

Wheel of Fortune - Translations

Fas et nefas ambulat

Good and bad walk,
as it were, in step.
A wastrel cannot make good
the vice of a miser.
Virtue, with its
rather special moderation,
requires that one
carefully consider the mean
between the two vices.

If you recall
having read Cato's Ethics,
where one reads
'Walk with the good',
then when you set your mind
to the glory of giving,
above all else bear foremost in your mind:
'Who is worthy of your gifts?

However cheerful your face,
however inoffensive your speech,
be the same toward all.
Yet one thing I enjoin:
If you truly wish
to receive praise for your giving,
first see the grain
among the chaff,
to whom you are giving and when.

There is no virtue in giving
other than when proper:
it is relatively good
but not absolutely so.
You will be able to give worthily
and safely enjoy
a reputation for generosity
if you first get to know me inside and out.

If you judiciously cleanse
the wheat from the chaff,
you earn a reputation for generosity
but take care, when you give,
lest you pour out poorly
the oil of your kindness.
I take pride in you
that, even if poorer than Codrus,
you abound in all things.

O varium fortune

O fickle slippery Fortune!
You give out questionable judgements.
It is no modest reward which you prepare
for whomever your grace wants to favour
and seek out.
You grant the uncertain heights of the wheel,
nevertheless inverting order:

raising up the pauper from the dung,
making a consul out of a rhetorician.

Fortune builds up and destroys.
Now she refuses those she favoured previously.
Those whom she did not want [before]
she claims as her own again.
This action, contradictory in itself,
gives very fleeting rewards.
Fickle are the bonds of Fate,
who ennobles the weak richly,
and weakens the noble repressively.

Nothing is more charming than Fortune's favour.
Nothing is sweeter amongst sweet things
than glory, if only it lasted a long time.
But it fades like withered weeds,
in the same way as the now flowering field
which you will see barren tomorrow.
Therefore I am not singing
an inappropriate song:
O fickle, slippery Fortune.

Bonum est confidere

It is good to trust
in the Lord of lords.
It is good to put one's hope
in our ultimate Hope.

Whoever places hope
in kingly power
rather than in God's mercy
will be disappointed
and expelled from
the house of the Highest Prince.
Why do you accumulate sin
by gathering wealth?
Cast your thoughts to God.
Seek to amend your previous misdeeds.
By the labour of your hands
and the sweat of your brow
you should earn your bread.

So blôzen wir den anger nie gesâhen

We never saw the meadow so bare,
although the spring is so near that the flowers
should be sprouting through the clover.
Again, like before,
the heath is surrounded by roses.
For them, summer is good, not bad.

Thrushes, nightingales are heard singing.
Mountains and valleys ring with their sound.
They are happy about the lovely summer time,
which gives us
many pleasures and a bright feast for the eyes.
The heath looks delightful.

Then a maid said: 'dew is falling on the meadows.
Can you see the wonders of summer?
the trees, which in the winter stand bare
without number,
are now coming into leaf in the wood.
Amongst them, the nightingales sing.'

Hear how all the birds are singing,
how they crown May with their singing!
Yes, I think winter has come to an end.
Dance then,
so that I can always thank you.
The lime tree is covered in leaves.

Ar ne kuth ich sorghenon

Formerly I knew no sorrow.
Now I must give voice to my grief.
Full of care, I sigh most sorely.
Guiltless, I suffer great shame.
Help, God, King of Heaven,
for the sake of thy beloved name.

Jesus Christ, true God, true man,
Lord, have pity on me!
From the prison that I am in
bring me out and make me free.
Some of my companions and I
(God knows I am not lying)
have been brought into this prison
because others have done wrong.

Almighty one,
who very easily
(remedy and cure of pain,
King of heaven)
might bring us
out of this misery,
if it is thy will,
forgive them,
the wicked men
for whose guilt
we have been cast
into this evil prison.

Let none trust in this life –
here he cannot remain.
High though he ascend,
Death fells him to the ground.
Now man has prosperity and bliss –
soon he shall lose them.
Worldly prosperity, for certain,
lasts but an hour.

Maiden who bore the king of heaven,
sweet thing, beseech your son
to take pity on us
and bring us out of this misery

through his great mercy.
May he bring us from this woe
and teach us to act such
in this life, however things may go, that we may for ever
and ever
have eternal bliss.

Der mai mit lieber zal

May, covers the whole earth
with lovely profusion.
Hills, plains, mountains and valleys ring
with sweet bird song.
There sing with great sound
larks, thrushes and nightingales.
The cuckoo flies behind the jolly little birds
creating great disquiet.
Listen to what he said
'Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo,
give me my due,
I want it from you.
Hunger in my stomach
makes me move fast.'
'Alas, now where shall I go?'
so spoke the little beasts.
Wren, squirrel, titmouse, now come and sing:
'oci und tu ich, tu ich, tu ich, tu ich,
oci oci oci oci oci oci
fi fideli fideli fideli fi,
ci ci cieri ci ci cieri,
ci ri ciwigg cidiwigg fici fici.'
But the cuckoo just sang 'kawa wa cuckoo'.

'Raco' said the raven.
'I sing well too,
but I have to be full.
Tuck in to my singing!
go for it! be full!
'Liri liri liri liri liri lon,'
sang the lark.
I sing loudly like a thrush,
which sings in the wood.
You strut, boast, grizzle
and wobble to and fro
just like our priest.'
'cidiwigg cidiwigg cidiwigg,
cificigo cificigo cificigo' - nightingale,
this one, with its singing possesses the grail.

'Upchachi' said the foal,
let us join in!
'frue' lows the cow,
the donkey brays:
'here, sack, onto my back!'
'rigo rigo rigo rigo rigo rigo kum'
cries the mule.
'Get away!' said the miller's wife.
'Get up!' said the farmer's wife.
'Off you go, donkey,

gee up, bray but don't stop,
or the vultures
will tear your skin off if you stop.'
'Come on, untie the ropes,
hurry up, Walpurg!
Get a move on, good Waidman,
with hunting, falconing, fishing in the wood.'

Veris dulcis in tempore

In the season of sweet spring,
Juliana stands with her sister,
under a blossoming tree.
How sweet is love!
He who forgoes you at this season becomes more tawdry.

See, the trees are in blossom,
and the birds sing their wanton song.
This is the source of maidens' warm stirrings.
How sweet..

See, the lilies are in bloom,
and the bands of maidens
sing their songs to the highest gods.
How sweet..

If I held the girl of my desire,
in the glade beneath the foliage,
I would kiss her with rapture.
How sweet..

Under der linden

Under the lime tree on the open field
where we two had our bed
you still can see
lovely broken flowers and grass.
On the edge of the woods in a vale
Tandaradei
sweetly sang the nightingale.

I came walking to the meadow.
My love was already there.
And he received me, blessed lady,
the joy of that will last.
Did he kiss me then? A thousand times at least,
Tandaradei
look now, how red my mouth is.

Then he made a lordly place to lie in
all of flowers.
There's a good laugh even now
for anyone coming that way:
he would be able to tell, by the roses
Tandaradei
just where my head lay.

If anyone found out, God forbid,
that he lay with me, I'd be ashamed.
What he did with me there,

may noone ever know,
except for him and me, and one little bird
Tandaradei
which will not say a word.

Tristan, 'The Love Potion'

Whilst Tristan and his compatriots
readied themselves for the journey,
Isolde the wise queen
[mother of the beautiful Isolde]
concocted in a glass vessel a love-potion,
ingeniously prepared and devised,
filled with such power
that with whomever anyone shared this drink
he must think of the other person involuntarily
above all other things
and the other also in him alone
- they share one death and one life,
one sorrow, one joy.

The wise woman took this drink
and spoke quietly to Brangaene:
'Be most zealous;
when Isolde and Mark come to be united,
give them this drink as wine
and let them drain it together.
Take care that apart from the two of them
no one else drinks it,
that is wise,
nor should you drink any of it yourself,
the drink is a love draught - remember this.'

Everyone had boarded the boat and taken their leave.
Tristan went on last
with the radiant young queen,
the flower of Ireland,
Isolde on his arm.
She sat crying.
She wept and lamented
that she had left her country
where she knew people,
and all her friends,
and was traveling with unknown folk
she knew not whither.
Tristan always comforted her
as sweetly as he could at every moment.

And she always said to him
'get lost, take your arms away,
you are a very tiresome man.
You are distasteful to me.
I would be without sorrow or grief
if it were not for you.
You have brought this trouble on me
with trickery and deceit.'
'Cheer up, Beautiful one,
in a short time I will give you
a king to be your husband,

in whom you will find joy
and good life, wealth, virtue
and honour for ever more.'

Once when he sat down with her
and spoke to her of this and that,
things which affected them both,
he ordered drinks to be brought.
There was no one present
apart from the queen,
except for one very young lady, who said,
'look there is some wine
in this little vessel.'
No, it was not wine!

She offered it to Tristan
and he offered it to Isolde.
She drank unwillingly
and then gave it to Tristan
and he drank,
and both thought it was wine.
In the midst of this,
Brangaene came in
and recognized the glass
and realized what was going on.
She was so very frightened and shocked
that it took away all her strength
and she went deathly pale.
With a dead heart
she took the harmful fateful flask,
carried it out
and threw it into the wild raging sea.
'Alas, poor me' she said
'alas, Tristan and Isolde,
this drink will be the death of you!'

Now that the maid and the man,
Isolde and Tristan,
had both drunk the potion,
at once the trouble-maker
of the world was there:
Love, the trapper of all hearts,
had crept into their hearts.
Before they became aware of it,
she raised her banner of victory there.

Through love and sorrow
each of the lovers seemed to the other
much more beautiful than before.
That is the rule of love,
that is the law of love:
It is this year,
and it was also last year,
and it will be as long as love endures.

Tristan muose sunder sînen danc

Tristan had to be true to the queen
against his will,

because the love-potion forced him to do this
more than the power of love.
Therefore my dear lady should be grateful
that I never drank such a drink
and yet I love her better
than he [loved Isolde], if that is possible.
Beautiful lady without flaw,
let me be yours and you mine.

Since the sun has lowered its bright rays
with the onset of the cold,
and the little birds have stopped singing,
my heart is sad.
I believe it will soon be winter,
which demonstrates its power to us
on the flowers, which we see,
their bright colours completely faded;
from this I experience
nothing but pain.

Reis glorios

Glorious King, true light and splendour,
almighty God, Lord, if it pleases you,
be a faithful help to my companion,
for I have not seen him since the night came on,
and soon it will be dawn.

Fair friend, whether you sleep or wake,
sleep no more, I pray you;
in the east I see the star growing
that brings the day, which I knew well;
and soon it will be dawn.

Fair friend, in a song I call you;
sleep no more, for I hear the bird sing,
which I see seeking the day in the woods,
and I fear that the jealous one will attack you;
and soon it will be dawn.

Fair friend, since I have left you
I have not slept or risen from my knees,
but I have prayed that God, the son of holy Mary,
might return you to me in loyal friendship;
and soon it will be dawn.

Fair friend, out there by the steps
you begged me not to be sleepy,
but to keep watch through the night until day;
now neither my song nor my company pleases you;
and soon it will be dawn.

Fair sweet friend, I am in such a precious situation
that I wish no more for the dawn or day;
for I hold and embrace the most noble woman
that was ever born of a mother, so I hardly regard
the crazy jealous one or the dawn.