

The Prose Life of Alexander

Robert Thornton

Table of Contents

<u>The Prose Life of Alexander</u>	1
<u>Robert Thornton</u>	2
<u>[How Anectanabus fled Egypt to Macedonia]</u>	3
<u>How Anectanabus went up to the Palace to Olympia the Queen</u>	4
<u>How Anectanabus in the Shape of a Mighty Dragon went to the fore in front of Philip and overcame his Enemies in the Fray</u>	6
<u>How Anectanabus in the Shape of a Dragon came before Philip at a Festival and kissed Olympia</u>	7
<u>How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died</u>	8
<u>The letter of Alexandere</u>	15
<u>HOW ALEXANDER PUT HEART INTO HIS HOST ANEW</u>	25
<u>HOW THE MESSENGERS OF DARIUS GAVE ALEXANDER THE LETTER, AND HIS ANSWER</u>	27
<u>HOW ALEXANDER ENCAMPED BY THE STREAM GRANCUS</u>	28
<u>THE LETTER SENT BY DARIUS TO PORUS KING OF INDIA</u>	29

The Prose Life of Alexander

Robert Thornton

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.
<http://www.blackmask.com>

- [How Anectanabus fled Egypt to Macedonia]
- How Anectanabus went up to the Palace to Olympia the Queen.
- How Anectanabus in the Shape of a Mighty Dragon went to the fore in front of Philip and overcame his Enemies in the Fray.
- How Anectanabus in the Shape of a Dragon came before Philip at a Festival and kissed Olympia.
- How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.
- Pe letter of Alexandere
- HOW ALEXANDER PUT HEART INTO HIS HOST ANEW.
- HOW THE MESSENGERS OF DARIUS GAVE ALEXANDER THE LETTER, AND HIS ANSWER.
- HOW ALEXANDER ENCAMPED BY THE STREAM GRANCUS.
- THE LETTER SENT BY DARIUS TO PORUS KING OF INDIA.

[How Anectanabus fled Egypt to Macedonia]

The most learned Egyptians who know the size of the earth, the waves of the sea, and the order of the heavens (betokening the way of the stars and the turning of the skies), have bequeathed these things to the whole world through the highness and the wisdom of magic knowledge. And they tell of a king of that land, by name Anectanabus, great in understanding, and full of love in astrology and mathematics. Now, upon a day it happened that a messenger came, and said unto him that Artaxerxes, king of the Persians, was drawing nigh towards him with a very great force of foes. Yet he did not call out his army, nor get ready his advance. Instead of this, he hurried into his bed-chambers in his palace, and, taking down a brazen shell, which was full of rain-water, and holding in his hand a brazen rod, sought by magic spells to summon the devils. By which wizardry he felt, in the shell itself, the fleets sailing over him amid fearful affray.

Now there were lords of Anectanabus set in sway over his armies to guard the Persian border.

And one hapless man coming to him, besought him: 'O most mighty King Anectanabus, there ariseth against thee Artaxerxes, the king of the Persians, with an untold horde of foes and strange races. For they are Parthians, Medes, Persians, Syrians, Mesopotamians, Brapes, Phares, Argiri, Chaldaeans, Bachiri, Confires, Hircanians, and Agiophii, and many other folks coming from Eastern lands.' On hearing this, Anectanabus said, sighing: 'The trust that I gave to thee, heed thou right well; yet thy prowess hath not been the prowess of a doughty man, but the doings of a cowardly fellow. For worth showeth itself, not in the greatness of the folk, but in the steadfastness of their souls. Dost thou not know one lion putteth many does to flight?' And having said these words, he went into his chamber alone, and made brazen shells, and filled them with rain-water, and held in his hand a palm rod, and gazing into this, began, as hard as he could, to utter spells, and beheld how the Egyptians were being smitten down at the onslaught of the Barbarians' ships.

Forthwith he changed his dress, and shaved his head and beard, and took gold as much as he might bear, and which might be needful to him to busy himself with wizardry. And thus he fled from Egypt, near by Pelusium. And at length, coming into Ethiopia, he put on linen apparel, [and] in the guise of an Egyptian seer went into Macedonia. And there he sate himself, and before all the Greeks, and in their sight was soothsaying. But the Egyptians, when they saw how Anectanabus was not at Court, went to Serapis, who was their greatest god, and besought him that he might give them answer as to Anectanabus their king. And Serapis replied: 'Anectanabus, your king, is gone from Egypt because of Artaxerxes, the king of the Persians, who will subdue you unto his lordship. Nevertheless, when a short time hath flown by, he will come back to shake off his thraldom, and will be avenged on your foes, and yoke them under you.' And as soon as they had got this answer, they made a kingly statue out of a black stone, in honour of Anectanabus. And they wrote on it, at his feet, this saying, that it might be handed down for their offspring to think of. But Anectanabus remained in Macedonia, nor was he known.

How Anectanabus went up to the Palace to Olympia the Queen.

In the meantime, Philip, king of Macedonia, went out to battle. But Anectanabus went forward to the palace, that he might behold Olympia the queen, and see how fair she was. And when he saw her, his heart was smitten with love of her, and stretching forth his hand, he greeted her, saying, 'Hail, Queen of Macedonia,' disdaining to call her 'lady'. And she, Olympia, answered him, speaking thus: 'Hail, master, come thou and sit near.' And when he sate thus, Olympia asked many things of him. 'Art thou not an Egyptian?' And Anectanabus answered: 'The word thou saidst was kingly, when thou didst name the Egyptians. For the Egyptians are wise, and read dreams, understand the birds of the air in their flight, open up the hidden places, and tell the fate of those newborn, babes. Of all these things, as a seer, I, too, have knowledge.' And Olympia saw how he gazed upon her, and spoke, 'Master, of what dost thou bethink thee, who thus lookest on me?' And Anectanabus answered, 'I call to my mind many answers of the gods. One answer had been that I was to look upon a queen.' And saying this, he drew forth from his breast a cleansing tablet of bronze and ivory, inwrought with gold and silver, and on its face were three whirls. The first contained in itself the Twelve Minds, and in the third, sun and moon were fashioned. Next to them, was seen a chain of ivory, and from it he pulled forth sever wonder-bright stars, that told the hours and birth-dooms of men, and seven carven stones, and two stones for the saving men whole.

And Olympia beheld these things, and said: 'Master, if thou wouldst I should believe thee, tell me the year, the day and hour of the king's birth.' And upon this, he said to the queen, 'Wishest thou to hear nothing else from me?' Quoth the queen, 'Tell me what shall fall out betwixt Philip and me, for men say that, when Philip shall come from the war, he will thrust me forth, and take another mate.' And Anectanabus answered: 'They prate of many things untruly; but ere a long time pass, it shall be as they say.' And the queen answered: 'I beg thee, master, unveil me all the truth.' Thereupon Anectanabus: 'One of the mightiest gods shall share thy bed and uphold thee through all thy thrivings and downfalls, even if they be overstrong.' Olympia replied: 'I beseech thee, say what shape this god shall put on?' Anectanabus replied: 'Neither young, nor old; his beard besprinkled with white hairs. Wherefore, if this please thee, be ready for him, for at night shalt thou see him, and in thy sleep shall he lie by thee.' The queen said: 'If I behold this, neither as a seer, nor as godly, but, as the god himself, will I worship' [thee]. And at once Anectanabus said, 'Fare thee well, O queen.' After this Anectanabus, leaving the palace, and walking straight forth to the city's camp in a desert spot, tore up herbs, and ground them, and took their juice, and wrought spells and other like things of the fiend, that in that same night Olympia might behold the god Hamon lying beside her, and saying to her thereafter, 'Woman, thou hast conceived him who shall beshield thee.' And, on the morrow, Olympia awoke from her slumbers, and called Anectanabus to her, and told him of the dream she had beheld. Then Anectanabus said: 'If thou wilt give me room in the palace, thou shalt see the god himself, face to face. For that god shall come to thee in the shape of a great snake, and soon after, taking on a manlike body, he shall seem to be in my likeness.' And to this Olympia said: 'As thou hast spoken, master, do. Take to thyself a bed in the palace, and canst thou make good the truth thereof, I will deem thee to be the father of the boy.' And, about the first watch of the night, Anectanabus took on him, through spells and wizardry to be changed into the shape of a great snake, and whistling on to the bedchamber of Olympia, to fly through. And he entered her room, and rose on to her bed, and with great love began to kiss her, and the kisses betokened to her who he was. And when he rose up from the bed, he smote her on the womb, and spake: 'This begetting be thy avenging, and in no wise may it be upbraided of men.'

On such a fashion was Olympia cheated, who had lain with a man as though he had been a god. And in the morning, Anectanabus went down from the palace, and the queen was with child.

And when she began to be big, she called unto her Anectanabus, saying: 'Master, tell me, what doom will Philip wreak on me, when he shall come back?' And Anectanabus said to her, 'Be not afraid: god Hamon will champion thee.' And with these words he left the palace, and went outside the town, to a barren spot. And, uprooting grasses, rubbed them, and grated them, and took their sap. And he caught a sea-bird, and began to sing over the herbs, and anoint the herbs with the sap. This he did in fellowship with the fiends, that he might betray King Philip through a dream. And this was brought about. That same night the god Hamon appeared to Philip, in

The Prose Life of Alexander

a dream, lying with his wife Olympia, and, the night ended, he saw him touch her womb, and seal it with a golden ring. And on the ring there was a stone, and graven on this a lion's head, and the chariot of the sun, and a very sharp sword. And he said to her: 'Woman, thou hast conceived thy saviour.' And Philip awoke from his sleep, and calling Arideus, made known to him the dream, and what he had seen. And Arideus said: 'Philip, not from man, but from a god, hath thy wife conceived. In truth, the lion's head and the chariot of the sun and the sharp sword, foretoken that he, who shall be born of her, shall journey to the East whence riseth the sun! And with the sharp sword shall he underyoke to himself the nations of the whole world.'

How Anectanabus in the Shape of a Mighty Dragon went to the fore in front of Philip and overcame his Enemies in the Fray.

In the meanwhile, King Philip fought and won. For there appeared in the battle a dragon, who went before him and laid low his foes. And when he came back to Macedonia, he met and kissed Olympia. And King Philip gazed upon her, and said, 'To whom, O Olympia, hast thou given thyself up. For sinned thou hast, yet not sinned, for as much as thou hast brooked frowardness from a god. But I have seen all that has been done by a god on thee, in a dream: therefore be blameless in my eyes, and the eyes of all men!'

How Anectanabus in the Shape of a Dragon came before Philip at a Festival and kissed Olympia.

On a certain day Philip was feasting with his lords and chieftains of Macedonia and with Olympia his wife. And Anectanabus through wizardry took on himself the shape of a dragon, and, passing through the midst of the couch whereon they lay apart, whistled so loudly that all the revellers were stricken with fear, and the greatest dread, and coming near Olympia, he put his head on her breast and kissed her. Philip, seeing this, spoke to Olympia, 'Woman, thee and all I tell; beheld this dragon, what time I laid my enemies low.'

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.

And a few days after this Philip the king was sitting in his palace, and there appeared unto him a little and most gentle bird, which flew into his bosom and laid an egg. And the egg, falling to the ground, was broken. And at once there crept forth from it a very little snake. And it turned around, wishful to go into the egg, but, before it might put in its head, it was quenched. And Philip, seeing this, was heavily distressed, and called to him Arideus, and showed him the monstrous thing he had seen. And Arideus said to him, 'King Philip, a son shall be born to thee, who shall reign after thy death, and shall fare forth over the whole world and sway all peoples, and ere he come back to the land of his birth, shall die by a most swift death.'

And as the time of child-birth was drawing nigh, Olympia began to feel pain, and her womb was tormented, and she bade Arideus be called to her, and spoke with him: 'Master, my womb is wrenched with very heavy labours.' Anectanabusⁿ¹ then spake: 'Raise thyself awhile from thy throne, for in this hour the elements are troubled by the sun.' This was done, and the pain went from her. And soon after, Anectanabus said to her, 'Sit down, O Queen!' and she sate herself and bore a child. And as soon as the boy was fallen on to the earth, a mighty thunderclap and thunderbolts, with tokens and lightnings came about throughout the whole world. Then night was spread forth and lasted, it reaching unto the last hour of day. Then parts of the clouds fell down in Italy. And seeing these signs, Philip the king was afrighted, and went in to Olympia, and said: 'I deemed that this little babe should in no wise be fostered. For he is not conceived of me, but of some god, for at his birth I beheld the heavens changed. Yet let him be fostered in my memory, as though he were my son, and follow in the stead of a son I begot through another wife.' And when he said this, she handled the babe with great care. And the boy's face had the likeness neither of father nor mother. The hair on his head was shaggy as a lion's. His eyes glistened like the stars, but each beamed with its own hue, one black, the other yellow. And his teeth were sharp, and his eager rush as a lion's. His shape foreshadowed his energy and forethought. By his parents he was called Alexander. In the schools, and wheresoever he sate, he strove with them in letters and disputations, and by his keen swiftness won the mastership. And when he was twelve years old, he was beweaponed for battle, and excelled in arms. And Philip, seeing how quick he was, praised him, and said: 'Son Alexander, I love thy speed, and wit of mind for its work. But I am sore and feel foolish that thy form is no unlike mine.' And Olympia heard this, and was greatly afraid. And she called hither Anectanabus, and said: 'Master, learn from me what Philip misdeemeth. For he said to Alexander, "Son, I love thy speed and wit of mind. But, that thy shape is unlike mine, I am saddened."' And Anectanabus began to think, and said: 'His thought is nowise harmful.' And gazing aloft as he was wont, he looked on a certain star, and riddled out his wish. And when Alexander heard this, he spake: 'The star thou seest is seen in the heavens?' And Anectanabus replied: 'My son, it is.' Alexander said: 'Canst thou show it unto me?' Anectanabus answered: 'Follow me in the hour of night, and I will show it unto thee.' Alexander said: 'Thy fate is not known to thee, or uncertain?' Anectanabus replied: 'Enough of this.' Alexander said: 'I would fain know it.' Anectanabus answered: 'In truth know that from my son shall come my death.' This said, as he went down from the palace, Alexander followed him in the hour of the evening without the city. And when they arrived up on to the ditch of the city, Anectanabus spake: 'Son Alexander, gaze thou on the stars; look how the star of Hercules is perplexed, and how Mercury's star is blithe. If I see Jove sparkling, my doom telleth me of my coming death at the hands of my son.' At this sight Alexander came up nigh to him, and made an onslaught on him, making him fall ⁿ² down in to þe dyke, and thare he felle, was all to-frusched; and þan Alexander said vn-to hym one this wyse. 'Fals wreche,' quop he, 'that presume to tell thyng þat ere to com, rete als þou were a prophete, and knewe þe preuate of heuen. Now may þou see that þou lye, And þare-fore þou arte worthy to hafe swilke a dede.' And than Anectanabus ansuerd, said: 'I wyste wele ynoghe,' quop he, 'þat I scholde die swylke a dede. Talde I note lange are to þe, that myn awenn son schulde slae me ?' 'Whi, ame I thi son ?' þan quop Alexandire: 'aa, for sothe,' quop Anectanabus, 'I gat the.' And wit þat word, he alde þe gaste. And than Alexander hert tendird on his Fader, And he tuke hym vp on his bakke, and bare hym to þe palace. And when his moder Olympias saw hym, Scho said vn-till hym. 'Son,' quop scho, 'what es that?' 'Als thi foly hase made it,' quop he, 'so it es.' And than he gert berye

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.

The Prose Life of Alexander

hym wirchipfully.

In the mene tyme, a prynce of Macedoyne broghte þe kyng a horse vn–temed, a grete and a faire; he was tyed on ilke side wit chynes of Iren, for he walde wery men and ete þam. This ilke horse was called Buktiphalas, bi–cause of his vgly luyngge, For he hade a heued lyke a bulle, knottills in his frount, as þay had hene þe bygynnyng of hournes. And when þe kyng saw þe bewtee of this horse, he said till his seruandis, 'Take this horse and putte hym in a stable, and makes barre of yren be–fore hym, that thefe and oþer mysdoers, þat sall be done to dede, may be putt in–till hym, to be slaen of hym. And þay didd soo. In þe mene tyme þe kyng Philippe had ane answeere of his goddes, that hee schulde regne nexte after hym, the whilke myghte ryde that wylde horse wit–owtten harme. So it felle þat Alexander þe whilke was þan twelue ere alde, wexe strange rete hardy, was wysse and discrete; for he was wele lered connand in all þe seuen sciences, þe whilke twa philosophirs had teched hym : þat es to say, Arestotle Calistene. And one a day, as Alexander passed for–by þe place þare als þe foresaide stode, he loked in betwene þe barre of yrnne and saw, bifore þe horse, mens hend and fete, oþer of þaire membris, liggand scatered here thare, and he had grete wonder þare–off. And he putt in his hande bitwene þe barre, And þe horse strekede oute his nekke, als ferre als he myghte, and likked Alexander hand; and he knelid down on his kneesse, and bi–helde Alexander in þe vesage langly. And Alexander vnderstode wele þe will of þe horse, and opynd the barre, and went into þe horse, and straked him softly on þe bakke wit his rite hand; And belyfe þe horse wexe wonderly meke till Alexander; and rite as a honde will couche when his maister biddes hym, so dide he till Alexander; and Alexander lukede besides hym, sawe a sadill a brydell hyng thare; and he tuke dydþam on hym, leppe one his bakke rade furthe on hym. And when the kyng Philippe sawe hym do so, he said vn–till hym 'Mi son Alexander' quop he: 'All þe ansuers of our godde are fulfillede in the! For when I ame dede, þou mon regne after me' And Alexander ansuerd; said 'I pray the, Fader,' quop he, 'ordeyne me horse men, for I gaa seke dede of arme.' 'For sothe' quop þe kyng wit a glade chere, 'Take þe a hundreth horse, and xl thosande pounce of golde; and take wit the of þe worthieste knyghte þat lange to me, and wendis furthe.' And he diddso.

And he tuke wit hym also a philosopre þat highte Eufestius, whilke he trausted mekill in, And twelue childe þat he chese to be his playfers, and went hym furthe, and come in–till a contreth þat es called Polipone. And when the kyng of þe land herd tell, þat swilke men ware entred in–to his rewme in swilke araye, he rayسد a gret Oste, and come agaynes Alexander for to feghte wit hym. And when he come nerehand hym, he said vn–till hym. 'Tell me' quop he 'whatt þou ert ?' And Alexander ansuerd 'I am Alexander' quop he 'þe son of Philippe, þe kyng of Macedoyne.' 'And what hope þou þat I be ?' quop þe kyng till hym. And Alexander ansuerd. 'Pou ert kyng of Arridouns' quop he. 'Neuer–þe–lesse, if all I do þe þat wirchippe þat I calle þe kyng, empride þe nathynge þare–of. For men see ofte tymes men þat ere in heghe astate com to lawe degree, men þat ere in lawe degree, come till heghe astate.' 'Pou sais rite wele' quop þe kyng. 'Take hede to thyn awen selfe!' And Alexander ansuerd said 'Ga hethen away fra me' quop he 'for þou can say noghte to mee, ne I hafe noghte at do wit þe.' And þan þe kyng was worder wrathe, And said till Alexander 'Luke on me' quop he 'þat spekes to the: Fore I swere the be my Fader hele, I anes spitte in thi face, þou schale dye.' And wit þat he spitte at Alexander, said: 'Take þe þare, þou biche whelpe, þat þe seme till hafe.' And Alexander stepped furthe, said vn–till hym. 'For þou' quop he 'hase dispised me, by–cause I ame littill; I swere þe, bi þe pete of my Fader, by my moders wambe, in þe whilke I was consayued of godd Amon, þat þou schall see mee, are oughte lange, in þi rewme, redi to feghte wit þe; and owþer I schall wyn thi rewme wit dynte of swerd, brynge it vnder my subieccionn, or þou schall make me subiecte vn–to þe.' And þare þay assignede day of Batelle; and ayther of þam went hame fra oþer.

And agaynes þe day of Batelle, Alexander, bi ascent ordynance of kyng Philippe, gadird a grete Oste, went to the place þare þe Batelle was assigned, and fand all redy þare, kyng Nicoll and his oste. And þay trumped vp appon bathe þe parties, and bigan to feghte, many men ware slaen on bathe þe syde. Bot at þe laste, Alexander hade þe felde, tuke kyng Nicholl, gart smytte of his heued, went in–till his land, and conquered it; and his knyghtes went and coround hym kyng þare–off. And sythen he went hame till his fader, kyng Philippe, and fand hym sittand at the mete at a bridale: For he had put away fra hym his wyfe Olympias, Alexander moder, and taken hym an–oþer þat highte Cleopatra; And Alexander went in–to þe haulle, and said vn–to þe kyng Philipp: 'Fader,' quop he, 'I pray ow, þat for a rewarde of my firste iournee þat I hafe now made, ee graunte me to take my Moder Olympias agayne vn–to ow, do to hir as awe to be done to a qwenne, rathere þan I gyffe hir to anoþer kyng; so þat I be note oure enemy for euer. For this weddyng, þat e hafe now made here, es vnlefull!' When he hadd said thir wordes, ane of þe þat satt at þe kynges burde, whase name was Lesias, ansuerd said to þe kyng:

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwit^h died.

The Prose Life of Alexander

'lord' quop he 'þou schall hafe a son of Cleopatra, and he schall regne after þe !' Alexander, than, was gretly greuede at his wordes, and wit a wardrere þat he hade in his hande, he went till hym and kellede hym. When kyng Pilippe sawe this, he was gretly stirred, and rase vp, gatt a swerde ranne to-warde Alexander, for to hafe smytten hym. Bot onane he felle down; and ay þe nerre Alexander þat he drewe, þe mare he felle to the erthe rite as he bene ferd. And þan Alexander said vn-till hym: 'Philippe' quop he 'how es it soo, that þou, þat hase wonn wit dynt of swerde alle Grece, ne hase now na strenghe to stande on thi fete.' And þan all þe haulle was troubbled, and the brydale letted. And Alexander went abowte þe haulle, and keste doun þe bourde wit þe mete, þe drynke þat ware appon þam, and tuke Cleopatra, and schotte hir oute at þe haulle dore. And the kyng Philippe, for sorowe þat he tuke till, felle grefe seke. And a littill afterwarde, Alexander went till hym for to vesett hym comforthe hym, and said vn-till hym 'Philippe,' quop he, 'if all it be note semely, þat I calle þe be þi propre name; neuere-þe-lesse, note as þi son, bot as þi gud frend, I sall telle the myn avice. It es fully my consaile þat þou reconnselle agayne vn-to the my lady, my Moder Olympias, and at þou grefe þe na-thinge at þe dede of Lesias, ne take na heuynes to the þare-fore. For vnkyndely me thynnke þat þou didd, and vngudely, þat þou drewe þi swerde for to smytte me þare-wit.' And when Philippe herd þir wordes, his hert tendird, he bigane to wepe. And þan Alexander went till his Moder Olympias, and said vn-till hir: 'Be note ferde' quop he 'ne be note heuy to my fader, for if alle thi trespas be preuee, note knawen, neuer-þe-lesse þou erte in party to blame.' And when he hade sayde thus, he ledd hir furthe to þe kyng Philippe. And he tuk kyssid hir, and thus was scho reconnselde vn-till hym agayne.

After þis, þare come messengers Fra Darius, þe emperour of Perse, to kyng Philippe, and asked hym tribute. And Alexander answerd to thir messengers, saide, 'Saise to Darius, our lorde,' quop he, 'þat sen þe tyme þat Philippe son was waxen of age þe hen þat ay es waxen barayne consumed awaye, and so es Darius pryuede of his trybute.' And [when] thir messengers herd thir wordes; þay hade grete wounder of þam of þe witt þe wisdom of Alexander.

In þe mene tyme tythyng come to kyng Philippe, þat Ermony, þe whilke bi-fore was suget vn-till hym, was rebelle raysse agaynes hym. And he garte semble a grete Oste, and sent Alexander thedir þare wit to feghte wit þam, and to putt þam agayne vnder his subieccionn. Alexander thanwent wit this Oste till Ermony broghte it agayne in subieccion, as it was bi-fore.

An in þe mene tyme, whils he was þare, a lorde of Macedoyne þe whilke highte Pansamy, a strange man a balde, suget vn-to Philippe, and bade of lange tyme couette for to hafe þe quene Olympias, conspirede agaynes þe kyng, and come with a grete multytude of folke appon þe kyng, to for-do hym. And when tythyng here of come to kyng Philippe, he went to mete hym in þe felde wit a fewe menea. And when he sawe þe grete multitude þat Pansamy hade wit hym, he turnedfledd, and Pansamy persued after hym, and ouerhied hym, and strake hym thurghe wit a spere, and itt ife all he were greuosity wonded, he dyed note alsone, bot he laye halfe dede in the waye. And than þe Macedoynes, þat wenede he bade bane dade, made mekill sorowe. And when þis iournee was done Pansamy was gretly empridede þare offe, went in to þe kynges palace for to take þe qwene Olympias oute of it and hafe hir with hym. And euen þe same tyme, Alexander come fra Hermony, sawe swylke trouble styrrynge in the rewme, and hyed hym faste towarde þe kynges palace, and when Olympias herd telle þat Alexander hir son had þe victorie of his enemys, was comande nere, Scho went furthe of þe palace at a preuee posterne to mete hir son, and to welcome hym hame. And alsone als scho come nere hym, scho criede appon hym said.

'A A, my son Alexander, whare es þe grace þe fortune þat oure goddes highte the, þat es to say, þat þou scholde alwaye ouercome thynn enemys note be ouercomen, þat Pansamy hase one þis wyse slaen thi Fader.' And alsone the worde come to Pansamy þat Alexander was comen, and he went furthe of palace for to mete hym. And also faste als Alexander sawe hym, he oute wit a swerd and clafe his heued in to þe tethe, slewe hym. And ane of þe Oste said till Alexander: 'Philippe þi fader' quop he, 'lyas dade in þe felde.' And þan Alexander went thedir thare he laye, and saw hym euen at þe dyinge. And þan he began faste for to wepe. And Philippe loked apon hym, said 'A A, my dere son Alexander,' quop he, 'wit a glade hert [I] may now dye, for þat þou so sounne hase venged my dede,' euen wit þat worde he alde þe gaste. And Alexander wirchipfully gert hym be entered.

When kyng Philippe was entered, Alexander went and sett hym in his trone, and gerte calle by-fore hym alle þe folke þat was gaderd thedir, lordes oper, and said vn-to þam on þis wyse. 'Men,' quop he, 'of Macedoyne of Tracy, and of Grece byhalde þe feigure of Alexander and putte oute of our hertes drede of alle our enemys. For sekerly, and e will take gude hertis to ow, thurghe þe helpe of oure goddis he schall hafe þe ouerhande of all oure neghtebours, and our name schall spred ouer alle the werlde. And þare-fore ilkane of ow þat hase Armour, makes

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.

The Prose Life of Alexander

it redy, and he þat hase nane come to my palace I sall gerre delyuer hym all þat hym nedis, and ilk a man make hym redy to þe werre.' And when þe lordes and knyghtis þat ware of grete age, herd thir wordes þay ansuerd Alexander, said vn–till hym: 'lorde,' quop thaye, 'we hafe seruede oure fader a longe tyme traueled wit hym in his werres, þare–fore we ere now so bryssed in armes þat þare [es] no myghte lefte in vs for to suffre disesse þat often tymes falles to men of werre. For we ere streken in grete age. And þare–fore, if it be plesynge vn–to ow, we consaile ow we beseken owe, that e chese ow ong lordes ong knyghtes, þat ere listy men able for to suffre disesse for to be wit ow. For here we giffe vp att armes if it be our will forsakes þam for euer.' And þan Alexander answerd said: 'I will rather,' quop he, 'chese þe sadnesse of an alde wyse man than þe vnavesy lightnesse of onge men. For ong men often tymes traystand to mekill in thaire awenn doghtynes thurgh þaire awen foly ere mescheued. Bot alde men wirkes all by consaile by witte.' When he had said thir wordes all men alowed his hie witte and hally þay assentede to hym for to do his lyste.

Sone after Alexander assemblede a grete Oste, went bi Schippe to–warde Ytaly, and als he come by Calcedoyne, he assaylled it rete strangly, and þe folke of Calcedoyne went to þe walles of þe Citee and defendid manly. Bot at the laste Alexander wan the Citee, and fra thethyn he Schippede in–till Italy. And alsone als þe Romaines herd of his comynge þay were wonder ferde for hym, and the grete lordes of þe lande tuke fourty thowsande of besande and I^ccorounes of golde, and went vn–till hym, and presant hym wit þam bysoughte hym þat he scholde note werrey appon þam, ne do þam na harme. And than Alexander tuke trybute of þe Romaines, and of alle the folkes þat duelt bitwixe that þe weste Occeane, þe whilke regione es callede Europe, lefte þam in gude pesse.

Fra thethyn he Schippede in–till Affrice, in thee whilke he fand bot fewe þat rebelled agaynes hym and þare–fore als [men] swa saye, eneil sodeynly he conquerid it broghte it vnder his subieccion. And fra Affric he went by Schippe till ane Ile, þat es called Frontides, for to consaile wit a godd þat þay called Amon. And as Alexander his men went to–warde þe temple of þis for–said godd, þay mett in þe waye a grete hert þe whilke Alexander bad his men sla wit arowes. And þay schott at hym; bet nane of þam myghte hitt hym. And þan Alexander tuke a bowe schotte at hym hitt hym slewe hym. And þan Alexander went in–to þe temple, made sacrafyce of þis hert vn–to godd Amon, and by–soughte hym þat he schulde gyffe hym ansuares. When Alexander hade made his prayers þare to godd Amon, he went wit his Oste in–till a place þat highte Taphoresey, In þe whilke were feftene gude townues, þay bade twelne grete reuers þat rane in–to þe see, and at þe entree of þam in–to þe see þare was drawn ouer grete chynes of yryne, and thare Alexandir made Sacrafice till his godde. And on þe same nyghte, a godd þat [hight] Serapis apperid vn–till hym in his slepe, cledd in riche clothyng in ane horrible forme a dredefull, and said vn–till hym. 'Alexander,' quop he, 'may þou take þis montayne on þi schulder bere it a–way?' Quop Alexander, 'how myghte any man do pat?' And Serapis ansuerd said, 'righte as þis montayne sall neuer wit–owten end be remowed hethen, so thi name thi dedes schall be made mynde of to the worldes end.' And than Alexander prayed hym þat he walde prophycye hym what kyns dede he scholde die. Serapis ansuerd and said, 'It es noghte spedfull till a man to knawe his paynefull endynge. For if he knewe it, peraventure, he scholde neuer hafe Ioye in his hert. Neuer þe lesse bi–cause þou hase prayede me to telle þe, I sall say the. After a drynke þou schall take thi dede. For in thi outhe þou sall make thyn endynge. Bot spirre me noþer þe tyme ne þe houre when it schal be, For I will on na wyse telle it to the. For–whi godde of þe este partie of þe werdle sall telle the alle thi werde.' When Alexander wakkened of his dreame, he was reghte heuy, and sent þe maste substance of his Oste to þe Cite of Askalon and bad þaim habide hym thare, and hym selfe a certane of mene wit hym habade thare he garte make a Citee called it Alexander after his awenn name.

In the mene tyme, Egipcyens herd of þe comynges of Alexander, þay went agaynes hym submytt þam vn–till hym resayffed hym wirchipfully. And when Alexander come in–till Egippte, he fand ane ymage of a kyng made of blake stane curiously coruen, and he askede þe Egipcians whase ymage it was, and þay ansuerd said, 'It es þe ymage,' quop þay, 'of Anectanabus that was kynge of Egippte note lange sythen gane, þe wyseste þe worthiest þat euer was þare–in.' For sothe quop Alexander, 'Auctanabus was my Fader.' And þan he knelid down with grete reuerence kyssed þe ymage. Fra thethyn he went wit his Oste to Surry. But þe Surriens agayne–stude hym and faghte wit hym and slewe many of his knyghtes. Neuer þe lesse Alexander had þe victorye. And þan he went to Damaske, Ensegged it wanne it, and fra thethyn he went to Sydon wan it. And þan he went vnto þe Citee of Tyre and layde Ensegge abowte it, and [in] þis Ensegge he laye many a day. And thare his Oste suffred many dysesse. For þat Cite was so strange in it–selfe by–cause of þe ground, þat it was sett apon, and by–cause of grete

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.

The Prose Life of Alexander

towres many þat ware abowte it, and also bicause it was so enclosed wit the see þat it myghte noghte lightly be wonnen by nane assawte. Alexander þan vmbithoghte hym, one what wyse he myghte best com to for to destruy þis citee, and he gerte make a grete bastell of tree, and sett it apon schippes in þe see euen forgaynes þe cete, so þat þare myghte no shippe come nere the hauen for to vetaille þe Citee or suppoell it wit men by—cause of þe bastelle. In þe mene tyme Alexander Oste hade grete defawte of vetaylls, and þan he sent lettres vnto Iadus, þat at that tyme was bischoppe gouernoure of þe Iewes, and prayede hym for to suppoell hym wit som men, and also þat he walde send sum vetails for hym his Oste, and he scholde pay for þam wit a glade chere, and þat he scholde also send hym the tribute þat he scholde gyffe Darius þe emperour of Perse. For hym ware better, he said, hafe his frenchippe þan þe frenchipe of Darius. The Bischope þan of þe Iewes ansuerd þe messangers þat broghte hym þe lettres said 'I hafe,' quop he, 'made athe to Darius, þat, whils he leffe, I schall neuer bere armes agaynes hym, and þarefore I ne may note do agaynes myn Athe.' The Messagers þan went till Alexander talde hym þe bischopes ansuere, and he was greued said 'I make myn avowe,' quop he, 'vntill oure goddes, þat I schall take swilke vengeance on þe Iewes þat I sall make þam to knawe, whethir it es better to þam to be obeisant vn—to [my ?] commandement, or vn—to þe kynges of Perse.' And he callede a duke, þat highte Melagere, and wit vcmen of armes, and badd þam gaa in to þe vale of Iosaphat, þe whilke was full of beste brynge of these beste to þe Oste for to vetaille þam wit. And ane Sampson, þat knewe þe cuntre wele was þaire gyde. Þay went in to þe vale, and gadird to gedir catell wit—owte nombir be—gan for to dryfe on þam. And he þat was lorde of þe cuntre, Theosellas bi name, raysed a grete multitude of folke and mett þam faughte wit þam slewe many of þam. Bot Melagere his felaws at þat tym had þe better. And ane þat highte Caulus went baldly to Theosellas, smate of his heued. All this was done bot a littill fra þe citee of Gadir. And þan Bertyne, lorde of þe citee, seand this, was gretely stirrede and ischewede owte of þe citee wit xxx feghtyng men and sett vp a schowte apon the Macedoynes alle at anes, that alle þe erthe trembled wit—alle. And when þe Macedoynes saw that grete multytude of folke com appon þam, þay were rete ferde. And þan Melagere walde hafe sent a Messangere to þaire lorde Alexander, for to come socoure þam, bot he mygte fynd na man þat walde vndertake þe Message. Than thir twa batalles met Samen faughte to—gedir, and thare was Sampson slaen, and Bertyne. And þe Macedoynes wit þe grete multitude of þaire enemys ware dreuen abakke, and lyke for to be dreuen abakke discomfites. And ane of þe grekkes, þat highte Arttes, seyng þe meschefe þay stode in, wann hym owte of the Bataile went in alle þe haste, þat he myghte, till Alexander talde hym þat þe Grekkes þe Macedoynes ware in poynte to be mescheuede, bot if he suppoellde þam þe tittere. And than Alexander lefte þe segge of Tyre, and went wit his Oste to þe vale of Iosaphat, and fand his men rite harde by—stadde wit þaire enemys. And he and his Oste vmbylapped alle þaire enemys, and daunge þam doun slewe þam ilke a moder son. And when he had so done he turned agayne vn—to Tyre, and fand the Bastelle, þat he hade made in þe See, dongen doune to þe grounde. For alson als Alexandere was gane fra Tire to þe vale of Iosaphat, Balan þat was lorde of Tyre ischewid oute of þe citee wit thee folke þare—of, assailed the bastell manfully, and tuk it dange it doune. And when Alexander sawe that, he was gretly angerde, and his hert wonder heuy, and so ware alle þe Macedoynes and the Grekes. In so mekill thay ware nerehand in dispeire for to wyn þe citee, and ware in poynte to hafe riffen up þe segge. And one þe nyghte nexte suande, Alexander, als he laye slept, dremyd þat he hadd in his hand a grape, þe whilke hym thoghte he keste downe vnder his fete, and trade þare—one, alsone þare ran oute of it a grete dele of wyne. And when Alexander wakned, he called till hym a Philosophre talde hym his dreame. And þe Philosophre ansuerde, 'be balde,' quop he, 'lefe note to ensegge Tyre, for þe grape þat þou helde in thi hand, and keste vnder thi fete, and trade þare—one, es þe Citee of Tyre, þe whilk þou sall wynn thurg strent and trede it with thi fote, and þare—fore be na—thyng abaste.' When Alexander herd thire wordes, he was gretly comforthed, and vmbithoghte hym one whate wyse he myghte gette this Citee.

And than he garte make anoþer bastelle in þe see, grettere, hyere, and strangere þan þe toper was. For it was hiere þan þe hegheste towre of þe citee. And þis basteýe was tyede wit a hundrethe ankers. Þan Alexander gert armede hyn suerely wele, wente by hym ane vp apon this bastelle, and badd all his men þat þay schulde make þam redy for to feghte to giffe assawte to þe citee. And alsone als þay sawe hym entire in to þe citee, þay scholde all at anes presse to þe walles, and scale þam, and clymbe ouer þe walles baldely wyn þe citee. And when all men weren redy, hee gerte smyte soundere þe cabills þat þe bastelle was tyed wit, þe waves of þe see bare it to þe walles of þe Citee. And Alexander delyuerlye stert apon [þe] walles, whare Balan stode, and ran apon hym slew hym and keste hym ouer þe walles in—to þe dyke of þe citee. And when þe Macedoynes þe Grekes sawe Alexander entir in—to þe citee, þay schouffed to þe walles all at anes, and clambe ouer, sum wit leddirs sum on oþer wyse

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.

The Prose Life of Alexander

wit-owtten any resistance. For þe Tyreyenes was so ferde bycause of þe dedde of Balan þaire duc þat þay ne durste noghte turne agayne no defende þe walle. And on this wyse was þe citee taken and dounge donne to þe erthe.

Fra þe segge of Tyre Alexander his men went to þe citee of Gaa and assailedit, wit schorte while þay wan it. And Fra thethyn hyed hym towarde Ierusalem for to ensegge it.

Qwhen þe Bischope of þe Iewes herde telle þat Alexander was commaund toward Ierusalem, he gert call bifore hym all þe iewes þat ware in þe citee, and talde þam þe thyngge þat ware talde hym. And sythen he commandid þam þat þay schuld com to þe temple, and be þare in praynge Fastynge and wakyngge in sacrafice makyng vn-to godd, bisekand hym of helpe socoure. And þay did soo. And on þe nyghte nexte after, when þe Bischope hadd made his sacrafice, and was lyand in prayers, he fell on slomeryng and ane Angelle appered vn-till hym, and sayd, 'Be note ferd,' quop he, 'bot swythe gere araye honestly all þe stretis of (þe) citee, and caste open the ates, and warne all þe folke þat þay aray þam in whitte clethyngge, and thi-selfe alle þe prestis reueste ow solempnely, and to-morne arely wende furthe of þe citee agaynes Alexander in processiou. For hym by-houe regne be lorde of alle þe werlde. Bot at þe laste þe wrethe of godd sall falle apon hym.' When þe bischoppe wakened of his slepe, he called till hym þe iewes and talde þam his reuelacion, and bad þam do all als þe Angelle hade schewed hym. And þay did so. For þay arayed þe strete of þe cetee and cledde þam in whitte clethyngge, and the bischope þe prestis reueste þam, and bathe thay and alle þe folke went furthe of þe citee till a place whare þe temple all þe citee may be seen. And þare þay habade þe comynge of Alexander. And when Alexander come nere þis foresaid place, and sawe be-for hym swilke a multitude of folke, cledde alle in whitte, and þe preste arayed solempnely in riche vestymentis, and þe byschope also in his pontyfcales and a mytir one his heued, and þare-apon a plate of golde, whare-one was wretyn þe name of grete godd Tetragramaton, he commaunded all his men þat þay schulde halde þam by-hynd hym, and habude till he com to þam. And he lighte off his horse, and went bi hym ane to þe iewes, And knelid down to þe erthe and wirchippede þe hye name of godd, þat he saw þar wretyn apon þe bischopes heued. And þan alle þe iewes knelid doun saluste Alexander and cried all wit a voyce: 'lyff lyffe,' quop þay, 'grete Alexander, lyffe, lyffe the gretteste Emperour of þe werlde, lyffe he þat sall ouer-com all men and note be ouercomen. Prynce maste glorious and maste worthy of all þe prince þat regne apon erthe.' When þe kyngge of Surry saw þis, þay hadd grete wonder þare-off. And a prynce of Alexanders, þat highte Parmenon, said vn-till Alexander: 'Mi lorde þe Emperour,' quop he, 'we mervelle vs gretely þat þou, wham all men wirchippe and lowte, wirchippe here þe bischope of þe Iewes.' And Alexander ansuered, 'I wirchipe no hym,' þis quop he, 'Bot Gdd, whase state he presente. For when I was in Macedoyne, and vmbithoghte me, on what wyse I myte conquere Assye, I saw hym slepand, in swilk habite in swylke araye; and he lete as he sett note by me, bot went baldely furthe bi me. And for I see nane in swilke arraye bot hym, I suppose it be he þat I saw in my slepe. And þare-fore I trowe þat thurg þe helpe of Godd I sall ouercom Daryus, þe kyng of Perse, and his grete pryde fordo. And all thyngge þat I caste in my hert fo[r] to do, it es my full triste þat thurg his helpe I sall fulfill it, and wele bryng it to end. And þis es þe cause I wirchipped hym.' And when he hadd said thies wordes, he went in-to þe citee wit the bischope þe preste, and went in-to þe temple þat Salamon made. And as þe bischope teched hym he offred sacrafice un-to Godd. And þe bischope tuke Alexander in hande a buke of þe prophicye of Daniel, in þe whilke he fand wretyn, þat a man of Grece sulde distruy þe powere of Perse. And Alexander was reghte gladde, supposynge þat it was hym-selfe. And þan he gaffe þe bischoppe þe oþer preste grete gyfte riche precyous, And badd þe bischope ashe of hym what so he walde. And the bischope askede þat he walde giffe þam leue to vse þe same lawes þat þaire faderes vsed bifore þam, and he graunted it. And þan pe [sic] bischoppe askede þat walde giffe þe Iewes þat ware in Medee in Babyloyn, leue for to vse þaire lawes, he graunted hym þat all oþer thyngge þat he walde aske.

Alexander than went fra Ierusalem, lefte thare Andromac his Messagere, and hym selfe his Oste went to þe oþer cite þat ware in þe lande of Iudee, and at ilke a citee þat he come to, he was wirchipfully ressayued. In þe mene tyme þe Surryens þat fledd fra Alexander, went to Perse, and talde þe emperour Darius how Alexander hadd done to þam. And Darius spirred thaim of his stature of his schappe, and þay schewed hym purtrayed in a parchemyn skynn þe ymage of Alexander. And alsone als Darius sawe it, he dispysed Alexander bycause of his littill stature, and be-lyfe he gerte write a lettre and sent it till Alexander. And þare-wit he sent hym a handball oþer certane Iape in scorne. And þis is þe tenour of þe lettre þat he sent till hym.

'Darius, kyng of kynges, and lord of all erthely lordes euen like vnto sonne schynande, wit þe godde of Perse,

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.

The Prose Life of Alexander

vntill Alexander oure seruand we send. We hafe vnderstanden now on late, whare—of we meruelle vs gretely, þat þou ert so rayed in pride and vayne glorye, þat þou hase semblede togedir a company of robbours and thefe oute of þe weste parties, and caste þe for to com in—till oure partie, supposynge thurg þam for to ouer—sett and constreyne þe grete myghte þe vertue of þe Percyens, whase strenghte þou may neuer sloken ne ouercome, suppose þou gadirde sembled togedir all þe werlde. For I do þe wele to wiete þou myghte nerehand alsonne nommer þe sternes of heuen, as þe folke of þe empire of Perse. Oure godde also, by whaym all þis werlde es gouerned sustened, praysse commende oure name passyng all oþer nacyons. 'Bot note wit—standynge þis; þou as a littill bisne a dwerghe, a halfe man orte of alle men, desyrand to ouerpasse þi littillnesse, rite as a mouse crepe oute of hir hole,so þou ert copen out of þe lande of Sethym, wenyng wit a few rebawde to conquere optene þe lande of Perse brade lange, to ryotte playe the in thaym as myesse douse in þe house whare na cattes ere. Bot I þat priually hase aspied thi gate, when þou wene moste seurely for to stertle abowte, I sall sterte apon þe take þe; so in wrechidnes sall thi dayes fouly hafe an ende. 'A grete Foly þou dide for to take apon the swylke a presumpcyon. It ware full faire to þe, if þou myghte bi oure lefe, wit oure beneuolence, ocupie all anely þe rewme of Macedoyne, eldyng þarefore till vs erely a certane tribute, if all þou couetid note oure empire. Pare—fore it es gude þat þou lefe thi fonned purposse, and wende hame agayne, and sett the in thi moder knee. And lo, I sende the here a littill balle, wit þe whilke als a childe þou may play the. For þou ert bot a childe. It es mare semely þat þou vse childe gamme þan dede of armes. 'We knawe wele thi pouert and thi nede, and þat þou hase vnnethes whare wit þou may sustene thi caytyfde corse. Weue þou, than, to bryng vnder thi subieccion the empyre of Darius. I say the by my Fader saule, þat in the rewme of Perse þare es so grete plente of golde, þat, it were gadirde to gedir on a hepe, It schulde passe þe clerenes of þe son. Whare—fore we commande the, and straitely enioyne the, þat þou leue thi fole pride and thi vayne glory, tourne hame agayne to Macedoyne. And if þou will note soo, we sall sende to þe a multitude of men of arme swilke ane saw þou neuer, þe whilke sall take þe, and hyng þe hye on a gebett as a traytour and a mayster of theefe: and note as þe son of Philippe.'

When þe messangers þat were sent fra Darius come to king Alexander, þay gaffe hym the lettres, and þe balle oþer certane Iapes, þat þe emperour sent hym in scorne. And Alexander tuke þe lettres, and gert rede it openly by—fore alle men, and Alexander knyghtes when þay herde þe tenour of þe lettres ware gretly astonayde and wonder heuy. And when Alexander sawe þam so heuy by cause of þe lettre, he saide vn—to þam: 'a a, my worthy knyghtis,' quop he, 'are e fered for þe prowde worde þat are contened in Darius lettres, wate e noghte wele þat hunde, þat berkes mekill, byte men noghte so sone, als doe hundes þat comme one men wit—outten berkyng. We trewe wele þe lettre says sothe of some thyng, þat es to saye, of þe grete plente of golde, þat Darius sais he hase. And þarefore late vs manly feghte wit hym and we sall hafe þat golde. For þe grete multitude of his golde, als me thynke, schulde gare vs be balde and hardy for to fighte wit hym manly.'

When Alexander had saide thir worde he bade his knyghtis take the messangers of Darius and bynd paire hande bi—hynde þam, lede þam furthe to the galowes, hyng þam. And þay tuke þe messangers bande þam, and began for to lode þam furthe to þe galowes—warde, and þan þe messengers bigan for to crye rewfully vntill Alexander sayd: 'A, A wirchipfull lorde kyng', quop þay, 'whate hafe we trespaste, þat we schall be haungede for oure kynges dedis'. And þan kyng Alexander ansuerd: 'þe worde of our Emperour', quop he, 'gers me do þis, þat sent ow vn—to me, as vnto a theeffe, as þe lettre whilke e broghte witesse': 'A, A lorde', quop þay, 'oure emperour sent thus to ou: for our powere our myghte was unknowwen vn—till hym. Bot we be—seke ow late vs gaa, and we schall mak aknawen vntill hym our grete glory, our ryaltee, our noblaye.'

Pan kyng Alexander badd his knyghtis lowse þam, and bryng þam in—till his haulle, to þe mete. And thare he made þam a grete feste a ryall. And as þay satt at the mete, þir messangers saide vn till Alexander, 'lorde,' quop þay, 'if it be plesynge to our hye maiestee sende with vs a thowsand of doghty men of armes, and we sall delyuer þam þe Emperour Darius,' and Alexander ansuerde agayne said 'Sittes stille', quop he, 'makes ow mery. For I tell ow in certayne, for þe betrayinge of our kyng, I will noghte graunt ow a knyghte wit ow'. Apon þe morne, Alexander gart write a lettre vn—to Darius, whareoffe þe tenour was this.

How a Bird laid an Egg in Philip's Bosom at whose breaking there came forth a Serpent, which forthwith died.

þe letter of Alexandere

'Alexander, the son of Philippe of qwene Olympias, vn—to Darius, kyng of þe land þat schynes wit þe godde of Perse, we sende. If we graythely sothefastly be—halde oure selfe þare es na thyng þat we here hafe þat we may bi righte calle ours, bot all it es lent vs for a tyme. For alle we þat ere whirlede aboute wit þe whele of fortune, now ere we broghte fra reches in—to pouerte: now fra myrthe ioy in—to Sorowe heuynssse; and agaynwarde : and now fra heghte, we are plungeded in—to lawnesse. Þare—fore þare schulde na man þat es sett in hye degre triste to mekill in his hyennesse, that, thurgh pride vayne glorye, he schulde despyse þe dedis of oþer men lesse þan he. For he wate neuer how sone þe whele of fortune may turne abowte, and caste hym doune to lawe degree, þat sitte hye on—lofte: and rayse hym to hye wirchipe and grete noblaye þat bifore was pore and in lawe degree. And þarefore the aughte to thynke grete schame, þat swilke a worthy emperour as men halde the, schulde sende swylke a message vnto me so littill a man and so pore. For þou ert euen lyke to þe sonne, as thi selfe says, sittande in þe trone of Nitas wit þe godde of Perse. Bot godde þat euermare are liffaunde neuermare dye, deyne note for to hafe þe felachipe of dedely men. Sekerly I am a dedely man; and to þe I come as to a dedely man, for to feghte wit the. Bot þou þat arte so grete so glorious calle thi selfe vndedely, Pou sall wynne na thyng of me, if alle þou hafe þe ouerhande of me. For þou hase ouercommen bot a littill man, and a theeffe als þou sayse. And if I hafe þe ouerhande ouer the, It sall be to me þe grettete wirchipe þat euere byfell me, for als mekill als I sall hafe þe victorye of þe worthieste emperour of þe werlde. Bot þare þou saide, þat, in þe rewme of Perse, es so grete plente of golde, þou hase scharpede oure herti, and made mare balde for to feghte with the, for to wynne þat golde; for to relefe oure pouerte wit—all, putte awaye our nede whilke þou says we hafe. In þat also, þat þou sent vs a hande—balle and oþer barne—laykaynes, þou prophicyed rite, and betakend bi—fore, thynges þat we trewe, thurg godde helpe, sall falle vn—till vs. By þe rowndenes of þe balle, we vnderstande all the werld aboute vs, þe whilke sall falle vnder oure subieccion. Bi þe tane of þe laykanes þat þou sent vs, þe whilke es made of wande and cruke donwarde at þe ouerend, we vnderstand þat all þe kynges of þe werlde, and all þe grete lorde, sall lowte till vs. Bi þe toþer laykan, þat es of golde, and hase apon it, as it ware, a manne hede, we vnderstande þat we sall hafe þe victorye of all men and neuer be ouercommen. And þou þat ert so grete so myghty hase now onwarde sent vs trybute, in als mekill als þou sent vs a handballe, and þir oþer thynges þat I rehersed by—fore, the whilke contene in þam so grete dignyte.'

When þis lettre was wreten, Alexander called till þe messangers of þe Emperour of Perse, and gaffe þam riche gyftes and betuke þam þe lettre, and badd þam bere it to þaire lorde. And þan Alexander sembled his Oste, and by—gan for to wende towarde Perse. When the messangers of Perse come to þe emperour þay talde hym of þe grete ryaltee of kyng Alexander and tuke hym the letters þat Alexander sent hym. And þe emperour garte rede þam. And when he herd þam redde he was wonder wrathe, and sent a lettre belyue vn—till twa grete lorde that hadd þe gouernance of þe empire vnder hym sayand to þam on this wiese.

'Darius kyng of kynges and lorde of lordes vntill oure trewe lege Primus Antyochoy, gretynge and ioy. We here tell þat Alexander, Philippe sonne of Macedoyne, es so heghe raysede in pryde, þat he es rebelle agaynes vs, es commen in—till Asye, and hase destroyed it vtterly. And itt hym thynke note this ynoghe, bot he purpose hym for to come nere vs, and do þe same till oþerre cuntre of oure empire as he hase done tyll Asye. Whare—fore we comande owe o payne of our legeance, þat e semble þe grete men þe worthy of ours empyre, wit oþer of our trewe lege; and, in all þe haste þat e may, gase counters one childe, takand hym, and bryngand hym bi—fore oure presence, þat we may lasche hym wele, als a wanton childe schulde be: and clethe hym in purpoure; so send hym till his moder Olympias wele chastyede. For it seme note to be a feghter: but for to vse childe gamme.

Thire twa lordes Primus and Antyochoy, when þay hadde redde this lettre of þe emperour, þay wrate agayne vntill him on this wyse.

'Vn—to Darius, kyng of kynges, grete godd, Primus Antiochoy, seruyce þat þay kan do. To our heghe maieste we make it aknawen, þat þe childe Alexandere, whilke e speke off, hase all vtterly destroyed our cuntree. And we sembled a grete multytude of folke, and faughte wit hym; bot he hase discomfit vs, and we were fayne for to flee. For unnethe myghte any of vs wynne awaye wit þe lyfe. Þare—fore we þat e say ere helpers vnto owe, beseke our hye maiestee that e send sum socoure till vs our trewe leges.' When Darius hadde redde þis lettre, þare come

The Prose Life of Alexander

anoþer messanger till hym and talde hym þat Alexander and his Oste hade lugede þam appon the water of Strume. And when Darius herd þat he wrate anoþer lettre vntill Alexander, of whilke þis was þe tenour.

'Darius, kyng of kynges, and lorde of lorde, vn–till oure seruande Alexander. Thorowte all þe werlde þe name of Darius es praysed commended. Oure godde also hase it wreten in thaire bukes. How than durste þou be so balde, for to passe so many waters, and see, Mountaynes cragge, for to werraye agaynes oure royalle maiestee. A grete wirchip me thynke it ware to þe, if þou myghte mawgre oures, hafe in possessioun þe kyngdome of Macedoyne all anely, wit–owtten mare. Thare–fore the es better amend þe of thi mysdededis, þan we take swilke wreke appon the, þat oþer men take bisne þareby, sen alle þe erthe wit–owtten oure lordchipe, may be callede wedowe. Torne agayne þare–fore, we consaile þe, in–to thyn awenn cuntree, are oure wrethe and oure wreke falle apon þe. Neuer–þe–lesse, þat oure wirchippe oure grete noblaye be sumwhate knawen to þe, we sende the a malefull of chessebolle sede, in takennyng þare–of. Luke if þou may nombir telle all þir chessebolle sede, if þou do þatt þan may þe folke of oure oste be nowmerd. And if þou may note do þat oure folke may note be nowmerd. Parefor turnee hame agayne in–to þi cuntree and lefe þi foly þat þou hase bygun, and take na mare apon þe swilke a presumpcion, for I tell þe we haffe men of armes wit–oute nowmmere'.

When þe Messangers of Darius come till Alexander, þay tuk hym þe lettre and þe malefull of chessebolle sede. Alexander þan gerte rede þe letter. And sythen he putt his hand in þe male, and tuke of þe chessebolle sede putt in his mouthe, chewed it, said, 'I see wele', quop he, 'þat he hase many men, bot þay are rite softe as this sede are.' In þe mene tyme þare come a Measanger till Alexander fra Macedoyne: and talde hym þat his Moder Olympias was grefe seke. And [when] Alexander herd þis, he was wonder heuy. Neuer þe lesse, he wrate vn to Darius a lettre, þat spakke on this wyse.

'Alexander þe son of Philippe of qwene Olympias vn–to Darius kyng of Perse, we sende. We do þe wele to wiete þat we hafe herde certane tythyng, whilke gers vs agayne oure will do þat we now sall saye. Bot trow þou note þat we for fere or dowte of thi pride and þi wayne glorye turne hame agayne now till oure awenn cuntre, Bot all anely for to vesett oure Moder Olympias, whilke lygges grefe seke. Bot wete pou wele, wit in schorte tym, we schall haste vs agayne, wit a grete nowmere of fresche knyghtis. And rite als þou sent vs a malefell of chessbolle sede; so we sende þe here a littill peper. For þou schulde witte þat rite as þe scharpenes of þis littill peper passe þe multitude of þe chessebolle sede, rite so þe grete multitude of þe Persyenes sall be ouer–comen wit a fewe knyghtis of Macedoyne.'

This lettre be–kende Alexander to þe knyghtis of Darius, þe peper also, bad þam bere þam to þe emperour. And he gaffe þam grete gyftes and riche, and sent þam furthe. And þan he turnede agayne wit his Oste towarde Macedoyne.

There was þe same tyme a wonder wyse man of werre þe whilke highte Amorca, and he was prynce–werres in Araby, and lay þare wit a grete multitude of men in awayte of Alexander his Oste. And when he herde tell of þe commyng of Alexander, he redied hym for to kepe hym. And when þay mett, þay faught to–geder all þe daye fra þe morne till þe euen. And so þay dide all þase thre deyes. And þare was so mekill folke dede in þat bataile, þat þe sone wexe eclipte wit–drewen his lighte, vggande for to see so mekill scheddyng of blude. Bot at laste þe Percyenes ware so thikke–falde felled to þe grounde, þat þaire prynce Amorca turned þe bakke fledd, and vnnethe myghte wynn awaye, and a fewe wit hym. So hastyly fledd Amorca, þat he come nerehand alsone to Darius, as his measagers did þat come fra Alexander, and fand Darius haldand þe lettre in his hande, þat Alexander sent hym, and spirrande what Alexander did wit þe chessbolle sede. And þe messangers ansuerd said: 'He tuke of þo chessbolle sede', quop þay, 'and chewed of þam, said. I see wele,' quop he, 'þat Darius hase many men, bot þay are wonder softe'; And than Darius tuk of þe peper, þat Alexander sent, and putt in his mouthe and chewed it. And when he felide þe strenghe of it, and þe grete hete, he syghede sare, and saide: 'Alexander knyghtis', quop he, 'are bot fewe, bot and þay be als strange in þam selfe, as þis peper es in it selfe, þay sall fynde nane in þis werlde þat may agaynestande þam.' And þan ansuerde Amorca saide, 'Forsothe, lorde', quop he, 'e say sothe, Alexander hase few knyghtis, bot þay ere strange, þat hase slaen my knyghtis þat ware so many, so þat vnnethe myghte I eschappe owte of þaire hande.' Alexander, if alle he hade þe victorye of his enemys, he bare hym neuer þe hiere þare–fore, ne empridede hym note þare–of. Bot bathe Percyene the Macedoyns þat ware slaen, he gert bryngte to beryell. And þan he come wit his Oste in–to Cecill, whare many Cite submyt þam vn–till hym, and of that rewme, þare went wit hym: xvij. M. ⁱⁱⁱ feghtyng men. And fra thethyn he come till Ysaury, þe whilke, wit–owtten any

The Prose Life of Alexander

agayne standynge, was olden vntill hym. And Alexander went vp apon þe Mounte Taurus, and fande þare a citee þat men callede Persypolis, and thare he tuk wit hym a certane of men of Armes, and went so thurgh Asye, and wan many Cite. And so he come in—to Frigy, and went in—to þo temple of þe son, and thare he made sacrafyce to þe son. Fra thethyn, he come to a reuere, þat es called Stamandra, and þare he said till his men. 'Blyste mote e be', quop he, 'þat hase getyn þe comendacions þe praysynge of þe gude doctour Homerus', and ane of his men ansuerde said, 'Mi lorde kyng', quop he, 'Me thynke I may sauely writte ma praysynge, lonyng of the, þan Homerus did of þam þat distruyede þe Citee of Trayane. For þou hase done in þi tyme ma wirchipfull thyng, þan euer did þay.' And Alexander [ansuerd,] said 'Me ware leuer,' quop he, 'be a wyse manes disciple þan for to hafe þe lonyng of Achille.' After this he remonede wit his Oste into Macedoynne, fande his Modir Olympias wele couerd of hir sekene, and suggournede þare wit her a while. And than he ordeyned hym for to wende agayne into Persy, And keste hym for to logge at a Citee, þat men calle Abandryan. The men of þe Citee, when þay herde telle of his commynge, þay sperede þe ates of þe Citee, and wachede þe citee one ilke a syde. And when Alexander saw þat, he went assaillede þe Citee. And þe burge of þe Citee, when þay sawe þat þe citee was note strange ynoghe of þe selfe, for to agaynstande þe assawte of þaire enemys, þay criede till Alexander saide: 'Kyng Alexander,' quop þay, 'we spered note þe ates of [the] citee to þat entent for to agaynstande the, Bot allanly for þe drede of Darius, kyng of Perse, þe whilke as it was tolde till vs, es purpossede for to send his men hedir, for to destruye vs oure citee.' And þan Alexander said vnto þam agayn. 'Iffe e will,' quop he, 'þat we distruy ow noghte, opene our ates, and when I hafe made an ende wit Darius, þan sall I come agayne, speke wit owe.' And þan þe Citaenes opened þe ates. Fra thethen þay went to Comnoliche. And fra thethyn to Bihoy, and so to Caldiple. Syne þay come till a grete reuere, whare Alexander Oste hadd grete defaute of vetalls, and þan his knyghtis murnede gretely and said, 'Oure horses,' quop þay, 'fayle vs ay mare mare.' Alexander ansuerd said, 'A A, my doghty knyghtis,' quop he, 'þat itt heder—towarde hase in werre suffred many perills mekill disesse, ere e now in despeyre of our hele for þe failynge of our horse, Sall we note gete horse ynowe, and we lyffe hafe qwert, and if we dye we sall hafe na nede of horse, na þay may do us na prophete. Haste we vs þare—fore in all þat we maye to þe place whare we sall gete horse wit—owtten nowmer, and vetails also, bathe for oure selfe for oure horse.' When he hadd all saide, þay went furthe and come till a place þat es called Luctus, þat es to saye wepyng, whar þay fande vetails ynoghe, and mete ynoghe for þaire horse. Fra thethyn þay remoued come till a place þat hatt Trigagantes, and þare þay lused þam. And Alexander went in—to a temple of Apollo; whare als he aghteled to hafe made Sacrafice, and hafe hadd ansuere of that godd of certane thynges þat he walde hafe aschede. Bot a woman þat hite acora, whilke was preste of þat temple, talde Alexander þat þan was note þe tyme of ansuere. On þe Morne Alexander come to þe temple made his sacrafice. And Apollo said till Alexander, 'Hercules,' quop he. And Alexander answered, said, 'Now þat þou calle me Hercules,' quop he: 'I see wele þat all thyn ansuers ere false.' Fra thethyn Alexander went till a citee þat es called Thebea, and said vn—to þe folke of þe citee: 'Sende me furthe,' quop he, 'foure hundreth knyghtis, wele armed for to wend wit vs in suppoellyng of vs.' And when þe Thebeans herd thir worde, þay spered þe ates of þe citee, for to agayne—stande Alexander, and went to þe walle, and cried lowde þat Alexander myghte here: 'Alexander,' quop þay, 'bot if [þou] gaa hethyn fra vs, we sall do the a velany, thi knyghtis also.' When Alexander herde this, he smyledsaide: 'e Thebeens,' quop he, 'þat ere so mekill praysed commended of strenghe, Spere e our ates saise e will feghte wit me; þare es na doghety man of arme þat couete for to haue wirchip and loos; þat will close hym witin walles, bot fightes wit his enemys manly in þe felde.' When he hadd saide thir worde, he bad þat foure thowsande archers sulde gaa abowte þe citee wit þaire bowes, lay apon þam wit arowes þat stode apon þe walle. And he bad two hundreth men of armes ga to þe walles, and myne þam doune, and a hundrethe he bad take fyrebrande, gaa to þe ates brynne þam. And he ordeynde oþer foure hundreth men, for to bett down þe walles wit Sewes of werre, Engynes and Gonnes oþer maner of Instrumente of werre. And hym selfe, and þe remenant of þe oste lay nere þam to socour þam when þay hadd nede. And belyfe fra þay hadd gyffen assawte to þe citee, þe ates ware brynt, mekill folke was slayne witin þe citee, Sum wit arowes, sum wit stanes of Engynes; þe Fire also by—gan for to sett in house wit—in þe citee, rayse a grete lowe. In þe Oste of Alexander was, þe same tyme, a man þe whilke highte Cicesterus, a grete enemy to þe citee. He, when he sawe þe citee bryne, made righte mery. Bot a man of the citee þat highte Hismon, when he saw his cuntree þusgates be distruyed, come and felle one knees be—fore Alexander, and bigan for to synge a sange of Musyke of murnyng wit an Instrument of Musike, Supposyng þare—by for to drawe Alexanders herte to Mercy, styrre hym to hafe rewthe on þe citee. Alexander be—helde hym, sayde: 'Maister,' quop he, 'whareto synge þou me

The Prose Life of Alexander

bis sange ?' 'A Alorde,' quop Hismon, 'to luke ife I myte styrre þi herte to hafe mercy on þe citee.' And þan Alexander was wonder wrathe, and bad dyngge þe walles of þe cetee doun to þe harde erthe. And when þay had so done þay remoued went þaire way, and ane of þe worthieste men of þe citee, þe whilke hyghte Clitomarus, went wit þam in company. Bot þe Thebeens þat ware lefte aftire þe birnyngge of þe citee went to þe temple of Apollo, and askede weþer euer mare þaire citee sulde be repaireld agayne. Apollo ansuerde, said, 'he þat schall bygge þis citee agayne sall hafe thre victories. And when he hase geten thre victories, he sall onane come reparell this citee, and bigge it agayne, also wele, als euer it was.'

Alexander fra þe citee of Thebe, went to Corynthe, and þare come till hym certane lordes, prayand hym þat he walde come see a wrestillyngge. And he graunted þam. And to þis Ilke wrestillyngge þare come folke witowtten nowmer. And when all men were gadirde, Alexander saide: 'whilk of owe,' quop he, 'sall gaa be-gynn þis playe'. Clitomarus þan, of whaym I spake bifore, knelid bi-fore þe kyng, saide: 'lorde,' quop he, 'e wolle vouche-saffe to giffe me leue, I will be-gyn.' And Alexander bad hym ga to. And Clitomarus went in-to þe place, and þe firste man þat come in his hande, at the first tourne he threwe hym wide open. And Alexander said vntill hym: 'Caste thre men,' quop he, 'þou sall be coround'. Pan þare come anoþer man to Clitomarus and vnnethe he come in his hande, when he was casten wyde open. And one þe same wyse he seruede þe thirde. And þan Alexander gart sett on his heuede a precious coroun, and þe kyngge seruaunde spirrede hym what his name was. 'My name,' quop he, 'es wit owtten citee'. When Alexander herde þat he saide vn-till hym: 'Thou noble wristiller,' quop he, 'whi arte þou callete wit owtten citee.' 'Wirchipfull emperour,' quop he, be-fore þat e werede þe emperours Dyademe, I hadde a citee full of folke of reches. Bot now, sene e come to this astate þis dignytes, I am spoylede priuede of my citee.' And when [he] herde this, he wiste wele þat he ment of þe citee of Thebe. And þan he garte his sergeante make a crye that [he] hadd giffen Clitomarus leue for to repairelle þe citee of Thebes. Fra Corinthe, Alexander and his oste remoued till a citee þat highte Platea, of þe whilke a man þat highte Scrassageras was prynde. And Alexander went to þe temple of Diane, and fand þare a woman preste, þe whilke was a mayden, scho was araied lyke preste of þat tymme. And when [scho] sawe Alexander, scho saide vn-till hym: 'Alexander,' quop scho, 'þou arte welcomme. Pou schall conquere all þe werlde.' One þe morne Scrassageras went to þe same temple, and alsone als þe preste sawe hym, scho saide vn-till hym: 'Scrassageras, quop scho, ' what thou wit-in a schorte while þou schall be priued of þe lordchip þat þou now hase ?' And when he herde þis he was righte wrathe wit hir, saide, 'þou arte note worthy,' quop he, 'for to be preste here. Alexander come to þe isterdaye, and þou prophycyed hym gude; And to me þou sais, þat I schall lose all my lordechipe.' And scho ansuerd; saide, 'Bee note angry to me,' quop scho: 'for all þis buse be fulfilled, and nathyngge þare of lefte ne ouerhippede.' A littill after it felle þat Alexander was gretely angrede at Scrassageras, and tuke fra hym his lordchipe, Scrassageras went to þe cite of Athene, and sare wepande he complenede hym to þe citaenes of Athene talde þam how þat Alexander hadd priued hym of his lordechipe. And þan þe Atheneanes ware wonder [wrathe] towards Alexander, and made grete boste manace, þat þay schold ryse agaynes hym, bot if he restorede Scrassageras agayne till his lordechipe. Alexander remoued his Oste fra Platea to þe citee of Athenes, and when [he] herde telle þat þe Athenens ware wrathe till hym-warde, and manaced hym, he wate vn-to þam a lettre þat spak one this wyse.

'Alexander, þe son of Philippe and of qwene Olympias, vn to the Athenenes, gretynge. Fra þe tyme þat oure Fadir was dedde, we were sett in þe Trone of his dingnytee, we went into þe weste Marches, whare all þe folke þat duelle thare for þe maste party alde þam vn-till vs wit-owtten stresse. Fra þe citee of Rome to þe weste see occyane, all men submytte þam vn-till vs þat wit oure awen fre will we hafe taken þam till oure grace. And these þat walde note submytt þam till vs wit fairenes, we hafe distruyed þam þaire cite, and dounen þam down to þe erthe. And now þis oþer daye as we went fra Macedoyne passed thurg Asye: bi þe cite of Thebe, þe Thebeyens despysed vs, lete as þay sett note by vs. Bot onane we garte þair pryde falle, and de-struyed bathe þam thaire citee. And þare-fore we write vn-to ow; that e sende vs ten philosopres þat be wyse, by þe whilke we may be encensede and conselled. For oþer thyng will we nane aske ow, Bot alle anely þat þe halde vs for our lorde our kyngge. And if e will note submytt owe vn-till vs, ow buse oþer be strangere þan we, or ells submytt yow to sum lordechipe, þat be strangere þan oures.'

The Athenyenes redd þis lettre and þan þay bigan to crye one highte. And ane, þat highte Eschille, stode vp amange þam, and said: 'It es fully my consell,' quop he, 'þat we on na wise assent [to thise] worde of Alexander.' Alle þe folke þan þat was gadirde þare, prayed þe philosophre Demostines, þat he walde tell þam his conselle, as touchynge þat matere. And he stude vp, badd all men be still. And þan he said vn-to þam. 'Sirs,' quop he, 'I pray

The Prose Life of Alexander

ow takes tent vn—to my worde herkenes gudly what I sall say. If e fele ow of power, for till agayne—stande Alexander, to supprise hym, þan feghtes wit hym manly, and obeys note till his worde. And if e suppose e be note strange ynoghe to fechte wit hym þan here hym, and obeys vn—till hym. e knawe wele, þat als oure eldirs telles vs, erses was a grett kynge, a myghty, and many victories he gatt. And neuer þe lesse in Ellada he suffrede grete meschefe. Bot he, this Alexander, hase done many batailles, in þe whilke he suffrede neuer diseise bot always had þe ouerhande. Þe Thirienes, I pray ow, ware [þai] note balde knyghtes and strange, and all þaire lyfe hade bene excercysede in Armes ? And whate profitede þam þaire strenghe? Þe Thebienes also þat were so wyse, and so grete exercyse hadde in armes, fra þe firste tyme þat þe citee was bygged, whare—off seruede þaire grete witt þam, and þaire grete strength, when Alexander assailede þam? Þe Poliponiens faghte wit Alexander, bot þay myghte na while agayne—stande his men of armes. Bot alson þaire ware disconfit and slaen. It es note vnknawen vn—to owe, how many citee castells townne for fere submittis þam vn—till hym wit—owtten any assawte gyffing. Parefore, it es note my consaile þat e be heuy, ne wrathe till Alexander for Scraçsageras. For all men knawes wele þat Alexander es a wonder wyse man a warre, a man þat gouernes hym by reson; and þare—fore e may wele wete, he walde note putt Scraçsageras oute of his lordechipe upon lesse þan forfeit vn—till hym.' When þe Athenyenes had herde þis worde, þay commedid gretly the conseil of Demostines, and than they ordeyned a coroun of golde þe weghte of . 1. ponde, and sent Messangers þarewit, and wit tribute vn—till Alexander, bot philosophres sent þay nane. And when þire Messangers come till Alexander, þay gaffe hym þe coroun. and þe tribute, þat þe Athenyenes sent hym, and talde hym þat þay had highte hym a grete nowmer of catelle. And when Alexander had herd þam, he vnderstode wele þe concell of Eschilus þat concellde þe Athenyenes to agaynestand hym, and also þe concell of Demostenes that concellde þam þe contrary, and þan he wrote a lettre to þam whare—of the Tenoure was this.

'Alexander þe son of Philippe and quene Olympias, for þe name of kynge will we note take apon vs, before we hafe oure enemys vnder oure subieccion: vn—to þe Athenyenes gretyng. It es note oure entent to come in our citee wit oure oste, Bot allanly to come dispuyte wit our philosophres, and to asche þam certane questyons, Oure purposse was also to hafe declared for oure trewe legge oure gude Frende. Bot our dede proues þe contrary, as it done vs till vnderstande. Oure godde we take to witness, þat whilke of ow so ryse agayne vs, we sall take swilke wreke apon hym þat oþer men sall take ensample þare—by. Bot e ale schrewes, and euyll men, euer mare trowe ill, and thynkes ill. Wate e note wele þat þe Thebienes þat raise agaynes vs, hadd þaire mede als þay disserued. And e haffand in vs a wrange consayte, blame vs, For we putt Scraçsageras owte of his Office the whilke forfeit gretly agaynes oure maieste. We sent vn—to ow bi lettre for ten philosophres, bot e, note knawande oure grete powere oure myghte, despysed oure maundement and walde note fulfill it. Neuer þe les if all e hafe offendid agaynes vs whider—towarde and bene disobeyande till oure maiestee, we forgiffe ow all our gilt, and þe greuance þat e hafe don vs, so þat e be obeyande vn—till vs, fra þis tyme forwarde. Comforthes ow þarefore bee mery, for of vs e schall hafe na greuance ne na disesse be—cause e did after þe concell of Demostynes.

When þe Athenyenes herd þis lettre redd, þay ware rite gladd, and þan Alexander his Oste went fra thethyn vn—to Lacedoyne. Bot þe Lacedouns walde one na wyse obey vn—till Alexander, bot said ilkan of þam till oþer, 'latt vs note be lykke þe Athenyenes,' quof þay, 'þat drede þe manaschyng, and þe boste of Alexander bot late vs schewe oure myte, and oure strenghe and manly defende oure citee agayne hym.' When þay hadd saide, þay spered þe ates of þe cetee faste, and went manly to þe walles. And a grete nowmer of þam tuke þam schippe went to þe see, a grete nauy, to fechte wit Alexander are he come to lande. And when Alexander saw this, he sent a lettre to þam sayand on this wyse.

'Alexander þe son of Philippe and of þe quene Olympias vn—to þe Lacedounes we sende. We concell ow, þat þat, that our elders hase lefte ow, e kepe hale sound in sauete and lyfte note our hende ouer hie to þe thyng þat þe may note reche to. And if e desire for to hafe ioy of our strenthe, dose swa þat e be worthy to hafe wirchipe of vs. Parefore we comande ow, þat e turne agayne wit our schippe, and leue þam, gase to lande by our awenn fre will; or sekirly I sall sett fire in tham brynne þam. And if ee dispice oure commandement, blame na man bot our selfe, if we wreke vs one owe.'

The Lacedounes redd þis lettre, and when it was redd, þay ware wonder heuy. Note for—thi þay redied þam to fechte. Bot Alexander arryued in an oþer coste, and come to þe citee are þay wiste and vmbylapped þe citee one ilke a syde, and assailede it strangly dange þe Lacedouns of þe walles slewe many of þam wounded many, and sett fyre in þaire schippe brynt þam. Þe remanant of þam þat ware lefte appon lyfe, when þay saw this grete

The Prose Life of Alexander

meschefe come owte of þe citee vn–till Alexander, felle doun at his fete, besoughte hym of mercy of grace. And Alexander ansuerd, 'I come to ow,' quop he, 'meke mylde, bot in þat degre e walde note ressayffe me, þarefore now are our schippe brynned, and our citee distruyed, our folke slayne. Warned I note be–fore þat e schulde note heue our hande ouer–hye to þe sternes, to þe whilke nane erthely man may wynn. For wha so euer clymbe hier, þan his fete may wynn to sum halde, he sall falle onane doun to þe grounde. And þarefore es þare a commone prouerbe: Þat "wha sa hewes to hie, þe chippes will falle in his egh." e wende hafe done till vs as our eldirs didde sumetyme till kynge erses, bot our wenyng dessayued ow. For e myghte note agayne–stande vs when we assaillde ow.' Whan he hadd saide on this wise, he gaffe þam leue to gaa whare þay walde. And than he remouede thethyn went to–warde Cicill. And when þe emperour Darius herd tell of þe comyng of Alexander, he was gretly abaiste and sent after all his prince, Dukes Erles, oþer grete lordes, went till a consaile. And he saide vn–to þaim, 'I see wele,' quop he, 'þat he, this Alexander, þat gase thus abowte werrayand, waxe gretly in wirchipe, and ay–whare whare he comme he hase þe victory. I wende he hadd bene a theeffe a robbour, þat hadde went till cuntre þat ere wayke feble, and durst note agayne–stande hym, robbed þam spoyled þam. Bot now, I see wele, he es a doghty man of Armes, a noble werrayour. And ay þe mare þat I hafe depraued hym and despysed hym; þe mare ryse his name, his wirchipe. I sent hym a balle, a toppe, a scourge, for to lere barne–laykes; bot hym þat I called a disciple, he seme a mayster whare–so–euer he gase, Fortune gase wit hym. Pare–fore vs byhoue to trete of oure hele, of oure pople, and pute awaye all pride all foly: namare despisse Alexander, saynge þat he es noghte, by cause we are emperour of Perse. For his littillnes waxes and ours gretnes decresse. I hafe grete dowte, þat godde forluke helpe hym, so þat whils we ere abowte, wene to putte hym out of Ellada, we be spoyled, by hym, of þe rewme of Perse.'

When Darius hadd said thir worde, his broder Coriather ansuerd said, 'þou hase here,' quop he, 'gretly magnified commendid Alexander, in that, þat þou sais he es mare feruent for to come in–to Perse, þan we in–till Ellada. And þarefore if it be plesyng vn–to our maiestee, vse e þe maners of Alexauder, and so sall [e] wele peysably welde our empire couquere many oþer rewmes. Alexander, when he gase to bataile and sall feghte, he lates [nane] of his prynce ne his oþer lorde gaa be–fore, hym selfe come by–hynde, bot he gase bi–fore þam alle, and so rise his wirchip his name.'

Quod Darius, 'wheþer awe me to take sa ensample at Alexander, or Alexander at me.' A prynce ansuerde saide, 'Alexander,' quod he, 'es a warrer man a wyse, hase trespaste in na degree þarefore he duse manly by hym selfe all þat he doe. For he hase taken þe fourme of þe lyonn.' 'Whare–by knawes þou þat,' quop Darius, and he ansuerd saide, 'whate tyme,' quop he, 'þat I was sent to Macedoyne for til aske tribute of kyng Philippe, I saw, bi his Figure his wise ansuere, þat he schuld be a passyng man, bathe of witt, of doynges. Thare–fore, if it be plesyng vn–to ow, I consell þat e sende till all þe lande cuntre þat lange to our empire, þat es to say to Parthy Medy, Appollamy, Mesopotamy, Ytaly, Bactri, and till all þe remenant for þay ere subiete vn–to ow a hundreth : c. and fifty l. of dyuerse folke. To þe lordes of all thire, I rede e sende commandyng þam, þat þay come to ow, in all þe haste þat þay may, with all þe men þat þay may gett whilk ere able to ga to werre . And when þay [ere] all sembled to gedir late vs beseke oure goddis of helpe. And þan Alexander when he see swilk a multitude of folke agaynes hym, his hert sall faile hym, and his mens also. And owþer he sall for fere turne hame agayne till his awen cuntree, or ells submytt hym vn–to ow.' And þan ansuerd anoþer prynce, sayde, 'This es a gud concell,' quop he, 'bot it es note profitable. Wate þou note wele þat a wolfe chase a grete floke of schepe gerse þam sparple. Righte so, and þe wysdome of þe grekes passe oþer nacyons.'

In this mene tym, Alexander sembled a gret multitude of folke to þe nowmer of cc of feghtyng men, and remewed to warde Perse, come till a reuere þat es called Mociona, of whilke þe water was wonder calde, faire, clere. And Alexander hadd a grete lyste for to be bathede þare–in, and went in–to it bathed hym, waschede hym þare–in, and also son he felle in a feuer and a heued–werke þare–wit, so þat he fure wonder ill. And when þe Macedoyns saw þaire lorde so grefe seke, þay were wonder heuy and reghte dredand and said amanges selfe: 'And Darius,' quod þay, 'wete þat oure lorde Alexander be þus seke, he sall come falle apon vs sodaynly, fordo vs ilkan. For, and we hadd þe hele of oure lorde Alexander, we hadd comforth ynoghe dredde no nacyon.' Than kyng Alexander called till hym his Phicisiene þaf highte Philippe badd hym ordeyne hym a Medcyne for his sekene. Pis ilk Phicisiene was bot a ong man, bot he was a passyng kunnyng man and a sotell in all þe poyntes þat langed to phisic. And he highte Alexander, þat [by] a certane drynke he sulde onane make hym all hale. Nowe fell it, þat was wit Alexander a prynce, þat highte Parmenius was lorde of hermony. This prynce hade grete envy to þis

The Prose Life of Alexander

phicsiene, bi-cause þat Alexander luffede hym so passandy wele belyfe he wrate till Alexander, and warned hym þat he schulde be warre wit Phillippe his phicsiene, and on na wyse resayfe þat drynke þat he walde gyffe hym. For he said þat Darius had highte to giffe hym his doghter to wyffe his kyngdom after his dissesse if swa ware, þat he myghte be any crafte make ane ende of hym. When Alexander hadda redd þis lettre he was na thyng trubbled, so mekill he tristede of þe conscience of his phisician.

In þe mane tyme, þis Phisician come till Alexander wit þe forsaid drynke, and Alexander tuk þis drynke in a hande þe forsaid lettre in his oþer hande and biheld þe Phisician in þe vesage rite scharpely. To whome þe Phisician saide: 'wirchipfull Emperour,' quof he 'be na thyng fered bot drynke þe medcyne baldely,' and þan onane Alexander tuk this drynke, schewed Philippe þe lettre. And when Philippe had redde þe lettre, he said till Alexander: 'Now for sothe, my lorde,' quof he, 'I take oure goddes to wnesse þat I ne am note guilty of this treson, þat here es wretyn.' Alexander þan was all hale als euer he was, called vn-till Philyppe his phisician embraced hym in his armes said: Philippe,' quof he, 'knaues þou how mekill luffe triste I hafe in the. Firste I dranke thi medecyne, syne I schewede þe þe lettre þat was sent me agaynes the.' 'Mi lorde,' quof Philippe, 'I beseke ow þat e wolle vchesaffe to send after myn accusour, and do hym come bi-fore our presence þat þis lettre sent vn-to ow, and hase lered me for to do swilk a hie treson. Be-lyfe þan gerte Alexander send after Parmeny for to come vn-till hym, and gerte þe sothe be serched, fande þat he was worthy þe dede. And þan he gert girde of his heued.

Fra þeine kyng Alexander remowed his Oste till hermony þe mare onane he conquered it, put it vnder his subieccion. And fra þeine he trauailed many a day wit his Oste, and at þe last e come till a cuntre wonder drye, full of creuesce of cauerne, alde cisternes whare na water myghte be funden. And Fra þeine þay passede thurg a cuntree, þat es called Andrias, to þe Reuere of Eufrates. And þare þay lugede þam. Þan Alexander garte brynge many grete tree, for to make a brygge of ouer þat water, appon schippe, and garte tye þam Samen wit chenys of Iren iren nayle. And when þe brigge was all redy, he badde his knyghtes wende ouer apon it. Bot whan þay saw þe grete reuer ryne so swiftly and with so a grate a byrre, thay dred þam þat þe brygge schulde falle. For þay supposede þe chenys schuld breke be-cause of grete weghte. And, when Alexander saw þam dredand on this wyse, he gert hirde-men, þat were þare kepand katell, wend oner before, and warnede þat þe Oste schulde folowe þam. Bot it þe knyghtis ware ferde durste noghte wende ouer. Than was Alexander rite wrathe and callede vntill hym all his prynces, grete lorde, and firste he went hym selfe ouer þe bryges, all his prynce folowed hym, and sythen all þe Oste. Twa grete ryuers rynnnes thurg Medee, Mesopotamy and Babiloyne, þat es to say Tygre Eufrates, and soo rynne in-to þe reuere of Nilus. When Alexander all hys Oste ware past ouer Eufrates, he gert smyte sonder þe brygge þat he hadd gert make bifore, and dissolue ilk a pece þare-off fra oþer. And when his knyghtis sawe that, þay ware reghte heuy and murnede gretly þarefore, and said emanges þam selfe, 'What sall we now doo,' quof þay, 'when we are harde by-stadde wit oure enemys walde flee. For ouer þis reuere may we note wyun.' And when Alexander perceyued þat murmoure of his folke, he said vn-to þam. 'What es þat,' quof he, 'þat e say amange ow, "If it falle þat we flee owte of þe bataile." Sothely, I late ow wele wite, þat þis is þe cause whi I garte for-do þis brygg, þat I gert make; For-thi, þat owþer we schulde feghte manly or ells if [we] walde flee, we schulde all perische at anes and all drynke of a coppe. For-whi þe victorie es note aretted to þam þat flie, Bot to þam þat habyde, or folowes on þe chace. Pare-fore comforthe ow wele, bese balde of hertis, and thyne it bot a playe stalworthly to feghte. For I say ow sekerly; we ne schall neuer see Macedoyne, be-fore we hafe ouercomen all oure enemys, And þan wit þe victorie we sall tourne hame agayne.

In þis mene tyme, kyng Darius gadirde a grete multitude of men agaynes Alexander, and ordeyned ouer þam fyve-hundreth chyftaynes of grete lordes and luged hym wit his men apon þe reuere of Tygre. And one a day thir twa kynges wit þaire bather Osters mett to-gedir apon a faire felde and faughte to-gedir wonder egerly. Bot sone Darius men hadd þe werre ode to grounde thikkfalde, slayne in þe felde. And when þe remenante saw þat, þay tuk þam to þe flighte. In Darius oste was a man of Perse, a doghety, a balde; to whaym Darius highte for to giffe his doghter to wyfe, if so were, þat he myghte, by any way, sla kyng Alexander. This man gatt hym clethyng and Armour like vn-to þe macedoyns, and went amange þam, as þay faghte, ay till he come by-hynd kyng Alexander. And alson als he come nere hym, he lifte his swerde on heghte, lete flye at hym wit all þe myghte þat he hade, and hitt hym on þe heued so fercely, þat he perched his bacenett, and drewe þe blode of hym. When Alexander knyghtis saw that: þay tuke hym anone, broghte hym bifore Alexander, and Alexander, supposyng þat he hadde bene a macedoyne, saide vn-till hym. 'Wirchipfull man,' quof he, 'doghety strange what ayled þe at me, for to giffe suylike a strake, knewe þou note wele þat it was I, Alexander our helpere our allere seruande.' And

The Prose Life of Alexander

[the] Percyene ansuerd, said, 'Wiete þou wele wirchipfull emperour,' quop he, 'I ne ame na macedoyne, bot I am a man of Perse; and this dede I didd. For kyng Darius made me a promysse of his doghetir to wife, if I myghte brynge hym thi heid.' Than kyng Alexander called bi—for hym all his knyghtis and askede þam what þam thoghte was for to do wit this man. Sum ansuerde saide þam thoghte it beste to gerre smyte of his heid, Sum for to putt hym to þe fire for to brynne, Sum to gare drawe hang hym. And when Alexander had herde þaire concell, he ansuerd said: 'Sirs,' quop he, 'what wrange or what defawte can e fynde in þis man, Sen he hase besied hym till obey till his lordes commandement, and at his power fulfilled it. Whilke of ow, so deme hym worthy to be dedde, es worthy in tyme commyng to hafe þe same dome. For if I commande ane of ow for to ga sla Darius, þe same payne, that e deme þis man for to suffre, ware e worthy for to suffre ourselfe of Darius, if e myte be getyn.' And þan he commanded þat he schulde wende hame to his felawes wit—owtten any harme. When Darius herde þat his lordes ware slayne in grete nowmer, he gadered a grete multitude of knyghtis and of fotemen, and went vp on a hill þat es called Taurisius, and thare he made his mustre of his men, supposynge þat he schuld ouercome Alexander thurg multitude of folke. Bot alson als þay mett wit þaire bathere oste, and bigan for to fighte, Darius men fledd and hymselfe also. And Alexander persuede hym vn—to þe citee of Bactrian, and þare he luded hym, and offerde Sacrafice till his godde. And on þe morne he garte assaile þe citee, and wanne it on werre. And in þe cheffe place þare—of he sett his trone. And all þir oþer cite þat were abowte it, he wann þam o werre, putt þam vnder his subieccion. In þis ilke citee of Bactrian, he fande tresour wit—owtten nowmer, and also his moder, and his wyfe.

And in þe mene tyme, whils Alexander lay at Batran: þare come a prynce of Darius oste vn—till Alexander, said vn—till hym, 'Wirchipfull emperour,' quop he, 'I hafe a lang tyme bene a knyght of Darius, and done hym grete seruyce; and itt to this day I had neuer na reward of hym. And þare—fore if it like vn—to owre maieste; take me ten thowsande of our men of armes; and I hete ow, for to brynge to our hande kyng Darius, þe maste parte of his oste.' And when Alexander had herde þis, he said vn—till hym. 'Frende,' quop he, 'I thanke þe mekill of thi faire promys. Neuer þe lesse, I late þe wite my men will note beleue þat þou will feghte agaynes thyn owenn peple.' In þe mene tyme a Prynce of Darius oste sent vn—till hym a letter, of whilk þis was þe tenour.

'To Darius, grete kyng of kynges, his lordes whilke he hase ordeyned cheftaynes vnder hym Sende meke seruyce. Oftymes be—fore this hafe we wreten to our maieste, and now agayne we writte vn—to ow, late ow wite þat þe macedoynes kyng Alexander, as wode lyouns ere enterde oure lande, and all oure strenthes, as a wilde raueschande beste he hase destroyed: oure knyghtes slayne. And oppressed we are wit so grete tribulacionns, þat we [may] na lengare suffre his mawgree, ne his malece bere. Whare—fore, mekly we be—seke our benyngne maiestee, þat e will drawe to oure mynde oure meke seruyce, and swilke socoure vouchsaffe to send vs, þat we put off and agaynestande þe violence þe malice of oure fore—said enemys.' When Darius had redde þis lettre, on ane he gert writte a lettir to kyng Alexander, sayand on þis wyse.

'Daryus kyng of Perse and kyng of kynge, vn—to my seruande Alexander, I say. Now late þare es commen till oure eres tythyng: þat þou wene to euen thi littilhede till oure heghe magnificence. Bot Sen it es impossible till a heuy asse, wit owtten wenges, or oþer instrumente of flying, for to be lifte vp to þe sternes, late note thyn hert be raysede to hie in pride for þe victories þat þou hase geten. We hafe wele herd tell þat þou hase done gentilly, and schewed grete humanitye till oure moder, oure wyfe, oure childre, and þarefore I late þe wele wite þat, als lang als þou dose wele to þam, þou sall fynde me nane enemy to the. And if þou do ill to þam þou sall hafe þe enemytee of me, and þare—fore spare þam noghte, bot do to þam as þe liste. For somtyme þou sall see fele þe sentence of oure ire lighte apon thi heghe pride.' When Alexander hadd redde þis lettre he wrate hym Anoper agayne whare—off þe tenour was this.

'Alexander þe son of Philippe qwene Olympias to Darius kyng of Perse we write. Pride vayne glorie hase oure godde all way hated; and take vengeance of dedly men þat takes apon þam þe name of immortalitee. Bot þou, als I wele see, cessee note itt hider—to for to blasfeme in all þat þou may. Bot of that þat þou blame me for þe benyngnytes that I schewed þi moder, þi wyfe, þi childre; þou ert moued on a lewed fantasye. For I late þe wele wyte, I did it note for to be thanked of the, ne for to hafe thi Beneuolence þare—fore. Bot it come of a gentilnes of oure awenn hert, fownded in vertu. Of thee victories also whilke þe forluke of godd hase sent vs, ere we na—thying

The Prose Life of Alexander

enpriddede. For we knawe wele þat oure goddis alwaye helpes vs, whilke þou ilk a daye dispyse sette at note. And this sall be þe laste letter þat I sall writte vn-to þe. Beware if þou will, For I say the sekerly, I come to þe onane.' Þis lettre gaffe Alexander to þe messangers of Darius and many grete gifte þare wit. Seyme, he sent anoþer lettre, till his prynce his lorde, of þis tenour.

' Alexander, þe son of Philippe of þe quene Olympias vn-to þe prynce þe lorde vnder our subieccion in Capadoce, In laodice, or ells whare duelland, gretynge, gude grace. We charge ou commande ow straytly þat ilkan of ow ordayne vs in all þe haste þat e may j^m nete-hydes barked, send þam till Alexander, þat we and oure knyghtis may gere make vs of þam clethyng, schoees; And wit cameles þat e haue at Alexsander gerre cary þam to þe water of Eufrates.' In þis mene tyme a prynce of Darius, Nostande by name, wrate to Darius on þis wise.

'To Darius þe wirchipfull grete godd his seruande Nostand law seruyce. Me aughte note to sende swylk tythyng to our ryalle maiestee, bot grete nede gers me do it. Þare-fore be it knawen vn-to our hie lordchipe, þat twa grete prynce of ours, I, hase foghten wit kyng Alexander, And hym es fallen þe victorie, slayne he hase thir twa worthy prynce, mekill oþer folke, and I fled greuously wonded. And many worthi knyghtis of ours hase for-saken our lordchipe ioyned þam till Alexander oste, þe whilk he hase wirchipfully, and hase giffen grete lord-chipes of ours.' And when Darius had redd þis lettre, he sent in haste till Nostand, and commanded hym for till ordeyne a grete Oste; and manfully agaynestande þe folke of Macedoyne. He sent also a lettre to Porus kyng of Ynde, praying hym to helpe hym agaynes Alexander, and Porus wrate agayne in þis manere.

' Porus, kyng of Ynde, vn-to Darius, kyng of Perse, gretynge. For þou hase prayed vs to come to the in helpynge of the agaynes thyn enemys, we late the wete, þat we are redy alwaye hase bene, for to com to helpe ow. Bot as at þis tyme we are lettete to com to ow, be-cause of grete seknesse þat we ere stadd in, Neuer þe lesse, sekerly, it es rite heuy vn-till vs, greuous, vn-till [vs to] here of þe grete injury þat es done vn-till ow. And þarefore we late ow wite, þat wit-in schorte tym, we sall come for to helpe ow wit ten legyouns of knyghtis.' Bot when Rodogorius, Darius moder, herd telle þat Darius hir son ordayned hym for to feghte agayne wit kyng Alexander scho was rite sory and wrote a lettre vn-till hym þat contened this sentence.

'To kyng Darius, hir moste biloued son, Rodogorius, his modir sende gretynge ioy. I hafe vnderstanden þat e hafe assemblede our men, mekill oþer folke also, for to feghte eftsones wit Alexander. Bot I late þe wite it will availe þe nathynge. For þoghe e hadd gadirde to gedir alle þe men in þe werlde duellyng, it e ware vnable to agayne-stande hym. For þe foreluxe of godd mayntene hym, vphalde hym. And þarefore dere son, it es my consell, our heghenesse of herte e lefe, fall sumwhate fra our glory, and bese fauorable to þe gretnes of Alexander. For better it es to forga þat at e may note halde, and haffe in pesse þan þat at e may halde, þan for too couett all and be excluded for-ga all.' When Darius redde þis lettre, he was gretly troubbled and weped bitterly, command vn-till his mynde, his moder, his wyf, his childer.

In the mene tyme kyng Alexander remowed his oste, and drew nere þe cite of Susis, in þe whilke Darius was lengand the same tyme, so þat he myte see all þe heghe hille þat ware abownn þe citee. Þan Alexander commanded all his men, þat ilkan of þam suld cutte downe a brawnche of a tree, and bere þam furth wit þam dryfe bi-fore þam alle manere of beste þat þay myte fynde in þe way. And when the Percyenes saw þam fra þe heghe hille þay wondred þam gretly. And Alexander come wit his oste to þe citee of Susis and lused hym nere besyde þe citee. And than he called bis prynnce his oþer lorde and said vn-to þam, 'Late vs,' quop he, ' send a messangere to kyng Darius bidd hym owþer com feghte wit vs or ells submyt hym vn-till vs.' The nexte nyghte after, Godd Amon apperede vntill Alexander in his slepe bryngand hym þe figurre of Mercuri a mantill, and anoþer manere of garment of Macedoyne, and saide vn-till hym. 'Alexander, son,' quop hee, 'euer mare when þou hase nede, sall I helpe the. And þarefore luke þou sende noghte to Darius þat messangere þat þou spake off. For I will þat þou thi selfe clethe thee wit my figure wende thedir þi selfe; if alle it be perilous for to do, Dred þe na thyng, for I sall be thi helpe, so þat þou sall hafe na maner of disesse.

On þe morne when Alexander rase fra slepe, he was gretly comforthed of his dreame called till hym his prynce and talde þam alle his dreame, and þay assentede alle, þat he schulde wende to Darius in his propir person. And onane he called vn-till hym ane of þe prince, þe whilke highte Emulus. This prynce was a wyghte man, an hardy

The Prose Life of Alexander

wonder trewe till Alexander. And þan Alexander bad hym lepe one a horse, and brynge wit hym a noþer horse folow hym. And he didd so. And when þay come to gedir to þe water of Graunte, þat in þe langage of Perse es called Struma, þay fande it frosen ouer, and Alexander onane chaunged he wede, lefte þe foresaid prynce wit twa horse at þe water-syde and hym selfe, wit þe horse þat he satt apon, went ouer þe water apon þe Ys, towarde þe citee of Susis. And his prynce besoghte hym þat he walde suffre hym wende wit hym, ne peraenture any disesse felle hym by þe waye. And Alexander ansuerd sayde, 'Habyde me here,' quop he, 'For he sall be my helpere, wham in drewe I sawe appere vn-to me.' This ilke water I spake of bi-fore, all þe wynter seson ilke a nyghte was frosen all ouer; bot tymely in þe mornynge als sone als þe warme son smate apon it, þan it dissoluede agayne, ran wonder swiftly; þe brede of þat water es þe space of a furlange. When Alexander come to þe ate of þe citee the Perciens, when þay saw hym, hadd grete wonder of his figure, and wend he hadd bene a godd, and onane þay asked hym what he was ? And he ansuerd and said he was a messangere sent fra kyng Alexander to þaire lorde Darius, and be-lyfe þay broghte hym til hym. Darius, when Alexander come bi fore hym, said vn-til hym. 'Whethyn ert þou,' quop he ? 'I ame,' quop Alexander, 'sent vn-to þe fra kyng Alexander to wiete where to þou taries to come till hymu to gyffe hym batelle. Owthir come feghte manfully wit thyne enemys or ells submitte þe till hym pay hym tribute.'

And Darius heard him and said, 'Art thou then the Alexander who with such madness shaped thy speech, for I see thou holdest thyself not from words as a messenger doth, but art bold as a king. Yet know that by thy words I am not frightened at all. Come dine with me this day.' And with these words, he reached out his hand to him and took him by his right, and led him into the palace. And Alexander, musing, began to say: 'A right good token hath this barbarian wrought me when he clasped my right hand and drew me into the palace, because, as the gods say sooth, ere long the palace shall be mine.' And going in, Darius and Alexander lay by a table, and the daintiest feast was laid out. And Darius' marshall gazed hard at Alexander face to face. And the table was wreathed in cleanest gold. But the Persians, seeing Alexander's shape, yet knew nothing of what wisdom, doughtiness, and strength lurked in this small body. The dishes and tables and seats were wrought of the finest gold. The cup-bearers bore cups in golden vessels and rarest jewels. And when a cup was handed to Alexander, he hid it in his breast. And another cup was brought to him and he did the same, and thus too with a third. And those who bore the cups, seeing this, gave the news to the Emperor Darius. And he, hearing of it, rose up; saying: 'Friend, what is this that thou doest, hiding the cups in thy breast?' And Alexander: 'In our king's feasts the guests are wont, whenever they will, to take their drinking-vessels. But, as this seemeth to you unworthy, I will give them back forthwith.' And with these words he gave them back to the cup-bearers. But the Persians who sate at the feast said each to each, 'a good custom, indeed, and one to be praised.' And some lords, too, praised this way and exalted it. But one of the Princes of Darius, called Anapolus, sitting at the feast, gazed hard at Alexander and his face. For he had seen him when, at Darius' bidding, he went into Macedonia to take tribute of Philip. He, knowing his voice and looking on his face, began to think to himself and say: 'Is this not Alexander?' And rising at once he drew near to Darius, saying: 'This messenger whom thou beholdest is Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedon.' And Alexander, seeing them with each other in talk, knew they were speaking of him and he was known. And at this he rose up from his place and leapt away from the board. And taking a blazing torch from a Persian's hand, himself mounted his palfrey, which he found ready outside Darius's palace, and fled in the swiftest flight. And the Persian seeing this, taking weapons, mounted their steeds with a mighty stir, and quickly followed after Alexander. And in the darkness of the nightfall, they began to stray, some scratched their faces by the tree-boughs, some falling into ditches. But Alexander, bearing his blazing torch in hand, fared straight forward. Now, Darius sate on his throne and thought of Alexander and how great his daring was. He saw a statue of gold of Xerxes the Persian king, who sate below the high-seat in the hall. And at once the statue broke and was all scattered asunder. And Darius seeing this was smitten with heaviness of heart and began to weep sorely and long. And he said: 'This foretokeneth the wasting of my life, and the utter downfall of the Persian kingdom.' Alexander, however, coming to the river Grancus, found it swollen, and leapt athwart it. But ere he was over the stream burst its banks, and swept his horse away; with great hardship Alexander escaped and met Eumulus, his lord. And thus he went back to his army and told them of Darius, how he had dealt with him, and the torch with which he had fled away.

HOW ALEXANDER PUT HEART INTO HIS HOST ANEW.

And on the following day, he gathered his army, which told two hundred and twenty thousand of weaponed men. And he went up

on a hye place comforthed his men and said vn-to þam: 'Þe multitude of þe percienes,' quop he, 'may note be euend to þe multitude of þe greckes. For sewrly we are ma þan þay. And if þay were ane hundreth sythes maa then wee, late note our hertis faile ow þarefore. For I telle ow a grete multitude of flyes may do na harme till a fewee waspes.' And when þe Oste had herde thire wordes þay commendide hym halelely wit a voyce.

Than þe emperour Darius remowed his oste, and come to þe reuere of Graunt on þe nyghte, and went ouer on þe ys, and þar he lused hym. The Oste of Darius was wonder grete and strange. For þay hadd in þaire oste X^m cartes ordaynd For þe werre, and grete multitude of Olyfante, wit towres of tree on þam, stuffed wit feghtyng men. And sone after appon a day thir twa kynges wit þaire oste mett samen on a faire felde, Darius wit his men, and Alexander wit his men.

Than Alexender lept apou his horse, þat highte Buctiphalas, and rade furthe bi-fore all his oste, and houed in þe myddes waye bi-twene þe twa ostes. And when þe Percyenes saw hym, þa had grete wonder of hym, and ware rite ferde for hym, by cause he was so vggly. Neuere-þe-lesse þay tromped vp went to-ward Alexander. And sone þe batell ioyned, faghte to-gedir fersely, and many men dyed on ayther party; þare was so thikke schott of arowes, þat þe ayer was couerde, as it had bene wit a clowde. Some faghte wit swerde, sum wit speres, sum wit axes, sum wit arowes. Þe felde lay full of folke, sum dede, sum halfe-dede, sum greuously wonded. Thay began for to feghte at þe son-rysynge, and faghte to þe son-settyng. Bot þare dyed many ma of þe Percyenes þan þare didde of Macedoyns.

And when Darius sawe his men falle so thikke in þe felde, he lefte þe felde, and fledd, and þe Percyenes seyng that, þay fledd also. Bot þan þaire cartes of werre rane amange þe Percyens slewe of þam folke wit-owte nouwmer namely of fote-men. For by þat tyme it was myrke nyghte, and þay ne myte note see for till eschewe þam. When Darius come to the foresaid watere he fande it frosen, and ouer he went. And when he was ouer, þe oþer lordes of perse went appon þe ys, so grete a multitude þat þay couerde þe ys fra þe taa banke to þe toþer, þat a grete brede, þan onane þe ys brake als sone als Darius was paste ouer, all þat ware on þe ys ware perischte, ilk a moder son, drowned in þe water. Þe remanaunt, when þay come to the water, þay myte note wyn ouer. And þan þe Macedoynes come, dange þam downe. In this batelle þare was slaen of þe Percyenes CCC^m wit-owten thase þat were drowned.

Kyng Darius fledd to þe citee of Susis, went in till his palace, felle downe to þe grounde, sigheand wepande wit a sare hert, he said theis wordes: 'Allas, full wa es me, vnhappye wriche, þat euer I was borne, for þe ire þe indignacionn of heuen es fallen one mee. For I Darius þat lifte my seluen vp to þe sternes, Now am I broghte lawe to þe erthe. Now es Darius, þat conquerede all þe Este nacyons, made þam subiecte tributaries vn-till hym, fayne for to flee fra his enemys and submytte hym vn-to þam. And it ware knawen vn-to þe wreched man, what schulde falle till hym after-ward, he schulde hafe littill thoghte of þe tyme presentt, bot one þe tyme to come solde his thote be. In a poynte of a daye it falles, þat þe meke es raysede vp to þe clowdde, and þe prowde es putt to note.' And when he hade saide thir wordes, he rase vp, satt wrate a lettre vn-till Alexander, sayande on this wyese.

'Till his lorde Alexander, kyng of Macedoyn, Darius, kyng of Perse, gretyng Joy. We hafe wele vndirstanden by þat that we hafe herde of owe and sene, þat e hafe in ow grete wysedom a hye witt: so þat note allanly e knawe thynges þat are present or passede, bot also thynges þat ere for to come, and þare-fore all thynges, þat e doo: e do it wit-owten any lakke or repreue. Neuer-þe-lesse hafe in mynde þat rite as wee ware, so ware e geten borne of a fleschly woman. And þare fore rayse note our herte to hye bi-cause of our prowesche our doghty dedis, so þat e forgete our laste ende. For ofte tymes we see þat þe lattere end of a man discordes wit þe firste. It suffice till a werryoure for to gete þe victorye of his enemys, þofe all he schewe note alle þe malice þat he may. Remembre ow of þe wirchipfull kyng erses oure progenytour, þat many victoryes gatt schane in alle prosperiteez, Be-fore he raysed his hert in pride passande mesure. Alle þe wirchippe þat he hadd: wonn be-fore, he loste in Ellada, þare-fore remembre ow, þat all þe wirchipes þe victoryes þat e hafe geten by þe forluke of godd

The Prose Life of Alexander

ye got this victory. To us then who beseech grant your mercy. Yield us our mother, our sons, and wife, and we will render unto you the treasures we have in Aydem and Susa and Batram, the which our fathers hoarded and hid in earthen cellars. And we will give you the kingship of the Medes and Persians, that thus ye may have and keep what victory Jove the all-mighty hath granted you.'

HOW THE MESSENGERS OF DARIUS GAVE ALEXANDER THE LETTER, AND HIS ANSWER.

The messengers of Darius coming then to Alexander gave him the letter, which Alexander read soon before them all. Then one of his chieftains, called Parmerion, said to Alexander: 'Most mighty emperor, take all the wealth which Darius covenants unto thee, and give back to him his wife and sons.' And, hearing this, Alexander called to him the messengers of Darius, and before all spoke thus, saying: 'Tell ye to your emperor we wonder first that he misdeemed his mother, wife, and sons to be betrayed by our hands. If he be overcome, bid him not promise us a reward. If he bow himself to our yoke, all his honours and the majesty of God shall be laid bare to our sway. If he be not overcome, let him do us battle once again.' This said, he gave them rich gifts and sent them forth away. Then he bade the soldiers take up and gather the bodies of the dead and bury them in graves: and he bade them heal those that were wounded.

HOW ALEXANDER ENCAMPED BY THE STREAM GRANCUS.

Then he encamped with his host by the stream of Grancus, and wintered there some days. And there he offered up victims to the gods. And about the river there were palaces, and they were the fairest, raised up with greatest skill, and Xerxes the King of the Persians had built them. Alexander, seeing them, bade them be burned. And soon after this, stirred by ruth, he gave word none should dare touch them. And there too was a most fair and very wide field in which the Kings and Deemsters of Persia were of old buried. And digging into this field the Macedonians found in the graves gemmed vases. And there they found the grave of Ninus the King of Assyria and Persia, which was hollowed out of a single amethyst, and engraven on the outside with palm-leaves and sundry kinds of birds. And so bright was the amethyst that even from the outside the man's body appeared whole. And in this place was a narrow and evil tower on which stood many men, some with cut legs, some with broken thighs, some with torn hands, and some blinded. They hearing the noise of the armed men cried out to Alexander, who bearing their cries, bade them be taken thence. And seeing them was struck with ruth and wept, and bade each one be given ten thousand drachmas, and be restored every one to his own. For Darius kept them in prison, since they were of noble birth, and awarded all their possessions to his thralls. In the meantime the messengers from Alexander to Darius told all that Alexander had said. And Darius hearing this began to get ready for the fight. And he wrote another letter to Porus King of India, which runneth as follows:

THE LETTER SENT BY DARIUS TO PORUS KING OF INDIA.

'Darius King of the Persians to Porus King of Our Indians joy. We asked but lately of you, and again we ask you to come and help against those who strive to overthrow our palace. We know well also that the like harm will light on you. For this Alexander, who fighteth thus, hath an unquenchable and wild soul, which like a lion ceaseth not, and is like the sea when stirred by mighty winds. Furthermore, unwillingly though it be, we have gathered numberless races, and we have taken our counsel to fight with him to the very death. better vs es for to dy manly in þe felde þan for to see þe mescheffe of oure pople þe dissolacion of oure rewme. Whare-fore, hafand reward and compassion of oure disesse, we be-seke ow, þat e late oure prayeres sattell in our hert, helpe for to succour vs now at oure nede, hafand in oure mynde þe grete noblaye of oure progenytours. And I seure ow þat [I sall] giffe ilke a fote-man þat come wit ow, thre pece of golde, And ilke a horse-man, fyve pece of golde, And also mete drynke ynoghe to ow all our men. And whare so e lugge ow, we schalle fynde ow a hundreth fourscore tentes curyously wrogbte. And also we schall gyffe ow Alexander horse Buktyphalas, and alle appairail, þe araye þat langes till Alexander hallely schall be ours and also all þe spoylle of his folke sall be dalte amange oure folke. Where-fore we beseke ow þat also son als this lettre comme to ow, e haste ow till vs in all þat e may. For wite e wele for certayne, that rite als he done till vs, so he purpose hym in tyme commyng for to do to owe.'

In the men tyme, certane men of Darius went fra hym come till Alexander, talde hym, þat Darius purposede hym for to feghte wit hym eftesones, and had sent till Porus, kyng of Inde, for to come in grete haste, for to helpe hym. When Alexander herd þis, be-lyfe he remowed his Oste ward Darius, thynkand in his herte þat he wolde on na wyse take apon hym þe name of Emperour be-fore he hadd wonn Darius and his rewme one werre. And when Darius herde of þe commyng of Alexander, he dredd hym gretly þe Percyenes also. Bot þare was two prynce of Darius, of þe whilke þe tane highte Bisso þe toþer Ariobarsantes, thir twa when þair herd of þe comyng of Alexander, conspyred togedir for to slaa þaire lord Darius, supposyng for till hafe a grete thanke of Alexander, and a gret reward for þaire dede. And ayther of þam ware sworne till oþer. And than thay went to þe kynges palace, and come intill his chamber wit drawen swerdes in þaire hande, and fand Darius bi hym ane. And when Darius saw that, he trowed wele þat þay wolde sla hym, And said vn-to þam: 'Dere frende, hedir to warde hafe I called ow my seruaunde, bot now I call ow my lordes. What ayles ow at me þat e will sla me ? Haes Alexander cheriste þe macedoynes mare þan I hafe done ow? Hafe I note sorow disese ynoghe of enemyse wit-owtten ? Bot if e conspire agaynes me for to sla me wit owtten gilt, I say for sothe, e sla me thus preuelye, And Alexander may gete ow, he will take mare cruell vengeance one ow, then on any theues. For sothely it es na comforthe ne lyknyng till ane Emperour to fynd an oþer Emperour murdered wit his awen men.' Bot þay were na-thynge stirrede to petee, ne tendernesse, ne mercy, thurg his worde, Bot went till ym and wit grete cruelnesse smate hym, al-to magle hym, and went faste þaire waye, lefte hym for dede.

And when Alexander herd tell þat Darius was slayne he went ouer þe water of Graunt, and all his Oste wit hym, and come to þe cetee of Susis. And alsone als þe Percyenes saw hym, Thay Opened þe ates of þe citee, rescheyued hym wit grete wirchipe. And when þe prynce þat slewe Darius wiste þat Alexander was comen in-to þe citee þay went helde þam in hidils ay till þay myte gete knaweynge of Alexander will, as towchand þat that þay hadd done to Darius. Alexander þan went in-to þe kynges Palace, and as he went þare-in he merueyled hym gretly of þe biggyng þare-off. For Cirus þe kyng of Perse gert bigg it ryally. And the pament þareoffe was made of stanes of dyuerse colours, þe walles all enueround wit fyne golde precyous stanes sternes lyke to þe firmament, and pelers of golde þat bare vp þe werke. When Alexander saw all this curious werke, he meruailed hym gretly. And than he went to þe chambre þare Darius laye halfe dede. And alsone als he saw hym he haddgrete rewthe compassion of hym, and he tuke off his awenn mantill couerd [hym] þare-wit, went and graped his wondes and wepid for hym rit tenderly, said un-til hym. 'Rise vp, sir Darius,' quop he, 'be of gude comforthe. And als frely as euer þou reioysede thyn Empire, so mot þou itt do, And be als myghty, als gloryouse als euer þou was. I swere the here by oure myty goddes by þe faythe in my body, þat here I resigne vn-to the all thyn empyre, desyrand souerayngly for to hafe þe lyfe of the, as þe son of þe Fader, For sekerly it es vnfittand unsemly till ane emperour for to be reioysede of an oþer emperours mescheffe disesse, when fortune hase forsaken hym. Telle me, sir, what þay are þat hase thus faren wit the, and I sewre þe als I am trew man I sall venge the to þe uttereste.' And when

The Prose Life of Alexander

Alexander had said this mekill mare, Sare wepand Darius putt furthe his hande, and layde his arme abowte Alexander nekke, and kyssed his breste, his nekke, his hande, saide thir worde, thare that here folowes. 'A, dere son Alexander,' quop he, 'als thi heghe witt knawes wele, all this werlde es corrupt and sett in malice. For þe souerayne forluxe of godd, all thyng knawande fra þe begynnyng, and hafand felyng of þe wirkyng for to come, made man in that wyse, at þe begynnyng, þat nathyng es in hym stable ne faste. So þat all thyng þat ere passande werldely, fra þat he faile of gouernance, tournes alson till hym in contrarye. For if godd hadd ordeyned all thyng esy to man and alwaye wit-owtten chaungyng sent hym prosperitee, man schulde be lyftede vp so hie in pryde in vayne glorye, þat he solde note arett alle his wele-fare his welthe vn-to godd, bot till his awenn desert his awenn vertu. And so schulde men gaa fra þaire makare. On þe toþer syde if þe heghe wysedom of godd hadd made þe werlde on þat wyse þat all illes and infelicities fell apon man wit-owtten any maner of gudenesse, so many freletese sulde folow þe kynde of man, þat we schulde all be drawen in-to þe gilder of disparacion, so þat we solde hafe na triste in þe gudnes of godd. And þarefore grete godd wolde so wisely skifte all thynges, þat, when a man full of felicitee, thurgh his heghe pride will note knawe his makare, Fra þe heghte of pride in-to þe pitte of mekenes lawnes he mon be plunged. So þat he þat thurgh pride felicite forgatt his godd, thurgh fallyng in wrechidnesse disesse hafe mynde of his godd. Reghte als þou may see bi me, my dere son Alexander, þat was raysede vp so hie in- pride vayne glorye, thurgh reches prosperitee þat felle vn-to me, þat I trowed note þat I was goddes creature bot goddes Felawe. And þan, thurg blyndenes of pride, I couthe note see that, þat now, thurgh scharpenesse of mekenes and mescheffe, I see clerely knawes. Bot if it happen þat any man be vmbilappede wit grete infelicitee, so þat he, despairand of þe grace of godd, supposse na remedy, ne nane lukes eftere; þan oure lorde godd rayse hym vp to þe heghte of prosperitee, so þat þan he, þat bi-cause of wrechidnes infelicitee, myte note see godd ne knawe hym, thurgh felicite prosperitee knawes þat he, þat may bryng a man to lawe state, may rayse a man till heghe degree. And he þat may rayse a man till heghe degree, may putt hym to lawnesse agayne, when hym lyst, and þare-fore, son, late note thy hert ryse to hie in pride, for þe victoryes þat godd hase sent the, if all þou may do now whate þe listrit as [þou] were a godd. Bot alwaye thynke on thy laste ende. For þou ert a dedly man, and ilk a day if þou be-halde graythely þou may see thy dedd bi-fore thyn eghne. Consedirs þou note how oure lyffe may be lykkened to þe werke of Eranes, þat so sotelly makes þaire webbes? Bot alson als a little blaste of wynde puffes apon þam, þay breke, falles to grownde. Behalde see how glorius I was isterday how wrechede I am to-day, how law I am broghte. I was lorde nerehande of all þe werlde, now I hafe na power of myn awen selfe. Now I be-seke the, son, þat þou will bery me wit thy benyng handes. And suffre for to come to myn exequisite bathe þe Macedoynes and þe persyenes. And fra this tyme forwarde, þe empire of Macedoyne þe empire of perse be bathe ane. Haffe recomend vn-to the my Moder Rodogon, trete hir wirchipfully as thyn awenn Moder. And I be-seke þe also, þat þou be Mercyable to my wyfe. And if it be lykyng to þe, take Rosan my dogheter to thi wyfe. For semely it es, þat e be ioynede to-geder þat er comen of so wirchipfull progenitours, For þou of kyng Philippe, and scho of kyng Darius, And of ow twa may a wirchipfull a noble fruyte spryng.' And rite as he had saide thir worde he swelt in Alexander armes. Kyng Alexander, þan, after þe custom was for to bery emperours, gert araye Darius body als ryally as he couthe. And wit all þe solempnyte and wirchipe þat myghte be done, he helped hym selfe for to bere þe bere, sare wepande, and gert þe Macedoynes þe Percyenes gaa bi-fore þe bere. The persyenes also weped wonder faste, note allanly for þe dede of Darius, bot for petee of þaire hertis, þat þay saw Alexander wepe so enterely. And when Darius was beried Alexander went agayne to þe palace.

And one þe morne Alexander went and sett hym in a trone all of golde precyous stanes, the whilke Cyrus sumtyme gert make þat was kyng of Perse. And the Macedoynes and þe Persyenes sett apon his hede a coroune þat was Darius, þe whilke was so precious, þat men knewe nane like it in na lande. For all þe palace schane thurg bryghtness of þe precyous stanes, þat were sett þare-in. And þe trone was all of golde, of precious stanes, ofþe sege þare-offe was vii seuen cubete heghe fra þe grounde, and a grece of seuen gree was made þare-to, whare-by kynges ascended þare-to. And thir gree were mede wonder craftyly curiously. The firste gree was of ane amatist. The seconde gree was of a Smaragd. The thredd gree was of a Topa. The ferthe gree was of a granat. The fift was of ane adamand. The sext was of fyn golde. And the seuennt was of clay. And thay ware not [wit-o]wtten grete cause ordeyned one þis wyse.

For þe first gree w[as a]ne amatist, for amange all oþer stanes it hase this vertu, that it represses halde donne þe fumositee of wyne þe myghte þare-offe, suffers note a man þat bere it on hym be troubled in his witt ne in his mynde thurgh drownkeness. And, on þe same wise, solde ilke a kyng be of perfite witt mynde, thurg nane

The Prose Life of Alexander

occasion do na mysse. The secund gree was of a Smaragd, þe whilke clarifye kepe þe sighte of hym þat beres [it] upon hym, and so schulde a kynge hafe clere sighte of his hert, wysely for to see discernen that þat es spedfull profitable bathe for hym selfe for þe comon profit. The thirdd gree was of a Topa, þe whilke es so clere, þat a man bi-halde hym selfe þare-in, it sall seme till hym, as his hede ware tournede downward, and his fete vpward; And it be-takenes þat a kyng schulde alway take hede till his laste ende. The ferthe gree was of a Granat whilk passe all manere of precious stanes in reedness: betakens þat a kyng suld be schamfull for till consent till any thyng þat es vnlefull. The fifte was of ane Adamande. Þe Adamande es so harde þat it may note be broken nowþer with yren ne wit stane, bot if it firste be enoynted wit gayte blode. On þe same wyse a kyng suld be of so grete constance sadnesse þat, for na prayere, ne for na worldely gude, he solde note bewg fra þe way of ryght-wisnesse. The sexte gree was of fyne gold: for rite as gold passe all maner of metalle in bewtee, in precioustee; rite so a kyng awe to be preferred before oþer men gouernours of þam. Þe seuent was of Clay, till þat entent þat a man þat es raysed vp to þe dingnyte of a kyng sulde alway vmbythynk hym þat he was made of erthe, at þe laste to þe erthe he sall agayne. When Alexander was sett upon this trone, coronnde wit his diademe, þe Macedoynes þe persenes standyng abowte hym: be-fore þam alle he gert write a lettre till all cuntree, þat was of this tenour.

'Alexander the son of godd Amon qwene Olympias kyng of kynges lorde of lordes, till alle Dukes, Prynce, Erles, Baronns, maisters, till all þe folke of Perse: ioy grace. Sen it es plesynge to godd, þat I sitt one þe trone of Darius, be lorde of þe persyenes, grete cause I hafe for to be reioyist gretely þare-offe, ne were it for þe gret multitude of folke þat ere slayne. Bot sen it so es þat godd hase ordeynede me to be our lorde, and our gouernour, þare-fore we commande ow þat in ilke a citee, thurghowte þe lordchipe of Perse, e ordeyne prynce and gouernours as þare was in Darius tyme, to þe whilke we commande ow þat e be obeyande as e before-tymes hafe bene, and that þay do rite till ilke a man at þaire powere. Also it es oure will and oure commandement, þat ilke a man welde reioyse paysably his landes and his possessiouns. We commande alsoo, þat fra this lande of perse vn-till Ellada, fra thethyn to Macedoynes, be reddy way open so þat ilke a man þat will may passe bathe in and owte, wit merchandyse or any oþer erandes þat þay hafe at do, and Joy pese be vn-to owe.'

Pan gert Alexander all men be still, and said one this wyse: 'Whilke of ow so slew myn enemy Darius; come forthe be-for me, and I shall giffe ow worthy mede, conable wirchipe do þam, I swere bi oure godde þat ere Almyty, bi my moste biloued moder Olympias, þat I sall gyffe þam worthy mede.' When Alexander had saide thir wordes þe persyenes wepede wonderly sare. And than þe twa man-morthireres Bisso and Aryobarantes come bi-fore Alexander, and sayde vn-till hym: 'Wirchipfull emperour,' quop þay, 'we ere thase þat slew Darius thyne enemy wit oure Awenn hende.' And when Alexander saw þam, he bade his knyghtes belyfe ga take þam, bynde þam, lede þam to Darius grafe, þare smyte of þaire heuedes, And than þay ansuerd, saide vn-till Alexander: 'A, A, wirchipfull emperour,' quop þay, 'swore þou note till vs, bi oure godde þat ere Almyty, bi þe hele of thi moder Olympias, þat þou solde gerre do vs na harme, bot þat þou solde giff vs a worthi reward.' And Alexander saide agayne vn-to þam: 'So aughte me wele for to swere, for to gette knawying of þe slaers of Darius. For I solde neuer hafe getyn knawying þare-offe had I note sworne so. And itt I sall safe myn athe wele ynoghe. For it was al-way myn entent, þat if I myte wete what þay ware, þay solde hafe swilke a rewarde. For þay þat slaes þaire awenn lorde it es a taken þat þay will hafe na conscience to sla an oþer man.' And when þe perseynes herde this þay by-gan to prayse Alexander to commende hym and blysse hym as he had bene a godd. Pan kyng Alexander gert hede tha twa homycydes. And all þe rewme he sett in gouernance of certayne lordes. Amanges oþer þare was ane alde lorde was eme to Darius, þe whilke highte Climitus, þat was gretly luffede wit þe persyenes; And Alexander at þe request of all the persyenes ordeyned hym for to be chefe goueruour vnder hym of all perse. And one þe morne Alexander sett hym in his trone, wit his coroun on his hede, and efter þe biddynng of Darius he commande to brynge bi-fore hym Rosan, Darius doghter, wit a coroun on hir hede, sett full of precious stanes. And þare, as þe maner was of þe persyenes, he tuke hir to his wyfe, and made hir to sitt wit hym in his trone command all men to wirchipe hir als quene. And þan þe persyenes were wonderly glade, onane þay brote þaire godde bi-fore Alexander, and bi-gan to wirchipe hym, loue hym rite als he hade bene a godd, and said vn-till hym, hallelu wit a voyce, 'þou thi selfe es a godd, For that þat es plesande till oure goddes alway þou dose.' And when Alexander saw this, he was gretly troubled rite ferde said vn-to þam 'Wirchipfull sirs,' quop he, 'I pray ow þat e wirchipe me note as a godd, for sothely I am as e are, a corupteble a dedly man, and in me þare es na parcell of the godhede. And þarefore, I beseke ow, cesse of this wirchipe þat e do me'

The Prose Life of Alexander

Pan gert Alexander write a lettre till Olympias his moder till Arestotle his maister, makand mencyon of all þe bataylls þe disesse þat he hadd suffred in Perse, and of þe grete reches þat he fand þare, of þe whilke he all his men ware made riche. And also he wrate vn-to þam, þat þay scholde make grete solempnytee lastyng aghte dayes be-cause of þe weddyng of Alexander Rosan Darius doghter. And so did Alexander, in Perse, wit þe maceyoynes þe persyenes, many a daye.

Affter this kyng Alexander sembled a grete Oste, bathe of macedoynes of persyenes, and went towarde Inde for to werre apon Porus, kyng of Inde, þe whilke ordeynede hym for to come helpe kyng Darius. And, when Alexander was entered in-till Inde, he went thurg wildernes waste cuntree, whare in ware grete reuers and many grete caues cauernes. And þan Alexander his men wex wery, irkede rite sare. And þe prynces Of macedoyne of grece murmourede amange þam gretly, saide ilkan till oþer: 'It myte hafe sufficed till vs, þat we hafe ouer-sett kyng Darius, conqerred þe kyngdom of Perse. Where-be seke we forthire in-till Inde, þe whilke es full of wilde beste, and leues oure awenn lande. Ne þis Alexander nane oþer thyng desyre, bot for to wende abowte and thurgh werre to brynge all þe worlde vndere his subieccion. For werre debate unresche his body so fer furth þat, and he ristede any lange tyme witowten werre, rite als it were for defaute of mete he schulde faile dye. Leue we hym þarefore, and turne we agayne vn-till oure awenn cuntree, and late hym wende furthe wit the persyenes, if he will.' When Alexander herde þis, he garte all þe Oste habide, and he went and stodde in ane heghe place amange þam, sayde one this wise: 'Departis ow in twaa, so þat þe persyenes be by þam-selfe and þe Macedoynes and þe grekes bi þam-selfe.' And when þay hadd so done, Alexander saide to þe Macedoynes and þe grekes: 'A A, myne owenn dere knyghtis,' quop he, 'wele [e] knawe þat thir persyenes, vn-to þis day, hase bene contrary rebelles vn-to ow to me, and e will now lefe me here wit þam, and tourne agayne to our awenn cuntree. Wele e wate, þat when our hertes were troublede, fered, for þe wordes þat ware contened in Darius lettres, I thrug my speche my consell comforthed our hertis. And afterwarde, when we come in-to þe felde agaynes oure enemys, I went bi-fore ow all. And I by myn ane was þe firste man þat entrede þe batayye. And itt more-ouer, as e wele wate, I tuke apon me for to be oure allere messangere vn-to kyng Darius. And þare, for ow, I putt my selfe in many grete perills. And þarefore, witte wele for certayne, þat, rite as hedirtowarde, we hafe ouercomen oure enemys and hade þe better of þam, rite so fro heþein-forwarde, thurgh þe helpe of oure godde we sall ouercome oure enemys, hafe þe victorye of þam. And þare-fore I say ow forsothe, þat, all if e will tourne agayne to grece macedoyne, I sall note tourne agayne on na wyse, þat e may knawe þat, wit-owtten gouernance of a kyng, nane Oste may wynne na wirchipe.' When Alexander had said þus, all þe prynce of Macedoyne and of þe grekes schamede gretely, and askede mercy forgifnesse, sayande one this wyse: 'Moste wirchippfull emperour, oure lyfe lyes hallely in our hande. Whedir so euer e will goo we will gladly felowe our hye maiestee; þofe we schulde all dye for ow on a daye, we sall folow ow neuer lefe ow.' And þan þay remowed fra þeinne and come in-till a cuntree of Inde þat es called Phisiacen, in þe laste ende of July. And þare mette hym þe embassatours of Porus kyng of Inde, and broghte hym lettres fra Porus, þat said on this wyse.

'Porus kyng of Inde: vn-to þe theeffe Alexander, þat thurg thifte robbery many citee wynne, bidding we send. Sen þou ert dedely: wharto wene þou þat þou ert of powere to agaynstande godd þat es vn-dedely. A grete fole, me thynke, þou ert þat hase eghne, and cane nott see. Trowes þou we be lyke vn-to þe Percyenes þat þou hase made subiecte vn-to the ? Þou hase foughten hedir-towarde wit softe men cowarde, for þou hase ouercomen þam, þou wene, þat thi littillness sall brynge oure hye maiestee vnder thi subieccion; þe whilke es vnpossyble for to bee, bot if godde submytt þam vn-to men, and þe erthe be euen lyke to þe heuen. I late the wiete, þat I may note be ouercomen for note allanly men bot also godde doee seruyce to my name. Wate þou note wele, þat ane Dynise, þe fader of Bachus, come in-till Inde, wit a grete Oste for to feghte, bot onane he tournede þe bakke fledd, for he was note of powere to agaynstande þe vertu of men of Inde. And þarefore, or any schame or mischeffe com to þe; we con-sell the commande the, þat in all þe haste þat þou may, þou tourne hame agayne to thyne awen lande. Fore wele þou knawes, þat, bi-fore erses was kyng of Perse, þe macedoynes gaffe tribute till Inde. Bot, by-cause þat þaire lande es barayne vnprofitable, na thyng þer-in plesande till a kyng: þe men of Inde sett note þare-by. For ilke a man, desyres mare a large lande a plenteuous: þan a strayte lande a barayne. And þarefore, itt the thirde tourne, I comaunde the that þou tourne hame to thyne awenn lande. And neuer, in thi lyfe, couette to hafe Lordschipe þare þou may nane gete.'

When þis lettre was comen till Alexander, he gerte rede it be-fore all men. And when his knyghtis hadd herde þe tenour of þis lettre, þay were trublede. And Alexander sayde vn-to þam: 'My wirchippfull knyghtis,' quop he,

The Prose Life of Alexander

'late note our hertis be trublede ne fered for Porus letre. Hafe e note in mynde, wit how grete pride Darius wrate vn–till vs dyuerse tymes ? I say ow sotheley þat all þe folke of thyse Este parties hase þaire hertis þaire wittis lyke vn–to þe bestes þat þay duelle wit–all, þat es at say, Tygres, Pardes, oþer wilde bestis, whilke full seldom ere slaenn of men, and þare–fore þay triste all in þaire strengthe.' And when Alexander hade said thir wordes, he garte writte a letre vn–to Porus kynge of Inde whare–of this was the tenour.

'Kyng of kynges and lorde of lordes, Alexander þe son of godd Amon þe quene Olympias, vn–to Porus we sende. Pou hase scharpede oure wittes, gyffen vs hardynesse for to feghte agaynes þe, whare þou says þat macedoyne es bot a littill lande barayne of all thyng þat gude es. And Inde, þou says, es large, plenteuous of all gude reches. And þare–fore we sall enforce vs to feghte wit the at all oure myghte, for to con–quere thi lande þat, þou sais, es so full of reches. And, for þou halde vs pouer, of na reputacion, þare–fore we desire for to ascende to þe heghte of thi majestie. And also þare þou says, þat note allanly vn–to men, bot also vn–to godde þou erte emperour, I sall come to the, for to feght wit þe, as wit an haythen man full of Pompe pride and vayne glory, note as wit a godd For all þe werlde may note agaynstand þe wrethe of a godd. Þer–fore, sen þe elementis of this aere, þat es at say Thunners, leuenyng and water, may note bere þe indygnacion of godde, how schulde þan dedely men mowe agaynstande þaire wrethe? And þare–fore I late the wele witte þat þi founde proudde speche trouble me note ne moue me neuer a dele.'

When Porus hadd this letre, he was wondere wrathe assemblede a grete Oste of men, and a grete multitude of Olyphanntes wit þe whilke þe men of Inde ere wount for to feghte, and went agaynes Alexander. This Oste of Porus was rite grete strange, for þare ware þer in xiiij. cartes of were and viij^c Oliphante, and ilk an Olyphanthadd a toure of tree upon his bakke, in ilke a toure xxx men. Pare ware also oþer feghting men on horse and on fote wit–owten nowmer. And when þe Macedoynes and þe persyenes sawe þe grete multitude bathe of men of Olyphaunte, þay were fered, gretely stonayde. Neuer þe lesse, bathe þe partyes ordayned þam to batell, and arayed þaire batells, Alexander on his syde, and Porus on his syde. And Alexander lepe vp–on his horse Buktiphalas prikkede bi–fore all his men, and comanded, þat þe Medoynes þe persyenes sulde firste begynn to feghte. And so þay did; hym selfe wit þe grekes, and þe macedoynes stode on þe toþer syde, redy to succour þam when myster ware. And for þe Olyphaunte also, Alexander gert make suylike an ordynance. He gert make xxiiij ymage of brasse, and gert fill þam full of dry wodde. And he gerte make also cartes of yren, for to bere thir ymage before þe Olyphaunte and when þe Oste came nere to–gedir he gert sett fyre in þe wodd þat was in þe ymages. And when þe Olyphaunte saw þir ymages, þay wende þat þay hadd bene men and schott owte þaire groynes, as þay were wount for to do for till hafe weryed þam. And alsone thurgh þe grete hete, þay were brynned and than thay gaffe bakke, fledd for drede to brynne þayre groynes. And þare–fore þe men þat were abown in þe toures myghte note wyn to for to feghte. And when Porus saw that he was reghte sary. Þan þe Medoynes þe persyenes, wit arowes and speres oþer dyuerse wapynes of werre, slewe thykfalde of þe men of Inde. And thus þay faghte contenuelly xxx^{ti} days, mekill pople of bathe þe parties ware dede. And at þe laste þe Medoynes, þe persyenes, began faste for to fayle. And when Alexander saw that, he was wondere wrathe, and entrede in–to þe batelle, sittand on his horse Buktiphalas, and faghte mannfully, þe grekes þe macedoynes wit hym. And his horse also helped hym gretely. And than belyfe þe Indyenes began gretely for to fayle. And when Porus saw that he turned þe bakke fledd And þan þe Indyenes þat ware lefte on lyfe fledd also. And Alexander lused hym thare wit his Oste and made Sacrafice till his godde and commaunded for to bery þe dedd bodys, bathe of Indyenes of þe persyenes þe Macedoynes.

Sone after, upon a day, Alexander ensegedd Porus citee wann it, and went in–till Porus Palace, whare–In he fand mare reches þan any man will trowe. For he fand þare–in xý pelers of Massy golde, ilkan of a grete thikness a grete lenthe, wit þaire chapytralles. And bitwene þe pelers of golde, ware hyngande venette of golde syluere, wit leues of golde. And þe brawnche of this venett ware sum of cristalle, sum of Margarite, sum of Smaragdes, sum of Onyches, and þay semed as þay hade bene verray vynes. Þe walles also of þe palace ware couerde all ouer wit plates of golde, þe whilke when þe Macedoynes cutte in soundre brakke, þay fand þat þay ware a gret ynche thikke. And þir walles ware sett full of diuerse precious stanes, þat es at say, of charebuncles, Smaragdes, Margarites Amatistes. And þe ates of þe Palace ware of Euour wonder whitt, þe bande of þam, þe legges of Ebene. Þe chambirs, also, of þis Palace, were all of Cipresse, and þe bedde in þam ware sett full of Margarite, Smaragde, charebuncles. Þe haull, also, of þis Palace, was sett full of ymages of golde, bi–twix þam stode perlatanes of golde, in þe branches of whilke þare were many manners of fewles ilke a fewle was colourede,

The Prose Life of Alexander

paynted after his kynde asked, þe bekens of þam, þe clowes ware all of fyne golde. And ay, when Porus liste, thir fewles thurg crafte of music walde synge after þaire kynde askede was. He fande also in þat Palace veselles wit-owten nowmer, sum of golde, sum of Cristalle, Sum of oþer maneres of precyouse stanes, sum of Suluere, and þat all maner of vesell þat men sulde be serued offe. Bot þare were bot fewe of þam of Siluere.

Fra thethyn, Alexander remowede his Oste come to þe ates of Caspee, and þare he lused hym. It was a noble lande a gude. Bot þare ware þare-In many maners of nedders and of wilde beste. Fra þeine Alexander sent a lettre till Talifride quene of Amaon, of þis tenour.

'Kyng of kynges, and lorde of lordes, Alexander, þe son of godd Amon, þe quene Olympias, vn-to Talifride þe quene of Amaon, ioy. The grete Bataylles þat we hafe hadd wit kyng Darius, how we hafe conquered all his rewme, and his lordchipes, we trowe he noghte unknawen vn-to ow. And also how we hafe foghten with Porus þe kyng of Inde his cheeffe citee wonnen. And also wit many oþer folkes, þay ware neuer of powere to agaynstande vs, þe whilke we suppose be note vnknawen vn-to owe. Whare-fore we sende ow worde, commande ow, þat e sende vs tribute, if e will þat wee com note to ow to do ow disesse.'

And vn-to this lettre Talifride made ansuere by lettre one this wyse.

'Talyfride quene of Amazon wit oþer grete ladys of oure rewme, vn-till Alexander, kynge of Macedoyne, joy. We hafe wele herde telle of þe bye witt þat es in the, thurg whilke þou hase in mynde thyng þat ere passede, and dispose thynges þat ere present, and knawe thyng þat ere to come. Avyse the wele þarefore are þou come till vs, what trebulacionne disesse may falle the in thi commynge. For þare was neuer nane it þat werreyed agayne vs þat ne he had schame þare-offe at þe ende. And þare-fore take hede to thi last ende. For grete schame it es till a wyse man thurg indiscrecion to falle in mescheffe. Bot if it be lykyng to þe, to knawe our conuersacyon, and oure habitacion, we declare it vn-to þe be oure present lettres, þat oure habitacion es in ane Ile, þat es closede abowte wit a grete reuer þat noþer hase bygynnyng nor endynge. Bot on a syde we hafe a strayte entree. And the nowmer of women þat duelle þer-in es ccciiii^m þat ere note filed wit men. For oure husbunde duelle note amange vs ne no noþer man, Bot on þe toþer syde of þe reuer. And ilke a ere we make a solempne feste in the wirchipe of Iubiter xxx days. And þan we go till oure husbundes, and duelle wit þam oþer xxx dayes hase oure luste and oure disporte to-gedir as kynde askes. And if any of vs consayfe bere a childe if it be a male þe modere kepis it seuen ere and than sende it to þe fadere. And if scho bere a mayden childe þe moder halde it wit hir teche it oure maners. When we goo to werre agayne oure enemys we ere c^m rydand one horse wele armede. And sum of vs hase bowes arowes, and sum speres, and oþer diuerse wapyne. And þe remanent kepe oure Ile. And when we come wit the victorye oure husbunde does vs grete wirchipe. And þare-fore if þou come agaynes vs we late the witt þat we will feghte wit the at all oure myte. And if it happen þat þou hafe þe victory of vs, wirchipe sall it nane be to the bi-cause þou hase discomfit women. And if we discomfit the, it sall be an heghe wirchippe till vs, þat we may discomfit so wirchipfull an emperour; and to the it sall be a hye reprove. Where-fore we sygnifie vn-to þe by oure lettres þat þou come note agaynes vs for sekerly þare may grete dysese come þare-offe, þat peraventure þou knawe note now offe at þis tymme.'

When Alexander hadd redd þis lettre, he began to lawghe. And onane he garte writte anoþer lettre, and sent it to Talyfride, whare-offe þe tenour was this.

'Alexander kyng of kynges and of lorde, the son of godd Amon þe quene Olympias, to Talyfride quene of Amaon and þe oþer ladys of þe same rewme: ioy. We late ow weite þat thre parties of þe werlde, þat es to say, Asye, Affric, Europe we hafe conquered and made subiects vn-till vs, þare was neuer nane of þam þat myte agaynstande oure powere. And if we now suld note be of powere, to feghte with owe it ware ane heghe schame till us. Neuer-þe-lesse for als mekill als we lufe our conuersacion we consell þat e come forthe of our Ile our husbonde wit ow, and appere in oure presence. For we swere ow bi god Amon oure Fader, by all oure godde þat e sall hafe na disesse of vs. Bot gyffe vs sumwhat in name of tribute and we schall fynd ow and oure Amaonns þat come wit ow horse ynowe. And when ou listees for to wende hame agayne, e schall hafe gude leue.' And when þe Amaons hadd redd þis lettre, þay went to consell, and thoghte it was beste for to ascent vn-till hym. And þan þay sent hym x stedes þe beste þat myte be funden in any cuntree, and x oþer horse þe beste þat myte be geten, and a grete sum of golde. And Talifride hir selfe and oþer ladys wit hir went un-till hym, and accorded wit hym, and went hame agayne, wonder glade and blythe.

In þe mene tyme it was talde Alexander, þat Porus, þe kyng of Inde, was in Bactricen, and assembled a grete Oste for to feghte eftsonns wit hym. And when Alexander herde this, he remowede his Oste, and chese owte c.l of

The Prose Life of Alexander

duyercs þat knewe þe cuntree, for to hafe þe gouernance of his Oste, and to lede þam seurlly thurgh þat strange cuntree. In þe Monethe of Auguste, when þe son es maste hate, þay bigan for to take þaire iournee. And thay went thurg a dry cuntree, sandye, wit-owtten water. And nedlynge þam byhoued wende armede, þare was so grete plentee of neddirs, and cruell wylde bestes. For thies forsaid gyde ware mare fauorable to Porus, þan till Alexander his Oste, and þare-fore þay ledd þam thurgh swilke barrayne and perilous cuntree. And when Alexander saw it schope thus, and that his consell byfore had sayd þe sothe, þat es at say, bathe his awnn frende and men of Caspy, þat conseld hym þat he suld note hye hym ouerfaste, ne triste to mekill to strangers; þau he commanded þat all men schulde wende armed: so þay did. And þan all þe Oste schane rite as it had bene sternes, for sum of þaire armours ware of golde, sum of siluer, and sum of precious stanes. And when Alexander saw þe araye of his Oste, and þaire baners bi-fore þam Schynande so faire, he was rite gladde. Neuer-þe-les grete disese he hadd, þat nowþer he, ne his men, myte fynde na water.

So it felle þat a knyghte of Macedoyne þat hyte ephilus fand water standyng in an holle stane, þat was gadird þare of þe dewe of þe heuen, the whilke þis forsaid knyghte putt in his Bacenett, brothe it till Alexander for to drynke. And Alexander saide un-till hym, 'I suppose,' quof he, 'þat I drynke þis water, sall þe Macedoynes þe persyenes be any thyng refreschede þareby, or I sall hafe all þe refreschyng be my selfe.' And he ansuerd, saide, 'Pou all ane lorde,' quof he, 'sall be comforthed þareby.' Quof Alexander þan, 'And if e sall all perische trowes þou þat it solde be lykand to mee, for to lyfe in sorowe disese seyng þe dedd of þe Macedoynes þe persyenes?' And be-lyue he garte helle downn þe water on þe erthe be-fore all his men. And when his knyghtis saw that, þay were hugely comforthede þare-by rite als Ilkan of þam hadd dronken a grete draughte of water, and þan went furthe þaire waye. And on þe morne, þay come till a reuere whase bankes was growand full of grete redys þay ware als hye as pyne-treese; a, for þe maste partie of xý fote lange. Than badd [he] that þay drawe of þe water and bryng to þe Oste. Bot all þat dranke þare-offe it keste þam in-till a flux, and slewe a grete hepe of þam. For þat water was wonder scharpe, and als bittire als any mekill gyrse. Bot þan was Alexander gretly disessedd all his Oste note allanly of þam-selfe, bot also for þaire horse þaire beste þat þay ledd wit þam þe whilke bi-gan for to faile for thyrste. Alexander hadd wit hym a thowsande Olypante þat bare his golde, And foure hundreth cartes of werre and j^m cc wayne. He hadd also in his Oste ccc^m horse men and muyles camelles witowten nowmer, þat bare þaire vetails, and oþer thyng þat was necessarye to þe Oste; also oxen and kye, schepe and swyne, wit-owten nowmer, þe whilke perischt for defaute of drynke. Sum of Alexander knyghtes lykked Iren, Sum dranke oyle, sum ware at so grete meschefe þat þay dranke þaire awen stalyng. And thare was so grete habundance of nedders oþer venymous bestee, þat þam byhoued nede trauelle armed, and þat was a grete nuy to þam an heghe disese. Þan was Alexander wonder sorye namely for þe disese þat his Oste suffrede.

And as þay went endlande þis reuere, abowte þe viii houre of þe day, þay come till a castell þat stode in a littill Ile in þis forsaid ryuere; Aud this castell was made of þe forsaid rede. Þe brede of this ryuer was foure furlange lent. And in þat castell þay sawe a few men. And þan Alexander bad his men spirre þam þat ware in þe castell in þe langage of Inde whare þay myghte fynde any swete watir able for to drynke. And also son als þay spake to þam þay with-drewe þam hidd. And Alexander gerte schotte arowes in-to þe castell and þan þay hidd þam wele þe mare. And when Alexander saw that þay walde one na wyse speke wit hym, he hadd a certane of his knyghtes nakne þam swyme ouer þe water to þe castell. And þan xxxvii balde knyghtis hardy of Macedoyne nakned þam, and tuke ilkan of þam a swerde in his hande went in-to þe water swame it to þay were passede þe fertbe parte þare-offe. And sodeynly thare rase oute of þe water a grete multitude of beste, þat ere called ypotaynes, grettere of body than an olypant, and deuored thir knyghtis euer-ilkanne. And þan was Alexander rite sare greuede, and be-lyfe garte take þe forsaid guyde cl caste þam in-to þe water. And onane þe ypotaynes deuored þem.

And Alexander thoghte it was note spedfull langare to stryffe wit thase monstres, and garte tromppe vp and remowed his Oste fra þeine, and went so all þat day wondere wery for thriste. And also þay hadd grete disese nuye of wilde Beste þat come apon þam, þat es to say, of lyones, beres, vnycornes, tygres, and parde, wit þe whilke þay faughte grete trauell hade.

And as þay went on þis wyse wit grete angere disese aboute þe elleued houre þay saw a littill bate in þe riuer made of rede and men rowande þare-in. And Alexander gert spirre þam in þe langage of Inde, whare þay myte fynde any fresche water. And þay talde whare schewed þam a place a littill þeine whare-in þay saide þay scholde fynde a grete staunke of swete water and gude. And þan Alexander hys Oste went all aboute þat ryuere, come till þis forsaid stanke and lused þam aboute it. And Alexander comanded þat þay sulde felle a wodd þat growed faste

The Prose Life of Alexander

pare—by three myle on lenthe, alls mekill on brede. Þat wodde was all of þe rede þat I spak of bi—fore, and þe stanke was a myle on lent. Þan Alexander comanded þat þay sulde make many fires in þe Oste, and gerte trompe to þe mete. Ald alson þe mone be—gan to schynne þare come a grete multitude of scorpyons to—warde þe stanke for to take þam a drynke. And þan þare come oþer manere of nedders, and dragones wonder grete of dyuerse colours. And all þat cuntree resounded of þe noyse þe hissinge þat þay made. Þir dragones come dounne fra þe hye mountaynes for to drynke of þe stanke, and þay hadd crestis one þaire hedde þaire breste ware bryghte lyk golde, þaire mowthes open. Þaire aande slewe any qwikk thyng þat it smate apon, and oute of þaire eghne þare come flammes of fyre. And when Alexander his Oste saw þam þay ware rit fered for þam. For þay wende þay schulde hafe weried þam ilkan. And þan Alexander comforthed þam and saide vn—to þam: 'Mi wirchipfull knyghtes,' quop he, 'bees note agaste of þam, bot does ilkane as e see me do.' And þan he tuk a nett sett it bi—twixe hym þam and tuke his schelde his spere faughte wit þam manfully. And when his knyghtes saw þat þay ware gretly comforthed be—lyfe tuke þaire wapynne didd als þay sawe Alexander doo, and slewe of þam a grete multitude, whatt thurg dyuerse wapynne, what in þaire fyres. And of Alexander knyghtes þe dragones slewe xx^{ti} xxx^{ti} fotemen. After þam, þare come owte of þe forsaide wodde of rede, Crabbes of a wonderfull greteness; and þaire bakkes ware harder þan cocadrille. And when þe knyghtis smate þam one þe bakkes wit þaire speres, þay myte note perche þam, ne na harme do þam. Neuer—þe—lesse þay slewe many of þam in þaire Fires and þe remenant of þam gatt in—to þe staunke. And aboute þe sexte houre of þe nyghte þare come apon þam whytt lyones grettere þan Bulles, and þay schoke þaire heuede at þam grete manace made in þaire manere. Þan þe knyghtes keped þam in þaire nettis and slew þam. After this þare com apon þam þan a grete multitude of swynne þat ware all of a wonderfull mekilness, wit tuskes of a cubett lenthe. And wit þam þare come wilde men women of þe whilke ilkan hadd sex hende. Bot Alexander his knyghtes keped þam in þaire nettis slewe many of þam. And on þis wyse Alexander his Oste was gretly disesed. Þan comanded Alexander þat þay schuld make many fyres wit—owtten þe Oste abonte þe stanke. After this þare come apon þam a wondere grete beste, grettere strangere þan an Olyphaunt, and he hadde in his frunte three lange hornes. And he was schapen lyke a horse he was all blakke. And þis beste was called in þe langage of Inde 'Anddontrucion'. And or he went to þe water at drynke, he assailed þe Oste. Bot Alexander went here þare amange þe oste comforthed þam. This ilke beste slewe of his knyghtes xxviiij and bare donne lij and at þe laste it felle in þe nettis and was slayne. After þis þare come oute of þe rede a grete multi—tude of mys als grete als foxes, and ete up þe dede bodys. Þare was na qwike thyng, þat þay bate þat ne also son it dyed. Bot harme did þay nane to þe oste. Þan come þare flyande amange þam bakkes, grettere þam wilde dowfes, and þaire tethe ware lyke men—tethe. And þay didd men mekill disese and hurte many men. Of sum þay bate offe þe nese; of sum þe eres. In þe mornenynge arely þare come many fewlis als grete as wlturs, reed of colour, and þaire fete þaire bekes all blakke. Bot þay didd na disese to þe oste, bot went to þe stanke—syde drewe fisches ele oute of þe water, ete þam.

Þan lefte Alexander þir perilous place, and come wit his Oste, in—to þe cuntree of Bactricen, þe whilke was full of golde oþer reches. And þe men of þe cuntree resayfed hym benyngly wirchipfully and gaffe hym and his Oste grete giftes. And þare he habade xx^{ti} dayes. In þat cuntree þay sawe trees þat, in—stedde of leues, bare wolle; þe whilke folke of þe cuntree gaderd made clathe þare—offe. Þe knyghtes of Alexander wex wonder balde strange of hert because of þe victoryes þay hadd wonnen of þe wilde beste before neuenned.

Fra thethyn, Alexander remowed his Oste and come to þe place where Porus lay wit þe folke þat he hadd assembled. And one þe morne bathe Alexander and Porus tuke þaire grounde arayed þaire batells for to feghte. And than Alexander lepped apon his horse Buktiphelas and went bifore his Oste þan þay trumpede up þe batells joyned samen, faghte to—gedir rite sare. Bot þe Indies fell thikfalde in þe batell as corne dose in þe felde be—fore þe sythe. And when Porus saw that, he went and stode bi—fore all his men, and cryed vn—till Alexander, saide on this wyse: 'It sitte note till an emperour,' quop he, 'to lose his men þus in vayne. Bot it sitte till hym for to determyne his cause with his awenn hande. And þarefore late thi folke stand still on þe ta syde, myn on þe toþer late the me feghte to gedir hand for hand. And if it happen þat þou ouer—come me, my folke I sall be subiecte vn—to þe. And if I ouer come the, than thou thi folke be subiecte vn—to me.' Thir worde said Porus dispysand Alexander, bi—cause þat he was a man of littill stature. For he was bot three cubites hye, Porus was fyfe cubetes hye mare. And þarefore he traysted hym all in strenghe of his body, note knawande þe vertu þe hardnes þat was hidd in Alexander. And than bathe þe ostes stode still ant lete þe twa kynge feghte samen, Porus gaffe Alexander a grete str[a]ke on þe hede, was in poynte to hafe felled hym. And then Porus knyghtes sett vp a grete Schowte.

The Prose Life of Alexander

And Porus tourned hym to þam—warde for to reprove þam for þaire schowtting. And Alexandsr went till hym manfully tuke his swerd in bathe his hande lete flye at hym hitt hym fullbott one þe heued slew hym. And when þe Indies saw that þay bi—gan sharply for to fighte wit Alexander his oste. Vnto whayme Alexander spake sayde: 'Wrechis,' quop he, 'wharto feghte e sen our kynge es dede. Wate e note wele that thare na gouernour es þe folke are sparpled be—lyfe als schepe þat ere wit—owtten ane hirde.' Þe Indies ansuerd saide: 'Vs es leuer,' quop þay, 'fighte manfully, and dye in the felde, þan for to see þe dissolacion of oure folke, and oure lande be destroyed wasted.' 'Leues our feghtyng,' quop Alexander, 'wende hame to our howse pesaybly seurely. For I swere ow bi oure godde, if ee will do so, e sall hafe no harme, ne our lande sall note be destroyed ne spoyled, bicause þat e hafe foghten so manfully for our kynge.' And when þe Indies herde thir wordes þay keste fra þam þaire waypne thanked Alexander and wirchiped him rite als he hadd bene a godd. Than kyng Alexander lused hym þare his Oste wit hym, he command to bery þe dede corse þat ware slayne in þe Batell, and offred sacrafice till his godde. Also he garte Entere Porus þe kynge of Inde wirchippedly.

Fra thethyn Alexander remowed his Oste come till a cuntree þat was called Oxidrases. The folkes of þat cuntree are wonder Symple men, and note prowde, þay are called Gumnosophiste. Þay feghte neuer mare ne stryfes. Þay ga alway naked citez ne townnez hafe þay nane, Bot duellez in luge in caues. When þe kyng of þis folke herd tell of þe commyng of Alexander he wrate a lettre, sent vn—till hym whare— offe this was the tenour.

'The corruptible Gumnosophist vn—till Alexander a man wee wryte. We here tell þat þou comme to werre apon vs, whare of we merueylle vs gretly. For wit vs sall þou fynd nathing þat þou may spoyle vs offe. For we hafe na thying elles amange vs, bot allanly whare with we may sustene oure wafull bodys. What may þou þan take fra vs. Bot if þou come for to feght wit vs, feghte on. For I late the wele witt, þat oure symplenes will we on na wyse lefe.' When Alexander had radd this lettre he sent ane ansuere agayne on this wyse. 'Paisably,' quop he, 'will we com to ow and no violence do ow.' And þan he wente in—to þe cuntree whare þay duelled. And he saw þam ga naked duelle in luges in caues, þaire wyfes þaire childre away fra þam, walkand wit wilde beste. And he hadd grete marueylle, asked þam if þay hadd any oþer howse. And þay ansuerde said, 'Nay. Bot in thir holette duelle we alwaye in þir caues.' And Alexander commendid gretely þaire symplenesse, and bad þam aske hym whate—so þay walde. And þay ansuerd sayde, 'Gyffe vs,' quop þay, 'vndedlynnesse, so þat we mow note dye; for oþer reches couet we nane.' Quop Alexander, 'I am dedely my selfe, how þan may I giffe ou vndedlynnesse?' And when þay herd hym say soo þan þay ansuerd sayde on this wyse. 'A, A, wreched man,' quop þay, 'whare to wende þou þus aboute, quelle so many men, soo many ilke dedi dooes sen þou wate wele þat þou sall dye.' 'For sothe,' quop he, 'þe cause whi I do it es of þe prouydence of godd. For hys mynystre I am, doand þe commandement of hym. ee wate wele þat þe see es note trubbled of hym selfe. Bot when þe wynde entres in—till hym, þan it stirre hym trouble hym. I walde hafe ristedd and lefte all werre. Bot þare es anoþer spyryte suffres it note be in reste.' And when Alexander hadde said thir worde he lefte þam went till anoþer cuntree.

Anoþer day, he come wit his Oste till a place wharee twa ymage ware, þe whilke Ercules gart make sett in þat place. And þe tane of þam was of fyne golde and þe toþer of fyne Siluere, the lenthe of aythir of þam was twa cubettis. When Alexander saw þir ymage, he gert perche þam for to witt, wheþer þay ware holle or massy. And he fand þat þay were a party holle. And he garte stoppe þe hole agayne and putt in þam a thowsande nobles, fyve hundreth. And fra þeine he remowed his Oste, and entrede in—till a wildirnesse calde myrk, so þat þay myghte vnnethes an knawe anoþer or see anoþer. And fra thythin þay went seuen daye iournee and entred in—till a wildirnesse, and come till a grete reuere. And bi—onde þat riuer þay saw wonder faire wele vesaged women cledd in foule clethyng horrible; and þay hadd in þaire hande wapne made all of siluere, bicause þay hadd noþer Iren ne stele. And þay rade one horse. And men saw þay nane amange þam. And when þe Oste walde hafe passede ouer this ryuere, þay myte note be cause it was rite brade and full of dragones and oþer monstres.

Fra thethin þay went aboute towarde þe lefte party of Inde and come till a dry Marras full of gret rede. And as þay passed thurgh þat Marras, be—lyue þare come owte of þe rede a beste lyke ane ypotayne, whase breste was lyke to þe cocadrille, and his bakke lyk a sawe, and his tethe wonder grete, als scharpe as a suerde; bot in his gangyng he was als slaw als a snyle. And, in his oute—come, he slew twa knyghtis of Alexander. This ilke beste myte þay on na wyse perche wit þaire speres. Bot wit mellis of yren þay slew it.

And fra þeine þay trauelde thritty day iourne and come to þe vttermaste iles of Inde, þare þay lused þam beside a ryuere þat es callede in þat langage of Inde Hemmahurer. And aboute þe Eleuend houre þar come owte of þe wodde a grete multitude of Olyphante come apon þam wit a gret birre þaire groynes opyn. And onane Alexander

The Prose Life of Alexander

lepe apon his horse Buktiphalas and busked hym agaynes þam and badd þe macedoynes þat þay solde tak þaire horse and ilk a man a swyne in a bande, wende agaynes þe olyphantis. And when þe olyphantes saw þam, þay come gapande wit þaire groyne redy te tak þam. And when þe Macedoynes saw þat þay ware fered and durste note go to þam. And Alexander saide vn—to þam, 'My wirchipfull knyghtes,' quop he, 'bese of gud comforthe and drede ow na—thyng. For, and e will gare oure swyne crye faste e schall see all þir Olyphantes flee anon.' And alsone als þe Olyphantes herde þe crye of þe swyne, and þe noyse of þaire trompes, þay fledd and durste note habyde. And Alexander his men pursued tham, and what wit nettis, whatt wit swerdes speres, þay slewe of þam a grete multitude, and come agayne to thaire tentis.

Anoþer day þay removed þeine, and trauelde thurg the same wodde of Inde. And þay fande þare women with berdis rechande downn to þaire pappes, þaire heuede playne abownne, and þay ware cledd all in skynnes. Þay chasede thir women and sum of þam þay tuke broghte þam till Alexander. And he gart spirre þam in the langage of Inde, how þay liffed in these woddes, whare na duellyng was of men. And þay ansuered said, 'We lyffe all,' quop þay, 'wit venyson þat we take in thir woddes thurg huntyng.'

When þay ware passed oute of thir wodde þay come in—till a faire felde vn—till a place whare this forsaid riuere ran. And þare þay fande bath men women all naked. And þay ware als ruge of hare as þay hade bene bestes. Whase kynde custom it was als wele to be in þe water, als on þe lande. And als sone als þay saw Alexander Oste onane þay fledd to þe water, and dowked in—till it. Fra þeine þay traueld xv day iournee, and entred in—till woddes þat ware full of cynocephals, þe whilke als son als þay saw Alexander his oste onane þay assailede þam. Bot Alexander his men, what wit arowes whate wit speres nettes slew a grete multitude of þam, and þe remenaunt of þam fledd here and thare in þe wodde.

Fra thethin þay went fourty dayes come in—till a champayne cuntree, þat was all Barayne, and na hye place ne na hilles myghte be sene on na syde. And as it ware aboute þe xj houre of þe day, þare bigan so grete a wynde to blawe oute of þe Este þat it blew doune to þe erthe all thaire tentis þaire luges. And þare was grete disese ymang þe oste. For þe wynde tuk fire—brandes oute of fyres þat þay hadd made, and smate dyuerse men brynte þam. And þan Alexander knyghtes mournurede gretly said amange þam, 'Þe wrethe þe wreke of oure godde,' quop þay, 'falle apon vs, Bicause we seke to ferre towarde þe son rysyng.' 'My wirchipfull knyghte,' quop Alexander, 'bese of gud comforthe and no thyng ferde for this tempeste es notee fallen thurg wrethe of oure goddes bot be—cause of equinox of heruest.' When þe wynde was cessed þay gadirde te—gedir þat þe wynd hadd sparpled.

Fra þeine þay went xxv days and come in—till a grene valay, and þare þay lused þam. Than commanded Alexander þat þay schuld make many fyres. For it began for to be vnsufferable calde. And thare be—gan for to falle grete flawghtis of snawe, as þay had bene grete lokkes of wolle. When Alexander saw that, he was ferde þat it schuld note hafe cessed sone, aud bad his men þat þay suld tred down þe snawe full it wit þaire fete. And þaire fyres also helpe þam gretly. Neuer—þe—lesse þare ware fyve hundrethe of þe Oste dedd thurgh þat snawe, þe whilk Alexander gart bery. Þan þare felle a passand grete rayne, and þe snaw cessed. Wit þe rayne, also, þare come so thikke a myste, þat contenually three days to gedir þay saw na sonn. And oute of þe clude þat hange abown þam þer fell as it hadd bene grete fyrebrande þe whilk brynt many of thaire tentis and of þaire luges. And onane Alexander offred sacrafice till his godde and bad his knyghtis put alde ryuen clathe wate bi—fore þe fire, and he made his prayere. And also son the whedir wexe clere faire.

Fra thethin, þay remowed and come till a grete ryuere þat es called Ganges þare þay lused þam. And as þay luked ouer on the toþer syde, þay saw twa or thre men walke up downn þare. And Alexander badd his men spirre þam in þe langage of Inde what þey ware. And þay ansuered said. 'We are Bragmayns,' quop þay. Alexander hadd grete desyre to speke wit þe Bragmayns. Bot he myte note wynn ouer þe water; it was so depe so brade Bot if it had bene in þe monethe of July and Auguste. And also it was full of ypotaynes scorpyones and cocadrilles, out taken in þe forsaid monethes And when he saw þat he myghte on na wyse wynn ouer he was rete heuy. And belyfe he garte make a lyttill bate of redis, couerde it wit nowtte hydys gerte pykk it wele bathe wit—in wit—owtten. And when þe bate was made, he gert a knyght of his gang in—to it, and gaffe hym a lettre wit hym for to bere to Dindimus, þat was kyng of þe Bragmayns, of whilk lettre þis was þe tenour.

'Kyng of kynges and lorde of lorde, Alexander þe son of godd Amon of þe quene Olympias, vn—to Dindimus kyng of Bragmayns, ioy. Euer sen we were comen to þat age þat we couthe discernen by—twix gud ill we hafe desyred soueraynly for to hafe wysdomme konnyng, for to putt away fra vs ignorance vnconnyng. For as þe wise techyng of oure philosopres declares opynly, Eloquence wit owtten witt wisdom dose ofte—sythes mare skathe

The Prose Life of Alexander

þan gude. Þarefore we hafe wele vnderstanden by relacion of dyuerse men, þat our lyfe our maners are diuised and diuerse fra all oþer men; so þat noþer on þe See ne on þe lande e seke na helpe and þat e eme anoþer manere of doctryne þan we hafe lerende of oure doctours. Whare–fore we pray ow þat e will certyfye vs bi our lettres of our lyffe and our maners and our doctryne. For perauenture we may take þare of sum gud Ensample, and our wysdome our gudnesse neuer be þe lesse. For it es na harme till a man thurg his gudnes to make anoþer man gude as he es. The whilk I may proue bi this simylitudI supposse a man hadd in his hand a lyght candill, many oþer candills may be lyghted þare at, it lose na–thyng of his lyghte. And rite so it es of þe gudnesse of a man. For many men may take gude ensample of hym his gudnesse be na thyng enmenuste þareby. Where–fore itt eft–sons we pray ow þat wit–owtten any taryng or delay, e schowe vs þe maners of our lyffing.' Than kyng Dindimus resaffed þis lettre wirchipfully and wrate anoþer agayne of this tenour.

' Dyndimus maister of þe Bragmayns vn–to kyng Alexander ioy gretynge. We hafe wele vnderstanden by þe tenour of thi lettres, þat þou desyres gretly for to hafe verray connyng and perfitt wysdom; þe whilke are mekill better þan any kyngdom; for þay may neuer be boghte wit na pryce, whare–fore I comend þe gretly, knawing þat þou arte a wyse man. For ane Emperour wit–owtten wisdom, es noghte lorde of his subiectis, Bot his sugettis ere lordes of hym. e wrate vntill vs, praying vs for to schewe owe oure maners of lyffynge, ilke a poynte efter oþer, þe whilke we halde impossible for to doo. For oure maner of lyffynge es full ferre dyuerse fra ours. For noþer we wirchipe þe goddes þat e wirchipe, ne ledis þe lyfe þat e lede. And if I writte owe oughte of oure maner of lyffing, e may hafe na sauoure þare in, be–cause e are besily ocupied wit dedis of armes. Neuer–þe–lesse þat e say note þat I layne oure lyfe fra ow for envy, Als mekill as come to my mynde at þis tyme I sall writt vnto ow of oure maners.

' We Bragmayns lede a symple lyfe a clene and þe wirchipyng of many goddes we eschu. We do na synnes ne we will hafe na mare þan reson of kynde asches. All thyng we suffer þat, say we, es necessary ynoge, þat es note ouermekill. We tille na lande, ne eryes, ne sawes, ne okes noþer ox ne horse in plughe ne in carte. Ne nett caste we nane in þe see, for to take fysche; Ne huntynge ne fewlynge vse we nanne. Mete drynke hafe we ynoghe, and oþer mete seke we nane, bot þat þe erthe oure allere moder wit–owtten mannes labour brynges furthe. Wit swilke metis we fill oure wambes, whilke nues vs note, ne na harme dose. And it of swilke metis we fill note oure bodis to full. For amange vs it es an vn–semely thyng an vn–leefull to see a grete–belyed man. And þare–for ere we all oure lyfe tym wit–owtten sekenesse lyffe lang alwaye are in gude hele till oure lyffes ende. We vse neuer–mare na medcyns ne sekas na helpe for þe hele of oure bodys. At a terme of deede endes oure lyfes, for ane of vs leues na langere þan an–oþer, Bot efter þe order of þe birthe of man, þe terme of deede comes till ilke a man. Thare come nane of vs at na fire for na calde, ne clathe come þare nane apon vs, Bot alway we ga naked. We fulfill neuer þe desyres of oure bodys. Thurg pacyence we suffree all thyng. All oure inwarde enemys we slaa, So þat we drede nane enemys wit–owtten. For lightlyer es a citee or a castelle taken þat es ensegged bathe wit inwarde enemys wit–owtten, þan þat þat es ensegged allanly wit owtwarde enemys. Bot þou, emperour, feghtes agaynes owtwarde enemys for [to] foster nuresche thyn inwarde enemys, þe whilke ere fendes of helle. We Bragmayns has slayne all oure inwarde enemys and þarefore we drede nane owtwarde enemys ne nane helpe sekas for to hafe agayne þam noþer be see ne be land. Bot we ere always sewre ynoghe, and lyffe wit–owtten any drede. Oure bodys we hill wit þe leues of trees and þe fruyte of þam we ete. We ete mylke also and drynkes water of a gude ryuere or of swete welles. We wirchipe a godd, and till hym alwaye we elde lonyng. We desire þe life of þe werlde þat es to come, and vs liste note here þe þyng þat turne to na profett. We spekke note mekill, Bot when we ere artede for to speke we say note bot þe sothe, and onane we halde vs still. Reches luffe we note. Couetise es a thyng þat may note be filled, þe whilke oftesythe brynge a man till a mescheuous ende. Wrethe ne envie es þare nane amange vs, ne nane of vs es strangere þan anoþer. Of the pouert þat we hafe we ere riche, for we hafe it in comon. We strife neuer mare, ne beres neuer wapen. We bere peesse ilkan till oþer of custom, note thurg vertu. Domes hafe we nane amanges vs, for we do nane ill, whare–fore we schulde be called vn–to dome. A law þare es þat es contrary til oure kynde. For we do na mercy, bi–cause we do no thyng whare–fore we sulde aske mercy. We do na labour þat pertene to couetise or auarice. We giffe note oure bodyse to lechorye, we do nane advowtrye, ne we do na synn whare–fore vs sulde nede to do penance. We fynde na fawte in na thyng, For we all does that þat righte es. We dye na sodeyne dede, For thurg foule dedis we corupte note þe ayere. We vse na clathes þat are littede of dyuerse coloures. Oure wiffes ne are note gayly arayed for to plese vs. Ne wit þam we comon note bi–cause of luste of lecherye, bot bi–cause of childre getynge. Our wyffes sekas na noþer clethyng,

The Prose Life of Alexander

þan þe forluxe of godd hase granted þam. And whaa dare take apon hym for to chaunge his wirkyng, an hege syn vs thynke it ware till any man for to presume to do it. Baththis vse we nane, ne warme water to wasche oure bodys wit all. Þe Son mynistres vs hete, and þe dewe of þe ayer ministre vs moyster wete. We hafe na thoghte of na thyng, ne we schewe na lordechipe abownn oþer men þat ere lyke vn–till us. For a grete crueltee we halde it to constreyne a man to serue vs, whayme kynde þe forluxe of godd hase made oure broþer als fre als we are. We brynne na stanes for to make lyme off and þare–wit to make vs howses at duelle in, and curiouse palase: ne vessell make we nane. In caues or creuyce of craggges we duelle, whare thare come na noyse of wyndes ne whare vs thare drede na rayne. On þe erthe we slepe wit–owtten any besynesse. Swilk howses we hafe; in þe whilke, whils we lyffe, we duelle, and when we dye, þay ere oure graues. We sayle note in þe see aboute na merchandyse, in þe whilke þay suffre many perills þat sayles þarein many meruaylles can tell offe. The crafte of Eloquence faire speche, lere we note for to polishe oure wordes; Bot thurgh þe sympilnesse þat we hafe þat suffres vs note to lye, all oure speche we speke. Scoles of philosophres haunt wee note, whase techechyng es alway discordand na thyng certayne, ne stabill diffines, bot for þe mare partye lyes. Bot þa scoles we haunte in þe whilke we lere to lyffe vertuosly and also thynges þat teches vs for to do no wrange to no man. Bot after verray rightwisnesse to helpe ilk man at oure powere. Plays lufe we nane. Bot if vs liste hafe any disporte we take rede þe lyfes þe dedis of oure Auncestres, and oure predicessours. And if we fynde any thyng in þam þat es cause of laughtre þar–at we wepe makes dole. Neuer–þe–lesse we behalde oþer thynges of þe whilke oure hertis ere gladdide and grete lykyng has, þat es at say, heuen–schyne wit sternes wit–owt nowmer; þe son faire bryghte, of whase bryghtnesse all þe werlde takes lyghte and hete. The see we se alway of purpoure coloure, and when tempeste ryse þare–in it distruyes note þe land þat es nere it, as it does in oure partes. Bot he embrace it as his sister and gase abuoute it. And in þe se we see many dyuerse kynde of Fisches, Delphines porpase layke þam. We hafe lykyng also for to bihalde faire feldes alouer floresched wit flores of þe whilke a swete reflaire enters in–till oure nose, in þe whilke a sensible saule hase maste delite. Also we delit vs in faire place of wodde of swete welles whare we here swete sange of fewles. This customs hafe we al–way, þe whilke, þou walde halde note bot a while, we trowe þou suld thynke þam rite hard. Blame note me, for all þat þou requerede me be þi lettres I send þe wretyn. Neuer–þe–less, and it sulde not displese the, I walde tell þe a littill of oure doctryne þe whilke makes oure lyfe to seme harde vn–to þe. ee hafe wit–in a schorte while conquered made sugete vn–to our empire all Asy, Europe, Affryke. As our selfe hase sayde e make þe lighte of þe son to faile, when e seke þe termes of his course thurg werre. e ete all manere of thynges þat come till hande, And our vesages seme as e ware fastande hungry. e slaa our childre makande sacrafice of þam to Mawmetes. e sawe discorde bi–twix kynges and thase þat schulde be meke e stirre for to be prowde. e make men to thynke þat grete space of landes sufice þam note And so þay seke duellyng place of heuen.

'Also thurg our goddes e do many ill dedis, as þay didd þam selfe, Ensample of Iubiter our godd of Proserpyna þat e wirchipe as a goddesse. For Iubiter defouled many mens wyfes, and Proserpyna made many men to do advowtry wit hir. Full wreched full hye fules þay ere, þat swilke goddes wirchipes. ee will note suffer men lyfe in þaire awenn libertee bot makes þam our thralles our sugetes. e deme note ritwisly, e gerre our iuge change our lawes as ow liste. e say many thyng þat sulde be donne, bot e do þam note. e halde na man wysse bot hym þat hase Eloquence of speche. e hafe all our witt in our tunge, and all our wysdome es in our mouthe. e lufe golde siluer gaders þam to–gedir and desyre to hafe grete howse hye, and grete multitude of seruande. e ete drynk to mekill, so þat oftymes our stomake thurgh grete repleccion es greued many sekenesse þare–thurg e fall in, so ofte sythes dyes before our tyme. e wolde euer–mare halde our reches and all thyng þat e may gete. Bot all thyng in þe laste leues ow. Þe wysdom allanly of þe Bragmayns passe as our witt our wysdom. For, we wele consedere, þe me moder þat broghte forthe stanes trees, of þe same was bathe oure bygynnyng ours. e honowre our Sepultours curyously wit golde syluer, and in vesselle made of precyouse stanes e putt þe asse of our bodys, when þay ere brynned. And what may be werre þan for till take þe banes, þat þe erthe sulde hafe, for to ga bryn þam, and note suffere þe erthe resayffe his element þe whilke he broghte forthe.

'We sla na beste in þe wirchipe of godde. Nee temples make we nane, for to sett in ymage of golde or of siluere in þe name of false godde, as e do; ne awters of golde and of precious stanes. e hafe swilke a lawe for to honour our godde wit our gudes for þat þay sall here our prayers. Bot we vndirstande wate wele þat noþer for golde ne siluer; ne for þe blode of calues nor gayte ne schepe Godd heres any man. Bot for gude werkes þe whilke Godd lufes, and thurg þe wordes of deuote prayere. Godd will here a man for þe worde. For thurg worde we ere lyke to

The Prose Life of Alexander

Godd. For Godd es worde, and þat worde made all þe werlde aud thurg þat worde all thyng hase beyng, Mouyng lyfe. That worde wirchipe wee and luffes honowres. Godd es a spirite. And he lufes na–thyng bot þat that es clene. Whare–fore we halde ow full grete foles, that wene our kynde be heuenly, and þat e hafe comunicacion with Godd, And neuer–þe–less files our kynde wit advowtries fornicacions seruyce of Mawmettis false goddis, and many oþer wikkede dedis: ilke a day þis e do. Þis e luffe, and þarefore when e ere dede ye sall suffere tourmentis wit–owtten nowmer. e wene þat Godd will be mercyable vn–to ow bi–cause þat e offre hym blode flesse of dyerse beste. Bot we on þe contrarye wyse luffe clenness bathe of Body of saule, so þat we mowe afe after þis lyfe ioy þat neuer sall afe ende.

'ee serue note a Godd þat regne in heuen, Bot e do seruyce to many false goddis. For als so many membris, als e afe on our bodys, als many goddis e wirchipe serues. For e calle a man þe lesse werlde, and rite as a man here hase many lymmes, so e say þare are many goddes in heuen. e say Iuno es godd of þe hert, bi–cause he was wonder angry; and Mars e say es godd of þe breste, bi–cause he was prynce of Batells. Mercury e calle godd of þe tung, bicause he was wonder euloquent in spekyng. Hercules e trowe be godd of þe armes, Bi–cause he did twelfe passande dedes of armes. ee trowe Bacus be godd of þe trotte, for he fande firste drounkynnesse. Couetise, e sau, es godd of þe lyuer, for he was þe firste lechoure þat euer was. And e say þat he ase in his hande a byrnand fyrebrande whare–wit he styrres þe luste of lechery. Cereris e calle godd of þe wambe, bi–cause sco was þe firste Fynder of wheete. And Venus, be–cause scho was moder of lecery, e say scho es godd of þe preuee membres of man woman. Mynerua, bi–cause scho was fynder of many werkes, e say wisdomer riste in her, and þare–fore e call hir godd of þe heued. And on þis wyse all þe body of man e deuyde in goddes, na party þareoffe e lefe in our awen powere. Ne e trowe note that a godd þat es in heuen made our bodys of noghte. False goddes e wirchipe þat sall bryng ow to thralledome schame schenchipe, and to thaim e make sacrafice tribute payes. Vn–to Mars e offere a Bare. To Bacus e offere a gayte ; To Iune a pacoke; To Iubiter a Bulle; To Appollo a swane; To Venus a doufe; To Mynerua ane owle; To Cereris floure; To Mercury hony. And Hercules e onowren wit floures grene branches of tresse. Þe temple of Couetyse e enourne wit rose. Alle our myghte oure triste e putt in þam þat may ow na–thyng helpe at nede. Now sothely e pray þam note to be our helpers, Bot oure tourmentours. For it byhoues nedis be þat, als many goddes als e wirchipe gyffe þam powere of our lymmes, als many tourmente e suffere. Ane of our goddes stirres ow to fornyacion. Ane oþer to ete drynke to mekill, and anoþer to feghte stryffe. All ere þay our lordes, and to þam e obey serues and wirchippes. So þat wonder it es þat our wrechid bodys fayles note for þe many seruyce þat e do to so many goddes. And gud rite it es þat e serue swilke goddes bi–cause of þe many wikkede dedis þat e do. And for e will note cesse of our ill dedis, þarefore e serue swilke goddes till our awenn harme, For euermare þay desyre þat e do ill. If our goddes here ow when e pray to þam, þay do ow harme in our conscience. For þat that e pray fore es ill. And if þay here ow noghte, þan ere þay contrarye to our desyres. Whare–fore whethir þay here ow, or þay here ow noghte, euer–mare þay do ow disesse. Þise ere þa tourmente þat oure doctours talde vs offe, þat here in this werlde tourmente ow as e ware dede. For, and e consyder wele, þare may no man suffere wers tourment þan e doo. For all þe takens þat oure doctours telle vs ere in helle, and we see þam in owe. Þare are many paynes in helle, e suffre paynes when e wake for to do advowtres, fornyacions, thiftes, man–slawghters. And namely, þat e bee filled of werldly reches a, of werldly rechesse. For oure doctours says, þare es in helle so mekill thriste, þat it may neuer be slokend; and e haue so grete Couetyse of werldly reches þat e may neuer be full. Þay say also þat in helle þare es a hunde þat es callede Cerberus þe whilke hase thre heuedes; And if ee conseder ryte, our wambes are lyke Cerberus. For mekill etyng drynkkyng, þay say also, þare es in helle a maner of nedder þat es called Idra. And e for þe many vice, þat e hafe bicause of our full wambe may be callede Idra. Whare–fore we bi–helde wele all þe illes þat are in helle, þay duelle in ow. Waa es ow, wreches, þat swilke a mysbileue haldes; whare–fore after þis lyfe, e mon suffere paynes wit–owtten nowmer.' When Alexander hadd redd þis lettre, he was wonder wrathe, be–cause of iniury of his godde. Neuer–þe–less, be–lyfe he gart write anoþer agayne of this tenour.

'Kyng of kynges, and lorde of lorde, Alexander þe son of godd Amon and of þe quene Olympias, to Dindimus, kyng of þe Bragmayns, gretyng. If all be fun trew amanges ow þat þou hase sent wretyn in thy lettres, þan allanly e are gude men in þis werlde; for as þou says e do nan ill. Bot wit þou wele for certayne, þat þis maner of lyffyng comme note of vertu bot of custom. All thyng þat we do, e saye es synn. And all þe crafte, þat ere amange vs on þe same wyse, e say, þay ere synnes. e will distroye all þe customs þat man–kynde hedir–toward hase hadd vsed. Owther e schew bi our worde, þat e are godde, or ells till goddes e hafe envy. And þare–fore e say, as e say, I may

The Prose Life of Alexander

not write to ow all þe order of our lyffing. Bot als mekill þare-offe als I may vnderstande at this tyme, I sall writte vn-to ow. ee say e vse note for to till þe erthe, ne sawe na corne, ne plante na vynes, ne sett na trees, na to make na faire howse. And þe cause here-of as it wele semes es for e hafe na Iren, whare-of e myghte make ow tuyles for to wirke with-alle. And þare-fore ow by-houes nedes ett herbes lede an harde lyfe, ryte as beste. For e may nowþer gette brede ne flesche ne fysche. Does not wolves on þe same wyse, þe whilke, when þay may note gete þaire fill of flesche, þay fill þaire belys of þe erthe ? And it ware lefull or lykande to ow to come till oure cuntree, we sulde lere na wisdom of oure nede. And þare-fore late our hunger habyde at hame in our awenn cuntree. Þat man es note mekills at commend þat alwayes lyffes in disesse. Bot he es gretly to commend, þat in reches lyffe attemperally. Bot and men schulde be commendid þat are oppressed wit disesse, þan sulde blynd men, leprouse men, oþer swilke ouer all oþer be commendid; þe blynde, for he sees not at desyre; þe pouer, for he hase note at do. And we walde make oure duellynge in our cuntree we sulde suffere pouert wrechidnes rite as e do. e say also þat our wyfes vse na prowde aray for to plese þaire husbunde, and þe cause es for þay hafe na noþer thyng for till araye þam wit. Also e say e do nane advowtries ne fornyacions. And þat es na meruaile! For-whi, how sulde þay hafe luste to lechery þat etes note. Luste of lechery es note comonly, bot yf it come of hete of þe leuer or ells of habudance of mete drynke. Bot e ete na-þynge hot herbes rote, as e ware swyne, drynkes water vnnethes may e sloken our hunger and þarefore e hafe nan appitite to women.

'e hafe na liste to studie aboute lerynge, ne e seke na mercy ne dees nane till oþer. And all this e hafe in comon wit beste. For rite as beste hase nowþer reson ne discrecion, ne hase na felynge of gude, rite so þay hafe na delite in gode. Bot till vs resonable men þat has free will of kynde ere many lykynges blandeschyng granted. For it es im-possible þat þis werlde wyde brade sulde note hafe sum chaungynge of gouernance; So þat ne after heuyness sorowe, Ioy myrthe sulde note folowe. For-why manes will es variable chaungeable þat chaunge wit þe heuen abownn. On þe same wyse manes hert es dyuerse. For when þe day es clere, manes hert es gladde blythe. And when þe day es derke, manes wittis are derke dulle heuy. Also men chaunge thurg dyuerse ages. For barnehed reioyse it in sympilnesse, outhede in presumptuosnes, And grete elde in stabilnes. For wha will luke efter wysdome in a childe, In a unge man stabillnes, or in an alde man wildenes ? Many delitable thynges come till oure mynde. For sum we See wit oure eghne; Sum we hafe thurgh herynge; Sum we fele thurg smellyng; Sum thurg tastynge; and Sum thurgh towchyng. Sumtyme we hafe delite in salutacions swete sange melodys of dyuerse Instrumente. Of þe erthe we hafe al maner of gud fruyte; of þe see we hafe habudance of fysche, and of þe ayere delyte of fewles of dyuerse kyndis. If þou abstene þe fra all thies owthir it es for pride or for envy. For pride, þat þou dispyse swilke precyouse gifte. For envy bi-cause þay ere note gyffen ow, as þat þay ere to vs. Bot efter myn opnyon I deme þat our lyffing and our maners commes mare of foundnesse þan of wysdom. For sen e are men e schulde hafe þe vertu of a resonable creature, and þat hafe e nohte.' When Dindimus hadd redd þis lettre, onane he wrate an oþer to kyng Alexander of þis tenour.

'Dyndimus, þe mayster of þe Bragmayns, vn-till Alexander, gretynge. We hafe vndirstand þe tenour of þi lettres þus we ansuere. We er note lorde of this werlde, as we sulde euermare lyffe þare in. But we ere pilgrymes in þis werlde, and when dede comme we wende till oþer habytacions. Oure Synne greue vs note, ne we duelle note in þe tabernacles of synners. We do na thyfte. And for þe conscyence þat we haue, we gaa note furthe in open. We say note þat we ere goddes, ne nane envy hase vn-to þam. Godd þat made all þat es in þis werlde, he ordeyned many diuerse thyng. For warne dyuersitees ware of thyng þe werld myte noghte stande. Godd gaffe man fre will, for to discerne of all thyng þat ere in þe werld, and chese whilke hym lyst. Whare-fore he þat leues þe ill chese þe gude, note godd, but goddes frende he may be called. Be-cause þat we lyffe contenently, and in quiete reste, e say þat we ere godde, or elles þat we hafe envy to godde. But this suspeccion þat e hafe of vs, pertene to ow. For e þat ere blawen full of þe wynde of pride e aray our bodys wit glorious clethyng, and on our fyngers, e putt iowells of golde precyous stanes.

'Bot I pray ow, what profit does þis ow: Golde and siluer saues note a manes saule, ne sustene note mens bodys. Bot we þat knawes þe verray profitt of golde, and þe kynd þareoffe, when vs thriste, gase to þe ryuere for to take vs a drynke, if we fynde golde in þe way, we trede apon it wit oure fete. For golde noþer fille vs when we hunger, ne slokens oure thriste, ne it hele note a man þat es seke. If a man thriste drynke water, it putte away his thriste. Also if a man hunger ete mete, it does away his hunger. Bot and golde ware of þe same kynde, als son als a man hadd it, þe vice of Couetyse suld be slokynde in hym. Be þis cause es golde ill. For ay þe mare þat a man hase þare-offe, þe mare he couetes. Wikkede men are wyrchippede amange ow. For comonly a man luffes hym

The Prose Life of Alexander

þat es lyke till hym selfen. e say þat godd takes nane hede till dedly thynges. And neuer–þe–lesse e bygge temples, and makes autres in þam, and settis vp mawmettes abownn þam, and grete delyte hase when bestes ere offerde, in þam, and at our name es noysede, þis was done to þi fader, to thyn Eldfader, till all thi progenytours. And þe same also es highte on–to þe. Wit swilke wirchipes þay ere rewarded, þat knawes note þam selfe dedly.' When Alexander hadd redd þis letre onane he sente anoþer agayne and that was of this tenour þe whilk þat folowes.

' Alexander, þe son of godd Amon of þe quene Olympias, kyng of kynge lorde of lorde, vn–to Dyndymus kyng of þe Bragmayns we sende. For als mekill als our duellynge es in þat partye of þe werlde fra þe begynnye, whare na strangers may com to ow, bot if it be rite fewe, ne e may note passe forthe of our cuntree, but als swa say e, are parred in, and na ferrere may passe; þarefore e magnyfy e our manere of lyffyng and suppose þat e are blyssed be–cause þat e er so spered in, þat if e walde neuer so gladly passe furthe for to lere þe customes þat oþer men vse, e may note; and nyll–e will–e, ow by–houe nedis suffere þat caytefftee þat e lyffe in. Whare–fore it seme bi our techynge, that þay þat ligge in presonn, are als mekill at comend als e, þe whilke vn–to þaire lyues ende suffres sorowe and nede. And as me thynke, þe gudnesse þat e ruse ow offe, may wele be lykkened to þe paynes of þaim þat ere in presonn. And so þat that oure lawe demes to be done t[i]ll wikked men, e suffere kyndely. And þare–fore hym þat we halde wyse, e halde an Ebbere fule . Sothely me thynk our lyffyng es note blyssed bot wrechid and as it ware a chastying to owe. I swere ow by oure godde of myghte, þat, I myghte come to ow with an oste, I sulde gare ow leue our wrechid lyfe, and by–come men of armes, als many of ow als ware able.' When Alexander had sent this letre till Dyndimus he gart rayse vp a pelare of Marble a wonder grete, an heghe, and gart writt þare–apon this title wit lettres of grewe, of latyne, and of þe langage of Inde. 'I Alexander, Philipp son of Macedoyne, after þe discomfytour þe dedd of Darius Porus come on werre vn–to this place.'

Fra þeine kyng Alexander his Oste remowed come in–till a felde, þat was called Actea þare þay lused. Abowte þat felde was a thikke wodd of treesse berand fruyte; of þe whilke wilde men þat duelt in þe Same wodd vsede for till hafe þaire fude, whase bodyes ware grete as geaunte, and þaire clethyng ware made of skynnes of dyuerse beste. And when þay saw Alexander Oste luge þare, onane þare come oute of þe wodd, a grete multitude of þam wit lange rodde in þaire hand bi–gan for to feghte wit þe oste. And þan Alexander commanded þat all [þe] oste schulde sette vp a schowte at anes. And also sone als þe wylde men herde þat noyse, þay were wondere fered be–cause þay had neuer be–fore herde swilke a noyse. And than þay be–gan to flee hedir thedir in þe wodd. And Alexander his men persued þam and slewe of þam vic xxx iiij. And þay slew of Alexander knyghtes xxvij. In þat felde Alexander his oste leuged iij dayes and vetailed þam of þat fruyte þat growed in þe wodd.

Fra þeine þay remowed and come till a grete ryuer, lused þam þare. And as it ware abowte none, þare come apon þam a wilde man, als mekill als a geaunte. And he was rughe of hare all ouer, and his hede was lyke till a swyne, And his voyce also. And when Alexander saw hym, he bad his knyghtis tak hym bryng hym bi–for hym. And when þay come abowte hym, he was na thyng fered, ne fledd note, bot stodd baldly bi–fore þam. And when Alexander saw that, he comanded þat þay sulde take a onge damesell nakken hir sett hir bi–fore hym. And þay did soo. And onane, he ranne apon ir romyandd as he hadd bene wodd. Bot þe knyghtes wit grete deficultee refte hyr fra hym. And ay he romyed made grete mane. And efte þay broghte hym till Alexander and sett hym bi–fore hym. And Alexander wonderd gretly of his figure. And þan he gerte bynd hym till a tree make a fyre abowte hym brynne hym. And so þay didd. Fra þeine þay remowed come till anoþer felde in þe whilke þare ware growand treesse, of a wonderfull heghte, and þay bigan for to sprynge vp at þe son rysynge; And bi þe son settinge þay wyted a–way in–to þe erthe agayne. At þe firste houre of þe day þay bi–gan to sprynge oute of þe erthe, so þay wex ay to myddaye, and þan þay bi–gan to decresse. And by þe son settinge þay ware in þe erthe agayne, And was na thyng of þam sene bi–fore on þe morne. Þir treesse bare a fruyte wonder swete of refflayre bot þay [ware] bitter of taste. When Alexander saw þat fruyte he bade a knyghte bryng hym þareoffe. And he went tuk þare–offe, and onane a wikked spirit smate hym, and be–lyfe he was dede. And þan þay herd a voyce in þe ayer þat said on þis wyse: 'What man so neghes þir treesse he sall dye onane.' Þare was also in þat felde fewles wonder meke tame. Bot what man so layde nande on any of þam, onane þare come fire oute of þam, brynt hym rite greuously.

Than þay remowed fra þeine, And come till a Mountayne, þat was so hye, þat þay ware viij dayes in gangyng ar þay myte wyne to þe heghte þare–offe. And when þay come to þe heghte of it, þare come agaynes þam a grete multitude of dragones, Serpentes, and lyones þe whilke turmentid Alexander his men reghte gretely. And at þe laste, þay askaped þaire daungere, and went doune of þe mountayne and come in–till a vaylay þat was so myrke

The Prose Life of Alexander

þat vnnethes myghte ane of þam See anoþer. In þat depe valay ware tresse growand of whilke þe fruyte þe lefes ware wonder sauory in þe tastynge, and reuells of water faire clere. Aghte dayes contenuelly þay saw na son. And at þe viij days end þay come to þe fote of a mountayne whare all þe Oste thurg a wikked thikk ayer ware so gretley disessed þat þay ware in poynte to hafe bene choked þare-offe. And when þay come a-bown on þe mountayne, þay fande þe ayer mare sotell, and þe lighte of þe day mare clere. And þus þay ware wendand vpwarde, on þis Mountayne Elleuen, xj, days wit grete trauaile. And when þay come to þe hegheste of þis Mountayne, þay saw on þe toþer syde faire weder bryghte. And þan þay went down of þis Mountayne, and come in till a grete playne of whilke þe erthe was wonder rede. And in þis playne þare ware growande tresse wit-owtten nowmer; and þay passed note a cubit in heghte, þaire fruyte þaire lefes ware passandy swete as þay had bene fyges. And þay fande þare reuells rite many, of clere water as cristalle. And it was als nureschand to manes body, as it hadd bene mylke wit-ouen eny oþer mete. Thurgh þat ilk playne þay went fourty .xl. days and þan þay com till wonder heghe Mountaynes; and it semed as þe toppes had towched þe firmament. And þir Mountaynes ware als brant vp-rite as þay had bene walles. So þat þare was na clymyng vpon þam. And at þe laste þay fande twa passage be-twix þase Mountaynes, of whilke, þe tane stretched to-warde þe west, and þe toþer towarde þe Este. Than Alexander demed þat that dyuyson be-twix þase Mountaynes was made thurg Noye flode. And þan þay went by þat passage þat stretched to warde þe Este Seuen days. And on þe hegthen .viij. day þay fande a Basilisc þat men calle a Cocatrys, a grete ane horrible. And bicause of his grete elde he was foull stynkand. Þis ilke Basilisc was so venymous, þat note all anely thurg his stynke, bot also thurg his sighte allane, whaym so he loked on, he sulde dy onane; þan þe Macedoynes and þe persyenes, as þay passede thurg þe strayt way dyed thikk-falde thurgh þe sighte of þat Basilisc. And when Alexander knyghtis saw that perill, þay durste passe na forther bot said amange þam: 'Þe vertue of oure goddes,' quoth þay, 'es bifore vs, þat schewes vs þat we schulde ga na forthir.' Bot Alexander went bi hym ane vpon an heghe cragge, where he myghte see on ferrome fra hym. And þan he saw this pestellencius beste þe Basilisc lygg slepande in myddes of þe passage. Þe kynde of hym was þat, als so sone als he felid a man or a beste com nere hym, for to open his eghne stare appon þam, and als many als he loked on, solde sudaynly falle doun dye. When Alexander had sen hym, Be lyfe he went downe of þe cragge, and gart sett a merke þat na man sulde passe. And þan he gart a pavyse be made seuen cubites of lenghte foure on brede; and on þe vtter syde þare-offe he gart sett a grete Mirroure, And a large. And at þe nethir ende of þe pavisse he gart nayle a burde þe lenthe of a cubit for to couere wit his legges, and his fete, so þat na party of hym myte be sene. And þan Alexander tuk þis pavisse in his handis, and went towarde this Basilisc, and warned his men þat nan of þam sulde passe his termes. And when he come nere þe basillsc, þe basilisc opynde his eghne. And wit a grete ire he bi-belde þe Mirroure and saw hym-selfe þare-in. And of þe reflexion of þe bemes of his sighte strykande appon hym-selfe Sudanly he was dede. And when Alexander knewe wele þat he was dede, he called till his knyghtis; And bad þam come see hym þat slewe þaire felawes. And when þay come till hym, þay saw þe Basilisc dede. And þan þay comended prayssed gretly his hardynesse and his hye witt, And went brynede þe Basilisc at þe commandement of Alexander.

Fra þeine þay went till þey come to þe ferreste of þat waye ; and ferrere myte þay note wynn. For þare ware so hye Mountaynes agaynes þam and craggas like walles þat þay myte passe no forþer. And þan þay turned agayne, and come to þe forsaide playne; and went by þat way þat stretched to-warde þe weste fyvftene .xv. days. And þan þay lefte þat way, And turnede on þe lefte hande. And so þay went foure score iiijⁿ⁴ days, and at þe laste þay come till a Mountayne of adamande; and at þe fute þare-offe þare hange chynes of golde. Þis Mountayne hadd made of saphyres twa thowsande gree a halfe, by þe whilke men ascendid to þe summit of þe Mountayne. And þare Alexander his Oste lused þam.

And on þe morne Alexander Offerd sacrafice till his goddes, And þan he tuk with hym xij twelue prynce of þe wyrchip-fulleste þat he hade, and went vp bi þe forsaide gree till he come aboun on þe Mountayne. And þare he fande a palace wonder faire and curiously wroghte; and it hade twelve ates and thre score ten wyndows. And þe lyntalls bathe of þe durs and of þe wyndows ware of fyn golde, wele burnescht, and þat Palace was called þe howse of þe son. Þare was also a temple all of golde of precious stanes, And bi-fore þe dores þare-offe þare was a vyne of golde, berande grapes of charbuncles, of Rubyes, Dyamande, and many oþer maneres of precyous stanes. Pan kyng Alexander his prince went in-to þe palace; and fande þare a man liggand in a bedd of golde, and couerd wit a riche clathe of golde. And he was rite a mekill man and a faire, And his berde his heued ware als whitt als any wolle; and hym semed lyke a Bischoppe. Als son als Alexander his prynce saw þis alde man þay

The Prose Life of Alexander

knelid dounne on þaire kneesse and saluste hym. And he ansuerd saide: 'Welcom Alexander,' quop he, 'I telle the þou sall see, þat neuer flescly man bi–fore this tyme sawe; And þou sall here þat neuer erthly man herde are.' And Alexander ansuerd sayd: 'Maste blyssed alde man,' quoth he, 'how hase þou knawyng of me?' 'For sothe,' quoth he, 'bi–fore Noy flode couerde all þe erthe, knewe I bathe the, thi dedis. I wate wele þou desyres for to See þe haly tree of þe Son And þe Mone þe whilke telle thyng þat ere to come.' 'aa for sothe,' quop Alexander, 'þer es na–thyng þat I desyre mare, þan for to see þam.' And he was rit gladd. Þan saide þe alde man till hym: 'And e be clene of flescly dede wit women, þan es it leefull to ow to see þam and to entir in–to þat haly place þat es a sette of godd. And if e be note clene, it es note leefull to ow.' 'is, sir, sothely,' quop Alexander, 'we ere clene.' Þan raise þe alde man vp of þe bedd þat he lay in, and said vn–to þam: 'Putte offe our ryng,' quop he, 'and oure clathes, our schone, and folowes me.' And þay dyd so. And þan Alexander tuk wit hym tholomeus and Antiochus, folowed þe alde man, and went thurg þe wodd þat was aboun on þe Mountayne closed with mannes hande. Þe tresse of þat wodd ware an hundreth .c. fote lange hye, and þay ware lyke lorers or Olyue tresse; And out of þam þare ran rykyles fynne bawme. And as þay went thurg þat wodd þay saw a tree wondere hye, in þe whilke þare satt a mekill fewle. Þat tree hadd noþer þare–on lefes ne fruyte. Þe fewle þat satt þare–on hadd on his hedd a creste lyk till a pacokke, his beeke also crested. Abowte his nekke, he hadd fethirs lyke golde. Þe hynder of hym was lyk purpure; and þe tayle was ownnded ouerthwert, wit a colour reede as rose wit blewe. And his fethers ware rite faire schynand. When Alexander saw þis fewle he was gretely meruailled of þe faired of hym; þan saide þe Alde man: 'Alexander,' quop he, 'þis ilke fewle þat þou here seese es a fenix.' And þan þay went forþer thurg þe forsaid wodd, And come to thiese haly tree of þe son þe mone þat growed in mydde of þe wodde. And þan þe alde man saide till Alexander: 'Luke vp,' quop he, 'to one haly tree, and thynke in thi hert what preuatee so þe liste, and þou sall hafe a trewe ansuere. Bot luke þat þou speke na worde in opyn. And þare–by sall þou witt þat it es a gude spiritt, þat knawes thi thoghte.' Thir twa tree were wonder hye. And þe tree of þe Son had leues lyk fyne golde, reed faire schynande. And þe tree of þe mone had lefes whitt als syluer faire schynande. And þan walde Alexander hafe Offrede Sacrafyce to þir tree. Bot þe alde man walde note suffre hym, bot said: 'It es note leuefull,' quop he, 'in þis haly place, nowþer to offre encense, ne to slaa na beste, Bot to knele doun to þe boles of þir tree kysse þam pray þe son þe mone to giffe trew ansuers.' And þan Alexander spirred þe alde man, in what langage þe tree sulde giffe þaire answers. And þe alde man ansuerd said: 'The tree of þe Son,' quop he, 'answers owþer all in þe langage of Inde or ells of grewe. And þe tree of þe Mone begynne wit þe langage of grewe ende wit þe langage of Inde.'

And as þay stode þus spekande, Sudaynly þare come a bryghte beme fra þe weste þat schane ouer all þe wodde. And þan Alexander kneled doun, and kyssede þe tree an thocht þus in his hert: 'Sall I conquere all þe werlde, and efterwarde wit þe victorye wende hame to Macedoyne till my moder Olympias, and my sisters? And þan þe tree of þe son ansuerd softly in þe langage of Inde, And said þir verse: *Tu dominatorum orbis dominus simul et pater extas,*

Set patrum rignum per tempora nulla videbis;

þat es at say, 'þou ert bathe lorde fader of alle þe werlde, Bot þe Rewme of thy Fadyrs sall þou neuer see wit thyn eghne.' Þan bygan Alexander to thynke how lange he sulde lyffe, and whate dedd he sulde dye. And þe tree of þe Mone ansuerd by þir twa verse: *Anno completo uiues mensibus octo,*

De quo confidis tibi mortis pocula dabit.'

Þat es at saye, 'A twluemonthe aughte monethes sall þou lyffe. And þan he þat þou traiste on, sall giffe þee a drynke of dedd.' Þan bi–gan Alexander to thynke in his hert on þis wyse, 'Tell me now, haly tree, Wha he es þat sall slaa mee.'

And þan þe tree of þe son ansuerd by þir twa verse: *'Si tibi pandatur vir qui tua facta resoluet, Illum confrynges sic mea carmina fallent.'*

Þat es at say: 'And I schew the þe manes name, þat sall vndo thi dedis, þou will slaa hym, and so sall my prophycye fayle.' And þan þe forsaide ald man sayd till Alexander: 'Disese na mare þir trees,' quop he, 'wit thyne askynges. Bot tourne we agayne, as we come hedir.' And þan Alexander his twa prynce wit hym toured agayne wit þe alde man. And ay as he went, he wyped bitterly, bi–cause of his schorte tyme; and his prynce also wyped rite sare. Bot he commanded þam þat þay schulde note telle to na man of his Oste þat that þay hadd herde sene. And when þay ware comen to þe forsaide Palace þe alde [man] said vn–till Alexander: 'Torne bakke agayne,' quoth he, 'for it es note leefull to na man to passe forthire. If þe liste wende toward þe weste, þou sall note trauelle

The Prose Life of Alexander

full lange are þou come to þe place, whare þe liste to bee.' Aud when þe alde man had said þir worde, he went in-to þe palace and Alexander and his twa prynce went down by þe forsaide gree come to þe Oste.

Apon þe morne Alexander his Oste removed þeine went agayneward fyftene days, And come agayne to þe forsaid playne þare þay lused þam. And þare at þe entree of þa twa forsaid ways, Alexander gart rayse vp twa pelers of Marble, and by-twixe þam he haude a table of golde, on þe whilke was wretyn in þe langage of grewe, hebrew, of latyne, and of Inde, one this wyse: 'I, Alexander, Phillipp son of Macedoyne, sett thir pelers here, after þe dedd of Darius kyng of Perse and of Porus kynge of Inde. What man so will passe forþer late hym tourne one þe lefte hand. For wha so tourne one þe rite hande he sall fynde many obstacle greuance þat sall perauenture lett his agayne-commynge.

Fra þeine þay removed thurg þat playne and lefte þase straye wayes, takand þe way westeward þe gayneste towarde Macedoyne. And at þe laste þay come till a cuntree þat highte Prasiac, And þare þay lused þam. And when men of þat cuntree herd of þe commynge of Alexander, wit grete wirchipe þay broghte hym grete presante of swilk thyng as þay hadd in þaire lande, þat es at say, skynnes of fischez lyke vn-to þe skynnes of pardes, or of lyouns also, and lawmpray skynnes of sex cubites lange. In þat cuntree was a noble citee all of precyous stanes made wit-owtten ýme or sande, sett apon an hill. Of þe whilke citee, a wirchipfull lady and a faire hadd þe lordechipe. Þis lady was wedowe and scho hadd three sones. The firste of þam highte Candeolus, þe secand Marcipius, And þe thirde hight Carator. To þis lady Alexander sent a lettre of þis tenour:

'Alexander þe son of godd Amon of þe quene Olympias, kyng of kynges lorde of lordes vn-to quene Candace of Meron ioy gretynge. We sende ow ane ymage of godd Amon all of fyne golde; And þarefore come till vs þat we may wende togeder to þe Mountayne for to make sacrafyce þare to godd Amon.' When þe Qwene Candace hadd redd þis lettre, Scho sent hir embassatours till kyng Alexander wit grete presante and with a lettre of this tenour:

'Candace, quene of Meron, vn-till Alexander, kyng of kynge, ioy. Wele we kawe þat e hafe by reuelacion of godd Amon þat e schulde couquere Perse, Inde and Egipte, and subiecte vn-to ow all oþer nacions. And all þat e hafe done, note allanly was graunted bot also of all oþer godde. Till vs þat hase faire saules bryghte it nede noghte to make sacrafyce to godd Amon in þe Mountaynes. Neuer-þe-lesse bicause we will note offende owere maiestatee, we sende till Amon oure godd a Coron of golde and precyouse stanes, And ten chynes of golde sett full of precious stanes. And vn-to ow we sende a hundrethe Besaunte of golde; And twa hundreth papeiayes closed in cage of golde, c childer of Ethipes, cc apes, cccc Olyphantis, xxxiiii ⁿ⁵ vnycornes, iij ⁿ⁶ panter's skynne, of parde lyounes cccc, and we beseke owre hye maieste þat e will notyfye vn-till vs bi our wirchipfull lettres, wheder e haue conquered alle þe werlde and made it subiecte vn-to ow or note.' Amange her embassatours þat scho sent till Alexander þare was a wonder crafty a sutell payntoure. And hym scho charged þet he schulde besely by-halde Alexander purtray his fygure in a parchemyn skynn and bryngge it to hir. And so he did. Alexander ressayued þe forsaid gyftes reuerently and sent hir noble gyftes agayne wit hir embassatours. And when þay come hame þe payntour tuke hir þe feigure of Alexander purtrayed as I saide be-fore. And when þe quene saw it, Scho was rite gladde, for scho desyred gretly for to see his fygure.

After þis ane of þe quene sonnes þat hight Candeolus went furthe of þe Citee wit his wyfe and a fewe of his mence for to take þe sporte. And onane þe kyng of þe Bebrikes, knawynge þe fairehed of Candeolus wyfe, come appon þam with a grete multitude of men, and slew many of Candeolus mence and refte hym his wyfe went his way. And þan Candeolus and his men þat ware lefte on lyfe went till Alexander Oste for to be-seke hym of helpe agaynes þe kynge of Bebrikes. And þe waches of þe oste tuke Candeolus broghte hym bi-fore Tholomeus, þat was þe secund person after Alexander. And Tholomeus spirred hym what he was, what he did þare. 'I am,' quop he, 'quene Candace son and þis day als I went wit my wyfe a preuee mence for to take þe sporte, þe kynge of þe Bebrikes come apon vs wit a grete multitude of men uand hase slayne many of my mence refte me my wyfe. And þare-fore I am comen heder for to beseke my lord, þe Emrerour, of helpe socoure.' When Tholomeus had herd þis onane he garte take kepe of Candeolus went till Alexander tentis and wakkned Alexander talde hym talde ilk a dele þat Candeolus had talde hym. And when Alexander hadd herde his tale he badd hym gange agayne till his tent and do a coroun on his hede and putt apon hym þe kynge clothynge, and sett hym in the kynge trone say Vn-to Candeolus þat he was kyng Alexander. 'And bidd an of thi men,' quop he, 'feche vn-to þe Antyochoch, And late hym bryng me to þe insteedd of Antyochoch, and when I come bi-for thee telle me bi-fore Candeolus all þat he talde the. And aske me consell, als I ware Antyochoch, what es beste to do in þat mater.' Tholomeus went and didd all als Alexander badd hym. And he asched Alexander in stedd of Antyochoch be-fore Candeolus what was

The Prose Life of Alexander

beste to do. And Alexander ansuerd sayde on herand Candeolus: 'Wirchipfull Emperour,' quop he, 'if it be plesynge to our maiestee I will go wit Candeolus þis same nyghte to þe kyng of þe Bebrikes, and comande hym one our byhalue þat he elde Candeolus his wyfe agayne. And if he will note do soo, I sall late hym witt þat e sall sende a grete powere to his Citee bryne it vp stikke stourre.' When Candeolus hadd herde hym say þus, he knelyd vn–till hym said: 'A a, wirchipfull Antyochus,' quop he, 'wele walde it seme þe for to be a kyng for þe hye witt and þe manhede þat es in the.' Than kyng Alexander tuke wit hym a grete powere and went apon þe same nyghte wit Candeolus vn–to þe Citee, whare þe kyng of þe Bebrikes lay. And whan þay come to þe citee, þe waytes cryed apon þam, and askede what þay ware. And Alexander ansuerd sayd: 'Candeolus,' quop he, 'es here wit ane Oste of men, and þe cause of his commynge es to be restorede agayne of his wyfe þe whilke our kyng raeste away fro hym þis same day. And my lord kyng Alexander commande ow þat e delyuer hir anone, or sewrely we sall brynne this citee our selfe are we passe hethyn.' And when þe men of þe citee herde this, þay ware ferde ynoghe and onane went to þe kyng palace brakke vp þe ates, tuke Candeolus wyfe delyuerd hir till hir lorde. Þan Candeolus kneled down till Alexander saide vn–till hym: 'A a, my dere frende,' quop he, 'wirchipfull Antyochus, Blyssed mot þou be for þis grete gudnes þat þou hase schewed mee. And I beseke the nowe þat þou will vouche–saffe for to wende with me vn–to my moder quene Candace, þat scho may rewarde þe for þis þat þou hase done for me.' And when Alexander herde this he was rite gladde. For he had gretely desyrede for to see quene Candace hir citee also. And þan he sayd: 'Goo we,' quop he, 'to þe emperour and asche hym leue.' And þay did soo; and when he had leue, he went wit Candeolus. And as þay went to–gedir þay come till heghe mountaynes þat reched vpto þe clowdes and apon þam þare growed trees of a wonderfull heghte lyke vn–to cedres þat bare appills of Inde rite grete, Of þe whilk Alexander wonnderde hym gretly. Pay saw also þare vynes growe wit wondere grete bobbis of grapes; for a man myte vnnethe bere an of þam. Þare ware also trees þat bare nutte als grete als gourdde. And þare ware also many apes. Fra þeine þay went come to þe citee of quene Candace.

And when Candace herd tell þat hir son Candeolus and his wyfe ware comande and ware safe sounde, And at a messangere of kyng Alexander come wit þaim, scho was wonder gladde; and onane scho arayed hir ryally as a quene suld be, and sett apon hir hedde a croun full ryche all of golde sett full of precyouse stanes, and went furthe wit hir lordes to þe ates of hir palace, for to mete hir son Candeolus and Alexander messenger. This quene was a wondere faire lady a semely; And when Alexander saw hir, hym thogte als he hade sene his moder Olympias. Hir palace was wonder ryalle precyouse and all þe ruffe þare–of schane wit golde precyouse stanes. Than quene Candace tuke Alexander bi þe hande, And ledd hym vp till hir chambir, whare þare ware beddes arayed wit þe fyneste clathes of golde þat myghte be getyn; And þat chambir was of golde precyous stanes, þe whilke are called Onychyns þe burde þe bynkes of euour Smaragde Amatistes. Þe Pelers of þe Palace ware all of Marble, And þar ware grauen in þam cartes of werre, þat semed to mannes sighte as þay hadd bene rynnand; And Olyphanntes tredand men vnder þaire fete. Vnderneþe þat Palace rane a water wonder swete, clere as any cristalle. Þat day Alexander ete wit quene Candace hir childire.

Apon þe morne quene Candace tuk Alexander by þe right hande ledd hym in–till hir bedd–chambir, and nane wit þam, Bot þay twa allan. Þis chambir was couerde all ouer wit–in wit golde precious stanes. And it schane wit–in, as it had bene þe sonne. And oute of þis chambir scho ledd hym in–till a wit–drawing chambir made of cypresse. Þis chambir was sett apon foure wheles by crafte of clergy; And twenty xx*ti* Olyphauntis drewe it whedir as scho wolde hafe it. And when Alexander þe quene ware entrede in–to þat chambir, onane it stirredd by–gan for to remowe. And þan Alexander was astonayde meruaylled hym gretly said vn–to þe quene : For sothe,' quop he, 'þir meruails ware in oure cuntree þay ware rite commendable mekill worthy to be praysede.' The quene answerde: 'Þou saise sothe, Alexander,' quop scho, 'þay ware mare commendable amange þe Greke, þan amange vs. And also sone als Alexander herde hys name be neuenede, he was gretly trubblede, and his vesage bi–gan to waxe pale, and his chere to change. And than the quene said efte vn–to hym: 'Alexander,' quop she, 'for to schewe þe mare verrayly þat þou ert Alexander, com with me.' And þan scho tuk hym by þe hande leedde hym in–till anoþer chambir, and schewed hym þare his awenn Fyfigure purtrayed in a parchemyn skyne. And when Alexander saw þat, he wex pale wanne biganne to tremblee. And þan þe quene said vn–till hym: 'Alexander,' quop scho, 'where–fore ert þou ferde, why chaunge þou chere. Thou þat hase distroyed all þe werlde; conquerour of Perse, of Inde, of Mede, and many oþer rewmes lande, Now arte þou witowtten scheddyng of blode fallen in þe dawngere in þe hande of quene Candace vnausyly. And þare–by may þou wele knawe þat a manes hert sulde on na wyse be enhanced in pride. For if all it bee þat ofte tymmes grete prosperitee fall to man,

The Prose Life of Alexander

Sodaynly falle adversitee till hym when he leste wenes.' When Alexander herde þis he bigan to grayste wit þe teethe and to torne his hede hedir thedir, And quene Candace saide vn–till hym: 'Whare to angers þou þe,' quop scho, 'truble thi selfe? What may now thi grete Imperiall glory, thi witt thi mighte serue the offe?' Alexander ansuerde said: Forsothe,' quop Alexander, 'resonably I am angry at my selfe bi–cause I hafe na swerde here.' Quop þe quene: 'I suppose þou hadd a swerde, nowe, what walde do þare–wit?' 'Sothely,' quop he, 'bi–cause I hafe wilfully betrayed my–selfe vn–to þe. First I solde sla þe and þan, I dowte it not, I sulde be slayne for þe.' 'Now for sothe,' quop scho, 'þis was wisely manfully sayde. Neuer–þe–less be nathyng heuy. For as þou delyuerde my son wyfe Candeolus oute of þe daungere of þe kyng of Bebrikes Swaa sall I delyuer the oute of þe daungere of thyn enemys þat þou hase here. For I say þe in certayne, and it ware knawen þat þou ware here vn–to my menee, onane þay walde slaa þe by–cause þou slewe Porus þe kyng of Inde. For my son wyfe Carator was his daughter.' And when scho had said þis, Scho tuk Alexander bi þe hande ledd hym forthe in–till hir forchambre and said vntill hir sones: 'My dere sonnes,' quop scho, 'I pray ow late vs make þis knyghte of Alexander gude chere, and schew hym all þe humanytee þat we can. For Alexander has schewed vs grete frendchipe and grete gudnesse.' And þan hir ongeste ansuerde said: 'Moder,' quop he, 'sothe it es þat he es a messangere of Alexanders, a knyghte of his, and þat he delyuerde my broþer wyfe of þe hande of þe kyng of þe Bebrikes and broghte hym hir hame vn–till vs bathe safe sownde. Neuer–þe–lesse my wyfe constreyne me for to do Antyochus to dede bi–cause of þe dede of hir Fadir Porus, whilke Alexander slewe, So þat Alexander may hafe sorow for his knyghte. Quop quene Candace þan: 'Lefe son, what wirchip may we get þare–offe if we slaa this knyghte þus traytourusly.' And þan Candeolus sayde wit a grete Ire, 'Þis knyghte,' quop he, 'saued me my wyfe broghte vs hedir safe sonde; And als saffe sall I hafe hym, agayne till his lorde, or I sall be dede þarefore.' And Carator ansuerde saide: 'Broþer,' quop he, 'what says þou? will þou þat aythere of vs here slaa oþer?' 'In gud faythe broþer,' quop he, 'it es note my will, ne my liste. Neuer–þe–lesse if it be thi liste, I am redy, rather þan þis knyghte be dedde.' And when þe quene saw þat hir sonnes walde ayther of þam slaa oþer, scho was wonder sary, and tuk Alexander on syde, and saide vn–till hym preualy: 'A, a, kyng Alexander,' quop scho, 'whi will þou note schewe thi witt, and helpe thurg thi wisdom þat my sonnes slaa not ayther of þam oþer?' And Alexander answerde and said: 'Late me goo speke wit þam,' quop he. And scho lete hym goo. And he went to þam and sayde vn–to Carator: 'For sothe, Carator,' quop he, 'I late þe wite þat if þou slaa me, þou sall wynne bot lyttill wirchipe þareoffe. For I say þe, kyng Alexander hase many worthyer knyghtis wit hym þan I am; And þare–fore he will hafe littill sorowe for my dede. Trowes þou þat and Alexander hadd lufed me wele þat he walde hafe sent me hyder to be killed amange owe. Bot if þou will þat I beken the Alexander þe slaere of þi wyfe fader bryng hym bi–for the, Swere me þat what so I asche þe, þou sall graunte mee it, And I sure þe bi þe faythe of my body, I sall bryng Alexander in–to þis palace be–fore þe.' And when Carator herde this, he was rite glade, and trowed þat that Alexander said. And so ware þe twa breþer pesede, And highte Alexander þat his askyng sulde be fulfilled als ferforthe als þaire powere reched, if so ware þat he helde couenant. Þan quene Candace ledd Alexander on syde sayd vn–till hym in preuatee: 'Wele ware me,' quop scho, 'myghte I ilke day hafe þe present be–fore myn eghne as I hafe myn awenn childere. For thurgh the sulde I ouercome all myn Enemys.' And þan [scho] gaffe Alexander a coroun of golde sett full of precyous dyamande, and a mantill Imperiall of a clathe of golde wit sternes wofen þare–in, and sett full of precyouse stanes. And þan scho kyssed hym oþer preuee thyng didd till hym, And badde hym goo in hir blyssyng.

Than kyng Alexander and Candeolus went furthe all that daye, And come till a grete spelunc, and þare þay herberde þam. And Candeolus saidetill Alexander: 'In this spelunc,' quop hee, 'þat you here see all godde ere wount for to ete and halde þaire consaill.' And þan onane Alexander made sacrafyce till his godde and enterde in–to þe caue by hym ane. And þare he sawe a myrke clowde, in þat myrknesse, he sawe as it ware bryghte sternes, and amange þase sternes he saw a grete godd sitt, And his eghne lyke twa lanternes. And when Alexander saw hym he was so fered þat he was as it hadd bene in a transyng. And þan þe godd said vn–to hym: 'Haile, Alexander,' quop he. And Alexander ansuerde said: 'Lorde,' quop he, 'what art þou?' 'I am,' quop he, 'Sensonchosis þat gouerne þe kyngdom of þe werlde and þat hase made men sugettes vn–to the. And þou hase bigged þiselfe many ryalle citee. Bot temple walde þou nane make in þe wirchippe of me.' And Alexander ansuerd said: 'Lorde,' quop he, 'þou will graunt me þat I sall wit prosperitee come in–to Macedoyne I sall ordeyne the a temple þare sall note be swilke an oþer in all þe werlde.' And he ansuerd agayne saide: 'For sothe,' quop hee, 'Macedoyne sall þou neuer see wit thyn eghne. Neuer–þe–lesse walke Innermare luke what þou see.' Alexander

The Prose Life of Alexander

þan went forthirmare saw anoþer myrke clowde and saw a godd sitt in a trone lyke a kynge, and Alexander said vn–till hym: 'Lorde,' quop he, 'what art þou ?' 'I am,' quop he, 'þe begynnyng of all godde and Serapis es my name. I sawe the in þe lande of liby nowe I see þe here.' 'Serapis,' quop Alexander, 'I beseke þe telle me wha it es þat sall sla me.' Quod Serapis: 'I talde þe bi–fore, þat and þe cause of a manes dede ware knawen vn–till hym, he solde dy for sorowe. Pou hase bygged a glorious citee agaynes þe whilke many emperours sall fighte. Þare–in sall thi graue be made and þare–in sall þou be beried.' And þan Alexander come oute of þe caue, and tuke his leue at Candeolus and went till his Oste.

One þe morne he removed his Oste And come till a valay þat was full of grete serpentis þe whilk hade in þaire heuedis Grete smaragde. Thir serpente lyffede all wit gyngere and pepir þat growede in þe valaye. And ilke a ere þay fechte to–gedir and many of þam slae oþer. Off þe forsaide Smaragdes tuk Alexander sum wit hym of þe gretteste þat he couthe gett.

Fra þeine þay removed come in–till a place in þe whilke þare ware beste þat hade one ilke a fote twa clees as swyne hase, and þase clees ware three fote brade wit þe whilke þay smate Alexander knyghtes. Þay had also heuedes lyke swyne tayles lyke lyouns. Þare ware also amange þam grypes þe whilke smate kynghes [sic] in þe vesage reghte felly. Þay ware so strange þat ane of þam wolde bere away an armed knyghte his horse also. Þan kynge Alexander rade hedir þedir amange his men and comforthed þam and badd þam fechte manly agaynes þam wit speres and wit arowes. And so þay did. Bot þare was slayne of Alexander knyghtes ccviii.

And fra þeine þay removed and come till a grete ryuer þe whilke was twenty furlange on brede fra þe ta banke to þe toþer. And on þase bankes þare growed redis wonder grete and hye. Of þase redes garte Alexander mak bates anoynte þam wit terre talg of beste, And badd his knyghtis row ouer þe water in þase bates. And þay did soo. And when þe [pople] of þe cuntree herde tell of þe commynge of Alexander his Oste, þay sent hym gyftes of swylk thyng als was in þaire cuntree, þat es at say Grete spounge bathe whitte purpore schelles of þe see so grete þat an of þam walde halde twa pekkes or three. Þay sent hym also wormes þat þay drew owte of þat ryuer grettere þan a manes thee, and þay ware swetter of taste þan any fysche. Þay gaffe hym Cukstoles all rede þat ware of a wonderfull gretnesse. In þat ryuer ware womans þat ware wonder faire þay hade on þam mekill here þat rechedd down to thaire fete. Þir women, when þay saw any straunge men swymme in þat riuer, owþer þay drowned þam in þe water, or ells þay walde lede þam to þe rede þat growed on þe water bankes and garre þam lye by þam ay till any lyfe was in þam. Þe Macedoynes persued þam tuke twa of þam and broghte þam till Alexander, and þay ware als white as any snawe, and þay ware ten fote lange and þaire teethe ware lyke dogge teethe.

Efter this Alexander went and closed in a maner of folkee þat are called Gog Magog, with–in þe hille of Caspy. Þis folke were of þe ten kynde of Israel, and þay ware leedd owte of þaire awenn land bi a kyng of Perse be–cause of þaire synne and halden in thralldom. And þay asched Alexander leue for to wende furt of þat cuntree. And Alexander gert spirre þe cause of þaire thralldom, and he was encensed þat be–cause þay hadd forsaken þaire godde lawe, þat es at say, godd of Isr and wirchiped Calues oþer Mawmettes, þare–fore þay ware ledd oute of þaire awenn lande halden in thralldom, and þat prophetes had prophiced be–fore þat þay sulde neuer come oute of thralldom bi–fore agayne þe day of dome. And þan Alexander ansuerde said þat he sulde sperre þam In mare seurely. And þan he garte close all þe entree wit stane lyme sand, Bot all þat he garte make on þe day was fordone on þe nyghte. And when Alexander saw þat mannes laboure myghte note stande in stede, he bi–soghte godd of Isrý þat if it ware his liste þat þay habade þare, þat he walde close þam in. And þe nexte nyghte aftir ilk a cragge felle till oþer, and so þare may nathyng passe in nor owte. And þare–by it seme þat it es note godde will þat þay come oute. Neuer–þe–lesse abowte þe Ende of þe werlde þay sall breke oute and do mekill schathe slaa many men.

Fra þeine þay removed come to þe grete See Océane. In þat See þay sawe ane Ile a littill fra þe lande. And in þat Ile þay herde men speke grewe. And þan Alexander commanded þat sum of his knyghts sulde do off þaire clathes and swyme ouer to þe ile. And þay did soo. And als sone als þay come in þe See þare come gret crabbes vp oute of þe water pullede þam downne to þe grounde drowned þam.

Thanne removed þay fra thethyn and went ay endlande þe See syde to–warde þe solstice of wynter trauellande xý days; and at þe laste þay come to a reede See, and þare þay lugede þam. Þare was faste by a Mountayne wonder hye, One þe whilke Alexander went vp. And when he was abown on þe heghte þare–offe, hym thoghte þat he was nerre þe Firmament þan þe erthe; þan he ymaged in his hert swilk a gynn how he myghte make

The Prose Life of Alexander

grippes bere hym vp in—to þe ayere. And onane he come doune of þe Mountayne and garte come bi—fore hym his Maistre wrightes and comandid þam þat þay sulde make hym a chayer and trelesse it wit barre of Iren one ilk a syde so þat he myte sauely sitt þare—in. And þan he gart brynge foure gripes and tye þam faste wit Iren cheynes vn—to þe chayere, and in þe ouermare party of þe chayere he gart putt mete for þe gripes. And þan he wente and sett hym in þe chayere. And onane þe gripes bare hym vp in þe ayer so hye þat Alexander thoghte all þe erthe na mare þan a flure þare men thressche corne, and þe See lyke a dragon abowte þe erthe. Pan sodaynly a specyall vertu of godd vmbilapped þe gripes þat gart þam discende douue to þe erthe in a felde: ten .x. day iournee fra þe Oste, and he hadd na hurt ne na schathe in þe chayere. Bot wit grete disesse at þe laste he come till his Oste.

After þis Alexander ymagened in his hert þat he walde know þe preuates þat are in þe see. And onane he gart come bifore hym all þe Maister glasyers þat ware in þe Oste, And comandede þam to make hym a grete tounne of passandy clere glasse þat he myghte thurg it clerely see all maner of thyng þat ware wit—owtten it. And when it was made he gart trelesse it al abowte witowtten wit barres of yren and feste þare—to lang cheynes of yren, and gart a certane of þe strangeste maste tristy knyghtes þat langed vn—till hym halde þir cheynes. And þan he went in—to þe tounne gart pykke wele þe entree whare he went in, and þan late it doun into þe See. And þare he sawe dyuerse schappes of fisches of dyuerse colours; and sum he sawe hafe þe schappe of dyuerse beste here one þe lande, gangande on fete as beste dose here etande fruyte of treesse þat growe on þe See grunde. Þir beste come till hym. Bot onane as þay saw hym thorow þe glasse þay fledde fra hym. He sawe þare also many oþer meruaylous thyng, þe whilke he walde tell na man bi—cause men walde noghte hafe trowed þam if he had talde þam, and at a certayne houre þase þat he hadd assyngned be—fore, his knyghtes drewe hym vp oute of þe See.

Fra þeine þay Remowed Folowande þe bankes of þe Rede See, and lugged þam in a place, whare þare ware wylde Beste that hade on þaire heuedis hornes lyke vn—to sawes, and þay ware als scharpe als swerde. And with thire hornes þay slewe hurte many knyghtis of Alexanders cloue þaire cheldes in sonder. Neuer—þe—lesse Alexander knyghtis slew of þam ccccli.

And fra beine þay removed and come in—till wilderness bitwex þe reed See and Araby, whare grete multitude of Pepir growed; And þare ware many grete nedders wit hornnes on þaire hedes lyke tuppe hornes, wit þe whilke þay smate Alexander knyghtis rit felly. Off þase nedderes slew þe Macedoynes a grete party.

Þeine þay removed and lugged in a place whare many Rynosephales ware, þe whilke hade heuedes manes lyke horse. And þay hade grete bodys, and wonder grete teethe and lange, and oute of þaire mouthes þay schotte flawme of fyre. And when þay saw þe Oste luge þare þay come assaylled þam. And Alexander ran hyder and thedir amange þe oste and comforthed his knyghtes and bad þam feghte manly wit þase monstres. And so þay didd. Neuer—þe—lesse þare ware a grete multitude of his knyghtis slayne of þase beste. Bot of þe Rynosephales þare was slayne an hugge multitude.

Pan þay removed fra þeine and come in—till a champayne cuntree and lugged þam þare, And lay þare a certane days, Bi—cause of his horse Buktyphalas þat fell seke þare; of þe whilke sekenesse he dyed. And when Alexander saw hym dedd he made grete dole for hym and weped for hym rit sare. For he hadd borne hym in many a Batelle, and broghte [hym] oute of many perells. And þare—fore when he was dede Alexander gart doo aboute hym grete exequyes and gart make hym a full riche tounge a hye and did hym þare—in and made a grete citee þare, þe whilke in mynde of his horse he gart call Buktyphalas.

Fra þeine þay removed and come till a ryuere þat was called Cytan or Deciracy whare men of þe cuntree broghte hym v Olyphantes and v cartes of werre. And fra þeine þay removed come till kynge erses palace. And in þat Palace þay fande bedde of clene golde many a thowsande. Þare ware also grete fewles white als doufes, þe whilke had knawyng be—fore of a seke man wheder he schulde lyffe or dye. For if þay by—helde þe seke man in þe vesage, he schulde mende fare wele. And if þay tourned þam awaywarde witowtten doute he schulde dye, and if þay tourned hym þe bakke wit owtten dowte he sulde dye.

Fra þeine þay removed and come to þe grete Citee of Babiloyne and wanne it oo werre and slew þe kynge þare—offe þe Captayne also. And þare he duelled vn—till his lyffes end, and þat was Bot vij seuen Monethes. In þat mene tyme Alexander sent a letre till Olympias his Moder and till his Mayster Arestotle, latand þam witte of þe Batells and þe dysse þat þay suffred bathe wynters and Somers in Inde and oþer cuntree, and also of þe Batells þat þay had hadd wit dyuerse Monstres. And þan Arestotle wrote an oþer letre till Alexander agayne þe whilke was of this tenour:

'Un—till Alexandere þe grete kynge of kynge Arestotle sende ioy and seruyce. When I hade redde our

The Prose Life of Alexander

wyrchipfull lettres I was gretly astonayd. For whilke cause I desyre with all myn hert for to fynde lonyng þat I myghte elde vn-to þe. I take witesse at oure godde þat for þe passande hardenesse of þi ert þe grete auentours þat þou hase put þe in, þou erte wele worthy for to be loued praysede. For þou hase sene assayed thyng þat neuer man or þis durste assaye. Whare-for thankynge lonyng I elde to þe makere of all þis wyde werlde þat swylke victoryes hase grantede vn-to þe. For þou hase ouercommen all nane hase ouercomen þe. Full blyssede are all thy prynce þat hase bene obeyande vnto þe, and helped þe in all thi disesse.'

Afftir þis Alexander gart make in Babyloyn a wonder curious trone of golde, þare was note swilke anoþer in þe werlde. For þe greke broghte so mekill golde oute of perse oute of Inde, þat it ware wonder for to telle. Þis ilke toure was twelue cubyte hye and by twelue grece men ascended þare-too, and þase grece ware all of golde. Þis trone was wonderfully wroghte and sett apon twelue ymage of golde, þe whilke trone þe forsaid ymage helde vp wit þaire hende. And on þase twelue ymage ware wretyn þe names of þe twelue prynce of Macedoyne. Þe seet of þe trone was of a Smaragde, þe syde þare off ware of Topaes in ilkan of þe grece ware sett dyuerse maneres of precyouse stanes. In þe summyt of þis trone þare wassett a ruby þat schane on þe nyghte as it hade bene þe Mone. In þis trone also was þare sett on ilke a syde dyuerse ymage on þe whilke ware wretyn bathe in latyne in grew verse þat contened all þe nammes of þe rewmes cuntree þat Alexandere had conquered and ware sugetes vn-till hym.

After þis Alexander gert make a coron of golde sett full of all maner of precyouse stanes, and gert wryte apon it a tittle in grew in latyn: 'Ortus occasus, Aquilo michi seruit Auster.' Þat es at saye: 'Est weste, Northe southe dose seruyce vn-to me.' In the mene tyme whils Alexander was in babyloyn, a woman was delyuer of a knaue childe þe whilke fra þe heuede to þe nauyll hadd schappe of man, was borne dedd. And fra þe nauyll downwarde it had lyknesse of dyuerse beste and was qwykke. Þis Monstre was taken broghte till Alexander; and als son als he saw it he meruaylled gretly þare-off, and gart come bi-fore hym a philosopher þat couthe of wiche-crafte, aschede hym what it sygnifyed. And when þe philosopher saw it, he syghede, saye wepand sayde vn-to hym: 'Sothely wirchipfull emperour,' quof he, 'þe tyme comme nere that þou sall passe oute of this werlde.' 'Telle me,' quof Alexander, 'whareby þou knawes þat.' And þe philosophre ansuerde sayde: 'My lorde,' quof he, 'þe halfe of þis Monstre þat hase þe schappe of man es dedd, betakens þat þou sall passe out of þis werlde in haste. And þe toþer party þat hase þe lyknes of dyuerse beste es on lyfe, betakynge þe kynges þat sall come after þe. Bot þare sall nane of þam be lyke vn-to þe, na mare þan a beste es lyke vn-till a man.' When Alexander herde þis he was wonder heuy, and sare wepand he sayde on þis wyse: 'O Allmyghty Iubiter,' quof he, 'what mene it þat my dayes sall be so schortte? Me thynke þat it had bene semely þat I had leffed langere for till haf endid thyng þat are in my thoghte. Bot for als mekill als it es note plesande vn-to þe, I beseke the þat þou resayffe me when I sall passe hethen als thyn awen seruante.'

In this mene tyme þare was in Macedoyne a lorde þat highte Antipater, þe whilke of langetyme be-fore hadd casten for þe dedde of Alexander; And wit many oþer þat he hadd confedred vn-till hym he conspyred for to brynge it tyll ende, bot he myghte neuer come aboute þer-with. For Olympias, Alexander moder, wrate vn-till hym ofte-sythes and warned hym þat he scholde be warre wit Antipater his childre, and here-fore was Antypater wonder sary. So apon a tyme he vmbythoghte hym þat he myghte neuer come aboute wit his purpose for to slaa Alexander, bot if it ware thurg enpuysonynge. And so apon a daye he went till a Sotell leche, and boghte of hym a maner of drynke made of puyson that was so felle se ranke þat þare myghte no vesselle halde it Bot a vessell made of Iren; and þare-in he putt it. And þan he gaffe it his son Cassandre, and bad hym bere it till his broþer Iobas and byd hym, quof he, gyffe it to kyng Alexander in his drynke, when he see his tyme. This ilk Iobas was a faire ong man was duellyng with Alexander, and gretly by-luffede cheriste of hym. Bot so it be-felle apon a tyme þat Alexander smate Iobas on þe heued wit a warderere for na trespasse. Whare-fore Iobas was gretly angred and greued at Alexander and consented till his dede, and tuke þe puyson of his broþer þat was ordeyned for Alexander dede þat luffed hym so mekill.

And apon a daye Alexander gart ordeyne a grete reuelle in Babyloyn and called þare too all his prynce on ilke a syde. And as he satt at þe mete I mange his prynce he was wonder mery gladde iocund, and reheted his lorde prayed þam þat þay schulde be mery. Þan Iobas þat serued þe kyng of his coupe tuke of þe puyson a porcyon, and putt it vnder þe nayle of his thowme, and broghte þe coppe to þe kyng full of wyne. And as he gaffe it to þe kyng, he lete þe puyson falle in þe wyne priually. And als sone als þe kyng hadd dronken þe puyson, Sudaynly he gaffe a grete scryke, and lened hym downn towarde þe rite syde. For hym thoghte reghte als a man hadd smyten

The Prose Life of Alexander

hym in—to þe lyuere wit a suerde. Neuer—þe—lesse he feyned forbare a while suffred a grete penance, and when he myte na langere habyde, he rase vp fra þe burde and saide till his lorde his knyghtes: 'Lordyngis,' quop he, 'I pray ow sitt e still ete drynke bee mery.' Bot þay ware gretly troubbled and rase vp fra þe burde and stode witowtten for to see þe ende. And Alexander went in—till his chambir gretly tourmentid and soghte a fethir for to putt in his throtte for to garre hym hafe a vomet of þe puyson þat he hadd resayffed. And Iobas, þat was cheffe of all this hye treson, gatt a fethir enoynt it wit þe same puyson broghte it till Alexander; and he tuk it putt in his throtte, and belyfe þe puyson vexed hym ay mare mare. And þan Alexander bade ane gange open þe palace ates þat ware on Eufrates banke. And alle þat nyte he woke in grete payne tourment. And aboute mydnythte he rase oute of þe bedde þat he lay in and putt oute þe lyghte þat brynt by—fore hym, and for he myghte noghte ga vprighte, he creped one hende one fete doune to—warde Eufrate for till hafe drownned hym selfe, þat þe strenth of þe water myth hafe borne hym away whare neuer man solde hafe fun hym.

And Rosan his wyfe folowed as faste as scho myghte. And when scho come to hym scho felle vpon hym embraced hym in hir armes said vn—till hym: 'Allas, my lorde Alexander,' quop scho, 'will þou now leue me gaa slaa thi—selfe.' And scho wepe þat it was dole to see; and Alexander ansuerde sayde: 'I beseke þe Rosan,' quop he, 'þat ert so dere to me so swete, late nane wit of myn Endyng, if all it be þat we may na langere hafe ioy togedir.' And þan Rosan ledd Alexander agayne to his bedd, and layde her armes aboute his nekke and kyssede hym many a tyme, and sare wepand said vn—till hym: 'A, A, my swete lorde,' quop scho, 'if þine ende be nowe comen, ordayne firste for vs or e passe hepine.' And onane he callede vn—till hym Iobas bade hym feche vn—till hym Semyon his notary. And when he was comen he garte bere hym down in—to þe haulle, and he garte come by—fore hym all his prynce bade his notary wryte his testament bi—fore þam all on þis wyse.

'ARestotle oure dere Maister, we comande the prayse the, þat of oure awen tresour þou sende to þe preste of Egipt þat ministre in þe temple, whare—in oure body sall be beryed entered, j besande of golde. Also I will that Tholomeus þat es kepare of oure body be our Gouvernour, And forgetis noghte my laste will, Bot late my testament be alway bi—fore our eghne so þat it be fulfilled noghte forgetyn. My will es also þat if Rosan my wyfe be delyuer of a knafe childe þat he be our Emperour and gyffe hym what name so ow liste, and if scho be delyuer of a mayden childe, þan es it my will þat the Macedoynes chese þam a kyng, and þat my wyfe be lady of all my mobles. Also I will þat Tholomeus be kyng of Egipt, and þat he tak till his wyfe Cleopatra, þat my Fader wedded sum—tyme here bi—fore, and þat he be lorde prynce ouer all þe lorde of þe Este euen vn—to Bactrian. Also I will þat my broþer Arrideus be kyng of þe Pelopones, also þat Cleopater be kyng of Perse, Mellagere kyng of Ethopy, And Anthiochus be kyng vn—to þe lande of Gog magoge, Areste kyng of Inde, Lissymacus lorde of Seleuce, Lythamon kyng of hungary, Caulus kyng of Ermony, Illicus kyng of Dalmace. Symeon my Notary, will I, be Kyng of Capadoce Pamphily, Cassander Iobas be lorde vn—to þe Ryuer þat es called Soll, Antipater þaire Fader be kyng of Cicile.' When this testament was in wrytyng bi—fore Alexander Sodeynly þare come a thonere a leuennyng ane erthedoun rite a hedous, so þat all babyloyn qwoke þare—wit. And than thorowte all Babyloyn þe noyse rase þat Alexander was dede. And þan all þe Macedoynes rasse hallely and come armed to þe Palace, and cryed on þe prynce said vn—to þam : 'Sothely,' quop þay, 'but if e onane schewe vs oure Emperour we sall slaa ow ilk ane.' And when kyng Alexander herde swilke noyse he askede whate it ment, and þe prynce ansuerde sayde: 'Þe Macedoynes,' quop þay, 'are comen armede hedir before þe ates, says sekerly bot if þay see ow þay sall slaa vs alle are þay passe hepine.' And when Alexander herde þis, he badd his knyghtis þat þay scholde take hym vp, and bere hym in—to þe consistorye. And þay did soo. And þan he garte open þe Palace ates þat þe Macedoynes myte come by—fore hym. And þan kyng Alexander be—gan to comend þam of þaire strenth þaire grete doghtynes, and charged þam þat þay scholde be in pesse reste ilkane wit oþer. Pan þe Macedoynes, sare wepande, sayde vn—till Alexander: 'A, A, wirchipfull,' quop þay, 'ordayne telle vs are e passe heyne wham e will þat be oure emperour efter ow.' And Alexander ansuerd sayde, 'A, A, my dere knyghtis,' quop he, 'when I am dede whaym so e will chese, be our emperour efter mee.' And þay ansuerde, 'Lord,' quop þay, 'we beseke owe þat e will graunt vs Perdic to be oure Emperour.' 'I vouche wele saffe,' quop Alexander, 'þat Perdic be our Emperour. Gers hym come be—fore mee.' And when he was comen by—fore hym he gaffe hym þe kyngdome of Macedoyne wit þe Emperourchipe. And he gaffe hym also Rosan for to be his wyffe, and prayed hym þat he walde be gude gentill till hir. And þan he kyssede all þe lorde þe knyghtis of Macedoyne ilkane after oþer, and sighed and weped wonder sare. Þare was þan so grete dole wepyng, þat it was lyke a thonere. For men Suppose þat note allanly men made Sorow for þe dede of so worthy ane Emperour, Bot also þe son and all þe oþer planetis and elementes

ware troubled.

A prynce of Macedoyne stode nere Alexander bedd þat highte Seleucus, wit grete dole wepynge he sayd: 'A, A, þou wirchipfull emperour,' quop he, 'what sall we do when þou ert dede. Philippe þi fader gouerned vs wele alle oure rewme, Bot þe gentilnes þe largesse of the na tunge may tell.' And þan Alexander sett hym vp in his bedd and gaffe hym selfe a grete flappe on þe cheke and by-gan for to wepe rite bitterly, and in þe langage of Macedoyne, he sayde on þis wyse:

'Full waa es me vnhappy wreche,' quop he, 'þat euer I was borne to man. For now Alexander dyes and Macedoyne sall waxe ay lesse lesse and emenische day bi day.' Than all þe Macedoynes wit an hye voyce and bitter wepynge sayd vn-till hym: 'Better it ware till vs,' quop þay, 'for to dy wit þe þan for to se þe dy in oure presence. For wele we wate þat, efter þe dede of the, þe kyngdom of Macedoyne es vndone for euere. Allas oure wirchipfull Alexander, why lefes þou vs here and wende away be thyn ane, withowten thi Macedoynes?' Than kyng Alexander alway sighand wepand said vn-to þam: 'A, A, my dere Macedoynes,' quop he, 'fra this tym forwarde sall neuer our name hafe lordchipe ouer þe Barbarenes.' And þan þe Macedoynes cryed and sayde: 'O wirchipfull lorde,' quop þay, 'þou ledd vs in-to Perse, Arraby, and Inde, and vn-to the werlde ende, and in-to what cuntree þat þe liste wende; why, lorde, flee þou now fra vs? Lede vs wit the whedir so þou gase.' Þan kyng Alexander sent to þe templee of Appollo in Athenes many riche iowels, and on þe same wyse till all oper temples. And þan he commanded þat when he ware dede, þay schulde enoynte his body and embawme it wit riche oynementes, þe whilke kepis menes bodys in graues wit-owtten corrupcioun. Þan he badde Tholomeus þat he scholde [take] a c besantes of golde, þare-off gere make hym a tombe in Alexander. And onane as he had commanded hym þus, one-seeand þam all, he swelt. And þan his prynce lifte vp his body, and did apon his clethyng of astate and putt a riche coron on his heued, and sett hym in þe emperours chayer, þe whilke twelue prynce drewe wit þaire breste fra Babiloyne till Alexander. Tholomeus went alway bi-fore þe chayere wepande sayande one þis wyse: 'Full waa es me, My lord Alexander, waa es me. For in all thi lyfe slew þou neuer so many men as þou dose nowe after þi dede.' All Alexanders knyghtis also weped made grete dole sayde on þis wyse: 'Waa es vs weches! whatt schall wee now do after þe dede of oure lorde Alexander? Whedir sall we now gaa or whate partye may we now chese? Whare schall we now get any helpe till oure lyfelade?' One þis wyse þay went wepand after Alexander, till þay come till þe citee of Alexander. And þare þay beryed hym in a toumbe þat was rite hye and wonder curyouslye wroghte. Þis tombe was all of fyne golde sett full of precyous stanes, and on þat toumbe þer was sett xxx ymages of golde wonder craftily made.

Alexander was a man bot of a comon stature, wit a lange nekke, Faire eghne glad, his chekes ruddy, and all þe remenant of his lymmes ware faire semely lyke vn-till a lorde. He ouercome all men neuer was ouercomen. The lenthe of his lyffe was xxxij ere, twa thritty ere seuen monethes. Fra þe twentyd ere of his birthe he gaffe hym to werre, and in twelue ere he conquered all þe werlde, and made subiect un-till hym alkyn nacyonns. Seu en monethes he ristede hym. He was borne on þe vij ký of January, and dyed on þe vij ký of August. He byggid also in his lyfe xij grete citee þat hider-to-warde bene enhabyt, and þis are þaire names. Firste Alexander þat es called yprysilicas, þe secund Alexander es called Bepyporum, þe thrid Alexander es callede Sithia, þe ferthe Alexander es called Bicontristi, þe fifte Alexander es called Peraucton, þe sext Alexander es called Buctiphalon, þe seuent es called vnder þe ryuer of Tygre, þe aghtend New Babiloyne, þe nyend Aptreadam, þe tend Messagetes, þe elleuend Ypsyacon, þe twelfed es called Egipt.

Explicit vita Alexandry magni conquestoris.

Here ende þe lyf of gret Alexander conquerour of all þe worlde.

Notes

- n1 [\[return to reference\]](#) sic in both editions 1489 and 1494
- n2 [\[return to reference\]](#) The early Text begins.
- n3 [\[return to reference\]](#) In printed text, "ý" inserted superscript above "M."
- n4 [\[return to reference\]](#) In printed text, "xx" inserted superscript above "iiij"
- n5 [\[return to reference\]](#) In printed text, "xx" inserted superscript above "xxxiiii," i.e., thirty-four score.
- n6 [\[return to reference\]](#) A tilde appears above "iiij" in printed text, i.e., three hundred?