



THE IMAGE OF THE FOREST IN THE *CARMINA BURANA*

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Ever since its discovery in 1803, the poetry of *Carmina Burana* has fascinated and challenged scholars. A great deal of research has been dedicated to different aspects of this collection of medieval goliard poetry, especially to the love songs which made it justly famous. It seems, however, that with advancing research problems and questions continue to arise concerning the *Carmina Burana*. Surprising as it may seem, certain elements of the love songs have not yet been taken into consideration. The representation of the forest appears to be one of them.

In this paper I examine the imaginary and mythical image of the forest and of sylvan space in two love songs of the *Carmina Burana*. It seems that the forest (called either *nemus* or *silva*) had both positive and negative aspects for medieval poets.¹

What are the positive and the negative features in the image of the forest? This question provides an opportunity to study the forest from an interdisciplinary point of view, not only on the basis of medieval poetry, but also of philosophy, mythology, and mentality. The idea of the mythical forest as an imaginary space is present in many mythologies around the world. Is the idea of the primeval forest present in the *Carmina Burana*? Apart from the literary presentation and analysis, I will examine this question in the context of the medieval history of ideas and cultural models set against the broader intellectual panorama of twelfth-century poetry.²

The Collection and Its Authors

Discovered in the Benedictine monastery of Benediktbeuern south of Munich during the secularization of the Bavarian monastic houses in 1803, the *Carmina Burana* is the most extensive and the most famous collection of Latin poetry that

¹ This article is based on my MA thesis, "The Imaginary World of *Carmina Burana*," (Budapest: Central European University, 2006).

² For the twelfth-century Renaissance, see Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933), 154 (hereafter: Haskins, *The Renaissance*).



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has survived from the Middle Ages.³ Strangely enough, the manuscript is not mentioned in any of the existing catalogues of Benediktbeuern abbey. Neither it is known when nor how the book appeared there.⁴

Johannes Andreas Schmeller published the first edition of the manuscript in 1847, rearranging the text and calling it *Carmina Burana* (“Songs from Benediktbeuern”). In 1901, Wilhelm Meyer discovered and published missing leaves under the title *Fragmenta Burana*. Between 1930 and 1970, Alphonse Hilka, Otto Schumann, and Bernhard Bischoff published the critical edition of the entire *Carmina Burana*, restoring the original sequence of the poems.⁵ Since the first edition, many publications have been dedicated to the *Carmina Burana*.⁶ Especially Peter Dronke’s research made an important contribution to the study of the collection.⁷

The *Carmina Burana* belongs to a group of manuscripts containing secular (usually love and satirical) poetry.⁸ These collections show a similar thematic and stylistic structure, but the individual poems are different. The *Carmina Burana* manuscript contains 119 leaves and over two hundred texts, divided into four groups: love songs (*Amatoria*), moral-satirical verses (*Moralia et Satirica*), drinking and gambling songs (*Potatoria et Lascoria*), and two short religious dramas for Christmas and Easter. A supplement of more varied texts was added, probably between 1230 and 1250. The majority of the texts are in Latin, but some of the poems are in Middle High German or with snatches of Old French, Provençal, Italian, and even a little Greek. This paper is focused on the analysis of the love

³ *Codex Latinus Monacensis* 4660 and *Codex Latinus Monacensis* 4660a are now kept in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich.

⁴ F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 256 (hereafter: Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*).

⁵ Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, 257.

⁶ For comprehensive bibliographies on the *Carmina Burana*, see Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, 353 and Peter Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 591.

⁷ Mainly with his books *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), *The Medieval Lyric* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), *The Medieval Poet and his World* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1984), and *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages: New Departures in Poetry, 1000–1150* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970). See also C. S. Lewis with his book *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), and *The Carmina Burana: Four Essays*, ed. Martin H. Jones (London: Center for Late Antique and Medieval Studies, 2000).

⁸ Similar collections are known from the monastery of Santa Maria de Ripoll, the British Museum MS. Arundel 384, the Vatican collection MS. Vat. Lat. 4389, and manuscript D IV of the University Library at Basle.



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songs (*Amatoria*), which comprise more than one hundred songs. In fact, half of the poems in *Carmina Burana* deal with the issue of love.

The problem of the authorship of the *Carmina Burana* is a fascinating topic in itself. About half of the texts are known only from this manuscript, but some of the texts have been identified through comparison with other codices. These compositions appear to be a product of famous and admired twelfth- and early thirteenth-century poets.⁹ The intellectual milieu of the book and its authors was probably clerical-scholarly, at least according to the manuscript and the content. The *Carmina Burana* poems are not a monastic product,¹⁰ but were composed in the student world of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, around 1150 to 1230, when the earliest universities were established.¹¹

The *Carmina Burana* reflects the privileged, ambitious, mobile and independent-minded youth culture blossoming in the twelfth-century universities. More than a half of the texts are love poetry. At the same time, it was a Latin-based culture. The students' attention was focused on the Classical authors, in combination with the studies of the Church Fathers and the Bible, and with influences of ideas about contemporary courtly love. As a result, the sacred and the profane were combined to an unusual degree.

Despite the fragmentary information about authors like the Archpoet, Hugo Primas, Peter of Blois and Walter of Châtillon, most of the poets of the *Carmina Burana* still remain anonymous, like the majority of poets from the twelfth century in general.¹² These authors stand in the shadows and their identity still provokes debate. Who were these people? Did they belong to some specific intellectual circle? Were they organized in certain way? In one of the poems in the *Carmina Burana* a certain *Ordo Vagorum* is mentioned. This "invisible order"¹³ is exactly the opposite of the real monastic orders within the Church. It was a company of people especially fond of a bohemian way of life, a group of wandering scholars, the so-called *Vagantes* or Goliards.¹⁴ Szövérfy

⁹ Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, 278 and Anne J. Duggan, "The World of the *Carmina Burana*," in *The Carmina Burana: Four Essays*, ed. Martin H. Jones (London: Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies, 2000), 1 (hereafter: Duggan, "The World of the *Carmina Burana*").

¹⁰ Duggan, "The World of the *Carmina Burana*," 2.

¹¹ Duggan, "The World of the *Carmina Burana*," 4.

¹² Haskins, *The Renaissance*, 161.

¹³ Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, 278.

¹⁴ The name has several rather uncertain etymologies—from the Biblical Goliath or from the Latin *gula* or the French *gueule*, both meaning, "throat." A real historical Goliath, the mythical founder and leader of the order, has yet to be identified.



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claims that the *Ordo Vagorum* and its legendary head, Goliath, are fiction and a joke created by poets, skillful in imitating ancient or contemporary models.¹⁵ According to Raby, the entire story of the Goliards and their “movement” is just an expression of the new humanism that “got out of control.”¹⁶

According to Anne J. Duggan, the young clerics, “who wrote, sang or listened to the *Carmina Burana*” felt that their careers were uncertain; therefore their poetry combines vibrant optimism and self-confidence with bitter satires and the age-old knowledge that life is short and Fortuna controls everything.¹⁷ Jacques Le Goff has expressed the opinion that the Goliards were a “strange group of intellectuals,”¹⁸ but also vagabonds, ribalds, jongleurs, bohemians, students and pseudo-students. One thing is sure—the Goliards were a mobile and highly educated group of intellectual wanderers who found a place in the new town intellectual centers.

Sylvan Idyll: the Positive Image of the Forest

In the love songs of the *Carmina Burana* two Latin words are used for designating the forest—*silva* and *nemus*.¹⁹ Usually one song contains only one of the terms, but in several cases both the *silva* and *nemus* figures can be seen in the same poem. I present one such poem, as it gives the opportunity to examine the different aspects of the representation of the forest.

De Phyllide et Flora (CB 92) is one of the masterpieces of the collection. Two girls are discussing the advantages and disadvantages of knights and clerics

¹⁵ Joseph Szövérfy, *Secular Latin Lyrics and Minor Poetic Forms of the Middle Ages* (Concord NH: Classical Folia, 1996), 443.

¹⁶ Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, 278.

¹⁷ Duggan, “The World of the *Carmina Burana*,” 12.

¹⁸ Jacques Le Goff, *Intellectuals in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1993), 84.

¹⁹ Both terms had specific nuances during the entire classical antiquity. *Silva* bears the connotations of a mystical and terrible place very often inhabited by hostile tribes (*Silva Ciminius* in Titus Livius, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 9.36; *Silva Litana* in Titus Livius, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 23.24; *Silva Hercynia* in Gaius Julius Caesar, *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, 6. 24). It is also closely connected with *Mars Silvanus* (*Silva Arisia* in Titus Livius, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 2.7). Hence the term covers the darker and chaotic aspects of forest imagery. Etymologically *silva* is connected with the Greek ὄλη “forest, wooden material.” Concerning *nemus*, in antiquity it has almost always been a forest space with prevalently sacred functions, closely connected with reproduction deities. The word with a capital letter was used especially for the sacred grove of Diana in Aricia. Cf. Gk. νέμος, Old Irish *nemed* “holy place” and Welsh *nant* “valley”.



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as lovers. Early in the morning, Phyllis and Flora, two beautiful creatures compared to queens,²⁰ take a ride on a nice sunny day.²¹ Phyllis and Flora arrive at a lovely place by a stream;²² sit under a tree and start chatting in its comfortable shade (*fuit iuxta rivulum spatiosa pinus venustata foliis*).²³ Their conversation is described in thirty-five stanzas, followed by a colorful description of Phyllis' mule and hawk and Flora's horse and falcon in seventeen stanzas. Then Phyllis and Flora continue their ride and arrive in another beautiful place: a forest full of pleasant fragrances and sounds.²⁴ The next seven stanzas elaborate on the music and the scents. The girls enter the most secret part of the forest, where *Amor* lives, surrounded by a large group of mythological figures.²⁵ It is the god of love, *Amor* himself, who will cut the girls' debate: *Amor* declares the cleric the better lover. The god's decision marks the end of the poem.

De Phyllide et Flora makes several remarkable points about the forest. The sylvan space is closely connected with the spring season and the mild weather. *Anni pars florida* is the blossoming part of the year, when reborn nature starts another cycle of life. The image of the warm season prepares the reader for the image of the forest.

The spring season is connected with a specific place, as the girls sit and chat on the stream bank, where *locus erat viridi gramine festinus*. The spring is surrounded by flowers (*florida*), and the place next to the stream is festive

²⁰ *Erant ambę virgines et ambę reginę...*(CB 92, 3). All the *Carmina Burana* quotations are from the edition of A. Hilka, O. Schumann, and B. Bischoff, ed., *Carmina Burana*. (Heidelberg: 1930–1978). The abbreviation used is CB, followed by the number of the poem and the number of the stanza.

²¹ *Anni parte florida, cęlo puriore,
picto terrę gremio vario colore,
dum fugaret sidera nuntius Aurore,
liquet somnus oculos Phyllidis et Flore.* (CB 92.1).

²² *...locus erat viridi gramine festinus,
et in ipso gramine defluebat rivus
vivus atque garrulo murmure lascivus.* (CB 92.6).

²³ CB 92.7.

²⁴ *Parvo tractu temporis nemus est inventum.
Ad ingressum nemoris murmurat fluentum,
ventus inde redolet myrrham et pigmentum,
audiuntur tympana cythareque centum.* (CB 92.60).

²⁵ *Circa silvę medium locus est occultus,
ubi viget maxime suus deus cultus;
Fauni, Nymphę, Satyri, comitatus multus
tympanizant, concinunt, ante dei vultus.* (CB 92.69).

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(*festivus*) because of the abundant green foliage. The flourishing season constitutes the first level of the picture, the lusty green stream bank forms the second level, and the pine tree completes the image of a *locus amoenus*. The adjectives used confirm the idea of revival and joyfulness: *florida, viridus, festivus, vivus, lascivus, spatiosa, venustata*. There is only one level left, and that is the image of the forest in its two variants, *nemus* and *silva*.

Nemus est inventum.²⁶ Phyllis and Flora enter the sylvan space, looking for Love (*ad Amoris destinant ire paradisum*).²⁷ The forest is compared to Paradise. This is a key verse—not only for this poem, but for all the love poetry of the *Carmina Burana*. The *locus amoenus* becomes a *locus sacer*. This is the highest evaluation of sylvan space. It is a part of the divine universe, both pagan and Christian.²⁸ This verse has close parallels in Bernard Silvestris' concept of the *nemus*. For Bernard this aspect of the forest is the incarnation of an earthly paradise, full of pleasant aromas and numerous animals. If *silva* is primeval, a magnificent and horrifying forest, *nemus* is a pleasant and calm grove. Bernard does not make an absolute distinction between the two terms. Both of them bear in themselves simultaneously the aspects of the generating matrix and the lost Paradise. Yet, *nemus* in *De Phyllide at Flora* is not only Eden-like, but also *thalamus Amoris*, the much desired secret abode of Love.²⁹ Its attributes (bird songs,³⁰ music,³¹ water's murmur,³² and fragrances³³) echo the *topoi* not only of the Classical *locus amoenus*, but of the sacred grove and of the heavenly realm.

What is this forest like? Internal and mystical. At the beginning of the poem the tree by the stream constitutes a *locus viridus et festivus*. At the end of the poem we are in a *locus occultus circa silve medium*.³⁴ *Silva* has all the spring sounds, fragrances and colors, and all the joyful inhabitants. At the same time, however, there is something dramatic in the forest. *Silva* is the cult place of the god who makes a judgment about the knight and the cleric. Apart from being a place of

²⁶ CB 92.60.

²⁷ CB 92.59.

²⁸ See Bernard Silvestris, *Cosmographia*, III, 216–217; III, 339, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978) and Étienne Gilson, “La cosmogonie de Bernardus Silvestris” in *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* (1928): 6.

²⁹ CB 92.64.

³⁰ CB 92.63.

³¹ CB 92.61.

³² CB 92.60.

³³ CB 92.66.

³⁴ CB 92.69.



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pleasure, the forest is also the location of a judge. If the *nemus* is idealized as *amoenum*, the *silva* is idealized as *sacra*.

Nemus and *silva* in *De Phyllide et Flora* correspond to two aspects of the forest. The *nemus* functions as the *locus amoenus*: the place by the stream, where the girls stopped at the beginning of their journey. Even if the pine tree and the green stream bank seem to be realistic, they soon become an imaginary place, full of divine music. *Nemus* represents a dimension of the forest described as the Garden of Nature in Alan of Lille's *Anticlaudianus*³⁵ and in Matthew of Vendôme's *Ars Versificatoria*.³⁶

The magical forest is the logical end of the girls' journey. Only gods can make the final judgement and dissolve the controversy about love. Gods live in another world, in a magical mythological forest. The first step towards this forest is the *nemus*, the *locus amoenus*. The *nemus* represents the ideal of eternal joy and happiness.

But what is the meaning of *silva*? It represents another dimension of the forest. *Silva* is not a *locus amoenus*, but a *locus occultus et sacer*—the throne of the god, the heart of an imaginary universe. If *nemus* is the pleasant place with all its colors and fragrances, standing at the border between profane and sacred, *silva* is like a sacred and mystical temple. This is the primordial womb—the only place, where the primeval controversy about love can be decided. In his *Cosmographia* Bernard Silvestris described the forest as *silva*. This is the archetype of the World (*archetypus mundi*), the place where trees and plants are born and at the same time the whole world is born.³⁷ In the *De Phyllide et Flora*, *silva* is the archetype of Love (*archetypus Amoris*), the center of the realm of love, where *Amor* gives his judgment.

In this poem *nemus* and *silva* have different meanings, just like in the works of Bernard Silvestris and Alan of Lille. While *nemus* is a beautiful place of music and joy, *silva* is the occult sacred grove, home and temple of the god. Even though there is nothing frightening about this forest, it still represents the primeval womb, sheltering the god and being divine in itself. The poem *De Phyllide et Flora* offers a complex and integrated imaginary space in the *Carmina Burana*. This imaginary space is not an ornament, but forms part of the narrative.

³⁵ Alan of Lille, *Anticlaudianus*, I, 55–56. See Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, 15–23.

³⁶ Matthew of Vendôme, *Ars Versificatoria*, I, 111, ed. Edmond Faral, *Les arts poétiques du XII et du XIII siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1971).

³⁷ Bernard Silvestris, *Cosmographia, Megacosmus*, X, 1 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978).



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The concept of the forest presented in this poem goes back to Classical poetry, but it is also influenced by the new philosophical ideas of the twelfth century.³⁸

Sylvan Seduction: The Negative Image of the Forest

The second example is another masterpiece in the book—the bilingual *Ich was ein Chint so wolgetan* (*I was such a wonderful little girl*, CB 185). Every stanza's first and third lines are in German, the second and fourth lines and the refrain are in Latin. This song is a dialogue between a young maiden, who tells about the adventure of her seduction, and the man who seduced her.

Concerning the forest, there are three important points in this poem. Firstly, there is an opposition between two locations: the forest (*nemus*) is set against the meadow (*wise*). The girl is talking about the meadow³⁹ and the man is talking about the forest.⁴⁰ This configuration corresponds to the opposition between the maiden and the man themselves: a place, regarded pleasant by the man, is unpleasant for the girl. The man sings about beautiful linden tree,⁴¹ and the girl curses the same tree in the refrain.⁴² Seduction can happen only after the two characters finally go to the linden trees, the man's territory.⁴³ The entrance in this territory is rather aggressive: the sylvan space becomes hostile for the girl.

³⁸ Gerhart Ladner, "Terms and Ideas of Renewal," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 56.

³⁹ *Ia wolde ih an die wisen gan*
flores adunare,
do wolde mich ein ungetan
ibi deflorare. (CB 185.2).

⁴⁰ *Er sprach, "vrowe, gewir baz,*
nemus est remotum". (CB 185.5).

⁴¹ *Iz stat ein linde wolgetan*
non procul a via,
da hab ich mine herp̄he lan
tympanum cum hyra. (CB 185.6).

⁴² *Hoy e oe, maledicantur tilig*
iuxta viam positę. (CB 185.Rfr.).

⁴³ *Do er zuo der linden chom,*
dixit "sedeamus",
diu mine twanch sere den man
ludum faciamus. (CB 185.7).



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Secondly, *nemus* is exclusively a secret and hidden place.⁴⁴ There is a delicate paradox here. The linden trees are near the road (*iuxta viam posite*), while the forest is far away (*nemus est remotum*). The emphasis is on the remoteness of the forest. This localization bears negative connotations. A *nemus* is not only hidden and secret, but marks physical remoteness and deviation. There are no adjectives describing blossoming nature. The only indication for a particular season is the presence of the green linden tree. The focus is not on the forest as a blossoming green *locus amoenus*, but on the forest as an ambiguous *locus remotus*. To a certain degree this image reminds one of the secret garden of *Natura*, depicted in the works of Alan of Lille.⁴⁵ The secret place of *Ich was ein Chint so wolgetan* is not a secure abode of a god, but the location of a realistic love scene. Thus the forest takes all the positive and negative nuances of the girl's and the man's interrelations.

Thirdly, there is no trace of a god's presence. There are only two people in the forest. The sylvan space becomes an arena of specific human relations, the place of a concrete love affair. If a conflict is to be dissolved, it is not the abstract controversy about the knight and the cleric, but the real-life dialogue between a woman and a man. *Nemus* becomes a poetic, but ordinary, part of daily life and as such has its negative side. The sylvan space is not sacred anymore; it is a human, not a divine location. The forest is connected with emotions, but on a more realistic human level.

This poem presents a rather different image of the forest. The sylvan space is ideal, but this time for seduction and this fact makes it ambiguous. Both the act of seduction and the forest are perceived from two different perspectives. The girl says that *I was such a wonderful little girl, while I was a virgin (Ich was ein Chint so wolgetan, virgo dum florebam)*⁴⁶ and repeats *cursed be the linden tree by the road (maledicantur tilię iuxta viam posite)* in the refrain. At the same time the man sings *There stands a beautiful linden tree (Iz stat ein linde wolgetan)*.⁴⁷ *Nemus* is still a *locus amoenus*, a magical and idyllic world, yet it is also a hidden, obscure, dramatic place. According to the girl, *nemus* is not a secure and joyful playground. In this sense, this poem is unique, as it depicts the only relatively negative image of

⁴⁴ *Er sprach, "vrowe, gewir baz,
nemus est remotum".*

*Dirre wech der habe baz,
Planxi et hoc totum.* (CB 185.5).

⁴⁵ See Alan of Lille, *De planctu Naturae* as quoted in Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, 22.

⁴⁶ CB 185.1.

⁴⁷ CB 185.5.



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forest in the entire collection. *Nemus* is turned upside-down and from idyllic it is transformed into a suspicious and unpleasant place.

Even if it is difficult to give a comprehensive overview of the concept of the sylvan space in the *Carmina Burana*, the analysis of these two poems brings one closer to the representation of the forest in medieval love poetry. The forest is not simply a poetic ornament in the *Carmina Burana*, but an ideal that underwent a long and complex development in several directions.

In the *De Phyllide et Flora*, the forest is not just an ordinary element of a description of nature. It is the perfect *locus amoenus*, a pleasant place of eternal spring and green trees. The temple of *Amor* and center of his cult, the idyllic place for love, the forest is the most secure and secret abode to express and to judge this emotion. Sylvan space is a mythical place, where the deity makes the judgment about the most important feeling—love. The forest is a sacred space, the divine grove of pagan gods transformed into a divine dimension, an imaginary universe of happiness and joy. It is also an earthly Paradise: not only *locus amoenus*, but *locus sacer*. The forest in the *De Phyllide et Flora* is a dream, a fantasy, and as such, it is positive and wonderful. *Silva* and *nemus* both refer to and describe the same imaginary features of the sylvan dimension: *silva* and *nemus* are two sides of the same image. Its positive features are the result of an intermingling of the Classical idea of the idyllic forest and the Christian idea of Paradise.

In the seduction poem *Ich was ein Chint so wolgetan* the forest imagery is more realistic. The forest is not just a poetic ornament, but an arena of human relations with their positive and negative aspects. Depending on which character is talking, the forest is either idyllic or unpleasant. From the male point of view the forest is still a *locus amoenus*, from the female point of view it is not a secure and joyful playground at all. For the woman, the forest is a remote location. The *locus amoenus* becomes the ambiguous *locus remotus*. This is a rare case of the negative evaluation of a sylvan space. The forest is not imaginary and mythical anymore, but part of daily life, in which everyday human relations develop. The forest in *De Phyllide et Flora* is a positive and imaginary universe, while in *Ich was ein Chint so wolgetan* it is partly negative and to a great degree a realistic place. The negative features, however, are not absolute. The *nemus* in CB185 is a special case, a variation on the forest theme. The realistic picture of the sylvan space comes together with a more dynamic and intense emotional development. In *Ich was ein Chint so wolgetan* the forest is not a lost Paradise, but a human environment.

The concept of the forest in the *Carmina Burana* was influenced by various models: Classical authors, contemporary philosophy, masters of verse, and rhetoricians, and probably, vernacular poetic tradition. It is not possible to



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determine which source of influence was predominant in creating the image of the forest in the *Carmina Burana*. This image is polysemic and has different characteristics that vary significantly from a totally positive *locus amoenus* (CB 92) to an ambiguous remote place (CB 185). The positive image of the forest may come as a result of the Classical influence of the perception of nature, but at the same time it also bears similarities to the image of the forest in Bernard Silvestris' *Cosmographia*. As neo-platonic ideas of nature were part of the poetic education and the intellectual milieu in the twelfth century, it is perhaps possible to assume that the author of CB 92 was influenced by such a significant philosophic text.

The CB 185 gives a different perspective. The forest image keeps the main features of the Classical *locus amoenus*, but this is only part of the picture. The evaluation of the forest depends on which character is talking. The forest is more individual and realistic; it is not the lost Paradise, but the grove of real human beings. The sylvan space reflects their experience and emotions. As a result, the forest becomes an ambiguous place. The woman and the man give the parameters of the sylvan space and individualize it. The realistic nuance brings negative features. In this sense CB 185 is a special case of more human and less imaginary forest. Together with the general idealization of the forest in the *Carmina Burana* love poems, the realistic *nemus* in CB 185 adds one more point of view and contributes to the multi-sided sylvan imagery in the poetry of the twelfth-century Renaissance.