The Bavarian Commentary and Ovid

ROBIN WAHLSTEN BÖCKERMAN

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Robin Wahlsten Böckerman, *The Bavarian Commentary and Ovid: Clm 4610, The Earliest Documented Commentary on the Metamorphoses*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2020, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0154

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ISBN Paperback: 978-1-78374-575-3 ISBN Hardback: 978-1-78374-576-0 ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-78374-577-7

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0154

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Part I

2. The Fate of Ovid Until the Twelfth Century

When and how did the *Metamorphoses* make its entrance onto the literary and scholarly scene of the Middle Ages? The general consensus regarding the *Metamorphoses* is that it was not widely read from Late Antiquity until the eleventh century, from which point we have more substantial material evidence. The following is a survey of the material evidence of the reception of Ovid from the Carolingian period until the twelfth century.

The Material Evidence

We will start by considering the material evidence in the form of the surviving *Metamorphoses* manuscripts from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, as illustrated by the following table:

Table 1. Number of preserved manuscripts for the *Metamorphoses* over four centuries¹⁹

Century:	9^{th}	10^{th}	$11^{\rm th}$	12^{th}	Total
Germany	1	1	5	15	22
Italy	-	1	4	14	19
France	1	-	3	8	12
England	-	1	-	1	2
Spain	-	-	-	1	1
Total	2	3	12	39	56

Of all of Ovid's works, the *Metamorphoses* survives in the largest number of copies. At the other end of the scale, we find the spurious *Halieutica* with only one copy from the ninth century, *De medicamine* with one copy from the eleventh century, and the *Ibis* with two copies from the twelfth century. As for the *Metamorphoses*, these numbers show a clear increment as the centuries pass, with four times as many

¹⁹ This table is a translation of Jean-Yves Tilliette's table in 'Savant et poètes du moyen âge face à Ovide: les débuts de l'aetas Ovidiana (v. 1050-v. 1200)' in Ovidius Redivivus: Von Ovid zu Dante, ed. M. Picone, B. Zimmerman (Freiburg: Rombach, 2014), p. 70. Tilliette's table is based on the information in Birger Munk Olsen, L'étude Des Auteurs Classiques Latins Aux XIe et XIIe Siècles. T. 2, Catalogue Des Manuscrits Classiques Latins Copiés Du IXe Au XIIe Siècle: Livius - Vitruvius: Florilèges - Essais de Plume (Paris: Éd. du CNRS, 1985).

preserved manuscripts from the twelfth century compared to the eleventh.

To get a clearer idea of what these figures entail we will add some comparative material from the other curriculum authors:²⁰

Century:	9 th	10^{th}	11^{th}	12^{th}	Total
Virgil, Aeneis	37	25	47	85	194
Cicero, De inventione	5	9	33	128	175
Lucan, Bellum civile	10	14	32	118	174
Horace, Epistulae	6	15	37	95	153
Sallust, Bellum Iugurth.	2	7	37	94	140
Juvenal, Saturae	7	23	36	52	118
Terence, Comoediae	6	18	34	50	108
Statius, Thebais	3	11	20	70	104
Persius, Satirae	4	16	30	22	72

Virgil's *Aeneid* is at the top of this league with a total of 194 preserved manuscripts, while Persius's *Satirae* comes last with seventy-two manuscripts—still almost twenty more than for the *Metamorphoses*.

All works show the same pattern of a steady, almost exponential, increase from century to century (except for the *Aeneid* with regard to the ninth and the tenth centuries and Persius with regard to the eleventh and twelfth). These numbers tell us that, even though we are looking at preserved manuscripts and not the actual number of manuscripts available at the time, the pattern is the same for all authors. This means that it is unlikely that there was a large quantity

²⁰ This table is created from the information in Birger Munk Olsen, L'Étude des Auteurs Classiques Latins aux Xi^e et XII^e Siécles vol. 4:2 (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2014), pp. 24-30. Munk Olsen also has the following numbers for the Metamorphoses:

Century:	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total
Metamorphoses	1	2	10	40	53

The number of manuscripts in relation to century does not completely match the information in Munk Olsen 1985. The reason seems to be that Munk Olsen has classified some of the *Metamorphoses* fragments as excerpts, and thus removed them from numbers illustrated in the table above. I have chosen to use Tilliette's table because it has regional division, but it should be noted that the table for the other authors might contain a few more manuscripts if fragments/excerpts were included.

of Ovid's work in circulation during, for example, the ninth century, which has subsequently been destroyed or lost.²¹

While comparing Ovid to the other ancient authors, it should also be mentioned that there are, of course, several other writers who are well known today, but were much less read than Ovid or the other authors I have mentioned during the ninth to the twelfth centuries: for example, Apuleius (a total of two surviving manuscripts for his *Metamorphoses*), Caesar (sixteen in total for *De bello Gallico*) and Plautus (six in total for his *Comoediae*).

We can also compare the number of manuscripts to the number of occurrences of the *Metamorphoses* in medieval inventories from before the thirteenth century. In the case of the *Metamorphoses*, the number of mentions is twenty-nine (compared to fifty-three surviving manuscripts).²² This can be compared to the case of Persius, who is mentioned eighty-nine times in the inventories, but with only seventy-two surviving manuscripts from this period.²³ A thorough examination of, for example, medieval German library catalogues, could probably also add to the inventory information (unspecific as to time and place) listed by Munk Olson, but that falls outside the scope of this study.²⁴

We can pinpoint the *Metamorphoses* manuscripts more precisely in time and space. Of the twelve oldest manuscripts listed in Tarrant's edition of the *Metamorphoses*, eight are from the latter part of the eleventh century or from the end of the eleventh/beginning of the twelfth century.²⁵ Two are dated as twelfth century only, and two as tenth century. As far as space is concerned, the information in the table above indicates that Germany, followed by Italy, dominate as far as provenance of the manuscripts is concerned.

Also worth mentioning in this context are the florilegia, in which there are some traces of Ovid's works preserved. Among the oldest are a ninth-century florilegium from St Gall and the *Opus prosodiacum* by

²¹ Munk Olsen has limited his catalogue to cover the period from the ninth to the twelfth century. If we consult *Texts and Transmission*, we can add to this that the only authors that seem to have an older tradition than the ninth century are Persius, Terence and Virgil, whose texts are extant in manuscripts from the fourth century onwards. *Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics*, ed. L. D. Reynolds (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 293-295, 412-420 and 433-437.

²² Munk Olsen 2014, p. 86. Munk Olsen does not give any more specific information in regard to time and place than 'antérieurs au début du xiiie' siécle' (p. 82).

²³ Munk Olsen 2014, p. 83.

²⁴ A few mentions of Ovid are to be found in Günther Glauche, Schullektüre im Mittelalter: Entstehung und Wandlungen des Lektürekanons bis 1200 nach den Quellen dargestellt (München: Arbeo-Gesellschaft, 1970) pp. 82, 86-87, 93, 95, 102.

²⁵ Tarrant 2004, pp. viii-xiv.

Micon Centulensis, which has survived in many copies, the oldest of which stems from the ninth century.²⁶ Since only a fragment of the *Metamorphoses* and a few of Ovid's other texts are extant in copies from this period, these florilegia are important witnesses to the fact that Ovid was being read alongside other ancient authors at this time, albeit in the form of short extracts. However, the absolute majority of the florilegia as well as the manuscripts of the complete works stem from the twelfth century, and the evidence from the florilegia seems to accord with that of the manuscripts in regard to establishing a growing interest in Ovid towards the end of the eleventh century.

Ovid and the Medieval Authors

Thus far, the material evidence of Ovid's work, which, together with the preserved commentaries, is the direct evidence of the Ovidian tradition. In the following, we will take a look at the indirect evidence in the form of the slightly more nebulous witness consisting of mentions and quotations of Ovid among scribes and scholars. In general, it is difficult to tell if the types of allusions, mentions, and quotations to be discussed here are the result of direct contact with and use of Ovid's texts by the medieval scholars, or whether they stem from second-hand sources of some sort. In addition, many of the authors mentioned below may have a complicated textual tradition of their own, which may contribute to complicating the picture. The end point of this short survey is the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which were famously named the Aetas Ovidiana by Ludwig Traube on account of the influence Ovid's verse (mainly his elegiac couplets) had on the poets of that period, an influence that is, by now, well researched, and not the topic of this study.27

To begin the discussion of the medieval familiarity with Ovid we will look at a type of indirect familiarity, namely how Ovid was known through Virgil. Virgil was always the most popular poet among scholars of this period, with a manuscript and commentary tradition that eclipses those of all other ancient authors. There exists a

²⁶ Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 870; Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, 10470-10473. For more on the florilegia see Birger Munk Olsen, *L'étude Des Auteurs Classiques Latins Aux XIe et XIIe Siècles*. *T. 3. P. 1, Les Classiques Dans Les Bibliothèques Médiévales* (Paris: Éd. du CNRS, 1987)., pp. 837-883; Munk Olsen 2014, pp. 300-328.

²⁷ Ludwig Traube, *Vorlesungen und Abhandlungen 2, Einleitung in die lateinische Philologie des Mittelalters* (Munich, 1911), p. 113. For a discussion of the concept, see Hexter 1986, p. 2. A good starting point for exploring this period is *Ovid in the Middle Ages*, ed. James G. Clark, Frank T. Coulson, Kathryn L. McKinley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

curious connection between Virgil and Ovid: the so-called pseudo-Ovidian *Argumenta Aeneidis*. These verses introduce each new book of the *Aeneid* and are found in several Virgil manuscripts, one dating as far back as the fifth century.²⁸ In these verses, Ovid is juxtaposed with Virgil and the younger poet often confesses his lower status, as in the following:

Vergilius magno quantum concessit Homero, tantum ego Vergilio, Naso poeta, meo. Nec me praelatum cupio tibi ferre, poeta; ingenio si te subsequor, hoc satis est.

'As much as Virgil yielded to mighty Homer, / so much do I, the poet Ovid, [yield] to my Virgil. / Nor is it my wish to relate that I am preferred to you, O poet. / If my talent is second to yours, this is sufficient.' ²⁹

These verses, when encountered by the medieval reader, must have established or strengthened the subordinate position of Ovid compared to Virgil, but also teased the reader with a glimpse of an unknown or little-known poet during a time when Ovid's works were not in circulation.³⁰ As a side note, when considering the relationship between Virgil and Ovid even during the high middle ages, the fascinating manuscript Ottob. lat. 3313 in the Vatican library is illustrative. In this large eleventh- or twelfth-century manuscript containing all of Virgil's texts, the Metamorphoses has been copied into the margins. On fol. 9^v, in which the main text is *Eclogue* 7, a few lines from Tristia introduced by the title Epythapion ouidii function as a brief introduction to the Metamorphoses, which begins after these lines and continues in the margin until fol. 65^r where it stops at Met. 6:294. The Metamorphoses text does not seem to be written by the same hand as the main text and there may have been more than one hand involved in this work.³¹ This is, of course, a unique occurrence, but the very idea of writing the Metamorphoses in the margins of Virgil's work tells us

²⁸ Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana: Vat. lat. 3867.

 ²⁹ Jan M. Ziolkowski, Michael Putnam (ed.), *The Virgilian Tradition: The First Fifteen Hundred Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 22. Translation M. Putnam.
 ³⁰ Hugo of Trimberg brings up these verses in his thirteenth century *Registrium multorum auctorum: Antequam Virgilius Eneados tangatur*, | *Titulus Ovidii sibi preponatur*. | *Hic enim libris singulis titulos prefixit*, | *In laudem tanti operis unde scribens dixit. Das Registrum*

multorum auctorum des Hugo von Trimberg: ein Quellenbuch zur lateinischen Literaturgeschichte des Mittelalters, ed. J. Huemer (Wien: F. Tempsky, 1888)]., l. 44-47.

³¹ The manuscript was examined on location by me in November 2015.

something about the connection between these two authors that was made by the medieval reader.

As far as its initial medieval reception is concerned, the locus classicus for early familiarity with Ovid is the eighth-century bishop, Theodulf of Orléans and his friend Modoin, bishop of Autun. The latter added the nickname Naso to his given name, and wrote poetry inspired by his namesake. However, only two of Modoin's poems composed in elegiac couplets survive.³² In the case of Theodulf, far more texts are preserved. His most famous poem related to Ovid is named *De libris quos legere solebam et qualiter fabulae poetarum a philosophis mystice pertractentur*, in which Ovid appears on line 18:

Et modo Pompeium, modo te, Donate, legebam, Et modo Virgilium, te modo, Naso loquax. In quorum dictis quamquam sint frivola multa, Plurima sub falso tegmine vera latent.³³

At one time I read Pompeius, at another you, Donatus, / At one time Virgil, at another you, talkative Naso. / Although there are many frivolous things in these authors' sayings, / There is a great truth hidden under a false covering.

However, Theodulf and Modoin are far from the only ones who mention or draw inspiration from Ovid at this time. In fact, Ovid is referenced by several of the most well-known names of the period. The most famous of all the Carolingian scholars, Alcuin, uses Ovid in a few places, such as in this extract from a letter to Angilbert, who is also known by the nickname Homer:

'Si nihil adtuleris, ibis, Homere, foras'.

Hoc de te tuoque itinere prophetatum esse, quis dubitat? Si Christum Sibilla

eiusque labores praedixit venturum, cur non Naso Homerum eiusque itinera praececinit?³⁴

'if you bring nothing, Homer, out you go!' Why do you doubt that this was foretold about you and your trip? If the Sybil foretold the coming of Christ and his work, why would Naso not prophesise about Homer and his travels?

³² E. H. Alton, 'Ovid in the Medieval Schoolroom' in *Hermathena* 94 (1960), p. 24.

³³ Monumenta Germaniae Historica (MGH) Poetae Latini aevi Carolini, vol. 1, p. 543, l. 17-20.

³⁴ MGH Epistolae Karolini aevi vol. 2, p. 141.

The quotations here is from *Ars amatoria* 2:280. Alcuin uses Book 2 of this work at least twice more, once in prose form in letter and the same passage (*Ars amat.* 2:670) is then also used in a piece of poetry in another letter.³⁵ Angilbert, the addressee of Alcuin's letter, also uses many Ovid allusions in his poems.³⁶

In general, Ovid seems often to be juxtaposed with other ancient authors or placed last in a list of authorities, as can be seen here in a part of a poem listed as one of the *carmina dubia* of Paul the Deacon:

Teudulfus rutilat mire de arte Iuvenci Atque Angelpertus, divini ambo poetae, Quos Flaccus Varro Lucanus Nasoque honorant;

Theodulf glows with wonder at Iuvencus's art, as does Angilbert, both divine poets, whom Flaccus, Varro, Lucan and Naso honour;³⁷

Here the ancient poets are described as taking second place to the Christian poets. The same theme is picked up during the ninth century, in a letter from the monk Otfridus to archbishop Moguntinus from 865, where Ovid is mentioned among the *gentilium vates* (pagan poets) and then again contrasted with the virtues of the Christian poets Arator, Juvencus, and Prudentius.³⁸ Around the same time, Ermenrich

Dixerat ast alter, melius sed, Naso poeta:

³⁵ MGH *Epistolae Karolini aevi* vol. 2, p. 369 and 481. In addition to this, in a poem Alcuin paraphrases Virgil's Corydon and ends the poem with:

Virgilius quondam: 'Rusticus es Corydon'.

^{&#}x27;Presbyter est Corydon', sit cui semper ave. MGH Poetae Latini aevi Carolini, vol. 1, p. 250.

³⁶ MGH Poetae Latini aevi Carolini, vol .1, pp. 358-380.

³⁷ MGH Poetae Latini aevi Carolini, vol .1, p 77, l. 15-22.

³⁸ Dum rerum quondam sonus inutilium pulsaret aures quorundam probatissimorum virorum eorumque sanctitatem laicorum cantus inquietaret obscenus, a quibusdam memoriae dignis fratribus rogatus, maximeque cuiusdam venerandae matronae verbis, nimium flagitantis, nomine Iudith, partem evangeliorum eis Theotisce conscriberem, ut aliquantulum huius cantus lectionis ludum secularium vocum deleret et in evangeliorum propria lingua occupati dulcedine sonum inutilium rerum noverint declinare (petitioni quoque iungentes queremoniam, quod gentilium vates, ut Virgilius Lucanus Ovidius caeterique quam plurimi, suorum facta decorarent lingua nativa – quorum iam voluminum dictis fluctuare cognoscimus mundum, nostrae etiam a sectae probatissimorum virorum facta laudabant, Iuvenci Aratoris Prudentii caeterorumque multorum, qui sua lingua dicta et miracula Christi decenter ornabant, nos vero, quamvis eadem fide eademque gratia instructi, divinorum verborum splendorem clarissimum proferre propria lingua dicebant pigrescere) – hoc dum eorum caritati importune mihi instanti negare nequivi, feci, non quasi peritus, sed fraterna petitione coactus. MGH Epistolae Karolini aevi vol. 4, p. 166–67.

of Ellwangen (died 874), monk at the monastery in Ellwangen, who was then a student of Rabanus Maurus and eventually became bishop of Passau, quotes a passages from Ovid in a long letter to Grimaldus, abbot of St Gall:

Item nomina, que in penultimis naturaliter sunt longa, postquam in obliquis casibus additur quelibet liquida, permanent longa: ut 'salûber salûbris',

'lugûber lugûbris'. Ut Ovidius in libro Metamorphoseon. 'Phoebe salûber, ades'.³⁹

Nouns, which naturally have a long penultimate, remain long after a liquid is added to the oblique cases, as in 'salûber salûbris', 'lugûber lugûbris'. As Ovid in the Metamorphoses: Salubrious Phoebus, be present.

This passage is noteworthy because it explicitly mentions the *Metamorphoses*. However, the quotation is from *Remedia amoris*, verse 704, and may be at least partially derived from Prisican.⁴⁰ Later on in the same letter Ermenricus quotes the *Metamorphoses* again:

Productum: ut Ovidius in I Metamorphoseon: 'Iussit et ambite, circumdare litora terre'.⁴¹

Lengthened, as Ovid in Book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*: He commanded the waters to surround the edge of the earth.

This is an explicit mention of the work and a quotation from *Metamorphoses* 1:37, but again via Priscian, which highlights the importance of intermediaries.⁴²

There are not many traces of Ovid to be found in the tenth century. E. H. Alton, in his published lecture 'Ovid in the Medieval Schoolroom,' claims that there is 'considerable evidence' that Ovid was studied in the schoolroom during this period, but he never supplies any sources to support this claim.⁴³ I have, however, managed to find a few traces of Ovid. First and foremost, by Ratherius of Verona, who

³⁹ MGH Epistolae Karolini aevi vol 3, p. 544.

⁴⁰ Ovidius tamen 'saluber' dixit et 'celeber' in IIII | | fastorum: Phoebe saluber ades et: Circus erit pompa celeber numero que deorum. Grammatici Latini. Vol. 2, Prisciani: Institutionum grammaticarum libri I-XII, ed. Heinrich Keil, Martin Julius Hertz, (Teubner: Leipzig, 1855-1880), 3:96:15.

⁴¹ MGH Epistolae Karolini aevi vol 3, p. 551.

⁴² Grammatici Latini. Vol. 2, 10:547:2.

⁴³ Alton 1960, p. 26.

mentions Ovid in the prologue to his *Phrenesis* written sometime between 955-56. Ovid is mentioned at the end of a list of authors and is listed among the satirists.⁴⁴ Ratherius also quotes from *Ars amatoria* (3:49) in a letter to count Nanno of Verona from 968 and paraphrases *Ex Ponto* in a letter to bishop Hubert of Parma from 963.⁴⁵ Around the same time, Gerbert of Reims or Aurillac, later pope Sylvester II, makes an allusion to both Ovid and Virgil in one sentence in a letter, which may imply thorough familiarity with their work.⁴⁶ The particular scene alluded to in the *Metamorphoses* is where Io is being tortured by Juno and chased by the Erinys.

Moving into the eleventh century there is clear evidence of Ovid's growing popularity. The letters from this period shows how Ovid is both mentioned by name and portions of his work used in paraphrases and allusions.⁴⁷ The most prolific Ovid reader in the German lands seems to have been Meinhard of Bamberg (died in 1088). In a letter to the bishop of Bamberg from c. 1060, Meinhard quotes from *Tristia* (5:14:44):

Que omnia etsi vos ipsos penitus nosse non ambigimus, nos tamen ad promptius excitandam memoriam capitulatim ea descripsimus, et ut ille ait,

Vela damus, quamvis remige navis eat.

⁴⁴ satyrographus omnibus praeferendum Flaccum Horatium, in libris quoque, qui praetitulantur Ex ponto, Nasonem Ovidium. MGH Die Briefe des Bischofs Rather von Verona, p. 63.

⁴⁵ Tolerabilius nam fuerat vestrum sic ferre dominium, ut, quem timerem, eundem diligerem ipsum, ut facere inchoaveram illum, de quo mihi congruere illud feci Nasonicum: Probra Teraphneae qui dixerat ante marite, Mox cecinit laudes prosperiore lyra. MGH Die Briefe des Bischofs Rather von Verona, p. 182; for the paraphrase see the same volume, p. 97.

⁴⁶ Laudo izitur et slorifico misericordias et miserationes eius cum in vohis tum in me, quem

⁴⁶ Laudo igitur et glorifico misericordias et miserationes eius cum in vobis tum in me, quem peregrinum, totoque, ut ita dicam, orbe profugum quandoque requiescere iussit certaque consistere terra. MGH Die Briefsammlung Gerberts von Reims, p. 247. The allusion is to Met. 1:727 and Aen. 1:629.

⁴⁷ For examples see MGH *Die ältere Wormser Briefsammlung*, p. 43 and 49. Here Ovid's stories of Hercules and Busiris, and of Icarus are used. MGH *Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV*, the index lists nine passages, but besides this Ovid is mentioned by name several times in the Hildesheim collection in this volume. MGH *Poetae Latinii medii aevi* vol. 5.1-2, p. 764. The index of quotations notes 15 parallels to the *Metamorphoses.*, e.g. Walter of Speyer's poetry, or the epitaph for the abbess Hathawiga of Essen. MGH *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* vol. 24. The eleventh-century allegorical animal fable *Ecbasis cuiusdam captivi per tropologiam* contains several parallels or allusions to Ovid (5 to the Met., and 3 to other works).

Even if I do not doubt that you know all of this thoroughly, I will still describe these things summarily to refresh your memory, and as he says: 'I am but giving sails to a ship that is already using the oars.'⁴⁸

Interestingly Meinhard reuses this quotation in two more letters, one from 1075 and one written sometime between 1057-1085.49 In the first (lengthy) letter, the quotation appears near the beginning, while in the latter two cases it is used at the end just before the farewell phrase. The quotation seems to function as a type of tagline for Meinhard and, if these were the only words from Ovid he quoted, it would be tempting to assume he used a florilegium or some other type of second-hand source for Ovid's poetry. However, there are more examples of Ovid in Meinhard's writings. In 1064, he writes to the bishop and quotes both Ovid and Virgil.⁵⁰ In the previous letters Meinhard had introduced Ovid with just a 'as he/that one says' (ut ille ait), but here Ovid is introduced by name, which is followed by a quotation from the Metamorphoses (7:740). Meinhard uses the 'as he says' phrase for Virgil instead (Aen. 1:671). Ovid is referred to as 'the best interpreter of female ease' (muliebris facilitatis optimus interpres). In the same letter, which is peppered with quotations and allusion to Ovid, Virgil, Cicero, and Horace, Meinhard again quotes from the Metamorphoses (9:523):

> Modo enim volo deplorare discessum tuum, sed hoc ociosum est; modo que apud nos gerantur digerere, sed hoc ineptum est; modo hortatorium aliquid tibi instillare, sed hoc mihi triste et luctuosum est. Denique illud Ovidianum patior:

Incipit et dubitat, scribit dampnatque tabellas. Et notat et delet, mutat culpatque probatque, Quid velit ignorat, quicquid factura videtur, Displicet.

One moment I want to lament your departure, but this is useless; one moment I want to digest all of these things that happened between us, but this is senseless; and then one

⁴⁸ MGH Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV, p. 108.

⁴⁹ MGH Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV, p. 131 and 228. N.B. The latter letter also contains an uncommon Martial quotation: denique ut Marcialis tuus ait: facis o omnia belle.

⁵⁰ MGH Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV, p. 218: Ipse quidem in primis hanc molem oppido recusare idque inceptum eorum mirabunda adversari, sed tamen, ut mos est feminis, immo ut Ovidius muliebris facilitatis optimus interpres ait: tandem dubitare coacta est. Igitur dilatum est usque Radasponem; ibi quod suorum fidelium deliberatio statuerit, se executuram spopondit. Et certe, ut ille ait: vereor, quo se Iunonia vertant hospicia.

moment I want to instil you with something encouraging, but this makes me sad and full of sorrow. Finally, I experience this Ovidian sensation:

'She begins, then hesitates and stops; writes on and hates what she has written; writes and erases; changes, condemns, approves; by turns she lays her tablets down and takes them up again. What she would do she knows not; on the point of action, she decides against it.'51

Meinhard shows a thorough familiarity with many of the ancient authors. He favours Virgil, Horace and Cicero most of all, but also Ovid, which was still a fairly rare thing at this point in time. Through Meinhard we can identify a certain Ovidian discourse (as part of a larger ancient-authors-discourse) in southern Germany in the eleventh century, which has its counterpart in the Loire valley. For it is here we find a group of churchmen and intellectuals who are probably most famous for being influenced by Ovid: a group commonly referred to as the Loire valley poets or the Loire circle. The group consists of Baudri (Baldric) of Bourgeuil (c. 1050-1130) abbot of Bourgeuil, later bishop of Dol; Marbode (Marbodus, Marbod) of Rennes (c. 1035-1123) first schoolmaster and possibly Baudri's teacher, then bishop of Rennes; and Hildebert of Lavardin (c. 1055-1133) bishop of Tours.⁵² These men were active in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. They were all men of the church, schoolmasters and monks earlier in life, and all three later became bishops.

This group of poets is known for writing verse inspired by Ovid. We know that Marbode is the author of ten poems modelled on the *Amores*. ⁵³ However, it is Baudri who seems to have been the foremost champion of Ovid. Baudri wrote many Ovidian-influenced poems and even had Ovid himself appear in two of them, in which he corresponds with his fictional friend Florus (poem 97-98). Another pair consists of an imitation of *Heroides* wherein Paris writes to Helen on

⁵¹ MGH Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV, p 219.

⁵² Max Manitius, *Geschichte der Lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters. Vol. 3, Vom Ausbruch des Kirchenstreites bis zum Ende des zwölften Jahrhunderts,* (München: C: H. Beck,1931), p. 883–898 (Baudri), 719-730 (Marbode), 853-865 (Hildebert). For a thorough study of Baudri and the ovidian influence see Gerald A. Bond ''Iocus amoris': The Poetry of Baudri of Bourgueil and the Formation of the Ovidian Subculture' in *Traditio* vol. 42 (Fordham University, 1986), pp. 143-193.

⁵³ Walther Bulst, 'Liebesbriefgedichte Marbods' in *Liber Floridus: Mittellateinische Studien Paul Lehmann zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet*, ed. B. Bischoff and S. Brechter (St. Ottilien: Eos Verlag der Erzabtei, 1950), pp. 287-301.

300 lines of distichs and receives a 370-line reply from Helen (poem 7-8). Baudri went on to compose his own letter modelled on the *Heroides*, to a lady named Constance, to which the lady replied (poem 200-201).⁵⁴

These are three educated men, firmly established in the hierarchy of the church. They correspond with each other and pepper their poetry and letters with themes from Ovid (as well as many other sources), which invites the question: from where did their knowledge of, and fondness for, Ovid originate? Had their schoolmasters introduced them to Ovid at some point in the middle of the eleventh century, or had they picked him up later in life?55 Whatever the answer to those questions might be, this little group seems to be of crucial importance for the establishment of a learned Ovidian discourse around 1100. This discourse has, by some scholars, been seen as a witness to a new 'turn' in medieval literature, one towards fictionality and, to use the words of Wim Verbaal, 'the emancipation of the poetical/textual world.'56 This is not the place to explore such a turn, but merely to point out the possibility that Ovid was associated with, or perhaps even conducive to, a new development of the literature of this period.

Most of the authors mentioned above use Ovid as an authority and generally refer to him in a positive way. This, however, was not always the case:

Interea cum versificandi studio ulta omnem modum meum animum immersissem, ita ut universa divinae paginae seria pro tam ridicula vanitate seponerem, ad hoc ipsum, duce mea levitate, jam veneram, ut ovidiana et bucolicorum dicta praesumerem, et

⁵⁴ Baudri de Bourgueil vol. 1-3, ed. J.-Y. Tilliette (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1998, 2002, 2013).

⁵⁵ The question of the Loire school and Ovid is a subject for a book of its own and much has already been written on the topic. For a recent article with a good bibliography on the subject, see Jean-Yves Tilliette, 'Savant et poètes du moyen âge face à Ovide: les débuts de l'aetas Ovidiana (v. 1050- v. 1200)', in Ovidius Redivivus: Von Ovid zu Dante, ed. M. Picone and B. Zimmerman (Freiburg: Rombach, 2014), pp. 63-105; Marek T. Kretschmer, 'The love elegy in medieval Latin literature (pseudo-Ovidiana and Ovidian imitations)' in *The Cambridge Companion to Latin Love Elegy*, ed. T. S. Thorsen (Cambridge: Camebridge University Press, 2013), pp. 271-89, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139028288.024.

⁵⁶ Wim Verbaal, 'How the West was Won by Fiction: The Appearance of Fictional Narrative and Leisurely Reading in Western Literature (11th and 12th century)', in *True Lies Worldwide: Fictionality in Global Contexts*, ed. A. Cullhed, L. Rydholm (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), pp. 189-200, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110303209.189. See also Jean-Yves Tilliette, 'Le retour du grand Pan: remarques sur une adaptation en vers des Mitologiae de Fulgence à la fin du XIe siècle (Baudri de Bourgueil, c. 154)', *Studi Medievali 38* (1996), p. 92.

lepores amatorios in specierum distributionibus epistolisque nexilibus affectarem. 57

I had, however, plunged my spirit beyond all limits into writing poetry, and I set aside every single page of scripture in favor of such pointless vanity. My inconstancy had already led me to mimic verses of Ovid and the bucolic poets, and the way I made a show of arranging the material into epistolary exchanges was an affectation of their erotic elegance.

These are the words of Guibert of Nogent (1055-1124), who is sharing his experience of writing poetry in his youth and includes Ovid in the context of an earlier sinful life. However, Herbert of Losinga (1054-1119) seems merely to find Ovid annoying:

taediosa est mihi ouidianarum fabularum prolixitas.⁵⁸ the great length of Ovid's stories is tedious to me.

Conrad of Hirsau (ca 1070-1150) has far more than this to say about Ovid. In his *Dialogus super auctores*, a master and a student discuss different aspects of both classical and Christian authors. When it comes to discussing Ovid, the student asks whether it is really wise to read Ovid when doing so may harm or taint the reader. The master responds that it is probably wise to stay away from Ovid, even though there may be some small merit to his *Fasti*, *Epistulae ex Ponto* and *Nux*. The one work absolutely to be avoided is the *Metamorphoses*, because here Ovid wrote about transformations that are contrary to Christian dogma. Conrad then continues with a long quotation from the Epistle to the Romans to prove his point.⁵⁹

This focus on transformations seems to touch upon a concern of the period. Caroline Walker Bynum has investigated different expressions of transformations during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. She has identified a tendency in the early twelfth century to think of transformation in terms of evolution, while in the latter part of the century, a shift in paradigm occurred and people became interested in change through replacement (i.e. a new thing/being is created). The

⁵⁷ Guibert de Nogent, *Autobiographie*, ed. E. R. Labande (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1981), p. 134. Translation Jay Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent: Portrait of a Medieval Mind* (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 53.

⁵⁸ Munk Olsen 2014, p. 429.

⁵⁹ *Dialogus super auctores*, ed. Robert B. C. Huygens (Berchem-Bruxelles: Latomus, 1955), p. 51.

first model of transformation is represented in theology with the idea that only God can create from nothing; the second model is represented by, for instance, the interest in alchemy and stories of metamorphosis, not least the Ovidian ones.⁶⁰

In the Bavarian B family of *Metamorphoses* commentaries, the *accessus* offers a detailed taxonomy of transformations, starting with a tripartite division into magical, spiritual and natural. These three categories are then modified with five sets of binaries: body/quality, natural/non-natural, living/non-living, sensate/insensate and magical/spiritual. Lycaon being transformed into a wolf is an example of a magical, non-natural transformation with regard to the body of a living creature with senses to another living creature with senses.⁶¹ This detailed analysis of transformations is not used explicitly in the commentary text itself, a fact that seems to hold true for other commentaries as well.⁶² The Bavarian B commentary, however, brings up the topic of transformations again in the commentary itself:

Sunt quidam, qui hic faciunt casuum mutationem dicentes corpora m<utata> in uarias formas, ideo quia dicunt corpus non mutari, nisi formas tantum. Contra quos nos dicimus c<orpora> et f<ormas> equaliter mutari.

There are those who here change the cases saying that bodies are transformed into various shapes, since they say that a body does not transform, lest in shape only. Against these we say that bodies and shapes transform equally. (clm 14482, 28^r)

This seems to be one of those rare witnesses to a contemporary debate where one group (*quidam*) holds the position that a body can transform in shape only (i.e. not its essence), while another group (*nos*) holds the position that transformations affect both body (essence) and shape.

Clm 4610 does not contain this list of transformations or any longer discussions of them. Instead, it contains laconic commentaries like the following:

⁶⁰ Caroline W. Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York: Zone Books, 2001), pp. 22-26. It is also tempting to speculate about the possible influence of the debate concerning transubstantiation in the eleventh and twelfth century, but that is too broad and deep a subject for this chapter.

⁶¹ See Appendix 1, 1. 3-25.

⁶² Bynum has identified the same phenomenon in the commentaries of Arnulf and John of Garland. Bynum 2001, pp. 98-99.

FIT LVPVS. Ista mutatio propinqua est ueritati, quia si umquam posset fieri, taliter mutaretur.

HE BECOMES A WOLF. This transformation is close to the truth, since if ever it could happen, he would have transformed in such a way. (1:237)

This type of explanation is closer to an allegorising explanation. It does not discuss the type of transformation, suggesting instead that it is fictional, but still a fitting example.

With these instances we enter the twelfth century, which marks the end of this survey. During the twelfth century, the use of Ovid seems to become more diverse. In the following we will look to some examples of the seemingly fruitful combination of Ovid and philosophy. Winthrop Wetherbee has pointed out that the implicit context for medieval mythography is Plato's Timaeus and its cosmology, where the ancient poets' myths could mix with philosophical concepts such as noys and hyle.63 Many of the sources for the commentaries seem to be different sorts of mythographic compendia, and indeed the Metamorphoses itself could be regarded as mythography. The Neoplatonist worldview was available to the medieval reader via Calcidius's translation and commentary on Plato's text, but also via authors such as Boethius, Macrobius and Martianus Capella, and of course through Augustine's interpretation. As the popularity of the Metamorphoses increased from the eleventh and twelfth centuries onwards, so did the study of Calcidius's Timaeus. From the period 850-1000, a total of seven manuscripts survive, while from the eleventh century we have twenty-nine manuscripts, the majority of them from Germany.64 The neoplatonic stream gave rise to several famous philosophical poems and works of prose centred around Plato's cosmology, e.g. William of Conches' Dragmaticon Philosphia, Bernardus Silvestris's Cosmographia and Alains de Lille's Anticlaudianus and De Planctu Naturae.

During our period, several authors seem to have made a connection between the *Metamorphoses* and Plato. Otto of Freising, writing around

⁶³ Winthrop Wetherbee, 'Learned Mythography: Plato and Martianus Capella', in *Oxford Handbook of Medieval Latin Literature*, ed. Ralph J. Hexter and David Townsend (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 335.

⁶⁴ Stephen Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideas in Medieval Europe,* 950-1200 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), p. 174. For a more recent study see A. Somfai 'The Eleventh-Century Shift in the Reception of Plato's "Timaeus" and Calcidius's "Commentary", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, Vol. 65 (2002), 1-21, https://doi.org/10.2307/4135103.

the middle of the twelfth century, pairs Ovid together with Plato in Book 8 of his De duabus civitatis, where he refers to Ovid as 'one of the poets', but he cites Book 1 of the Metamorphoses (1:256) and clearly associates him with 'the first of the philosophers, Plato'. In poetry, we also find the connection between Ovid and Plato. The following example is from a late-twelfth-century anonymous poem from Tegernsee addressed to some cloistered women. The poem in question is called Profuit ignaris and consists of 191 lines of leonine hexameter. Its subject is love (or courtly love, as Dronke argues), love poetry and the moral aspects of these two. In the following two samples, the poet first gives a type of moral explanation or justification for Ovid's scandalous stories and then, in the second sample, he describes a practical application of this poetry.

Miror cur vates tot feda, tot improbitates voluit primordia rerum, Dicturus demum, Celi vel terre, subtiliter ante referre. Iuxta Platonem Nature condicionem, Post res mutatas, rerum species variatas, impia stupra deorum Et mutatorum scelus, Vult nobis significare Explicat-et quare? Quantum Natura, quondam sine crimine pura Nunc degravata, corrupta sit et viciata.

... (l. 137-145)

Hec de virtute, de vera verba salute
Quando tractamus, ad sidera mente volamus:
Sic celum petimus, non ut ferat Ossan Olimpus.
Hunc habitum mentis tum rursus ad impia sentis

Prave mutari, scortari, luxuriari.

Mortales actus Iovis implet ad infima tractus,

Mens vitio victa peccat virtute relicta.

65 Ottonis episcopi Frisingensis Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus, ed. Adolf Hofmeister, MGH - Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum Separatim Editi, 45 (München: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1912), p. 401, book 8:8: Cum iuxta apostolum pax et securitas dixerint, repentinus interitus supervenit, terribilisque ignis virtute cuncta cremabantur. Quam seculi per ignem exterminationem non solum nostri prophetico spiritu veridice predixerunt, sed et quidam ex gentibus humana subnixi ratione phisicis opinionibus somniaverunt. Unde precipuus philosophorum Plato mundum abditis naturae rationibus, aqua prius, post igne purgandum in Tymeo suo asserit, et quidam poetarum de eadem re sic ait:

..... reminiscitur affore tempus,

Quo mare, quo tellus inmensaque regia caeli Ardeat et mundi moles inmensa laboret. Est quod in illorum discas deitate deorum, Nec sine doctrina migrare feruntur ad ima.⁶⁶ (1. 155-163)

'I wonder why the poet about to tell of so many monstrous and shameful things wished first to relate the beginnings of heaven and earth. Like Plato he gives a cosmology, and then explains the things that were changed, the varied species, the flaw in what is mutable, the unholy lewdness of the gods. Why does he do this? He wants to show us how much Natura, once guiltlessly pure, has been dragged down, seduced and defiled. [...] When we expound such things about virtue and true salvation, in spirit we are flying to the stars. Thus do we (truly) seek heaven - this is not to pile Ossa on Olympus! Then again you feel this state of mind changing, turning to impiety, wantonness, and luxury. Jove, drawn deep down, fills human action, the mind sins, overcome by vice, casting virtue aside. Yet there is something you can learn from the nature of these gods: it is not without significance that they are said to make their way to the depths.'

This poem combines several topics discussed thus far: The poetic imitation of Ovid, critique of Ovid and now also the association of Ovid with Plato.⁶⁷

In clm 4610, Ovid himself is twice referred to as a philosopher (philosophus). Paule Demats explored this Ovidius Philosophus and the commentary tradition in her Fabula: Trois études de mythographie antique et médiévale. She explores three different aspects of Ovid: the ethical, philosophical and theological. The first aspect is principally related to the medieval interpretation of Ovid's shorter works as ethical, in the

⁶⁶ Translation Peter Dronke. The poem is found in the manuscript Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 19488. It is from Tegernsee and can be dated to the end of twelfth century. An edition and translation of the poem can be found in Peter Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric*, vol 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 452-463.

⁶⁷ Another much shorter poem from twelfth-century Metz that also combines courtly love with mentions of both Ovid and Plato can be found in the manuscripts Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Phillipps 1694. An edition and translation can be found in Geralrd Bond, *The Loving Subject: Desire, Eloquence, and Power in Romanesque France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 146-47.

⁶⁸ Paule Demats, *Fabula: Trois études de mythographie antique et médiévale* (Geneve: Libraire Droz, 1973), pp. 107-177.

sense that they were meant to illustrate bad behaviour and thus warn the reader. The theological aspect is related to the later allegorical tradition of interpreting Ovid. The philosophical aspect is the connection between the *Metamorphoses* and *Timaeus* as well as the work of Boethius. The commentary in clm 4610, which she had available only through the excerpts in Meiser's article, is discussed briefly by Demats and mainly to juxtapose it with the later commentary tradition.⁶⁹

In clm 4610, the first reference to Ovid as a philosopher is in the *accessus*, where three kinds of philosophers and their views on God are described. The first group believes that God created the world from nothing, the second that God created it from atoms and emptiness, and the third that there have always existed three things: God, the four elements and the pure ideas or essential properties existing in the mind of God. Ovid is said to be a philosopher belonging to the last group. This section of the *accessus* was of particular interest to Karl Young, who also transcribed four *accessus* in the Bavarian B family. Young believed that this passage was evidence of a medieval association between platonic ideas and the *Metamorphoses*, which might then in turn have inspired Chaucer. More recently, Michael Herren has proved that the vocabulary and general ideas used in the *accessus* to clm 4610 at this point is derived from two different parts of Macrobius's commentary on *Somnum Scipionis*.

The second reference to the philosopher Ovid is implicit in one of the rare Christianising passages of the commentary where he is spoken of in the context of the 'other philosophers' (*alii philosophi*).⁷⁴ However, just as in the case with the transformations discussed above, there are not many passages in the actual commentary that reflect any specific Platonic interest. There are a few explanations of a cosmographical nature, most of which are found in the commentary to Book 1, where the creation of the world is treated.⁷⁵ Regarded as a whole, the

 $^{^{69}}$ Demats first mentions clm 4610 on p. 114 and then returns to it several times in this chapter.

 $^{^{70}}$ For more on the $\it accessus$ see chapter Form and Function.

 $^{^{71}}$ Karl Young, 'Chaucer's Appeal to the Platonic Deity' in *Speculum* Vol. 19:1 (1944), p. 11.

⁷² I.e. words such as togaton, nous and anima mundi.

⁷³ Michael Herren 'Manegold of Lautenbach's Scholia on the *Metamorphoses* - Are There More?' in *Notes and Queries* (2004), p. 222.

 $^{^{74}}$ Clm 4610, 2:850. For more on this explanation see chapter The Commentary and its Focus on the *Metamorphoses*.

⁷⁵ For more on these see chapter Form and Function, sub-section Function of the Commentary: Categories of Explanation.

Bavarian commentaries cannot be said to be cosmographical or otherwise neoplatonic. Instead, they must be regarded as products from a period where neoplatonic ideas gained centre stage. As such, they could be interpreted as reflecting an ongoing dialogue in the schoolroom at the time when new ideas were gaining ground and the *Metamorphoses* was being carefully introduced into the curriculum.

The philosophical aspect of the reception of Ovid is only one of the facets of his use during the twelfth century and onwards. When his popularity starts to grow, it becomes more difficult to give a brief description of his readers. Another sign of Ovid's increased renown is the fact that he can be found referenced in different chronicles from the twelfth century and onwards (but not, to my knowledge, before this).⁷⁶

This chapter has surveyed Ovid from the Carolingian period to the twelfth century, with a focus on material as well as indirect evidence. The material evidence has been shown to go hand in hand with the indirect evidence as the number of preserved manuscripts, as well as mentions and quotations of Ovid, have increased century by century. Ovid was evidently known already in the Carolingian period, although usually placed towards the bottom of a list over which Virgil would usually preside. During the eleventh century, a distinct increase in Ovid's popularity is evident, and a type of Ovid discourse seem to have existed in both the German lands and France. During the twelfth century, Ovid's renown grew further and contemporary intellectuals seemed to find new uses for him in everything from philosophical texts to chronicles, all of which would also increase the need for commentaries explaining his works.

⁷⁶ MGH SS 16, p. 549-550. In the *Annales Cameracenses* (Cambrai in the Hauts-de-France region), in a passage about the year 1169 Ovid is mentioned and quoted:

Immittitur a Domino nobis correptio febrium saepius ob salutem animarum, aliquando datur in medicinam, quibusdam initia fiunt tormentorum subsequentia. Ovidius sic dicit:

Temporibus medicina valet, data tempore prodest.

This seems to refer to an alternate reading in Remedia amoris l. 131.

MGH SS 10, p. 157: The chronicler quotes *Ponticus Ovidius* (Ex Ponto 4:7:49).

MGH SS 24, p. 558: *Lamberti Ardensis Historia comitum ghisnensium*. Written in the 1190s. In the prologue an advanced discussion of Ovid can be found, and the author also seems to quote him in several other places.