid*, and the etymology of his name taken from Servius's commentary on Virgil. From an underground guard dog, he turns into an anthropomorphic personification of the third Circle: his eternal hunger is likened to the eternal hunger of gluttons. Visually, the miniaturists emphasize first the gluttony of Cerberus, who can be depicted in the process of eating or among already eaten bodies, in exactly the same way as Satan. His three-facedness in some cases is likened to the three-facedness of Lucifer or acts as the 'antithesis' of The Holy Trinity.

25 | Boespflug 1994: 181-240.
26 | Brumble 1998: 68.

16 Cerberus. Florence, The National Central Library, ms Pal. 313, f. 14r

17 Cerberus. London, BL, ms Yates Thompson 36, f. 11r

18 Hercules and Cerberus, III century, The National Archaeological Museum, Madrid

19 Cerberus. BAV, Urb. Lat. 365, f. 15r.
Drawing by A. Tevdoy-Burmuli

20 Plutus. London, BL, ms Yates Thompson 36, f. 12v

21 Plutus. Chantilly, Bibliothèque du musée Condé, ms 0597, f. 70v

Plutus in *Inferno VII* and its visual embodiment

The Fourth Circle, where misers and spendthrifts are executed, is guarded by Plutus, the god of wealth. Dante does not give this hero such a detailed description as for the characters discussed above. The text of the *Divine Comedy* says the following about him (*Inferno* VII: 1-2 and 7):

«''Pape Satàn, pape Satàn aleppe!'', / cominciò Pluto con la voce chioccia / [...] Poi si rivolse a quella 'nfiata labbia».

[Pape Satan, Pape Satan aleppe!» / «so Plutus, with his grating voice, began [...] Then he turned back to Plutus' swollen face].

The meeting with the character ends with the following episode (*Inferno* VII: 13-15):

«Quali dal vento le gonfiate vele / caggiono avvolte, poi che l'alber fiacca, / tal cadde a terra la fiera crudele».

[As sails inflated by the wind collapse, / entangled in a heap, when the mast cracks, / so that ferocious beast fell to the ground].

That is, Dante compares his fall with the fall of the inflated sail. Such an action followed the words of Virgil (*Inferno* VII: 10-13):

«Non è sanza cagion l'andare al cupo: / vuolsi ne l'alto, là dove Michele / fé la vendetta del superbo strupo».

[His is no random journey to the deep: / it has been willed on high, where Michael took / revenge upon the arrogant rebellion].

Thus, the scene of the meeting of travelers with Plutus is not accompanied by a detailed description of the character, which would allow him to be identified with the mythological hero.

This circumstance could have influenced discrepancies in the ways of depiction. Nevertheless, according to the same logic of association of the infernal characters with demons, Plutus is often depicted as a demon (except for *Yates Codex*, f. 12v). In those rare cases when Plutus has anthropomorphic forms, he is also provided with horns, which probably refers to the ancient iconography of Pan[27], and by bird paws. Images of the god of wealth in *Chantilly Codex*, f. 70v and *Yates Codex*, f. 12v are enriched with several interesting attributes: the throne (in both manuscripts), which, apparently, is associated with the traditional medieval confusion between Plutus and Pluto, the king of Hades (Pietro Alighieri calls him the son of Saturn and Cybele)[28], and the episcopal miter and money bag (*Chantilly Codex*, f. 70v).

The money bag as an attribute is especially significant, since it points specifically to Plutus as the god of wealth, and to the vice that is executed in the fourth Circle. Having received such an attribute, Plutus turns into the personification of one of the most condemned Christian vices: the greed. Characters associated with greed were quite often depicted with purses suspended on their necks (western portal of the abbey church of Sainte-Foy in Conques (end of the 11th-begining of the 12th century). The association between the throne and miter of Plutus and the throne of Pope Boniface VIII depicted in the same manuscript (f. 33v) is remarkable and most likely not accidental, making it possible to speak about the social and political aspects of the manuscript's iconographic program[29].

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27 | Williams 2004: 9-12.

28 | Brumble 1998: 276-277.

29 | See the glossa on the same folio: *Anno enim domini MCCC, quo scilicet anno fuit Rome generalis remisso omnium peccatorum, sedente in Sacrosancta Sede Romana Bonifatio Papa VIII, Sacro autem Romano vacante Imperio, de mense martii, die veneris sancti - hoc est illa die qua mortuus*

In the same miniature, Plutos receives a new attribute – the donkey ears of King Midas, which is traditionally associated with the sin of avarice[30]. Images of King Midas with donkey ears on the throne are known from the miniatures of *The Moralized Ovid* (for example, 1330-1340, Paris, Arsenal, ms 5069 réserve, f. 147v). As for the bishop's miter on the head of Midas from the *Chantilly Codex*, it may refer to one of Dante's early commentators, Guido da Pisa, who characterizes Plutus as a «bishop of misers», or to S.I. Kozlova, who remarks the direct influence of exegesis on the miniatures of the *Chantilly Codex*[31].

Thus, as in a few previous cases, the appearance of Plutus, who had no visual tradition, was primarily influenced by the appearance of demons, borrowed from the iconography of the Last Judgment. In *Chantilly Codex*, f. 70v, he receives an additional attribute in the form of bags of money, like the purses in medieval images personifying greed. Associations with the king of Hades brought in two cases the appearance of the throne, and in one case, a reference to the bishop.

Phlegyas in *Inferno VIII* and its visual embodiment

At the exit from the fifth circle – the circle of the wrathful – travelers are met by Phlegyas, which is a mythological character who burned the Temple of Delphi because Apollo killed his daughter (Pausanias, *Description of Greece* – II century, Book II: 26). In Virgil's *Aeneid* (Book VI: 618-620), Aeneas meets Phlegyas during his descent into Hades:

«Phlegyasque miserrimus omnis / admonet, et magna testatur voce per umbras: / "Discite iustitiam moniti, et non temnere divos"».

[And wretched Phlegyas warns the world with cries / «Could warning make the world more just or wise»: / Learn righteousness, and dread th' avenging deities].

So, the reader learns that the character is doomed to eternal torment in the underworld for his anger. Dante repeats the same motif (*Inferno* VIII: 22-24):

«Qual è colui che grande inganno ascolta / che li sia fatto, e poi se ne rammarca, / fecesi Flegïàs ne l'ira accolta».

[And just as one who hears some great deception / was done to him, and then resents it, so / was Phlegyas when he had to store his anger].

Accordingly, as in the case of Cerberus and Plutus, Phlegyas, by the similarity of his characteristics in Dante's text, turns out to be the personification of those vices that are punished in the circle he protects.

Phlegyas acquires the function of a boatman situationally since there is a reservoir in the topography – although the original source does not speak of him as a boatman. It would seem that the functional similarity of Phlegyas and Charon should have led to a similar image of them, but this is not entirely true. The similarity between them is preserved only in *Dante Urbinate*, f. 20r, the authors of which, apparently, turned to ancient samples[32], which we noted when analyzing Charon, and understood the similarity of the characteristics of both characters. However, we assumed the presence of the same samples in *Egerton Codex*, f. 15r, and *Yates Codex*, f. 14r, where Charon is depicted as a human.

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fuit Christus - in aurora iste poeta more poetico fingit se istam Comediam, hoc est universa que continentur in ea, in visione vidisse […] *Dante. Cantica dell'Inferno con commenti di Fra Guidone Pisano*.

30 | Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11: 100-145; *Purgatorio* XX: 106-108; see Brumble 1998: 217.

31 | Kozlova 2013: 186.

32 | Brieger, Meiss, Singleton 1969: 32-80.

22 Phlegyas. BAV, Urb. Lat. 365, f. 20r.
Drawing by A. Tevdoy-Burmuli

Chioida nō pinse mai passe saetta
chessi chorresse ma plane isnella
chormo imodi ima naue piaolecta.
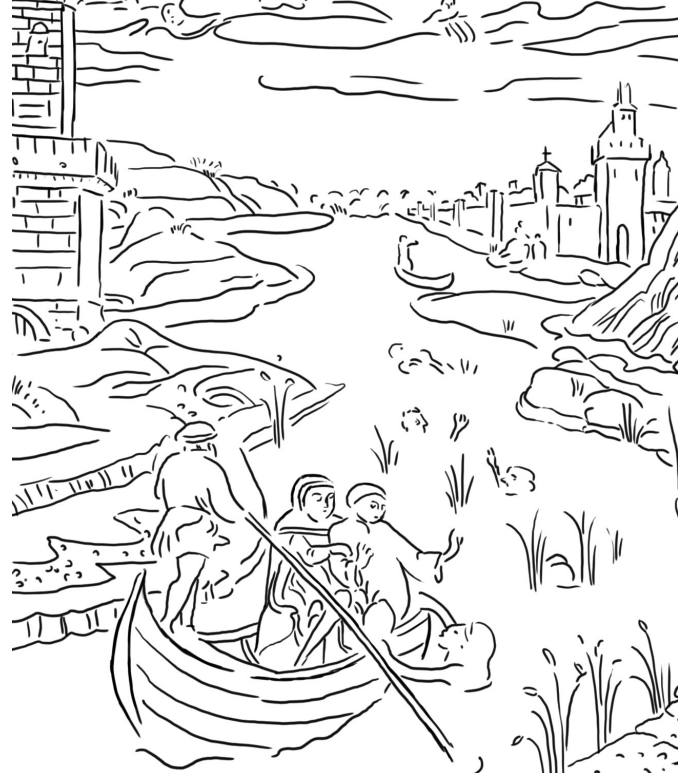
23 Phlegyas. London, BL, ms Egerton 943, f. 15r

24 Phlegyas. London, BL, ms Yates Thompson 36, f. 14r

22   However, in these manuscripts, as in all others (except *Dante Urbinate*, f. 20r), Phlegyas is depicted as a demon. Interestingly, the iconography designer and miniaturists did not assume that the iconography assigned to Charon could be mechanically transferred to Phlegyas. Mechanically, another transfer took place: the demonic appearance of Phlegyas. At the same time, familiar personifications of Anger are not used in any of the cases known to us. Therefore, the association of Phlegyas with a certain vice is fixed only at the verbal level, and it can be stated that the absence of distinct associations and the sparseness of the description in the text bring out the most common image: the demonic one.

The Three Furies in *Inferno IX* and their visual embodiment

Above the towers of Dis, which leads to the sixth Circle, three Furies fly: *Tisiphone* («avenging the murder»), *Megaera* («hater») and *Allecto* («irrepressible»). In ancient Greek mythology (Aeschylus, *Oresteia*, 458 BC) they are the goddesses of revenge and damnation, which is also indicated in the *Aeneid* (Book IV: 610). Dante, however, describes them vividly (*Inferno* IX: 38-42):

«tre furïe infernal di sangue tinte, / che membra feminine avieno e atto, / e con idre verdissime eran cinte; / serpentelli e ceraste avien per crine, / onde le fiere tempie erano avvinte».

[Stood three infernal Furies flecked with blood, / who had the limbs of women and their ways / but wore, as girdles, snakes of deepest green; / small serpents and horned vipers formed their hairs, / and these were used to bind their bestial Temples].

Further (*Inferno* IX: 49-51):

«Con l'unghie si fendea ciascuna il petto; / battiensi a palme e gridavan sì alto, / ch'i' mi strinsi al poeta per sospetto».

[Each Fury tore her breast with taloned nails; / each, with her palms, beat on herself and wailed / so loud that I, in fear, drew near the poet].

Despite all the ferocity of the Furies, in the systematization of Dante they guard the sixth Circle, where heretics are executed. Apparently, such an association originates from the commentary of Bernardus Silvestris (ca. 1085-1160) – the theologian of the Chartres school – on a poem by Virgil[33]. He identifies, following Fabius Planciades Fulgentius and Maurus Servius Honoratus[34], the three Furies with specific actions: *Allecto* is associated with evil thoughts (*prava cogitatio*), *Tisiphone* with malicious speeches (*sermo scilicet malus*) and *Megaera* with objectionable deeds (*mala operatio*)[35]. Subsequently, the first commentators on Dante's text will associate the selected characteristics with three steps, leading firstly to mortal sin, secondly to the denial of Christian tenets of faith, and accordingly to heresy[36].

The iconography of the Furies in the manuscripts generally corresponds to their description in the text itself. The model, apparently, was the iconography of the Gorgon Medusa, well known by that time. It is no coincidence that the Furies look like her, because further in the text they call on her (*Inferno*, IX: 52-54). Furies are described and depicted in a similar way to Medusa, whose images were quite widely known not only from ancient Roman floor mosaics (for example, Roman mosaic, 100 BC, The Getty Museum, Los Angeles), but also entered the Old Testament iconography (for example, the personification of the Abyss in the First Day of Creation in the ivory from Montecassino, 11th century, Bode Museum, Berlin)[37].

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33 | Cornish 2010: 429.
34 | Brumble 1998: 131.
35 | Brumble 1998: 429.
36 | Brumble 1998: 429. See also: Mansfield 1970: 143-160.
37 | Kessler 1966: 67-95. See also: Pozhidaeva 2021: 386-388.

The miniaturists relied on iconography they were familiar with the motif of torn clothes, and a scratched chest was also known: one can assume that they appealed to the Massacre of the Innocents, where mothers are visualized in a similar way, or to the high priest tearing his clothes in the scene of the Interrogation of Christ (see, for example,

25 the *The Gospels of Otto III*, ca. 1000, München, BSB, Clm 4453, ff. 30v, 247r), or that more likely, to the personifications of Wrath (Ira), like Giotto's fresco in the Scrovegni Chapel. The motif of tearing clothes is iconographically stable and is present in Giotto's ensemble also in the scene *Christ before Caiaphas*. The miniaturists needed only to

26 repeat such an image three times. The only exception is *Budapest Codex*, f. 22r, where the Furies are depicted not as demonic creatures, but as red naked female figures (as sinners tormented in Hell are usually represented in that manuscript)[38].

Thus, miniaturists had quite specific samples for depicting the Furies, as they borrowed their appearance from that of the Gorgon Medusa. However, in this ready-made scheme, they imposed details that originate from both text and visual patterns, like the motif of tearing clothes in anger, which is directly related to the personification of sin.

The Minotaur in *Inferno XII* and its visual embodiment

The Minotaur is a mythological animal with the head of a bull and the body of a man. It is said that he was born as a result of contact between Pasiphae – the wife of Minos – and a bull, and was hidden by Minos himself in a labyrinth on the island of Crete (Diodorus Siculus, *Historical Library*, Book IV: 61:1 and 77:1). In the *Aeneid* (Book VI: 25-26) the appearance of this character is barely described, as Virgil characterizes him as «the lower part a beast, a man above» (*mixtumque genus prolesque biformis*). A more attentive description of the Minotaur is contained in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, with whose works Dante may have been familiar[39]. Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, VIII: 156-157) describes this hero as «the monster of a human-beast» (*monstri novitate biformis*)[40] and «the shame» (*pudorem*), without specifying which of the parts belonged to a person, and which to an animal. Dante (*Inferno* XII: 12) quotes Ovid almost verbatim also calling the Minotaur «the infamy of Crete» («l'infamïa di Creti»). Plutarch quotes from the lost tragedy of Euripides: «and that this Minotaur was (as Euripides hath it) – «A mingled form where two strange shapes combined, / And different natures, bull and man, were joined»[41]. The Italian poet supplements the description of the mythological bull with a characteristic emphasizing in every possible way his malice and propensity for violence (*Inferno* XII: 14-15 and 22-25):

«e quando vide noi, sé stesso morse, / sì come quei cui l'ira dentro fiacca [...] Qual è quel toro che si slaccia in quella / c'ha ricevuto già 'l colpo mortale, / che gir non sa, ma qua e là saltella, / vid'io lo Minotauro far cotale».

[and, catching sight of us, he bit himself / like one whom fury devastates within ... Just as the bull that breaks loose from its halter / the moment it receives the fatal stroke, / and cannot run but plunges back and forth, / so did I see the Minotaur respond].

It seems that in the text of the poem itself there is no exact description of the appearance of the Minotaur, however, the comparison with the bull (*Inferno* XII: 22) makes early commentators assume that Dante's mythological character has the head of a man and the body of a bull, because, if he were the last, it would not be necessary to

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38 | Draskóczy 2020: 85-100.

39 | Diskin 2014: 174-186.

40 | Ovidius, *Metamorphoses* VIII, 155, 169. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. by Sir S. Garth, J. Dryden, *et alii*.

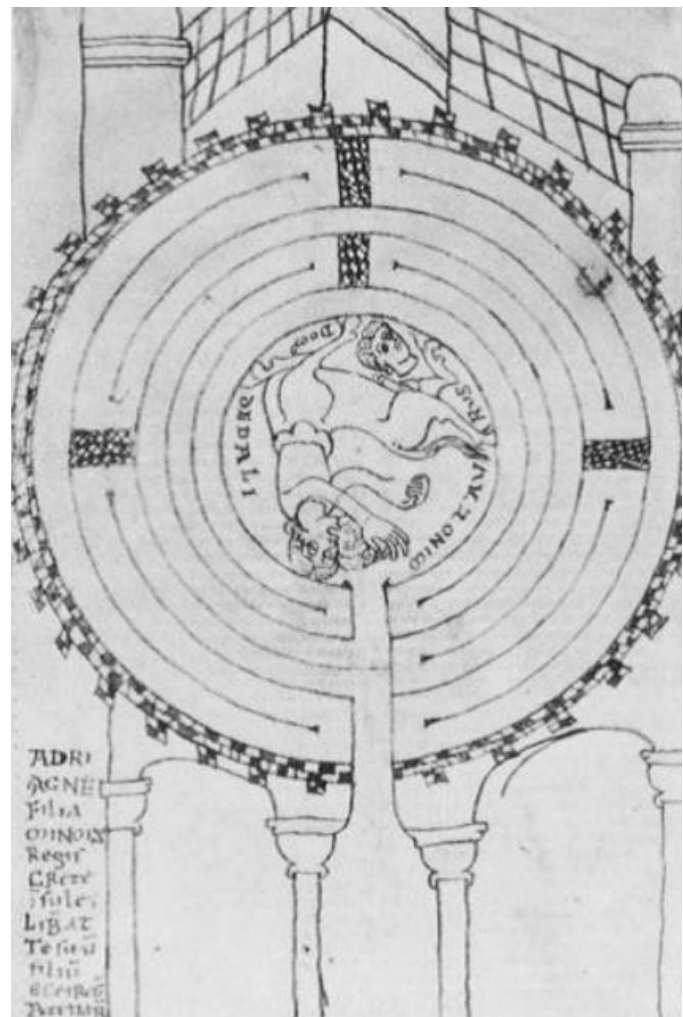41 | Plutarch, *Theseus* XV, trans. by John Dryden.

25 The Massacre of the Innocents. Munich, The Bavarian State Library, The Gospels of Otto III, f. 30v

26 Three Furies. Budapest, The University Library, Cod. Ital. 1, f. 22

27 Labyrinth. Paris, BnF, ms Lat. 12999, f. 1v

make a comparison[42]. It was the mixomorphism of the Minotaur that gave commentators the opportunity to consider him the personification of the «bestial in man»[43].

In illustrating this Canto, the miniaturists are guided, on the one hand, by the text. On the other hand, they turn to the prevailing mid- 14th century tradition to depict the Minotaur to the waist as a man, and below as a bull, that is, in fact, like a centaur[44]. It is noteworthy that in Book III of the *Bibliotheca* by Pseudo-Apollodorus, the Minotaur is described as a young man with the head of a bull and the body of a man[45], which is confirmed by the monuments of Greek antiquity (Roman copy of a 5th century BC Greek sculptural group depicting the Minotaur and Theseus, The National Archaeological Museum, Athens). However, commentators on the text of the *Divine Comedy*, like Dante himself, do not explain exactly how the Minotaur looked: everyone points to the duality of this image, ignoring which of the parts was human and which was bovine.

In medieval iconography the images of the Minotaur and the centaur are mixed in such a way that it is possible to identify them only by the horse (centaurs) or bull (Minotaur) croup[46]. The Italian researcher Alessandra Forte, in her article *La rappresentazione del Minotauro dantesco nei manoscritti trecenteschi della Commedia tra commento scritto e commento figurato*[47] traces such iconography in images of labyrinths in French manuscripts of the 9th-12th centuries (Paris, BnF, ms Lat. 12999, f. 1v, first half of the 12th
27   century), where the Minotaur could be depicted both as a demon and as a creature with a bull or horse croup and a human upper body. She explains such a mixture of images by the fact that the images of centaur-archers were known to medieval miniaturists from Romanesque sculpture[48]. However, there are very few versions of medieval images of the Minotaur with a bull's head and a human body (London, BL, ms Add 19669, f. 96v,
28   second half of the 13th century). It seems more natural that the miniaturists turn to the iconography of the Minotaur-Centaur, or simply a centaur, well known to them.

However, in two early manuscripts from the beginning of the 14th century we can see
29   the gradual development of type. So, in *Budapest Codex*, f. 26r, the Minotaur is depicted as a man with a bull's head; apparently, those who designed the iconography may have had examples of artifacts with a less common iconography of this character. However,
30   in *Egerton Codex*, f. 21v the mythological character receives the head of a man, and the body becomes completely bullish.

In addition to the centaur scheme, the Minotaur can also be stylized under the
31   appearance of Pan (*Naples Codex*, f. 28v). In both versions, his upper limbs are human, and his lower limbs are animal. It is important to make two points here. Firstly, according to the assumptions of some researchers[49], such an iconography of the Minotaur made it possible to indicate his malice through visual means: the human was mixed with the animal in such a way that the animal's irrational energy suppressed the rational human, as a result of that mixing the violence was born. Secondly, the union of the human and the animal indicated the irrational energy and, accordingly, the cruelty of the character, which became identical to the cruelty of the violent souls of the seventh Circle.

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42 | Botterill 1998: 60-62.
43 | Guido da Pisa, *Super Comediam Dantis*: 220. Cit. by: Brumble 1998: 224.
44 | Forte 2015: 39-41.
45 | «He had the face of a bull, but the rest of him was human». Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. by J.G. Frazer.
46 | Forte 2015: 39-41.
47 | Forte 2015: 37-58.
48 | Forte 2015: 41.
49 | Botterill 1998: 60-76. Forte 2015: 37-58.

28 Minotaur. London, BL, ms Add 19669, f. 96v

29 Minotaur. London, BL, ms Egerton 943, f. 21v

30 Minotaur. Naples, The National Library of the Girolamini
Oratory, CF 2.16, f. 28v

31 Minotaur. Budapest, The University Library,
Cod. Ital. 1, f. 26r

Thus, when depicting the Minotaur, whose appearance is not described by Dante in the text, miniaturists were guided by earlier iconographic samples. Three possible versions of the image are developed, successively replacing each other: a bull with a human body (ancient sources); a bull with a human face (images of labyrinths in French manuscripts); centaur (Romanesque sculpture) or Pan.

Geryon in *Inferno XVII* and its visual embodiment

The guardian of the eighth Circle is the monster Geryon, who combined the features of various animals (*Inferno* XVII: 10-18):

«La faccia sua era faccia d' uom giusto, / tanto benigna avea di fuor la pelle, / e d'un serpente tutto l'altro fusto».

[The face he wore was that of a just man, / so gracious was his features' outer semblance; / and all his trunk, the body of a serpent].

His paws are «with hair up to the armpits» («avea pilose insin l'ascelle» – *Inferno* XVII: 13); its back, belly and sides are covered with flowery patterns (*Inferno* XVII: 14-15), and its tail ends in «a tip just like a scorpion» («ch'a guisa di scorpion la punta armava» – *Inferno* XVII: 27). Thus, Geryon's face resembles a man, his limbs resemble a lion, his body is like the body of a leopard (or a pattern on a Turkish carpet[50]), and his tail is like that of a scorpion.

In ancient sources, the descriptions of Geryon are strikingly different from the description proposed by Dante. So, Hesiod in *Theogony* (281-282) indicates that Geryon had three heads; and in the *Geryoneis Stesichorus* (ca. 630-550 BC) he says that he was also winged[51]. Virgil in the *Aeneid* (Book VI: 202-203) describes it as a three-body character. However, Dante's description makes Geryon more like the images of Manticore in Medieval bestiaries (see, for example, Oxford, The Bodleian Library, ms Bodley 764, f. 25r, ca. 1225-1250)[52]. The monster has the body of a lion and the head of a man, which makes it very similar to Geryon in the *Divine Comedy*. Dante could see its image in the *Tesoretto* from the workshop of his teacher Brunetto Latini[53] (see, for example, Brunetto Latini, *Tesoretto*, Saint-Petersburg, Saltykov-Schedrin National Library of Russia, Fr. F. v. III, f. 4, beginning of the 14th century).

However, the Italian poet gives Geryon a characteristic that was not known to medieval miniaturists, as he describes him as spotty. The spotted pattern of his skin, compared with the fabric of Arachne and oriental ornament, could be perceived as a well-known association of the intricate pattern with deceit[54]. The spotted skin of Geryon, then, is associated with the vice that is punished in the eighth Circle[55].

It is noteworthy, however, that the miniaturists almost never depict Geryon as a Manticore, although his description is quite consistent with the character from the bestiaries. Closest to the Manticore is a miniature of the *Budapest Codex*, f. 35r. Here, however, Geryon is depicted not red, but brown or green, with scales like a lizard, with wooly paws and the claws of a predator in a monastic hood (apparently, the representation of the torso was probably influenced by the line «the composition was serpentine»). This is not the only time that the clergy will be ridiculed in

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50 | Porcari 2018: 4-23.
51 | Robertson 1969: 207-221.
52 | *Dante's Teacher: Brunetto Latini, Trésor*, ed by. A. Granacki.
53 | *Dante's Teacher: Brunetto Latini, Trésor*, ed by. A. Granacki.
54 | Cirulli 2015: 21.
55 | Porcari 2010: 435-437.

32 Manticore. Oxford, The Bodleian Library, ms Bodley 764, f. 25r

33 Geryon. Budapest, The University Library, Cod. Ital. 1, f. 35

34 London, BL, ms Stowe 17, The Maastricht Hourbook, f. 131r

35 Geryon. London, BL, ms Egerton 943, f. 31v

36 Geryon. Chantilly, The Condé Museum, Chantilly 0597, f. 123r

this manuscript – for example, in the illustrations to Canto VII, either misers or spendthrifts are depicted in episcopal tiaras. So, in the image of a wonderful creature, as in the case of Plutus, social criticism is also projected, pointing to the deceit that the monks cover up with sweet speeches. This is somewhat like the *drôlerie* in Gothic manuscripts, where various mixomorphic characters with animal bodies and human heads often appear in episcopal tiaras or with monastic tonsure

34   (see, for example, the *Maastricht Hourbook*, London, BL, Stowe ms 17, f. 131r).

35, 36   Depictions of Geryon in the *Egerton Codex*, f. 31v and *Chantilly Codex*, f. 123r are quite similar. So, in both manuscripts, the character has a human head and body, partly reminiscent of the body of the Locust from the *Revelation of John the Apostle*[56]. Its images were known from early illustrations of Rev. 9:3-4, for example, from a French Apocalypse (The Manchester University Library, ms Latin 19, f. 7r, 3rd

37   quarter of the 14th century). At the same time, the character retains wooly paws, reminiscent of the paws of the 'forest man' in Gothic manuscripts, which once again convinces the viewer that the image of the monster is made up of quotes dating back to several sources. By the middle of the 15th century, images of Geryon became

38   closer to the text. For example, in the *Paris Codex*, f. 50v, and in *Yates Codex*, f. 30v, the «serpentine composition» and majesty are emphasized as well as clarity of face. It is interesting that in the first case he is a handsome old man, in the second a pretty young man. The same look of the face of Geryon as such of a young man we

39   can find at *Morgan Codex*, f. 27r.

As for the «snake» component of Geryon's body (especially expressed in miniatures by *Egerton Codex* and *Dante Poggiali*, f. 40r), it can also be associated with another prototype. For example, J.B. Friedman convincingly shows that the «water» component of the monster can be traced to the image of Antichrist associated with Leviathan seating on him, as in the *Liber Floridus* of Lambert of St. Omer (1120, Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, ms 92, f. 6); or represented as half-man and half-Leviathan, as in the caricature of Pope Urban VI in Pseudo-Joachim, V S*ummis Pontificibus* (14th century, BAV, Vat. Ross. 374, f. 9r)[57]. It is this line that is developed

40   in the *Dante Urbinate* (BAV, Urb. Lat. 365, f. 46r) towards the antiquation of the image. Geryon is depicted as a man above the waist, and below as a sea creature with horse legs, which somewhat resembles the ichthyocentaurs, well known to Andrea Mantegna, contemporary to the Ferrara miniaturists (*The Battle of the Sea Gods*, 1470).

So, it makes sense to recognize the iconography of Dante's Geryon as the most complex and rich in various kinds of associations. Under the influence of different passages of the text, which gives a very accurate description of the mixomorphic creature, the miniaturist turns to familiar but apparently different images (manticore, locust, forest man, ichthyocentaurs), habitual patterns of social satire (*Budapest Codex*) or, on the contrary, strives to follow the textual description exactly (*Morgan Codex*, *Yates Codex*), succeeding for the first time in our review.

[56]   Cirulli 2015: 20.
[57]   Friedman 1972: 112 ff., fig. 8a, b.

37 Manchester, The Manchester University Library, ms Latin 19, Apocalypse (Rev. 9 3-4), f. 7r

38 Geryon. London, BL, ms Yates Thompson 36, f. 30v

39 Geryon. New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, ms M.676, f. 27r

Conclusion

Having considered the features of the visualization of mythological characters, many of which in Dante's text are replacing the personifications of vices, we tried to show that in most cases miniaturists preferred to use familiar iconographic schemes that little or completely do not correspond to the textual description of the character. In the absence of a visual tradition, artists could have turn to different kinds of familiar images, leading to the standard appearance of mythological heroes as demons, illustrating the *Comedy* in the second quarter of the 14th century.

It is noteworthy that in those cases when illustrators turned to obvious iconographic patterns (images of the Furies), they were able to supplement them with familiar details (open chest) originating from other sources, combining several motifs in one iconographic scheme. In most cases the guardians of the hellish circles are in no way iconographically connected with the personifications known from contemporary artistic production. This allows us to assume that the power and expressiveness of the text of the *Comedy* awakens to life an independent associative series, drawing images from other, less obvious sources. The detailed description of the character, akin to the description of Geryon, makes it possible to create an image exactly following the text.

Thus, the uniqueness and unprecedentedness of the text to be illustrated allow us to judge the visual outlook and associative range of the miniaturist and/or the iconography designer which change in the strongest way from the middle of the 14th to the end of the 15th century, and guides each of the guardians of the circles through a long series of guises: from a demonic appearance through that of a Gothic *drôlerie* or a medieval Bestiary, to a completely recognizable hero of Greco-Roman mythology.

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