

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.
SOME ELIZABETHAN OPINIONS
OF THE POETRY AND CHARACTER
OF OVID, A DISSERTATION**

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The university of Chicago. Some Elizabethan opinions of the poetry and character of Ovid, a dissertation by Clyde Barnes Cooper

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The University of Chicago
FOUNDED BY JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

Some Elizabethan Opinions of the Poetry and Character of Ovid

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND
LITERATURE IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH)

BY
CLYDE BARNES COOPER

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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. This includes the use of surveys, interviews, and focus groups to gather insights from stakeholders and employees.

3. The third part details the process of identifying and addressing key challenges and opportunities. It highlights the need for a proactive approach to problem-solving and the importance of involving all relevant parties in the decision-making process.

4. The fourth part discusses the role of technology in enhancing data collection and analysis. It mentions the use of advanced software and analytics tools to process large volumes of data efficiently and accurately.

5. The fifth part focuses on the importance of communication and collaboration in the implementation of the findings. It stresses that clear and consistent communication is essential for ensuring that all team members understand their roles and responsibilities.

6. The sixth part provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations. It offers practical advice on how to apply these findings to improve the organization's performance and achieve its strategic goals.

7. The final part concludes the document by expressing confidence in the organization's ability to overcome challenges and achieve success through a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.

The literary fortunes of the Roman poet Ovid are little short of the marvelous. Accorded among his own people a rank second only to that of Virgil, distinguished for admirable narrative, tender elegy, and for at least one notable experiment in tragedy—the lost *Medea*, he received even in his own lifetime that striking mixture of praise and censure that has continued to the present.¹

Throughout mediæval literature his influence was potent and pervasive.² He appears in various ways in Italian, Provençal, Spanish, Bohemian, German, Icelandic, French, and English. He was a main source of inspiration for the first part of the *Roman de la* *

¹ For remarks of Seneca and of Quintilian on the character of Ovid, see Teuffel-Schwabe-Warr: *Hist. of Roman Lit.*, I, p. 495.

² The character and extent of the references to Ovid during the Middle Ages in England may be seen in part by consulting the carefully prepared indexes to the following: (Rolls Series.)

Warner, G. F.: *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*. VIII vols.

Haydon, F. S.: *Eulogium Historiarum*.

Anstey, H.: *Munimenta Academica*. II vols.

Riley, H. T.: *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani*.

Luard, H. R.: *Roberti Grosseteste Epistolae*.

Luard, H. R.: *Annales Monastici*.

Lumby, J. R.: *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden*. IX vols.

Wright, Th.: *Alexandri Neckham de Naturis Rerum Libri Duo*.

Madden, Sir F.: *Matthæi Parisiensis Historia Anglorum*. III vols.

Luard, H. R.: *Flores Historiarum*.

* The most extensive collection of mediæval citations of Ovid is in Manitius: *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Ovid im Mittelalter*. Philologus, Suppl. VII (1899), pp. 721 ff.

No study of Ovid in mediæval literature such as Comparetti's *Virgilio nell' medio evo* has yet appeared. The following references are of value:

Bartsch, Karl: *Albrecht von Halberstadt und Ovid im Mittelalter*. Quedlinburg, 1861.

Belloni, Egidio: *Note sulle traduzioni dell' Arte Amatoria e dei Remedia Amoris d'Ovidio anteriori al Rinascimento*. Bergamo, 1892. Completed study, Turin, 1900 [*Romania*, 22, 339, and 29, 630].

Cloetta, W.: *Beiträge zur Litteraturgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*. Erster Theil, Halle, 1890. P. 164 ff.

Dernedde, R.: *Über die den altfr. Dichtern bekannten epischen Stoffe aus dem Altertum*. Göttingen, 1887.

Kühlhorn, G.: *Das Verhältnis der Art d'amors des Jacques d'Amiens zu Ovids Ars amatoria*. Quedlinburg, 1908.

✧ *Rose*,³ and he supplied a code of laws for the Courts of Love.⁴ The poem *Flamenca*, says Mr. Ker, "is really the triumph of Ovid over all his Gothic contemporaries."⁵ Monastic annalists frequently quote him,⁶ and the numerous manuscripts bear witness to his popularity.⁷ Dante makes some hundred references to Ovid, and ranks him third among the four great poets of the world.⁸ Chaucer ✧ and Gower knew him well, as did a host of lesser men.⁹ The mediæval mind, however, approached the classics in its own way. The schoolmen admired Virgil's Fourth Eclogue because they saw there a prophecy of the birth of Christ.¹⁰ Allegorizing was the recognized mode of interpretation; and the ingenuity that exercised itself on the mystic properties of numbers and the hidden significations of the parts of speech saw justifiable meanings in even the most licentious passages in Ovid, and insisted that here also were moral and religious lessons had one but the wit to find them.¹¹ As Canon

✧ — Neilson, W. A.: *The Origins and Sources of the Court of Love*. Harvard Studies and Notes—Vol. VI, pp. 170-212, The Ovidian Tradition.

Runge, O.: *Die Metamorphoseon-Verdeutschung Albrechts von Halberstadt*. Berlin, 1908. Palaestra—No. 73.

Sudre, L.: *Publii Ovidii Metamorphoseon libros quomodo nostrates mediævi poetæ imitati interpretatique sunt*. Paris, 1893. [Romania, 22, 242].

Sandys, J. E.: *History of Classical Scholarship*. Cambridge, 1906. Page 638.

Seldmayer, H.: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Ovid-Studien im Mittelalter*. Wiener Studia, VI, 1884.

³ E. Langlois: *Origines et sources du Roman de la Rose*, pp. 69-75.

|| — ⁴ L. F. Mott: *The Court of Love*, p. 55.

⁵ *Epic and Romance*, p. 361.

⁶ Indexes to the Rolls Series.

⁷ Teuffel-Schwabe-Warr: *Hist. of Roman Lit.*, I, sec. 249, note 3.

⁸ Scartazzini: *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, II, p. 1412.

⁹ Moore: *Studies in Dante*, pp. 206-228.

Inferno, Canto IV, line 90.

¹⁰ Skeat: *Chaucer*, VI, p. 387.

Lounsbury: *Studies in Chaucer*, II, 251-252.

G. C. Macaulay: *The Complete Works of John Gower*, IV, p. 369 ff.

¹¹ Greenough: *The Greater Poems of Virgil*, notes, p. 27.

For the best account of the legend, see Comparetti: *Virgil in the Middle Ages*, Eng. trans. by Benecke.

¹² See below, note 46.

J. Janssen has shown, mediæval writers employed such Latin authors as they knew as aids toward a deeper knowledge of Christianity and as incentives toward a purer moral life.¹²

In the Renaissance also Ovid was a great favorite with painter, poet, and cultivated readers generally.¹³ To an astonishingly early reading of that poet Montaigne ascribed his love of literature, although in later life his fondness for Ovid left him.¹⁴ Clement Marot promised: "de tout mon pouvoir suyvre et contrefaire la veine du noble poëte Ovide."¹⁵ Of the whole Rhetorical School in France, M. Guy observes: "Le poete qu'ils preferent, c'est Ovide; viennent ensuite Virgile, Horace, Terence."¹⁶ During the same period, however, appeared also the note of disparagement or censure, as may be seen in the following opinions. Thus in 1450 Æneas Sylvius remarked in his *De Liberorum Educatione*: "Ubique tristis, ubique dulcis est, in plerisque tamen locis nimium lascivus."¹⁷ And Ludovicus Vives, whose writings were widely influential, observed in his *De Tradendis Disciplinis*, 1555: "Imo vero amissa sunt tot philosophorum et sacrorum autorum monumenta, et grave erit et non ferendum facinus, si Tibullus pereat aut Ars Amandi Nasonis."¹⁸ The latter statement is not, of course, to be interpreted as evidence of a special attack on Ovid. As will appear in the course of the discussion, it is really but a part of the prevailing attitude toward the claims of poetry. But it shows that in the very heyday of his fame doubt and censure were mingled with the praise of Ovid.

That Elizabethan poets and playwrights had a special fondness for the poetry of Ovid has long been a commonplace of English

¹² J. Janssen: *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages*. English trans., London, 1896. I, p. 63.

¹³ The painters of the Renaissance found Ovid a source of suggestion for mythological subjects. Cf. Schoenfeld, P.: *Ovids Metamorphosen in ihrem Verhältnis zur antiken Kunst*. Wunderer, W.: *Ovids Werke in ihrem Verhältnis zur antiken Kunst*.

¹⁴ Montaigne: *Essays*, trans. by Cotton, I, p. 204.

¹⁵ *Oeuvres de Clement Marot*, Lyon, 1870, II, p. 154.

¹⁶ *L'Ecole des Rhétoriciens*, p. 10.

¹⁷ Elyot: *The Governour*. Ed. Croft, I, p. 124, note.

¹⁸ *Ib.*

literary history.¹⁹ Mr. Alfred Dorrinck, in the conclusion of his dissertation, *Die lateinischen Zitate in den Dramen der wichtigsten Vorgänger Shakespeares*, p. 75, gives the following table of citations: Catullus 1, Cicero 11, Claudian 1, Gellius 1, Horace 16, Juvenal 3, Lucan 1, Martial 1, Ovid 54, Plautus 11, Pliny 1, Publius Syrus 1, Seneca 7, Statius 1, Terence 14, Virgil 12. Herein he sees, "Die grosse Vorliebe der Elisabethaner für Ovid." This judgment is further supported by the investigations of Mr. Karl Frey.²⁰ In his essay, *Ovid and Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sidney Lee has sketched the vogue of Ovid from 1200 to 1700, maintaining that the poet appealed to readers of all classes and was an educational manual in all schools and colleges of the Sixteenth Century.²¹ Here, as well as in his *Life of Shakespeare*,²² he points out the latter's indebtedness to Ovid, a view thoroughly confirmed by Mr. R. K. Root.²³ In the same way Mr. R. Bayley regards "ultra-classicism" as a characteristic of the Elizabethan drama, even of the plays destined solely for the popular stage. "To the plebeian crowd," he thinks, "fully one-half of the Elizabethan drama must have been caviare utterly beyond their reach."²⁴

Mr. McKerrow, however, in his edition of Nashe, reaches the conclusion that Roman authors were not the favorite reading of the average literary man of the period.²⁵ Hence, "the ultimate debt of Elizabethan literature to the classics is hardly at all a debt at first hand." The reason given for this latter view is that there were numerous collections of scraps of Latin, from which Nashe and others might have drawn. Numbers of illustrations and proverbs in Latin were current. Such books as Lilly's *Latin Grammar*, Erasmus's *Parabolae*, or the *Sententiae Pueriles* would serve as sources

¹⁹ *Cambridge Hist. of Eng. Lit.*, IV, p. 22.

²⁰ *Die klassische Götter- und Heldensage in den Dramen von Marlowe, Lyly, Kyd, Greene und Peele*. Karlsruhe, 1909.

²¹ *Quarterly Review*, No. 210.

²² Ed. of 1909, p. 262.

²³ *Classical Mythology in Shakespeare*, pp. 3-10.

Cf. H. R. D. Anders: *Shakespeare's Books*, pp. 21-30.

²⁴ *The Shakespeare Symphony*, Ch. 10.

²⁵ Vol. V, p. 133 ff.

for large numbers of the quotations of the time. "Interlarding one's work with quotations was a favorite practice." In the case of Nashe, his reading "seems to have been limited to Ovid, a play of Plautus, the Epistles of Horace, and perhaps some plays of Terence." Nashe has one hundred quotations from Ovid, twenty from Homer, and twelve from Virgil.²⁶ But so many of these are vague in character or had appeared in Lilly, that Nashe "need never have opened a volume of Ovid in his life."²⁷

x The importance of the foregoing will escape no one. In any problem of classical influence in the Sixteenth Century it will not suffice merely to exhibit an array of quotations or allusions. An effort must be made to discover whether the author is depending on current collections of sayings or on his own reading of the classics.²⁸ Particularly does this condition apply to the work of so eminently quotable an author as Ovid. For citations from him appear in the school grammars of both Linacre and Lilly.²⁹ In the school curricula he has a prominent place. Thus Wolsey's plan of studies for Ipswich School (1528) directed: "The party in the seventh Form should regularly have in hand either Horace's *Epistles* or Ovid's *Metamorphoses* or *Fasti*."³⁰ Bishop Pilkington's Statutes of Rivington Grammar School (1566) recommended, among other Latin texts, *Epistolae Ovidii*.³¹ Brinsley translated *Tristia* and *Metamorphoses* according to his own special plan of instruction, and recommended versification on Ovidian models.³² Hoole recommended that *De Tristibus* be learned memoriter, "to impart a lively pattern of hexameters and pentameters."³³

To the Elizabethan reader, as to all others, a chief source of attraction in Ovid lay in his superb gift as a story-teller. And

²⁶ See Vol. V, p. 313, for Index of Allusions.

²⁷ *Ib.*, p. 134.

²⁸ Cf. M. B. Ogle: *Classical Literary Tradition in Early German and Romance Literature*. *Mod. Lang. Notes*, Dec., 1912.

²⁹ Watson, F.: *The English Grammar Schools to 1660*, p. 245.

³⁰ *Ib.*, p. 472.

³¹ *Ib.*, p. 472.

³² *Ib.*, p. 357.

³³ *Ib.*, p. 371.