

Carmina Burana

Medieval songs from the Benediktbeuren manuscript (c 1230)

I Right and wrong go walking

First Set

- 1 Fas et nefas ambulans 2'41

(ensemble) Gauthier de Châtillon

- 2 O varium fortune 4'23

(Anne Azéma · Christy Catt · Women's voices)

- 3 O fortuna, velut luna 4'15

(ensemble)

- 4 Bonum est confidere 1'59

(Heather Knutson) Philippe le Chancelier

- 5 Curritur ad vocem 2'20

(John Fleagle · William Hite · Mark Sprinkle · Catherine Jousselein · strings)

II Lords of misrule

- 6 Dum juvenus floruit 3'36

(William Hite · bowed strings)

- 7 From the "Officium Lusorum" (Gambler's Mass) Introitus 3'15

(men's voices)

- 8 Alte clamat Epicurus 4'08

(Joel Cohen · Margriet Tindemans)

- 9 Olim lacus colueram (melody: Dies irae) 4'02

(Anne Azéma · Christy Catt · Catherine Jousselein · Heather Knutson · ensemble)

- 10 Dic Christi veritas 1'12

(Christy Catt)

- 11 Bulla fulminante 3'14

(Joel Frederiksen · ensemble) Philippe le Chancelier

- 12 Bacche, bene venies 4'06

(ensemble)

III Hail, bountiful Venus!

- 13 Doleo, quod nimium 4'22

(John Fleagle · men's voices · percussion)

- 14 Ecce chorus virginum 2'36

(women's voices · plucked strings)

- 15 Exiit diluculo 1'31

(Christy Catt · Catherine Jousselein · plucked strings)

- 16 Sic mea fata 4'34

(Joel Frederiksen · Joel Cohen)

- 17 O mi dilectissima 2'44

(John Fleagle · ensemble)

- 18 Veni veni venias / Chume chume geselle mîn 5'43

(William Hite · women's voices · instrumental ensemble)

- 19 Ich was ein chint 3'59

(Anne Azéma · women's voices · instruments)

- 20 Tempus est jocundum 3'23

(Anne Azéma · John Fleagle · ensemble)

- 21 Tempus adest floridum 3'43

(ensemble)

Anne Azéma soprano · organetto · Christy Catt soprano · harp

Catherine Jousselein mezzo-soprano

Heather Knutson soprano

John Fleagle tenor · harp · hurdy-gurdy

Joel Frederiksen bass-baritone

William Hite tenor · John Holyoke baritone · Mark Sprinkle tenor

Joel Cohen baritone · lutes · percussion

Robert Mealy medieval fiddle · harp

Margriet Tindemans medieval fiddle · rebec · guiterne

Steven Lundahl recorder · shawm · slide trumpet · harp

Ben Harms percussion

Assisted by members of the
Harvard University Choir

Murray Forbes Somerville *director*

Katharine Christopherson · Katherine Lawson *sopranos*

Nancy Granert · Kate A. Lingley · Catherine Wearing · Nadine Yap *altos*

Peter Kalmus · Michael Cedrone · Christopher Thorpe *tenors*

Daniel Gallisá · Daniel Rolhl · Charles D. Starrette *basses*

Boston Camerata

Joel Cohen

Musical arrangements by Joel Cohen

Transcriptions / editions / reconstructions of the melodies from the *Carmina Burana* manuscript and from other medieval sources by:

Thomas Binkley (20), René Clemencic (7, 19), Miriam K. Whaples (1, 2), Joel Cohen (all others)

Instrumental variations on "Chume chume geselle mîn" by Margriet Tindemans

Language consultant and text edition: M. J. Connolly

This recording is dedicated to the memory of Thomas Binkley (1931-1995)

Carmina Burana

The ages-old manuscript that lay in the vaults of the Benediktbeuren monastery in Bavaria did not begin with the usual devotions. On the contrary, the opening song — meant as some satirical mime, or a dance perhaps — cast a cynical eye on worldly reality: "Right and wrong go walking, almost in step together, and virtue must take care to stay halfway between two vices. Be friendly and smooth towards everyone, but be careful misplaced charity is no virtue. If you wisely sift the wheat from the chaff, your donation will buy fame." The next song, on the same page, was no prayer to the Virgin, but rather a hymn to Goddess Fortune: "Fate, monstrous and empty, you are a malevolent, whirling wheel."

And the image on that opening page was not some pious one of a Nativity or a Crucifixion. Instead, a wheel of Fortune (framed by an eerie, inverted cross) is presented as an allegory of life: a king on his throne at the top; on his right, a poor schlemiel sliding down and away from power; another unfortunate in the dumps at the bottom, and a third climbing back up on the left.

Though there are Christian prayers — and even two passion plays — in this manuscript, the one now called the *Carmina Burana*, a pagan spirit inspires most of the poems; these texts are vivid reminders that the rough, intense world of medieval Europe was anything but a Sunday school picnic. Did some wealthy ecclesiastic piece together this anthology of (mostly Latin) songs because of their literary grace, or their musical interest? Or, despite his ecclesiastical functions, was he seduced by the hard-nosed satire, the raw sensuality of so many of the poems?

In any case, we can only be grateful, for *Carmina Burana* is probably the most important source of secular, Medieval Latin poetry that we now have. The songs were collected, somewhere in the German-speaking area, from many places and sources, most likely in the early decades of the thirteenth century. Surprisingly, the original compiler(s) had international, "European" tastes. Most of the *Carmina* pieces with known authors are of French origin — and we have recovered a number of the tunes from French and Provençal manuscripts.

Despite their markedly secular content, most of the songs were written in the shadow of the Church. A number of them in fact deal with church politics, and corruption in the

hierarchy. The Latin they generally employ (there are some in medieval German and even one, *Doleo quod nimium*, in a mixture of Latin, French, and Provençal) was an ecclesiastical language, learned by all in the church hierarchy, high — refined poets like Philip the Chancellor — and low — the anonymous “wandering scholars” or goliards who presumably penned the many lusty songs to Bacchus and Venus. Much has been written about these clerks, who entered the service of the Church to gain financial and material advancement; it was a good path to take for a bright, literate young man from a modest background. Furthermore, once in orders, a scholar was exempt from civil law, and could only be tried by an ecclesiastical court. This rule kept any number of tonsured troublemakers safely out of reach of the local police. How were these brilliant, scabrous, touching, vivacious songs sung? Most of them appear in the manuscript source without music — and the ones that do have an accompanying tune use a notation system so maddeningly imprecise that scholars have been fighting about the “correct” solutions for generations. Carl Orff wrote his own tunes. We, more modestly, attempt to reconstruct the original melodies whenever possible, or to reconstruct/borrow plausible tunes from other medieval sources. But then, what style of performance would be appropriate? We can, of course, never know for sure. All of the songs, even the ones with the most scurrilous subject matter, show considerable learning — they are not simply folksongs. And yet the refined and courtly manner of the troubadours may not be appropriate for texts that describe the best way to bribe an official, or a stomach upset, or adolescent dating behaviour. Perhaps a mix of musical approaches may be most appropriate: just as the *Carmina Burana* itself contains elements of both “high” and “low” art, our performances seek to draw out the different expressive possibilities inherent in, and suggested by, the cryptic signs on the manuscript page.

Reconstructing the *Carmina* melodies: a backstage tour. Any finished recording of medieval music seems deceptively final; the myriad of decisions (many of them only educated guesses) made by modern performers are enveloped in smooth, hi-tech packaging. Thus presented, our modern performances seem to carry the same authority as the original, medieval manuscript source. Dear listener, beware! There is both less, and much more, to any latter-day performance of medieval song than meets the ear. The following notes aim to take you on a short, introductory tour behind the scaffolding of our interpretations. Because of the unique, peculiar nature of the original manuscript, the

Carmina Burana pieces are especially challenging to reconstruct; sometimes the requisite detective work is frustrating, infuriating; sometimes it is exhilarating and fun. In any case, many, many intermediate steps (a few of them described in the following notes) come between the signs on the page and the sounds on a CD.

Fas et nefas ambulat (CB 19)

The text and tune are found on the first page of the *Carmina* manuscript, under the “wheel of fortune” illustration described above. The neumes used as musical notation in the *Carmina* manuscript indicate the rise and fall of the singing line, but not precise pitches. Here, as elsewhere, we have tried to locate when possible a concordant manuscript using staff notation, in this case the so-called Florence manuscript (Bibl. Medicea-Laurenziana pl. 29. I), a major source of medieval French monody and (especially) polyphony. *Fas et nefas* appears in the Florence manuscript, with musical notation in three parts; the tune that the *Carmina* scribe wrote out in neumes is the leading voice of the Florence polyphony.

O varium fortune lubricum (CB 14)

Both the tune and the polyphonic countermelody are transcribed from the Florence manuscript. Another version of this well-known song appears in the fourteenth-century French satire, the *Roman de Fauvel*.

O fortuna (CB 17)

The “other” poem on the first page of the *Carmina* manuscript, famous as the opening of Carl Orff’s oratorio. There is no music in the original source. I have adapted a thirteenth-century French trouvère melody (Raynouraud 1559).

Bonum est confidere (CB 27)

Philippe le Chancelier.

Melody from the Florence manuscript.

Curritur ad vocem (CB 14a)

The meter and rhyme of this poem are derived from a crusader’s song, *Crucifigat omnes*, whose music we have also re-utilised.

Dum juvenus floruit (CB 30)

The manuscript gives the tune in neumes; even though it is, strictly speaking, impossible

to know exactly what pitches were originally sung, I have attempted a reconstruction (with a tip of the hat to Walter Lipphardt and Tom Binkley).

Officium lusorum (CB 215)

From the "Officium lusorum" (Gambler's Mass): Introitus Sequence (melody: Victimae paschali laudes). Finding the original melody is easy, since these texts are rugged, sacrilegious send-ups of well-known Gregorian chants.

Alte clamat epicurus (CD 211)

Just following this humorous Latin text in the *Carmina* manuscript is the well-known crusader song by Walther von der Vogelweide — the tune for that German-language poem, and, by extension, *Alte clamat epicurus*, is found in a later, German source. The ancestor of both songs, however, is a twelfth-century Provençal troubadour song, *Lanquan li jorn son lonc en mai*, by Jaufre Rudel.

Olim lacus colueram (CB 130)

The scansion and rhyme-scheme of this well-known spoof seem to be based on a bit of the Requiem mass, the Gregorian sequence, *Dies irae*, whose melody I have used.

Dic, Christi veritas (CB 131)

There are neumes in the *Carmina* manuscript; the staff notation in the Florence manuscript is easier to decrypt.

Bulla fulminante (CB 131a)

Philippe le Chancelier

Juxtaposed with the previous song in the *Carmina* manuscript, and with musical notation in neumes; also appears, with polyphony, in the Florence manuscript.

Bacche, bene venies (CB 200)

A few lines of this poem appear, with music, in the French mystery play *Ludus Danielis* (*The Play of Daniel*), written in Beauvais, France circa 1200. And so the tune we use comes from the Beauvais manuscript.

Doleo quod nimium (CB 118)

This unusual, macaronic poem, recalls the phrase structure of a song by the great trouvère, Thibaut de Champagne, Roi de Navarre — it is Thibaut's melody that I have adopted here.

Ecce chorus virginum (CB 59)

The melody we use is adapted from a trouvère song by Conon de Béthune.

Exiit diluculo (CB 90)

A two-part musical setting of this poem exists in another source of French or Occitan origin; in somewhat simplified form, it is the one we use here.

Sic mea fata (CB 116)

There is no music in the original source, but this intensely erotic poem is found with musical notation in a southern French manuscript devoted mainly to pious, devotional songs.

O mi dilectissima (CB 180)

I have attempted a reconstruction of the melody from the neumes of the *Carmina* manuscript.

a) **Veni venias** (CB 174)

b) **Chume, chume, geselle mîn** (CB 174a)

To this delicious, macaronic fragment of a poem we have adapted a fragment of trouvère melody (Raynouard 292). The virtuosic instrumental commentaries were contributed by Margriet Tindemans.

Ich war ein chint (CB 185)

We cannot tell a lie. The poem can be found in the *Carmina* manuscript (folio 72 r/v) but the perky tune, by now something of a "standard" among medieval music ensembles, was penned by René Clemencic (b 1928).

Tempus est jocundum (CB 179)

In the mid-1960s, Tom Binkley made a hypothetical, but lovely, reconstruction of the melody, based on the neumes of the *Carmina* manuscript. It is his melody that you hear in our performance.

a) **Tempus adest floridum** (CB 142)

b) **Ave, formosissima** (CB 77.08)

There is no tune in the original source, but a fascinating melody does in fact appear, centuries later. A Christianized version of *Tempus adest floridum* was printed, with music, in late sixteenth-century Sweden. That Scandinavian melody is well-known in the English-speaking world as the tune to a Victorian Christmas carol (*Good King Wenceslas*). We, on the other hand, have tugged the late Renaissance Swedish melody backwards, altering some pitches and re-fitting it for the magnificent, pagan strophes to Venus found in the *Carmina* manuscript.

Carmina Burana

Le manuscrit ancien retrouvé dans la chambre forte du monastère de Benediktbeuren en Bavière ne commence pas par les dévotions habituelles. Au contraire, le chant d'ouverture – aux vellétés de mime satirique, ou peut-être de danse – jette un regard cynique sur la réalité de notre monde :

“Le Bien et le Mal marchent presque dans les pas l'un de l'autre, et la Vertu doit veiller à demeurer à mi-chemin entre deux Vices. Soyez amicaux et doux envers tout le monde, mais faites attention, la charité déplacée n'est point une vertu. Si vous séparez le bon grain de l'ivraie, votre don vous apportera la notoriété.” Le chant suivant, situé sur la même page, n'est pas une prière à la Vierge Marie, mais bien une ode à la Déesse Fortune: “Destin, monstrueux et vide, tu es une roue néfaste et tournante.”

Sur la page d'ouverture, point d'image pieuse de la Nativité ou de la Crucifixion : une roue de la Fortune (encadrée par une sinistre croix inversée) est présentée comme une allégorie de la vie : un roi sur son trône au sommet, à sa droite un pauvre bougre chassé du pouvoir, en bas, un autre malheureux s'effondrant parmi les ordures et enfin, à gauche, un troisième homme qui recommence à grimper.

Bien qu'on trouve des prières chrétiennes, et même deux Passions, dans ce manuscrit désormais appelé *Carmina Burana*, c'est l'esprit païen qui inspire la plupart des poèmes et ces textes nous rappellent que le monde grossier et intense de l'Europe médiévale était loin d'être une partie de plaisir. Un riche ecclésiastique assembla-t-il cette anthologie de chants — pour la plupart latins — pour leur grâce littéraire ou leur intérêt musical ? Ou, en dépit de ses fonctions ecclésiastiques, fut-il séduit par cette satire incisive et la sensualité sauvage de nombre de ces poèmes ?

Dans tous les cas, nous lui sommes redevables, car *Carmina Burana* est sans doute la plus importante source de poésie médiévale laïque en latin dont nous disposions aujourd'hui. Les chants provenant de régions germanophones ont été rassemblés à partir de sources et de lieux divers, vraisemblablement au tout début du treizième siècle. Les goûts internationaux, “européens”, du/des compilateur(s) d'origine sont surprenants. La plupart des pièces de *Carmina Burana* dont on connaît l'auteur sont d'origine française — et nous avons retrouvé plusieurs airs dans des manuscrits français et provençaux.

En dépit du contenu résolument séculaire, la plupart des chants ont été écrits dans l'ombre de l'Eglise. Plusieurs traitent d'ailleurs d'aspects politiques et de corruption dans la hiérarchie ecclésiastique. Le latin généralement utilisé (quelques-uns sont en allemand médiéval et on trouve même un, *Doleo quod nimium*, qui mélange latin, français et provençal) était la langue ecclésiastique, que tout le monde connaissait dans la hiérarchie, qu'elle soit haute — des poètes raffinés comme Philippe le Chancelier — ou basse — les clercs errants ou “goliards” anonymes qui ont vraisemblablement retranscrit les nombreuses odes lubriques à Bacchus et à Vénus. On a beaucoup écrit au sujet de ces clercs, qui entraient au service de l'Eglise pour obtenir leur avancement financier et matériel. C'était une bonne voie pour un jeune homme d'origine modeste, intelligent et instruit. En outre, une fois dans les ordres, un clerc n'avait plus à répondre à la loi civile, et ne pouvait être jugé que par une cour ecclésiastique. Cette règle a maintenu un bon nombre de troubadours tonsurés, au rang desquels figuraient de nombreux universitaires ayant le statut de clerc durant leurs études, hors de portée de la justice locale. Comment ces chants brillants, libertins, touchants et vivants étaient-ils chantés à l'époque ? La plupart apparaissent dans le manuscrit dépourvus de mélodie, et ceux qui en possèdent une emploient un système de notation musicale si imprécis que les spécialistes se chamaillent depuis des générations sur l'interprétation correcte de ces mélodies... Carl Orff a pris le parti d'écrire entièrement ses mélodies. Plus modestement, nous avons tenté de reconstituer les mélodies d'origine chaque fois que c'était possible, ou de recréer/emprunter des airs plausibles à d'autres sources médiévales. La question qui se pose est de savoir quel style d'interprétation serait alors approprié ? Aucune certitude à ce sujet. Même les chants les plus salaces font preuve d'une grande érudition et ne sont certainement pas de simples chansons populaires. Pas plus d'ailleurs que les manières courtoises des troubadours ne seraient appropriées pour décrire la meilleure manière de corrompre un officiel, un estomac dérangé ou les conquêtes amoureuses d'un adolescent : sans doute un mélange d'approches musicales conviendrait mieux. Tout comme le manuscrit de *Carmina Burana*, qui associe art élitiste et art populaire, nos performances cherchent à exploiter les diverses possibilités expressives inhérentes et suggérées par les signes cryptiques qui remplissent ces pages.

Reconstitution des mélodies de *Carmina Burana* : visite guidée en coulisses. Tout

enregistrement final de musique médiévale semble étrangement définitif ; la myriade de décisions prises par les interprètes modernes (qui doivent maintes fois procéder à l'aveuglette, armés de leur simple savoir) est cimentée dans une enveloppe lisse, perfectionnée. Ainsi présentées, nos performances modernes semblent peser du même poids que le manuscrit original du Moyen-Âge qui les inspire. Auditeurs, méfiez-vous ! Toute performance récente d'un chant médiéval est à la fois plus riche et moins riche qu'il n'y paraît au premier abord. En guise d'introduction, les quelques commentaires ci-dessous vous dévoilent brièvement les étapes du travail. De par la bizarrerie du manuscrit d'origine, unique en son genre, les diverses parties de *Carmina Burana* sont particulièrement difficiles à reconstituer ; parfois, le travail de détective est frustrant, énervant ; ailleurs, il inspire et enthousiasme. Dans tous les cas, toutes sortes d'étapes intermédiaires s'intercalent entre les symboles figurant sur la page et les sonorités émanant du CD, et nous les détaillons partiellement dans les notes ci-après.

Fas et nefas ambulans (CB 19)

Le texte et la mélodie se trouvent sur la première page du manuscrit de *Carmina Burana*, sous l'illustration de la "roue de la Fortune" déjà mentionnée. Les neumes employées pour la notation musicale dans le manuscrit marquent la hauteur de la ligne de chant, qui monte et qui descend, mais aucune note précise. Ici, comme ailleurs, nous avons essayé si possible de localiser un manuscrit concordant, qui contienne des portées ; dans ce cas, c'est le manuscrit dit de Florence (Bibl. Medicea-Laurenziana pl. 29. I), source majeure de monodie française médiévale et surtout, de polyphonie. *Fas et nefas* apparaît dans le manuscrit de Florence, avec une notation musicale en trois parties ; dans la polyphonie de Florence, la voix principale est la mélodie de *Carmina Burana* transcrite par le scribe au moyen de neumes.

O varium fortune lubricum (CB 14)

La mélodie et la contre-mélodie polyphoniques sont transcrites à partir du manuscrit de Florence. Une autre version de cette chanson bien connue figure dans la satire française du quatorzième siècle, le *Roman de Fauvel*.

O fortuna (CB 17)

L'autre poème célèbre figurant sur la première page du manuscrit de *Carmina Burana*, qu'on

entend en ouverture de l'oratorio de Carl Orff. La mélodie est absente de l'original. J'ai adapté à cet effet une mélodie française de trouvère du treizième siècle (Raynouard 1559).

Bonum est confidere (CB 27)

Philippe le Chancelier.

Mélodie du manuscrit de Florence.

Curritur ad vocem (CB 14a)

Le mètre et les rimes de ce poème sont dérivés d'une chanson de croisade, *Crucifigat omnes*, dont nous avons également repris la mélodie.

Dum juvenis floruit (CB 30)

Dans le manuscrit, la mélodie est indiquée par des neumes ; bien qu'il soit, à strictement parler, impossible de savoir exactement quels tons étaient chantés à l'origine, j'ai fait une tentative de reconstruction (tous mes remerciements à Walter Lipphardt et Tom Binkley).

Officium lusorum (CB 215)

Provient de l'"Officium lusorum" : séquence Introitus (mélodie : *Victimae paschali laudes*). Trouver la mélodie d'origine ne s'est pas avéré difficile, car ces textes sont des versions rudimentaires, sacrilèges, de chants grégoriens bien connus.

Alte clamat epicurus (CD 211)

Dans la foulée de ce texte latin plein d'humour, au sein du manuscrit, figure la célèbre chanson de croisade de Walther von der Vogelweide — la mélodie de ce poème en allemand, et par extension, celle d'*Alte clamat epicurus*, se retrouve plus tard dans une source allemande. Leur ancêtre est cependant une chanson provençale de troubadours, du douzième siècle, *Lanquan li jorn son lonc en mai*, de Jaufre Rudel.

Olim lacus colueram (CB 130)

La scansion et les rimes de ce célèbre pastiche semblent basés sur un passage grégorien - *Dies irae* — de la messe de Requiem dont j'ai repris la mélodie.

Dic, Christi veritas (CB 131)

Des neumes figurent dans le manuscrit de *Carmina Burana* ; dans le manuscrit de Florence, les portées sont plus faciles à déchiffrer.

Bulla fulminante (CB 131a)

Philippe le Chancelier

Juxtaposé au chant précédent dans le manuscrit de *Carmina Burana*, avec notation

musicale sous forme de neumes ; figure également, avec sa polyphonie, dans le manuscrit de Florence.

Bacche, bene venies (CB 200)

Quelques lignes de ce poème apparaissent, avec une mélodie, dans le mystère français *Ludus Danielis*, écrit à Beauvais, circa 1200. La mélodie utilisée ici provient du manuscrit de Beauvais.

Doleo quod nimium (CB 118)

Ce poème insolite, macaronique, rappelle la structure d'une chanson du grand trouvère, Thibaut de Champagne, *Roi de Navarre* — c'est la mélodie de Thibaut que j'ai adoptée ici.

Ecce chorus virginum (CB 59)

La mélodie est adaptée d'une chanson de trouvère de Conon de Béthune.

Exiit diluculo (CB 90)

Une version musicale en deux parties de ce poème existe dans une autre source d'origine française ou occitane ; c'est celle que nous utilisons ici, relativement simplifiée.

Sic mea fata (CB 116)

Dans l'original, il n'est accompagné d'aucune musique, mais ce poème très érotique se retrouve avec une notation musicale dans un manuscrit du sud de la France, où il est consacré principalement à des chansons à vocation pieuse.

O mi dilectissima (CB 180)

J'ai essayé de reconstituer la mélodie en partant des neumes du manuscrit de *Carmina Burana*.

a) **Veni venias** (CB 174)

b) **Chume, chume, geselle mîn** (CB 174a)

Pour ce fragment délicieux et macaronique d'un poème, nous avons adapté un fragment d'une mélodie de trouvère (Raynouard 292). Les commentaires instrumentaux, sur le mode virtuose, sont ceux de Margriet Tindemans.

Ich war ein chint (CB 185)

Nous ne pouvons pas mentir. Le poème se trouve dans le manuscrit de *Carmina Burana* (folio 72 r/v), mais c'est à René Clemencic que nous devons la mélodie pimpante, qui fait désormais figure de standard dans les ensembles de musique médiévale.

Tempus est jocundum (CB 179)

Au milieu des années 60, Tom Binkley a fait une reconstitution hypothétique, mais adorable, de la mélodie, à partir des neumes du manuscrit de *Carmina Burana*. C'est cette mélodie que vous entendez dans notre enregistrement.

a) **Tempus adest floridum** (CB 142)

b) **Ave, formosissima** (CB 77.08)

L'original n'est pas accompagné d'une mélodie, mais une mélodie fascinante apparaît quelques siècles plus tard. Une version christianisée de *Tempus adest floridum* a été imprimée, avec sa musique, à la fin du seizième siècle, en Suède. Cette mélodie scandinave est bien connue à travers le monde anglophone, car elle a inspiré un chant de Noël anglais victorien, *Good King Wenceslas*. Nous avons opté en revanche pour le remaniement à l'ancienne de la mélodie suédoise de la fin de la Renaissance, en modifiant quelques tons et en l'adaptant pour les magnifiques strophes païennes dédiées à Vénus du manuscrit de *Carmina Burana*.

Joel Cohen

Traduction : Byword

Carmina Burana

Das Jahrhunderte alte Manuskript, das lange Zeit im Gewölbe des bayerischen Klosters Benediktbeuren lag, beginnt nicht mit den üblichen andächtigen Gebeten. Ganz im Gegenteil, das erste Lied – eine satirische Posse oder vielleicht auch ein Tanz – wirft einen zynischen Blick auf das weltliche Treiben: "Richtig und falsch spazieren fast im Gleichschritt einher, die Tugend muss Acht geben, zwischen zwei Lastern nicht das Gleichgewicht zu verlieren. Seid freundlich und milde zu allen, aber seid auf der Hut, denn Güte am falschen Ort ist keine Tugend. Seid klug beim Trennen der Spreu vom Weizen, dann erkaufte eure Spende euch Ruhm." Und das folgende Lied auf derselben Manuskriptseite richtet sich nicht an die Muttergottes, sondern an die Göttin Fortuna: "Ungeheures und ungewisses Schicksal, rollendes Rad, von böser Absicht bist du."

Auch die Abbildung auf dieser ersten Seite zeigt keine Szene von der Geburt oder Kreuzigung Christi, sondern ein Glücksrad, das von einem umgedrehten Kreuz eingerahmt wird und eine Allegorie des Lebens darstellt: Oben sitzt ein König auf seinem Thron, rechts stürzt er als armer Tor von der Macht hinab, ein Unglückseliger liegt ganz unten in der Gosse, während links eine Gestalt nach oben aufsteigt.

Obwohl die heute als *Carmina Burana* bekannte Handschrift christliche Gebete und sogar zwei Passionsspiele enthält, zieht sich durch die meisten Texte ein sehr heidnischer Geist, der uns daran erinnert, dass die derbe Welt des europäischen Mittelalters alles andere als eine fromme Andacht war. Trug ein wohlhabender Geistlicher diese Sammlung zumeist lateinischer Lieder wegen ihrer literarischen Qualitäten zusammen oder vielleicht wegen ihres musikalischen Anspruchs? Oder fühlte er sich, aller Geistlichkeit zum Trotz, von der unverblühten Satire, der handfesten Sinnlichkeit vieler Lieder angesprochen?

Auf jeden Fall müssen wir ihm dankbar sein, denn die *Carmina Burana* sind die wohl bedeutendste uns bekannte mittelalterliche Quelle weltlicher Dichtung in lateinischer Sprache. Die Lieder wurden von vielen Orten und aus verschiedensten Quellen irgendwo im deutschsprachigen Raum zusammengetragen, vermutlich in den ersten Jahrzehnten des 13. Jahrhunderts. Wer immer dabei federführend war, legte einen erstaunlich internationalen, "europäischen" Geschmack an den Tag. Die meisten Lieder, deren Verfasser wir namentlich kennen, sind französischen Ursprungs – eine ganze Reihe der

Melodien entdeckten wir in französischen und provenzalischen Handschriften.

Des deftig-weltlichen Inhalts zum Trotz wurden die meisten Lieder im Schatten der Kirche geschrieben; einige drehen sich sogar explizit um Kirchenpolitik oder die Korruption innerhalb des Klerus. Das Latein, in dem der Großteil abgefasst ist (einige sind in Mittelhochdeutsch gehalten und eines, *Doleo quod nimium*, sogar in einer Mischung aus Latein, Französisch und Provenzalisch), war die Umgangssprache der Geistlichkeit, die alle innerhalb der Hierarchie beherrschten, ob nun Hochrangige wie der Pariser Kanzler Philipp, ein gelehrter Dichter, oder niedere Chargen wie die anonymen Vaganten und Goliarden, die vermutlich die vielen sinnenfrohen Lieder an Bacchus und Venus verfassten. Über diese Scholaren, die vorwiegend aus materiellen Gründen in den Dienst der Kirche traten, wurden zahlreiche Abhandlungen geschrieben. Wissbegierige junge Männer, die aus bescheidenen Verhältnissen stammten und des Lesens und Schreibens kundig waren, konnten kaum eine bessere Laufbahn einschlagen, zumal sie, mit den Priesterweihen ausgestattet, dem weltlichen Recht entzogen und ausschließlich dem Kirchenrecht verantwortlich waren. So konnte sich eine ganze Reihe geistlicher Unruhestifter vor der Verfolgung durch die Ordnungshüter entziehen. Wie wurden diese brillanten, schlüpfriegen, anrührenden, lebhaften Lieder aber gesungen? In den Handschriften ist bei den wenigsten eine Melodie angegeben, und wenn doch, steht sie in einem derart ungenauen Notationssystem, dass Musikwissenschaftler sich seit Generationen über deren "richtige" Auslegung streiten. Carl Orff schrieb für seine *Carmina Burana* eine völlig eigene Musik. Wir sind etwas weniger ehrgeizig und haben uns bemüht, wann immer möglich die ursprüngliche Melodie zu rekonstruieren oder plausible Melodien aus anderen mittelalterlichen Quellen zu entnehmen. Aber in welchem Stil sollten sie interpretiert werden? Mit Gewissheit werden wir das natürlich nie sagen können. Alle Lieder, selbst die mit den drastischsten Inhalten, sind erstaunlich anspruchsvoll und alles andere als schlichte Volkslieder. Andererseits wäre der feinsinnige höfische Stil der Troubadoure wohl etwas unpassend für Texte, in denen es um Bauchschmerzen oder jugendliches Liebeswerben geht oder um die beste Möglichkeit, einen Amtmann zu bestechen. So entschieden wir uns für eine Mischung von Musikstilen. Ebenso, wie die *Carmina Burana* Elemente des "E"- und des "U"-Bereichs enthalten, so versuchen wir in unseren Darbietungen, die unterschiedlichen Ausdrucksformen

einzuflchten, die von den kryptischen Zeichen des Manuskripts nahe gelegt und angedeutet werden.

Die *Carmina*-Melodien zu rekonstruieren ist eine Arbeit, die sich hinter den Kulissen abspielt. Jede abgeschlossene Aufnahme von mittelalterlicher Musik erweckt einen täuschenden Eindruck von Endgültigkeit; die zahllosen, vielfach auf bloßen Vermutungen fußenden Entscheidungen der modernen Musiker sind in gefälligem Hi-Tech verpackt. In dieser Gestalt scheinen unsere heutigen Darbietungen dieselbe Autorität zu verströmen wie die ursprünglichen Handschriften. Liebe Zuhörer, sehen und hören Sie sich vor! Jede heutige Interpretation mittelalterlicher Lieder beinhaltet weitaus mehr und gleichzeitig weitaus weniger, als man vermeint. Mit den folgenden Anmerkungen möchten wir Ihnen einen kurzen Einblick in den Hintergrund unserer Interpretationen geben. Wegen der Einzigartigkeit des Originalmanuskripts stellen die Nummern der *Carmina Burana* bei der Rekonstruktion eine besondere Herausforderung dar. Manchmal ist die dabei erforderliche Detektivarbeit frustrierend und entnervend, manchmal vergnüglich und beglückend. Auf jeden Fall stehen viele, viele Schritte (von denen wir unten einige wenige ausführen) zwischen den Zeichen auf dem Papier und den Klängen auf der CD.

Fas et nefas ambulans (CB 19)

Der Text und die Melodie stehen auf der ersten Seite der *Carmina*-Handschrift unter der oben beschriebenen Abbildung des Glücksrads. Die dort verwendeten Neumenzeichen geben die Konturen des Melodieverlaufs wieder, nicht aber die absoluten Tonhöhen. Hier wie auch sonst versuchten wir, ein entsprechendes Manuskript mit Liniennotation zu finden, in diesem Fall im so genannten Florentiner Manuskript (Bibl. Medicea-Laurenziana Tafel 29.1), eine wichtige Quelle für die Monodie und (insbesondere) die Polyphonie im französischen Mittelalter. *Fas et nefas* steht im Florentiner Manuskript mit drei Stimmen; die Weise, die der *Carmina*-Kopist in Neumen notierte, ist die führende Stimme in der Florentiner Polyphonie.

O varium fortune lubricum (CB 14)

Sowohl die Weise als auch die polyphone Gegenmelodie sind vom Florentiner Manuskript transkribiert. Eine weitere Version dieses bekannten Lieds findet sich im *Roman de Fauvel*, einem französischen Satireroman aus dem 14. Jahrhundert.

O fortuna (CB 17)

Das zweite Gedicht auf der ersten Seite der *Carmina*-Handschrift wurde berühmt als Auftakt zu Carl Orffs gleichnamigen Werk. Da in der Handschrift keinerlei Notation steht, adaptierte ich eine französische Trouvère-Melodie aus dem 13. Jahrhundert (Raynouard 1559).

Bonum est confidere (CB 27)

Kanzler Philipp

Melodie aus dem Florentiner Manuskript.

Curritur ad vocem (CB 14a)

Versmaß und Reime dieses Gedichts gehen auf das Kreuzfahrerlied "Crucifigat omnes" zurück, dessen Melodie wir hier auch verwenden.

Dum juvenus floruit (CB 30)

In der Handschrift ist die Melodie in Neumen notiert. Obwohl es streng gesehen unmöglich ist, die "richtigen" Tonhöhen zu eruieren, habe ich mich an einer Rekonstruktion versucht (mit einem Dankeschön an Walter Lipphardt und Tom Binkley).

Officium lusorum (CB 215)

Aus dem "Officium lusorum" (Spielermesse): Introitus-Sequenz (Melodie: Victimae paschali laudes). Die ursprüngliche Melodie war nicht schwer zu finden, da diese Texte derbe, blasphemische Parodien bekannter gregorianischer Gesänge sind.

Alte clamat epicurus (CD 211)

Gleich auf diese scherzhafte lateinische Weise folgt in der *Carmina*-Handschrift das bekannte Kreuzfahrerlied von Walther von der Vogelweide; die Melodie zu diesem mittelhochdeutschen Gedicht und entsprechend zu *Alte clamat epicurus* stammt aus einer späteren deutschen Quelle. Vorgänger beider Lieder ist allerdings ein provenzalische Troubadourlied aus dem 12. Jahrhundert, nämlich *Lanquan li jorn son lonc en mai* von Jaufre Rudel.

Olim lacus colueram (CB 130)

Skandierung und Reimschema dieser beliebten Parodie beruhen wohl auf einem Ausschnitt aus der Requiem-Messe, der gregorianischen Sequenz *Dies irae*, deren Melodie ich hier verwendete.

Dic, Christi veritas (CB 131)

In der *Carmina*-Handschrift sind hierzu Neumen angegeben, doch die Notation im Florentiner Manuskript war leichter zu entziffern.

Bulla fulminante (CB 131a)

Kanzler Philipp

Das Gegenstück zum vorhergehenden Lied in der *Carmina*-Handschrift und ebenfalls in Neumen notiert; auch in diesem Fall steht eine mehrstimmige Melodie dazu im Florentiner Manuskript.

Bacche, bene venies (CB 200)

Einige Zeilen dieses Gedichts erscheinen mit Musikbegleitung im französischen Mysterienspiel *Ludus Danielis* (*Das Spiel Daniels*), um 1200 im französischen Beauvais geschrieben. Entsprechend stammt die hier verwendete Melodie aus dem Beauvais-Manuskript.

Doleo quod nimium (CB 118)

Dieses ausgefallene makkaronische Gedicht erinnert in der Satzstruktur an ein Lied des großen Trouvères Thibaut de Champagne, Roi de Navarre – und eben Thibauts Melodie habe ich hier adaptiert.

Ecce chorus virginum (CB 59)

Die Melodie, die wir hier verwenden, gehört zu einem Trouvère-Lied von Conon de Béthune.

Exiit diluculo (CB 90)

Eine zweistimmige Vertonung dieses Gedichts erscheint in einer Quelle französischen oder okzitanischen Ursprungs; diese haben wir für dieses Lied etwas vereinfacht.

Sic mea fata (CB 116)

In der ursprünglichen Quelle wird zu diesem überaus erotischen Gedicht keine Melodie geliefert, doch steht es mit Notation in einer südfranzösischen Handschrift, die vorwiegend fromme Andachtslieder enthält.

O mi dilectissima (CB 180)

Hier habe ich mich an einer Rekonstruktion der Melodie anhand der Neumen in der *Carmina*-Handschrift versucht.

a) **Veni venias** (CB 174)

b) **Chume, chume, geselle mîn** (CB 174a)

Für dieses reizvolle makkaronische Gedichtfragment adaptierten wir das Fragment einer Trouvère-Melodie (Raynouard, 292). Die virtuoson Instrumentalkommentare gehen auf Margriet Tindemans zurück.

Ich war ein chint (CB 185)

Wir wollen bei der Wahrheit bleiben: Das Gedicht steht tatsächlich in der *Carmina*-Handschrift (Folio 72 r/v), aber die muntere Weise, die mittlerweile fast zum Standardrepertoire eines jeden Ensembles alter Musik gehört, stammt von René Clemencic (Jahrgang 1928).

Tempus est jocundum (CB 179)

Mitte der 1960er Jahre erstellte Tom Binkley ausgehend von den Neumen in der *Carmina*-Handschrift eine hypothetische, aber wunderschöne Rekonstruktion der Melodie. Eben diese hören Sie hier.

a) **Tempus adest floridum** (CB 142)

b) **Ave, formosissima** (CB 77.08)

Im Originalmanuskript steht keine Musik, doch Jahrhunderte später finden wir eine wunderschöne Melodie. Eine christianisierte Fassung von *Tempus adest floridum* wurde mit Musik Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts in Schweden veröffentlicht. Diese skandinavische Melodie ist in der englischsprachigen Welt als das viktorianische Weihnachtslied *Good King Wenceslas* allgemein bekannt. Wir haben diese schwedische Melodie aus der Spätrenaissance zurück gepolt, einige Tonhöhen verändert und sie den wunderbaren heidnischen *Carmina*-Versen an die Venus angepasst.

Joel Cohen

Übersetzung: Byword

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Recording producer: Ysabelle Van Wersch-Cot

Recording engineer: Jacques Doll

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Fas et nefas ambulant

1 Fas et nefas ambulant
passu fere pari;
prodigus non redimit
vitium avari;
virtus temperantia
quadam singulari
debet medium
ad utrumque vitium
caute contemplari.

Si legisse memoras
ethicam Catonis,
in qua scriptum legitur:
"Ambula cum bonis",
cum ad dandi gloriam
animum disponis,
supra cetera primum hoc considera,
quis sit dignus donis.

Vultu licet hilari,
verbo licet blando
sis equalis omnibus;
unum tamen mando:
si vis recte gloriam
promereri dando,
primum videas
granum inter paleas
cui des et quando.

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 on mind:
Who is worthy of our 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.

Dare non ut convenit
Non est a virtute,
bonum est secundum quid,
sed non absolute;
digne dare poteris
et mereri tute
famam muneris,
si me prius noveris
intus et in cute.

Si prudenter triticum
paleis emundas,
famam emis muneris;
sed cavetto, dum das,
largitatis oleum
male non effundas.
In te glorior;
Quia Codrus Codrion,
omnibus habundas.

O varium fortune lubricum

2 O varium fortune lubricum
dans dubium
tribunal iudicum,
non modicum
paras huic premium,
quem colere
tua vult gratia
et petere.
Rote sublimia,

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 first you 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 Fortuna's
slippery way,
rendering the questionable
verdict of judges.
It is no modest reward
that thou preparest for him
whom thy kindness desires to favour
and to seek out.
Thou grantest the uncertain

Dans dubia,
tamen, prepostere
de stercore
pauperem erigens
de rhetore
consulem eligens.

Edificat
Fortuna, diruit;
nunc abdicat
quos prius coluit;
quos noluit
iterum vendicat,
hec opera
sibi contraria,
dans munera
nimis labilia.
Mobilia
sunt Sortis federa,
que debiles
ditans nobilitat
et nobiles
premens debilitat.

Nil gratius
Fortune gratia,
nil dulcius
est inter dulcia
quam Gloria,
si staret longius.
Sed labitur

heights of the wheel of fortune,
even perversely raising up
the pauper from the dung
and making a consul from a rhetorician.

Fortuna builds up
and destroys;
she now renounces those
whom she had favoured earlier;
those whom she desired not,
she makes her own again,
granting as exceedingly
unreliable favours
these contrary states.
Fickle
are Chance's bands,
she who richly
ennobles the weak
and repressingly
weakens the noble.

Naught is more charming
than Fortuna's charm,
naught is sweeter
of all sweet things
than glory,
if it lasted but a while.
But it wastes away

ut olus marcidum
et sequitur
agrum nunc floridum
quem aridum
cras cernes. Igitur
improprium
non edo canticum:
o varium
Fortune lubricum.

O fortuna

- 3 O fortuna
velut luna
statu variabilis,
semper crescis
aut decrescis;
vita detestabilis
nunc abdurat
et tunc curat
ludo mentis aciem.
Egestatem,
potestatem
dissolvit ut glaciem.
Sors immanis
et inanis,
rota tu volubilis,
status malus,
vana salus
semper dissolubilis,
obumbratum

like a rank weed,
as does also
the now blossoming field,
which tomorrow thou seest barren.
Wherefore I bring forth
no unfitting song when I sing:
O Fortuna's
slippery way.

O Fortuna,
changing in condition
just like the moon,
always waxing
or waning.
Life abominable,
for sport,
first hardens the mind's eye
then mends it.
Neediness
and power
it melts like ice.
Fire and
empty chance,
thou revolving wheel,
thou poor estate,
thou empty prosperity,
ever fading,
to me as well

et velatam
michi quoque niteris;
nunc per ludum
dorsum nudum
fero tui sceleris.

Sors salutis
et virtutis
michi nunc contraria
est affectus
et defectus
semper in angaria.
Hac in hora
sine mora
corde pulsum tangite:
Omnes mecum plangite
quod per mortem
sternit fortem,
mecum omnes plangite!

Bonum est confidere

4 Bonum est confidere
in dominorum Domino,
bonum est spem ponere
in spei nostre termino.

Qui de regum potential,
non de Dei clementia
spem concipis,
te decipis

dost thou present
thy dark, veiled side;
so now, through gaming,
I go about with back bared
all due to thee.

The same chance
that brings prosperity
and virtue
is now an asset
and a liability to me
ever in conflicting loyalty.
So this moment,
without delay,
strike the string:
all of you lament with me
that through death
Fortuna has scattered the mighty.

It is a good thing to trust
in the Lord of lords;
it is a good thing to set one's hope
on our hope's destination.

Thou that dost await thy hope
from the might of kings
and not from the mercy of God,
thou deceivest thyself

et excipis
ab aula summi principis.
Quid in pum aggere
exaggeras peccatum?

In Deo cogitatum
tuum jacta,
prius acta
studeas corrigere,
in labore manuum
et in sudore vultuum
pane tuo vescere!

Curritur ad vocem

5 Curritur ad vocem
nummi vel ad sonitum;
hec est vox ad placitum.
Omnes ultra debitum,
ut exempla docent,
nitimur in vetitum.
Disce morem
et errorem,
fac et tu similiter!
Hac in vita
Nichil vita,
Vive sic, non aliter!
Cleri vivas ad mensuram,
qui pro censu dat censuram.
Quando jacis in capturam rete,
messes vides jam matutam;

and dost cut thyself off
from the court of the Prince most high.
Why, in gathering wealth,
dost thou accumulate sin?

Cast thy thoughts
unto the Lord,
learn to amend
what thou hast done before,
and in the work of thy hands
and in the sweat of thy countenance
partake of thy bread.

One runs toward the call
of money, or toward its sound;
this is a call that pleases.
As example shows,
we all tend toward forbidden fruit
far beyond rhyme or reason.
Study how it is done
and is not done,
and do thou likewise!
Avoid nothing
in this life,
live thus and no other way!
Live as the clergy do,
who send a bill for their advice.
When thou castest thy net
for the catch,

et tu saltem per usuram mete!

Si quis in hoc artem
populo non noverit,
per quam mundus vixerit,
omnia cum viderit,
eligat hanc partem
aut nichil decreverit:
Quod vis, aude
dolo, fraude,
mos gerundus Thaïdi.
Mundo gere
morem, vere
nil vitandum credidi.
Legi nichil sit astrictum,
Juri nichil sit addictum!
Sanciatum hoc edictum tibi:
Ubi virtus est delictum,
Deo nichil est relictum ibi.

Dum juvenus floruit

6 Dum juvenus floruit
licuit
et libuit
facere quod placuit,
juxta voluntatem

thou beholdest the harvest is nigh;
so do thou reap also,
with some usury at least!

If among this people
no one knew the means
by which the world really lives,
when he examined everything,
he would also choose this way
and would have lost nothing:
Dare what you may,
by cheat or deceit,
Do as Thaïs would do.
Do as the world does,
for indeed I believe
naught should be avoided.
Let nothing be bound to law,
let nothing be due to justice!
Only this decree should be
holy for thee:
Where virtue is neglected,
nothing is left
for God either.

When youth was in flower,
it was permitted,
even desirable,
to do whatever was pleasing,
to run about

currere,
peragere
carnis voluptatem.

Admodo sic agree,
vivere
tam libere,
talem vitam ducere
viri vetat etas,
perimit
et eximit
leges assueltas.

Etas illa monuit,
docuit,
consuluit,
sic et etas annuity:
"Nichil est exclusum!"
Omnia
cum venia
contulit ad usum.

Volo respiscere,
linquere,
corrigere
quod commisi temere;
deinceps intendam
seriis,
pro vitiis
virtutes rependam.

at will,
and to engage
in fleshly lust.

My time of life forbids me
to go on this way,
to live
so freely,
to lead such a life,
it does away with
and hinders
the accustomed laws.

The former life kept watch,
instructed and counselled me,
and this is what it allowed:
'Naught is forbidden!'
It showered me
graciously
with all I needed.

I desire to reform,
leave behind,
to set right
what I rashly did;
and so I shall strive
in earnest,
I shall repay my vices
with virtues.

Officium lusorum

7 Officium lusorum

Introitus

Lugeamus omnes in Dacio
diem festum deplorantes
pro dolore omnium lusorum,
de quorum nuditate gaudent decii
et collaudant filium Bacchi.

Maledicant Dacio in omni tempore:
semper fraus ejus in ore meo.

Sequentia

Victime novali *zinke ses*
immolant deciani.
Ses zinke abstraxit vestes:
equum, cappam et pelles
abstraxit confestim
a possessore.

Sors et sortita duello
confluxere mirando.
Tandem tres decii
vicerunt illum.

Nunc clamat "O fortuna,
quid fecisti pessima?
Vestitum cito nudasti
Et divitem egeno coequasti."
Per tres falsos testes
abstraxisti vestes.

Officium lusorum

Introit

Let us all mourn in Dacius,
lamenting the holy day,
for the sorrow of all gamblers:
at whose nakedness the Decii rejoice
and praise the son of Bacchus.

Let them curse Dacius at all times:
his deceit be ever on my lips.

Sequence

To the latest victim
let the Deciani offer V+VI.
VI+V hath stripped his garments:
it hath stripped forthwith
horse, cloak and furs
from their owner.

Luck and his winnings
clashed in wondrous combat,
but the three decii
beat the fellow.

Now he cries: "O Fortuna,
why hast thou done these horrid things to
me?"
Thou hast swiftly denuded the clothed
and hast set the rich man equal to the
needy.

Ses zinke surgant spes mea,
precedent cito in tabulea.

Credendum est magis soli
ses-zinke-quatter veraci
quam dri-tus-es ictu fallaci.

Scimus istos abstraxisse
vestes lusoribus vere.
Tu nobis, victor *ses*, Miserere.

Alte clamat epicurus

8 Alte clamat epicurus
venter satur est securus.
Venter dues meus erit,
talem deum gula querit
cujus templum est coquina
in qua redolent divina.

Ecce deus opportunus
nullo tempore jejunos
ante cibum matutinum
ebrius eructat vinum,
cujus mensa et cratera
sunt beatitudo vera.

Cutis ejus semper plena
velut uter et lagena;

"Through these three false witnesses
thou hast stripped away even my clothing.
Arise, my hope, VI+V,
and swiftly prevail on the board!"

One should rather trust
a reliable VI+V+IV
than a cheating cast of III+II+I.

We know they have stripped
losers' garments indeed.
Do thou, o winning VI, have mercy on us.

Epicurus proclaims:
A sated belly is best off.
The belly will be my god,
a god such as the gullet seeks.
His temple is a kitchen
where it smells divine.

Here is a fitting god,
never fasting.
Before his morning meal
this drunkard throws up his wine.
His cup and board
are true bliss.

His skin is always as full
as a wineskin or a flagon;

jungit prandium cum cena,
unde pinguis rubet gena,
et si quondo surgit vena
fortior est quam catena.

Sic religionis cultus
in ventre movet tumultus,
rugit venter in agone,
vinum pugnat cum medone;
vita felix otiose
circa ventrem operosa.

Venter inquit: "Nichil curo
preter me; sic me procure
ut in pace in idipsum
molliter gerens me ipsum
super potum et super escam
dormiam et requiescam."

Olim lacus colueram

- 9 Olim lacus colueram
olim pulcehr exstiteram,
dum cygnus ego fueram.
Miser, miser,
modo niger
et ustus fortiter.

Eram nive candidior,
quavis ave fomiosior;
modo sum corvo nigrior.

he combines lunch and dinner,
such that his fat cheek reddens,
and where his blood is up,
it is stronger than a chain.

And so his religious rites
cause disturbance in his belly,
the belly roars in deadly contest,
wine contends with mead;
a detached, fruitful life
in the service of the belly.

The belly says; I care for naught
but myself, and so,
making myself comfortable
I see to it
that over food and drink
I lay me down in peace and sleep.

Once I used to dwell on lakes,
once I used to be considered handsome,
back when I used to be a swan.
Wretched me,
now black
and seriously scorched.

I used to be whiter than snow,
more beautiful than any other bird,
and now I am blacker than a raven.

Me rogus urit fortiter,
gyrat, regyrat garcifer;
propinat me nunc dapifer.

Mallet in aquis vivere,
nudo semper sub aëre,
quam in hoc mergi pipere.

Nunc in scutella jaceo
et volitare nequeo;
dentes frendentes video.

Dic, Christi veritas

- 10 Dic, Christi veritas
dic, cara raritas,
dic, rara Caritas:
ubi nunc habitas.
Aut in Valle Visionis?
Aut in throno Pharaonis?
Aut in alto cum Nerone?
Aut in antro cum Theone?
Vel in fiscella scirpea
cum Moÿse plorante?
Vel in domo Romulea
cum Bulla fulminante?

Bulla fulminante

- 11 Bulla fulminante
sub iudice tonante,

My funeral pyre scorches me fiercely,
the groom is turning me to and fro,
and now the steward is serving me up.

I should rather live on the waters,
ever beneath the open sky,
than be dipped in this pepper.

Now I lie on the platter
unable to fly about;
those are gnashing teeth I see.

Tell us, Christ's truth,
tell us dear rarity,
tell us rare Charity,
where thou now dwellest.
In the Vale of Vision?
On Pharaoh's throne?
On high with Nero?
In the cave with Theôn?
Or in the basket of rushes
with the crying Moses?
Or in the house of Romulus
with a flashing papal bull?

Truth is suppressed,
distraught,

reo appellante,
sentential gravante
Veritas opprimitur,
distrahitur
et venditur
Justitia prostante;
itur et recurritur
ad Curiam, nec ante
quid consequitur,
quam exuitur quadrante.
Bulla fulminante ...

Si queris prebendas,
Vitam frustra commendas;
mores non pretendas,
ne iudicem offendas!
Frustra tuis litteris
inniteris;
moraberis
per plurimas kalendas –
tandem exspectaveris
a ceteris ferendas,
paris ponderis
pretio nisi contendas.

Pape janitors
Cerbero surdiores.
In spe vana plores,
jam etiamsi fores
quem audit, Orphëus,
Pluto dues

and sold
by a flashing papal bull,
under a thundering judge,
while the accused appeals
under the weight of the decision,
and Justice is pimped out.
One goes and runs
to the Curia, nor will aught ensue
before he is stripped
of his last farthing.
Truth is suppressed ...

If you seek preferments,
in vain so you advance your record;
do not bring up your good conduct,
lest you upset a magistrate.
In vain do you rely
on your erudition,
but rather you wait around
for months and months,
and still you can expect
your preferments to be carried off by
others,
unless you compete
with a price of equal weight.

With vain hope may you beseech
the Pope's gatekeepers,
who are deafer than Cerebus,
even if you were
Orpheus, whom Pluto,

Tartareus;
Non ideo perores,
malleus argenteus
ni feriat ad fores,
ubi Protëus
variat mille colores.

Jupiter, dum orat
Danen, frustra laborat;
sed eam deflorat,
auro dum se colorat.
Auro nil potentius,
nil gratius:
nec Tullius
facundius perorat.
Sed hos urit acrius,
quos amplius honorat:
Nichil justius,
calidum Crassus dum vorat!

Bacche, bene venies

12 Bacche, bene venies
gratus et optatus,
per quem noster animus
fit letificatus.

Istud vinum, bonum vinum,
vinum generosum
reddit virum curialem,
probum, animosum.

the god of hell,
heeded.
And so you will not have your say
unless the silver hammer
knock at the gates
where Proteus
changes a thousand different ways.

When he pleads with Danaë,
Jupiter toils in vain,
but when he tints himself gold,
he deflowers her!
Naught is mightier,
naught more pleasing than gold:
not even Cicero
speaks more eloquently.
But those whom it dignifies abundantly
it burns quite painfully:
Naught is more fitting
than Crassus devouring it hot.

Welcome, Bacchus,
dear desired guest,
through whom our spirits
are made merry.

This wine, a good wine,
a noble wine,
makes a man courteous,
upright, and lively.

Bacchus forte superans
pectora virorum
in amorem concitat
animos eorum.

Bacchus sepe visitans
mulierum genus
facit eas subditas
tibi, o tu Venus.

Bacchus venas penetrans
calido liquore
facit eas igneas
Veneris ardore.

Bacchus lenis leniens
curas et Dolores
confert jocum, gaudia,
risus et amores.

Bacchus mentem femine
solet hic lenire,
cogit eam citius
viro consentire.

A qua prorsus coitum
nequit impetrare,
Bacchus illam facile
solet expugnare.

Bacchus forcefully overcomes
men's hearts
and arouses their minds
to love.

Bacchus often visits
womankind
and makes them subject
to thee, o Venus.

Bacchus flows through the veins
with his warm liquor
and makes them fiery
with Venus' burning.

Gentle Bacchus alleviates
cares and sorrow
and brings us humor, joys,
smiles, and loves.

Bacchus is wont
to ease a woman's mind;
he makes her more readily
be of one mind with a man.

Bacchus is wont
to win over easily someone
from whom one has previously
been unable to get coition.

Bacchus numen faciens
hominem jocundum,
reddit eum partier
doctum et facundum.

Bacche, dues inclite,
omnes hic astantes
leti sumus munera
tua prelibantes.

Omnes tibi canimus
maxima preconia,
te laudantes merito
tempora per omnia.

Doleo quo nimium

- 13 Doleo quo nimium
patior exilium.
Pereat hoc studium,
si m'en iré,
si non reddid gaudium,
cui tant abé!

Tua pulchra facies
me ley planser milies;
pectus habet glacies.
A remender
statim vivum facies
per un baser!

The god Bacchus makes
man merry
and likewise makes him
learned and eloquent.

Bacchus, renowned god,
all of us here present
are joyful when we
taste thy gifts.

We all sing to thee
our highest songs of praise
and we rightly praise thee
throughout all the ages.

I grieve that I suffer
this great exile.
To hell with learning!
I must away,
since it cannot make up for the joy
for which I yearn so much.

Thy face so fair
makes me weep a thousand times;
my heart grows chill.
To make it well
revive it at once
with a kiss.

Prohdolor, quid faciam?
Ut quid novi Franciam?
Perdam amicitiam
de la gentil?
Miser corde fugiam
de cest pays?
Cum venray in mon pays,
altri drud i avra bris.
Poydra mi lassa dis.
Me miserum!
Suffero par sue amor
supplicium.

Amia, pro vostre amur
doleo, suspir et plur;
par tut semplant ey dolur
grande d'amer.
Fugio nunc; socii,
lassé m'aler.

Ecce chorus virginum

- 14 Ecce chorus virginum
tempore vernali,
dum solis incendium
radius equali
moderatur ordine,
jubilo semoto
fronde pausat tilie
Cypridis in voto.

Alas, what shall I do?
Why did I decide on France?
Shall I lose the love
of this lady?
Shall I flee, sore at heart,
from this land?
When I return to my own country
she will have taken another.
I can only say,
poor me!
I suffer great humiliation
for love of her.

My love, for love of thee
I grieve, sigh and weep;
my great grief from love
is there for all to see.
Comrades, I depart now,
leave me go.

Behold, a crowd of maidens
in the spring time,
while the sun's fire
disperses its rays
equally about,
far from the shepherd's song
it rests in the linden's shade
true to Cypris.

Acies virginea
redimita flore —
quis enarret talia!
Quantoque decore
prenitent ad liquidum
veneris occulta!
Dido necis meritum
proferat inulta.

Per florenta nemorum
me fortuna vexit.
Arcum Cupidineum
vernula retexit.
Quam inter Veneream
diligo cohortem,
languo, dum videam
libiti consortem.

Exiit diluculo

- 15 Exiit diluculo
rustica puella
cum grege, cum baculo,
cum lana novella.

Sunt in grege parvulo
ovis et asella,
vitula cum vitulo,
caper et capella.

A maidenly line
wreathed in flowers —
who can tell such wonders!
With what gracefulness
do Venus' secrets
shine forth so sharply!
Let Dido unavenged
present the recompense for her dying.

Fortuna hath borne me
through the glades' flowery parts.
The young attendant
hath drawn his Cupid's bow.
I grow faint when I see
the partner of happy me,
her whom I love
among Venus' company.

At first light
a country maid went out
with her flock, with her crook,
and with some new fleece.

In her tiny flock
there is a sheep, a young ass,
a heifer with a calf,
a he-goat and a she-goat.

Conspexit in cespite
scolarem sedere:
quid tu facis, domine?
Veni mecum ludere.

Sic mea fata

- 16 Sic mea fata
canendo solor,
ut nece proxima facit olor.
Roseus effugit ore color,
blandus inest meo cordi dolor.
Cura crescente,
labore vigente
vigour labente
miser moror.
Hei morior,
Hei morior, hei morior,
Ut quod amem cogor et non amor.

Si me dignetur quam desidero,
felicitate Jovem supero.
Nocte cum illa si dormiero,
si sua labra semel suxero,
mortem subire,
placenter obire,
vitamque finire
libens potero.
Hei potero,
hei potero, hei potero,
tanta si gaudia recepero.

On a lawn she spied
a student sitting:
"What are you doing, sir?
Come sport with me."

Thus in singing do I ease my fate,
as does the swan when death is nigh.
The rosy complexion flees from my face,
sorrow unadorned grasps my heart.
As care doth grow,
as suffering doth thrive,
as my strength is sapped,
I die wretched.
Ah, I die,
I die, I die,
that I am forced to love yet am not loved.

If she whom I desire deems me worthy,
I shall exceed Jove in happiness.
If I could sleep one night with her,
if I could but once taste her lips,
I would be gladly able
to suffer death,
to pass away peacefully,
and to end my life.
Ah yes, I would,
I would, I could,
if I could partake of such joys.

Ubera cum animadverterem,
Optavi manus ut involverem,
Simplicibus mammis ut alluderem.
Sic cogitando sensi venerem.
Sedit in ore
rosa cum pudore,
pulsatus amore
quod os lamberem.
Hei lamberem,
hei lamberem, hei lamberem
luxuriando per characterem.

O mi dilectissima

- 17 O mi dilectissima
vultu serenissima
et mente legis sedula
ut mea refert littera.

*Mandaliet, mandaliet,
mîn geselle chûmet niet.*

Vultus tuus indicat
quanta sit nobilitas,
que in tuo pectore
lac miscet cum sanguine.

Circa mea pectoral
multa sunt suspiria
de tua pulchritudine,
que me ledunt misere.

When I have been looking at her bosom,
O have wanted to wrap my hands
about her bare breasts, to play with them.
And in thinking thus I have felt the
attraction.
In her face is
a rosy shyness,
that torn by love
I would lap at her lips,
ah, I would,
ah, I would, ah I would lap
licentiously about her face.

Ah my dearest,
with thy calm countenance
and quiet mind thou dost perceive
what my earnest message utters.
Joyous strain, o joyous strain!
My lover has no regrets.

Thy countenance showeth
the nobleness
which within thy breast
doth mix milk with blood.

Around my breast
many are the sighs
for thy beauty
which wound me sore.

Vellet Deus, vellent di,
quod mente proposui:
ut ejus virginea
reserassem vincula.

a) Veni venias

b) Chume, chume, geselle mîn

18 Veni, veni, venias,
ne me mori facias.
*Hyria hyrie
nazaza trillirivos.*

Pulchra tibi facies,
oculorum acies,
capillorum series,
o quam clara species.

Rosa rubicundior,
lilio candidior,
omnibus formosior,
semper in te glorior.

Chume, chume, geselle mîn,
ih enbite harte dîn,
süezer rôsenvarwer munt,
chum unde mache mich gesund.

That God and the gods might grant
what I have set to mind:
that I might loose
the chains of her virginity!

Come, come do come,
do not make me die!
*Hyria hyrie
nazaza trillirivos.*

Fair is thy face,
the set of thine eyes,
the tresses of thy hair,
ah, what a fine sight!

Redder than the rose,
whiter than the lily,
fairer than all,
I always take my pride in thee.

Come, come, my love,
longingly I wait for thee.
Sweet, rose-red lips,
come and make me well.

Ich was ein chint

19 Ich was ein chint

*Ich was ein chint so wolgetan,
virgo dum florebam,
do brist ich diu werlt al,
omnibus placebam.*

Hoy et oe!
Maledicantur thylie
juxta viam posite.

*Ja wolde ih an die wisen gan,
flores adunare,
do wolde mich ein ungetan
ibi deflorare.*

*Er nam mich bi der wizen hant,
sed non indecenter,
er wist mich diu wise lanch
valde fraudulenter.*

*Er graif mir an daz wize gewant
valde indecenter,
er fuorte mih bi der hant
multum violenter.*

*Er sprach: "Vrouwe, gewir baz,
nemus est remotum."
Dirre wech der habe haz,
planxi et hoc totum.*

*I was such a comely child
when I was in the bloom of maidenhood,
the whole world sang my praises,
everyone liked me.*

Hoy and oe!
Cursed be the lindens
planted beside the way.

*I wanted to go to the fields
to gather flowers
and there a crude fellow was going
to pluck my blossom.*

*He took me by my pale hand,
not really with impropriety,
he led me along the field
rather deceitfully.*

*He put his hands on my white clothing
rather improperly,
he led me by the hand
very forcefully.*

*He said, "Woman, let's keep moving,
the grove is some way off."
Cursed be this way,
I have wept over all this.*

*Iz stat eine linde wolgetan
non procul a via,
da hab ich mine herpfe lan,
typanum cum lyra.*

*Do er zuo der linden chom
dixit "Sedeamus",
diu minne twanch sere den man,
"ludum faciamus."*

*Er graif mir an den wizen lip,
non absque timore,
er sprach: "Ich mache dich ein wip,
dulcis es cum ore."*

*Er warf mir uof daz hemdelin,
corpore detecta,
er rante mir in daz purgelin
cuspide erecta.*

*Er nam den chocher unde den bogen,
bene venabatur,
der selbe hete mich betrogen
"Ludus compleatur."*

*So there stands a lovely linden
not far from the way,
that's where I left my harp lying,
my tympanum and lyre.*

*When he reached the linden
he said "Let's sit down",
(love was tearing at the fellow)
"let's commence the game."*

*He put his hands on my white body
not without respect,
he said "I'll make a woman of you,
you with your sweet lips."*

*He threw open my chemise
so that my body was exposed,
he charged into my fortalice
with his lance upright.*

*He took his quiver and bow,
(it was good hunting),
He may have deceived me,
but now let the play take its course!*

*This is a gay season,
o maidens.
Rejoice with us now,
you fellows.*

*O, o,
totus floreo,
jam amore virginali totus ardeo;
novus, novus amor est, quo pereo.*

*Cantat philomela
sic dulciter
et modulans auditur
suaviter.*

*Mea mecum ludit
virginitas,
mea me detrudit
simplicitas.*

*Sile, Philomena,
pro tempore,
surge cantilena,
de pectore.*

*Tempore brumali
vir patiens.
Animo vernali
lasciviens.*

*Veni, domicella,
cum gaudio;
veni, veni, pulchra,
jam pereo.*

*O, o, ...
I am blossoming all over,
I am burning all over with this innocent
love;
this is a new kind of love by which I pine
away.*

*Philomela is singing
so sweetly
and as she sings
she is gently heard.*

*My innocence
toys with me,
my naivety
brings me defeat.*

*Hush a while,
you nightingale,
take leave of my heart,
you melody.*

*In wintry times
a man can be patient.
When spring is in the air
he becomes wanton.*

*[So] come joyfully,
little miss,
come, come my beauty,
I'm pining away.*

a) Tempus adest floridum

b) Ave, formosissima

21 Tempus adest floridum,
surgunt manqué flores
vernales; mox in omnibus
immutantur mores.
Hoc, quod frigus leserat,
reparant calores;
cernimus hoc fieri
per multos colores.

Stant prata plena floribus,
in quibus nos ludamus!
Virgines cum clericis
simul procedamus,
per amorem Veneris
ludum faciamus,
ceteris virginibus
ut hoc referamus!

O dilecta domina,
cur sic alienaris?
An nescis, carissima,
quod sic adamaris?
Si tu esses Helena,
vellem esse Paris!
Tamen potest fieri
noster amor talis.

The time of blossoming is at hand,
the springtime flowers are budding,
the old ways in all things
will soon be changing.
What frost has damaged
warmth will make well again;
we see this happening
in many different ways.

Let us play in the meadows
which are standing full of flowers!
Let us go together,
maidens and students,
let us make play
for love of Venus,
so that we can set an example
for the other maidens!

O, beloved lady,
why dost thou avoid me?
Knowest thou not, dearest,
that thou art so truly loved?
If thou wert Helen,
I should want to be Paris!
And still our love
can become just like theirs.

Ave, formosissima,
gemma pretiosa,
ave, decus virginum,
virgo gloriosa,
ave, lumen luminum,
ave, mundi rosa,
Blanziflor et Helena,
Venus generosa.

Text edition: M. J. Connolly

Hail, thou most fair,
thou precious jewel,
hail, thou ornament of maidens,
maiden most glorious,
hail, thou light of lights,
hail thou rose of all the world,
Blanchefleur and Helen,
noble Venus!

Translation: M. J. Connolly