MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN SERIES · VOLUME 53

The Alexanderlied

Pfaffe Lamprecht

Lamprechts Alexander

The Alexanderlied

The Strassburg Text

---

with a word-for-word interlinear English translation

preserving the original word order



CANES NOBILES · MMXXVI

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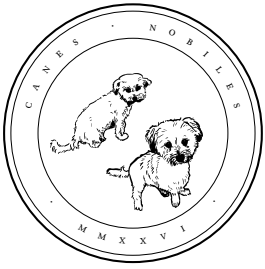

Volume 53 of the Canes Nobiles Middle High German interlinear texts

The Middle High German text follows Lamprechts Alexander nach den drei Texten mit dem Fragment des Alberic von Besançon und den lateinischen Quellen, herausgegeben und erklärt von Karl Kinzel, Germanistische Handbibliothek 6 (Halle: Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1884), the Strassburg text, pp. 27–385

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Artwork by Esther Steves

The verses are numbered as Kinzel numbers them, every fifth verse in the outer margin. The Strassburg manuscript lost a leaf after verse 508, where Kinzel's count resumes at 959, and a rhyme line after 2631; each gap prints as asterisks. The paragraphs are Kinzel's; the reading sections and their English heads are this press's.

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The priest Lamprecht names his source, Alberic of Besançon, who began the song in Solomon's mood of vanity. Alexander, son of Philip and Olympias, is no conjurer's son, as liars say. Storms and a darkened sun mark his birth; he grows fast, with a dragon's eye and a griffin's, learns letters, music, the stars, arms, and law, and tames the man-eating Bucephalus. He sets the crown he won from King Nicolaus on Philip's head, rebuking him for leaving Olympias for Cleopatra. When the bride's knight Lysias answers insolently, Alexander strikes him in the teeth; Philip leaps up, falls, and breaks his leg.

Daz liet, daz wir hie wirken,
The song, that we here work,

daz sult ir rehte merken.
that shall you rightly mark.

sîn gevôge ist vil gereht.
its fitness is very right.

iz tihte der paffe Lamprecht
it composed the priest Lamprecht

unde saget uns ze mêre,
and tells us as tale,

wer Alexander wêre.
who Alexander were.

Alexander was ein listich man,
Alexander was a cunning man,

vil manige rîche er gewan,
very many realms he won,

er zestôrte manige lant.
he destroyed many lands.

Philippus was sîn vater genant.
Philip was his father named.

daz mugit ir wol hôren
that may you well hear

in libro Machabeorum.
in book of-Maccabees.

Elberîch von Bisenzun
Alberic of Besançon

der brâhte uns diz liet zû,
he brought us this song to,

der hetiz in walischen getihtit.
he had-it in Romance composed.

ih hân is uns in dûtischen berihtet.
I have of-it for-us in German rendered.

nieman ne schuldige mih:
no-one — blame me:

alse daz bûch saget, sô sagen ouh ih.
as the book says, so say also I.

Dô Elberîch daz liet irhûb,
When Alberic the song began,

dô heter einen Salemonis mût,
then had-he a Solomon's spirit,

in wilhem gedanken Salemon saz,
in which thoughts Solomon sat,

dô er rehte alsus sprah:
when he rightly thus spoke:

'vanitatum vanitas
'of-vanities vanity

et omnia vanitas.'
and all vanity.'

daz quît: iz ist alliz ein îtelicheit,
that means: it is all a vanity,

daz di sunne umbegeit.
that the sun around-goes.

daz hete Salemon wol versûht.
that had Solomon well tried.

durh daz swar ime sîn mût.
through that ached to-him his spirit.

er ne wolde niwit langer ledich sitzen,
he — would not longer idle sit,

er screib von grôzen witzen,
he wrote from great wits,

wande des mannis mûzicheit
for the man's idleness

zô dem lîbe noh zô der sêle nit ne versteit.
to the body nor to the soul not — avails.

dar ane gedâhte meister Elberîch.
there on thought master Alberic.

den selben gedanc haben ouh ih.
the same thought have also I.

ih ne wil mih niwit langer sparen,
I — will myself not longer spare,

des liedis wil ih vollenvaren.
of-the song will I carry-through.

Iz quît: rîchere kuninge was genûch:
It says: of-rich kings was enough:

daz ne sagit uns aber nehein bûch
that — tells us however no book

noh neheiner slahte mêre,
nor of-any kind tale,

daz ie dichein sô rîche wêre,
that ever any so rich were,

der in alten gezîten
who in old times

mit sturmen oder mit strîten
with assaults or with strifes

ie sô manige lant gewunne
ever so many lands won

oder sô manigen kuninc bedwunge
or so many king subdued

oder sô vil herzogen irslûge
or so many dukes slew

unde andire fursten genûge,
and other princes enough,

sô der wunderlîche Alexander.
as the wondrous Alexander.

ime ne gelîchet nehein ander.
to-him — is-like no other.

Er was von Kriechen geboren
He was of Greece born

und wart dâ ze kuninge irkorn
and was there as king chosen

und was der allirhêriste man,
and was the most-lordly man,

den Kriechen ze kuninge ie gwan.
whom Greece as king ever won.

ouh wâren kuninge creftich
also were kings mighty

hêr unde mehtih
lordly and powerful

ubir manige diet gwaldich,
over many people ruling,

ir hêrheit manicfaldich;
their lordship manifold;

michel was ir wîsheit,
great was their wisdom,

ir list unde ir cundicheit,
their cunning and their skill,

ir scaz was mêre unde grôz:
their treasure was famous and great:

ir ne wart aber nie nehein sîn genôz,
of-them — became however never any his peer,

di mit listen oder mit mehten
who with cunnings or with mights

irin willen ie sô vollenbrêhten,
their will ever so accomplished,

sô aber dirre selbe man,
as however this same man,

umbe den ich diser rede began.
about whom I of-this speech began.

An eine andere rede wil ih nû vân.
On an other speech will I now take.

Salemon der was aleine ûz getân,
Solomon he was alone out set,

der sih ûzir allen kuningen nam.
who himself out-of all kings took.

dô regina austri zô ime quam,
when queen of-the-south to him came,

unde si sîne wunder
and she his wonders

alle besunder
all severally

rehte merken began,
rightly to-mark began,

starke si dô undirquam;
greatly she then was-amazed;

dô si sîne wîsheit
when she his wisdom

und sîne grôze rîcheit,
and his great riches,

sîn fleisch und sîne vische
his meat and his fish

und di zîrheit sîner tische
and the splendor of-his tables

unde sîn templum gesach,
and his temple saw,

mit rehter wârheit si dô sprach,
with right truth she then spoke,

daz von mannis geburte
that of man's birth
frumiger kuninc nie ne wurde.
worthier king never — became.
man mûstin wol ûz scheiden,
one must-him well out except,
wande Alexander was ein heiden.
for Alexander was a heathen.
Noch sprechint manige lugenêre,
Still say many liars,
daz er eines gouchelêres sun wêre,
that he a conjurer's son were,
Alexander, dar ih û von sagen:
Alexander, there I to-you of tell:
si liegent alse bôse zagen
they lie as wicked cowards
alle di is ie gedâhten;
all who of-it ever thought;
wande er was rehte kunincslahte.
for he was truly king's-kin.
sulhe lugenmêre
such lie-tales
sulen sîn ummêre
shall be unwelcome
iegelîchen frumen man.
to-each worthy man.
sîn geslehte ih wol gereiten kan.
his lineage I well recount can.
sîn geslehte was hêrlîch,
his lineage was lordly,
ubir al Kriechlant gwaldich.
over all Greece mighty.
Philippus hîz der vater sîn,
Philip was-called the father his,

al Macedonien was sîn.
all Macedonia was his.

sîn ane der was ein gût kneht,
his grandfather he was a good knight,

ubir daz mere ginc sîn reht.
over the sea went his right.

er was geheizen Omin.
he was named Omin.

wîten ginc der gwalt sîn,
widely went the power his,

michil was sîn heriscraft.
great was his host-strength.

vil manich volcwîch er vaht
very many folk-battle he fought

wider den kuninc Xersen:
against the king Xerxes:

gewaldiclîche verwan er den
mightily overcame he him

unde vil ellenthafte
and very valiantly

mit sîner hercrafte.
with his host-might.

Philippus der nam ein wîb,
Philip he took a woman,

di trûch einen vil hêrlîchen lîb.
who bore a very lordly body.

ih sagû, wî ir name was:
I tell-you, how her name was:

si hîz di scône Olympias.
she was-called the fair Olympias.

diu was Alexandris mûter.
she was Alexander's mother.

di frowe hete einen brûder,
the lady had a brother,

der was ouh Alexander genant,
he was also Alexander named,

ze Persien het er daz lant.
in Persia had he the land.

der was ein furste alsô getân,
he was a prince so made,

er ne wolde werden undertân
he — would become subject

nie neheineme kuninge;
never to-any king;

daz sagih û âne lugene:
that tell-I to-you without lie:

er ne wolde ouh ze neheinen zîten
he — would also at no times

von sturmen noh von strîten
from assaults nor from strifes

nie neheine wîs geflîhen,
ever in-any way flee,

swî ime sîne dinc dâ irgîhen.
however to-him his things there turned-out.

er was ein tûrlîcher degen
he was an excellent thane

und wolde rehter herschefte plegen.
and would right lordship practice.

Woldet ir alle nû gedagen,
(if)-Would you all now be-silent,

sô woldih û sagen
so would-I to-you tell

von Alexandris geburte,
of Alexander's birth,

wî diu gewurte:
how it came-about:

sîn mûter frowe Olympias
his mother lady Olympias

zestunt dô si sîn genas,
straightway when she of-him was-delivered,

dô wart ein michil nôtfal:
then was a great calamity:

di erde irbibete ubir al.
the earth trembled over all.

der donre wart vil grôz.
the thunder was very great.

ein starkiz weder nider gôz.
a strong storm down poured.

der himel verwandelôte sih
the heaven changed itself

und di sunne vertunkelôte sih
and the sun darkened itself

und hete vil nâh irn schîn verlorn,
and had very nearly its shine lost,

dô Alexander wart geborn.
when Alexander was born.

Nû ne vereischetih ê nie noh sint
Now — heard-I before never nor since

alsus geborn nie nehein kint.
thus born ever any child.

geloubit mir des ih û sagen:
believe me what I to-you tell:

er gedeih baz in drîn tagen
he throve better in three days

dan alle andere kint,
than all other children,

sô si drîer mânede alt sint.
when they three months old are.

und alsime iht des gescach,
and when-to-him anything of-it happened,

daz ime ubile ze hugen was,
that to-him ill to mind was,

sô sach er alse der wolf deit,
so looked he as the wolf does,

alser ubir sînem âze steit.
when-he over his food stands.

daz ih von ime sagen, daz ist wâr:
what I of him tell, that is true:

strûb unde rôt was ime sîn hâr,
bristly and red was to-him his hair,

nâh eineme vische getân,
after a fish made,

den man in den mere sehet gân,
which one in the sea sees go,

und was ime ze mâzen dicke
and was to-him in measure thick

und crisp als eines wilden lewen locke.
and curly as a wild lion's locks.

Umbe sîn gesihte
About his sight

wil ih ûh ouh berihten
will I you also inform

unde rehte bescheiden:
and rightly explain:

ein ouge was ime weiden,
one eye was to-him blue,

getân nâh einen trachen.
made after a dragon.

daz quam von den sachen:
that came from the causes:

dô in sîn mûter bestunt ze tragene;
when him his mother undertook to bear;

dô quâmen ir freislîche bilide ingagene,
then came her fearsome images against,

daz was ein michil wunder.
that was a great wonder.

swarz was ime daz ander,
black was to-him the other,

nâh einem grîfen getân.
after a griffin made.

daz sult ir wizzen âne wân.
that shall you know without doubt.

Sîn hals was ime wol geschaffin,
His neck was to-him well shaped,

sîn brust starc und wol offin,
his breast strong and well open,

sîne arme wâren ime von grôzer maht.
his arms were to-him of great might.

allis sînes mûtes was er wol bedâht.
all of-his spirit was he well bethought.

sîn bûch ne was ime nit ze lanc noh ze breit:
his belly — was to-him not too long nor too broad:

vil wol daz deme jungelinge steit.
very well that the youth suits.

beide ubir vûze und ubir bein
both over feet and over legs

rîterlîch er ze tale schein.
knightly he to valley shone.

unde ubir allen sînen lîb
and over all his body

was er rehte hêrlîch.
was he truly lordly.

daz sagih û zewâre:
that tell-I to-you in-truth:

in sînen êristen jâre
in his first year

wôhs ime maht und der lîb sîn
grew to-him might and the body his

mêr dan einem anderen in drin.
more than to-an other in three.

Nû hôret, wî er sih fure nam:
Now hear, how he himself before took:

swâ ein frumich rîter zô ime quam,
wherever a valiant knight to him came,

den bôt er lîb unde gût
to-him offered he body and goods

unde ne karte neheinen sînen mût
and — turned not-at-all his spirit

an neheinen tumben man;
to any foolish man;

vil harte wol im daz gezam.
very greatly well to-him that suited.

ime was sîn gebâre,
to-him was his bearing,

als er ein furste wâre
as-if he a prince were

ubir alliz ertrîche.
over all earth-realm.

ih sage û wêrlîche:
I tell to-you truly:

die meistere, di er dô gwan,
the masters, whom he then won,

di wâren cunstige man.
they were skillful men.

si begunden in wîsheit lêren
they began him wisdom to-teach

und zugen in ze grôzen êren.
and drew him to great honors.

si larten ime strîten
they taught to-him to-fight

und vermezzenlîchen rîten
and boldly to-ride

in sturm unde in volcwîch,
in assault and in folk-battle,

sô daz is nie ne wart sîn gelîch.
so that of-it never — was his like.

der liste di er von in gwan,
of-the cunnings which he from them won,

der wart er ên vil vornême man.
of-them became he a very excellent man.

Der êriste meister sîn
The first master his

der lartin kriechisch und latîn
he taught-him Greek and Latin

und scrîben ane pergemint.
and to-write on parchment.

noh dan was er ein lutzil kint.
yet then was he a little child.

und lartin vil manige bûch
and taught-him very many books

und andire wîsheit genûch.
and other wisdom enough.

Sîn meister, den er dar nâh gwan,
His master, whom he there after won,

der lartin wol mûsicam
he taught-him well music

und lartin di seiten zîhen,
and taught-him the strings to-draw,

daz alle tône dar inne gîhen,
that all tones there within go,

rotten unde der lîren clanc,
rotes and the lyre's sound,

und von ime selben heben den sanc.
and from him self to-raise the song.

Der dritte frumete ime wole:
The third profited to-him well:

er lartin allir dinge zale
he taught-him of-all things number

unde lartin al di wîsheit,
and taught-him all the wisdom,

wî verre diu sunne von dem mânen geit;
how far the sun from the moon goes;

unde lartin ouh di list,
and taught-him also the craft,

wî verre von den wazzeren zô den himelen ist.
how far from the waters to the heavens is.

Der meister, den er dô gwan,
The master, whom he then won,

was Aristotiles der wîse man.
was Aristotle the wise man.

der lartin alle di cundicheit,
he taught-him all the skill,

wî der himel umbe geit,
how the heaven around goes,

und stach ime di list in sînen gedanc
and pricked to-him the craft into his thought

zerkennene daz gestirne und sînen ganc,
to-know the stars and its course,

dâ sih di wîsen veren mite bewarint,
there themselves the wise sailors with guard,

dâ si in dem tiefen mere varint.
where they in the deep sea fare.

Einen meister gwan er abir sint
A master won he again afterward

Alexander daz edele kint,
Alexander the noble child,

der lartin mit gewêfene varen,
who taught-him with weapons to-fare,

wî er sih mit einem schilde solde bewarn,
how he himself with a shield should guard,

und wî er sîn sper solde tragen
and how he his spear should bear

zô deme, dem er wolde schaden,
to him, whom he would harm,

und wî er den erkiesen mohte
and how he him discern might

und gestechen, alsiz ime tohte;
and pierce, as-it to-him availed;

und alse der stich wêre getân,
and when the thrust were done,

wî er zô dem swerte solde vân
how he to the sword should seize

und dâ mite kundiclîche slege slân,
and there with skillfully blows strike,

und wî er sînen vîant solde vân,
and how he his enemy should catch,

und wî er sih selben solde bewaren
and how he himself self should guard

vor allen, di ime woldin schaden;
against all, who to-him would harm;

und wî er sînen vîanden lâgen solde,
and how he for-his enemies lie-in-wait should,

di er danne untwirken wolde,
whom he then undo would,

und wî er zô den rîteren solde gebâren
and how he to the knights should behave

zô diu daz si ime willich wâren.
to that that they to-him willing were.

Der sehste bestunt in mit grôzen witzen
The sixth undertook him with great wits

und lartin ze dinge sitzen
and taught-him at assembly to-sit

und lartin, wî er daz irdêhte,
and taught-him, how he that devised,

wî er von dem unrehten beschiede daz rehte,
how he from the wrong distinguished the right,

und wî er lantreht bescheiden kunde
and how he land-law decide could

allen den er is gunde.
to-all to-whom he of-it granted.

Umbe daz und vil manich ander
For that and very many other

alsus wart daz kint Alexander
thus became the child Alexander

listic, gwaldich unde balt.
cunning, mighty and bold.

nû allir êrist was er zwelif jâr alt.
now of-all first was he twelve years old.

alsô stêtich was ime sîn mût,
so constant was to-him his spirit,

durh alliz werltlîch gût
for all worldly goods

ne wolder nie geliegen
— would-he never lie

und niemanne betriegen,
and anyone deceive,

noh durh lieb noh durh leit
nor for joy nor for sorrow

geswachen di wârheit.
debase the truth.

einem sînen meistere daz wol schein:
on-one his master that well showed:

den stîz er ze tale ubir einen stein,
him pushed he to valley over a stone,

daz ime sîn hals in zwei brach,
that to-him his neck in two broke,

wander ime eine lugene zû sprah.
for-he him a lie to spoke.

nû sprechent manige lugenêre,
now say many liars,

daz der sîn vater wêre.
that he his father were.

vil ubile ih des gelouben mach,
very ill I of-that believe may,

wander ime den hals in zwei brach.
for-he to-him the neck in two broke.

Von Philippis stûte wil ih û nû sagen:
Of Philip's stud will I to-you now tell:

dar under was ein ros getragen.
there among was a horse borne.

daz ros daz was wunderlîch,
the horse it was wondrous,

irre und vil strîtich,
wild and very quarrelsome,

snel und starc von gescafnisse.
swift and strong of creation.

des sult ir sîn gwisse.
of-that shall you be certain.

iz hete unzallîche craft
it had countless strength

und ummâzlîche maht.
and measureless might.

iz irbeiz di lûte unde irslûch.
it bit-to-death the people and slew.

iz was freislîch gnûch.
it was fearsome enough.

ime was sîn munt,
to-it was its mouth,

daz wil ih û tûn kunt,
that will I to-you make known,

als eime esele getân.
as to-an ass made.

di nasen wâren ime wîte ûf geslân.
the nostrils were to-it wide up struck.

sîne ôren wâren ime lanc,
its ears were to-it long,

daz houbit magir unde slanc.
the head lean and slender.

sîne ougen wâren ime allir vare
its eyes were to-it of-all color

glîch eineme fliegindin aren.
like to-a flying eagle.

sîn hals was ime lockehte,
its neck was to-it shaggy,

ih wêne iz wêre lewingeslehte.
I ween it were lion's-kin.

ûf den goffen hâtiz rindis hâr,
on the croup had-it ox's hair,

an den sîten liebarten mâl:
on the sides leopard's spots:

sô Sarrazîn joh cristinman
so Saracen and Christian-man

nie nihein bezzer ros gwan.
never any better horse won.

Daz ros wart mit îsine gebunden,
The horse was with iron bound,

alse daz dâ tobit zallen stunden.
as that which rages at-all hours.

iz wart vor den kuninc Philippum geleit.
it was before the king Philip led.

und als er vernam sîne gelegenheit,
and when he perceived its nature,

Bucival hîz erz namen.
Bucephalus bade he-it name.

daz dûhte si gût alle samen.
that seemed them good all together.

Dô hîz man manigen starkin man
Then bade one many strong man

daz selbe ros leiten dan
the same horse lead away

und in einen marstal betûn,
and into a stable shut,

daz man dâ vor mohte gerûn.
that one there before might rest.

zô ime ne torste nieman gân,
to it — dared no-one go,

wan der alsô hete getân,
except who so had done,

daz ime verteilet wart daz leben,
that to-him condemned was the life,

den môse man deme rosse geben.
him must one to-the horse give.

Deme kuninge wart ein bote dô gesant
To-the king was a messenger then sent

von deme, der daz ros het erkant,
from him, who the horse had known,

und hîz iz sint baz bewarn,
and bade it afterward better guard,

wande man solde dar an irvarn,
for one should there by learn,

weme nâh sînem lîbe
to-whom after his life

sîn kunincrîche solde blîbe;
his kingdom should remain;

und enbôt ime dâ bî,
and sent-word to-him there by,

iz solde rehte derre sî,
it should rightly his be,

der iz allir êrist beschrite,
who it of-all first mounted,

wandiz noh diu nehein man ne gerite.
for-it still then no man — rode.

Unde alse Alexander heim quam,
And when Alexander home came,

di scrift er harte wol vernam,
the writing he very well understood,

wîs was er zunmâzen;
wise was he beyond-measure;

sîne meistere heter verlâzen.
his masters had-he left.

dannoh ne heter nit vernomen,
still — had-he not heard,

wî iz umbe daz ros was comen.
how it about the horse was come.

eines tages dô der jungelinc
one day when the youth

in der pelenze ginc,
in the palace went,

dô volgetime Vestian,
then followed-him Vestian,

der was ein edele juncman.
he was a noble young-man.

daz ros hôrter dô weien
the horse heard-he then neigh

und tubilîchen schrîen.
and devilishly scream.

vil starke er dô dâhte,
very hard he then thought,

waz daz wesen mohte,
what that be might,

mit allen sînen sinne,
with all his senses,

wes wêre di freislîche stimme.
whose were the fearsome voice.

zô Vestiane er dô sprach:
to Vestian he then spoke:

'nû sage mir, waz daz sîn mach,
'now tell me, what that be may,

daz mir schillit in mîne ôren
that to-me rings in my ears

und ne lâzet mih nit gehôren;
and — lets me not hear;

iz gebârit freislîche.
it behaves fearsomely.

sîn stimme di is gelîche
its voice it is like

einem freislîchem tiere.'
to-a fearsome beast.'

dô antworte ime schiere
then answered to-him quickly

Ptolomeus unde sprach:
Ptolemy and spoke:

'ih sage dir, waz daz wesen mach:
'I tell to-thee, what that be may:

iz ist ein ros freislîch.
it is a horse fearsome.

ime ne wart nie nehein gelîch
to-it — was never any like

in alle kriechische lant.
in all Greek lands.

Bucival ist iz genant.
Bucephalus is it named.

dîn vater hât iz în getân.
thy father has it in put.

iz ne dorfte bezzer nie gegân
it — needed better never go

under neheiner stûte.
among any stud.

iz ne hât nieman in hûte,
it — has no-one in keeping,

wandiz ist vil freislîch.
for-it is very fearsome.

sîn stimme di ist eislich.
its voice it is hideous.

iz irbizit man und wîb.
it bites-to-death man and woman.

nieman ne mach sînen lîb
no-one — may his body

vor ime gesunt behalden,
before it sound keep,

swes iz mûz gwalden.'
of-whom-ever it must rule.'

Dô der hêre diz vernam,
When the lord this heard,

schiere er zô deme rosse quam.
quickly he to the horse came.

dô sîn daz ros wart gware
when of-him the horse became aware

und er iz begunde ane stare,
and he it began at to-stare,

iz vergaz allir sîner maht
it forgot all its might

unde woldime wesen dienisthaft.
and would-to-him be servile.

iz knête fur in der nider
it knelt before him there down

und ne unsitete niwit sider.
and — misbehaved not afterward.

ime worden sîne gebêre,
to-him became its bearings,

alsiz des kindes vil wol gewone wêre.
as-if-it of-the child very well accustomed were.

Er begundiz streichen,
He began-it to-stroke,

daz nieman geweichen
that no-one soften

ne mohte neheine wîs;
— might in-any way;

wander was vil wîs:
for-he was very wise:

er ne legete zoum noh seil dar ane,
he not laid bridle nor rope there on,

er begreif iz in sîne manen.
he seized it in its mane.

ellenthaft was sîn gedanc:
valiant was his thought:

ûf den rucke er ime spranc.
on the back he to-it sprang.

ûz dem marstalle er iz reit,
out-of the stable he it rode,

daz was ein michil baltheit.
that was a great boldness.

Dô wart daz langer nit verdaget,
Then was that longer not kept-silent,

dem kuninge wart dô gesagit,
to-the king was then said,

waz sîn sun hete getân.
what his son had done.

der kuninc der spranc ûf sân
the king he sprang up at-once

und zehenzich sînes gesindes,
and hundred of-his household,

er frowete sih sînis kindes.
he rejoiced himself of-his child.

di mêre er gerne vernam.
the tidings he gladly heard.

dô der kuninc dar quam
when the king there came

und in Alexander vernam,
and him Alexander perceived,

dô tet er alsime wol gezam:
then did he as-to-him well suited:

er warf sih nider unde ginc.
he threw himself down and went.

Vestian daz ros entfienc,
Vestian the horse received,

alsiz Alexander wolde,
as-it Alexander would,

mit einem breitele von golde
with a bridle of gold

mit gesteine wol beslagen.
with gems well mounted.

sînen vater ginc er ingagen.
his father went he toward.

dô si zesamene quâmen,
when they together came,

bî henden si sih nâmen.
by hands they each-other took.

ir rede wart vile minnesam,
their speech was very lovely,

als ir hie mugit verstân.
as you here may understand.

'heil dir', sprach er, 'sune mîn,
'hail to-thee', spoke he, 'son my,

mih dunkit du salt kuninc sîn.
me seems thou shalt king be.

diu gwalt sî dir vil gerêt
the power be to-thee much honored

alsô verre sô mîn rîche gêt.'
as far as my realm goes.'

Alexander sprach zestunt:
Alexander spoke straightway:

'vater, got lâze ûh sîn gesunt,
'father, God let you be sound,

allis gûtes ih û wol getrûwen.
of-all good I you well trust.

got lâz ûh lange bûwen
God let you long inhabit

mit froweden ûwer rîche
with joys your realm

und ouh sêliclîche.
and also blessedly.

noh sult ir, vater, mih geweren
yet shall you, father, me grant

eines dinges, des ih sêre geren:
of-one thing, which I sorely desire:

nû bin ih funfzehen jâr alt,
now am I fifteen years old,

daz hân ih rehte gezalt,
that have I rightly counted,

und bin sô komen zô mînen tagen,
and am so come to my days,

daz ih wol wâfen mac tragen.
that I well weapons may bear.

swer diheine tugent sol gwinnen,
whoever any virtue shall win,

der sal is in sîner juginde beginnen,
he shall of-it in his youth begin,

und swer dir zins sol geben,
and whoever to-thee tribute shall give,

wil er iht derwider streben,
(if)-will he anything there-against strive,

der mûz en dir mit scanden
he must it to-thee with disgrace

senden von sînen landen
send from his lands

und ouh lasterlîche.'
and also shamefully.'

dô ne wolde der kuninc rîche
then — would the king rich

niwit langer beiten:
not longer wait:

er hîz daz kint bereiten.
he bade the child equip.

waz sol ih mêr dar umbe sagen:
what shall I more there about say:

er hîz ime wâfen vor tragen,
he bade him weapons before bear,

sô man si under des kuninges gesinden
as one them among the king's household

allirbest mohte vinden;
best might find;

und verkore si Alexander,
and should-reject them Alexander,

man gewunne ime aber ander.
one would-win to-him again others.

Dô daz kint nâh rîterlîchen site
When the child after knightly custom

wol gewêfent was und geriten,
well armed was and mounted,

dô was er ein scône jungelinc.
then was he a fair youth.

si grûzten in alse einen kuninc.
they greeted him as a king.

er sprach, wes si gedêhten,
he spoke, what they thought,

daz si ime kuninges namen ane lehten,
that they to-him king's name on laid,

sô er kunincriches nit ne hête,
when he of-kingdom not — had,

daz er sînen vinger ûf gesezte.
that he his finger on set.

Er sprach: 'woldet ir eine wîle gerûn
He spoke: 'would you a while rest

unze ih eine tugint mohte getûn:
until I a deed might do:

an einen kuninc wil ih is beginnen,
on a king will I of-it begin,

und mach ih den verwinnen
and (if)-may I him overcome

und ih ime di crônen abe gezîhen
and I from-him the crown off draw

und ûz den velde getûn flîhen,
and out-of the field make flee,

sô mugit ir mir kuningis namen geben
so may you to-me king's name give

al di wîle di ih leben.'
all the while that I live.'

Ein kuninc was Nicolaus genant.
A king was Nicolaus named.

Alexander fûr in sîn lant
Alexander fared into his land

ze Cesaream vor die grôze stat.
to Caesarea before the great city.

dâ wart der rîcher kuninc entsazt,
there was the rich king unseated,

Alexander vaht ime den sige ane
Alexander fought from-him the victory away

und fûrte di crônen mit ime dane.
and carried the crown with him thence.

Dô er dô wider heim quam,
When he then back home came,

ein vil leit mêre er vernam;
a very grievous tidings he heard;

des gwan er ungemûte:
of-that won he ill-spirit:

iz was sîner mûter
it was from-his mother

sîn vater Philippus ab comen
his father Philip off come

und hete ein ander wîb genomen,
and had an other woman taken,

di was Cleopatra genant.
she was Cleopatra named.

dô Alexander daz irvant
when Alexander that found

und erz rehte vernam,
and he-it rightly heard,

vor sînen vater ginc er stân.
before his father went he stand.

er sazte di crônen dô,
he set the crown then,

di er Nicolaô
which he from-Nicolaus

hete geroubit,
had robbed,

sînem vater ûf daz houbit.
on-his father upon the head.

'her vater, nemet diz ze minnen,
'sir father, take this as love,

daz ih mit sturme hân gewunnen
what I with assault have won

unz ih mêr mac getûn;
until I more may do;

des habit ir êre unde rûm.
of-that have you honor and fame.

wene ein dinc, daz ih û clagen
except one thing, which I to-you lament

und in mînem herzen tragen,
and in my heart bear,

des hân ih vil swêren mût;
of-that have I very heavy spirit;

ouh ne dunkit iz mir niwit gût,
also — seems it to-me not good,

daz ir mîne mûter
that you my mother

Olympiaden di gûten
Olympias the good

mir ze leide verlâzen hât
to-me for sorrow abandoned have

und einen ubirhûr begât
and an adultery commit

mit einen anderen wîbe.
with an other woman.

ih swere û daz bî mîneme lîbe,
I swear to-you that by my body,

swer disen rât hât gefromit,
whoever this counsel has furthered,

daz iz ime ze grôzen unstaten noh comet.'
that it to-him to great harm yet comes.'

Ein rîter hîz Lysias,
A knight was-called Lysias,

der stolz und redehaft was,
who proud and well-spoken was,

der was mit der brûte dar comen;
he was with the bride thither come;

des gwan er lutzelen fromen.
of-that won he little profit.

deme was vil harte ungemâch,
to-him was very greatly displeasing,

daz Alexander sô irre sprach,
that Alexander so wildly spoke,

und antworte ime smêlîche
and answered to-him scornfully

unde frevillîche.
and insolently.

des mohter gerne habin enborn;
of-that might-he gladly have done-without;

des gwan daz kint grôzen zorn.
of-that won the child great anger.

einen guldînen naph grôz und swâr,
a golden bowl great and heavy,

dar ane stunden blachmâl,
there on stood enamel-work,

hete Alexander an di hande,
had Alexander in the hand,

den slûch er Lysiam vor di zande,
it struck he Lysias before the teeth,

daz si ime in di kele resen,
that they to-him into the throat fell,

und sprach: 'lâ dîne bôse rede wesen.'
and spoke: 'let thy wicked speech be.'

Philippus ûf di tabelen spranc,
Philip onto the tables sprang,

wande in sîn grôze zorn dwanc;
for him his great anger compelled;

der strît ime niht wol geviel.
the strife to-him not well pleased.

dô trat er fur baz unde viel,
then stepped he forth further and fell,

daz ime sîn schenkel zebrach.
that to-him his shank broke.

lasterlîchen er dô lac.
shamefully he then lay.

in andirhalb fiel di brût.
in other-side fell the bride.

dâ ne wart neheiner gâbe lût
there — was of-no gift sound

nieren nehein spileman.
anywhere any minstrel.

wande dô iz alsô quam,
for when it so came,

daz der kuninc der nider viel,
that the king there down fell,

* * *
(lacuna)

II · THE SIEGE OF TYRE

Tyre refuses to submit and hangs the three princes Alexander sends. Storm and the defenders wreck his first assault from the sea. He has cedars cut on Lebanon and guards the woodcutters after the Arabs kill a thousand, while the Tyrians sally and break a castle. In the storm of the walls he spears their duke and leaps onto the battlements; Greek fire burns the towers, the gate falls, and he blinds and hangs three thousand burghers, a victory that cost him more men than Tyre held. Ruined Tyre is later refounded by Apollonius.

Nû vernemet ouh ein ander:
Now hear also an other:

zô zin sante Alexander
to them sent Alexander

und hiez sînen knehte
and bade his knights

sagen in vil rehte,
tell them very rightly,

ob si in ze kuninge wolden entfân
if they him as king would receive

und ime werden undertân
and to-him become subject

und ime geben in sîne hant
and to-him give into his hand

di burc unde daz lant:
the castle and the land:

er wolde si lâzen leben
he would them let live

und woldin mit êren geben
and would-them with honors give

und mit gnâden lâzen
and with grace leave

und faren sîne strâze.
and fare his road.

ob si des nit ne wolden,
if they of-that not — would,

er sagetin, daz er solde
he told-them, that he should

ir lant zevôren
their land lay-waste

und ire stat zestôren
and their city destroy

unde nemen in allen daz leben,
and take from-them all the life,

ob si ime wolden widerstreben
if they to-him would resist

mit siheiner gwalt.
with any force.

dô wâren dar in helede balt.
then were there inside heroes bold.

dô si di rede vernâmen,
when they the speech heard,

ze samene si quâmen.
to together they came.

zô Alexandro si santen,
to Alexander they sent,

wande si sîn niht nerkanten,
for they of-him not knew,

unde hiezen ime sagen,
and bade to-him tell,

er mohte gerne gedagen,
he might gladly be-silent,
wande si sîn niht neforhten
for they of-him not feared
und ze nihte ne bedorften.
and of nothing — needed.
doch trûgen si ime willigen mût
yet bore they to-him willing spirit
und gâben ime gerne ir gût,
and gave to-him gladly their goods,
ob erz wolde durh minne.
if he-it would for love.
sus sprâchen si dar inne.
thus spoke they there inside.

Dô der bote wider quam
When the messenger back came

und in Alexander vernam,
and him Alexander perceived,
und er ime gesagete rehte,
and he to-him told rightly,
waz ime di gûten knehte
what to-him the good knights
ûz von Tyren enboten,
out from Tyre sent-word,
von zorne begunder roten
from anger began-he to-redden
vor ungemûte er nider saz;
for ill-spirit he down sat;
bî sîme lîbe er sih vermaz,
by his body he himself vowed,
iz gienge in allen an den leben,
it would-go to-them all at the life,
daz si ime torsten widerstreben.
that they to-him dared resist.

er solde sih wol gerechen
he should himself well avenge

unde ir stat zebrechen.
and their city break.

Dô nam er sîner fursten drî —
Then took he of-his princes three—

ih ne weiz niht, wî ir name sî —
I — know not, what their name be—

und sante si wider in di stat
and sent them back into the city

und hîz den besten sagen daz,
and bade the best tell that,

war si ir wîsheit tâten,
whither they their wisdom put,

daz si in versmâten,
that they him scorned,

der Rôme mit sîner craft
who Rome with his strength

under sih hête brâht,
under himself had brought,

und alle kriechische lant
and all Greek lands

hête in sîner hant.
had in his hand.

wes si wolden wênen
what they would ween

durh waz er dare quême,
for what he thither came,

daz si sih baz bedêhten.
that they themselves better bethought.

si ne kanten in nit rehte.
they — knew him not rightly.

er wolde mit sînen knehten
he would with his knights

ir starke stat irvehten
their strong city win-by-fight

und iz ne soldin niemer gefromen,
and it — should-them never profit,

iz solde in unrehte comen,
it should to-them wrongly come,

si ne wordin ime undertân.
they unless became to-him subject.

nû vernemet, wî iz dô quam:
now hear, how it then came:

dô di boten în quâmen
when the messengers in came

und di burgêre vernâmen,
and the burghers heard,

waz di boten sageten,
what the messengers said,

nit langer si ne dageten,
not longer they — kept-silent,

di boten si vingen,
the messengers they seized,

schiere si sie verhingen.
quickly they them hanged.

Dô das mêre ûz quam
When the tidings out came

und iz Alexander vernam,
and it Alexander heard,

dô gwan der helt gût
then won the hero good

eines zurnigen lewen mût.
of-a wrathful lion spirit.

dô hîz er sîn here
then bade he his host

mit schiffen varen in daz mere
with ships fare into the sea

und hîz di burg al umbevân.
and bade the castle all surround.

daz wart schîre getân.
that was quickly done.

und alse di Tyrêre
and when the Tyrians

vernâmen dise mêre,
heard these tidings,

dô schûfen si ir were
then made they their defenses

wider daz creftige here
against the mighty host

in der burh innen
in the castle within

und giengen an di zinnen.
and went onto the battlements.

Alexander trûch in ubelen danc:
Alexander bore them ill thanks:

mit sturme er si sêre dwanc.
with assault he them sorely pressed.

und di dar inne wâren,
and who there inside were,

daz sagih û zwâren,
that tell-I to-you in-truth,

di werten ire selede
they defended their dwellings

alse tûrlîchen helide
as excellent heroes

und vohten sêre her ze tale.
and fought sorely hither to valley.

ih wil û sagen ir zale:
I will to-you tell their number:

man zalte si dâ zestunt
one counted them there straightway

mê dan an hundrit tûsunt.
more than at hundred thousand.

des geloube swer sô wile.
that believe whoever so will.

si irslûgen sô vile
they slew so many

Alexandris heris,
of-Alexander's host,

daz di unden des meris
that the waves of-the sea

von dem blûte wurden rôt.
from the blood became red.

der wint der tet in starke nôt,
the wind it did to-them strong distress,

wander vil stark was,
for-it very strong was,

der selbe der dâ Boreas
the same which there Boreas

in den bûchen heizet,
in the books is-called,

und di aller meist reizet
and which of-all most stirs

daz mere mit den unden.
the sea with the waves.

der schiffe slûch er ze grunde
of-the ships struck it to ground

vile, daz si versunken
many, that they sank

und di lûte dar in vertrunken.
and the people there in drowned.

vil manic ouh dâ irslagen lach.
very many also there slain lay.

dô Alexander daz gesach,
when Alexander that saw,

des sturmes hîz er abe stân
of-the assault bade he off stand

und hîz balde wider gân
and bade quickly back go

di schif in di habe,
the ships into the harbor,

ob ih rehte vernomen habe.
if I rightly heard have.

Dô clagete Alexander
Then lamented Alexander

mêr dan sihein ander
more than any other

sînen scaden grôze,
his loss great,

sîne liebe wîcgenôze.
his dear battle-comrades.

doh môser getrôsten sih
yet must-he console himself

des scaden ummâzlîch,
of-the loss measureless,

wander was ein listich man:
for-he was a cunning man:

vil grôze boume er gwan
very great trees he won

und hîz si ze samene spannen
and bade them to together bind

von kundigen zimbermannen
by skillful carpenters

und hîz si mit steinen fullen.
and bade them with stones fill.

daz was an sînen willen:
that was in his will:

swanner iz gefulte vollen hôe,
whenever-he it filled fully high,

daz er sîn ebinhôe
that he his level-towers

dar ûf zô den turmen brêhte
there on to the towers brought

und lange boume dar abe rihte,
and long trees there down directed,

di ûf di zinnen mohten gân.
which onto the battlements might go.

mit nîde wolder si bestân.
with hatred would-he them attack.

Eilif tûsint von sînen here
Eleven thousand from his host

santer nâh boumen von den mere
sent-he after trees from the sea

und hîz di boume vellen
and bade the trees fell

und berchfride stellen
and siege-towers set-up

ûf einen berch, heizet Lybanus,
on a mountain, is-called Lebanon,

dâ ûf stêt manic cêdrus.
there on stands many cedar.

Lybanus in Arabien stêt,
Lebanon in Arabia stands,

dâ der Iordanis ûz gêt.
where the Jordan out goes.

Lybanus ist ouh der selbe walt,
Lebanon is also the same forest,

den der kuninc Salemon galt
which the king Solomon bought

wider einen kuninc, der hîz Hyram.
from a king, who was-called Hiram.

dem gab er halb Galileam,
to-him gave he half Galilee,

wandime di boume wol gevielen
for-to-him the trees well pleased

ze zimbrin und ze kielen,
for timbering and for keels,

ze balken und ze sûlen.
for beams and for pillars.

man saget, daz holz gefûlen
one says, that wood rot

ne muge niemer mê
— may never more

durh regen noh durh snê.
through rain nor through snow.

Dô Arabes daz befunden,
When the-Arabs that found,

di Tyro gûtis gunden,
who to-Tyre good granted,

nit langer si ne twalten:
not longer they — tarried:

di iren walt falten,
those-who their forest felled,

unsamfte si ane quâmen,
roughly they on came,

ein phant si in nâmen
a pledge they from-them took

und irslûgen ir dâ zestunt
and slew of-them there straightway

mêr dan ein dûsunt.
more than a thousand.

dô Alexander daz vernam,
when Alexander that heard,

vier dûsint er dô nam
four thousand he then took

ûz von sînen here.
out of his host.

daz ander lîz er bî dem mere
the other left he by the sea

und beval iz zwein fursten,
and entrusted it to-two princes,

di iz wol bewaren tursten,
who it well guard dared,

di er mit ime brâht hatte.
whom he with him brought had.

der einer hîz Glatte,
of-them one was-called Glatte,

der ander was Perdix genant,
the other was Perdix named,

den bevalch er mit sîner hant
to-them entrusted he with his hand

di er dâ wolde lâzen,
those-whom he there would leave,

unde vôr dô sîne strâze
and fared then his road

hin zô den walde
hence to the forest

vil wunderlîchen balde
very wondrously quickly

und bewarte sîne holden,
and guarded his loyal-ones,

di ime dâ zimberen solden
who for-him there timber should

ebenhô und berchfride,
level-towers and siege-towers,

di behûtter mit fride
them protected-be with peace

biz daz werc bereitet wart.
until that work prepared was.

dô karter an di widervart.
then turned-he on the return-journey.

Alle di wîle dô Alexandris here
All the while when Alexander's host

nâh den boumen fûr von dem mere,
after the trees fared from the sea,

dô wurden di Tyrêre
then became the Tyrians

di rîchen burgêre
the rich burghers

beide stolz unde balt.
both proud and bold.

si ranten ûz mit gwalt.
they rushed out with force.

starke si sih râchen,
strongly they themselves avenged,

ein castel si zebrâchen
a castle they broke

undir Alexandris man.
among Alexander's men.

stolzlîche hûben siz an
proudly began they-it on

eines morgenis frû
one morning early

mit fûre giengen si ime zû.
with fire went they it to.

si slûgen unde viengen,
they struck and seized,

swaz si ir begiengen.
whatever they of-them came-upon.

swem des bedûhte,
to-whomever of-it seemed,

daz er untflîhen nit ne mohte,
that he escape not — might,

der sencte sih an der stunt
he sank himself at the hour

nider an des meres grunt.
down on the sea's ground.

vor wâr ih û daz sage,
for true I to-you that say,

daz man si in allem dem tage
that one them in all the day

nie nîren gesach,
never anywhere saw,

biz man di gruntfeste brach:
until one the foundation broke:

dô vant man si an des meres grunt.
then found one them at the sea's ground.

di quâmen wider ûz gesunt.
they came back out sound.

Dô daz castel zebrochen wart,
When the castle broken was,

dô hûb sih dâ ein sturm hart.
then raised itself there an assault hard.

dâ wart michel gedôz.
there was great din.

dâ was der strît vil grôz,
there was the strife very great,

dâ si volgeten den vanen.
where they followed the banners.

daz wart sêre ze banen
that became sorely to bane

dem, der iz mit dem lîbe galt.
to-him, who it with the life paid.

an zwei hundrit wurden gezalt,
at two hundred were counted,

di den lîb dâ verlorn
who the life there lost

und den bitteren tôt corn.
and the bitter death tasted.

di dâ lâgen irslagen,
who there lay slain,

daz wil ih û wêrlîchen sagen,
that will I to-you truly tell,

di wâren Alexandris man,
they were Alexander's men,

alsih mih versinnen kan.
as-I myself recollect can.

di von Tyre schieden dannen
those of Tyre departed thence

gesunt mit irn mannen,
sound with their men,

vil lutzil ir tôt bliben.
very few of-them dead remained.

stolzlîche si triben
proudly they drove

di Kriechen von der vesten.
the Greeks from the stronghold.

dô was dâ den gesten
then was there to-the strangers

gescadit vil sêre.
harmed very sorely.

dô êrist quam ir hêre
then first came their lord

ze strîte harte wol gare
to strife very well ready

mit einer gewâfinder schare.
with an armed troop.

dô entwichen ime di gaste
then gave-way to-him the strangers

in di burch vaste.
into the castle fast.

Dô Alexander sih bedâhte,
When Alexander himself bethought,

waz er getûn mahte,
what he do might,

er hîz insamt heften
he bade together fasten

di schif mit manniscreften.
the ships with men's-strength.

er hîz si starke spannen
he bade them strongly bind

mit îsenînen lannen
with iron chains

ein benebin daz ander.
one beside the other.

ouch hîz Alexander
also bade Alexander

di schif mit hûten bezîhen,
the ships with hides cover,

daz di unden dar în nit ne gîen.
that the waves there in not — go.

des nam man gûte goume.
of-that took one good heed.

von den langisten boumen,
from the longest trees,

di si ieren hatten,
which they anywhere had,

berchfride si dar ûf sazten
siege-towers they there upon set

und tribin si zô den zinnen.
and drove them to the battlements.

alsus wolder gewinnen
thus would-he win

Tyrum di hêre stat.
Tyre the lordly city.

di dâ bî dem mere lach.
which there by the sea lay.

Diz sult ir rehte merken:
This shall you rightly mark:

dô hîz er starc gewerke
then bade he strong works

machen ûffe schîben
make upon wheels

und zô der stat trîben
and to the city drive

und hîz di mûren howen
and bade the walls hew

mit stehelînen gezowen.
with steel tools.

dô irhûb sih ein sturm grôz.
then raised itself an assault great.

starke man warf unde scôz
strongly one threw and shot

von den einen zô den anderen.
from the one to the others.

sêre mohtes deme wunderen,
sorely might-it him wonder,

der ie diheinen sturm gesach.
who ever any assault saw.

von der werlde, di dâ tôt lac,
from the world, that there dead lay,

wart daz mere al ein blût.
became the sea all a blood.

des wôhs Alexandro sîn mût,
of-that grew to-Alexander his spirit,

er bestunt si mit nîde.
he attacked them with hatred.

von den berhfriden,
from the siege-towers,

di wâren hôer dan di turme,
that were higher than the towers,

dô bestunt er si mit sturme.
then attacked he them with assault.

dâ wurden di scônen swibogen
there were the fair arches

in daz wazzer gezogen
into the water drawn

und di gemôseten steine.
and the mortared stones.

der mûren brach dô eine
of-the walls broke then one

Alexander und di geste,
Alexander and the strangers,

di dâ was di beste.
which there was the best.

Dô si zer anderen mûren quâmen,
When they to-the second wall came,

cêdirboume si nâmen
cedar-trees they took

unde lange tannen:
and long firs:

bercfride hîz man spannen
siege-towers bade one bind

und rihte si ûf mit listen
and raised them up with crafts

und sazte si zô der vesten.
and set them to the stronghold.

dô steich Alexander
then climbed Alexander

und manic man ander
and many man other

ûf di uberisten were
up-on the uppermost works

und hîz sturmen sîn here.
and bade assault his host.

dâ nider an der erden
there down on the earth

hîz er den sturm werden.
bade he the assault be.

dô hîz man werch ûf schîben,
then bade one works up shove,

zô der mûren trîben.
to the walls drive.

mit gezowe man di mûre brach.
with tools one the wall broke.

vil manic man dâ tôt lach.
very many man there dead lay.

man mohte dâ scowen wunder,
one might there behold wonder,

sêre vaht Alexander.
sorely fought Alexander.

sîn schilt der was elfinbein,
his shield it was ivory,

bezzer ne wart nie nehein.
better — was never any.

sîn helm der was ouh alsô gût,
his helm it was also so good,

daz nehein swert dar durh wût.
that no sword there through waded.

ouh heter umbe di sîten
also had-he about the sides

ein swert von gûter sniten
a sword of good edges

und an der hant einen gêren.
and in the hand a javelin.

er frumte manigen sêren.
he made many-a-one wounded.

daz sagih û vor ungelogen.
that tell-I to-you for unlied.

dô gesah er den herzogen,
then saw he the duke,

dem Tyre was undertân,
to-whom Tyre was subject,

vor sih ûf di mûren stân.
before himself on the walls stand.

den scôz er mit den gêren durh
him shot he with the javelin through

und faltin tôt in di burch.
and felled-him dead into the castle.

Dô tete der kuninc einen sprunc
Then made the king a leap

und mit ime manic helt junc
and with him many hero young

nider ûf di zinnen.
down onto the battlements.

di burg wolden si winnen.
the castle would they win.

vier tûsint lûtis mit ime spranc,
four thousand of-people with him sprang,

ellenthaft was ire gedanc;
valiant was their thought;

mir ne betriege mîn wân:
me unless deceive my opinion:

dâ spranc iteslîch man,
there sprang each man,

daz er nâh der stunt
that he after the hour

niemer mêr ne wart gesunt.
never more — became sound.

dâ was michele nôt.
there was great distress.

hundrit sneller helede tôt
hundred swift heroes dead

von dem springene lach.
from the leaping lay.

ouh liden michil ungemach
also suffered great hardship

die kriechischen geste,
the Greek strangers,

dâ si brâchen di veste
where they broke the stronghold

nider zô der erden.
down to the earth.

nie ne mohte werden
never — might be

ein mûre, di bezzer wâre,
a wall, which better were,

daz sagih û zwâre.
that tell-I to-you in-truth.

Dâ was daz velt vil wît.
There was the field very wide.

dâ was der bitteriste strît,
there was the bitterest strife,

von dem ih ie gehôrte sagen.
of which I ever heard tell.

man ne sah dâ niemannen verzagen.
one — saw there no-one despair.

man mohte dâ degene scowen
one might there thanes behold

durh den helmen verhowen.
through the helms hewn.

man sah dâ manigen rîter junc
one saw there many knight young

durh den halsberch sô verwunt,
through the hauberk so wounded,

daz er nit ne gnas
that he not — recovered

in den strîte, der dâ was.
in the strife, that there was.

durh di schilde fûr der gêr
through the shields fared the javelin

und mahete manigen helt sêr.
and made many hero wounded.

in den selben nîtspile
in the same hate-play

leit ungemachis vile
suffered of-hardship much

der eine joh der ander.
the one and the other.

der wunderlîh Alexander
the wondrous Alexander

der machete in den stunden
he made in the hours

freislîche wunden.
fearsome wounds.

er irslûc des lûtes de menige.
he slew of-the people the multitude.

gebeizet was sîn brunie
steeped was his byrnie

in eines wurmes blûte.
in a dragon's blood.

manigen helt gûten
many hero good

irlôseter des lîbes.
deprived-he of-the life.

des sît âne zwîbel.
of-that be without doubt.

sîn brunie was hurnîn vil vast.
his byrnie was horny very fast.

er hete manige grôze list.
he had many great crafts.

ih wil û wêrlîchen sagen:
I will to-you truly tell:

vor den, di dâ lâgen irslagen,
for those, who there lay slain,

sô ne mohte nieman
so — might no-one

ûf die erden gegân,
on the earth go,

sô vil lach ir dâ tôt,
so many lay of-them there dead,

daz dâ ingagen wurden rôt
that there against became red

des tiefen meris unden.
of-the deep sea's waves.

in den selbin stunden
in the same hours

di helede von Tyre,
the heroes of Tyre,

des lebenes vil gîre,
of-the life very greedy,

di fuhten sô di wilden swîn,
they fought as the wild boars,

wene daz nit solde sîn
except that not should be

ir lebenes dô mê.
of-their life then more.

in was in beidenthalben wê.
to-them was in on-both-sides woe.

eine vil lange wîle
a very long while

flugen di phîle
flew the arrows

alse der snê unde der regen.
as the snow and the rain.

dâ bleib manic tûre degen.
there remained many excellent thane.

Dâ fuhten Alexandris man,
There fought Alexander's men,

alsiz heleden wol gezam.
as-it to-heroes well suited.

doh brâchen si Tyrêre durh
yet broke they the-Tyrians through

und wichen wider in di burch.
and withdrew back into the castle.

Alexander tet in unreht.
Alexander did to-them wrong.

er verlôs dâ manigen tûren kneht.
he lost there many excellent knight.

vil zurnic wart er dô.
very wrathful became he then.

mit nîde ginc er der porten zô:
with hatred went he the gate to:

di dar ûffe wâren,
who there upon were,

di tâten ime scaden mâren.
they did to-him harm famous.

di porte hete drî turme;
the gate had three towers;

dâ geschît er abe mit zurne,
there departed he off with wrath,

wandime dâ leides vil gescach.
for-to-him there of-sorrow much happened.

mit sînen fursten er dô sprah
with his princes he then spoke

und nam iren heimlîchen rât,
and took their secret counsel,

wî er gehandelte di tât.
how he should-handle the deed.

er sprach: 'nû râtent mir, des ist zît,
he spoke: 'now counsel me, of-it is time,

wandir vil wîse lûte sît:
for-you very wise people are:

nement nû dise di uberin hant,
(if)-take now these the upper hand,

sô spottet man unser in daz lant.'
so mocks one us into the land.'

Ime rieten sîne fursten,
To-him counseled his princes,

di ime râten tursten,
who to-him counsel dared,

daz er sante ubir sê
that he sent over sea

und lieze heris comen mê
and let of-host come more

und hieze mangen rihten
and bade catapults erect

und tête di turme brechen
and made the towers break

mit sturmes gewalt.
with assault's might.

schiere wurden dâ gestalt
quickly were there set-up

zwô und sibinzich mangen
two and seventy catapults

mit hurden wol behangen,
with hurdles well hung,

gemannet unde geseilet.
manned and roped.

di wurden in drî geteilet
they were in three divided

und wurden getriben zô der burch.
and were driven to the castle.

dô wâre dâ eines friden durht.
then were there of-a peace need.

in di burch wurfen si dô
into the castle threw they then

beide spâte unde frô
both late and early

kriechisc fûr unde wite,
Greek fire and wood,

daz was Alexandris site:
that was Alexander's custom:

kriechisc fûr cunder wirken
Greek fire could-he work

und ne liez daz niemanne merken,
and — let that no-one mark,

von wilhen listen daz quam,
from which crafts that came,

daz iz in den wazzere bran.
that it in the water burned.

daz warf er în zô der burh.
that threw he in to the castle.

dâ mite branter di turme durh
there with burned-he the towers through

und manigen vil herten stein.
and many very hard stone.

dô ne bleib der burgêre nehein, 1370
then — remained of-the burghers none,

si ne môsten von den zinnen gân,
they unless must from the battlements go,

wande si ne tursten dâ niwit langer stân
for they — dared there not longer stand

vor des fûris forhten.
for the fire's fear.

Alexander dranc zô der porten,
Alexander pressed to the gate,

mit nîde er si der nider brach. 1375
with hatred he it there down broke.

sîner helede vil dâ tôt lach.
of-his heroes many there dead lay.

ime wâre doch leides me geschît,
to-him would-have yet of-sorrow more happened,

ne forhten si daz fûr nit
— (if)-feared they the fire not

unde maniger mangen worf.
and many catapult's throw.

sô solde ime ouh di burh 1380
so should to-him also the castle

wesen vil tûre,
be very dear,

ne hêter si mit den fûre
— had-he it with the fire

und mit den mangen nit bestân.
and with the catapults not attacked.

daz sult ir wizzen âne wân.
that shall you know without doubt.

Alexander wolde sih vollen rechen:
Alexander would himself fully avenge:

er hîz di turme nider brechen,
he bade the towers down break,

di daz fûr hete verlâzen.
which the fire had left.

der rîchestin burgêre, di dar inne sâzen,
of-the richest burghers, who there inside sat,

hîz er drî dûsint fâhen
bade he three thousand seize

und blinden unde hâen
and blind and hang

wider sînen fursten drîn,
for his princes three,

di er sante dar în.
whom he sent there in.

des siges, des er dâr nam,
of-the victory, which he there took,

wêre er ein wol bedâht man,
were he a well considered man,

er ne wurdis niemer frô;
he — would-become-of-it never glad;

wandiz gescah ime alsô,
for-it happened to-him so,

daz ime mê lûte tôt bleip,
that to-him more people dead remained,

des sagen ih û di wârheit,
of-that tell I to-you the truth,

dan der in Tyro wâre
than there in Tyre were

geste oder burgêre.
strangers or burghers.

Zestôret lach dô Tyrus.
Destroyed lay then Tyre.

di stifte sint der kuninc Apollonius,
it founded afterward the king Apollonius,

von dem di bûch sagent noh,
of whom the books tell still,

den der kuninc Antioch
whom the king Antiochus

ubir mere jagete,
over sea hunted,

wander ime sagite
for-he to-him told

ein rêtisle mit forhten.
a riddle with fear.

daz was mit bedecketen worten
that was with covered words

gescriben in einen brief,
written in a letter,

daz er sînes selbes tohter beslief.
that he his self's daughter lay-with.

ouh ist Tyrus di selbe stat,
also is Tyre the same city,

dâr Chananea unsen hêren bat,
where the-Canaanite-woman our lord besought,

daz er si getrôste
that he her should-comfort

und ir tohter lôste
and her daughter free

mit sîner volleiste
with his aid

von den ubilen geiste.
from the evil spirit.

dâ gewerte si unser hêre
there granted her our lord

durh sînes selbes êre
for his self's honor

unde machete dâ zestunt
and made there straightway

ir tohter gesunt.
her daughter sound.

III · DARIUS'S GIFTS

Darius, shamed by a fugitive from Tyre, sends Alexander a ball, shoe-straps, and gold: play like a child, serve, and live on your allowance, or be flogged with brooms. Alexander condemns the messengers, then spares them, reads the gifts as signs of his rule over the world, and promises a hundred thousand men over the Euphrates in three months. Darius orders his dukes Marius and Tybotes, who warn that he is deceived, to hold the river; he sends Mennes with a hundred thousand. Alexander forces the ford at a cost of a thousand Greeks, and in the fight Mennes strikes Alexander down.

Dô cunte Dario ein man,
Then made-known to-Darius a man,

der ûz von Tyren entran,
who out from Tyre escaped,

wî der kuninc Alexander
how the king Alexander

hête in sînen lande
had in his land

sîne lûte gevangen,
his people captured,

geblindet und irhangen
blinded and hanged

und gewôstet sîn lant
and wasted his land

unde daz ouh wêre verbrant
and that also were burned

Tyrus unde lêge in colen; 1430
Tyre and lay in coals;

und er daz laster wolde dolen,
and-if he the disgrace would suffer,

dar umbe mohter sih gescamen
there for might-he himself be-ashamed

sînes kuninclîchen namen,
of-his kingly name,

daz er in mit gelfe
that he them with clamor

niwit ze helfe 1435
not to help

schîre ne quême,
quickly — came,

dô er ir nôt vernâme.
when he their distress heard.

Der rîche kuninc Darius
The rich king Darius

der antworte ime alsus:
he answered to-him thus:

‘der kûne Alexander 1440
‘the bold Alexander

der tût als ein tumber
he does as a fool

unde alse ein kindischer man,
and as a childish man,

der sih versinnen nit ne kan.
who himself understand not — can.

daz wirt vil lîhte sîn val,
that becomes very easily his fall,

wander dar umbe sal
for-he there for shall

sîne êre verliesen
his honor lose

oder den bitteren tôt kiesen,
or the bitter death choose,

er ne vare schiere wider heim.'
he unless fare quickly back home.'

doh wart er des inein,
yet became he of-it agreed,

dô er gienc ze râte,
when he went to council,

daz er ime sante drâte
that he to-him sent quickly

einen guldînen bal
a golden ball

scône unde sinewal.
fair and round.

ouh santer ime zehant
also sent-he to-him at-once

zwêne hêrlîche scûchbant
two lordly shoe-straps

und ein lutzil goldis in einer laden.
and a little of-gold in a casket.

er wânde, daz er ime gescaden
he weened, that he to-him harm

mit nihte ne mohte,
with nothing — might,

biz daz erz besûhte.
until that he-it tried.

und hîz von disen drîn sachen
and bade of these three things

einen brief machen,
a letter make,

der ime rehte bescheinte,
which to-him rightly showed,

waz dise gâbe meinte.
what this gift meant.

Mit dem balle meinter daz,
With the ball meant-he that,

daz ime gezême michilis baz,
that to-him would-suit much better,

daz er mit anderen kinden
that he with other children

des balles spilen gienge,
of-the ball to-play went,

dan er sîne lûte vienge
than he his people seized

und di slûge oder hienge.
and them slew or hanged.

dar zô meinten die scûchbant,
there to meant the shoe-straps,

di er ime ouh hete gesant,
which he to-him also had sent,

daz ime Alexander
that to-him Alexander

und dar zô manic ander
and there to many other

tagelîch dienen solde,
daily serve should,

alsô vil sô er wolde.
as much as he would.

ouh meinte daz golt,
also meant the gold,

daz ir vil rehte merken sult,
that you very rightly mark shall,

daz sîn vater wêre
that his father were

sîn rehter cinsêre,
his rightful tributary,

und daz er ouh solde
and that he also should

leben mit dem golde,
live with the gold,

biz daz er heim quême,
until that he home came,

und niemanne niht ne nême
and from-no-one anything — took

und ouh schiere heim rite,
and also quickly home rode,

und ob er iwit lange bite
and if he at-all long waited

oder tâte wider sînen willen,
or did against his will,

er hieze in mit besemen villen.
he would-bid him with brooms flog.

Dô Alexander den brieb gelas,
When Alexander the letter read,

vil harte ummêre ime was,
very greatly displeasing to-him was,

daz er in mit besemen wolde slân.
that he him with brooms would beat.

sîne boten hiez er alle hân.
his messengers bade he all hang.

der boten einer zô ime sprah:
of-the messengers one to him spoke:

‘hêre, ne tût uns nehein ungemach;
‘lord, — do us no harm;

wande daz ne wâre niwit reht,
for that — were not right,

swâ sihein uher kneht
wherever any your servant

uher botescaft tribe,
your embassy drove,

daz er dar umbe tôt blibe.
that he there for dead remained.

ne schendet niwit uheren namen.
— disgrace not your name.

wir jehen û alle samen,
we avow to-you all together,

daz under disen kuningen allen
that among these kings all

neheiner mach zô û gevallen,
none may to you equal,

der mit sulher frumicheite
who with such valor

sîn here ubir lant leite,
his host over land led,

alsir, hêre kuninc, tût.
as-you, lord king, do.

nû bedwingit uheren mût
now constrain your spirit

unde habit unsir mâze.
and have of-us measure.

wî torste wir lâzen,
how dared we leave,

daz unser hêre uns gebôt,
what our lord us commanded,

durh siheiner slahte nôt!'
for any kind of-need!'

Alexander bedâhte sih,
Alexander bethought himself,

den boten wart er gnêdich.
to-the messengers became he gracious.

er ne weiz in niwit durh di scult,
he — blamed them not for the guilt,

er gab in wider daz selbe golt,
he gave to-them back the same gold,

daz ime von Dario quam.
which to-him from Darius came.

er sprah: ‘vil ubile daz gezam,
he spoke: ‘very ill that suited,

daz mich drowete zeslân
that me threatened to-beat

Darius uher hêre,
Darius your lord,

waz sol der rede mêre:
what shall of-the speech more:

er ist ein unversunnen man.
he is a senseless man.

er hât glîche getân
he has alike done

alse der blôde hovewart.
as the timid yard-dog.

sulih ist sîn art:
such is his nature:

swenner nahtes iht vernemet,
whenever-he at-night anything perceives,

durh sîne blôdicheit wirt er irgremet,
for his timidity is he enraged,

er ne tar dar nâher comen niet,
he — dares there nearer come not,

al bellender flîhet.
all barking-he flees.

alsô hât Darius getân.
so has Darius done.

er ne tar mir niemer bestân,
he — dares me never withstand,

wander ist ein tumber.
for-he is a fool.

er zuckit sih in einen cumber,
he draws himself into an affliction,

dâ er nit ûz ne mac comen.
where he not out — may come.

sînen brieb hân ih wol vernomen.
his letter have I well understood.

diu gâbe ein ander meinet,
the gift an other means,

dan mir der brief bescheinet.
than to-me the letter shows.

Den bal hât er mir gesant,
The ball has he to-me sent,

dâ mite hât er mir bekant,
there with has he to-me made-known,

daz iz alliz an mir sol stân,
that it all on me shall stand,

daz der himel hât umbevân;
what the heaven has encompassed;

und ih hêre sule werden
and I lord shall become

noh an diser erden
yet on this earth

ubir alle di rîche,
over all the realms,

di sint in ertrîche,
which are in earth-realm,

unde ubir alle di lant,
and over all the lands,

di ie wurden genant.
which ever were named.

Er sante mir ouh zwê schûhbant.
He sent to-me also two shoe-straps.

dâ mite hât er mir becant
there with has he to-me made-known

daz er sih mir ze eigene wil geben
that he himself to-me as own will give

und mit mînen gnâden leben
and with my grace live

und mîn dienist wille sîn
and my service willing be

zallen herverten mîn.
at-all campaigns my.

mit dem golde, daz ir mir habet brâht,
with the gold, which you to-me have brought,

dâ mite hât er gedâht,
there with has he thought,

daz mir eineme daz gezeme,
that to-me alone that suits,

daz ih den zins von ime neme
that I the tribute from him take

und ouh alle erdische lant
and also all earthly lands

bedwinge zô mîner hant.'
subdue to my hand.'

Diz screib Alexander dô
This wrote Alexander then

und santiz Dario
and sent-it to-Darius

und embôt ime dâ mite,
and sent-word to-him there with,

daz er noh drî mânede bite;
that he yet three months wait;

er ne woldiz niwit lengen,
he — would-it not prolong,

zehenzic tûsint wolder bringen
hundred thousand would-he bring

ubir daz wazzer Eufraten
over the water Euphrates

vor di mêre Babylonien.
before the famous Babylon.

(er sprah): ‘sint daz er zinsis von mir geret,
(he spoke): ‘since that he of-tribute from me desires,

er wirt is aldâ gewert
he is of-it there granted

mit sô getâner mâzen,
with so made measure,

daz er mir mûz lâzen
that he to-me must leave

ze phande sîn houbit,
as pledge his head,

oder ih werde beroubit
or I be robbed

mînes lîbes und mîner manne.
of-my life and of-my men.

und ob ih zagelîche danne
and if I cowardly then

von dem volcwîge flîhe,
from the folk-battle flee,

sô gelobe ih, daz mir geschie
so vow I, that to-me may-happen

dane vorder niemer mêre
thence forth never more

frowede, gût noh êre.
joy, goods nor honor.

alsus wil ihz bestân.'
thus will I-it undertake.'

unde alse Dario der brieb quam
and when to-Darius the letter came

und er in gelas,
and he it read,

alse dâ gescriben was,
as there written was,

zornlîche er ûf fûr.
wrathfully he up fared.

bi sîneme rîche er swôr:
by his realm he swore:

'iz werde ze scanden
'it shall-become to disgrace

dem tumben Alexandren,
to-the foolish Alexander,

daz er mich ie beschalt.
that he me ever reviled.

er ist worden ze balt.
he is become too bold.

er ne gewinnit is niemer fromen,
he — wins of-it never profit,

daz er ie getorste comen
that he ever dared come

durh mîn laster in mîn lant.
for my shame into my land.

des sol er werden gescant,
of-that shall he be disgraced,

sô daz erz niemer mêr ne getû,
so that he-it never more — does,

wander irhebet sih ze frû.'
for-he raises himself too early.'

Dô sante Darius einen brieb
Then sent Darius a letter

zwein herzogen, di ime wâren lieb.
to-two dukes, who to-him were dear.

der eine der hîz Marius,
the one he was-called Marius,

der brieb nennet in alsus,
the letter names him thus,

und der ander Tybotes.
and the other Tybotes.

er hîz si sêre biten des,
he bade them sorely ask of-this,

daz si gegen Alexandren kêrten
that they against Alexander turned

und im daz lant werten
and from-him the land defended

und sînes hôhmûtes widerstiezen
and his arrogance repelled

und ubir daz wazzer nit ne liezen
and over the water not — let

Eufraten heim ze lande varn;
Euphrates home to land fare;

daz si daz wolden bewaren
that they that would guard

unde mit strîte in bestunden
and with strife him attacked

und brêhten in gebunden.
and brought him bound.

nû er dar nâh strebete,
now he there after strove,

daz er ubir alliz, daz dâ lebete
that he over all, that there lived

ieren an der erden
anywhere on the earth

der hôiste wolde werden,
the highest would become,

daz solde an einen galgen wesen.
that should on a gallows be.

dô der brieb wart gelesen,
when the letter was read,

dô sprachen di herzogen:
then spoke the dukes:

'Darius ist harte betrogen.
'Darius is greatly deceived.

er heizet uns den man vân,
he bids us the man seize,

dem alle di lant sint undirtân
to-whom all the lands are subject

und der di fursten hât gevangen
and who the princes has captured

und des wille ist irgangen
and whose will is gone

ubir Jherusalem und ubir Tyre.
over Jerusalem and over Tyre.

sînes selbes ist er gîre.
of-his self is he greedy.

Rôme und Egiptelant
Rome and Egypt-land

stânt beide an sîner hant.
stand both in his hand.

er bedwanc Kartaginen di burch.
he subdued Carthage the castle.

mit gwalt reit er dâ durh.
with force rode he there through.

er hât ouh manic ander lant
he has also many other land

verwunnen und verbrant,
conquered and burned,

bedwungen und zestôret,
subdued and destroyed,

der ein teil Dario hôret.
of-which a part to-Darius belongs.

daz hât Darius al versezzen.
that has Darius all neglected.

Alexander hât sich vermezzen,
Alexander has himself vowed,

iz gê ze scaden oder ze fromen,
it go to harm or to profit,

wil ime Darius ingagen comen,
(if)-will him Darius against come,

er wil in menlîchen entfân
he will him manfully receive

unde mit volcwîge bestân.
and with folk-battle withstand.

er wil unsen hêren
he will our lord

aller sîner êren
of-all his honors

verstôzen oder crenken.
thrust-out or diminish.

Darius sol sih bedenken
Darius shall himself bethink

und handeliz noh mit sinnen.
and handle-it yet with wits.

er mah sîn lîhte gwinnen
he may of-it easily win

scaden unde scande
harm and disgrace

in sînes selbis lande.'
in his self's land.'

Von den zwein herzogen dô
From the two dukes then

reit ein bote ze Dario.
rode a messenger to Darius.

unde alser vor ime quam
and when-he before him came

und dise botescaf vernam,
and this embassy heard,

sêre zurneter des.
sorely raged-he of-it.

einen herzogen, der hîz Mennes,
a duke, who was-called Mennes,

und dar zô hundirt tûsint man
and there to hundred thousand men

er vil schiere gwan.
he very quickly won.

di santer dô
them sent-he then

dem hêren Alexandro
to-the lord Alexander

wol ze strîte gare ingagen
well for strife ready against

und hîz den zwein herzogen sagen,
and bade the two dukes tell,

liezen si in ubir daz wazzer comen,
(if)-let they him over the water come,

si ne gwunnen is niemer fromen,
they — would-win of-it never profit,

wen laster unde cumber;
except shame and affliction;

daz wesset in dar under
that grows to-them there among

und scade unde scande.
and harm and disgrace.

ob der mûlîche Alexander
if the troublesome Alexander

sînen willen dâ geendet,
his will there accomplishes,

si werdent is geschendet
they are of-it disgraced

vil lîhte an irn lîbe
very easily on their bodies

unde an kinden unde an wîbe
and on children and on women

unde ouh an irn gûte.
and also on their goods.

'sus ist mir ze mûte.'
'thus is to-me in mind.'

Den herzogen beiden
To-the dukes both

wart vil leide,
became very sorrowful,

dô in der bote sagete,
when to-them the messenger told,

waz er vernomen habite.
what he heard had.

si ne tursten is niwit lâzen,
they — dared of-it not leave,

si ne wereten di strâzen
they — defended the roads

dem stolzen Alexandro.
from-the proud Alexander.

ze râte gingen si dô,
to council went they then,

Marios und Tybotes.
Marius and Tybotes.

ze râte wurden si dô des,
in council became they then of-this,

daz si santen algerihte
that they sent straightway

ubir al ir gerihte;
over all their jurisdiction;

di si ze samene brâhten,
those-whom they to together brought,

di mohte man ahten
them might one reckon

ane vierzich tûsunt.
at forty thousand.

dar nâh in curzer stunt
there after in short time

genante sih Alexander
ventured himself Alexander

und mit ime manic ander,
and with him many other,

wande si hâten stâten mût.
for they had steadfast spirit.

si schiffeten ubir di eufrateischen flût.
they shipped over the Euphratean flood.

ze êrist si ze stade quâmen.
at first they to shore came.

dô di herzogen daz vernâmen,
when the dukes that heard,

mit zorne vôren si ime ingagen
with anger fared they him against

und wolden ime flîzlîchen scaden.
and would to-him zealously harm.

dâ hûb sih ein sturm grôz,
there raised itself an assault great,

ein dûsunt blieb dâ tôt
a thousand remained there dead

von kriechischeme kunne,
of Greek kin,

ê Alexander den vort gwunne.
before Alexander the ford won.

Alexandro mûwete daz. 1695
To-Alexander grieved that.

ûf Bucifale er saz.
on Bucephalus he sat.

er ne wolde niwit bîten,
he — would not wait,

er begunde rîten,
he began to-ride,

ergremet was ime sîn mût.
enraged was to-him his spirit.

er slûc alse der donre tût 1700
he struck as the thunder does

sîne vîande.
his enemies.

swaz ir ime quam ze hande,
whatever of-them to-him came to hand,

der ne genas nie nehein mûter barn.
of-them — survived never any mother's child.

sih ne mohte nieman bewarn
himself — might no-one guard

von den slegen, die er slûch, 1705
from the blows, which he struck,

wander ein tûre swert trûch.
for-he an excellent sword bore.

ouh was sîn scaft starc und grôz;
also was his shaft strong and great;

sweme sîn wart slach oder stôz,
to-whom-ever of-it became blow or thrust,

der nembeiz niemer mêr brôtes,
he bit never more of-bread,

wander was des gwissen tôtes.
for-he was of-the certain death.

Mennes der wîgant,
Mennes the fighter,

den Darius hete gesant
whom Darius had sent

Alexandro ingagen,
Alexander against,

alsih daz bûch hôrte sagen,
as-I that book heard tell,

der hete manlîchen mût
he had manly spirit

und was ouh ein rîter gût.
and was also a knight good.

dô er di mêre vernam,
when he the tidings heard,

stolzer rîter er nam
proud knights he took

ze sih zehen hundrit
to himself ten hundred

ûz sîneme here gesundrit,
out-of his host separated,

di sîn solden hûten
who him should guard

mit ellenthaften mûten.
with valiant spirits.

der karte Alexandro ingagen.
he turned Alexander against.

dô daz Alexander hôrte sagen,
when that Alexander heard tell,

umbe karter sînen vanen
round turned-he his banner

und begunde sîne helede manen.
and began his heroes to-exhort.

Bucifale er verhancte,
Bucephalus he gave-rein,

Mennese er zô sprancte.
Mennes he to spurred.

durh sîne rîtere er dô brach.
through his knights he then broke.

ir iegweder den anderen stach
of-them each the other thrust

nider zô der erden.
down to the earth.

dô griffen si zô den swerten.
then grasped they to the swords.

dô slûgen di recken
then struck the warriors

mit den brûnen ecken,
with the brown edges,

daz daz fûr dar ûz spranc.
that the fire there out sprang.

ir iegweder dranc
of-them each pressed

vaste zô dem andren.
fast to the other.

dô slûch doh Alexandren
then struck yet Alexander

Mennes nider an daz gras.
Mennes down onto the grass.

ob di rede alsô was,
if the account so was,

des mach uns al besunder
of-that may us all severally

nemen michel wunder.
take great wonder.

IV · MENNES, SARDIS, AND DARIUS'S HOST

In the battle at the ford Alexander's helm is broken and he lies beaten until Daclym kills Jubal, binds the helm back on, and rouses him; he fights then beyond the heroes of the German tales and of Troy, and kills Count Pynchun, who had seized his banner, and Mennes. He takes Sardis. Darius gathers a vast host and sends poppy seed for Alexander to count; Alexander eats it and sends back pepper, which burns Darius's mouth. Called home to his sick mother, he beats Amenta, and his coming cures her; he raises a hundred thousand men.

Dô hûbin sih ir lûte dare
Then raised themselves their people thither

beidenthalben mit der scare,
on-both-sides with the troop,

dâ di helede junge
where the heroes young

mit nîde insamt rungen,
with hatred together wrestled,

dâ was michele nôt.
there was great distress.

dâ bleib manic helt tôt.
there remained many hero dead.

sêre stoub dâ der melm.
sorely flew there the dust.

dâ wart Alexandro sîn helm
there was to-Alexander his helm

von dem houbete gebrochen.
from the head broken.

dâ was vil nâh gerochen
there was very nearly avenged

Darius der tûre degen.
Darius the excellent thane.

Alexandro wart dâ gegeben
to-Alexander was there given

manic stôz unde slach.
many thrust and blow.

di wîle, di er der nider lac,
the while, that he there down lay,

leit er ein bittere nôt.
suffered he a bitter distress.

er was vil nâh tôt.
he was very nearly dead.

doh half in, daz er genas,
yet helped him, that he survived,

daz er sô wol gewâfent was.
that he so well armed was.

vil schîre ime ouh ze helfen quam
very quickly to-him also to help came

Daclym ein rîter lobesam.
Daclym a knight praiseworthy.

der was mit Alexandro dare comen.
he was with Alexander thither come.

der stunt ime ze grôzen fromen,
he stood to-him to great profit,

dâ er was bestanden
where he was beset

von sînen vîanden.
by his enemies.

sîn swert daz heter bare
his sword that had-he bare

und hûb sih îlende dare.
and raised himself hastening thither.

der hiu umbe sih
he hewed round himself

1770 einen helede gelîch.
to-a hero like.

des danctime sint Alexander.
for-that thanked-him afterward Alexander.

dâ was ouh ein ander,
there was also an other,

ein rîter, der hîz Jubal,
a knight, who was-called Jubal,

der sih ungerne verhal,
who himself unwillingly hid,

1775 swâ iz in di nôt ginc.
wherever it into the distress went.

der was ein edele jungelinc.
he was a noble youth.

der was in andre sîte
he was on other side

in den selben strîte
in the same strife

mit den zwein herzogen.
with the two dukes.

1780 sîn swert heter irzogen.
his sword had-he drawn.

der quam gedrungen dar zû
he came pressed there to

und wolde Alexandro
and would to-Alexander

in den hals slân einen slach,
into the neck strike a blow,

dâ er in blôz sach.
where he him bare saw.

Daclym wart der êrre
Daclym was the sooner

und lôste sînen hêren.
and freed his lord.

er slûc Jubale
he struck Jubal

zô dem selben mâle
at the same time

obene von den zenden
above from the teeth

nidene durh di lenden
below through the loins

und machete zwêne halbe man.
and made two half men.

vil michil lob er des gwan.
very great praise he of-it won.

Daclym der ellenthafte man
Daclym the valiant man

vil schîre er dô nam
very quickly he then took

den helm mit sîner hant,
the helm with his hand,

Alexandro er in ûf bant.
to-Alexander he it on bound.

sîn houbit was ime verschellet,
his head was to-him stunned,

dâ er nider was gevellet,
where he down was felled,

von den michelen slagen.
from the great blows.

ih wil û wêrlîchen sagen:
I will to-you truly tell:

er nerwîlt sih niwit sîner rede,
he had-command himself not of-his speech,

ime wâren zeblûwen sîne lide.
to-him were bruised his limbs.

des wart Daclym innen
of-that became Daclym aware

unde rief mit hôer stimmen:
and cried with high voice:

'Alexander, hêre kuninc,
'Alexander, lord king,

gedenket hûte an ûwer tugint
think today on your virtue

und manet ûwer gesellen,
and exhort your comrades,

daz si diz here irschellen,
that they this host scatter,

wandir ein tûre kneht sît.
for-you an excellent knight are.

nû reget daz swert, des ist zît.'
now stir the sword, of-it is time.'

Dô Alexander wart lôs,
When Alexander became loose,

dô spranc er ûf sîn ros.
then sprang he onto his horse.

sîn gebêre daz was eislîch,
his bearing it was hideous,

sîn ougen wâren freislîch;
his eyes were fearsome;

dar umbe vorhte in manic man.
there for feared him many man.

dô er zime selbin wider quam,
when he to-himself self back came,

dô heter michelen zorn.
then had-he great anger.

sîn ros nam er mit den sporn
his horse took he with the spurs

unde sagite Daclyme danc
and said to-Daclym thanks

und frumete manigen swertis swanc
and made many sword's swing

undir daz here, daz dâ was,
among the host, that there was,

daz slûch er nider alsein gras.
that struck he down as-a grass.

di menige was vil grôz,
the multitude was very great,

di er irslûch und irschôz.
which he slew and shot.

unzallîch wâre uns ze sagen,
countless were-it to-us to tell,

umbe di dâ lâgen irslagen
about those-who there lay slain

Persen unde Kriechen
Persians and Greeks

sunder gewunten unde siechen.
apart-from wounded and sick.

dâ was weinen unde clagen.
there was weeping and lamenting.

von einen volcwîge hôre wir sagen,
of a folk-battle hear we tell,

der ûf Wulpinwerde gescach,
which on Wulpenwerder happened,

dâr Hilden vater tôt lach,
where Hilde's father dead lay,

inzwischen Hagenen unde Waten:
between Hagen and Wate:

der ne mohte sih hî zô niht gegaten.
it — might itself here to not match.

Herwîch unde Wolfwîn
Herwig and Wolfwin

ne mohten ime niwit gelîch sîn,
— might to-him not like be,

noh nehein man ander;
nor any man other;

alsô freislîch was Alexander.
so fearsome was Alexander.

man sagit von gûten knehten,
one tells of good knights,

di wol getorsten vehten,
who well dared fight,

in der Troiere liede,
in the of-Trojans song,

ê sich der sturm geschiede,
before itself the assault parted,

Achilles unde Hector,
Achilles and Hector,

Aiax unde Nestor,
Ajax and Nestor,

di manic tûsint irslûgen
who many thousand slew

unde ouh scarfe gêre trûgen:
and also sharp spears bore:

iz ne mohte undir in allen
it — might among them all

ze Alexandro niht gevallen.
to Alexander not equal.

Pynchun was ein grêbe genant,
Pynchun was a count named,

der fûrte den vanen an der hant,
who carried the banner in the hand,

den er Alexandro abe brach,
which he from-Alexander off broke,

dô in Mennes der nider stach.
when him Mennes there down thrust.

dô in Alexander hete irkorn,
when him Alexander had spied,

er rûrte daz ros mit den sporn:
he stirred the horse with the spurs:

ingagen den grâben er reit.
against the count he rode.

er sprach: 'daz was michil kintheit,
he spoke: 'that was great childishness,

daz mîn vane ie quam an dîner hant;
that my banner ever came into thy hand;

daz sol dir werden noh gewant
that shall to-thee be yet turned

ze leide und ze rûwen,
to sorrow and to rue,

des mahtu mir getrûwen.'
of-that mayst-thou me trust.'

der grâbe dô erz gehôrte,
the count when he-it heard,

Alexandro er antworte.
to-Alexander he answered.

er sprach: 'nû varet scône,
he spoke: 'now fare finely,

daz û mîn trehtîn lône.
that you my Lord reward.

daz ih fôren ûweren vanen,
that I carry your banner,

daz sol û werden ze banen.
that shall to-you become to bane.

mûzih behalden mînen leben,
(if)-may-I keep my life,

ih wil in û sô wider geben,
I will it to-you so back give,

daz man der vone reden mac
that one there of speak may

biz an den jungisten tac.'
until on the last day.'

er stach nâh dem worte
he thrust after the word

Alexandrum mit dem orte,
Alexander with the point,

daz an sînen spere was.
which on his spear was.

des stichis er wol genas,
of-the thrust he well recovered,

wander was ime getân
for-it was to-him done

obenwendich sînen ouchbrân.
above his eyebrow.

Alexander der sprah,
Alexander he spoke,

dô in Pynkun gestah:
when him Pynkun stabbed:

'du salt lugenêre wesen,
'thou shalt liar be,

ih sal des stichis wol genesen.'
I shall of-the thrust well recover.'

mit dem selben worte
with the same word

slûch er in mit dem swerte.
struck he him with the sword.

ûffe sîn houbit er in slûch
upon his head he him struck

durh den stêlînen hût
through the steel hat

einen sô freislîchen slach,
a so fearsome blow,

daz er an der erden tôt lach.
that he on the earth dead lay.

Dô nam Alexander sînen vanen
Then took Alexander his banner

und reit rîterlîche danen,
and rode knightly thence,

dâ er wisse sîne man.
where he knew his men.

Mennes ime aber zû quam,
Mennes him again to came,

der in dâ vore der nider stach.
who him there before there down thrust.

er gab ime einen swertslach:
he gave to-him a sword-blow:

ûf den arm er in slûc,
on the arm he him struck,

dâ er daz sper mite trûc.
where he the spear with bore.

er slûch in mit grôzer craft,
he struck him with great strength,

durh den arm und durh den schaft
through the arm and through the shaft

quam daz swert gedrungen
came the sword pressed

und irwant ime an der lungen.
and stopped to-him at the lung.

Mennes der viel dâ tôt nider.
Mennes he fell there dead down.

di Perses vohten niwit sider,
the Persians fought not afterward,

si fluhin von den velde
they fled from the field

und ne getrûweten an sih selben
and — trusted in themselves self

neheiner manheite mê
in-no manhood more

unde riefen ach unde wê.
and cried alas and woe.

Des wart Alexander vile balt:
Of-that became Alexander very bold:

al dâ bleib er mit gewalt
all there remained he with force

biz zô den stunden,
until to the hours,

daz ime geheileten sîne wunden.
that to-him healed his wounds.

er nâhete sih Dario baz.
he neared himself to-Darius better.

eine burh er ime besaz,
a castle he from-him besieged,

di was Sardis genant.
which was Sardis named.

schîre wart si verbrant.
quickly was it burned.

dô er si gwan,
when he it won,

der hêre dar ûf nam
the lord there upon took

michil silber unde golt
much silver and gold

und machete ime sîne helede holt.
and made to-himself his heroes loyal.

di burh di heizet Sardis,
the castle it is-called Sardis,

von ir saget Apocalipsis,
of it says Apocalypse,

daz si der siben burge ein wêre,
that it of-the seven castles one were,

di unser heilêre
which our savior

in den himelrîche nante
in the heaven-realm named

und dâ er ze boten sante
and where he as messenger sent

Iohannem den heiligen man
John the holy man

apostolum et evangelistam.
apostle and evangelist.

Dô man Dario diz gesagete,
When one to-Darius this told,

niwit langer er gedagete,
not longer he kept-silent,

er tete durh sînen ubirmût
he did through his arrogance

alse der stolze man tût,
as the proud man does,

der sih ze sêre verhebet
who himself too sorely exalts

und ze jungist in dem laster liget:
and at last in the shame lies:

er swôr bî sînen rîche,
he swore by his realm,

daz er vil lasterlîche
that he very shamefully

Alexander wolde vâhen
Alexander would seize

und ûf einen ast hân
and on a branch hang

und scantlîche nemen in daz leben
and shamefully take from-him the life

und wolde ouh sîn fleisc geben
and would also his flesh give

den vogelen ze ezzen;
to-the birds to eat;

daz er sih ie torste vermezzen
that he himself ever dared presume

wider sînen hêren,
against his lord,

daz worde ime ze unêren.
that would-become to-him to dishonor.

Darius sîne boten sande
Darius his messengers sent

in wazzer und in lande
in water and in land

und hîz daz sînen fursten sagen
and bade that to-his princes tell

und flîzlîchen clagen
and zealously lament

den kunigen di scande,
to-the kings the disgrace,

di ime tete Alexander.
which to-him did Alexander.

er bat herzogen und grâben,
he bade dukes and counts,

daz si ime rât gâben
that they to-him counsel gave

und ime mit gelfe
and to-him with clamor

quâmen ze helfen
came to help

mit alsô tûren knehten,
with so excellent knights,

di wol getorsten vehten,
who well dared fight,

mit aller ir manie.
with all their company.

ze Mesopotamie
at Mesopotamia

in der breiten ouwen
in the broad meadow

wolder daz here bescowen,
would-he the host behold,

wander gerne vernême,
for-he gladly would-hear,

wî manich scare ime quême.
how many troop to-him came.

Nû wil ih û cunden ubir al,
Now will I to-you make-known over all,

wî vil einer scare wesen sal,
how many of-a troop be shall,

alsihz in den bûchen hân gelesen:
as-I-it in the books have read:

der sal sehs tûsint wesen
of-it shall six thousand be

und sehs hundrit unde sehscich man,
and six hundred and sixty men,

alsih mih versinnen kan.
as-I myself recollect can.

alsô vil sal sîn in einer scaren.
so many shall be in a troop.

gagen Dario quâmen gevaren
toward Darius came faring

zwêne und drîzich kuninge,
two and thirty kings,

daz wizzit âne lugene,
that know without lie,

di sîne nôt vernâmen.
who his distress heard.

herzogen ime ouh quâmen
dukes to-him also came

zwei hundrit unde sibinzich
two hundred and seventy

unde dar zô manic grâbe rîch,
and there to many count rich,

di zô ime kêrten
who to him turned

und sîne reise mertin.
and his campaign increased.

di quâmen alle mit gwalt.
they came all with force.

di grâben wâren gezalt
the counts were counted

rehte an eilif hundrit.
right at eleven hundred.

ob û der hêren wundrit,
if you at-the lords wonders,

des ne sult ir mir wîzen nit;
of-that — shall you me blame not;

wandiz cundit uns daz liet
for-it makes-known to-us the song

und daz bûch, dâ ihz ane las,
and the book, where I-it on read,

daz ir alsus vil was.
that of-them so many was.

Von Persien worden ime gesant
From Persia were to-him sent

helede sibinzic tûsant.
heroes seventy thousand.

ouh quâmen Cenonenses dare
also came the-Cenonenses there

mit einer hêrlîcher vare,
with a lordly array,

mit funfzich tûsint knehten,
with fifty thousand knights,

di wol getorsten vehten.
who well dared fight.

Pamphilienses quâmen ouh wale
the-Pamphylians came also well

und brâhten ime di selben zale.
and brought to-him the same number.

dar nâh quam ime ein here grôz,
there after came to-him a host great,

dem wîgis lutzil verdrôz,
whom of-battle little irked,

daz kuninges reisen wol gezam:
which king's campaigns well suited:

von Medintriche daz quam.
from Media-realm that came.

Meden ist daz selbe lant,
Media is the same land,

dar der engel wart mit Tobien gesant.
where the angel was with Tobias sent.

funfzich tûsint si brâhten,
fifty thousand they brought,

alsus hôrtih si ahten.
thus heard-I them reckon.

von Ninive worden ime gesant
from Nineveh were to-him sent

zwei unde zwencich tûsant.
two and twenty thousand.

ime brâhten di von Armenie
to-him brought those of Armenia

ahte tûsant in einer menige
eight thousand in a company

vil sneller jungelinge
very swift youths

zô sînen tagedinge.
to his assembly.

Armenien ist daz rîche,
Armenia is the realm,

daz sagih û wêrlîche,
that tell-I to-you truly,

dâ daz wazzer di archam treib,
where the water the ark drove,

dâ Noe lebende inne bleib;
where Noah living inside remained;

in den bergen si dâ besaz.
in the mountains it there settled.

vor wâr solt ir wizzen daz.
for true shall you know that.

Ouch santen dar zô
Also sent there to

dem rîcheme kuninge Dario
to-the rich king Darius

di ubirmûtige Gâzen,
the arrogant Gazans,

di ubir Philistim sâzen,
who over Philistia sat,

zehen hundrit starker risen,
ten hundred strong giants,

di ime ze trôste solden wesen.
who to-him as comfort should be.

ime santen sîne frîe man,
to-him sent his free men,

di dâ sâzen in Frigiam
who there sat in Phrygia

mit vil gûten willen
with very good wills

zwênzich tûsint gesellen.
twenty thousand comrades.

si gunden ime wol sîner êren.
they granted to-him well his honors.

ouch begunden dar kêren
also began thither to-turn

von India di fursten,
from India the princes,

di wol vehten torsten.
who well fight dared.

dô siz vernâmen,
when they-it heard,

mit zwelif tûsinden si quâmen.
with twelve thousands they came.

dannoh quam ime ein lutzil here,
yet came to-him a little host,

daz vôr von dem rôten mere:
which fared from the red sea:

ein tûsint sneller helede,
a thousand swift heroes,

ze wîge wol irwelede.
for battle well chosen.

Nû merket, wî vile dis heres was:
Now mark, how much of-this host was:

alsihz an den bûchen las,
as-I-it in the books read,

sô ahte man iz dâ zestunt
so reckoned one it there straightway

an sehs hundrit unde drîzich tûsunt,
at six hundred and thirty thousand,

daz alliz Dario quam.
that all to-Darius came.

und alse Alexander vernam,
and when Alexander heard,

daz ime Darius mit here
that from-him Darius with host

daz lant ze Persiam wolde were,
the land at Persia would defend,

dô besanter sîne man,
then summoned-he his men,

di von Macedoniam.
those of Macedonia.

di quâmen ime gereite.
they came to-him ready.

dô hîz er here leiten
then bade he host lead

ubir ein wazzir, daz was breit.
over a water, that was broad.

Darius under des screib
Darius under that wrote

einen brieb Alexandro
a letter to-Alexander

unde hîz ime dar zô
and bade to-him there to

eine wâge mâhenes fur tragen
a measure of-poppy-seed before bear

unde hîz ime sagen,
and bade to-him tell,

daz er zalte die korn.
that he counted the grains.

iz wâre ime leit oder zorn,
it were to-him sorrow or anger,

er neconde si nit gezellen:
he could them not count:

alsô ne mohter sîne gesellen
so not might-he his comrades

gezelen noh sîne heriscraft,
count nor his host-strength,

di er ime gagen hête brâht.
which he him against had brought.

ouh sagite ime der brieb,
also told to-him the letter,

Dario ne wêre niwit lieb,
to-Darius — were not dear,

daz er mit sulher gwalt
that he with such force

wolde ze Persiam in daz lant.
would to Persia into the land.

er ne woldiz ime rûmen,
he not would-it to-him yield,

er vernême ein sulh gestrûme,
unless-he perceived a such assault,

dâ er imer vone mohte zellen
where he ever of might tell

in lîde und in bîspellen.
in songs and in examples.

Dô Alexander gelas,
When Alexander read,

daz an den brieb gescriben was,
what in the letter written was,

der wol geborne jungelinc,
the well born youth,

den mâhen er frôlîche entfienc
the poppy he gladly received

unde warf in an der stunt
and threw it at the hour

in sînes selbis munt
in his self's mouth

und az sîn ein vil michil teil
and ate of-it a very great part

und sprach: 'wir haben gût heil:
and spoke: 'we have good luck:

dise corner sint sô manicfalt,
these grains are so manifold,

si ne werdent von mir niemer gezalt.'
they — are by me never counted.'

in sînen munt er si streich
in his mouth he them stroked

und sprah: 'si sint sô weich
and spoke: 'they are so soft

und smeckint sô wole,
and taste so well,

ih hoffe, daz ih sîn here sole
I hope, that I his host shall

harte wol verwinnen
very well overcome

mit mînen jungelingen.'
with my youths.'

Sîn bote quam under des gerant,
His messenger came under that rushing,

dâ er Alexandrum vant.
where he Alexander found.

der sagite ime, daz Olympias
he told to-him, that Olympias

sîn mûter vil siech was
his mother very sick was

und bat in vil harte,
and bade him very hard,

daz er dâ hine karte,
that he there hence turned,

wande si des jêhe,
for she of-it avowed,

ob si in gesêhe,
if she him saw,

si genêse curzlîche.
she would-recover shortly.

Alexander der rîche
Alexander the rich

der screib dô selbe einen brief.
he wrote then self a letter.

die hant er in sînen bûtel stîz,
the hand he into his pouch thrust,

alsiz ime in den mût quam,
as-it to-him into the spirit came,

sîne hant fol pefferis er nam.
his hand full of-pepper he took.

ze Darien boten er dô sprach:
to Darius's messenger he then spoke:

'diz ezze dîn hêre, ob er mach.
'this eat thy lord, if he may.

dise corner sint niht manicfalt,
these grains are not manifold,

si sint vil schiere gezalt:
they are very quickly counted:

alsus bitter ist mîn here,
so bitter is my host,

er ne mah sih niemer mih irweren.
he — may himself never me resist.

ouh sage du dîneme hêren:
also tell thou to-thy lord:

ih wil nû wider kêren,
I will now back turn,

alse mir mîn mûter enbôt,
as to-me my mother sent-word,

andirs durh neheine nôt,
otherwise for no need,

iz sî ime leit oder lieb,
it be to-him sorrow or joy,

dar umbe ne lâz ih is niet,
there for — leave I of-it not,

ih wil schiere wider comen:
I will quickly back come:

des gewinnet er lutzelen fromen.
of-that wins he little profit.

di wîle mah er bî dem mere
the while may he by the sea

gesamenen ein grôz here,
gather a great host,

daz er mir frumelîche
that he from-me valiantly

erwere sîne rîche.'
defend his realm.'

Dô reit der bote von Alexandro
Then rode the messenger from Alexander

wider hin ze Dario
back hence to Darius

unde sagetime daz,
and told-him that,

daz Alexander den mâhen az,
that Alexander the poppy ate,

den er ime hete gesant,
which he to-him had sent,

und gab ime den peffer in di hant.
and gave to-him the pepper into the hand.

den enfienc er mit zorne
it received he with anger

und warf di peffercorner
and threw the pepper-grains

nîtlîchen in sînen munt
hatefully into his mouth

unde beiz si an der stunt.
and bit them at the hour.

dô begunder sih cremfen
then began-he himself to-cramp

und di nase remfen,
and the nose to-wrinkle,

wand in der pheffer sêre beiz.
for him the pepper sorely bit.

sîn lîb di wart ime allir heiz.
his body it became to-him all hot.

er neigete sih nidere
he bowed himself down

unde wolde, daz Alexander widere
and would, that Alexander back

wêre ân sîne scande
were without his disgrace

heim in sînem lande.
home in his land.

An dem wege, dâ Alexander
On the way, where Alexander

heim reit ze lande
home rode to land

in mitten Arabia,
in midst Arabia,

dâ bestunt in Amenta,
there attacked him Amenta,

der was Daries man
he was Darius's man

und was ein herzoge lobesam.
and was a duke praiseworthy.

des nêhesten morgenis frû
the next morning early

mit volcwîge reit er ime zû
with folk-battle rode he him to

und vohten allen einen tach,
and fought all one day,

sô dâ nieman gesach
so there no-one saw

neheinen man entwîchen.
any man give-way.

si vohten freislîchen
they fought fearsomely

zwêne tage al in ein,
two days all in one,

daz di sunne nit ne geschein,
that the sun not — shone,

wande si ne wolde belûhten niht den mort.
for it — would illumine not the murder.

alsus fâhten si vort,
thus fought they forth,

unze die helede gûte
until the heroes good

wûten in den blûte
waded in the blood

vaste biz an di knî.
fast until to the knee.

si vohten langer tage drî.
they fought longer days three.

vil manich in den blûte ertranc,
very many in the blood drowned,

daz ime nie nehein swanc
that to-him never any swing

ne wart von swerte noh von spere.
— came from sword nor from spear.

manic tûsint was dere,
many thousand was of-those,

di dâ irslagen lâgen.
who there slain lay.

dô Arabite daz gesâgen,
when the-Arabs that saw,

si entwichen Alexandro
they gave-way to-Alexander

und fluhen wider ze Dario.
and fled back to Darius.

Alexander der rîche
Alexander the rich

hîz dô flîzlîche
bade then zealously

sîne liebe wîcgnôze begraben,
his dear battle-comrades bury,

di dâ lâgen irslagen.
who there lay slain.

di gwunten hîz er binden
the wounded bade he bind

und arzâte in gwinnen
and physicians for-them win

und hîz, daz man ir wol plêge,
and bade, that one them well tended,

biz daz er gesêge,
until that he saw,

ob si mohten genesen;
if they might recover;

alsô lange wolder dâre wesen.
so long would-he there be.

des siges was er vil frô:
of-the victory was he very glad:

rûwech was er dar zô,
rueful was he there to,

wander dâ habete verlorn,
for-he there had lost,

di ime dicke dâ bevorn
who to-him often there before

hulfin sîner êren
helped his honors

zô Tyre der mêren.
at Tyre the famous.

Dô di wol genâren,
When those well recovered,

di dâ gwunt wâren,
who there wounded were,

dô fûr Alexander vor sih.
then fared Alexander before himself.

manige burh hêrlîch
many castle lordly

undir wegen er zebrach.
on way he broke.

er tete michil ungemach
he did great harm

sînen vîanden
to-his enemies

in fremeden landen.
in foreign lands.

sêre rach er sînen zorn,
sorely avenged he his anger,

wander hete verlorn
for-he had lost

di kûnen Macedones.
the bold Macedonians.

sus getânes mûtes
so made spirit

gesah er sîne mûter,
saw he his mother,

des genas di frowe gûte.
of-that recovered the lady good.

Vil frôhen mût er des gwan.
Very glad spirit he of-it won.

dô besanter sîne man
then summoned-he his men

in allenthalben bî dem mere.
in all-sides by the sea.

er hête gerne ein grôz here,
he would-have gladly a great host,

des gwan gnûc der helt balt.
of-that won enough the hero bold.

ze hundrit tûsinden wâren gezalt
at hundred thousands were counted

di helede, di ime quâmen,
the heroes, who to-him came,

di sîne reise vernâmen,
who his campaign heard,

die wol vehten kunden,
who well fight could,

dô si sih is underwunden.
when they themselves of-it undertook.

V · THEBES, SPARTA, AND THE BRIDGE

Abdirus, stormed, is spared; Thebes defies Alexander and is razed. Corinth crowns him, Athens submits, and Sparta wins peace once Greek fire burns its fleet. Darius's brother Occeatyr scorns his wish for peace, and the counselors bid him muster his host. Alexander, sick after bathing, drinks the physician Philip's potion though Perminus writes that it is poison, and has Perminus slain. At the Euphrates he breaks the bridge behind his army: it must win or die.

Dô fûr von Macedonia
Then fared from Macedonia

Alexander wider in Persia.
Alexander back into Persia.

under wegen er bedwanc
on way he subdued

manige burch unde lant
many castle and land

gewaldichlîche ze sînen handen.
mightily to his hands.

Abdirus sih besante
Abdirus itself summoned

nâh iren holden,
after their loyal-ones,

wande si weren wolden
for they defend would

di strâze Alexandro.
the road from-Alexander.

si wâren holt Dario.
they were loyal to-Darius.

Abdirus was ein michel stat.
Abdirus was a great city.

under den bergen si lac.
under the mountains it lay.

swer in Persen wolde,
whoever into Persia would,

dâ durh er varen solde.
there through he fare should.

dâ wâren ritere gemeit
there were knights joyful

und wâren zaller zît gereit
and were at-all time ready

ze wîge und ze sturme.
for battle and for assault.

si beslozzen ir burge
they locked their castles

und giengen vaste an di were.
and went fast onto the defenses.

Alexander unde sîn here
Alexander and his host

gewunnen schiere daz wal.
won quickly the battlefield.

si macheten fûr ubir al.
they made fire over all.

si branten di hûs in den graben.
they burned the houses in the ditches.

daz wart den burgêren ze schaden,
that became to-the burghers to harm,

wande dô si daz gesâhen,
for when they that saw,

dô sûhten si gnâde.
then sought they mercy.

Dô sprach Alexander:
Then spoke Alexander:

'ih ne gelobe û niwit andris:
'I — promise to-you not otherwise:

lâzent ir mih rîten hî durh,
(if)-let you me ride here through,

ûwe lant und ûwe burh
your land and your castle

daz lazih unverbrennet,
that leave-I unburned,

nû ir ûh mir bekennet;
now you yourselves to-me submit;

swanne ih Darium bedwinge
whenever I Darius subdue

unde in gefangen bringe,
and him captive bring,

sô wil ih her wider kêren
so will I hither back turn

und sprechen mit ûh hêren,
and speak with you lords,

sô wil ih zefûren uher stat,
so will I destroy your city,

sô gezeige ih û, waz ih getûn mach.'
so show I to-you, what I do may.'

Dô di burgêre
When the burghers

vernâmen dise mêre,
heard these tidings,

si underquâmen vil harte
they were-amazed very greatly

und entslozzen ire porte.
and unlocked their gate.

si liezen in rîten mit fride.
they let him ride with peace.

mit in ne facht er niwit sider.
with them — fought he not afterward.

durh sîne kuninclîche wort
through his kingly words

bleib di stat unzestôrt.
remained the city undestroyed.

Dannen fûr er ze Theben
Thence fared he to Thebes

und hiez dar în gebieten,
and bade there in command,

daz si ime santen dare
that they to-him sent thither

di wol ze wîge wâren gare,
who well for battle were ready,

vier tûsint irwelete man:
four thousand chosen men:

er wolde Darium bestân.
he would Darius attack.

Dô di Thebêre
When the Thebans

vernâmen daz mêre,
heard the tidings,

daz in Alexander enbôt,
which to-them Alexander sent-word,

iz dûhte si ein hôhmût
it seemed them an arrogance

und kartenz ime ze scanden,
and turned-it to-him to disgrace,

daz er ie dar gesande
that he ever thither sent

nâh iren wineholden,
after their dear-friends,

wande si selben wolden
for they selves would

mit ime vehten vor der stat.
with him fight before the city.

dô Alexander daz gesach,
when Alexander that saw,

di burch bevienc er mit here.
the castle surrounded he with host.

si ne mohten sih niwit irweren
they — might themselves not defend

vor ime dicheine wîle.
before him any while.

di armborst und di phîle
the crossbows and the arrows

tâten ime vil grôzen scaden.
did to-him very great harm.

in andirhalb hiez er zô tragen
in other-side bade he to bear

sinewelle steine
round stones

grôz unde cleine.
great and small.

mit mangen wurfen si in di burch.
with catapults threw they into the castle.

dô wâre in gûtes râtis durft.
then were to-them of-good counsel need.

mit sus getânen grimmen
with so made furies

begunde er si dwingen.
began he them to-press.

si ne mohten ime niwit vor bestân.
they — might him not before stand.

si môsen den lîb verlorn hân.
they must the life lost have.

Dô hîz der wunderlîche man
Then bade the wondrous man

vier tûsint dare gân.
four thousand thither go.

mit îsenînen stangen
with iron bars

zebrâchen si di spangen,
broke they the clasps,

di dâ lâgen vor den turen.
which there lay before the doors.

dô ne bleib dâ nieman vore.
then — remained there no-one before.

mit grimme giengen si in di burh.
with fury went they into the castle.

dâ wêre eines friden durft,
there were of-a peace need,

den gab in dâ nieman.
it gave to-them there no-one.

si slûgen wîb unde man
they struck woman and man

und branten si al in eine glût.
and burned them all into one glow.

dô gestillete deme kuninge sîn mût.
then stilled to-the king his spirit.

Dô Alexander der kûne man
When Alexander the bold man

di stat ze Theben gwan,
the city of Thebes won,

und si gare was verbrant,
and it wholly was burned,

dô gebôt der kûne wîgant
then commanded the bold fighter

sînen mannen an der stunt,
to-his men at the hour,

daz si brâchen daz fullemunt,
that they broke the foundation,

durh daz di burh hêre
so that the castle lordly

ne mohte niemer mêre
— might never more

nieman gebûwen.
anyone build.

des mugint ir wol getrûwen.
of-that may you well trust.

Dô daz alsus was getân,
When that thus was done,

Alexander hûb sih sân
Alexander raised himself at-once

unde fûr dannen
and fared thence

frôlîche mit sînen mannen.
gladly with his men.

des landes er vil gwan.
of-the land he much won.

Chorinthia sînes frides gesan
Corinth his peace desired

und crônten in an der stunt
and crowned him at the hour

und gâben ime funfzic phunt
and gave to-him fifty pounds

unde silber unde golt.
and silver and gold.

des wart in der kuninc holt.
of-that became to-them the king loyal.

Chorinthia was ein michel stat,
Corinth was a great city,

di bekarte von der heidenscaf
which converted from the heathendom

dar nâh sanctus Paulus.
there after Saint Paul.

Alexander hûb sih dar ûz
Alexander raised himself there out

und fûr ad Athenas,
and fared to Athens,

di des vermêret was,
which of-that famed was,

daz nehein lût ne mohte wesen,
that no people — might be,

von dem ih ie gehôrte lesen,
of which I ever heard read,

wîser zallen dingen.
wiser in-all things.

ze râte si dô giengen,
to council they then went,

waz si tûn mahten.
what they do might.

schiere si sih bedâhten,
quickly they themselves bethought,

si wolden gerne fride hân,
they would gladly peace have,

und wurden ime alle undertân.
and became to-him all subject.

Di kûnen Lacedemones
The bold Lacedaemonians

di verhûben sih des,
they exalted themselves of-this,

daz si sâzen bî dem mere
that they sat by the sea

und heten ein creftigiz here
and had a mighty host

und fâhten manic folcwîch
and fought many folk-battle

und verwunnen einen kuninc rîch,
and overcame a king rich,

den gwaldigen Xersem;
the mighty Xerxes;

des wâren si vermezzen.
of-that were they proud.

si enboten Alexandro,
they sent-word to-Alexander,

wolder scaden Dario,
(if)-would-he harm Darius,

daz dûhte si ummâze.
that seemed them out-of-measure.

si wereten ime di strâze.
they barred to-him the road.

si widersagiten ime den fride
they renounced to-him the peace

und wolden vehten mit ime.
and would fight with him.

Dô gereite sih in den strît
Then readied themselves for the strife

beide man unde wîb
both man and woman

und gingen vaste an di were;
and went fast onto the defenses;

wande si heten in dem mere
for they had in the sea

behalden grôze heriscraft.
kept great host-strength.

dâ mite heten si gedâht
there with had they thought

ze vehtene von den schiffen.
to fight from the ships.

ir berhfride si ûf rihten
their siege-towers they up raised

und macheten ir were
and made their defenses

gegen Alexandris here.
against Alexander's host.

Alse Alexander daz gesach,
When Alexander that saw,

dô enbôt er in di stat,
then sent-word he into the city,

weme si daz wazzer wolden weren,
from-whom they the water would defend,

er ne wolde niwit ubir mere;
he — would not over sea;

er hîz si halten ir burch,
he bade them hold their castle,

des wêre in nôt unde durft.
of-that were to-them distress and need.

er wolde an in daz rechen,
he would on them that avenge,

daz si den kuninc Xersem
that they the king Xerxes

mit wîge torsten bestân.
with battle dared attack.

dô viel er umbe di burc sân
then fell he round the castle at-once

mit sînen jungelingen.
with his youths.

ze sturme si dô giengen
to assault they then went

daz einmûtige here
the single-minded host

vaste unz an di burchwere.
fast until to the castle-defense.

Alexander was ze vorderôst
Alexander was at foremost

unde gab sînen heleden trôst,
and gave to-his heroes comfort,

mit sîner ellenthaften hant
with his valiant hand

verhiu er maniges schildes rant
hewed he many shield's rim

und manigen helm vil vast.
and many helm very fast.

der jener nie nehein genas,
of-them of-those never any survived,

dâ er mit nîde ûffe slûc.
where he with hatred upon struck.

er hete eines lewen mût.
he had a lion's spirit.

di dâ lâgen irslagen,
who there lay slain,

di ne cunde û nieman gesagen;
them — could to-you no-one tell;

ist iz, alse daz bûch quît,
(if)-is it, as the book says,

di naht di schît dâ den strît.
the night it parted there the strife.

Des nêhisten morgenes vil frû
The next morning very early

der stat giengen si aber zû.
the city went they again to.

und alse di burgêre
and when the burghers

gesâhen sîne gebêre,
saw his bearing,

si wurfin ûf ir tore
they threw open their gates

und stunden vaste der vore.
and stood fast there before.

si slûgen unde stâchen,
they struck and thrust,

daz di vesten ringe brâchen.
that the firm rings broke.

dâ wart manic helt gût
there was many hero good

gewunt durh den stâlhût,
wounded through the steel-hat,

sô daz ime daz blût flôz ze tale.
so that to-him the blood flowed to valley.

di swert striden vil wale.
the swords fought very well.

di veigen vielen der nider,
the doomed fell there down,

di andren fâhten vaste sidir.
the others fought fast afterward.

dâ mohte der schilt lutzil gefromen.
there might the shield little avail.

si wâren durh rûm ûz comen
they were for fame out come

di kûnin Macedones
the bold Macedonians

gegen di Lacedemones.
against the Lacedaemonians.

in was lieber, daz si sturben,
to-them was dearer, that they died,

dan si verwunnen worden.
than they overcome were.

Durh disen grimmigen mût
Through this grim spirit

quam geflozzen daz blût
came flowing the blood

vaste unz in daz mere.
fast until into the sea.

dô geschiet sih daz here
then parted itself the host

beidenthalben âne sige.
on-both-sides without victory.

ir nehein ne sûhte neheinen fride.
of-them none — sought any peace.

unde alse Alexander den schaden gesach,
and when Alexander the harm saw,

der ime dâr geschien was
which to-him there happened was

an sînen jungelingen,
on his youths,

dô hiez er ime gwinnen
then bade he for-himself win

balde daz kriechische fûr.
quickly the Greek fire.

daz wart den burgêren vil sûr.
that became to-the burghers very bitter.

er brante di schif in dem mere.
he burned the ships in the sea.

daz ne mohte daz wazzer niht irwere.
that — might the water not prevent.

daz sagih û zwâren.
that tell-I to-you in-truth.

di in den schiffen wâren,
who in the ships were,

dô si des fûris wurden innen,
when they of-the fire became aware,

dô wolden si ûz swimmen.
then would they out swim.

des liden si michele nôt,
of-that suffered they great distress,

wande si forhten den tôt.
for they feared the death.

daz lebent wart in vil sûr,
the living became to-them very bitter,

wande si brante daz wilde fûr.
for them burned the wild fire.

in der selben wîlen
in the same while

sturben si von den phîlen,
died they from the arrows,

di man in engagen scôz.
which one them against shot.

vil manich sînen genôz
very many his comrade

in daz mere irtrancte,
in the sea drowned,

alser sîn niht nerkante.
as-he him not knew.

dô branten di wîchûs.
then burned the battle-houses.

di gîsele gab man dar ûz
the hostages gave one there out

leider alze spâte,
alas all-too late,

wande si verlorn hâten
for they lost had

di allir kûnisten man,
the of-all boldest men,

alsih mih versinnen kan,
as-I myself recollect can,

die ie beschein di sunne
whom ever shone-upon the sun

oder imer mêr gwunnen
or ever more won

di kûnin Macedones.
the bold Macedonians.

di burgen bâten si des,
the castles begged they of-this,

daz si in fride wolden geben,
that they to-them peace would give,

daz si behîlden daz leben
that they kept the life

unde liezen stân ir stat.
and let stand their city.

Alexander in dô fride gab,
Alexander to-them then peace gave,

daz er in niht ne scadete
that he them not — harmed

an allen, des si habeten.
in all, which they had.

Dô fûr er dannen in Persiam.
Then fared he thence into Persia.

und alse daz Darius vernam,
and when that Darius heard,

er sprah zô sînen râtgeben:
he spoke to his counselors:

‘nû mah mih rûwen, daz ih leben,
‘now may me rue, that I live,

wande mir dise roubêre
for to-me this robber

mûwit alsus sêre.
grieves so sorely.

di sâlde volget sînen vanen.
the fortune follows his banner.

ih vorhte, er wirdit mir ze banen.
I fear, he becomes to-me to bane.

er vihtet in allenthalben sige,
he fights for-himself on-all-sides victory,

wolder mih lâzen mit fride
(if)-would-he me let with peace

haben mîne rîche,
have my realm,

ih gelobete ime werlîche,
I would-vow to-him truly,

daz ich ze Kriechlande
that I to Greece

nâch zinse gesande
after tribute sent

von disen tage niemer mê,
from this day never more,

mir werde wol oder wê.’
to-me become well or woe.’

Dô sprâchen sîne fursten,
Then spoke his princes,

di ime wol râten torsten:
who to-him well counsel dared:

‘Darius, vil lieber hêre,
‘Darius, very dear lord,

du hâst sô wol dîn êre
thou hast so well thy honor

ienoh unze here brâht:
ever-yet until hither brought:

den zins, den dir sîn vater gab,
the tribute, which to-thee his father gave,

den sal dir ouh der sun geben
that shall to-thee also the son give

oder wir verliesen den leben.
or we lose the life.

swenne er dînes heris craft,
whenever he of-thy host's strength,

di du vil wol geleisten maht,
which thou very well muster mayst,

sehet ingagen ime varn,
sees against him fare,

sô wirt er des wol geware,
so becomes he of-it well aware,

daz er wol mit êren
that he well with honors

mac wesen dîn zinsêre.'
may be thy tributary.'

Dô sprah Occeatyr
Then spoke Occeatyr

Darieses brûdir:
Darius's brother:

'du hâs des grôze scande,
'thou hast of-it great disgrace,

daz du Alexandre
that thou to-Alexander

dem ungetrûwen roubêre
the faithless robber

ie gebûtis êre.
ever offered honor.

du hâst gehôet sînen mût.
thou hast heightened his spirit.

jo ne dûhte mihz nie gût,
yea — seemed me-it never good,

daz du ie getâtes di clage,
that thou ever madest the lament,

daz er dir mohte gescaden
that he to-thee might harm

in dîneme rîche,
in thy realm,

dir ne wollen dan geswîchen
to-thee unless would then fail

beide frûnt unde man.
both friend and man.

er hât eine reise getân,
he has a campaign made,

der er niemer mêre
from-which he never more

ne comet an sîne êre.
— comes to his honor.

ouh wil ih dir sagen,
also will I to-thee tell,

du salt des sînen site haben
thou shalt of-it his customs have

umbe iteslîche dinc,
about certain things,

di dir vil gût sint:
which to-thee very good are:

swâ er ane di nôt komit,
wherever he into the distress comes,

nieman sulhis nit ne fromit
no-one such anything — avails

ze sturme noh ze wîge,
in assault nor in battle,

sô er mit sînen lîbe,
as he with his body,

er ne sî imer ze vorderôst;
he unless be ever at foremost;

dâ vone hânt si den trôst
there from have they the comfort

di edelen wîgande.
the noble fighters.

man mac an den vîanden
one may from the enemies

nemen gût bilide,
take good example,

dâ iz gêt an di tuginde.
where it goes to the virtues.

Dô sprah ein ander râtgebe:
Then spoke an other counselor:

'hêre, du salt mir vernemen
'lord, thou shalt me hear

und salt vil rehte verstân,
and shalt very rightly understand,

wî sîne site sint getân,
how his customs are made,

wandihz dir wol gesagen kan
for-I-it to-thee well tell can

umbe den wunderlîchen man.
about the wondrous man.

iz ist mir allir beste kunt.
it is to-me of-all best known.

ih was wîlen ze einer stunt
I was formerly at one time

mit dînen mannen gesant
with thy men sent

in sînes vater lant.
into his father's land.

dô solde wir holen den zins.
then should we fetch the tribute.

dan noh was er ein lutzil kint
then yet was he a little child

unde was doh wîser,
and was yet wiser,

dan dihein man grîser.
than any man grayer.

er quam dicke drâte
he came often quickly

ze sînis vater râte,
to his father's council,

dâ er rât habite.
where he counsel had.

vil sêre er daz clagete,
very sorely he that lamented,

daz sîn vater wêre
that his father were

dîn zinsêre.
thy tributary.

er swôr, sô ime sîn lîb
he swore, if to-him his body

gelebet imer di zît,
lived ever the time,

daz gwaldiclîche
that mightily

sînes vater rîche
his father's realm

an ime quême,
to him came,

des zinsis er sih benême.
of-the tribute he himself would-rid.

nû ist er alsô here comen,
now is he so hither come,

hân ihz rehte vernomen,
(if)-have I-it rightly heard,

er williz vollenbringen.
he will-it accomplish.

nû saltu dih besenden
now shalt-thou thyself send

nâh dînen mannen,
after thy men,

di du hâst in den landen,
whom thou hast in the lands,

di dir sint undertân,
who to-thee are subject,

daz dir ne muge nehein man
that from-thee — may no man

den sige an irwerben,
the victory on win,

er ne wille sterben.
he unless will die.

daz ist der rât mîn,
that is the counsel my,

ih wêne iz mah ouh wol sîn.'
I ween it may also well be.'

Dô sprah ein ander râtman,
Then spoke an other counselor,

des ih genennen nit ne kan:
whom I name not — can:

'der rât mir vil wol behaget.
'the counsel me very well pleases.

mir ist dicke daz gesaget,
to-me is often that said,

daz er mêr mit wîsheite
that he more with wisdom

dan mit degenheite
than with thane-valor

dih kuninc wil bedwingen
thee king will subdue

und den zins an dir gwinnen;
and the tribute from thee win;

wande eines hundis bellen
for a dog's barking

mac vil scâfe irschellen;
may very-many sheep scatter;

ob si rehtis hûtêris niht ne haben,
if they of-right shepherd not — have,

er tût in michelen scaden.'
he does to-them great harm.'

dâ mite meinter daz,
there with meant-he that,

daz iz ein unstête folc was
that it an unsteady folk was

alliz Daries here,
all Darius's host,

dâ er sih mite wolde were.
where he himself with would defend.

Hinnen disen râte,
From this counsel,

den der kuninc hâte,
which the king had,

quam Alexander
came Alexander

ze Dariusis lande.
to Darius's land.

einhalben bî dem mere
on-one-side by the sea

dâ liez er rûwen sîn here.
there let he rest his host.

di sunne schein vil heiz,
the sun shone very hot,

harte mûte si der sweiz.
hard troubled them the sweat.

dô ginc Alexander
then went Alexander

und mit ime manic ander
and with him many other

baden in den wâch.
to-bathe in the water.

der rite bestunt in der nâh.
the fever attacked him there after.

des gwan sîn here grôz
of-that won his host great

vil michelen untrôst.
very great discomfort.

si forhten vil sêre,
they feared very sorely,

obiz Darius vernême,
if-it Darius heard,

daz dannen nimer ir nehein
that thence never of-them any

ne quême lebinde heim.
— came living home.

Von disem untrôste
From this discomfort

ein arzât si irlôste.
a physician them freed.

Philippus hîz der junge man.
Philip was-called the young man.

ein furste was ime gram
a prince was to-him hostile

geheizen Perminus.
named Perminus.

einen brieb screib er alsus.
a letter wrote he thus.

er sprah: ‘Alexander hêre,
he spoke: ‘Alexander lord,

vil lieb sint mir dîne êre.
very dear are to-me thy honors.

niwit ne nem du den tranc,
not — take thou the drink,

den dir der arzât hât gesant.
which to-thee the physician has sent.

iz ist Dariusis rât,
it is Darius's counsel,

wander ime gelobet hât
for-he to-him promised has

ze gebene sîne swester.
to give his sister.

er wil in zeinem fursten
he will him into-a prince

in sînen lande machen,
in his land make,

swenne er daz gescaffe,
whenever he that brings-about,

daz er dir den tôt gegebe.
that he to-thee the death gives.

des trankis ne saltu niwit nemen.’
of-the drink — shalt-thou not take.’

Alexander las disen brieb.
Alexander read this letter.

er ne lîz iz umbe daz niet,
he — left it for that not,

er ne nême den tranc,
he — took the drink,

und gienc, dâ er Philippum vant.
and went, where he Philip found.

er sprach: 'geselle vil liep,
he spoke: 'comrade very dear,

wî gevellet dir dirre brieb?'
how pleases thee this letter?'

'ubile', sprah der jungelinc,
'ill', spoke the youth,

'du weist wol, hêre, mîne dinc.
'thou knowest well, lord, my things.

her zû wêrih ze gût.
here to were-I too good.

ih ne gwan des nie neheinen mût,
I — won of-it never any spirit,

daz ih dir tête den tôt,
that I to-thee did the death,

daz hêtistu unversculdigôt.
that hadst-thou undeserved.

doh wêriz ime lieb,
yet were-it to-him dear,

der dir sante disen brieb,
who to-thee sent this letter,

ob du des nêmes grôzen scaden.
if thou of-it took great harm.

er wolde dih lîhte verclagen.
he would thee easily cease-to-mourn.

nû heiz in dir gwinnen
now bid him for-thee win

und danke in der minnen,
and thank him for-the love,

di er dir kuninc tete,
which he to-thee king did,

dô er dih warnôte.
when he thee warned.

Dô Alexander genas
When Alexander recovered

und des wol gewis was,
and of-it well certain was,

daz ime der tranc wol bequam,
that to-him the drink well agreed,

Perminen hîz er slân
Perminus bade he slay

ze sîner anesihte,
in his sight,

Philippo er dô rihte,
Philip he then righted,

wander in habite belogen.
for-he him had lied-about.

dô hîz er sîne herzogen
then bade he his dukes

sîn here leiten,
his host lead,

des wâren si ime gereite,
of-that were they to-him ready,

in daz lant ze Armenia.
into the land at Armenia.

zimberen begunder dâ
to-build began-he there

eine burg unde eine stat.
a castle and a city.

dannen fûr er vor baz
thence fared he before further

an eine breiten heide.
onto a broad heath.

dâ was ubil weide
there was ill pasture

rossen unde mannen.
for-horses and for-men.

dô hûben si sih dannen
then raised they themselves thence

in kurzen stunden dar nâ
in short hours there after

in eine stat, di heizet Andria.
into a city, which is-called Andria.

dâr quâmen si zeinem wâge,
there came they to-a water,

dâ gescah in gnâde,
there happened to-them grace,

wande si sih gelabeten
for they themselves refreshed

von dem durste, den si habeten.
from the thirst, which they had.

Der wâg hîz Eufrates.
The water was-called Euphrates.

in ein worden si des,
in one became they of-this,

daz der kuninc hîz sîne man
that the king bade his men

grôze boume howan
great trees hew

und eine brucke machen.
and a bridge make.

* * *
(lacuna)

dô daz was gescaffit
when that was made

und di brucke was gemachet,
and the bridge was made,

alle zwîbeleten si dar an;
all doubted they there on;

wande dâr ne was nieman,
for there — was no-one,

der in den selben zîten
who in the same times

dar uber durste rîten.
there over dared ride.

Alexander sih genante,
Alexander himself ventured,

uber di brucken her rante.
over the bridge hither rushed.

den sînen wart vil gâch
to-the his-own became very hasty

unde ranten ime alliz nâh.
and rushed him all after.

dô si quâmen ubere,
when they came over,

Alexander karte widere
Alexander turned back

und zehiu alle di spangen,
and hewed all the clasps,

dâ di brucke was ane gehangen.
where the bridge was on hung.

dô vlôz di brucke ze tale.
then floated the bridge to valley.

daz ne geviel dâ niemanne wole.
that — pleased there no-one well.

si redeten albesunder,
they talked each-apart,

si nême des michel wunder,
they took of-it great wonder,

durh waz der wunderlîche man
for what the wondrous man

daz habete getân.
that had done.

ouh sprâchen si mê:
also spoke they more:

‘uns sol werden vil wê:
‘to-us shall become very woe:

werde wir hie sigelôs,
(if)-become we here victoryless,

sô ne habe wir necheinen trôst
so — have we no comfort

heim zunseme rîche,
home to-our realm,

sô sterbe wir jêmerlîche.’
so die we miserably.’

Sân an der stunt
At-once at the hour

sô wart di rede kunt
so became the speech known

deme kuninge Alexandro,
to-the king Alexander,

vil wol behâtiz imo dô.
very well pleased-it to-him then.

er sprah ze sînen ubir al:
he spoke to his over all:

‘diz gevellet mir wol,
‘this pleases me well,

daz ir mînen gedanc
that you my thought

alsô rehte hât irkant
so rightly have recognized

unde mîne liste,
and my crafts,

und ir sô gerne wistet,
and you so gladly would-know,

durh waz ih dise brucken brach:
for what I this bridge broke:

daz tet ih alliz umbe daz,
that did I all for that,

ob man uns jagete,
if one us hunted,

daz wir neheinen trôst ne habeten
that we no comfort — had

heim zô unseme lande,
home to our land,

sô gedêhte wir wol zen handen
so would-think we well to-the hands

unde fuhten alse helede.
and would-fight as heroes.

frumis mannis selide
a-valiant man's dwellings

di sint in lande gelîch.
they are in land alike.

nû weret helide den lîb;
now defend heroes the life;

wande quême daz heim mêre,
for (if)-came that home tidings,

daz wir hin entrunnen wêren,
that we hence fled were,

wir môsen dan von den wîben
we must then from the women

sulhen spot liden,
such mockery suffer,

daz uns lieber mohte wesen,
that to-us dearer might be,

verlore wir alle hie den leben.
(if)-lost we all here the life.

nû gedenkit helede dar zô,
now think heroes there to,

wî wir sô leide getûn
how we so sorrow do

unsen widerwinnen,
to-our adversaries,

daz wir si gefrumen hinnen
that we them send hence

zirn wîben und zirn kinden,
to-their women and to-their children,

daz si wol bevinden,
that they well find,

daz di von Macedonian
that those of Macedonia

den zins here brâht hân;
the tribute hither brought have;

wandiz ne wirt niemer gesehen,
for-it — is never seen,

daz wir hinnen geflîhen.
that we hence flee.

al hie wil ih ê sterben
all here will I rather die

oder sige irwerben.
or victory win.

wir vergelden den scaz,
we repay the treasure,

den mîn vater hêre gab
which my father lord gave

diseme gûten knehte
to-this good knight

mit grôzeme unrehte.'
with great wrong.'

A Persian in Greek arms, promised Darius's daughter, wounds Alexander from behind and is sent home praised. Alexander routs Darius, takes Bactra with Darius's mother, wife, and children, and spurns a traitor. Threatened by Darius, he says he spared the women for his mother. Bidden by a dream figure like his father, he crosses the frozen Strage as his own envoy, defies Darius, and pockets the gold cups at his feast; recognized, he flees as the ice breaks.

Von disen grimmen worten
From these grim words

Darius sih irforhte.
Darius himself took-fright.

des wart er bescholden
for-that was he reproached

sêre von sînen holden.
sorely by his loyal-ones.

dô gwan der helt gût
then won the hero good

ein manlîchen mût
a manly spirit

unde trôste sîne man.
and comforted his men.

dô karte daz here dan.
then turned the host away.

mit den rîchen fursten,
with the rich princes,

di wol vehten torsten,
who well fight dared,

quâmen si zô deme wâge.
came they to the water.

vil wol sih dô besâgen
very well themselves then saw

der zweier kuninge wartman,
of-the two kings watchmen,

alsih mih versinnen kan.
as-I myself recollect can.

in den selben stunden
in the same hours

ir vanen si ûf bunden
their banners they up bound

under iegwederme here.
in each host.

si grummen alse daz mere,
they roared as the sea,

sô iz di starken winde
when it the strong winds

trîbent an den unden,
drive on the waves,

unde quâmen zesamene
and came together

mit micheler manige.
with great multitude.

Alexander mit den Kriechen
Alexander with the Greeks

lîz dar zô strîchen.
let thither to sweep.

Darius und sîne fursten,
Darius and his princes,

di wol vehten torsten,
who well fight dared,

di armen und di rîchen
the poor and the rich

fâhten freislîchen.
fought fearsomely.

si slûgen unde stâchen.
they struck and thrust.

irn scaden si dâ râchen,
their harm they there avenged,

wande si hâten grimmigen mût.
for they had grim spirit.

under des daz sih der sturm hûb,
under that that itself the assault raised,

sô quam ein Daries man,
so came a Darius's man,

kriechische wâfen trûch er an
Greek weapons bore he on

unde dranc mit liste,
and pressed with cunning,

dâ er Alexandrum wiste
where he Alexander knew

in allen dem gebêre,
in all the bearing,

alser der sîner wêre
as-if-he of-the his were

und ginc hinder in stân
and went behind him stand

und gab ime einen slac sân.
and gave to-him a blow at-once.

durh den stehelînen hût
through the steel hat

verwundeter den helt gût.
wounded-he the hero good.

er hêtis gerne mêr getân,
he would-have-it gladly more done,

wen daz in geviengen sîne man.
except that him seized his men.

Alexander hinder sih gesach,
Alexander behind himself looked,

zô dem helede er sprah:
to the hero he spoke:

‘warumbe woldet ir mir slân?’
‘why would you me strike?’

dô sprah Dariesis man:
then spoke Darius’s man:

‘ih ne bin dînes heris niet.
‘I — am of-thy host not.

mîn stolzheit mih her zô verriet.
my pride me hither to betrayed.

ih bin von Persia geborn.
I am of Persia born.

mih hete Darius irkorn
me had Darius chosen

zeinen gûten knehte.
as-a good knight.

er sprah: ob ih ime brêhte
he spoke: if I to-him brought

dîn houbit abe geslagen,
thy head off struck,

daz wil ih dir zwâre sagen,
that will I to-thee truly tell,

er gâbe mir ze lône
he would-give to-me as reward

sîne tohter scône.
his daughter fair.

di gâbe dûhte mir gût.
the gift seemed to-me good.

dar zô stunt mir der mût,
there to stood to-me the spirit,

daz ih si gerne irworbe
that I her gladly won

oder degintlîchen sturbe.
or thanely died.

nû ne mac des niwit wesen.
now — may of-it not be.

sol ih verliesen daz leben,
(if)-shall I lose the life,

sô rûwit mih daz scône wîb
so rues me the fair woman

mêr dan mînes selbes lîb.
more than my self's life.

ouh ne bin ih der êriste niet,
also — am I the first not,

der durh herzelîchiz lieb
who for heartfelt love

sîn lîb sazte in wâge,
his life set in hazard,

grôz wâre mîn gnâde,
great were my grace,

môste ih di selbe frowen
(if)-might I the same lady

vor mîn ende noh bescowen.'
before my end yet behold.'

Dô lîz Alexander den selben man
Then let Alexander the same man

wider zô sînem here gân,
back to his host go,

durh daz si mohten gesehen,
so that they might see,

waz dâr wâre geschên.
what there were happened.

er fôr mit fride in sîn lant.
he fared with peace into his land.

Alexander sagetime grôzen danc,
Alexander said-to-him great thanks,

daz erz ie torste getûn.
that he-it ever dared do.

sîne hulde gab er ime dar zô
his favor gave he to-him there to

und sprah zô sînen ubir al:
and spoke to his over all:

‘diz gezimet jungelingen wal,
‘this befits youths well,

daz sus getâne botescaft
that thus made embassy

von ime ze lande werde brâht.
from him to land be brought.

swâ daz comet mêre,
wherever that comes tidings,

dâ beginnet man in êren,
there begins one him to-honor,

beide wîb unde man.
both woman and man.

sîne lêhen gemêret man ime dan.
his fiefs increases one to-him then.

ouh mugint in di frowen
also may him the ladies

deste gerner minnen tougen.’
the-more gladly love secretly.’

er liez den degen kêren wider.
he let the thane turn back.

nâh den sige warb er sider.
after the victory strove he afterward.

Dô faht Alexander
Then fought Alexander

mêr dan ein ander.
more than an other.

er hete grimmigen mût,
he had grim spirit,

alse der zornige bere tût,
as the wrathful bear does,

sô in di hunde bestân:
when him the hounds attack:

swâz er ir mit den clâwen mach gevân,
whatever he of-them with the claws may catch,

dar ane richet er sînen zorn.
there on avenges he his anger.

der kuninc faht imer fore.
the king fought ever in-front.

er slûch ros unde man
he struck horse and man

und alliz, daz ime zô quam
and all, that him to came

an den berch und in daz tal.
on the mountain and in the valley.

daz gesâhen ubir al
that saw over all

sîne vîande.
his enemies.

schiere hûben si sih danne
quickly raised they themselves thence

und fluhen hine ze Batra,
and fled hence to Bactra,

vil schiere besaz er si dâ.
very quickly besieged he them there.

dô gesweich ime der tach.
then failed to-him the day.

umbe di burh lach er al di naht.
round the castle lay he all the night.

Sân des morgenis frû
At-once the morning early

mit grimme ginc er in zû.
with fury went he them to.

schiere gewan er di stat.
quickly won he the city.

er nam, swaz dar inne was,
he took, whatever there inside was,

er nam dâ hêrlîche dinc:
he took there lordly things:

alle Dariesis kint,
all Darius's children,

dar zô sîne mûter,
there to his mother,

di heter in scôner hûte.
whom had-he in fair keeping.

ouh fienc er Darien wîb.
also seized he Darius's woman.

Alexander frowete sih,
Alexander rejoiced himself,

wandiz was ein kuninclîch roub.
for-it was a kingly booty.

dar zô bedwanc er ouh
there to subdued he also

manige burch unde lant
many castle and land

und gwan iz alliz zô sîner hant.
and won it all to his hand.

Under des quam ein furste,
Under that came a prince,

swî erz getûn torste,
however he-it do dared,

von Persienlande.
from Persia-land.

er sprah ze Alexandre:
he spoke to Alexander:

'ih bin Darien man
'I am Darius's man

und hân ime dicke getân
and have to-him often done

manic dienist scône.
many service fair.

des ist mir ungelônet.
for-that is to-me unrewarded.

durh daz vernem, waz ih dir sagen.
for that hear, what I to-thee tell.

wiltu is mînen rât haben
(if)-wilt-thou of-it my counsel have

und wiltus mir wol lônen,
and (if)-wilt-thou-it me well reward,

alsih mih zô dir verwênen,
as-I myself to thee expect,

mit helfe dîner manne
with help of-thy men

bringih in dir gevangen
bring-I him to-thee captive

und sîne fursten dâ mite:
and his princes there with:

sint mahtu imer sîn mit fride.'
afterward mayst-thou ever be with peace.'

Alexander antworte ime sân:
Alexander answered to-him at-once:

'niht ne gerent mîne man
'not — desire my men

dînere helfe.
of-thy help.

sint du ân nôt selbe
since thou without need self

dîne hêren wilt verrâten,
thy lord wilt betray,

di dir dike liebe tâten,
who to-thee often kindness did,

sô vare mit unêren
so fare with dishonor

wider zô dînen hêren
back to thy lord

und hilf ime weren sîn lant,
and help to-him defend his land,

iz wirt dir ze lastere bewant.
it is to-thee to shame turned.

dir ne sulen hêren noh frowen
thee — shall lords nor ladies

niemer mêr getrûwen.'
never more trust.'

Dô quam Dario ein brieb,
Then came to-Darius a letter,

der ne was ime niwit lieb,
it — was to-him not dear,

dô er in ubirlas:
when he it read-through:

daz der strît irgangen was,
that the strife ended was,

daz stunt dar inne gescriben
that stood there in written

und wer dâr tôt was bliben
and who there dead was remained

und wer dannen wâre comen
and who thence were come

mit scaden und niht mit fromen;
with harm and not with profit;

unde wî Batran di mêre
and how Bactra the famous

gare beroubit wêre
wholly robbed were

und wî sîn mûter und sîn wîb,
and how his mother and his woman,

di ime wâren sô der lîb,
who to-him were as the life,

und sîne kint wâren gevangen,
and his children were captured,

und wî iz dâ was irgangen,
and how it there was happened,

daz enboten ime sîne man,
that sent-word to-him his men,

unde daz iz Alexander hête getân,
and that it Alexander had done,

unde hiezen ime clagen
and bade to-him lament

irn vil michelen scaden;
their very great harm;

unde swanner daz vernême,
and whenever-he that heard,

daz er in quême
that he to-them came

schiere ze helfe
quickly to help

und selbe mit gelfe
and self with clamor

rêche sînen anden:
avenged his grievance:

er lîde grôze scande.
he suffers great disgrace.

Darius screib einen brieb dô
Darius wrote a letter then

und santin Alexandro.
and sent-it to-Alexander.

dar stunt alsus gescriben an;
there stood thus written on;

alsihz vernomen hân:
as-I-it heard have:

'mir ist ze wizzene getân,
'to-me is to know made,

wî du hâst mîne man
how thou hast my men

beide gevangen und irslagen:
both captured and slain:

ih ne mac iz langer nit vertragen,
I — may it longer not bear,

wandiz mir wê tût.
for-it to-me woe does.

ih genidere dînen hômût,
I humble thy arrogance,

daz du des ie gedâhtes,
that thou of-it ever thoughtest,

daz du mir gestrîten mahtes
that thou with-me fight mightest

und ie torstis gejehen,
and ever daredst avow,

daz du mich woldes sehen
that thou me wouldst see

ûf einen velde mit mînem here.
on a field with my host.

mahtu dih mih irwere,
(if)-mayst-thou thyself from-me defend,

sô mugen von himele mîne gote
so may from heaven my gods

zô der helle wesen bote.'
to the hell be messenger.'

ouh enbôt Darius
also sent-word Darius

Alexandro alsus:
to-Alexander thus:

'daz du mîneme gesinde,
'that thou to-my household,

mînen wîbe und mînen kinden
to-my woman and to-my children

unde mîner mûter
and to-my mother

hâs getân ze gûte,
hast done to good,

daz hâstu ubile gewant:
that hast-thou ill turned:

ih ne weiz dirs nit bezzeren danc,
I — know to-thee-for-it not better thanks,

wene alse du si hêtis irslagen.
except as-if thou them hadst slain.

ih wil dir wêrlîchen sagen,
I will to-thee truly tell,

ih ne werde niemer dîn frûnt,
I — become never thy friend,

di wîle ih dih weiz gesunt;
the while I thee know sound;

wandih dih von rehte hazzen sol.
for-I thee by right hate shall.

mir ne is niwit wol
to-me — is not well

zô dir ze mûte,
toward thee in mind,

nû scaffe dîne hûte.
now make thy guard.

du hâs einen sturm an dîner hant.'
thou hast an assault on thy hand.'

Alexander der wîgant
Alexander the fighter

der entfienc disen brieb
he received this letter

und ne forhtin betalle niet.
and — feared-him altogether not.

Einen andren hiez er schrîben
An other bade he write

unde sprah: 'daz ih dînen wîbe
and spoke: 'that I to-thy woman

habe getân ze gûte,
have done to good,

dâ genôz si mîner mûter,
there profited she by-my mother,

wandih durh ir liebe
for-I for her love

allen wîben gerne diene:
all women gladly serve:

von dû hân ihz gerne getân.
for that have I-it gladly done.

ih ne wil von dir entfân
I — will from thee receive

neheinen lôn dar umbe.
no reward there for.

du entbûtis mir als ein tumbe.'
thou sentest-word to-me as a fool.'

Dô quam ein brieb Dario
Then came a letter to-Darius

von dem kuninge Poro
from the king Porus

vil verre ûz von Indian
very far out from India

und bat, daz er ime sîne man
and begged, that he to-him his men

ze helfen wolde senden,
to help would send,

wande in di inlenden
for him the natives

in sîneme lande
in his land

mit roube joh mit brande
with robbery and with burning

hêten starke bestân.
had strongly attacked.

dô enbôt er ime wider sân,
then sent-word he to-him back at-once,

daz er ime gerne quême,
that he to-him gladly came,

ob ime nit ne benême
if to-him not — prevented

urlouge und Alexandris herescraft,
war and Alexander's host-strength,

di in lange hête belaht.
which him long had beset.

doh wolder sih genenden
yet would-he himself venture

und wolde ime senden
and would to-him send

von persischen lande
from Persian land

sîne wîgande,
his fighters,

di ime helfen solden,
who to-him help should,

swes sô er wolde.
whereof so he would.

Dar nâh hûben sih sân
There after raised themselves at-once

Alexander unde sîne man
Alexander and his men

ze Persen in di rîche.
to Persia into the realm.

er gedâhte wîslîche,
he thought wisely,

wî er daz mohte bewaren,
how he that might guard,

daz di vîande sîne scharen
that the enemies his troops

niht ne konden gemirken.
not — could notice.

dô verhiu er manige birken
then hewed he many birches

und manic oliboumes rîs,
and many olive-tree's branch,

wander was listic unde wîs.
for-he was cunning and wise.

zô der rosse zagelen man si bant.
to the of-horses tails one them bound.

der melm der stoub ubir lant,
the dust it flew over land,

daz der Persen wartman
that the of-Persians watchman

grôz wunder des nam,
great wonder of-it took,

wannen der melm mohte wesen:
whence the dust might be:

ir nehein ne trûwete genesen.
of-them none — trusted to-survive.

Alexander was von der stat,
Alexander was from the city,

dâ Darius mit here lah,
where Darius with host lay,

funf tageweide.
five days'-journeys.

dâ enzwischen was ein heide
there between was a heath

unde ein vil tiefer wâch.
and a very deep water.

mit sînen fursten nam er rât,
with his princes took he counsel,

wâ er einen man funde,
where he a man found,

den er ze boten sande
whom he as messenger sent

deme kuninge Dario
to-the king Darius

und ime sagete dar zô,
and to-him told there to,

daz er daz wol vernême,
that he that well heard,

daz er ime quême
that he to-him came

mit dem kriechischeme here:
with the Greek host:

ob er sîn lant wolde weren,
if he his land would defend,

daz er griffe dar zô
that he grasped there to

beide spâte unde frô,
both late and early,

wander wêre sicherlîche
for-he were surely

mitten in sînem rîche.
midst in his realm.

Der rât der wart ûf gelaht.
The counsel it was up laid.

twerhes ubir di naht
across over the night

dô troumete Alexandro, wî ein man
then dreamed to-Alexander, how a man

ginge vor ime stân
went before him stand

in allen dem gebêre,
in all the bearing,

alser sîn vater wêre.
as-if-he his father were.

in den bûchen hân ih gelesen,
in the books have I read,

daz ouh sîn vater solde wesen
that also his father should be

ein gwaldiger got.
a mighty god.

daz ist der leien spot,
that is the laymen's mockery,

di des niht ne wizzen,
who of-it not — know,

waz man tût mit listen.
what one does with crafts.

manic list ist sô getân,
many craft is so made,

swer is flîz wille hân,
whoever of-it diligence will have,

wil er got verkiesen
(if)-will he God renounce

und die sêle verliesen,
and the soul lose,

der tûbel hilfet ime dar zô,
the devil helps to-him there to,

daz er spâte unde frô
that he late and early

tûn mah besunder
do may severally

vil manicfalden wunder.
very manifold wonders.

Vil manichfalder liste
Very manifold crafts

Philippus vil wiste,
Philip much knew,

der Alexandris vater was,
who Alexander's father was,

alsihz an den bûchen las.
as-I-it in the books read.

dâ er an sînem bette lach,
where he on his bed lay,

in dem troume er ime zô sprah:
in the dream he him to spoke:

'Alexander, liebe sune,
'Alexander, dear son,

3005 durh dih bin ih here comen.
for thee am I hither come.

ih wil dir lâzen schîn,
I will to-thee let appear,

daz ih ein gwaldich got bin:
that I a mighty god am:

ih wil dir sîn bereite
I will to-thee be ready

zô dîner arbeite.
to thy toil.

3010 dir ne mac nieman gescaden,
thee — may no-one harm,

di wîl ih dir holt herze tragen.
the while I to-thee loyal heart bear.

tû du den rât mîn:
do thou the counsel my:

du salt selbe bote sîn
thou shalt self messenger be

hin zô Dario.'
hence to Darius.'

3015 inrihte irwahter dô
straightway awoke-he then

und sagetiz sînen mannen.
and told-it to-his men.

dô rieten si ime alle,
then counseled they to-him all,

daz er wêre dem gote
that he were to-the god

gevolgich ze sînem gebote.
obedient to his command.

3020 Alexander dô mit ime nam
Alexander then with him took

einen einigen man,
a single man,

der hîz Eomulus.
who was-called Eomulus.

si riten zwei snelle ros
they rode two swift horses

und fûrten daz dritte in der hant
and led the third in the hand

und riten verre ubir lant
and rode far over land

und quâmen zô einem wâge,
and came to a water,

der was geheizen Strâge.
it was named Strage.

der flûzit allen den tach
it flows all the day

und irfrûsit inne der naht,
and freezes within the night,

daz man dar ubir mohte rîten.
that one there over might ride.

Alexander hîz dô bîten
Alexander bade then wait

sînen man mit einen volen.
his man with a foal.

al eine reit er dar ubir
all alone rode he there over

und quam des tages an di stat,
and came of-the day to the place,

dâ Darius lach
where Darius lay

mit sînen grôzen here.
with his great host.

jene sprâchen: ‘wer ist dere?
those spoke: ‘who is this?

er glîchet sêre einem gote.’
he resembles sorely a god.’

er sprah wider: ‘ih bin ein bote,
he spoke back: ‘I am a messenger,
mîn hêre ist Alexander.
my lord is Alexander.
den nimet michil wunder,
him takes great wonder,
wes Darius sûme,
why Darius delays,
wander gebeitet sîn vil kûme.’
for-he awaits him very scarcely.’
Dô lîz ein Daries man
Then let a Darius’s man
den boten vor den kuninc gân,
the messenger before the king go,
daz er wurbe sîne botescaf.
that he delivered his embassy.
zô Dario er dô sprah:
to Darius he then spoke:
‘man saget, Daris edele kuninc,
‘one says, Darius noble king,
du sîs gwaldich unde frumich
thou be mighty and valiant
und stolz dînes gemûtis
and proud of-thy mind
und milde dînis gûtis.
and generous of-thy goods.
daz ne schînet niwit wol.
that — appears not well.
vernem, waz ih dir sagen sol:
hear, what I to-thee tell shall:

dir enbûtit Alexander
to-thee sends-word Alexander

und manic ander
and many other

enbietent dir besunder,
send-word to-thee severally,

si neme des michil wunder,
them takes of-it great wonder,

wes du sô lange bites,
why thou so long waitest,

daz du niht ne rîtes
that thou not — ridest

und riches di scande,
and avengest the disgrace,

di dîne vîande
which thy enemies

dir tûn allir tagelîche.
to-thee do all daily.

du sûmes zagelîche.
thou delayest cowardly.

dir sint di burge und daz lant
to-thee are the castles and the land

beroubit unde verbrant
robbed and burned

und dîn lût gevangen.
and thy people captured.

du sûmis al ze lange.
thou delayest all too long.

diz ist dir gût vernomen:
this is to-thee good heard:

mîn hêre heizit dir comen
my lord bids thee come

bî den Strâge an einen velde,
by the Strage onto a field,

den zins wil er dir gelden
the tribute will he to-thee pay

den er hât versezzen.
which he has neglected.

dâ wil er dih is irgetzen
there will he thee of-it compensate

er und sîne recken
he and his warriors

mit irn scarfin ecken
with their sharp edges

mit sulher mâzen,
with such measure,

daz du si mûzes lâzen
that thou them must leave

imer mêr âne nôt.
ever more without distress.

diz ist, daz er dir enbôt.'
this is, what he to-thee sent-word.'

Darius der rîche
Darius the rich

der tete hêrlîche:
he did lordly:

er nam den boten bî der hant
he took the messenger by the hand

und sprah: 'nû du here bist gesant,
and spoke: 'now thou hither art sent,

sô mûstu gûten fride hân.
so must-thou good peace have.

in mînen sal soltu gân
into my hall shalt-thou go

und wesen ze mîner wirtscaf.
and be at my feast.

dîn hêre des selben sitis plach:
thy lord of-the same custom practiced:

alsô dicke sô ih sande
as often as I sent

zô sîneme lande,
to his land,

sô liez er di boten mîn
so let he the messengers my

zô sîner wirtscafte sîn.'
at his feast be.'

Alexander frowete sînen mût.
Alexander gladdened his spirit.

daz geleite dûhte ime alsô gût,
the escort seemed to-him so good,

daz in der rîche Darius
that him the rich Darius

selbe leite in sîn hûs
self led into his house

zô sîner wirtscaft.
to his feast.

dâ was eine michele maht
there was a great might

der hêren von manigen landen.
of-the lords from many lands.

dô hîz man Alexandren
then bade one Alexander

ingegen den kuninc sitzen gân.
opposite the king sit go.

daz wart umbe daz getân,
that was for that done,

daz Darius selbe sêge,
that Darius self saw,

daz man sîn wol plêge.
that one him well tended.

Den fursten was daz ungemach,
To-the princes was that displeasing,
daz man sîn sô wole plach.
that one him so well tended.
ih wil û sagen umbe waz:
I will to-you tell about what:
si versmâheten in umbe daz,
they scorned him for that,
wander was sô cleine.
for-he was so small.
si sprâchen al gemeine,
they spoke all together,
er wêre ein wênich twirgelîn,
he were a little dwarf,
waz boten er mohte sîn
what messenger he might be
eines alsô rîchen mannes.
of-a so rich man.
dannoh wisten si lutzil des,
yet knew they little of-it,
daz an ime was gereit
that in him was ready
alsô manich frumicheit.
so much valor.
Vil wol der hêre diz vernam
Very well the lord this perceived
der vil wunderlîche man.
the very wondrous man.
iz quam in rehte in den gedanc:
it came to-him right into the thought:
diu goltfaz, dâ er abe tranc,
the gold-cups, where he from drank,
di warf er al in sîne scôz.
them threw he all into his lap.

dô den schenken des verdrôz,
when the cupbearer of-it vexed,

daz er ime mêr brâhte,
that he to-him more brought,

dô stunt er unde dâhte,
then stood he and thought,

daz er ein dieb wêre:
that he a thief were:

und sagetiz sînem hêren,
and told-it to-his lord,

daz der bote, der dâ saz,
that the messenger, who there sat,

verstêle sîne goltfaz.
stole his gold-cups.

Darius sprah dem boten zû
Darius spoke the messenger to

'wî torstistu daz getû,
'how daredst-thou that do,

daz du stêle mîne goltvaz?'
that thou stolest my gold-cups?'

Alexander dar wider sprah,
Alexander there against spoke,

daz der site wêre
that the custom were

zô dem tische sînes hêren,
at the table of-his lord,

daz allirmanne gelîch
that every-man alike

di vaz nême zô sih,
the cups took to himself,

dâ er ûz trunke.
where he out-of drank.

'vil wol mih des bedunket,
'very well me of-it seems,

man ne phlege hie des sites niet:
one — practices here of-the custom not:

nû diz alsus ist geschiet,
now this thus is happened,

nû heiz nemen dîne goltfaz.
now bid take thy gold-cups.

zwâren sagen ih dir daz,
truly tell I to-thee that,

daz mir vil ummêre sîn
that to-me very indifferent are

dîne goltfaz unde dîn wîn.'
thy gold-cups and thy wine.'

Under disen worten
Among these words

ein furste merkete harte
a prince noticed hard

an des boten gebêre
in the messenger's bearing

wî iz Alexander selbe wêre.
how it Alexander self were.

er hetin wîlin bekant,
he had-him formerly known,

dô in Darius hete gesant
when him Darius had sent

nâh deme zinse zô Philippo.
after the tribute to Philip.

dô sprah er ze Dario:
then spoke he to Darius:

'hêre, ih wil dir sagen
'lord, I will to-thee tell

ein dinc, daz ih gemerkit habe:
a thing, which I noticed have:

den boten, den wir hie gesehen,
the messenger, whom we here see,

wol ne wil er is niht bejehen,
well — will he of-it not avow,

daz is selbe Alexander.
that it-is self Alexander.

nû rich dînen anden
now avenge thy grievance

an den wunderlîchen man,
on the wondrous man,

sô mahtu imer mêre fride hân.'
so mayst-thou ever more peace have.'

Vil wol der listige man
Very well the cunning man

der hêren gerûne vernam
of-the lords whispering perceived

und rûmete von deme sale.
and cleared from the hall.

des gehalf ime vil wale
in-that helped to-him very well

ein brinninde vakele, di er nam.
a burning torch, which he took.

einen persischen man,
a Persian man,

den slûch er vor di zande,
him struck he before the teeth,

daz er sih verwânde,
that he himself weened,

daz er ê solde sterben,
that he before should die,

ê er quême zô der erden.
before he came to the earth.

er dranc durh Darien man.
he pressed through Darius's men.

schiere er vor di ture quam.
quickly he before the door came.

ûf sîn ros er gespranc,
onto his horse he sprang,

ân ir allir danc
without of-them all thanks

reit er zô dem Strâge.
rode he to the Strage.

ê er dar ubir quême,
before he there over came,

gwan er michil arbeit:
won he great toil:

daz îs undir ime spleiz,
the ice under him split,

daz ime sîn ros dâ entflôz.
that to-him his horse there floated-away.

sîner craft er dâ genôz,
of-his strength he there profited,

daz er den anderen stat gwan,
that he the other bank won,

ouh half ime wol sîn man.
also helped to-him well his man.

Alexander likens Darius's host to flies against wasps, and in the great battle at the Strage two hundred thousand Persians fall; Darius flees first. Persia mourns, and Darius laments Fortune's wheel and offers his treasure and kingdom for peace. Alexander will not give back the captive women for it, since all Darius offers is already his: Darius may fight to win them back, or submit. Alexander buries his dead, spares Xerxes's palace at his men's plea, finds Evilmerodach's glass coffin, and frees and enriches Darius's maimed prisoners.

Dô reit er hine zô sînem here.
Then rode he hence to his host.

hundrit tûsunt was dere
hundred thousand was of-them

und zwênzich tûsint dar zô.
and twenty thousand there to.

vil wol entphiengen si in dô
very well received they him then

und hiezen in willecome sîn.
and bade him welcome be.

alsus antworter in:
thus answered-he to-them:

'o wol ûh, kriechische man,
'o well to-you, Greek men,

ze heile mûz iz û irgân.
to fortune must it to-you go.

ih ne wille niwit liegen
I — will not lie

noh niemanne betriegen.
nor anyone deceive.

wir ne mugin niwit gelîchen
we — may not equal

Dario dem rîchen.
Darius the rich.

ih wâne, daz ûf dir erden
I ween, that on this earth
nieman mohte gewerden,
no-one might become,
der zô ime gestunde
who to him stood
oder alsô grôz here gewunne.
or so great host won.
dâ bî wil ih û sagen:
there by will I to-you tell:
ein her fliegen mach nit gescaden
a host of-flies may not harm
zwein wênigen wespen,
to-two little wasps,
dâ si varen ze neste.'
where they fare to nest.'
Alexandris gesellen
Alexander's comrades
worden von disen bîspellen
became from these examples
vil wunderlîchen frô.
very wondrously glad.
vil kûme irbeiten si dô,
very scarcely waited they then,
biz man begunde sturmen.
until one began to-assault.
Darius von sînen burgen
Darius from his castles
reit zô dem wâge,
rode to the water,
der dâ heizet Strâge.
which there is-called Strage.
des nahtes fûren si dar ubir.
of-the night fared they there over.

der quam aber lutzil wider,
of-them came however little back,

wande si wurden irslagen.
for they were slain.

ih wil û zwâren sagen.
I will to-you truly tell.

sân des morgenis frû
at-once the morning early

ze wîge gareten si sih dô,
for battle readied they themselves then,

beidenthalben di here,
on-both-sides the hosts,

und brummen alse daz mere
and roared as the sea

di alden mit den jungen,
the old with the young,

dâ si ze samene drungen.
where they to together pressed.

Alexander der hêrre
Alexander the lord

der was der êrre,
he was the first,

der dâ zô der zît
who there at the time

irhûb den freislîchen strît.
raised the fearsome strife.

ûf Bucifale er reit.
on Bucephalus he rode.

nie man ne bescreit
never man — mounted

dichein ros alsô gût.
any horse so good.

dar zô stunt ime der mût,
there to stood to-him the spirit,

daz er den sige irwurbe
that he the victory won

oder degintlîchen sturbe.
or thanely died.

vil wole half ime daz,
very well helped to-him that,

daz er sô wol gare was
that he so well ready was

nâch deme kriechischeme site.
after the Greek custom.

di ingegen im quâmen geriten,
who against him came ridden,

di sprâchen, er wêre ein got.
they said, he were a god.

von beidenthalben flouch daz scoz
from on-both-sides flew the missiles

alsô dicke sô der snê.
as thick as the snow.

den recken wart dâ vil wê.
to-the warriors became there very woe.

Dâ wart ein michil schal.
There was a great din.

man blies di herehorn ubir al
one blew the host-horns over all

und di trummen zô dem wîge.
and the drums to the battle.

Darius mit den sînen
Darius with the his-own

mûste durh nôt vehten.
must for need fight.

er brâhte manigen Persen
he brought many Persian

zô deme strîte.
to the strife.

di wâren gesamenet wîte
they were gathered widely

und heten manlîchen mût.
and had manly spirit.

und alse der helt gût
and when the hero good

Alexander diz vernam,
Alexander this perceived,

dô maneter sîne getrûwe man,
then exhorted-he his faithful men,

di ime wâren einmûte
who to-him were of-one-mind

zaller sîner nôte,
in-all his distress,

daz si sih wol bedêhten
that they themselves well bethought

und wâren gûte knehte,
and were good knights,

wande si mit rehte
for they with right

umbe den zins solden vehten,
about the tribute should fight,

dâ si Darius zô dwanc.
where them Darius to compelled.

dô hûb sih ze hant
then raised itself at once

di kriechische manige
the Greek multitude

den Persen ingegene.
the Persians against.

mit micheler frevele
with great boldness

quâmen si ze samene
came they to together

bî dem Strâge an der ouwen.
by the Strage on the meadow.

wer mohte ie bescowen
who might ever behold

zwei sô hêrlîchen scaren.
two so lordly troops.

dâ was maniger mûter barn.
there was many mother's child.

dâ si ze samene quâmen
where they to together came

und grôzen scaden nâmen,
and great harm took,

dâ was daz felt vil breit
there was the field very broad

mit den tôten ubirspreit.
with the dead overspread.

si slûgen unde stâchen,
they struck and thrust,

sô daz di schefte brâchen.
so that the shafts broke.

dô griffen di recken
then grasped the warriors

zô den scarfin ecken
to the sharp edges

und vohten mit nîde.
and fought with hatred.

alle di volcwîge,
all the folk-battles,

sturme unde strîte,
assaults and strifes,

di von Darien gezite
which from Darius's times

al biz her sint geschît,
all until hither are happened,

di ne glîchen dar zô niet,
they — compare there to not,

dâ Alexander der helt balt
where Alexander the hero bold

Dario den zins galt.
to-Darius the tribute paid.

daz der zins ie gedâht wart,
that the tribute ever thought-of was,

daz gerou manigen in der vart,
that rued many on the way,

wande si in dem blûte swebeten,
for they in the blood floated,

di dannoh gerne lebeten.
who yet gladly would-have-lived.

Der sturm was grimme unde hart.
The assault was grim and hard.

dâ wart manich helm scart
there became many helm notched

und manige brunje durhstochen,
and many byrnie pierced-through,

daz dâ durh quam geflozzen
that there through came flowing

daz blût den lîb al ze tale.
the blood the body all to valley.

man sah dâ in dem wale
one saw there in the battlefield

manigen schilt verhowen.
many shield hewn.

dâ mohten man scowen
there might one behold

di kriechischen recken
the Greek warriors

mit den scarfen ecken
with the sharp edges

di helme verscrôten.
the helms hack.

si frumeten manigen tôten
they made many dead

dem rîchem kuninge Dario,
to-the rich king Darius,

der vil starke clagete dô,
who very strongly lamented then,

daz er ze Kriechlande
that he to Greece

nâh deme zinse ie gesande.
after the tribute ever sent.

Der Persen kuninc hêre,
The of-Persians king lordly,

der vil grôzir êre
who very great honor

wielt ubir manich rîche,
wielded over many realm,

der trûrte grôzlîche,
he mourned greatly,

daz der wunderlîche man
that the wondrous man

durh sîn laster ûz quam.
for his shame out came.

daz begunder sêre clagen
that began-he sorely to-lament

wander sah in den walphade
for-he saw in the battlefield-path

manigen helt gûten
many hero good

beflozzen mit dem blûte,
flowed-over with the blood,

sîne tûrlîchen recken,
his excellent warriors,

di ime dâ vore dicke
who to-him there before often

hulfen sîner êren.
helped his honors.

sint niemer mêre
afterward never more

ne wart Darius frô,
— became Darius glad,

daz bûch sagit uns alsô,
the book tells us so,

wande dâ viel manic man,
for there fell many man,

der nie wunde ne gwan
who never wound — won

von stiche noh von slage.
from thrust nor from blow.

ih wil û wêrlîchen sagen:
I will to-you truly tell:

si wâren gûte knehte
they were good knights

und sturben durh ir vehten
and died through their fighting

in Darien halbe.
on Darius's side.

dô man si gezalde,
when one them counted,

zwei hundirt tûsunt der was,
two hundred thousand of-them was,

der nie nehein ne gnas;
of-whom never any — survived;

ân di, di in den Strâge
without those, who in the Strage

ouh vertrunken lâgen:
also drowned lay:

der ne mohte man neheine zale
of-them — might one no number

gescrîben noch gesagen wale.
write nor tell well.

Alse Darius gesah,
When Darius saw,

daz sîner sô vil tôt lah,
that of-his so many dead lay,

beide gewunt und irslagen,
both wounded and slain,

dô begunder irzagen.
then began-he to-despair.

er was der êriste man,
he was the first man,

der dâ flîhen began.
who there to-flee began.

des gewan sîn her grôz
of-that won his host great

vil michelen untrôst.
very great discomfort.

si fluhin al gemeine,
they fled all together,

man mah noh hûte weinen
one may yet today weep

den mort, der dâ gescach.
the murder, which there happened.

Alexander reit in alliz nâh.
Alexander rode them all after.

und slûch si nider alsein vê.
and struck them down as-a beast.

si schrûwen ach unde wê.
they screamed alas and woe.

Dô daz mêre dô quam
When the tidings then came

ubir alle Persiam,
over all Persia,

daz der kuninc wêre sigelôs,
that the king were victoryless,

dô wart dâ michil untrôst
then was there great discomfort

ubir alle di lant,
over all the lands,

dâ der kuninc was bekant.
where the king was known.

der jâmer wart dâ vil grôz.
the misery was there very great.

vil manic sînen genôz
very many his comrade

weinete unde clagete,
wept and lamented,

den er verlorn habite.
whom he lost had.

der vater weinete sîn kint,
the father wept his child,

daz wâren jâmerlîche dinc;
that were miserable things;

manic man sînen eidem,
many man his son-in-law,

wande ime was vil leide;
for to-him was very sorrowful;

di swester irn brûder,
the sister her brother,

irn lieben sun di mûter.
her dear son the mother.

ouh weinte di irn amîs,
also wept she her lover,

di dâ stille was gehît.
who there secretly was wed.

di frowen weinten irn trût,
the ladies wept their beloved,

den si minneten ubirlût.
whom they loved openly.

di man ze manne solde geben,
she-whom one to husband should give,

der leidete daz leben;
to-her grew-loathsome the life;

si weinte alsô sêre
she wept as sorely

alse si gehît wêre.
as-if she wed were.

di jungen an der strâzen,
the young-ones in the street,

dâ si ze spile sâzen,
where they at play sat,

di weineten vil sêre
they wept very sorely

ir mâge unde ir hêren.
their kinsmen and their lords.

di kint an den wagen,
the children on the wagons,

sô si weinen sâgen
when they weeping saw

und alse manz in gezalde,
and when one-it to-them told,

si weineten alse di alde
they wept as the old

und lebeten âne wunne.
and lived without delight.

di mâne unde di sunne
the moon and the sun

di verwandelôten ir lieht
they changed their light

und ne wolden schînen nieht
and — would shine not

und ne wolden niet besehen
and — would not behold

den mort, der dâ was geschên.
the murder, which there was happened.

Darius der blôde man
Darius the timid man

starke flîhende quam
greatly fleeing came

von mannen und von mâgen
from men and from kinsmen

ubir den wâc Strâgen
over the water Strage

und sînes heris ein michil teil.
and of-his host a great part.

verlorn heter daz heil.
lost had-he the fortune.

er quam ûf sînen sal.
he came up-to his hall.

daz lût weinte ubir al
the people wept over all

und clagete grôzlîchen
and lamented greatly

Darium den rîchen.
Darius the rich.

ûf sînen estrich er sih warf.
onto his floor he himself threw.

er clagete, daz er niet ne starb.
he lamented, that he not — died.

ime wêre lieber der tôt,
to-him were dearer the death,

dan er sus wêre gelasterôt.
than he thus were shamed.

er clagete, daz er ie genas,
he lamented, that he ever survived,

und sprah: 'waz hilfit mir, daz ih was
and spoke: 'what helps me, that I was

kuninc ubir manige lant,
king over many lands,

di ih selbe bedwanc
which I self subdued

wîlen mit mîner frumicheit.
formerly with my valor.

zô mîneme dieniste was gereit
to my service was ready

manic lant in dem mere.
many land in the sea.

manic dûsint was dere,
many thousand was of-them,

di mir zins gâben
who to-me tribute gave

und mih doh nie gesâgen.
and me yet never saw.

swâ si gehôrten mînen namen,
wherever they heard my name,

dâ dieneten si mir alle samen.
there served they me all together.

nû bin ih verwunnen,
now am I overcome,

vil kûme her entrunnen
very scarcely hither escaped

von einen kriechischen man.
from a Greek man.

von mînen sunden daz leider quam
from my sins that alas came

und durh mînen ubirmût.
and through my arrogance.

Ungelucke, waz ir mir leides tût!
Misfortune, what you to-me of-sorrow do!

Fortuna di ist sô getân:
Fortune she is so made:

ir schîbe lâzet si umbegân.
her wheel lets she round-go.

si hilfit den armen, sô si wile,
she helps the poor, when she will,

den rîchen hât si ze spile;
the rich has she for play;

umbeloufet ir rat,
(if)-turns-round her wheel,

dicke vellet, der dâ vaste saz.'
often falls, who there firmly sat.'

Darius sih dô ûf hûb
Darius himself then up raised

unde trôste sînen mût.
and comforted his spirit.

er dihte selbe einen brieb.
he composed self a letter.

mit sîner hant er in screib.
with his hand he it wrote.

er santin Alexandro.
he sent-it to-Alexander.

dar ane stunt gescriben sô:
there on stood written so:

'frô wis unde gesunt,
'glad be and sound,

Alexander, zaller stunt.
Alexander, at-all hours.

iz ist mir nû alsô comen,
it is to-me now so come,

wiltu mir scaden oder fromen,
(if)-wilt-thou me harm or profit,

des hâstu gûten gwalt.
of-that hast-thou good power.

mir is dicke gezalt,
to-me is often told,

daz iz dem manne wol stât,
that it to-the man well stands,

alsime sîn heil vore gât,
when-to-him his fortune before goes,

daz er sîne mâze
that he his measure

an gûten dingen lâze.
in good things keep.

nit ne verhebe du des dih,
not — exalt thou of-it thyself,

daz du hâs verwunnen mih.
that thou hast overcome me.

iz kumet dir rehte.
it comes to-thee rightly.

nû gedenc ane mîn geslehte
now think on my lineage

unde an mînen gwalt.
and on my power.

swer mir daz hête gezalt,
whoever to-me that had told,

daz mir sus solde geschên,
that to-me thus should happen,

ih ne hêtis ime niet gejehen,
I — would-have-of-it to-him not avowed,

wandih ne mohtis niht getrûwen.
for-I — might-it not trust.

mir mûz nû balde rûwen,
to-me must now quickly rue,

daz ih unde mîne man
that I and my men

den kuninc Xersem ie verwan,
the king Xerxes ever overcame,

den rîchen unde den frumigen
the rich and the valiant

und andre manige kuninge,
and other many kings,

ih nam in lant unde gût.
I took from-them land and goods.

owî wî wê mir nû daz tût,
alas how woe to-me now that does,

daz ih sol lîden
that I shall suffer

den spot von den wîben.
the mockery from the women.

iedoch sô verwêne ih mih,
nevertheless so expect I myself,

daz du tûst sô kuninclîch,
that thou dost so kingly,

swen sô du verwinnes,
whom so thou overcomest,

wande du dih wol versinnes,
for thou thyself well understandest,

di lâzestu sunderlingen
them lettest-thou especially

an dîne gnâde dingen
into thy grace negotiate

und lâzes si dir sîn undertân
and lettest them to-thee be subject

und di lant vor dir hân.
and the lands from thee hold.

wiltu alsus mit mir tûn,
(if)-wilt-thou thus with me do,

des hâstu êre unde rûm:
of-that hast-thou honor and fame:

sô gebe ih dir den meisten scaz,
so give I to-thee the greatest treasure,

der mîner forderen was,
which of-my forefathers was,

den si zesamene trûgen
which they together carried

und in der erde grûben.
and in the earth buried.

der ligit zô Mynjatan,
it lies at Mynjatan,

ze Susis und ze Batran.
at Susa and at Bactra.

daz saltu wizzen âne wân,
that shalt-thou know without doubt,

daz nie nehein man,
that never any man,

der ie an diser werlt quam,
who ever into this world came,

sô vil scazzis gewan.
so much of-treasure won.

dar zô vernim noh mêre:
there to hear yet more:

ih wil dih machen hêren
I will thee make lord

ze Medentrîche ubir daz lant,
at Media-realm over the land,

Persiam gebih an dîne hant.
Persia give-I into thy hand.

du maht dih frowen dirre geben
thou mayst thyself rejoice-in these gifts

di wîle di du solt leben.
the while that thou shalt live.

dar zô jehen ih dir des siges.
there to avow I to-thee of-the victory.

nû bitte ih al ze spâte frides.'
now beg I all too late of-peace.'

Alexander las disen brieb.
Alexander read this letter.

ein furste ime al di wîle riet,
a prince to-him all the while counseled,

daz er nême alliz daz
that he took all that

beide lant unde scaz
both land and treasure

und Darium lieze leben
and Darius let live

und hieze ime wider sîn wîb geben
and bade to-him back his woman give

und sîne mûter dar zô.
and his mother there to.

Alexander sprah dô,
Alexander spoke then,

daz er des nit ne tête,
that he of-it not — did,

wandime des wunder hête,
for-to-him of-it wonder had,

ob er si ime sande
if he them to-him sent

wider heim ze lande,
back home to land,

ob er si nemen wolde.
if he them take would.

diz sprah er durh di sculde,
this spoke he for the cause,

durh andris neheine nôt,
for other no need,

wander ime dâ vore enbôt,
for-he to-him there before sent-word,

er zugis wol ze râte,
he would-draw-it well to counsel,

waz er dâ mite tâte.
what he there with did.

Aber sprah Alexander sus:
Again spoke Alexander thus:

'ob der kuninc Darius
'if the king Darius

nû ist verwunnen,
now is overcome,

sô nimit mih michel wunder,
so takes me great wonder,

wes er sih noh wil irheben
whereof he himself yet will raise

oder waz er mir wille geben.
or what he to-me will give.

nû stênt doch an mîner hant
now stand yet in my hand

beide burge unde lant
both castles and land

unde gwant unde scaz:
and clothing and treasure:

ih mach ime geben michil baz,
I may to-him give much better,

wande velt unde walt
for field and forest

stêt an mîner gewalt.
stand in my power.

wil er abir vehten
(if)-will he however fight

und mah er sih gerechen,
and (if)-may he himself avenge,

gwinnet er danne daz heil,
(if)-wins he then the fortune,

sô wirt ime wider âne teil
so becomes to-him back without share

wîb, mûter unde kint.
woman, mother and child.

lêzet er mih danne leben sint,
(if)-lets he me then live afterward,

sô mûz ime sîn undertân
so must to-him be subject

und den lîb von sînen gnâden hân
and the life from his grace have

unde leben nâh sînen gebote.'
and live after his command.'

dô îlete danne der bote
then hastened thence the messenger

unde reit dannen
and rode thence

âne fride, doh ungevangen.
without peace, yet uncaptured.

Dan nâh diser botescaf
Then after this embassy

Alexander reit an di walstat
Alexander rode onto the battlefield

und begrûb sîne tôten,
and buried his dead,

und di dâ lâgen in nôten
and those-who there lay in distress

gwunt unde mohten genesen,
wounded and might recover,

den hîz er vil gût wesen,
to-them bade he very good be,

biz si wurden gesunt.
until they became sound.

al dâ bleib der hêre junc
all there remained the lord young

des winteris eine wîle.
of-the winter a while.

dô gebôt er den sînen,
then commanded he to-the his-own,

daz si brêchen den palas,
that they broke the palace,

der des kuningis Xersen was.
which of-the king Xerxes was.

der sal der was alsô gût,
the hall it was so good,

sô nie nehein bezzer gestût
as never any better stood

in aller dirre werilde.
in all this world.

di sîne wâren gerinde,
the his-own were entreating,

daz er den sal lieze stân.
that he the hall let stand.

des wart er in gehôrsam
for-that became he to-them obedient

unde gesamfte sînen mût.
and softened his spirit.

er liez in blîben, daz was gût.
he let it remain, that was good.

Alsih mich versinnen kan,
As-I myself recollect can,

dâ grûben grebere sîne man,
there dug diggers his men,

dâ si zô den stunden
where they at the hours

inne genûc vonden
within enough found

guldîner nepphe,
of-golden bowls,

die ie verborgen heten,
which ever hidden had,

di ê dâre wâren.
who before there were.

ouh funden si zwâren
also found they truly

einen sarc glesen.
a coffin of-glass.

an den bûchen hân ih gelesen,
in the books have I read,

er wêre sô scône und sô clâr,
it were so fair and so clear,

daz sult ir wizzen vor wâr,
that shall you know for true,

daz man dar durh wol gesach
that one there through well saw

einen tôten, der dar inne lach.
a dead-man, who there inside lay.

si besâhen vil garwe
they beheld very thoroughly

sîn hâr und sîne varwe
his hair and his color

unde wî er getân was.
and how he made was.

der sarc was grûne alse ein gras.
the coffin was green as a grass.

des selbin tôten mannis name
of-the same dead man's name

was gegraben dar ane:
was engraved there on:

er hîz Evilmerodach,
he was-called Evilmerodach,

der kuninc in Babilonia was.
who king in Babylon was.

Ouh funden si ze leste
Also found they at last

eine hêrlîche veste.
a lordly stronghold.

dâ inne lâgen di man,
there inside lay the men,

di Darius hete gevân,
whom Darius had captured,

gestummelet unde geblendet.
maimed and blinded.

si wâren dar versendet
they were thither sent

ze pînlîcher hûte.
to painful keeping.

Alexander der gûte,
Alexander the good,

dô er ir nôt an gesach,
when he their distress on saw,

harte irbarmete ime daz.
greatly pitied to-him that.

er lîz si alle ledic wesen
he let them all free be

unde hîz in kuninclîchen geben
and bade to-them kingly give

golt unde silber.
gold and silver.

der tugint was er milder
of-the virtue was he more-generous

unde gebôt, daz ir iegelîch
and commanded, that of-them each

sîn eigen wider zô sih
his own back to himself

nême und vorder mêre
took and forth more

lebete mit êren.
lived with honors.

Darius begs Porus for help, offering gold, eighty thousand women, and Alexander's horse and armor once taken, and Porus promises to meet him at the Caspian Gates. Alexander learns of it and marches there, but Bessus and Ariobarzanes cut Darius down in his palace despite his pleas. Alexander finds him bleeding, weeps over him, and vows vengeance. Darius kisses his hand, asks him to join Greece and Persia in peace, commends to him his mother, his wife, and his daughter as Alexander's bride, and dies in his lap; Alexander carries the bier.

Ein brieb quam dô von Dario
A letter came then from Darius

dem kuninge Poro
to-the king Porus

vil verre hin in Indiam.
very far hence into India.

dar stunt gescriben an:
there stood written on:

3590 'di vil michele nôt,
'the very great distress,

di mir Alexander tût,
which to-me Alexander does,

di hîz ih dir clagen
it bade I to-thee lament

unde wolde dîne helfe haben,
and would thy help have,

daz ih mih irwerete,
that I myself defended,

3595 wander mih starke herete.
for-he me strongly harried.

dô ne quême du mir niet,
then — camest thou to-me not,

des is mir ubile geschît.
of-that is to-me ill happened.

ouh bin ih darumbe frowedelôs,
also am I therefore joyless,

mîn here wart dâ sigelôs,
my host became there victoryless,

dâ wir fâhten insamen.
where we fought together.

des mach ih mih sêre scamen,
of-that may I myself sorely be-ashamed,

daz ihz dir mûz sagen.
that I-it to-thee must tell.

dô begunder mih jagen.
then began-he me to-hunt.

der mîner bleib dâ vil irslagen,
of-the my remained there many slain,

di mach ih niemer verclagen.
them may I never cease-to-mourn.

dô quam ih flîhende heim;
then came I fleeing home;

vil harte wol mir daz schein,
very greatly well to-me that showed,

daz du dâ nierne wêre;
that thou there nowhere were;

des ist min herze swêre
of-that is my heart heavy

mit unfroweden geladen.
with joylessness laden.

lâ dir erbarmen mînen scaden
let thee pity my harm

unde com mir gereite.
and come to-me ready.

ze grôzer arbeite
at great hardship

sal man got flêhen
shall one God beseech

und stâte frûntscaf besehen.
and steadfast friendship prove.

wiltu mir ze helfe comen
(if)-wilt-thou to-me to help come

und mahtu mir noh gefromen,
and (if)-mayst-thou to-me yet profit,

sô ne wis niwit trâge:
so — be not slow:

ih gebe dir âne wâge
I give to-thee without hazard

golt unde michelen scaz,
gold and great treasure,

daz du dîn zouwis deste baz.
that thou thee hasten the better.

sorchlîche stânt mir mîne dinc:
anxiously stand to-me my things:

mîne mûter unde mîne kint
my mother and my children

unde dar zô mîn wîb,
and there to my woman,

di mir ist sô der lîb,
who to-me is as the life,

di hât er gevangen.
them has he captured.

soldih noh lîden langer
(if)-should-I yet suffer longer

dise lasterlîche nôt,
this shameful distress,

sô wêre mir lieber der tôt.
so were to-me dearer the death.

vor dir ne wil ih niwit sparen:
before thee — will I not spare:

ahzic tûsint in einer scaren
eighty thousand in a troop

sendih dir gegen frowen,
send-I to-thee toward ladies,

di mahtu gerne scowen.
them mayst-thou gladly behold.

daz sint megide unde wîb,
those are maidens and women,

di sulen frowen dînen lîb
they shall gladden thy body

und dîner helede alle.
and of-thy heroes all.

swaz sô dir gevalle,
whatever so thee pleases,

daz scaffe in mînen lande,
that procure in my land,

wande mir tût Alexander
for to-me does Alexander

leit ze manigen mâle.
sorrow at many times.

sîn ros Bucifale
his horse Bucephalus

und sîne kuninclîche wât,
and his kingly raiment,

di ime alsô wol stât,
which to-him so well suits,

di gebih dir zeigen
them give-I to-thee as-own

und swere dir mit eiden,
and swear to-thee with oaths,

daz nie nehein man
that never any man

bezzer ros ne gwan
better horse — won

noh bezzere wâfen.
nor better weapons.

du ne salt des niwit lâzen,
thou — shalt of-it not leave,

du sules mir bereite wesen.
thou shalt to-me ready be.

sô du den brieb hâs gelesen,
when thou the letter hast read,

den ih dir sende,
which I to-thee send,

sô vindestu an den ende:
so findest-thou at the end:

helt, niht ne sûme,
hero, not — delay,

wandih erbeite dîn kûme.
for-I await thee scarcely.

ze Caspen Porten
at Caspian Gates

dâ wil ih dîn warten
there will I thee await

unde lâz mir werden schîn,
and let to-me become apparent,

ob in der werlt mugen sîn
if in the world may be

ieren dihein trûwe,
anywhere any faith,

wande ih lîde grôze rûwe.'
for I suffer great rue.'

Dô Porus disen brieb gelas,
When Porus this letter read,

alsime dar in gescriben was,
as-to-him there in written was,

Dario er sus enbôt:
to-Darius he thus sent-word:

‘gehabe dih wol, helt gût.
‘fare thee well, hero good.

du gesehest êr iwit lanc,
thou seest ere any long,

daz ih dir brenge in dîn lant
that I to-thee bring into thy land

sô manigen snellen swertdegen,
so many swift sword-thane,

daz ih mih wille verplegen,
that I myself will pledge,

daz er dir leides hât getân,
what he to-thee of-sorrow has done,

daz sol ime an daz leben gân.
that shall to-him to the life go.

ih antwortin dir gevangen
I deliver-him to-thee captive

und vaste gebunden.
and fast bound.

sîne allir kûniste man,
his of-all boldest men,

di ih in den wîge irkennen kan,
whom I in the battle recognize can,

di fûre ih mit mir in Indiam,
them lead I with me into India,

dâ sulen si mir sîn undirtân.
there shall they to-me be subject.

ze Caspin Porten
at Caspian Gates

dâ saltu mîn warten.
there shalt-thou me await.

dâ kume ih dir engegene
there come I thee toward

mit manigen snellen helede.'
with many swift heroes.'

Dise rât di wart dô
This counsel it was then

vermeldet Alexandro.
betrayed to-Alexander.

dô hûb er sih dannen
then raised he himself thence

mit allen sînen mannen
with all his men

ze Caspen Porten,
to Caspian Gates,

wander sagen hôrte,
for-he say heard,

daz Darius mit sînen holden
that Darius with his loyal-ones

dar comen wolde.
thither come would.

Under des wâren zwêne man
Under that were two men

Bysan unde Arbazan
Bessus and Ariobarzanes

Dariesis undertânen,
Darius's subjects,

zesamene si beide quâmen.
together they both came.

ir trûwe si des gâben,
their faith they of-it gave,

daz si Darium irslûgen.
that they Darius slew.

sô mir got von himelrîche,
so-help me God from heaven-realm,

si tâten untrûwelîche,
they did faithlessly,

si tâten alse tumbe.
they did as fools.

si verwâneten sih dar umbe
they expected themselves there for

von Alexandro grôzes fromen.
from Alexander great profit.

alsus hân ihz vernomen.
thus have I-it heard.

si gingen in daz palas,
they went into the palace,

dâ Darius eine inne was,
where Darius alone inside was,

unde trûgen in ir hant
and bore in their hand

verholne undir ir gwant
secretly under their clothing

ir swert al bare.
their swords all bare.

dô wart des Darius gware
then became of-it Darius aware

und sprah in jêmerlîche zû:
and spoke them miserably to:

‘owî waz wollent ir nû tû?
‘alas what will you now do?

waz hân ih wider ûh getân,
what have I against you done,

daz ir mih willet irslân.
that you me will slay.

lâzet mih leben, hêren,
let me live, lords,

und helfet mir mîner êren
and help me to-my honor

unde slahet Alexandren,
and slay Alexander,

di uns in disen lande
who us in this land

mit brande mûwet unde heret
with burning grieves and harries

und dar in mit sînen Kriechen veret.
and there in with his Greeks fares.

gedenket helede dar an,
think heroes there on,

daz ir sît beide mîne man,
that you are both my men,

und merket rehte mîne wort,
and mark rightly my words,

wande begêt ir an mir nû disen mort
for (if)-commit you on me now this murder

und ne lâzet ir mir nit genesen,
and — (if)-let you me not survive,

sô ne mach daz neheine wîs wesen,
so — may that in-no way be,

ir ne werdet is vermeldet,
you unless are of-it betrayed,

vil sêre irs dan engeldet;
very sorely you-it then pay-for;

wande alsirs lutzil wânet,
for as-you-it little expect,

sô werdet is gehônet.
so are-you of-it shamed.

waz wollet ir ane mich rechen?
what will you on me avenge?

man sal û dar umbe sprechen
one shall to-you there for speak

laster unde scande
shame and disgrace

wîten after lande.
widely through land.

lâzet mih, helede, genesen
let me, heroes, survive

und lâzet û des gnûc wesen,
and let to-you of-it enough be,

daz ih bin verwunnen.
that I am overcome.

waz mugit ir mir vergunnen,
what may you me grudge,

daz ih sus jêmerlîche leben.
that I so miserably live.

ih wil û zwâre verplegen:
I will to-you truly pledge:

slahet ir mih mortlîche,
(if)-slay you me murderously,

Alexander der rîche
Alexander the rich

der sol mih an ûh rechen.
he shall me on you avenge.

vor wâr wil ih daz sprechen.
for true will I that speak.

ih getrûwe an sîner frumicheit:
I trust in his valor:

mordit ir mih, daz is ime leit.'
(if)-murder you me, that is to-him sorrow.'

Zehant dô er diz gesprach,
At-once when he this spoke,

ir iegweder slûch ime einen slach,
of-them each struck to-him a blow,

zwô verhwunden.
two mortal-wounds.

si liezen in ungesunden
they let him unsound

ligen an der erden.
lie on the earth.

schiere si dannen karten
quickly they thence turned

iedoh mit sorgen.
yet with cares.

ir wâfen si verborgen
their weapons they hid

und giengen offenbâre,
and went openly,

alse si unsculdich wâren,
as-if they guiltless were,

und clageten jêmerlîchen
and lamented miserably

Darium den rîchen
Darius the rich

und redeten jêmerlîche wort.
and spoke miserable words.

disen freislîchen mort
this fearsome murder

eine wîle si verhâlen.
a while they concealed.

er wart in doch sint ze quâlen.
it became to-them yet afterward to torment.

Alexander und sîn here breit
Alexander and his host broad

al di wîle ubir den Strâch reit
all the while over the Strage rode

mit vil grôzer gwalt,
with very great force,

dô wart ime gezalt,
then was to-him told,

wî iz Dario was irgân.
how it to-Darius was gone.

zô dem palase ranter sân
to the palace rushed-he at-once

unde gienc ûffe daz hûs.
and went up-into the house.

dô flôz zô den wunden ûz
then flowed to the wounds out

daz blût deme kuninge Dario.
the blood to-the king Darius.

Alexander sprach ime zû
Alexander spoke him to

weinende jêmerlîche
weeping miserably

unde sprach: ‘helt rîche,
and spoke: ‘hero rich,

du bist starke gewunt.
thou art strongly wounded.

mohtistu noh werden gesunt,
(if)-mightest-thou yet become sound,

ih lieze dir dîne rîche
I would-leave to-thee thy realm

imer mêr fridelîche
ever more peacefully

unverhert und unverbrant.
unharried and unburned.

kuningis name ist an dir gescant.
king's name is in thee disgraced.

westih, wer daz hête getân,
(if)-knew-I, who that had done,

iz soldime an daz leben gân.
it should-to-him to the life go.

du rûwis mih zummâzen.
thou ruest me beyond-measure.

wî wârestu verlâzen
how wert-thou abandoned

sus eine in diseme palas.
so alone in this palace.

ein michil ungelucke iz was,
a great misfortune it was,

daz dîn nieman ne plach.
that of-thee no-one — took-care.

owî daz ih disen tach
alas that I this day

ie solde geleben,
ever should live,

daz ih dih, tûrlîcher degen,
that I thee, excellent thane,

alsus solde sehen verslagen.
thus should see slain.

wî mohtih imer verclagen
how might-I ever cease-to-mourn

disen freislîchen mort.'
this fearsome murder.'

dise kuninclîche wort
these kingly words

begunden wol gevallen
began well to-please

sînen mannen allen.
his men all.

Aber sprah Alexander:
Again spoke Alexander:

'nû ne weiz nieman ander
'now — knows no-one other

wene got altirs eine,
except God all alone,

helt, wî ih dich meine
hero, how I thee mean

und mit wilhen trûwen,
and with which faith,

du mûst mir iemer rûwen.
thou must to-me ever rue.

ouh ne wil ih dih niemer verclagen,
also — will I thee never cease-to-mourn,

daz mach ih wêrlîche sagen;
that may I truly say;

wande du wâris biderbe unde gût
for thou wert worthy and good

und hetes manlîchen mût.
and hadst manly spirit.

du wêre vil milde,
thou wert very generous,

gevôge zô dînem schilde,
fit for thy shield,

getrûwe unde wârhaft,
faithful and truthful,

hubisch unde êrhaft,
courtly and honorable,

wol geborn unde rîche.
well born and rich.

ih sage dir wêrlîche:
I tell to-thee truly:

mohtistu behalden noh den leben,
(if)-mightest-thou keep yet the life,

sô woldih dir mîne trûwe geben,
so would-I to-thee my faith give,

daz ih dir, kuninc hêre,
that I thee, king lordly,

ne scadete niemer mêre.
— harmed never more.

hêtistu aber noh di craft
(if)-hadst-thou however yet the strength
und an dem lîbe sulhe maht
and in the body such might
und têtis ûf dînen munt
and (if)-didst up thy mouth
unde têtis mir kunt
and (if)-madest to-me known
umbe dise mordêren,
about these murderers,
rehte wî si wêren,
rightly how they were,
woldistu si nennen
(if)-wouldst-thou them name
und mohtih si irkennen,
and (if)-might-I them recognize,
sô mah ih daz wol sprechen,
so may I that well speak,
ih wolde dih rechen
I would thee avenge
oder zwâre ih wolde geben
or truly I would give
umbe ir lîb mînen leben;
for their life my life;
und ob ih daz lieze,
and if I that left,
sô woldih daz mih verwieze
so would-I that me reproached
got von sînen rîche
God from his realm
imer êwiglîche.'
ever eternally.'

Dô Alexander diz gesprach,
When Alexander this spoke,

Darius al dâ er lach
Darius all where he lay

berunnen mit dem blûte
run-over with the blood

und mit trûrigem mûte,
and with mournful spirit,

ûf rihte sih der wîgant
up raised himself the fighter

und kuste Alexandris hant
and kissed Alexander's hand

mit vil grôzer ummaht
with very great weakness

und vergaz allir vîentscaft.
and forgot all enmity.

er sprah jêmerlîche:
he spoke miserably:

'gedenke, kuninc rîche
'think, king rich

Alexander, wer ih wêre,
Alexander, who I were,

wer was gewaldigere,
who was mightier,

der ie geborn worde,
who ever born was,

lûtis unde burge.
of-people and castles.

waz mach mir abir daz gefromen,
what may me however that profit,

nû iz alsus ist comen,
now it thus is come,

nû râtih dir unde mane
now counsel-I to-thee and exhort

unde gedenke vaste dar ane,
and think fast there on,

daz dir al samen nit geschê:
that to-thee all together not happen:

mir tûnt mîne wunden vil wê
to-me do my wounds very woe

unde smerzent mir sêre.
and pain to-me sorely.

noh sagen ih dir mêre:
yet tell I to-thee more:

nû stânt an dîner hant
now stand in thy hand

Kriechen unde mîn lant,
Greece and my land,

mache fride under den zwein
make peace between the two

und lâz si wesen beide al ein,
and let them be both all one,

sô ne mac dir nieman widerstân.
so — may thee no-one withstand.

mîner frûnde saltu gnâde hân
to-my friends shalt-thou grace have

durh dînes selbis gûte.
for thy self's goodness.

wis gnêdich mîner mûter.
be gracious to-my mother.

mîn wîb wil ih dir ouh bevelen.
my woman will I to-thee also commend.

owî wî sêre ih nû quelen:
alas how sorely I now suffer:

sweder ih sterben unde genesen,
whether I die or survive,

sô sol mîn liebe tohter wesen
so shall my dear daughter be

dîn êlîche wîb.
thy wedded woman.

di bevele ih dir an dînen lîb,
her commend I to-thee on thy life,

wande si is von adele geborn.
for she is of nobility born.

allir vîentscaft hân ih verkorn.'
all enmity have I renounced.'

und alser diz vollensprach,
and when-he this finished-speaking,

vil schiere er dernider lach
very quickly he there-down lay

von dem blûte, daz ime ûz flôz,
from the blood, which to-him out flowed,

tôt in Alexandris scôz.
dead in Alexander's lap.

Alexander weinte den hêren.
Alexander wept the lord.

mit vil grôzen êren
with very great honors

wart di bâre bereit
was the bier prepared

und der lîchame dar ûf geleit
and the corpse there upon laid

mit pelle unde mit golde,
with silk and with gold,

alsiz Alexander wolde,
as-it Alexander would,

nâh dem kriechischeme site.
after the Greek custom.

gewâfent ginc man dâ mite
armed went one there with

3880 und mit trûrigen mûte.
and with mournful spirit.

Alexander der gûte
Alexander the good

trûch selbe di bâren.
bore self the bier.

di fursten, di dâ wâren,
the princes, who there were,

jâmerete des sêre,
pitied of-it sorely,

3885 daz si irn hêren
that they their lord

sâgen weinen sînen vîant.
saw weep his enemy.

daz wart al dâ bewant
that was all there turned

Alexandro dem mêren
to-Alexander the famous

zô vil michelen êren.
to very great honors.

Alexander settles the realm and offers a reward to whoever had Darius killed; the two murderers come forward and he hangs them. He marries Roxane, holds a wedding feast that only Solomon's table could match, and marches against Porus through heat and serpents. The army, weary, wants to go home; Alexander shames it with his own deeds and it repents. Porus writes in scorn, recalling Dionysus's defeat and the Macedonians' old tribute to India, and bids him turn back.

Dô Darius was begraben,
When Darius was buried,

Alexander hîz ubir al sagen
Alexander bade over all proclaim

fride unde gnâde.
peace and grace.

herzogen unde grâben
to-dukes and counts

bevalch er di rîche
entrusted he the realms

harte kuninclîche
very kingly

und liez wîb unde man
and let woman and man

ir iegelîch sîn reht hân,
of-them each his right have,

und tete di wâfen alle tragen,
and made the weapons all bear,

di er behalten wolde haben,
which he kept would have,

hôe ûf ein palas.
high up-into a palace.

und alse daz getân was,
and when that done was,

dô gebôt er den fursten,
then commanded he the princes,

lâzen siz nit ne torsten,
leave-it they not — dared,

daz si fride swôren
that they peace swore

den, di durh daz lant fûren
to-those, who through the land fared

koufmannen unde gebûren,
merchants and peasants,

und hîz, daz iz ze sûre
and bade, that it too bitter

worde ime, swer in zebreche
became to-him, whoever it broke

unde daz manz reche
and that one-it avenged

an sînen hals und an sîn lîb,
on his neck and on his body,

er wêre man oder wîb.
he were man or woman.

Dô bôt er michelen scaz
Then offered he great treasure

allen den, di gerieten daz,
to-all those, who counseled that,

daz man Darium irslûge
that one Darius slew

unde swôr in des genûge
and swore to-them of-it enough

bî sîner mûter heile,
by his mother's welfare,

er wolde mit in teile
he would with them share

sîn lant und sîn rîche.
his land and his realm.

dô tâten tumplîche
then did foolishly

di dâ sculdich wâren,
who there guilty were,

daz sagih û zwâren,
that tell-I to-you in-truth,

daz si vore quâmen,
that they forward came,

dô si vernâmen
when they heard

daz man in gnûc wolde geben.
that one to-them enough would give.

si wâren zwêne geneben,
they were two together,

und strebeten nâh gifte
and strove after gift

und brâhten al gerihte
and brought all straightway

sih selben des ze mâren,
themselves self of-it to tidings,

daz si daz beide wâren,
that they that both were,

di den mort hêten getân.
who the murder had done.

mit rehte soldiz in irgân,
with right should-it to-them go,

alse si heten gewurben:
as they had striven:

mit scanden si worden
with disgrace they were

von dem lîbe getân.
from the life done.

nû hôret, wî iz dar zô bequam.
now hear, how it there to came.

Si giengen vor Alexandren stân.
They went before Alexander stand.

dô si des mordes verjân,
when they of-the murder confessed,

der kuninc ne wolde niht beiten,
the king — would not wait,

er hîz si dannen leiten
he bade them thence lead

unde daz man si irslûge.
and that one them slew.

si bâten in gnûge:
they begged him enough:

si ne gerten neheiner geben,
they — desired no gifts,

wen daz er si lieze leben;
except that he them let live;

wander daz selbe sprêche,
for-he that same spoke,

daz erz niemer ne gerêche
that he-it never — avenged

mit neheiner slahte leide;
with any kind of-sorrow;

und maneten im sîner eide,
and reminded him of-his oaths,

daz er si lieze genesen
that he them let survive

und lieze si imer arm wesen
and let them ever poor be

in anderen rîchen.
in other realms.

er sprah: ‘wêrlîchen
he spoke: ‘truly

ir mûzet mit deme tôde streben,
you must with the death strive,

wande ir sult curze wîle leben.’
for you shall short while live.’

Ir gescrei und ir gedôz
Their screaming and their din

daz wart michel unde grôz,
it became great and great,

dô man si zeinen galgen
when one them to-a gallows

zouch dâ behalben
drew there aside

an eine vil unreine stat,
to a very unclean place,

alse der kuninc hîz und bat,
as the king bade and asked,

er hîz si schentlîchen hân
he bade them shamefully hang

und sprah: ‘hôret alle mîne man:
and spoke: ‘hear all my men:

uher iteslîch hât gesprochen,
of-you each has spoken,

ih habe nû zebrochen
I have now broken

mîne trûwe unde mînen eit.
my faith and my oath.

nein ih, mir wêre vil leit,
no I, to-me were very sorrowful,

daz meineide swôre.
that perjury swore.

ih swôr, daz ih irfôre,
I swore, that I found-out,

wer den mort hête getân.
who the murder had done.

man ne sal dem untrûwen man
one — shall to-the faithless man

neheine trûwe leisten;
no faith keep;

swâ man in mach vereischen,
wherever one him may find-out,

man sol in brinnen unde slân,
one shall him burn and slay,

radebrechen oder hân,
break-on-the-wheel or hang,

alse dise zwêne bôse man,
as these two wicked men,

di disen mort haben getân:
who this murder have done:

di nerbarmen mir niet.'
they move-to-pity to-me not.'

daz was gemeinlîchen lieb
that was commonly dear

den Persen und den Kriechin.
to-the Persians and to-the Greeks.

lob si ime dô riefen
praise they to-him then cried

und sprâchen, daz er wêre
and said, that he were

ein rehter rihtêre.
a right judge.

Alexander warb mit sinnen
Alexander strove with wits

und hiez ime gewinnen
and bade for-himself win

Darien tohter.
Darius's daughter.

vil wol er gedâhte,
very well he thought,

wes ime der rîche kuninc bat,
whereof him the rich king asked,

dô er an sînem ende lac,
when he at his end lay,

swîz mit ime quême,
however-it with him came,

daz er ze wîbe nême
that he as woman took

Roxanien di scônen
Roxane the fair

und saztir ûf di crônen.
and set-to-her on the crown.

Alexandren des bedûhte,
to-Alexander of-it seemed,

daz iz wol wesen mohte.
that it well be might.

und dô daz brûtloft was bereit,
and when the wedding was ready,

Alexander einen brieb sreib,
Alexander a letter wrote,

sîner mûter heim ze lande
to-his mother home to land

er in vil schiere sande
he it very quickly sent

und enbôt ir, wî iz im was irgân,
and sent-word to-her, how it to-him was gone,

daz er ze wîbe solde hân
that he as woman should have

Darien tohter.
Darius's daughter.

zô sînen brûtlofte
to his wedding

bat er, daz si quême,
bade he, that she came,

swanner sîn wîb nême,
whenever-he his woman took,

und dar nâh gelîche
and there after alike

di armen und di rîche.
the poor and the rich.

Sîne boten er ouh sante
His messengers he also sent

heim ze Kriechlande
home to Greece

und hîz daz lant berihten
and bade the land instruct

und ein brûtlofte stiften
and a wedding establish

in allen dem gebêre,
in all the bearing,

alser dâ selbe wêre.
as-if-he there self were.

daz teter alliz umbe daz,
that did-he all for that,

daz man wiste deste baz
that one knew the better

ubir manige rîche mêre,
over many realms tidings,

wîz ime irgangen wêre
how-it to-him gone were

in persischen rîche.
in Persian realm.

vil kuninclîche
very kingly

stifte man di wirtscaf,
established one the feast,

alsuns daz bûch hât innen brâht,
as-us the book has to-knowledge brought,

drîzich tage und ouh mê. 4020
thirty days and also more.

weder sint noh ê
neither since nor before

newart nihein wirtscaft
was any feast

mit sulhen êren vollenbrâht,
with such honors accomplished,

iz ne tête der kuninc Salemon.
it unless did the king Solomon.

vil michil was sîn rîchtûm 4025
very great was his wealth

ubir manige kuninge rîche;
over many kings rich;

er lebete keiserlîche,
he lived imperially,

wander kundiz wol bedenken.
for-he could-it well devise.

drî hundrit schenken
three hundred cupbearers

hâter aller tagelîch. 4030
had-he all daily.

daz wêre ungeloublîch
that were unbelievable

iemanne ze sagene,
to-anyone to tell,

ne wêriz uns vil ebene
— were-it to-us very evenly

in den bûchen niht gescriben
in the books not written

und von der wârheite bliben.
and of the truth remained.

ouh heter ze sînen tische
also had-he at his table

fleisch unde vische
meat and fish

sô unmâzlîchen vile,
so measurelessly much,

daz man is gelouben niht ne wile,
that one of-it believe not — will,

wander was hêr unde rîch.
for-he was lordly and rich.

ouh heter allir tagelîch
also had-he all daily

drîzich malder simelen.
thirty measures of-fine-flour.

des beriet in got von himele.
of-that provided him God from heaven.

ze sîner cuchenen man ouh gab,
to his kitchen one also gave,

des neheines tagis ne gebrach,
of-which no day — lacked,

zehen sumersâzen
ten summer-fattened

veiz unde grôzen,
fat and great,

und dar zô drîzich rinder
and there to thirty oxen

mêrre unde minder,
greater and lesser,

und dar zô hundrit wedere.
and there to hundred wethers.

sîn dienist daz stunt ebene
his service it stood evenly

an fugile unde wiltprât.
in fowl and venison.

der hêre hete sînen rât
the lord had his provision

gescaffit wol mit liste,
ordered well with craft,

wander genûch wiste:
for-he enough knew:

diz môse man ime gewinnen
this must one for-him win

mit liebe und mit minnen
with love and with affection

âne roub und âne ungemach,
without robbery and without hardship,

daz ime nihtis ne gebrach.
that to-him nothing — lacked.

Dô di brûtloft was gelant,
When the wedding was ended,

dô quam ein bote alzehant,
then came a messenger at-once,

der sagete Alexandro sus:
who said to-Alexander thus:

'hî comet der kuninc Porus
'here comes the king Porus

mit micheleme gelfe
with great clamor

Dario ze helfe.'
to-Darius to help.'

daz was Alexandro ungemach.
that was to-Alexander displeasing.

dô der bote diz gesprach,
when the messenger this spoke,

dô sameneter sîne heriscraft
then gathered-he his host-strength

und vôr mit micheler craft
and fared with great strength

ingagen im in Indiam
against him into India

uber eine heide freisam.
over a heath fearsome.

dâ liden si michil ungemach
there suffered they great hardship

von der sunnen den tach
from the sun the day

und des nahtis von den wormen.
and of-the night from the worms.

ze râte si dô worden,
to counsel they then came,

si ne mohten dise leit
they — might this sorrow

unde sulich arbeit
and such toil

langer niht verlîden:
longer not endure:

ze kinden und ze wîben
to children and to women

wolden si heim kêren.
would they home turn.

si sprâchen, ir hêre
they said, their lord

wâre ein wunderlîch man,
were a strange man,

waz er sûhte in Indiam.
what he sought in India.

Si sprâchen almeistich,
They spoke mostly,

si hêten geleistit,
they had performed,

daz si ime swôren,
what they to-him swore,

dô si von lande fûren:
when they from land fared:

si hulfin ime bedwingen
they would-help to-him subdue

mit ir jungelingen
with their youths

Darium den rîchen
Darius the rich

vil ernistlîchen,
very earnestly,

beide vân oder slân.
both seize or slay.

'nû habe wir diz getân',
'now have we this done',

sprâchen si algemeine
spoke they all-together

grôz unde cleine,
great and small,

'nû gebrichit uns des lîbes,
'now fails us of-the body,

ouh verdrûzit uns des wîges.
also irks us of-the battle.

unse lant stêt umbewart.
our land stands unguarded.

waz ob manz brinnit unde heret,
what if one-it burns and harries,

sô nist dâ nieman, der iz were.'
so is there no-one, who it might-defend.'

dô wolde daz here
then would the host

almeistic wider kêren
mostly back turn

unde geswîchen ir hêren.
and fail their lord.

Ouh sprâchen si gelîche,
Also spoke they alike,

wolder dihein rîche
(if)-would-he any realm

vorder mêr bedwingen,
forth more subdue,

sô moster gewinnen
so must-he win

nûwe urlouges man.
new war men.

si hêtens sô vil getân,
they had-of-it so much done,

daz manz wol mohte scowen.
that one-it well might behold.

si sprâchen: 'wir sîn sô verhowen,
they spoke: 'we are so hewn,

daz uns verdrûzit daz wir leben.
that us irks that we live.

er mach uns wol urlob geben
he may us well leave give

und lâze uns wider kêren.'
and let us back turn.'

Alexander der hêre
Alexander the lord

der vernam ir gebêre.
he perceived their bearing.

des wart sîn herze swêre
of-that became his heart heavy

und gienc ûf einen berc stân
and went onto a mountain stand

und bat dar zô ime gân,
and bade there to him go,

di mit ime wâren comen;
who with him were come;

wander hête vernomen
for-he had heard

rehte ir aller willen.
rightly of-them all will.

er sprah: ‘vil liebe gesellen,
he spoke: ‘very dear comrades,

saget mir durh uher gûte
tell me for your goodness

rehte uher gemûte.
rightly your mind.

wollet ir von mir scheiden
(if)-will you from me part

an dirre wûsten heiden,
on this wild heath,

daz ist mir herzelîchen leit,
that is to-me heartily sorrowful,

wande ir lâzt mih hie in arbeit.
for you leave me here in toil.

uns sint die Perses sô gram;
to-us are the Persians so hostile;

wir hân in leidis vil getân,
we have to-them of-sorrow much done,

des ne hânt si niht vergezzen.
that — have they not forgotten.

helede vermezzen,
heroes bold,

nû ihz sol sprechen,
now I-it shall speak,

mugen si sih gerechen,
(if)-may they themselves avenge,

dar zô sint si vil gereit.
there to are they very ready.

ih sagiz û mit der wârheit,
I tell-it to-you with the truth,

vernement si disen únmût,
(if)-perceive they this ill-will,

den ir âne nôt tût,
which you without need do,

sô sîn wir alle verlorn,
so are we all lost,

iz sî uns lieb oder zorn.
it be to-us dear or anger.

ih ne spreche diz darumbe niet,
I — speak this therefore not,

ist û heim ze lande lieb,
(if)-is to-you home to land dear,

ih mûz û varen lâzen:
I must you fare let:

ih ne were û niht di strâzen.
I — bar to-you not the roads.

doh gedenkit dar ane,
yet think there on,

wes ih û nû hie mane:
whereof I you now here remind:

ob ir dâ heime ûwit sagit,
if you there at-home anything tell,

des ir hie getân habit,
of-that you here done have,

daz ist alliz ein wiht,
that is all a nothing,

ir ne habit hie getân niht.
you — have here done nothing.

ih was jener, der dâ vaht.
I was he, who there fought.

sît ir rehte bedâht,
(if)-are you rightly bethought,

ir mûzt der wârheite jehen;
you must the truth avow;

wandir hât iz alliz wol gesên,
for-you have it all well seen,

daz iz alliz was mîn rât,
that it all was my counsel,

swaz ir hie getân hât.
whatever you here done have.

mir ne sah nie nehein man
me — saw never any man

in dem sturme ubir hôer gân,
in the assault over shoulder go,

noh ubir rucke zîhen
nor over back draw

noh zagelîchen dannen flîhen.
nor cowardly thence flee.

ih vaht imer zevorn.
I fought ever in-front.

âne scult hân ih verlorn
without guilt have I lost

uher aller frûntscaft.
of-you all friendship.

er was ubile bedâht,
he was ill bethought,

der ûh dar ane brâht hât.
who you there on brought has.

nû sol is werden der rât,
now shall of-it become the counsel,

der is nû werden mac:
which of-it now become may:

ih gelebe lîhte noh den tac,
I live perhaps yet the day,

mûz ih dar under genesen
(if)-may I there among survive

und mûz ih dan mit gnâden wesen,
and (if)-may I then with grace be,

sô gwinnih noh di man,
so win-I yet the men,

di mir suln bî stân.'
who to-me shall by stand.'

Dô Alexander diz gesprach,
When Alexander this spoke,

al sîn here, daz dâ lach,
all his host, that there lay,

scamete sih durh nôt.
was-ashamed itself for need.

iz wart bleich unde rôt,
it became pale and red,

wande si wolden kêren
for they would turn

von irem lieben hêren.
from their dear lord.

si bejâhen ir sculde
they avowed their guilt

und er gab in sîne hulde.
and he gave to-them his favor.

zehant si ûf sprungen,
at-once they up sprang,

frôlîchen si sungen.
gladly they sang.

ane bunden si ir vanen
on bound they their banners

unde sprâchen alle samen,
and spoke all together,

si ne wolden von der stunt,
they — would from the hour,

di wîle si wâren gesunt,
the while they were sound,

ime niemer mê geswîchen.
him never more fail.

si hûbin sih frôlîchen
they raised themselves gladly

und fûren hin in Indiam.
and fared hence into India.

zegegen si dô quam
against them then came

ein bote starke gerant
a messenger strongly rushing

und fûrte briebe in daz lant,
and carried letters into the land,

di sante dar in Porus.
which sent there in Porus.

dar ane stunt gescriben sus:
there on stood written thus:

‘Hie veret after lande
‘Here fares through land

der roubêre Alexander
the robber Alexander

und gewinnet lutzele statelîn.
and wins little towns.

si múgen wol vertorben sîn,
they may well ruined be,

di ime daz weren solden.
who to-him that prevent should.

vil ungerne ihs ime wolde
very unwillingly I-it to-him would
ze langer wîle gestaten.
for longer while allow.
ih wêne, ih wil in gesaten
I ween, I will him sate
sturmis unde vehte.
of-assault and fighting.
mit manigem snellen knehte
with many swift knight
come ih ime ingegene,
come I him against,
mit mînen snellen degenen.
with my swift thanes.
ih wil in bringen inne,
I will him bring in-to-knowledge,
daz ih sîne minne
that I his love
niemer ne gesûche,
never — seek,
wandih ir nit ne rûche.
for-I of-it not — care.
mir ne geswîchen di mîne,
me unless fail the mine,
ih trîbin und di sîne
I drive-him and the his
wider heim ze lande.
back home to land.
wes wânet Alexander?
what weens Alexander?
ih ahte ûffe sîne rede
I heed upon his speech
lutzil und ûf sînen fride.
little and upon his peace.

her fûr ouh wîlen in diz lant
hither fared also formerly into this land

Dionisius der wîgant,
Dionysus the fighter,

ein kuninc mit grôzeme here.
a king with great host.

manic tûsint was dere,
many thousand was of-them,

di mit ime quâmen
who with him came

und scaden hie nâmen.
and harm here took.

si worden alle sigelôs.
they became all victoryless.

des heres, des er hie verlôs,
of-the host, which he here lost,

des was unmâzlîchen vile.
of-that was measurelessly much.

ih wil bestân mit nîtspile
I will withstand with hate-play

disen selben roubêre.
this same robber.

joh mûwet mih vil sêre,
yea grieves me very sorely,

daz ih dise rede tûn sal.
that I this speech do shall.

iz weiz doch die werlt al,
it knows yet the world all,

daz di Macedonien
that the Macedonians

deme hêren von Indien,
to-the lord of India,

hie vore zins sanden
here before tribute sent

von irn landen,
from their lands,

biz Crelus wart geborn.
until Crelus was born.

daz wir den zins dâ verlorn,
that we the tribute there lost,

daz was uns ummêre.
that was to-us indifferent.

wir sprâchen, daz dâ ne wêre
we said, that there — were

niht sulhis, sô wir wolden,
not such, as we would,

durh daz wir setzen solden
for that we set should

lîb und gût an ein heil
life and goods on a fortune

und ouh an ein urteil.
and also on a judgment.

umbe dise rede wânich
for this speech ween-I

wurde wir des zinsis ânich.
became we of-the tribute deprived.

Alexander ih dir doh râte
Alexander I to-thee yet counsel

baz dan du mir tâtes,
better than thou to-me didst,

ob mirs durft wâre.
if to-me-of-it need were.

ih râte dir zwâre,
I counsel to-thee truly,

daz du mih êres
that thou me honorest

unde wider kêres
and back turnest

heim zô dînen lande,
home to thy land,

ê dir dihein scande
before to-thee any disgrace

begagene von mir.
meets from me.

daz râtih trûwelîche dir.
that counsel-I faithfully to-thee.

ne kêristu niwit widere,
— (if)-turnest-thou not back,

ih gesetze dih vil nidere
I set thee very low

von allen dînen êren;
from all thy honors;

unde dâ du hêre
and where thou lord

niwit an ne maht wesen,
not on — mayst be,

daz lâz nâh mînen râte wesen.
that let after my counsel be.

ouh sagih dir wêrlîche:
also tell-I to-thee truly:

daz du mir mîn rîche
that thou from-me my realm

wênis an gewinnen,
weenest on to-win,

daz comet von unsinnen;
that comes from senselessness;

du mûst mirz doh lâzen.
thou must to-me-it yet leave.

ih mûze sîn verwâzen,
I may be cursed,

ob ihz dir niht ne were
if I-it from-thee not — defend

mit mînem kreftigen here.'
with my mighty host.'

X · THE WAR WITH PORUS

Alexander answers Porus's letter in scorn. Porus brings black Moors and elephants that carry towers; Alexander sends hollow bronze figures full of Greek fire, and the elephants, licking them, burn and flee through their own ranks. Porus rallies his men, and the battle lasts three days with the Greeks the worse for it. Alexander offers single combat; though Porus is two fathoms taller, Alexander kills him and cuts off his head. The Indians fight on, then submit and bury their king.

Dô Alexander der kûne man
When Alexander the bold man

Poren botescaft vernam
Porus's embassy heard

unde er sînen brieb gelas,
and he his letter read,

vil harte smâhe iz ime was.
very greatly scornful it to-him was.

er sprah zô sînen allen:
he spoke to his all:

'wî sol uns diz gevallen?
'how shall us this please?

woldir tûn mînen rât,
(if)-would-you do my counsel,

tût ane uher sarwât.
do on your armor.

wir suln dem stolzen Poren
we shall the proud Porus

mit den swerten lônen,
with the swords reward,

daz er Dionîsen
that he Dionysus

den frumigen und den wîsen
the valiant and the wise

ie torste bestân: 4280
ever dared attack:

daz sol ime an den leben gân.
that shall to-him at the life go.

ouh was des luzele nôt,
also was of-it little need,

daz er uns her enbôt
that he us hither sent-word

sô smêlîche eine botescaft.
so scornfully an embassy.

mir ne geswîche mîne craft, 4285
me unless fail my strength,

er solis ze wandele stân.'
he shall-of-it to amends stand.'

daz lobeten alle sîne man.
that praised all his men.

Dô dise rede was getân,
When this speech was done,

Alexander screib sân
Alexander wrote at-once

deme kuninge Poro einen brief. 4290
to-the king Porus a letter.

starke er in dar in berief,
strongly he him there in reproached,

alser wol mohte,
as-he well might,

von sîner unzuhte.
for his ill-breeding.

wande er hête gehôrt
for he had heard

an sînen brieve scheltwort.
in his letter abusive-words.

er enbôt ime ouh mêre,
he sent-word to-him also more,

daz daz ubil wêre,
that that ill were,

daz sihein edele man
that any noble man

solde wesen hônsam.
should be insulting.

er sprah, daz brûn îsen
he spoke, that brown iron

daz solde wol gewîsen,
it should well show,

wâ der helt mêre
where the hero famous

in der nôt wêre.
in the distress were.

dâ man solde stechen
where one should thrust

unde spere brechen
and spears break

und di scilde howen,
and the shields hew,

dâ mohte man scowen
there might one behold

manneglîchis ellen
of-every-man valor

under den gesellen
among the comrades

und degenis gebêre.
and thane's bearing.

ime wêre vil unmêre,
to-him were very indifferent,

waz der hunt gebulle
what the dog barked

und grene unde sculle,
and snarled and yelped,

der ime alsime dûhte
who to-him as-to-him seemed

gescaden niht ne mohte.
harm not — might.

Dô Porus disen brieb gesach,
When Porus this letter saw,

dô was ime daz vil ungemach,
then was to-him that very displeasing,

daz dar ane stunt gescriben;
what there on stood written;

ime wêre lieber, wârer bliben.
to-him would-be dearer, (if)-were-he remained.

er ne sante Alexandro sider
he — sent to-Alexander afterward

neheinen anderen wider,
no other back,

wandin dwanc der grôze zorn,
for-him compelled the great anger,

den sin hêter nâh verlorn;
the sense had-he nearly lost;

doh gebôt er sîne hervart.
yet commanded he his campaign.

dô quam ime manich môr swarz,
then came to-him many Moor black,

di ime woldin helfin.
who to-him would help.

si brâhten manich elfent.
they brought many elephant.

von den wil ih û sagen,
of them will I to-you tell,

wiliche sterke si haben.
what strength they have.

si ne hânt in ir gebeine,
they — have in their bones,

nû merket, waz ih meine,
now mark, what I mean,

nieren nehein marc.
nowhere any marrow.

si sint ûzer mâze stark.
they are beyond measure strong.

man mach ûf si bûwen,
one may on them build,

willit irs getrûwen,
(if)-will you-it trust,

turme unde berchfride.
towers and siege-towers.

vil stark sint in di lide.
very strong are to-them the limbs.

ouh sint selbe vil grôz.
also are selves very great.

si ne vorhten slach noh stôz
they — feared blow nor thrust

in neheinen stunden.
in no hours.

man ne mac si niwit wunden,
one — may them not wound,

wen in den nabel under.
except in the navel under.

daz ist ein michil wunder.
that is a great wonder.

ist abir ieman sô tumb
(if)-is however anyone so foolish

er sî alt oder junc,
he be old or young,

der iz in den nabel wil irslahen,
who it in the navel will slay,

der mac niemer sô gegâhen,
he may never so hasten,

er ne gwinnis grôze nôt
he unless win-of-it great distress

und den bitteren tôt;
and the bitter death;

wande swenne sô erz stichit,
for whenever so he-it stabs,

schîre iz sih selben richet
quickly it itself self avenges

und vellet ûf in dernider
and falls on him there-down

und ne lebet niwit langer sider.
and — lives not longer afterward.

sus wirt in beiden der lîb benomen,
thus is to-them both the life taken,

ob ihz rehte hân vernomen.
if I-it rightly have heard.

Ouh hâtiz eine natûre,
Also has-it a nature,

daz wirdit ze sûre
that becomes too bitter

den alden joh den jungen:
to-the old and the young:

swen ez mit sîner zungen
whom it with its tongue

in dem sturme mac irlangen,
in the assault may reach,

des leben ist irgangen.
his life is gone.

alsiz gevellet ouh dernider,
when-it falls also there-down,

ûf ne komet iz niwit sider;
up — comes it not afterward;

iz mûz dâ ligende blîben,
it must there lying remain,

wandiz ne hât niht knieschîben;
for-it — has no knee-caps;

wellent irs gelouben,
(if)-will you-it believe,

des ne mach iz niht gebôgen
of-that — may it not bend

an den schenkelen sîn gebeine.
in the shanks its bones.

iz ist vil harte reine
it is very greatly clean

an allen sînen lîbe.
on all its body.

iz treget wol âne zwîbel
it bears well without doubt

in strîte und in sturme
in strife and in assault

berhfriden unde turme
siege-towers and towers

und rîter dar inne.
and knights there inside.

iz wîset mit grôzeme sinne
it guides with great sense

sîn meister, der dâ mite kan.
its master, who there with can.

iz ne mac nieren gegân,
it — may nowhere go,

daz lant ne sî dâr ebene.
the land unless be there level.

beginnit man ime ze gebene
(if)-begins one to-it to give

rôten wîn oder blût,
red wine or blood,

des gewinnet iz freislîchen mût.
of-that wins it fearsome spirit.

sus mac man iz bedwingen
thus may one it subdue

und dar zô bringen,
and there to bring,

daz manz wîset, swâ man wile
that one-it guides, wherever one will

ze froweden und ze nîtspile.
to joys and to hate-play.

Alexander der rîche
Alexander the rich

gedâhte wunderlîche;
thought wondrously;

zehant dô er vernam,
at-once when he heard,

daz Porus gegen ime quam
that Porus against him came

und elefande brâhte,
and elephants brought,

wîslîchen er dâhte.
wisely he thought.

mit listiclîchen sachen
with cunning things

hiez der hêre machen
bade the lord make

êrîne bilede,
brazen images,

gescaffen alse helide.
made as heroes.

enbinnen wâren si hol
within were they hollow

und wâren kriechisches fûris vol.
and were of-Greek fire full.

mit den bilden hiez er laden
with the images bade he load

manigen îsenînen wagen
many iron wagon

und scûf sîne gewarheit
and made his precaution

gegen Poren here breit
against Porus's host broad

und hiez sîne holden,
and bade his loyal-ones,

di ime helfen wolden,
who to-him help would,

daz si dâhten dar an,
that they thought there on,

er wolde Porum bestân.
he would Porus attack.

des morgenis alsiz tagete,
in-the morning when-it dawned,

di wartman ûz dô draveten
the watchmen out then trotted

von iewedere menige
from each multitude

und bescoweten di degene.
and beheld the thanes.

Sân des morgenis frô
At-once in-the morning early

dô gereite sih dar zû
then readied itself there to

di menige in beiden sîten,
the multitude on both sides,

alse si wolten strîten.
as they would fight.

Porus dâ vore sande
Porus there before sent

sîne elefande
his elephants

ze vorderist vor sîner schare.
at foremost before his troop.

des wart Alexander geware
of-that became Alexander aware

und schickete dâ ingegene
and sent there against

di brinninde bilide
the burning images

vor sînen wîganden.
before his fighters.

man gab den elfanden
one gave the elephants

rôten wîn unde blût.
red wine and blood.

des wart irgremet in der mût.
of-that was enraged to-them the spirit.

des hugeten wol zem sturme
of-that took-heart well for-the assault

di dâ wâren in di turme
who there were in the towers

ober di elfande,
over the elephants,

di kûnen wîgande
the bold fighters

und di tûrlîche recken.
and the excellent warriors.

dô begunden lecken
then began to-lick

elfande di bilede.
elephants the images.

si wânden, daz iz helede
they weened, that it heroes

wêren sicherlîchen.
were surely.

si gebârten freislîchen,
they behaved fearsomely,

wande si heten grôze nôt.
for they had great distress.

der tiere bleib dâ vil tôt,
of-the beasts remained there many dead,

wande si branten ir mûlen
for they burned their muzzles

an den glûndigen sûlen
on the glowing pillars

von des fûris flammen.
from the fire's flames.

di dâ quâmen dannen,
who there came away,

di fluhin durh daz here wider.
they fled through the host back.

si ne scadeten niwit mêr sider,
they — harmed not more afterward,

wen daz si di frûnt irtrâten,
except that they the friends trampled,

dâ si dannen gâheten.
where they thence hastened.

Dô begundiz gân an di nôt,
Then began-it to-go to the distress,

dâ mannelîch den tôt
where every-man the death

vor sînen ougen sach gereit.
before his eyes saw ready.

mit vil grôzer arbeit
with very great toil

Alexander den sînen half.
Alexander the his-own helped.

Porus in andirhalf
Porus in other-side

manete di môre,
exhorted the Moors,

alsir wol mugit gehôren:
as-you well may hear:

‘dirre tûbiles Alexander
‘this devil’s Alexander

stellet michil wunder.
sets-up great wonder.

er ist ein ungehûre man.
he is a monstrous man.

vil manige bôse list er kan.
very many wicked crafts he knows.

er tût uns grôze scande:
he does to-us great disgrace:

er hât unse elefande
he has our elephants

verbrant und verjaget.
burned and driven-off.

sehet, daz ir nit ne verzaget.
see, that you not — despair.

denket zô den handen,
think to the hands,

tûre wîgande,
excellent fighters,

wande er ne mac uns niht gescaden.
for he — may us not harm.

wir suln strîtis gesaten
we shall of-strife sate

in und sîne recken
him and his warriors

mit den brûnen ecken,
with the brown edges,

vil blôde sint di Kriechen.
very timid are the Greeks.

si ne sulens niht geniezen,
they — shall-of-it not profit,

daz si lûderêre
that they rascals

ie durh unse unêre
ever for our dishonor

in diz lant torsten comen.
into this land dared come.

si ne gewinnint is niemer fromen.
they — win of-it never profit.

mir ne gebreche daz swert in der hant,
me unless fail the sword in the hand,

si mûzen rûmen mir diz lant.
they must yield to-me this land.

si wênent tumplîche,
they ween foolishly,

daz in unsem rîche
that in our realm

niht ne sîn sô tûre recken
not — be so excellent warriors

zô den scarfen ecken
to the sharp edges

noh sô kûne wîgande
nor so bold fighters

alse in Kriechlande.
as in Greece.

ih verliese swaz ih hân
I lose whatever I have

oder ih verleide in den wân
or I spoil for-them the hope

und bringe si der nider.
and bring them there down.

ih ne bringe niemer wider
I — bring never back

heim gesunt mînen lîb
home sound my body

oder ih mache sûhtende wîb
or I make sighing women

dâ heim in irn landen.
there at-home in their lands.

si mûzen mit scanden
they must with disgrace

von uns hinne rûmen;
from us hence yield;

ouh gebeite ih vil kûme.'
also await I very scarcely.'

Dô der wîse Alexander
When the wise Alexander

an den elefanden
on the elephants

den sige mit listen gwan,
the victory with crafts won,

des frowete sih der stolze man.
of-that rejoiced himself the proud man.

ouh gwan is sîn here grôz
also won of-it his host great

einen michelen trôst.
a great comfort.

di Indi begunden verzagen.
the Indians began to-despair.

si heten michelen scaden
they had great harm

vil nâh dâr gewunnen.
very nearly there won.

zesamene si dô sprungen
together they then sprang

und begunden sih weren
and began themselves to-defend

ingegen dem kriechischen here
against the Greek host

und spienen ire hornbogen.
and drew their horn-bows.

uns ne habe daz bûch dan gelogen,
to-us unless have the book then lied,

sô wêren di Kriechin sigelôs,
so would-be the Greeks victoryless,

ne wêre Alexander ir trôst
— were Alexander their comfort

mit den bileden niwit comen.
with the images not come.

iz comet dicke ze fromen,
it comes often to profit,

daz der hêre sîne man
that the lord his men

ze nôte wol getrôsten kan
in distress well comfort can

unde williget mit dem gûte.
and makes-willing with the goods.

daz machet in stolzgemûte,
that makes them proud-spirited,

und derwider si sûze
and there-against them sweetens

mit minlîchem grûze,
with loving greeting,

und er ze vorderist an den scaren
and he at foremost in the troops

sîn here selbe tar bewarn.
his host self dares guard.

Dô Indi solden verzagen
When the-Indians should despair

und man si begunde jagen,
and one them began to-hunt,

dô gwan Porus der helt gût
then won Porus the hero good

einen grimmigen mût.
a grim spirit.

der tûrlîche wîgant
the excellent fighter

under sîn here er dô spranc
among his host he then sprang

und manete si vaste zô der nôt.
and exhorted them fast to the distress.

mildiclîche er in bôt
generously he to-them offered

phellil unde sîde,
brocade and silk,

golt unde gesmîde.
gold and jewelry.

er sprah: 'untrôst nist niet gût.
he spoke: 'discouragement is not good.

habet manlîchen mût
have manly spirit

unde weret alse helide
and defend as heroes

uher lant und uher selide,
your land and your dwellings,

beide gût unde lîb
both goods and life

unde kint unde wîb,
and child and woman,

unde irwirbet êre unde rûm.
and win honor and fame.

ne wollint ir des niwit tûn,
— (if)-will you of-it not do,

sô solt ir des gelouben,
so shall you of-it believe,

si sulin vor uheren ougen
they shall before your eyes

uhere liebe kint schenden
your dear children disgrace

und uns in ellende
and us into exile

trîben ûzer dem lande
drive out-of the land

in zêren unde uns ze scanden.
to their-honor and to-us to disgrace.

durh waz solde wir diz dolen?
for what should we this suffer?

wir mugin vil wole
we may very well

in wîgis gestaten.
to-them of-battle grant.

weiz got, wir sulin si gesaten
knows God, we shall them sate

strîtis unde vehte.
of-strife and fighting.

wir habin sô gûte knehte
we have so good knights

und sô manigen dietdegen,
and so many folk-thane,

wir suln mit starken swertslegen
we shall with strong sword-blows

uns an in rechen
ourselves on them avenge

und ir scare durhbrechen.
and their troops break-through.

si mugin sih uns nit irweren
they may themselves from-us not defend

noh den lîb vor uns generen.
nor the life from us save.

wir suln in ûf ir laster
we shall to-them upon their shame

widerstân michil vaster,
withstand much faster,

dan Darius habe getân,
than Darius have done,

den Alexander hîz slân
whom Alexander bade slay

mortlîchen in sîn palas.
murderously in his palace.

hei wî grôz untrûwe daz was.
hey how great faithlessness that was.

weret ûh, helede gût,
defend you, heroes good,

und haldet manlîchen mût.
and hold manly spirit.

ir sult in wîsen
you shall to-them show

daz scarfe brûn îsin.
the sharp brown iron.

tûre wîgande,
excellent fighters,

gedenket wol zô den handen
think well to the hands

und lâzet û rûwen
and let you rue

Darium mit trûwen
Darius with faith

unde rechet sînen tôt.
and avenge his death.

warumbe solde wir dise nôt
why should we this distress

von in langer lîden?
from them longer suffer?

joh willent si uns vertrîben
yea (if)-will they us drive

ûz von unsem rîche,
out from our realm,

weret ûh sô frumichlîche,
defend you so valiantly,

daz man von den môren
that one of the Moors

hernâh sagen hôre,
hereafter tell hear,

wî si ir lant werten,
how they their land defended,

dô si di Kriechen hereten.
when they the Greeks harried.

ir sult slân unde stechen
you shall strike and thrust

unde ir schare durhbrechen.
and their troops break-through.

swer daz heil gewinnet,
whoever the fortune wins,

daz er hin entrinnet,
that he hence escapes,

daz er dâ heime muge sagen,
that he there at-home may tell,

waz er hie gesehen habe,
what he here seen has,

wî si worden entfangen
how they were received

in indischen landen.'
in Indian lands.'

Dô Porus dise rede
When Porus this speech

zô sînen heliden getete,
to his heroes made,

dô gewunnen si einen stâten mût.
then won they a steadfast spirit.

dô was dâ manich helt gût,
then was there many hero good,

den niht sô liebis ne was,
to-whom nothing so dear — was,

sô daz si di scarfen sas
as that they the sharp knives

teilten mit den gesten.
shared with the strangers.

ze wîge si sih dô rusten,
for battle they themselves then readied,

wande aller manne gelîch
for of-all men alike

gehugete an daz volcwîch.
took-heart for the folk-battle.

manic irwarb dâ den tôt.
many won there the death.

dâ mohte man scowen daz blût
there might one behold the blood

von den Kriechin fliezen.
from the Greeks flow.

di môre ouh dâ liezen
the Moors also there left

manigen urlouges man.
many war man.

swer mit dem lîbe dannen quam,
whoever with the life thence came,

der mohtis imer frô sîn.
he might-of-it ever glad be.

di kuninge fâhten under in
the kings fought among them

unz ane den dritten tac,
until on the third day,

sô nieman dâ ne gesach
so no-one there — saw

blôdis mannis gebêre.
of-a-timid man bearing.

wî vil der wêre,
how many of-them were,

di dâ lâgen irslagen,
who there lay slain,

daz ne hôrtih noh nie gesagen.
that — heard-I yet never tell.

der den grôzern scaden dâ gwan,
who the greater harm there won,

daz was Alexander und sîne man.
that was Alexander and his men.

Dô Alexander gesach,
When Alexander saw,

daz dâ sô vil tôt lach
that there so many dead lay

sîner wîgande:
of-his fighters:

alsô getâner scande
so made disgrace

was er ê vil ungewone —
was he before very unaccustomed—

vil schiere was er dô comen,
very quickly was he then come,

dâ er Porum gesach.
where he Porus saw.

vermezzenlîche er zô ime sprah:
boldly he to him spoke:

‘des habe wir, kuninc, laster,
‘of-that have we, king, shame,

daz unser zweier geste
that of-us two strangers

sô lange samt vehten,
so long together fight,

unz di gûten knehte
until the good knights

beidenthalp werdent irslagen:
on-both-sides are slain:

sô ne muge wirz niemer mêr verclagen
so — may we-it never more cease-to-mourn

noh niemer mêr verwinden
nor ever more overcome

under unsen ingesinden.
among our households.

nû lâze wir di here stân
now let we the hosts stand

und in beidenthalben fride hân
and for-them on-both-sides peace have

und swer den zebreche,
and whoever it breaks,

daz manz an ime reche.
that one-it on him avenge.

nû nem du kuninc wider mich
now take thou king against me

und ih ein einwîch wider dich:
and I a single-combat against thee:

swer daz heil gewinne
whoever the fortune wins

und mit gnâden comet hinne,
and with grace comes hence,

dem werden des anderen man
to-him become the other's men

mit ir dieniste undirtân.' 4635
with their service subject.'

Porus der rîche
Porus the rich

der globete frôlîche,
he vowed gladly,

daz Alexander dâr sprah.
what Alexander there spoke.

ime was zô dem camphe gâch.
to-him was to the combat hasty.

er was vil langer 4640
he was much longer

dan der kuninc Alexander,
than the king Alexander,

zweier clâftere unde mêr.
of-two fathoms and more.

Porus was stark unde hêr.
Porus was strong and lordly.

des getrôster sih
of-that comforted-he himself

unde gelobete daz einwîch. 4645
and vowed the single-combat.

daz wart ime sint ze leide.
that became to-him afterward to sorrow.

di kuninge kûme beide
the kings scarcely both

des kamphis irbeiten,
of-the combat waited,

dar zô si sih bereiten.
there to they themselves readied.

dô si solden strîten, 4650
when they should fight,

dô stunden in beiden siten
then stood on both sides

di here, alse dâ gelobit was.
the hosts, as there vowed was.

di hêren zucten di sahs,
the lords drew the knives,

zesamene si dô sprungen.
together they then sprang.

woh wî di swert clungen
ho how the swords rang

an der fursten handen,
on the of-princes hands,

dâ sih di wîgande
where themselves the fighters

hiwen alse di wilde swîn.
hewed as the wild boars.

dâ was nît under in.
there was hatred among them.

michil wart der stahilscal.
great became the steel-sound.

daz fûr blickete ubir al,
the fire flashed over all,

dâ si des schildes rande
where they the shield's rims

zehiwen vor di hande.
hewed before the hands.

si giengen alle wîle
they went all while

wider ein ander ze bîle.
against each other at bay.

wol nutzeten di ecken
well used the edges

di tûrlîche recken
the excellent warriors

ir geweder wider den anderen.
of-them each against the other.

dô dûhte Alexanderen,
then seemed to-Alexander,

daz er daz bezzer habete.
that he the better had.

Poren lût des irzagete
Porus's people of-it despaired

und ouh von unheile
and also from misfortune

vercrîsten algemeine.
cried-out all-together.

under des Porus dare sach,
under that Porus thither looked,

unde Alexander gab ime einen slah
and Alexander gave to-him a blow

und tetime an den stunden
and did-to-him at the hours

eine sô grôze wunden,
a so great wound,

daz der michele man
that the great man

zô der erde gevallen quam.
to the earth fallen came.

swî gerne er wider wolde streben,
however gladly he again would strive,

er ne mohte langer niwit leben.
he — might longer not live.

er lach dâr zehant tôt.
he lay there at-once dead.

daz môse wesen durh di nôt,
that must be for the need,

wandime Alexander
for-to-him Alexander

selbe mit sînen handen
self with his hands

daz houbit von dem bûche slûch.
the head from the trunk struck.

dô heter des camphes genûch.
then had-he of-the combat enough.

Dô Poren here gesach,
When Porus's host saw,

daz ir hêre tôt lach,
that their lord dead lay,

si ne verzageten niwit umbe daz,
they — despaired not for that,

si fâhten alle deste baz,
they fought all the better,

wande dô begunden strîten
for then began to-fight

di here von beiden sîten,
the hosts from both sides,

unde gemischete sih ze samene
and mingled itself to together

mit grimme di menige.
with fury the multitude.

dô hûb sich êrist der wîch.
then raised itself first the battle.

dâ verlôs manic man den lîb.
there lost many man the life.

di grûnen wisen worden rôt.
the green meadows became red.

der môre lach dâ vile tôt,
of-the Moors lay there many dead,

sô tetiz ouh der Kriechen.
so did-it also of-the Greeks.

ze gîsele si dâ liezen
as hostage they there left

manigen ellenden gast.
many exiled stranger.

nehein helm ne was sô vast,
no helm — was so fast,

Alexander ne slûge der durh.
Alexander unless struck it through.

dâ wart gevollit manic furh
there was filled many furrow

mit dem blûte al rôt.
with the blood all red.

dâ was di grimmiste nôt,
there was the grimmest distress,

di dâr ie dehein man
which there ever any man

in folcwîge vernam.
in folk-battle heard.

getunget wart di heide.
fertilized was the heath.

dâ vielen di veige,
there fell the doomed,

unz man ûf si mohte gân.
until one on them might walk.

dâ wart vil leide getân
there was much sorrow done

manigen stolzen manne,
to-many proud man,

di niemer mê quam danne.
who never more came thence.

di hêren von India
the lords of India

di holeten grôzen scaden dâ,
they fetched great harm there,

wande Alexander
for Alexander

frumete sulh wunder,
made such wonder,

daz is alle di mac jâmer haben,
that of-it all they may misery have,

di iz imer gehôren sagen.
who it ever hear tell.

daz lût von Mauritanie
the people of Mauretania

daz habite sih zesamene
they held themselves together

und gulden ein herte widergelt.
and paid a hard requital.

dâ flôz daz blût ubir velt.
there flowed the blood over field.

di scare si durhbrâchen,
the troops they broke-through,

irn hêren si dâ râchen,
their lord they there avenged,

und di Kriechen slûgen si wider.
and the Greeks struck them back.

dâ viel manic tôt nider.
there fell many dead down.

dâ viel man ubir man.
there fell man over man.

Alexander doh den sige nam
Alexander yet the victory took

ubir di grimmigen diet.
over the grim people.

si ne gereten neheines friden niet,
they — desired of-any peace not,

unz Alexander gelobete,
until Alexander vowed,

daz nieman in ne scadete
that no-one them — harmed

ane wîben unde an kinden,
in women and in children,

dô entfiengen si daz gedinge
then received they the terms

und wurden alle undertân
and became all subject

deme hêren von Macedonian.
to-the lord of Macedonia.

Alexander in dô urlob gab,
Alexander to-them then leave gave,

daz si fûren an di walstat
that they fared onto the battlefield

unde bewareten mit êren
and tended with honors

Porum irn hêren.
Porus their lord.

bereite wâren si dar zû.
ready were they there to.

sciere hûben si sih dô,
quickly raised they themselves then,

dâ si irn hêren funden.
where they their lord found.

in den selben stunden
in the same hours

bestatten si hêrlîchen
buried they lordly

Porum den rîchen
Porus the rich

unde andre ire holden,
and other their loyal-ones,

di si begraben wolden,
whom they bury would,

mit êren si di grûben.
with honors they them buried.

si folten manige grûben
they filled many pits

mit frûnden unde mit mâgen,
with friends and with kinsmen,

di dâ irslagen lâgen.
who there slain lay.

daz sagih û zewâren.
that tell-I to-you in-truth.

di dâ gewunt wâren,
who there wounded were,

di fûrten si heim in ire lant.
them carried they home into their land.

ouh bleib dâ manic wîgant
also remained there many fighter

biz daz sîne wunden
until that his wounds

heilen begunden.
to-heal began.

The Occidratae, poor naked people who own nothing, ask Alexander for immortality; he angrily answers that he too must die, and when one rebukes his restless conquests, he says the highest power drives him as the wind drives the sea. Then his letter to his mother and Aristotle tells of the march to the world's end: bitter water, crocodiles, scorpions, lions, boars, six-handed men, a three-horned beast, giants scattered by a shout, trees that rise and sink by day, their fruit guarded by an unseen voice, and the Phoenix.

Dô Darius was begraben
When Darius was buried

und Porus irslagen,
and Porus slain,

Alexander fûr in ein lant,
Alexander fared into a land,

daz was Occidratis genant. 4765
that was Occidratis named.

daz lant is von der sunnen warm.
the land is from the sun warm.

daz lût dar inne daz is arm
the people there inside it is poor

und ne hât neheinen ubirmût.
and — has no arrogance.

vil mêzlîch ist ir gût.
very moderate is their goods.

si gânt nackit allizane 4770
they go naked altogether

und hânt lutzil umbe und ane.
and have little about and on.

ir rîchtûm ist cleine.
their wealth is small.

si sint mit zigenbeine
they are with goat-bone

alle gewâfent.
all armed.

si ne rûchent, wâ si slâfent.
they not care, where they sleep.

si ne hânt dorf noh stat.
they not have village nor city.

swâ si der naht ane gât,
wherever them the night on goes,

dâ blîbet mannegelîch.
there remains every-man.

ir vihe unde ir wîb
their cattle and their women

di sint von in gescheiden
they are from them parted

an di breiten heiden.
on the broad heaths.

si lebent jêmerlîche.
they live miserably.

der kuninc von dem rîche,
the king of the realm,

dô er rehte vernam,
when he rightly heard,

daz Alexander in sîn lant quam,
that Alexander into his land came,

dô santer ime engagen
then sent-he him toward

sîne boten wol geladen
his messengers well laden

mit sô getâner gâben,
with so made gifts,

sô si dâ ze lande plâgen.
as they there in land were-wont.

ouh santer ime einen brieb,
also sent-he to-him a letter,

dar ane gût und alliz lieb
there on good and all kindness

ân allirslahte leit.
without any-kind sorrow.

an dem briebe er screib:
in the letter he wrote:

‘bistu comen in mîn lant
‘art-thou come into my land

durh roub oder durh brant
for robbery or for burning

oder durh vehte?
or for fighting?

daz saltu wizzen rehte,
that shalt-thou know rightly,

du bist ein harte wîs man,
thou art a very wise man,

der sih wol versinnen kan;
who himself well understand can;

ih wil, du dih versinnis,
I will, thou thyself understandest,

den rûm, den du gwinnis
the fame, which thou winnest

hie, der nist niht grôzlîch.
here, it is not great.

Alexander, wes mûwestu dih?
Alexander, why troublest-thou thyself?

du vindis hie niht ze nemene.
thou findest here nothing to take.

wir ne hân dir niht ze gebene.
we — have to-thee nothing to give.

hie nist der schilt noh daz swert.
here not-is the shield nor the sword.

iz nist der arbeite wert,
it not-is the toil worth,

kuninc, daz du bist comen here.
king, that thou art come hither.

nû saltu varen andirsware,
now shalt-thou fare elsewhere,

daz mach dir gefromen baz.
that may thee profit better.

in trûwen râtih dir daz.'
in faith counsel-I to-thee that.'

Alexander las disen brieb
Alexander read this letter

und enbôt im, er ne quême niet
and sent-word to-him, he — came not

zô zin unfridelîche.
to them unpeacefully.

er ne wolde ir rîche
he — would their realm

niwit zestôren.
not destroy.

gagen in si dô vôren
toward him they then fared

und hiezen in willecome sîn.
and bade him welcome be.

Alexander der genâdete in
Alexander he thanked them

und sîne wîgande.
and his fighters.

er frâgete di von dem lande,
he asked those of the land,

wâ si des jâres wâren.
where they of-the year were.

ouh frâgeter si zwâren,
also asked-he them truly,

wes si sih betrageten
whereof they themselves sustained

und wilehes sites si phlegeten;
and which custom they practiced;

und alse si irsturben,
and when they died,

wâ si begraben wurden,
where they buried were,

und ob si sih plêgen ze graben.
and if they themselves were-wont to bury.

dô begunden si ime sagen:
then began they to-him tell:

‘wir ne haben hûs noh burge
‘we not have house nor castles

und leben âne sorge.
and live without care.

wir ne hân ze verliesene niet,
we — have to lose nothing,

wene rehte alse man uns gesihet,
except right as one us sees,

daz ist di rehte wârheit.
that is the right truth.

uns ist in alle zît gereit
to-us is in all time ready

beide woninge unde grab,
both dwelling and grave,

erweren uns nieman daz ne mach.
deny us no-one that — may.

swenne wir irsterben,
whenever we die,

al ein wir nit ne werden
all though we not — be

begraben in neheinem grabe.
buried in any grave.

einen trôst habe wir doh dar abe,
a comfort have we yet there from,

daz uns bedecke der himel.'
that us covers the heaven.'

dô ne frâgeter si nihtes mêr sider.
then — asked-he them nothing more afterward.

Dô hîz in Alexander,
Then bade them Alexander,

daz si under einander
that they among each-other

gingen ze râte
went to counsel

und ime einer bete bâten,
and him a boon asked,

di wolder in leisten.
that would-he them grant.

dô begunden si ime eischen,
then began they of-him to-demand,

daz er in daz wolde geben,
that he to-them that would give,

daz si imer môsten leben
that they ever might live

und niht ne dorften sterben.
and not — needed die.

dô ward ime unwerde.
then became to-him indignant.

mit zorne sprah er in zû,
with anger spoke he them to,

wî er daz mohte getûn,
how he that might do,

er môste selbe sterben;
he must self die;

wer des ubir mohte werden.
who of-that free might become.

diz lût wêre dar an glîch,
this people were there in alike,

iz wêre alliz sterblîch;
it were all mortal;

er ne solde niht sterben eine.
he — should not die alone.

iz wêre ein dinc gemeine
it were a thing common

allen lûten in ertrîche.
to-all people in earth-realm.

dô sprah vil wîslîche
then spoke very wisely

einer von deme lande dô
one of the land then

zô deme kuninge Alexandro,
to the king Alexander,

ober selbe ouh solde sterben,
if-he self also should die,

warumber an der erden
why-he on the earth

wunder alse manicfalt
wonders so manifold

sô lange hête gestalt;
so long had set-up;

er mohtiz gerne lâze:
he might-it gladly leave:

‘alles dingis mâze
‘of-all things measure

gezimet manneglîche.’
befits every-man.’

Alexander der rîche
Alexander the rich

sprah: ‘dise sache
spoke: ‘this matter

ist uns alsô gescaffen
is to-us so created

von des uberisten gwalt:
from the highest’s power:

swaz uns dannen wirt gezalt,
whatever to-us thence is allotted,

daz mûze wir alliz ûbin.
that must we all practice.

daz mere ne mac nieman trûben,
the sea — may no-one trouble,

iz ne trûbe der wint:
it unless trouble the wind:

angist hânt, di dar inne sint.
fear have, who there inside are.

di wîle ih vor den tôde mac genesen,
the while I from the death may be-safe,

wen lâzent ir mih wesen
why-not let you me be

meister von mînen sinnen:
master of my senses:

ih mûz beginnen
I must begin

ettewaz daz mir wol tût.
something that to-me well does.

hêten si alle uheren mût,
had they all your spirit,

di in der werilde wollent wesen,
who in the world will be,

waz solde in danne daz leben?’
what should to-them then the life?’

Er hiez si blîben gesunt.
He bade them remain sound.

dar nâh in curzer stunt
there after in short time

leit er arbeite gnûch.
suffered he toils enough.

beide berge unde brûch
both mountains and marsh

macheten ime di wege lanc.
made to-him the ways long.

vil selden er gemach fant;
very seldom he ease found;

biz der wunderlîche man
until the wondrous man

mit grôzer arbeite quam
with great toil came

der werlt an ein ende.
of-the world to an end.

in dem ellende
in the exile

wart ime ze mûte,
became to-him in mind,

wî er sîner mûter
how he to-his mother

und sînem meistere gescrîbe
and to-his master should-write

di nôte, di er irlîde
the distresses, which he suffered

in fremeden landen
in foreign lands

mit sînen wîganden.
with his fighters.

Alsus hebet sih der brieb,
Thus raises itself the letter,

dar an leit unde lieb
there on sorrow and joy

screib Alexander,
wrote Alexander,

di er und manich ander
which he and many other

leit in fremedem lande.
suffered in foreign land.

sîner mûter er in sande
to-his mother he it sent

der scônen Olympiadi
the fair Olympias

und sînem meistre Aristotili.
and to-his master Aristotle.

Wellt ir ein lutzil gedagen,
(if)-Will you a little be-silent,

sô wil ih û rehte sagen,
so will I to-you rightly tell,

daz an dem briebe gescriben was,
what in the letter written was,

alsihz an einen bûche las.
as-I-it in a book read.

er quît: 'mir ist ze mûte,
he says: 'to-me is in mind,

daz ih dir, liebe mûter,
that I to-thee, dear mother,

und mîneme lieben meister
and to-my dear master

vil gerne wille leisten,
very gladly will perform,

daz ih û beiden gehiz,
what I to-you both promised,

dô ih û dâ heime liez.
when I you there at-home left.

vernemet, waz hie gescriben stâ,
hear, what here written stands,

unde denket wol dar nâ,
and think well there after,

wandih cunde û di dinc,
for-I make-known to-you the things,

di mir zevorn comen sint.
which to-me before come are.

Dô ih Darium verwan
When I Darius overcame

und alliz daz lant ze Persiam
and all the land at Persia

und ouh di mêren Indiam
and also the famous India

mir brâhte undertân,
to-me brought subject,

dannen hûb ih mih sân
thence raised I myself at-once

und mîne vil liebe man
and my very dear men

ze Caspen Porten.
to Caspian Gates.

leides unde vorhten
of-sorrow and of-fears

wânedih wesen âne.
weened-I to-be without.

wir quâmen zeinem wâge.
we came to-a water.

dâ liez ih rûwen mîn here,
there let I rest my host,

durstes wânede wir uns irweren.
of-thirst weened we ourselves to-save.

dô wir zem wazzere quâmen
when we to-the water came

undiz in dem munt genâmen,
and-it in the mouth took,

dô was iz bitter als ein galle.
then was it bitter as a gall.

ungelabet blibe wir alle.
unrefreshed remained we all.

Dô brâche wir ûf unse gezelt
Then broke we up our tents

unde sâhen ubir ein felt,
and looked over a field,

wâ ein scône stat was,
where a fair city was,

di was geheizen Barbaras,
which was named Barbaras,

ubir daz wazzir eine mîle.
over the water a mile.

mîne rîter al di wîle
my knights all the while

wolden swimmen in den wâch.
would swim in the water.

dâr ginc uns der scade nâh.
there went us the harm after.

cocodrillen quâmen,
crocodiles came,

mîner gesellen si nâmen
of-my comrades they took

sibene unde zwênzic,
seven and twenty,

di verloren dâ den lîb:
who lost there the life:

vor wâr ih û daz sagen mach,
for true I to-you that say may,

wandihz selbe ane sach,
for-I-it self on saw,

in irn munt si sie âzen.
into their mouth they them ate.

di môstih varen lâzen.
them must-I fare let.

Dô hûb sih mîn heriscraft,
Then raised itself my host-strength,

wandiz rehte was bedâht,
for-it rightly was considered,

ûf bî daz wazzer,
up by the water,

daz ê was bitter,
which before was bitter,

daz wart dô sûze unde gût.
that became then sweet and good.

des wart gefrowet unse mût.
of-that was gladdened our spirit.

dô slûge wir unse gezelt
then pitched we our tents

bî dem wâge an daz velt
by the water on the field

unde mahten michel fûr.
and made great fire.

di rûwe wart uns dâ vil sûr,
the rest became to-us there very bitter,

wande ûz dem walde quam gegân
for out-of the forest came going

manih tier freisam
many beast fearsome

und freislîch gewurme.
and fearsome serpents.

mit den begunde wir stormen
with them began we to-assault

vil nâh alle di naht,
very nearly all the night,

der durst hete si dare brâht.
the thirst had them thither brought.

des wazzers wânden si sih laben.
of-the water weened they themselves to-refresh.

scorpiones tâten uns grôzen scaden.
scorpions did to-us great harm.

si wâren breit unde lanc
they were broad and long

unde heten freislîchen ganc,
and had fearsome gait,

beide wîz unde rôt;
both white and red;

si tâten uns michele nôt,
they did to-us great distress,

si irbizzen uns manigen man.
they bit-to-death of-us many man.

dô quâmen lewen gegân,
then came lions going,

di wâren grôz unde starc.
they were great and strong.

mêrre vorhte nie ne wart
greater fear never — was

under neheineme here.
among any host.

den lewen môste wir uns were.
from-the lions must we ourselves defend.

dar nâh quam zô zuns gegân
there after came to us going

manic eber freisam,
many boar fearsome,

grôzere dan di lewen.
greater than the lions.

mit den zanden si hiwen
with the tusks they hewed

alliz, daz vor in was.
all, that before them was.

daz unsir ie dehein genas,
that of-us ever any survived,

des habe got danc.
for-that have God thanks.

di zande wâren in lanc
the tusks were to-them long

einer clâfter oder mê.
of-one fathom or more.

di tâten uns vil wê.
they did to-us very woe.

dô quâmen elefande
then came elephants

manige gegangen
many going

trinken zô dem wâge.
to-drink to the water.

wir liden ungenâde.
we suffered misfortune.

ouh sûhten uns slangen
also sought us serpents

ummâzen lange
beyond-measure long

mit ûf gerihter brust.
with up raised breast.

wir liden michil unlust.
we suffered great displeasure.

dô quâmen lûte gegân
then came people going

alse tûbele getân.
as devils made.

si wâren alse affen
they were as apes

under den ougen gescaffen.
under the eyes shaped.

si heten sehs hande,
they had six hands,

lanc wâren in di zande.
long were to-them the teeth.

harte mûweten si mîn here;
hard grieved they my host;

den lûten môste wir uns were
from-the people must we ourselves defend

mit speren joh mit scozzen.
with spears and with shots.

di sturben ungenozzen.
they died unprofited.

Unse nôt di was manicfalt.
Our distress it was manifold.

dô brante wir den selben walt.
then burned we the same forest.

daz was durh daz getân,
that was for that done,

daz wir fride môsten hân
that we peace might have

vor den freislîchen tieren.
from the fearsome beasts.

dar nâh vil schiere
there after very quickly

sah ih daz grûwelîchiste tier,
saw I the most-gruesome beast,

daz sint oder êr
that since or before

ieman mohte gescowen,
anyone might behold,

daz sah ih mit mînen ougen.
that saw I with my eyes.

freisamer tier niemer ne wirt.
fearsomer beast never — becomes.

iz was gezwîget alsein hirz:
it was branched as-a hart:

iz hete drî stangen
it had three antlers

grôze unde lange.
great and long.

ne wêre ih der mînen trôst,
unless were I of-the my comfort,

iz hête des lîbis irlôst
it would-have of-the body deprived

ein michil teil von mînem here.
a great part of my host.

sehs und drîzic wâren dere,
six and thirty were of-those,

di iz mit den hornen irslûh.
whom it with the horns slew.

iz was freislîch genûch.
it was fearsome enough.

ouh sagih û zwâren,
also tell-I to-you in-truth,

daz ir funfzic wâren,
that of-them fifty were,

di iz irtrat mit den vûzen,
whom it trampled with the feet,

nû wirz û sagen mûzen.
now we-it to-you tell must.

Dar nâh in der nâhesten naht,
There after in the next night,

des hân ih ouh mir bedâht,
of-that have I also me bethought,

alse wirz dâ vernâmen,
as we-it there heard,

fôchse dar ouh quâmen
foxes there also came

grôze ûzir mâzen.
great beyond measure.

di lîchamen si âzen.
the corpses they ate.

daz ne mohte wir niwit irwere,
that — might we not prevent,

ih unde al mîn here.
I and all my host.

in dem velde, dâ wir lâgen,
in the field, where we lay,

fliegen wir sâgen
flying we saw

alse tûben unde lederswalen.
as doves and bats.

daz ne beviel uns niwit wale.
that — pleased us not well.

si heten menschen zane.
they had human teeth.

si âzen uns allizane
they ate from-us altogether

nasen unde ôren.
noses and ears.

hie mugit ir wunder hôren.
here may you wonder hear.

di ros mûweten si dar zû.
the horses grieved they there to.

dannen hûbe wir uns dô
thence raised we ourselves then

an ein velt, heizet Accia.
onto a field, is-called Accia.

unse gezelt slûge wir dâ
our tents pitched we there

und rûweten an dem velde
and rested on the field

under unsen gezelde.
under our tents.

froweden dâr mîn here plach.
joys there my host practiced.

wir nâmen sulich gemach,
we took such ease,

sô wir dâr vonden.
as we there found.

dar nâh in curzen stunden
there after in short hours

vôre wir mit gewalt
fared we with force

in einen harte scônen walt.
into a very fair forest.

dâ stunden hôe boume.
there stood high trees.

des nâme wir allis goume.
of-that took we all heed.

ûf den boumen wôhs alliz daz,
on the trees grew all that,

daz daz lantlût az,
which the land-people ate,

dâ si sih mite nereten,
where they themselves with nourished,

di uns daz lant wereten,
who from-us the land defended,

di wâren ummâzlîchen grôz.
they were measurelessly great.

owî wî starke uns der verdrôz,
alas how strongly us of-them irked,

wandiz wâren gigande
for-it were giants

und trûgen an ir hande
and bore in their hands

stahelîne stangen
steel bars

und quâmen uns zô gegangen
and came us to going

vil unfridelîche.
very unpeacefully.

ih gedâhte wîslîche
I thought wisely

unde begunden râten,
and began to-counsel,

waz wir dar wider tâten.
what we there against did.

wir wochzeten alle insamen,
we shouted all together,

wande si nie mêr ne vernâmen
for they never more — heard

neheines menschen stimme:
of-any human voice:

sô fluhen si vil grimme
so fled they very grimly

verre in einen grôzen walt.
far into a great forest.

al dâ wurden si gezalt
all there were they counted

an sehs hundrit.
at six hundred.

dô wurden ir gesundrit
then were of-them separated

von den andren fier und drîzic,
from the others four and thirty,

di verlorn dâ den lîb.
who lost there the life.

daz ne wil ih niemer geclagen.
that — will I never lament.

ouh wart der mîner dâ verslagen
also was of-the my there slain

rehte vier und zwênzic.
right four and twenty.

drî tage bleib ih
three days remained I

aldâ mit mînen mannen.
all-there with my men.

dô hûb ih mih dannen.
then raised I myself thence.

Dô slûge wir unse gezelt
Then pitched we our tents

ûf an ein breit felt.
up on a broad field.

grôz wunder ih dâ sah:
great wonder I there saw:

des morgenes dô uns quam der tach,
in-the morning when to-us came the day,

dô sah ih wassen boume,
then saw I grow trees,

des nam ih rehte goume,
of-that took I right heed,

di wôhssen harte scône
which grew very fairly

ûzer erde unz an di nône.
out-of earth until to the noon.

dar under blûmen unde gras.
there under flowers and grass.

dô di nône liden was,
when the noon past was,

dô sunken di boume nider
then sank the trees down

tiefe under der erden wider.
deep under the earth back.

ûf den boumen wôhs gût fruht.
on the trees grew good fruit.

dâ beginc ih grôz unzuht:
there committed I great ill-breeding:

ih gebôt mînen knehten,
I commanded my knights,

daz si mir des obezes brêhten.
that they to-me of-the fruit brought.

grôz nôt in dar vone bequam.
great distress to-them there from came.

swilich irre daz obiz nam,
whoever of-them the fruit took,

der wart sô zeblûwen,
he was so bruised,

daz ime daz môste rûwen,
that to-him that must rue,

daz er ie geboren wart.
that he ever born was.

si worden ouh an der vart
they were also on the way

mit geislen sêre zeslagen.
with scourges sorely beaten.

si ne wisten, ubir wen doh clagen,
they not knew, over whom yet to-lament,

wande si ne gesâhen niemanne;
for they — saw no-one;

doh hôrten si eine stimme
yet heard they a voice

di gebôt unde sagete,
which commanded and said,

daz nieman ne scadete
that no-one — harmed

dem obize noh den boumen,
the fruit nor the trees,

daz si des nâmen goume,
that they of-it took heed,

neweder wâfen noh man.
neither weapon nor man.

wurdiz ubir daz getân,
were-it over that done,

dar umbe solde lîden nôt
there for should suffer distress

und den bitteren tôt
and the bitter death

oder scaden vil grôz,
or harm very great,

der des obezis nie ne genôz.
who of-the fruit never — enjoyed.

Ouh sâhe wir dâr
Also saw we there

cleine fugele, daz ist wâr,
small birds, that is true,

di wâren samfte gemût
who were gently spirited

und ne forhten niwit den tôt.
and — feared not the death.

grôze nôt er lîden solde,
great distress he suffer should,

swer in scaden wolde,
whoever them harm would,

den brante das himelfûr,
him burned the heaven-fire,

dem wart daz leben vil sûr.
to-him became the life very bitter.

ein wunder scowetih dâr ouh:
a wonder beheld-I there also:

einen boum âne loub,
a tree without leaves,

der ne hatte blat noh fruht.
which not had leaf nor fruit.

dâ saz ein scône vogel ûf,
there sat a fair bird on,

deme was sîn houbet,
to-it was its head,

ob irs mir geloubet,
if you-it me believe,

lûtir sô di sunne.
bright as the sun.

er was allir fugele wunne.
it was of-all birds delight.

er ist Fenix genant.
it is Phoenix named.

ubir alle di lant
over all the lands

und ubir al ertrîche,
and over all earth-realm,

daz wizzit wêrlîche,
that know truly,

nist wen der eine.
not-is except the one.

er nist ouh niht ze cleine.
it is also not too small.

In a forest full of song Alexander finds maidens born each spring in great flowers, who must live in the shade and die when the flowers fade; he and his men live with them three months and twelve days, until they die. He burns a wild bristled man who carried off a maiden set before him as a test, climbs sapphire steps to a gem palace hung with gold chains where an old man sleeps, takes gifts from the king of Brasiacus, and at the world's end loses to the sea's beasts twenty men who swim toward Greek voices.

Dô wir fûren bî den mere,
When we fared by the sea,

dô reit ih ûzer dem here
then rode I out-of the host

mit drîn dûsint mannen.
with three thousand men.

dô hûbe wir unsih dannen
then raised we ourselves thence

und wolden wundir besehen.
and would wonder behold.

dô sâhe wir verre dannen stên
then saw we far thence stand

einen hêrlîchen walt.
a lordly forest.

daz wunder daz was manicfalt,
the wonder it was manifold,

daz wir dâ vernâmen.
which we there perceived.

dô wir dâ bî quâmen,
when we there by came,

dô hôrte wir dar inne
then heard we there inside

manige scône stimme,
many fair voice,

lîren unde harfen clanc
of-lyres and of-harps sound
und den sûzesten sanc,
and the sweetest song,
der von menschen ie wart gedâht,
that by men ever was devised,
wêrer allir zesamene brâht,
were-it all together brought,
der ne kunde sih dar zô niet gegaten.
it — could itself there to not match.
vil harte wunniclîch der scate
very greatly delightful the shade
under den boumen dâr was.
under the trees there was.
dâ entsprungen blûmen unde gras
there sprang flowers and grass
und wurze maniger kunne.
and herbs of-many kind.
ih wêne ie walt gewunne
I ween ever forest won
alsô manige zîrheit.
so much adornment.
er was lanc unde breit.
it was long and broad.
der selbe walt der lach,
the same forest it lay,
alsih û der von sagen mach,
as-I to-you there of tell may,
an einer scônen ouwen.
on a fair meadow.
dâr môste wir scowen
there might we behold
manigen edelen brunnen,
many noble spring,

der ûz den walde quam gerunnen
which out-of the forest came running

lûtir unde vil kalt.
clear and very cold.

ih und mîne helede balt
I and my heroes bold

heten dâ wundiris gemach,
had there of-wonders ease,

daz uns ze liebe dâ gescah.
which to-us for love there happened.

daz ne wil ih sô niwit verdagen,
that — will I so not keep-silent,

ih ne wil iz û flîzlîche sagen.
I — will it to-you diligently tell.

Der edele walt frône
The noble forest holy

was wunderlîchen scône.
was wondrously fair.

des nâme wir allis goume.
of-that took we all heed.

hô wâren di boume.
high were the trees.

di zelgen dicke unde breit.
the branches thick and broad.

nâh der rehten wârheit,
after the right truth,

daz was ein michil wunne.
that was a great delight.

dâ ne mohte di sunne
there — might the sun

an di erde niht geschine.
on the earth not shine.

ih unde di mîne
I and the mine

wir liezen unse ros stân
we let our horses stand

und giengen in den walt sân
and went into the forest at-once

durh den wunniclîchen sanc.
for the delightful song.

di wîle dûhte uns harte lanc,
the while seemed to-us very long,

biz wir dare quâmen,
until we thither came,

dâr wir vernâmen,
where we perceived,

waz wunderis dâ mohte sîn.
what of-wonder there might be.

vil manich scône magetîn
very many fair maiden

wir al dâ funden,
we all there found,

di dâ in den stunden
who there in the hours

spilten ûf den grûnen clê.
played on the green clover.

hundirt tûsint unde mê
hundred thousand and more

di spileten unde sprungen;
they played and leaped;

hei wî scône si sungen,
hey how fairly they sang,

daz beide cleine unde grôz
that both small and great

durh den sûzlîchen dôz,
through the sweet sound,

den wir hôrten in den walt,
which we heard in the forest,

ih und mîne helede balt
I and my heroes bold

vergâzen unse herzeleit
forgot our heart's-sorrow

und der grôzen arbeit
and the great toil

und alliz daz ungemah
and all the hardship

und swaz uns leides ie gescach.
and whatever to-us of-sorrow ever happened.

uns allen dô bedûhte,
to-us all then seemed,

alsiz wol mohte,
as-it well might,

daz wir genûc habeten,
that we enough had,

di wîle daz wir lebeten,
the while that we lived,

frowede unde rîcheit.
joy and riches.

dâ vergaz ih angist unde leit
there forgot I fear and sorrow

unde mîn gesinde,
and my household,

unde swaz uns von kinde
and whatever to-us from childhood

ie leides gescach
ever of-sorrow happened

biz an den selben tach.
until on the same day.

mir dûhte an der stunt,
to-me seemed at the hour,

ih ne wurde niemer ungesunt,
I — would-become never unsound,

ob ih dâr imer mûste wesen,
if I there ever might be,

sô wâre ih garwe genesen
so were I wholly saved

von aller angistlîcher nôt
from all fearful distress

und ne forhte niwit den tôt.
and — would-fear not the death.

Woldir nû rehte verstân,
(if)-Would-you now rightly understand,

wî iz umbe di frowen quam,
how it about the ladies came,

wannen si bequâmen
whence they came

oder wilich ende si nâmen,
or which end they took,

des mach û wol besunder
of-that may you well severally

nemen michil wunder.
take great wonder.

swanne der winter abe ginc
whenever the winter off went

und der sumer ane ginc,
and the summer on went,

und iz begunde grûnen,
and it began to-green,

und di edelen blûmen
and the noble flowers

in den walt begunden ûf gân,
in the forest began up to-go,

dô wâren si vil wol getân:
then were they very well made:

lieht was ir glîze;
bright was their gleam;

ir rôte unde ir wîze
their red and their white

vil verre von in schein.
very far from them shone.

blûmen ne wart nie nehein,
flower — was never any,

di scôner wesen mohte.
which fairer be might.

si wâren, alsuns bedûhte,
they were, as-to-us seemed,

rehte sinewel als ein bal
right round as a ball

und vaste beslozzen ubir al.
and fast closed over all.

si wâren wunderlîchen grôz.
they were wondrously great.

alse sih di blûme obene entslôz,
when itself the flower above opened,

daz merket an uheren sinne,
that mark in your senses,

sô wâren dar inne
so were there inside

megede rehte vollencomen.
maidens right perfect.

ih sagû, alsihz hân vernomen.
I tell-you, as-I-it have heard.

si giengen unde lebeten,
they went and lived,

menschen sin si habeten,
human sense they had,

unde redeten unde bâten
and spoke and asked

rehte alse si hâten
right as-if they had

aldir umbe zwelif jâr.
age about twelve years.

si wâren gescaffen, daz is wâr,
they were shaped, that is true,

scône an ir lîbe.
fair in their body.

ih ne sach nie von wîbe
I — saw never of woman

scôner antluzze mê,
fairer countenance more,

noh ougen alsô wol stê.
nor eyes so well stand.

ir hande unde ir arme
their hands and their arms

wâren blanc alseinen harme
were white as-an ermine

unde fûze unde bein.
and feet and legs.

undir in ne was nehein,
among them — was none,

si ne phlêge scôner hubischeit.
she unless practiced fair courtliness.

si wâren mit zuhten wol gemeit
they were with breeding well joyful

unde lacheten unde wâren frô
and laughed and were glad

unde sungen alsô,
and sang so,

daz ê noh sint nehein man
that before nor since no man

sô sûze stimme ne vernam.
so sweet voice — heard.

Mugint irs getrûwen,
(if)-May you-it trust,

sô solden dise frowen
so should these ladies

alliz an den scate wesen,
all in the shade be,

sîne mohten andirs nit genesen.
they might otherwise not survive.

swilhe di sunne beschein,
whichever the sun shone-on,

der ne bleib ze lîbe nie nehein.
of-them — remained to life never any.

daz wunder daz was manicfalt:
the wonder it was manifold:

dô wart irschellet der walt
then was resounded the forest

von der sûzer stimme,
from the sweet voice,

di dâ sungen inne,
which there sang within,

di fugele und di magetîn,
the birds and the maidens,

wî mohtiz wunniclîcher sîn
how might-it more-delightful be

frô unde spâte.
early and late.

al ir lîbis gewête
all their body's raiment

was ane si gewassen
was on them grown

ane hûte und ane vasse.
on skin and on hair.

in was getân di varwe
to-them was made the color

nâh den blûmen garwe
after the flowers wholly

rôt und ouh wîz sô der snê.
red and also white as the snow.

dô wir si zuns sâgen gê,
when we them to-us saw go,

zô zin spilete uns der lîb.
to them played to-us the body.

sus lussame wîb
so lovely women

sint der werlt unkunt.
are to-the world unknown.

nâh mînen here santih zestunt.
after my host sent-I straightway.

dô si ze mir quâmen
when they to me came

unde ouh vernâmen
and also heard

di hêrlîchen stimme,
the lordly voice,

dâ vôren si mit sinne
there fared they with sense

unde slûgen ir gezelt
and pitched their tents

in den walt, niht an daz felt.
in the forest, not on the field.

dô lâge wir dâr mit scalle.
then lay we there with noise.

und froweten unsih alle
and rejoiced ourselves all

der seltsênen brûte.
of-the rare brides.

ih und mîne lûte
I and my people

wir wolten dâr blîven.
we would there remain.

unde nâmen si ze wîben
and took them as wives

und hatten mêr wunnen
and had more delights

dan wir ie gewunnen,
than we ever won,

sint daz wir worden geborn.
since that we were born.

owê daz wir sô schiere verlorn
alas that we so quickly lost

daz michele gemach.
the great ease.

diz wunder ih alliz sah
this wonder I all saw

selbe mit mînen ougen.
self with my eyes.

des mugent ir gelouben.
of-that may you believe.

diz werte, alsih û sage,
this lasted, as-I to-you tell,

drî mânede unde zwelif tage,
three months and twelve days,

daz ih und mîne helede balt
that I and my heroes bold

wâren in dem grûnen walt
were in the green forest

und bî der scônen owen
and by the fair meadow

mit den lieben frowen
with the dear ladies

und wunne mit in habeten
and delight with them had

und mit froweden lebeten.
and with joys lived.

vil jâmerlîche uns dô gescach,
very miserably to-us then happened,

daz ih verclagen nit ne mach.
that I cease-to-mourn not — may.

dô di zît vollenginc,
when the time ran-out,

unse frowede di zeginc:
our joy it passed:

di blûmen gare verturben
the flowers wholly perished

und di scônen frowen sturben.
and the fair ladies died.

di boume ir loub liezen
the trees their leaves let-go

und di brunnen ir fliezen
and the springs their flowing

unde di fugele ir singen.
and the birds their singing.

dô begunde dwingen
then began to-oppress

unfrowede mîn herze
joylessness my heart

mit manicfalder smerze.
with manifold pain.

freislîch was mîn ungemah,
fearsome was my hardship,

daz ih alle tage sah
which I all days saw

an den scônen frowen.
on the fair ladies.

owê wî si mih rûwen,
alas how they me rued,

dô ih si sah sterben
when I them saw die

und di blûmen verterben,
and the flowers perish,

dô schiet ih trûrich dannen
then departed I mournful thence

mit allen mînen mannen.
with all my men.

Dô gesah ih und mîne man
Then saw I and my men

eine scône burch vor uns stân.
a fair castle before us stand.

di was gemachit mit sinne.
it was made with sense.

ih wêre gerne dar inne.
I would-be gladly there inside.

dô ne mohtis niwit sîn.
then — might-it not be.

ih und daz here mîn
I and the host my

wir sâhen einen grôzen man,
we saw a great man,

der was freislîchen getân,
who was fearsomely made,

der quam dar ûz gegangen.
he came there out going.

sîne hût was ime bevangen
his skin was to-him covered

al mit swînis bursten.
all with swine's bristles.

mih noh mîne fursten
me nor my princes

ne wolder nîwit forhten.
— would-he not fear.

ime dûhte, daz er ne dorfte.
to-him seemed, that he not needed.

er wânde, daz in nieman
he weened, that him no-one

mit wîge torste bestân.
with battle dared attack.

daz liez er wol schînen.
that let he well appear.

dô gebôt ih den mînen,
then commanded I the mine,

daz si den man viengen.
that they the man seized.

dô si zô zin giengen,
when they to him went,

er ne vorhte noh ne flô,
he not feared nor — fled,

âne sorge stunt er dô.
without care stood he then.

dô hiez ih eine magit gân
then bade I a maiden go

schiere unde vor in stân.
quickly and before him stand.

ih wolde scowen dar an,
I would behold there on,

ob wêre dihein man,
if were any man,

dem di wîbis minne
whom the woman's love

nit ne brêhte ûzem sinne.
not — brought out-of-the senses.

dô di magit zô zime ginc,
when the maiden to him went,

under sîne arme er si gevienc
under his arms he her seized

und îlete vile balde
and hastened very quickly

mit ir zô dem walde.
with her to the forest.

des wurde wir vil unfrô.
of-that became we very unglad.

zô den rossen quâme wir dô.
to the horses came we then.

uns wart vil harte gâh.
to-us became very greatly hasty.

vaste îlete wir ime nâh.
fast hastened we him after.

dô wir den man bequâmen
when we the man reached

und ime di maget nâmen,
and from-him the maiden took,

dô gwan er eine stimme,
then got he a voice,

di was harte grimme,
which was very grim,

grôz unde freislîch,
great and fearsome,

eines lewen stimme gelîch.
a lion's to-voice like.

uns quam von ime michil nôt,
to-us came from him great distress,

wander vorhte den tôt.
for-he feared the death.

dô ime mîn here zô ginc,
when him my host to went,

dô gebôt ih, daz man in vinc
then commanded I, that one him seized

unde brâhtin gebunden
and brought-him bound

vor mih an den stunden.
before me at the hours.

ih hiez in brinnen in ein fûr.
I bade him burn in a fire.

ime wart sîn leben vil sûr;
to-him became his life very bitter;

unlange er lebete,
not-long he lived,

swî sêre er widerstrebete.
however sorely he resisted.

Dô hûb ih mih dannen
Then raised I myself thence

mit allen mînen mannen
with all my men

unde quam an einen hôen berc.
and came to a high mountain.

dâ ûf stunt ein scône werc
there upon stood a fair work

ein hêrlîcher palas,
a lordly palace,

der von edelen gesteine was,
which of noble gems was,

alse wirz an den bûchen haben.
as we-it in the books have.

an den palase was irgraben
on the palace was engraved

maniger slahte wunder.
of-many kind wonder.

ein scône wâch flôz dar under.
a fair water flowed there under.

von dem palase wâren,
from the palace were,

daz sagih û zwâren,
that tell-I to-you in-truth,

ketenen gehangen,
chains hung,

di wâren vil lange,
which were very long,

gemachit von golde.
made of gold.

swer ûf den berc wolde,
whoever onto the mountain would,

der solde sih halden dar an,
he should himself hold there on,

alsih mih versinnen kan.
as-I myself recollect can.

ouh gingen ûf den berc
also went up the mountain

biz an daz hêrlîche werc
until to the lordly work

zwei dûsint grâde,
two thousand steps,

di wâren mit râde
which were with counsel

von saphîre gemachet.
of sapphire made.

sus lussame sache
so lovely thing

is al der werlt unkunt.
is to-all the world unknown.

ûf den berc quam ih gesunt
onto the mountain came I sound

unde besah den palas,
and viewed the palace,

wî wol der gezîret was.
how well it adorned was.

di venster wâren dar inne
the windows were there inside

gemeisteret mit sinne.
mastered with sense.

di ture unde glockelîn
the doors and little-bells

di wâren alliz guldîn.
they were all golden.

dâ gesach ih ein betehûs,
there saw I a prayer-house,

di ture di ginc selbe ûf.
the door it went self up.

dô ih dar în quam,
when I there in came,

grôz wunder ih dâ vernam.
great wonder I there perceived.

ein bette sah ih dar in stân,
a bed saw I there in stand,

daz was harte lussam,
that was very lovely,

mit golde gezîret,
with gold adorned,

mit gesteine wol gewieret.
with gems well set.

alsô verre sô daz bette ginc,
as far as the bed went,

ein wînrabiz al umbevinc.
a vine all surrounded.

di was geworht von golde.
it was wrought of gold.

daz di trûbelen wesen solden,
what the grapes be should,

daz was edele gesteine
that was noble gems

grôz unde cleine.
great and small.

ûf den bette ein man lac,
on the bed a man lay,

sô mîn ouge nie ne gesah
so my eye never — saw

mêr sô scônen alden man.
more so fair old man.

michil wunder mih nam,
great wonder me took,

wer der man wêre.
who the man were.

er lach an dem gebêre,
he lay in the bearing,

alser wêre vil rîche.
as-if-he were very rich.

er lach vil hêrlîche.
he lay very lordly.

vil sûzlîch er slief.
very sweetly he slept.

ih ne sprah noh ne rief,
I not spoke nor — called,

dô ih stunt vor sînen bette,
when I stood before his bed,

ih ne wolde in niwit wecke.
I — would him not wake.

gezogenlîche ih ime neich.
courteously I to-him bowed.

den hôen berc ih dô steich
the high mountain I then climbed

vil gemechlîche nider
very easily down

und quam zô mînen lûten wider.
and came to my people back.

Dô ih nider quam ze tale,
When I down came to valley,

dô fôre wir rehte drî tage
then fared we right three days

unde quâmen in ein lant,
and came into a land,

daz was Brasiacus genant.
that was Brasiacus named.

der kuninc von dem lande
the king of the land

sîne gâbe mir sande.
his gift to-me sent.

ouh brâhten mir di lantlûte
also brought to-me the land-people

rûhe vischis hûte
rough fish's skins

zesamene gebunden.
together bound.

an den hûten stunden
on the skins stood

scône liebarten mâl.
fair leopard's spots.

ouh brâhten si mir, daz is wâr,
also brought they to-me, that is true,

vil manige lamprîden hût:
very many lamprey's skin:

ih tar iz wol sagen ubirlût,
I dare it well say aloud,

si wâren sehs clâftere lanc.
they were six fathoms long.

der gâbe sagetih in danc.
for-the gift said-I to-them thanks.

Daz lant liez ih mit fride stân.
The land let I with peace stand.

dannen hûb ih mih sân
thence raised I myself at-once

mit mînen ingesinde
with my household

der werlt an daz ende,
of-the world to the end,

dâ der werlt nabe stât
where the world's hub stands

und der himel umbe gât,
and the heaven around goes,

alse umbe die ahsen daz rât.
as around the axle the wheel.

dô hôrtih, wâ man sprah,
then heard-I, where one spoke,

ouh hôrtiz mîn here,
also heard-it my host,

kriechische sprâche in dem mere.
Greek speech in the sea.

des wunderte uns ûzer mâzen.
of-that wondered us beyond measure.

mîne man sih des vermâzen,
my men themselves of-it presumed,

si wolden swemmen in daz mere,
they would swim into the sea,

rehte zwênzich wâren dere.
right twenty were of-them.

wande si wunder habeten,
for they wonder had,

wâ di lûte woneten,
where the people dwelt,

di si hôrten dar inne
whom they heard there inside

mit menschlîcher stimme:
with human voice:

si wolden swimmen ûf einen wert.
they would swim onto an island.

daz wart in starke bewert
that was to-them strongly proved

von den tieren in dem mere.
by the beasts in the sea.

daz wunder scowete mîn here,
the wonder beheld my host,

wâ di zwencich an der stunt
where the twenty at the hour

sunken an des meres grunt.
sank to the sea's ground.

Queen Candace of Meroe exchanges gifts with Alexander, a unicorn and a crown for his god Ammon among hers, and has his portrait painted. Her son Candaulus, seized at Alexander's camp, asks help for his abducted wife; Ptolemy plays Alexander, and Alexander, as his officer Antigonus, leads a host to Bala, whose frightened burghers give her up. Candaulus takes him home past mountains of wonders and presents him as Antigonus; Candace kisses him and feasts him and his men in a palace of onyx and gold above a golden stream.

In der gegenôte
In the region

stunt ein burg gûte.
stood a castle good.

Meroves hîz di burch rîch
Meroe was-called the castle rich

unde was vil hêrlîch.
and was very lordly.

si was al umbevangen
it was all surrounded

mit eime velse, der was langer.
with a cliff, which was long.

di lûte von deme lande
the people of the land

wâren tûre wîgande
were excellent fighters

und lebeten hêrlîche
and lived lordly

und wâren al gelîche
and were all alike

einer frowen undertân,
to-a lady subject,

di hîz Candacia.
who was-called Candace.

si was ein kuninginne
she was a queen

und lebete mit sinne.
and lived with sense.

zwêne sune hete si.
two sons had she.

dô hîz ih dâ bî
then bade I there by

ûf slân mîn gezelt
up pitch my tent

an ein harte scône velt.
on a very fair field.

dô enbôt ih der frowen
then sent-word I to-the lady

mîn dienist mit allen trûwen,
my service with all faith,

und santir zô den mâle
and sent-her at the time

ein bilide wol gemâlet
an image well painted

nâh Amon mînen gote.
after Ammon my god.

dô brâhte mir wider ir bote
then brought to-me back her messenger

vil hêrlîche gâben
very lordly gifts

unde hiez mir frâgen,
and bade me ask,

ob ih wêre alsein andir man
if I were as-an other man

und mir wêre undertân
and to-me were subject

di werlt alle biz al dâ.
the world all until all there.

dô hîz ir sagen jâ.
then bade-I her say yes.

Von der gâben wil ih û sagen,
Of the gifts will I to-you tell,

di siu mir hîz vore tragen:
which she to-me bade before bear:

hundrit guldîne gote;
hundred golden gods;

ouh brâhte mir ir bote
also brought to-me her messenger

andirhalp hundrit môre,
one-and-a-half hundred Moors,

di hâten lange ôren
who had long ears

und wâren alle kinder.
and were all children.

mînen gesinde
to-my household

gab ih si an ir hûte.
gave I them into their keeping.

ouh sante mir di gûte
also sent to-me the good-one

drîzic gûte goltfaz,
thirty good gold-cups,

nûnzich elfande unde baz.
ninety elephants and more.

si sante mir pantêre
she sent to-me panthers

seszich unde mêre
sixty and more

und hundrit liebarte,
and hundred leopards,

di dâ loufint harte.
which there run hard.

ouh sante mir di kuningîn
also sent to-me the queen

funf hundrit fugelîn
five hundred little-birds

sitige unde spingen,
parrots and finches,

di sprechent unde singen;
which speak and sing;

und hundrit balkin vein.
and hundred beams fine.

nie ne wart holz nehein
never — was wood any

sô gût noh sô tûre.
so good nor so precious.

iz ne mac in den fûre
it — may in the fire

neheine wîs verbrinnen,
in-no way burn,

ouh brâhte durh minne
also brought for love

der selben kuninginnen bote
of-the same queen's messenger

Amone mînen gote
to-Ammon my god

eine crône wol gezieret
a crown well adorned

unde harte wol gewieret
and very well set

mit edelen gesteine
with noble gems

grôz unde cleine,
great and small,

alsiz di frowe wolde.
as-it the lady would.

zehen ketenen von golde
ten chains of gold

wâren dar ane gehangen.
were there on hung.

dâ mite was bevangen
there with was encircled

di crône hêrlîche.
the crown lordly.

di kuninginne rîche
the queen rich

sante mir ouh ein tier,
sent to-me also a beast,

daz was edele unde hêr,
that was noble and lordly,

daz den carbunkel treget
which the carbuncle bears

und daz sih vor di magit leget.
and which itself before the maiden lays.

Monosceros ist iz genant.
Monoceros is it named.

der ist luzzil in diz lant.
it is little in this land.

dar zô ne frumet nehein jaget:
there to — avails no hunt:

man sol iz vâhen mit einer magit.
one shall it catch with a maiden.

sîn gehurne daz ist freisam,
its horn it is fearsome,

dâ ne mac niwit vor bestân.
there — may nothing before stand.

und dô di gâbe was brâht,
and when the gift was brought,

5590 dô was di frowe des bedâht,
then was the lady of-it bethought,

daz si zô mir sante einen man,
that she to me sent a man,

der was alsô getân,
who was so made,

daz er konde mâlen.
that he could paint.

der mâlede zô dem mâle
he painted at the time

5595 an einer tabelen mînen lîb.
on a tablet my body.

niht nist sô listic, sô daz wîb
nothing is so cunning, as the woman

unde ouh ir kint.
and also her child.

des quam ih in grôz angist sint.
of-that came I into great fear afterward.

Candaulus der frowen alder sun
Candaulus the lady's elder son

5600 dâhte, was er mohte tûn.
thought, what he might do.

er nam sîne wîse man.
he took his wise men.

dô er rehte vernam,
when he rightly heard,

daz ih dare comen was,
that I thither come was,

dô volgeter mir an ein gras
then followed-he me onto a grass

und sûhte mih an daz velt.
and sought me on the field.

dô lach ih under mîn gezelt.
then lay I under my tent.

dô er bî mînen here quam
when he by my host came

unde mîne wartman
and my watchmen

sîn worden geware,
of-him became aware,

dô hûben si sih dare
then raised they themselves thither

und viengen den helt junc
and seized the hero young

unde brâhten in zestunt,
and brought him straightway,

dâr Tholomeus lach.
where Ptolemy lay.

der frâgetin unde sprah,
he asked-him and spoke,

waz sîn gewerb wêre.
what his business were.

dô sprah der junchere:
then spoke the young-lord:

‘Candacis is mîn mûter.
‘Candace is my mother.

vernim durh dîne gûte
hear for thy goodness

mîn herzeleit, daz ih dir clagen.
my heart’s-sorrow, which I to-thee lament.

ih wolde dîne helfe haben.
I would thy help have.

ih hân verloren mîn wîb,
I have lost my woman,

di mir lieb was sô der lîb.
who to-me dear was as the body.

daz is mir ze unheile comen.
that is to-me to misfortune come.

di frowe di hât mir genomen
the lady her has from-me taken

ein kuninc, der is vermezzen
a king, who is bold

und ist hie bî gesezzen.
and is here by settled.

durh trôst bin ih comen zô dir,
for comfort am I come to thee,

und mahtu des gehelfen mir,
and (if)-mayst-thou of-it help me,

daz ih si wider gewinnen,
that I her back win,

des lônih dir mit minnen.'
for-that reward-I thee with love.'

Dô Tholomeus mîn man
When Ptolemy my man

des hêren clage vernam,
the lord's lament heard,

dô sweich er vil stille
then fell-silent he very still

und ginc mit gûten willen
and went with good will

rehte under mîn gezelt,
right under my tent,

dâ ih lach an daz velt,
where I lay on the field,

und sagete mir, wî iz was comen
and told me, how it was come

unde waz er hête vernomen.
and what he had heard.

dô rihtih mih ûf scône
then raised-I myself up finely

und gab ime mîne crône
and gave to-him my crown

unde hiez in sân
and bade him at-once

wider in sîn gezelt gân
back into his tent go

und mit sinne handelen sîn dinc.
and with sense handle his matter.

ih sprah: ‘dirre jungelinc
I spoke: ‘this youth

ne mah dîn niht irkennen;
— may thee not recognize;

Alexander saltu dih nennen
Alexander shalt-thou thyself name

und jehe des neheine wîs,
and avow of-it in-no way,

daz du Tholomeus sis,
that thou Ptolemy be,

und heiz mih dir gewinnen.
and bid me for-thee win.

Antigonus saltu mih nennen
Antigonus shalt-thou me name

und gebût mir alse dînen man,
and command me as thy man,

daz schiere werde widertân
that quickly be undone

daz dir hêre hât geclagit.
what to-thee lord has lamented.

alse wir haben hie gesaget,
as we have here said,
daz tû wir mit sinne;
that do we with sense;
und heiz mir ime gewinnen
and bid me for-him win
schîre widere sîn wîb,
quickly back his woman,
alsô lieb sô mir sî der lîb.'
as dear as to-me be the body.'
Di hêren beide tâten,
The lords both did,
des si wâren berâten.
what they were advised.
Tholomeus di crône entfienc.
Ptolemy the crown received.
zô sînen gezelde er gienc
to his tent he went
in allen den gebêre,
in all the bearing,
alser Alexander wêre.
as-if-he Alexander were.
nâh Alexandere er sante,
after Alexander he sent,
Antigonus er in nante.
Antigonus he him named.
dô sprah er zô Candaulo:
then spoke he to Candaulus:
'gehabe dih wol und wis frô,
'fare thee well and be glad,
dîn bete wirt geleistet.
thy request is granted.
du hâs wol vereischet,
thou hast well found-out,

daz ih Alexander bin genant.
that I Alexander am named.

Macedonia is mîn lant,
Macedonia is my land,

dannen bin ih here comen.
thence am I hither come.

daz mahtu haben wol vernomen.
that mayst-thou have well heard.

Persen ist mir undertân,
Persia is to-me subject,

Parthis unde Indiân
Parthians and Indians

di stênt an mîner gewalt.
they stand in my power.

ih wil mit dir, helt balt,
I will with thee, hero bold,

hinnen senden disen man,
hence send this man,

der dir wol gehelfen kan.
who thee well help can.

ih gebe ime heris alsô vile,
I give to-him of-host as much,

alse er is selbe nemen wile.
as he of-it self take will.

er ist Antigonus genant.
he is Antigonus named.

den fûre in daz selbe lant,
him lead into the same land,

dâ dîn wîb is inne.
where thy woman is in.

er veret mit grôzen sinne.
he fares with great sense.

er gwinnet dir widere dîn wîb
he wins to-thee back thy woman

oder er verlieset den lîb.'
or he loses the life.'

Dô wânede Candaulus,
Then weened Candaulus,

daz mîn man Tholomeus
that my man Ptolemy

Alexander wêre.
Alexander were.

des frowete sih der mêre.
of-that rejoiced himself the famous-one.

dô gwan der helt gût
then won the hero good

einen frôlîchen mût,
a glad spirit,

daz er sulhe helfe gewan.
that he such help won.

dô gereite sih manic man
then readied himself many man

von mînen gesinde.
of my household.

dô vôre wir mit dem kinde.
then fared we with the child.

dô sagete ih vil stille
then said I very still

mînen lûten mînen willen,
to-my people my will,

di mih wol irkanten:
who me well knew:

daz si alle nanten
that they all named

mih Antigonus,
me Antigonus,

dô iz geahtit was alsus,
when it considered was thus,

daz verwandelet was mîn name.
that changed was my name.

selbe fûrte ih mînen vanen.
self carried I my banner.

mîn volch ih bereitte.
my folk I readied.

Candaulus uns leitte
Candaulus us led

ze Bala vor di veste.
to Bala before the stronghold.

sô getâner geste
so made strangers

wâren si vil ungewone,
were they very unaccustomed,

alsin dô wâren comen.
as-to-them then were come.

ir state slozzen si zô.
their city locked they to.

ze râte gingen dô
to council went then

di helede vermezzen,
the heroes bold,

di dâ wâren besezzen,
who there were besieged,

und sprâchen al besunder,
and spoke all severally,

si nême michil wunder,
them took great wonder,

waz daz here wolde
what the host would

oder waz iz dâre solde.
or what it there should.

Der kuninc der was ûz gevaren
The king he was out fared

mit einer creftigen scharen
with a mighty troop

ûf einen sînen genôz.
upon a his peer.

dô wart der angist vil grôz,
then became the fear very great,

di in der stat wâren,
of-those-who in the city were,

daz sagih û zwâren.
that tell-I to-you in-truth.

dô si in allen sîten
when they on all sides

daz here gesâhen rîten
the host saw ride

ubir di marke,
over the march,

dô forhten si starke,
then feared they strongly,

daz Porus dannoch lebete
that Porus yet lived

unde dar zô strebete
and there to strove

mit sînes heres craften.
with his host's strengths.

in ir mût si dâhten,
in their spirit they thought,

daz er si stôren solde
that he them disturb should

unde er lôsen wolde
and he free would

di frowe, wande er was ir mâch,
the lady, for he was her kinsman,

dar ih was gevarn nâh.
whom I was fared after.

Nû vernemet rehte, waz ih û sage.
Now hear rightly, what I to-you tell.

dar nâh ubir drî tage
there after over three days

Candaulus mih bat,
Candaulus me asked,

daz wir riten vor di stat,
that we rode before the city,

dâ di frowe was inne.
where the lady was in.

daz tâte wir mit sinne.
that did we with sense.

dô wir dar quâmen
when we thither came

undiz jene vernâmen,
and-it those heard,

di in der stat wâren,
who in the city were,

si gingen offinbâre
they went openly

an ir zinnen stân
on their battlements stand

unde frâgeten uns sân
and asked us at-once

von ir brustwere
from their breastwork

umbe daz uncundige here,
about the unknown host,

wannen daz comen wêre.
whence that come were.

ouh frâgeten si mêre,
also asked they more,

waz si uns hêten getân
what they to-us had done

unde ob wir si bestân
and if we them attack

mit urlûge solden.
with war should.

wir sageten, daz wir wolden
we said, that we would

ir stat gare zebrechen
their city wholly break

unde an in rechen
and on them avenge

beide an ir êre und an ir lîb,
both on their honor and on their body,

daz si Candaulis wîb
that they Candaulus's woman

dar in hêten gevân
there in had seized

und dar zô sîne liebe man;
and there to his dear men;

daz ne wurde schiere widertân,
that unless were quickly undone,

sô môstens imer scaden hân.
so must-they ever harm have.

Dô di burgêre
When the burghers

vernâmen diz mêre
heard these tidings

und alsiz in di burg quam,
and when-it into the castle came,

michil angist si des nam.
great fear them of-it took.

ûf brâchen si daz palas,
up broke they the palace,

dâ di juncfrowe inne was,
where the young-lady inside was,

zô uns santen si nider
to us sent they down

und gâben uns di frowe wider.
and gave to-us the lady back.

dô lieze wir ir stat stân
then let we their city stand

unde fûren dannen sân
and fared thence at-once

mit hêren Candaulo.
with lord Candaulus.

dem was sîn herze vil frô.
to-him was his heart very glad.

der sprah offinbâre,
he spoke openly,

daz ih des gwis wâre,
that I of-it certain were,

woldih mit ime heim comen,
(if)-would-I with him home come,

ih gwunnis michelen fromen
I would-win-of-it great profit

von im und von sîner mûter.
from him and from his mother.

er weste si in den gûten,
he knew her in the goodness,
si solde mir mîner arbeit
she should to-me my toil
mit liebe lônen âne leit.
with love reward without sorrow.
Dô enbôt ih Tholomeo,
Then sent-word I to-Ptolemy,
daz ih mit Candaulo
that I with Candaulus
wolde heim ze lande,
would home to land,
durh daz ih irkande
so that I knew
unde mit listen irfunde,
and with crafts found-out,
wî iz dâ ze lande stunde,
how it there in land stood,
und ouh daz ih irsêge,
and also that I saw,
wilher site man dâ phlêge.
which custom one there practiced.
dô wir dannen solden rîten,
when we thence should ride,
des weges in beiden sîten
of-the way on both sides
di hôisten berge ih gesach,
the highest mountains I saw,
mit wârheit ih daz sagen mach,
with truth I that say may,
dar ie dehein man
where ever any man
in diser werlt zô quam,
in this world to came,

und di hie an der erden
and which here on the earth

ie mohten gewerden.
ever might become.

dô frâgetih mit listen
then asked-I with cunning

di lûte, diz wol wisten,
the people, who-it well knew,

waz ûf den bergen wâre.
what on the mountains were.

di sageten uffenbâre,
they said openly,

dar ûf wâren besunder
there upon were severally

manicfalde wunder:
manifold wonders:

tier di wâren eislîch,
beasts which were hideous,

und wurme vil freislîch.
and serpents very fearsome.

ih sah dâ lange boume,
I saw there long trees,

des nam ih allis goume:
of-that took I all heed:

daz obiz, daz dar ûf wôchs,
the fruit, that there upon grew,

daz waz sô ummâzlîchen grôz,
that was so measurelessly great,

daz ihs nit ne tar sagen.
that I-it not — dare tell.

ir mohtis uheren spot haben,
you might-of-it your mockery have,

wandiz dûhte û ungeloublîch.
for-it seemed to-you unbelievable.

wîntrûbelen di sach ih,
grapes them saw I,

von den mach ih û sagen,
of them may I to-you tell,

di ne mohte ein man niht getragen.
them — might a man not carry.

ouh sah ih dâ nuzze
also saw I there nuts

grôz und niwit lutzil,
great and not little,

grôzer si wâren
greater they were

danne phedemen zwâren,
than gourds truly,

ouh sach ih dâ trachen
also saw I there dragons

und andre manige sachen
and other many things

und manige grôze slange
and many great snakes

grôze unde lange.
great and long.

ûf den boumen sâzen affen
on the trees sat apes

und wilde merekatzin
and wild monkeys

und freislîch gefugele,
and fearsome birds,

daz hete dâ sîn gesidele.
that had there its dwelling.

Vernemet noch mêr, waz ih û sage,
Hear yet more, what I to-you tell,

dô wir gefûren funf tage,
when we fared five days,

dô sâge wir vor uns stân
then saw we before us stand

ein burch, di was wol getân.
a castle, which was well made.

dar ûf stunt ein palas,
there upon stood a palace,

dâ Candacis inne was,
where Candace inside was,

di phlac grôzer gûte.
who practiced great goodness.

di was Candaulis mûter.
she was Candaulus's mother.

dô si hete vernomen,
when she had heard,

daz ir sun was wider comen
that her son was back come

und sîn wîb brâhte,
and his woman brought,

vil liebe si sih gedâhte:
very gladly she herself bethought:

ingagen uns si dô ginc,
toward us she then went,

mit grôzen êren si uns entphinc.
with great honors she us received.

ûf ir houbit si trûc
on her head she bore

eine crône von golde sô gût,
a crown of gold so good,

daz nie nihein man
that never any man

neheine bezzere gewan.
any better won.

si selbe was harte lussam,
she self was very lovely,

von rehten prîse wol getân:
of right praise well made:

si ne was ze kurz noh ze lanc.
she not was too short nor too long.

mir was in mînen gedanc
to-me was in my thought

alsô wol ze mûte.
so well in mind.

alsih mîne mûter
as-if-I my mother

gesêhe vor andren wîben;
saw before other women;

alsô wol was mînem libe.
so well was to-my body.

Die edele kuninginne
The noble queen

frâgete dô mit sinne
asked then with sense

umbe den man irn sune,
about the man her son,

di mit ime was comen,
who with him was come,

wande si gerne vernême,
for she gladly would-hear,

von wilhen lande er quême
from which land he came

und waz sîn gewerb wêre.
and what his business were.

Candaulus der mêre
Candaulus the famous

antworte sîner mûter sus:
answered his mother thus:

‘der hêre heizet Antigonus
‘the lord is-called Antigonus

und is geborn von Kriechlant;
and is born of Greece;

den hete mit mir gesant
him had with me sent

der rîche Alexander
the rich Alexander

here zô unsen lande.
hither to our land.

zô dînem hûs nie ne quam
to thy house never — came

sô rehte biderbe ein man.
so truly worthy a man.

von rehte mûzih in loben,
of right must-I him praise,

wander is harte wol gezogen
for-he is very well bred

und hât einen kûschen lîb.
and has a chaste body.

er gwan mir widere mîn wîb.
he won to-me back my woman.

diz habe in dînen sinnen
this have in thy senses

und dankis ime mit minnen
and thank-for-it to-him with love

unde mit gûten,
and with goods,

Candacis trût mûter.’
Candace dear mother.’

Dô entfienc mih mit minnen
Then received me with love

di edele kuninginne
the noble queen

und kuste mich an mînen munt
and kissed me on my mouth

unde leite mih zestunt
and led me straightway

in ein scône palas,
into a fair palace,

daz von ônichîno geleget was.
which of onyx laid was.

di sûlen wâren reine
the pillars were pure

von edelem gesteine.
of noble gems.

daz dach daz was guldîn.
the roof it was golden.

manic wunder stunt dar in.
many wonder stood there in.

di spanbette wâren,
the couches were,

daz sagih û zwâren,
that tell-I to-you in-truth,

von gelûterten golde,
of refined gold,

alsiz di frowe wolde.
as-it the lady would.

dar ûffe lâgen bettewât
there upon lay bedclothes

von rôtem golde wol genât.
of red gold well sewn.

di tabele, dâ si zô saz,
the table, where she to sat,

sô si geswêslîchen az,
when she privately ate,

di was von elfenbeine,
it was of ivory,

gezîret mit gesteine.
adorned with gems.

di benche wâren rôt golt.
the benches were red gold.

noh mêr ir vernemen sult:
yet more you hear shall:

der palas was hêre
the palace was lordly

gezîrt mit manigen êren.
adorned with many honors.

obene di swibogen
above the arches

wâren mit golde ubirzogen.
were with gold covered.

di manicfalden wunder,
the manifold wonders,

di obene unde under
which above and below

dar ane stunden irgraben,
there on stood engraved,

di ne mah û nieman gesagen.
them — may to-you no-one tell.

ein wâch ouh dar under flôz,
a water also there under flowed,

der was mâzlîchen grôz,
which was moderately great,

orpimento gelîch,
to-orpiment like,

nâh dem golde verweter sih.
after the gold colored-it itself.

dâ was michil wunne:
there was great delight:

swenne sô di sunne
whenever so the sun

obene an den palas schein,
above on the palace shone,

sô schein daz golt al ein
so shone the gold all one

und der wâch der under.
and the water there under.

daz dûhte mir grôz wunder,
that seemed to-me great wonder,

dô ihz rehte besach.
when I-it rightly viewed.

vor wâr ih daz sagen mach,
for true I that say may,

dâ was lûtes ein michil maht.
there was of-people a great might.

dô machete eine wirtscaft
then made a feast

di rîche kuninginne
the rich queen

mit grôzeme sinne
with great sense

iren lieben kinden
for-her dear children

und iren ingesinden.
and for-her households.

zêrist unde ze leste
at-first and at last

hîz si ire geste
bade she her guests

vil harte flîzlîchen plegen
very greatly diligently tend

und hîz uns genûc geben
and bade to-us enough give

allis des wir wolden
of-all which we would

unde des wir haben solden
and which we have should

beide ih und mîne man.
both I and my men.

siu selbe unsir ware nam.
she herself of-us care took.

XIV · CANDACE UNMASKS ALEXANDER

Alexander describes Candace's hall: a gold-and-silk hanging, carbuncles, a golden stag whose birds, huntsman, and hounds sound by bellows, and a chamber on wheels drawn by elephants. When he wishes it home, she names him, shows his portrait, and warns that fortune throws down the proud. He rages that a woman has caught him, but she promises silence: her son Caracter hates him for killing Porus. They become lovers. Presented to her sons as the king's messenger, he is threatened by Caracter and defended by Candaulus, whose wife he won back.

Der edelen kuninginnen sal,
The noble queen's hall,

der was, alsih û sagen sal,
it was, as-I to-you tell shall,

daz si ze mûse inne ginc,
where she to meal in went,

sô si liebe geste entfienc,
when she dear guests received,

hêrlîch unde reine,
lordly and pure,

gezîret mit gesteine.
adorned with gems.

nidene unde ouh obene
below and also above

was er wol ze lobene.
was it well to praise.

dâ di frowe ze tabelen saz,
where the lady at table sat,

alse si tranc unde az,
when she drank and ate,

dâ hinc ein tûre umbehanc,
there hung a precious hanging,

der was breit unde lanc,
which was broad and long,

von edelen golde durhslagen.
of noble gold shot-through.

mit sîdin wâren dar în getragen
with silk were there in borne

vogele unde tiere
birds and beasts

mit manicfalder ziere
with manifold ornament

unde mit manigerslahte varwe.
and with many-kinds color.

daz merketih alliz garwe.
that marked-I all wholly.

man mohte dar an scowen
one might there on behold

rîter unde frowen
knights and ladies

obene unde nidene
above and below

mit wunderlîchen bilide.
with wondrous images.

zô den enden und an den orten
at the ends and at the corners

wâren tûre borten
were precious borders

und elfenbeinîne crapfen,
and ivory hooks,

di hangeten an den ricken.
which hung on the rods.

alse man zouh den umbehanc,
when one drew the hanging,

manic goltschelle dar an irclanc.
many gold-bell there on rang.

der umbehanc was hêrlîch.
the hanging was lordly.

ime ne wart nie nehein gelîch.
to-it — became never any like.

den meisterde Candacis.
it devised Candace.

wande si was listich unde wîs,
for she was cunning and wise,

di rîche kuninginne
the rich queen

mit iren tiefen sinne.
with her deep wits.

Ouh sah ih dâ ze stunden,
Also saw I there at-the hour,

daz vor ir tabele stunden
that before her table stood

zwei edele kerzestallen
two noble candlesticks

von lûteren cristallen.
of pure crystal.

dâ was gesazt inne
there was set in

manic scône gimme.
many fair gem.

obene stunden ouh dar an,
above stood also there on,

daz scowete dâ manic man,
that beheld there many man,

zwêne lîhte carbuncel:
two bright carbuncles:

di naht ne was nie sô tunkel,
the night — was never so dark,

si lûhten sô die sterren
they shone as the stars

nâh unde verre
near and far

und sô daz man in den sal
and so that one in the hall

wol gesach ubir al
well saw over all

in allen enden,
in all ends,

alse dâ vackelen brenten.
as-if there torches burned.

sus hêrlîche
so lordly

was di frowe rîche
was the lady rich

allezît berâten.
at-all-times provided.

in ir kemenâte
in her chamber

was gnâde unde heil.
was grace and welfare.

dâ ne gebrast nehein teil,
there — lacked no part,

des dâ wesen solde
of-which there be should

und des man haben wolde.
and of-which one have would.

Ih wil û sagen mêre
I will to-you tell more

von der kuninginnen hêre,
of the queen lordly,

wî ir spil was getân,
how her play was made,

sô si ze mûse solde gân:
when she to meal should go:

mitten in ir palas
midst in her palace

ein scône tier geworht was,
a fair beast wrought was,

daz was alliz golt rôt,
that was all gold red,

alse siz selbe gebôt.
as she-it self commanded.

daz tier was vil hêrlîch
the beast was very lordly

eineme hirze gelîch.
to-a hart like.

an sîn houbit vorne
on its head in-front

hattiz dûsint horne.
had-it thousand horns.

ûf allir horne gelîch
on of-all horns alike

stunt ein fugil hêrlîch.
stood a bird lordly.

ûf dem tiere saz ein man
on the beast sat a man

scône unde wol getân,
fair and well made,

der fûrte zwêne hunde
who led two hounds

unde ein horn ze sînen munde.
and a horn to his mouth.

nidene an dem gewelbe
below in the vault

lâgen viere und zwênzich blâsebelge.
lay four and twenty bellows.

zaller belge gelîch
to-all bellows alike

gingen zwelif man creftich.
went twelve men strong.

sô si di belge drungen,
when they the bellows pressed,

di fugele scône sungen
the birds fairly sang

an deme tiere vorn,
on the beast in-front,

sô blies ouh der man sîn horn,
so blew also the man his horn,

sô galpeden ouh di hunde.
so bayed also the hounds.

ouh lûtte an der stunden
also sounded at the hour

daz hêrlîche tier
the lordly beast

mit der stimmen alsein pantier,
with the voice as-a panther,

dem gêt under stunde
from-which goes at times

ein âdem ûz dem munde
a breath out-of the mouth

sûzer den wîrouch.
sweeter than-the incense.

der frowen dienist werte ouh
the lady's service lasted also

von prîme biz ze nône.
from prime until to none.

sô di frowe scône
when the lady fair

Candacis ze mûse ginc,
Candace to meal went,

sô stunden dâr an einen rinc
so stood there in a ring

tûsint jungelinge
thousand youths

von irn ingesinde,
of her household,

di plâgen hubischeite vile
who practiced courtliness much

mit allir slahte seitspile,
with all kind string-play,

unde funf hundrit junchêren,
and five hundred young-lords,

di mit allen êren
who with all honors

des hobis wol plâgen
of-the court well took-care

unde wazzer gâben
and water gave

und di dâ ware nâmen
and who there care took

der geste, di dâ quâmen.
of-the guests, who there came.

ouh mohte man dâ scowen
also might one there behold

funf hundrit juncfrowen
five hundred young-ladies

wol gewassen unde smal
well grown and slender

und rîterlîch ubir al,
and knightly over all,

scône under den ougen,
fair under the eyes,

mit guldînen bougen.
with golden rings.

di trûgen an ir lîb
they bore on their body

manigen scônen samît
many fair samite

beide grûne unde rôt,
both green and red,

alsiz di frowe gebôt.
as-it the lady commanded.

alse di harfen clungen,
when the harps rang,

di juncfrowen sungen
the young-ladies sang

und tanzeten unde trâten.
and danced and stepped.

hei wî wol daz taten,
hey how well that did,

dô sis begunden,
when they-it began,

wande siz wol kunden.
for they-it well could.

und alse di frowe lussam
and when the lady lovely

ubir hob solde gân,
over court should go,

vor si gingen getwerge
before her went dwarfs

zô der herberge,
to the lodging,

di wâren alle wol gezogen.
who were all well bred.

daz merket vor ungelogen,
that mark for unlied,

di trûgen phellîne wât,
they bore brocade raiment,

di was mit golde wol genât.
which was with gold well sewn.

si trûgen grâ unde bunt.
they bore gray and colored-fur.

mir ne wart nie mê kunt
to-me — became never more known

nehein frowe sô lussam
any lady so lovely

unde alse rehte wol getân.
and as rightly well made.

si was vor allen wîben
she was before all women

an frumicheit und an ir lîbe
in valor and in her body

vor allen frowen ûz irkorn.
before all ladies out chosen.

si ginc in allen bevorn,
she went to-them all before,

di in den gezîten
who in the times

in der werlt wâren wîten.
in the world were wide.

Des nêhisten morgenis frû
The next morning early

di frowe leitte mich dô
the lady led me then

in eine andre kemenâten.
into an other chamber.

di di geworht hâten,
those-who it wrought had,

di wâren listige man.
they were cunning men.

dâ stunden rôte steine an,
there stood red stones on,

di lûhten sô di sterren
which shone as the stars

nâh unde verre.
near and far.

des nahtes was dar inne tah
of-the night was there inside day

und von lîhte michil gemach.
and from light great ease.

Dô leitte mih di kuningîn
Then led me the queen

di dritte kemenâten in.
the third chamber into.

di was vil hêrsam.
it was very lordly.

mit uns ne ginc nieman,
with us — went no-one,

wan wir einigen zwei.
except we only two.

von edelen holze aspindei
of noble wood aspindei

was daz gewerke.
was the work.

daz solt ir rehte merken.
that shall you rightly mark.

daz holz daz is tûre,
the wood it is precious,

iz ne mah in den fûre
it — may in the fire

neheine wîs verbrinnen.
in-no way burn.

dô leitte si mih dannen
then led she me thence

in eine kemenâten hô,
into a chamber high,

di was gemachit alsô
which was made so

von starken balken veinen
of strong beams fine

grôzen und niwit cleinen,
great and not small,

di meisterde di frowe.
it devised the lady.

man mohte dar ane scowen
one might there on behold

manige list besunder.
many craft severally.

dâ wâren gesazt under
there were set under

starkir radere viere.
strong wheels four.

starker elfentiere
strong elephants

sehs unde drîzich,
six and thirty,

daz was vil hêrlîch,
that was very lordly,

zugen di kemenâten.
drew the chamber.

diz hatte al berâten
this had all provided

di wîse kuninginne.
the wise queen.

ih dâhte in mînen sinne,
I thought in my senses,

dô ih diz alliz besach,
when I this all viewed,

dô hûb ih an unde sprah:
then raised I on and spoke:

‘wolde got der gûte,
‘would God the good,

hêtih und mîn mûter
had-I and my mother

dise kemenâten
this chamber

alsus wol berâten
so well provided

mit disen elfanden
with these elephants

heim ze Kriechlande!’
home at Greece!’

ze hant dô ih alsus gesprach,
at once when I thus spoke,

di kuningîn mih ane sah
the queen me on looked

und sprah: ‘Alexander,
and spoke: ‘Alexander,

daz wêre ein michil wunder,
that would-be a great wonder,

hêtistu alsus lîhte
hadst-thou so easily

mir nû mîn gestifte
from-me now my foundation

mit dînen worten benomen,
with thy words taken,

und wâriz ze Kriechen comen
and were-it to Greece come

mit sus samfter arbeit,
with so gentle toil,

wênistu, iz ne wêre mir leit?’
weenest-thou, it not would-be to-me sorrow?’

Vile harte ih underquam,
Very greatly I was-amazed,

dô ih der frowen wort vernam
when I the lady’s word heard

und ih gehôrte mînen namen;
and I heard my name;

dô begundih forhten unde scamen.
then began-I to-fear and be-ashamed.

sih verwandelôte garwe
itself changed wholly

mîn sin und mîn varwe.
my sense and my color.

dô sprah si: ‘Alexander,
then spoke she: ‘Alexander,

nemet dih des wunder,
takes thee of-it wonder,

daz ih dih hie nenne?
that I thee here name?

vil wol ih dih irkenne,
very well I thee recognize,

daz saltu noh bescowen.'
that shalt-thou yet behold.'

dô leitte mih di frowe
then led me the lady

in eine kemenâte,
into a chamber,

dâ si behalden hâte
where she kept had

ein bilide nâh mir getân,
an image after me made,

dan abe ih û gesagit hân.
there of I to-you told have.

Vil leide ih mir gedâhte,
Very sorrowful I me thought,

dô di frowe brâhte
when the lady brought

daz bilide ze lîhte
the image to light

unde ze mînen anesihte
and to my sight

daz hatte in irn handen.
that had-she in her hands.

si sprah: 'Alexander,
she spoke: 'Alexander,

nû du dîn bilide hâst gesehen,
now thou thy image hast seen,

nû mûstu mir von rehte jehen,
now must-thou to-me by right avow,

daz ih dih wol irkenne,
that I thee well recognize,

wandih dih rehte nenne.
for-I thee rightly name.

ih weiz wol, wer du bist.
I know well, who thou art.

dih ne hilfit neheine dîne list,
thee — helps none thy crafts,

di du canst, helit balt,
which thou knowest, hero bold,

du ne stês an mîner gewalt.
thou unless standest in my power.

waz hilfit dir nû dîn craft
what helps thee now thy strength

unde daz du sigehaft
and that thou victorious

ubir manic lant wêre.
over many land were.

Persiam di mêre
Persia the famous

hâstu zestôret
hast-thou destroyed

und Indiam zefûret,
and India laid-waste,

Partos ubirwunden.
Parthians overcome.

nû hât dih bedwungen
now has thee subdued

âne fehten ein wîb.
without fighting a woman.

waz hilfit dir nû manic strît,
what helps thee now many strife,

den du lange hâs getân.
which thou long hast done.

nû mahtu rehte wol verstân,
now mayst-thou right well understand,

daz nû nieman ne lebet,
that now no-one — lives,

swenner sih ze hô verhebet,
whenever-he himself too high exalts,

swî ime di sâlden volgen,
however to-him the fortunes follow,

werdent si ime verbolgen,
(if)-become they to-him angered,

si ne kêre zornlîche wider
they unless turn wrathfully back

und wirfit den rîchen der nider
and throws the rich there down

alsô schiere sô den armen.
as quickly as the poor.

des mûz ih dih warnen.
of-that must I thee warn.

ouh hâstuz selbe wol gesehen,
also hast-thou-it self well seen,

wiltu der wârheite jehen.'
(if)-wilt-thou the truth avow.'

Mîn zorn mih dar zô dwanc,
My anger me there to compelled,

daz ih mih karte zô der want
that I me turned to the wall

von der kuninginnen.
from the queen.

dô wart si wol innen
then became she well aware

mîner ungebêre
of-my ill-bearing

und frâgete, waz mir wêre.
and asked, what to-me were.

ih sprah, mir wêre vil zorn,
I spoke, to-me were very anger,

daz ih hette verlorn
that I had lost

beide witze unde sin.
both wits and sense.

‘daz ih nû sus vertôret bin,
‘that I now so fooled am,

daz ist mir vil unwert.
that is to-me very hateful.

ih hête gerne mîn swert,
I would-have gladly my sword,

ih wolde dih ze tôte slân.
I would thee to death strike.

sê, wî torstistu mih vân!
see, how daredst-thou me seize!

sol ih abir hin comen
(if)-shall I however hence come

unde wirt iz danne vernomen
and (if)-is it then heard

dâ heim ze mînen lande,
there at-home in my land,

dô habih is imer scande,
then have-I of-it ever disgrace,

daz mih bedwungen hât ein wîb.
that me subdued has a woman.

war zô sol mir nû der lîb,
where to shall to-me now the life,

er is mir ummêre.’
it is to-me indifferent.’

sô sprah di frowe hêre:
so spoke the lady lordly:

‘ne zurne nûwit helt gût
‘— be-angry not hero good

und habe manlîchen mût,
and have manly spirit,

ih bin an dir inne
I am in thee aware

worden grôzer sinne
become great sense

unde grôzer wîsheit.
and great wisdom.

ne lâ dir niwit wesen leit,
— let to-thee not be sorrow,

daz ih dih alsus hân irvarn.
that I thee thus have found-out.

dir ne scadet neheiner mûter barn.
thee — harms no mother's child.

du ne salt den frowen
thou — shalt the ladies

neheine wîs drowen
in-no way threaten

noh slân noh schelden.
nor strike nor revile.

ih ne wil dih niwit melden.
I — will thee not betray.

gehabe dih wol und wis frô.
fare thee well and be glad.

du hâs Candaulo
thou hast for-Candaulus

wider gewunnen sîn wîb.
back won his woman.

daz behaldet dir den lîb.
that keeps to-thee the life.

irkanten dih di lûte,
(if)-recognized thee the people,

dih ne irnerte hûte
thee — would-save today

von den tôte nehein man.
from the death no man.

wande dir ist vil gram
for to-thee is very hostile

Caracter mîn junger sun,
Caracter my younger son,

wande du irslûge Porum,
for thou slewest Porus,

den vater sînis wîbis.
the father of-his woman.

du ne darf dînes lîbes
thou — needst of-thy life

rehte neheine sorge haben.
rightly no care have.

dir ne mach nieman hie gescaden.'
thee — may no-one here harm.'

Dô leitte siu mih vore baz,
Then led she me forth further,

dâ ir slâfgadem was.
where her sleeping-chamber was.

dar inne hienc ein umbehanc,
there inside hung a hanging,

der was breit unde lanc.
which was broad and long.

dô sih der umbehanc entlouch,
when itself the hanging opened,

dô quam dar ûz der beste rouch,
then came there out the best scent,

den ie dichein man
which ever any man

umbe ein bette vernam.
around a bed perceived.

ir bette stunt hêrlîche.
her bed stood lordly.

di kuninginne rîche
the queen rich

bescheinte mi ir willen.
showed me her will.

dô minnetih si stille.
then loved-I her secretly.

si sprah, dô ih si gwan
she spoke, when I her won

ze wîbe, ih wêre ir man,
as woman, I were her man,

daz ih mîn trûren lieze stân,
that I my mourning let stand,

mir ne wurde argis niwit getân.
to-me — would-be of-harm not done.

dô bat mih di frowe gût,
then begged me the lady good,

daz ih getrôste iren mût
that I comforted her spirit

unde schiere wider quême
and quickly back came

unde ih ir benême
and I from-her took

den freislîchen smerzen,
the fearsome pain,

den si an ir herzen
which she in her heart

durh mih lîden solde.
for me suffer should.

dô sprah ih, daz ih wolde
then spoke I, that I would

vil schiere zô ir komen wider.
very quickly to her come back.

dô gienge wir nider,
then went we down,

dâ ir sune wâren.
where her sons were.

dâ sprah si offinbâre
there spoke she openly

zô den junchêren:
to the young-lords:

‘mit wî getânen êren
‘with how made honors

wir disen wîgande
we this fighter

gelônen âne scande
reward without disgrace

dem boten des kuninges.
the messenger of-the king.

wêre hie iht sulehis,
were here anything such,

des er nemen wolde,
of-which he take would,

vil gerne manz ime solde
very gladly one-it to-him should

geben unde in lâzen
give and him let

varen sîne strâze.’
fare his road.’

Des antworte der jungelinc
For-that answered the youth

Karacter, der frowen junger kint:
Caracter, the lady’s younger child:

‘ih wil ime eine gâbe geben,
‘I will to-him a gift give,

di ime hûte gêt an daz leben,
which to-him today goes to the life,

mit mînem swerte einen slach,
with my sword a blow,

den er verwinnen nit ne mach,
which he overcome not — may,

Alexandro ze leide,
to-Alexander for sorrow,

wander slûch mînen eidem.
for-he slew my father-in-law.

des bin ih imer unfrô.'
of-that am I ever unglad.'

sus antwortime dô
thus answered-him then

Candaulus unde sprah:
Candaulus and spoke:

'swer ime hie tût diheinen slach,
'whoever to-him here does any blow,

mir ne breste daz swert,
me unless break the sword,

er wirt eines grôzeren gewert
he is of-a greater granted

von mînes selbis handen,
from my self's hands,

wander rach mînen anden
for-he avenged my grievance

und gwan mir widere mîn wîb.
and won to-me back my woman.

ih wil ime hûte sînen lib
I will to-him today his body

gesunt al hie behalden,
sound all here keep,

sol is gelucke walden.'
(if)-shall of-it fortune rule.'

Karacter zô sînem brûder sprach:
Caracter to his brother spoke:

'mir is vil harte ungemah,
'to-me is very greatly displeasing,

daz du den wilt vor stân,
that thou him wilt before stand,

des hêre mir hât getân
whose lord to-me has done

harte vil ze leide:
very much to sorrow:

er slûch mir mînen eidem.
he slew to-me my father-in-law.

dar umbe wil ih hûte geben
there for will I today give

mîn lîb umbe sînen leben
my life for his life

oder kiesen mit ime den tôt,
or choose with him the death,

wandih stunt in grôzer nôt
for-I stood in great distress

vor sînen hêren Alexandren.
before his lord Alexander.

daz wirt ime nû ze scanden.'
that becomes to-him now to disgrace.'

Advised by Candace, Alexander, still disguised, swears to deliver Alexander to her sons, and she bids them spare her guest. They give him gold, a hauberk, and a mantle, and the queen a diamond crown. In a crypt of gods, one who saw him in Libya foretells his burial at Alexandria. He leaves Candace and demands the Amazons' tribute; they send three thousand maidens with gifts, a warning, and an offer of service; he promises friendship. His letter to Olympias and Aristotle ends. He seeks paradise to subdue the angels, the young men urging him against the wise.

Dô wart mir vil leide.
Then became to-me very sorrowful.

di junchêren beide
the young-lords both

griffen zô den schilden.
grasped to the shields.

dô sprach di frowe milde
then spoke the lady generous

Candacis di kuninginne
Candace the queen

mit michelen sinne
with great sense

zô mir verholenlîche:
to me secretly:

'Alexander, helt rîche,
'Alexander, hero rich,

du salt durh den willen mîn
thou shalt for the will my

hûte lâzen werden schîn,
today let become apparent,

ob du bist alsô wîs,
if thou art so wise,

alse man saget, daz du sîs.
as one says, that thou be.

sô scheit mit listen disen strît.'
so part with crafts this strife.'

in der selber zît
in the same time

sprah ih zô den junchêren:
spoke I to the young-lords:

'des hêttir lutzil êre,
'of-that would-have-you little honor,

slûgit ir einen ellenden man.
(if)-slew you an exiled man.

ouh wêriz ubile getân.
also were-it ill done.

iz ne was nie reht,
it — was never right,

daz siheinime kneht
that to-any knight

oder siheineme bote
or to-any messenger

dihein hêre missebote.
any lord mistreated.

iz ne wêre des wert,
it not were of-it worth,

daz ieman sîn swert
that anyone his sword

ubir mih hie irzoge.
over me here drew.

ih bin mînis hêren herzoge.
I am my lord's duke.

er hiez mih fûren sînen vanen.
he bade me carry his banner.

hêtih û gedienet wol dar ane,
had-I to-you served well there on,

des wêre mir nû nôt,
of-that were to-me now need,

ih lige noh ungerne tôt.
I lie yet unwillingly dead.

lâzent mir den leben hân,
let me the life have,

daz ist û bezzer getân.
that is to-you better done.

sô wil ih û sweren daz,
so will I to-you swear that,

daz irs getrûwet deste baz,
that you-it trust the better,

ih bringe û Alexanderen
I bring to-you Alexander

und mit ime niemanne anderen
and with him no-one other

vil schiere an uhere gwalt
very quickly into your power

und lâzt ir dan den helt balt
and (if)-let you then the hero bold

genesen, sô tût ir wole.
survive, so do you well.

den tôt ih noh ungerne dole.'
the death I yet unwillingly suffer.'

Dô sprah di frowe rîche
Then spoke the lady rich

zô irn kinden lieblîche:
to her children lovingly:

'ir ne sulit niwit scaden
'you — shall not harm

mînen gaste, den ih haben.
my guest, whom I have.

er ist ein unsculdich man.
he is a guiltless man.

û hât leide getân
to-you has sorrow done

sîn hêre Alexander,
his lord Alexander,

der veret hie in dem lande.
who fares here in the land.

sendet disen hêren
send this lord

wider mit uheren êren.
back with your honors.

woldet ir an einen gaste
(if)-would you on a guest

tûn uher laster,
do your shame,

des wurde after lande
of-that would-be through land

gebreitet uher scande.'
spread your disgrace.'

sus behîlt ih den lîb.
thus kept I the life.

daz vil listige wîb
the very cunning woman

ne sagite niemanne daz,
— told no-one that,

daz ih Alexander was.
that I Alexander was.

Nâh dise sûze wort
After these sweet words

wart garwe zestôrt
was wholly destroyed

unsir allir vîentscaft
of-us all enmity

und wart ein stête frûntscaft
and was a steadfast friendship

zô mir von den hêren
to me from the lords

und gâben mir mit êren
and gave to-me with honors

hêrlîche gâbe,
lordly gifts,

golt âne wâge
gold without weighing

unde einen halsperg gût.
and a hauberk good.

des wart gefrowet mîn mût,
of-that was gladdened my spirit,

wander was maniger marke wert.
for-it was of-many marks worth.

den ne mohte spere noh swert
it not might spear nor sword

durhsnîden noh durhstechen
cut-through nor pierce-through

noh nieren durhbrechen,
nor anywhere break-through,

noh der wâfene nichein,
nor of-the weapons any,

daz di sunne ie beschein.
which the sun ever shone-on.

si gâben mir noh dan
they gave to-me yet then

eine gâbe vil hêrsam,
a gift very lordly,

di was mir wol ze danke:
which was to-me well to thanks:

einen sô gûten mantel,
a so good mantle,

daz nie nehein man
that never any man

neheinen bezzeren gwan.
any better won.

ouh gab mir ze minnen
also gave to-me for love

di liebe kuninginne
the dear queen

eine gûte crône.
a good crown.

di was vile scône,
it was very fair,

von einem adamante hart,
of a diamond hard,

mit allen flîze gewart.
with all diligence wrought.

si sprah, si wêre mir reht,
she spoke, it were to-me right,

wandih wêre ein gût kneht
for-I were a good knight

lîbis unde gûtes
of-body and of-goods

und eines harten mûtes.
and of-a hard spirit.

Dô leite mih mit sinne
Then led me with sense

di rîche kuninginne
the rich queen

heimlîche in ire behalt,
secretly into her keeping,

in eine cruft, di was alt.
into a crypt, which was old.

gerne ginc ih mit ir.
gladly went I with her.

dô sagete si mir,
then told she me,

wî dâ gote sâzen
how there gods sat

zô irn tische und âzen.
at their table and ate.

dô ih dô dar în quam,
when I then there in came,

di wârheit ih dâ vernam:
the truth I there perceived:

dâ vant ih gote manige,
there found I gods many,

di sâzen dâ ze samene.
who sat there to together.

al ne mugit is nit gelouben,
although — may-you of-it not believe,

in lûhten di ougen
to-them shone the eyes

alse brinninde liehtfaz.
as burning lamps.

harte irforhtih mih daz.
greatly feared-I myself that.

ein der gote der grûzte mih.
one of-the gods he greeted me.

der sprah: 'ganc here unde sih.
he spoke: 'go hither and see.

wiltu bescowen wunder,
(if)-wilt-thou behold wonder,

sô ganc her vorder under.'
so go hither further under.'

dô ih dar under in quam,
when I there under in came,

grôz wunder ih dâr vernam.
great wonder I there perceived.

ein genibele was dâ vil grôz.
a mist was there very great.

vil starke mih des verdrôz.
very strongly me of-it irked.

ouh lûhten dâ sterren
also shone there stars

nâh unde verre.
near and far.

dâ sach ih einen grôzen man,
there saw I a great man,

der was alse ein got getân.
who was as a god made.

sîn gesidele was hêrlîch.
his seat was lordly.

der redete vile wider mih.
he spoke much to me.

Der got alsus ze mir sprach:
The god thus to me spoke:

'dô ih dih allerletzist sah
'when I thee last saw

ze Libien, des nist niht lanc.
at Libya, that is not long.

nû habe michelen danc,
now have great thanks,

daz du ze mir bist comen.'
that thou to me art come.'

ih sprah: 'des nâmih gerne fromen,
I spoke: 'of-that would-take-I gladly profit,

ob tu mir sagen woldes,
if thou to-me tell wouldst,

wî lange ih leben solde.
how long I live should.

wiste ih wêrlîche daz,
(if)-knew I truly that,

mir wêre lange deste baz
to-me were long the better
beide naht unde tach;
both night and day;
sô sturbih ouh âne ungemach.'
so would-die-I also without hardship.'
Dô antworte mir der got
Then answered to-me the god
und sprah: 'ih sage dir âne spot,
and spoke: 'I tell to-thee without mockery,
daz nehein erdische man
that no earthly man
sînen tôt wizzen ne kan,
his death know — can,
wandiz ne wêre ime niwit gût,
for-it — were to-him not good,
er ne wurde niemer wol gemût.
he — would-become never well spirited.
iz ne quême ime niwit rehte,
it — would-come to-him not right,
swanner dar ane dêhte.
whenever-he there on thought.
ime ne wêre niwit deste baz,
to-him — were not the better,
wane alser sturbe al den tach;
except as-if-he died all the day;
wene ih sage dir ein dinc.
except I tell to-thee a thing.
daz saltu wizzen jungelinc:
that shalt-thou know youth:
eine stat hâstu gebûwet,
a city hast-thou built,
di hâstu wol vernûwet,
which hast-thou well renewed,

di heizet Alexandria:
which is-called Alexandria:

man sol dih noh begraben dâ.'
one shall thee yet bury there.'

niwit mêr ne sprah er mir zû.
nothing more — spoke he me to.

wider ûz gienc ih dô
back out went I then

zô den junchêren.
to the young-lords.

di liezen mih mit êren.
they let-go me with honors.

ouh schiet ih mit minnen
also departed I with love

von der kuninginnen.
from the queen.

di kustih an irn munt
her kissed-I on her mouth

und hiez si blîben gesunt,
and bade her remain sound,

und quam zô mînen mannen.
and came to my men.

dâ wart ih wol entfangen.
there was I well received.

vil wol si mîn phlâgen,
very well they of-me took-care,

wande si mih gerne sâgen.
for they me gladly saw.

dannen fûre wir dô
thence fared we then

durh berge, di wâren hô,
through mountains, which were high,

unde slûgen unse gezelt
and pitched our tents

ûf an ein breit felt,
up on a broad field,

und hiez briebe scrîben
and bade letters write

zô den urlûges wîben,
to the war women,

di sîn Amazones genant,
who are Amazons named,

Amazonia hîz ir lant.
Amazonia was-called their land.

ih enbôt ir kuninginnen
I sent-word to-their queen

mîne holde minne
my loyal love

in mînen brieve
in my letter

und harte vil ze liebe,
and very much to kindness,

und hiez, daz si mir sande
and bade, that she to-me sent

den zins von irn lande.
the tribute from their land.

Dô mîn bote dar quam
When my messenger thither came

und si von ime den brieb genam
and she from him the letter took

und si rehte gelas,
and she rightly read,

daz dar in gescriben was,
what there in written was,

dô antwortime mit sinne
then answered-him with sense

der frowen kuninginne:
of-the ladies queen:

‘waz wil der mêre wîgant
‘what will the famous fighter

here in unser magede lant
hither into our of-maidens land

mit alsô creftegen here?
with so mighty host?

beginne wir ime di rîche weren
(if)-begin we from-him the realm to-defend

unde irslehet er uns dan alle samen,
and (if)-slays he us then all together,

des mah er imer sih gescamen,
of-that may he ever himself be-ashamed,

wander hât is lutzil êre.
for-he has of-it little honor.

ouh sage ih dir mêre
also tell I to-thee more

man wenttiz ime ze scanden
one would-turn-it to-him to disgrace

hie unde in allen landen,
here and in all lands,

dat er mit sînen knehten
that he with his knights

wider magede wolde vehten.
against maidens would fight.

gibit uns abir got daz heil,
(if)-gives to-us however God the fortune,

daz wir daz bezzere teil
that we the better part

gewinnen inne den strît,
win in the strife,

des sal er denken enzît,
of-that shall he think in-time,

unde wirt er danne sigelôs,
and (if)-becomes he then victoryless,

sô ist er imer êrenlôs
so is he ever honorless

under sînen genôzen
among his peers

cleinen unde grôzen.
small and great.

wil er fridelîche
(if)-will he peacefully

comen in unse rîche,
come into our realm,

wir dienen ime mit êren.
we serve to-him with honors.

diz sage dîneme hêren.'
this tell to-thy lord.'

mit sus getânen urbote
with so made message

quam wider zô mir mîn bote.
came back to me my messenger.

Ingagen mir dô sande
Toward me then sent

di frowe von dem lande
the lady of the land

magide driu tûsant.
maidens three thousand.

di trûgen phellîn gwant.
they bore brocade clothing.

daz was ein hêrlîch scare.
that was a lordly troop.

vor mir quâmen si gare
before me came they wholly

vil gezogenlîche
very courteously

und nigen mir algelîche
and bowed to-me all-alike

mit magedelîchen sinnen.
with maidenly senses.

dô entfienc ih si mit minnen. 6520
then received I them with love.

dô sprah der frowen eine,
then spoke of-the ladies one,

di was ein magit reine:
who was a maiden pure:

'heil sî dir, kuninc hêr,
'hail be to-thee, king lordly,

beide nû und imer mêr.
both now and ever more.

dir entbûtit unse frowe 6525
to-thee sends-word our lady

âne valsc mit rehter trûwe
without falsehood with right faith

ir dienist unde alliz lieb.
her service and all kindness.

si hât gesant dir einen brieb
she has sent thee a letter

unde hêrlîche lînwât,
and lordly linen,

phellil unde cindât.' 6530
brocade and sendal.'

dô danketih der frowen
then thanked-I the lady

der minnen und der trûwen
for-the love and for-the faith

und der grôzen liebe.
and for-the great kindness.

dô greif ih zô den briebe.
then grasped I to the letter.

selbe ih dar inne las,
myself I there inside read,

daz dar an gescriben was,
what there on written was,

wî sih di frowen trageten
how themselves the ladies bore

und sih bewaret habeten
and themselves guarded had

vor andre wîgande,
against other fighters,

di bî irn lande
who by their land

wâren gesezzen
were settled

rîche und vermezzen:
rich and bold:

'swî gwaldich si wâren,
'however mighty they were,

si bewarten wol zwâren,
they prevented well truly,

daz si ie roub oder brant
that they ever robbery or burning

gestiften in unse lant,
brought into our land,

sint daz Cyrus irstarb,
since that Cyrus died,

der ouh mit urlôge warb;
who also with war strove;

der quam zeinen stunden
he came at-one time

mit grôzer samenunge
with great gathering

gevaren in unse marke
fared into our march

und urlougete uns starke.
and warred on-us strongly.

des verlôs er den lîb.
for-that lost he the life.

den slûg ein urlôgis wîb
him slew a war woman

geheizen Cassandra.
named Cassandra.

di was in unsem lande dâ
she was in our land there

kuningîn und frowe.
queen and lady.

daz sage wir dir in trûwen.'
that tell we to-thee in faith.'

Dô ih den brief dô gelas,
When I the letter then read,

alser mir gescriben was,
as-it to-me written was,

und ih ouh hete gehôrt
and I also had heard

dirre scônen juncfrowen wort,
of-this fair young-lady words,

dô trôstih di magetîn.
then comforted-I the maidens.

ih sprah: 'ir sult gwis sîn,
I spoke: 'you shall certain be,

wandirz wol sult irvaren,
for-you-it well shall learn,

daz ih here bin gevarn,
that I hither am fared,

daz ne sal û, frowen, comen
that — shall to-you, ladies, come

ze neheinen unfromen.
to no harm.

ih tetiz durh di sculde,
I did-it for the cause,

daz ih irvaren wolde
that I learn would

di manicfalden wunder,
the manifold wonders,

di mir dicke besunder
which to-me often severally

von û wâren gesagit.
of you were said.

sage dîner frowe, maget,
tell thy lady, maiden,

daz si mit gnâden sî
that she with grace be

und von allen sorgen frî.
and of all cares free.

ih bin ir stêtige frûnt.
I am her steadfast friend.

sage ir, daz si sî gesunt.'
tell her, that she be sound.'

di frowen kuster an irn munt.
the ladies kissed-he on their mouth.

dô hûben si sih an der stunt
then raised they themselves at the hour

und fûren heim ze lande.
and fared home to land.

mîne wîgande
my fighters

di wurden inniclîchen frô.
they became heartily glad.

dannen fûre wir dô.
thence fared we then.

sint irfûr ih manich lant.
afterward traversed I many land.

manic wundir ih irvant,
many wonder I found,

daz ih sah und vernam.
which I saw and perceived.

vil dicke mir ouh missequam.
very often to-me also went-amiss.

Hie endet sih der brieb,
Here ends itself the letter,

dar ane leit unde liep
there on sorrow and joy

Alexander screib,
Alexander wrote,

di er in fremeden landen leit,
which he in foreign lands suffered,

und den er heim sande
and which he home sent

sîner mûter ze lande
to-his mother to land

der frowen Olympiadi
the lady Olympias

und sînen meistre Aristotili.
and to-his master Aristotle.

Sint erfûr er gnûch
Afterward traversed he enough

beide velt unde brûch
both field and marsh

unde lant unde walt.
and land and forest.

ouh erfûr sint der helt balt
also traversed afterward the hero bold

ze staten unde burgen
to cities and castles

mit froweden und mit sorgen.
with joys and with cares.

sint môster entwîchen
afterward must-to-him give-way

den armen und den rîchen.
the poor and the rich.

des wart sîn gewalt
of-that was his power

vil verre gezalt
very far told

in allin ertrîche
in all earth-realm

ubir manigen kuninc rîche,
over many king rich,

di in alle êreten
who him all honored

und sînen lob mêreten
and his praise increased

und ime zins sanden
and to-him tribute sent

alle von irn landen.
all from their lands.

des ne dûhte ime allis niht genûc.
that — seemed to-him all not enough.

sîn hôhmût in dar zû trûc,
his arrogance him there to bore,

daz er sih hîz wîsen
that he himself bade guide

gegen den paradîse.
toward the paradise.

daz wolder bedwingen
that would-he subdue

und zins ouh dannen bringen
and tribute also thence bring

von den engelischen chôren.
from the angelic choirs.

hî muget ir tumpheit hôren,
here may you foolishness hear,

wî er des begunde.
how he it began.

an der selben stunde
at the same hour

frâgeter sîne holden,
asked-he his loyal-ones,

waz si ime râten wolden,
what they to-him counsel would,

wî er dar zô solde comen,
how he there to should come,

daz er daz mohte gefromen,
that he that might accomplish,

daz er mit here quâme dare,
that he with host came thither,

dâ er di engelische scare
where he the angelic troop

mohte bedwingen
might subdue

und ime undertânich bringen.
and to-him subject bring.

Dô sprâchen sîne fursten,
Then spoke his princes,

di iz getûn torsten,
who it do dared,

wande si wîs wâren:
for they wise were:

si rieten ime offinbâre,
they counseled to-him openly,

daz er sih vil rehte
that he himself very rightly

hî umbe bedêhte
here about bethought

und mit gnâden lebete
and with grace lived

und wider gote niht ne strebete,
and against God not — strove,

sô têter wîslîche.
so would-do-he wisely.

dô sprâchen al gelîche
then spoke all alike

di tumben jungelinge
the foolish youths

zô disem tegedinge:
at this assembly:

‘kuninc Alexander,
‘king Alexander,

wir râten dir ein ander.
we counsel to-thee an other.

du salt gedenken, helt balt,
thou shalt think, hero bold,

dise lûte di sîn alt
these people who are old

und unlustich unde laz,
and listless and slack,

di dir haben gerâten daz,
who to-thee have counseled that,

daz du hî blibis.
that thou here remainest.

si vorhten des lîbis.
they feared for-the life.

heiz dih, hêre, wîsen
bid thee, lord, guide

zô den paradîse.
to the paradise.

daz saltu bedwingen
that shalt-thou subdue

mit dînen jungelingen.
with thy youths.

dar sole wir dir helfen zô
there shall we thee help to

beide spâte unde frû.
both late and early.

jo hâstu dînes willen
yea hast-thou of-thy will

offenlîche und stille
openly and quietly

irworben ein vil michil teil.
won a very great part.

wir lâzenz, hêre, ane daz heil
we leave-it, lord, to the fortune

und îlen dar hine varen
and hasten there hence to-fare

mit einer hêrlîchen scaren,
with a lordly troop,

wande wir haben ein michil here.
for we have a great host.

wir suln mit schilde und mit spere
we shall with shield and with spear

dînen willen irwerben
thy will win

oder genendiclîchen sterben.'
or boldly die.'

XVI · THE WALL OF PARADISE

Taking the young men's counsel, Alexander, greedy as hell's insatiable mouth, rows up the Euphrates, which flows from paradise, through storms and past floating fruit, vowing to make no war once paradise is won. At a high wall of gems his men hammer at a gate and demand tribute. An old man bids their lord turn back and repent and sends a stone whose meaning will teach him measure. The young men want to storm the wall; a wise man counsels leaving, since God guards those within.

Alexandro dûhte in sînen mût
To-Alexander seemed in his spirit

der tumber lûte rât gût.
of-the foolish people's counsel good.

daz was ein michil tumpheit.
that was a great foolishness.

des quam in manich arbeit.
of-that came to-him many toil.

der tobende wûterîch
the raging tyrant

der was der hellen gelîch,
he was to-the hell like,

di daz abgrunde
which the abyss

begenit mit irn munde
gapes with her mouth

und den himel zô der erden,
and the heaven to the earth,

und ir doh niht ne mac werden,
and to-her yet not — may become,

daz si imer werde vol;
that she ever becomes full;

si is daz ungesatlîche hol,
she is the insatiable hole,

daz weder nû noh nie ne sprah:
which neither now nor ever — spoke:

diz ist, des ih niht ne mach.
this is, what I not — may.

alsô tete Alexander,
so did Alexander,

di fromete manich wunder.
who wrought many wonder.

der quam durh sîne giricheit
he came through his greed

in vil michil arbeit.
into very great toil.

er ne wolde niwit sûmen,
he — would not delay,

er begundiz dâr rûmen
he began-it there to-clear

unde fûr dannen
and fared thence

mit allen sînen mannen
with all his men

ubir berg unde tal
over mountain and valley

unde manigen stîch smal,
and many path narrow,

dâ er mûste sturmen
where he must assault

mit freislîchen wurmen
with fearsome serpents

unde mit den tieren.
and with the beasts.

dô hoffeter, daz er schiere
then hoped-he, that he quickly

quâme ûz der nôt.
came out-of the distress.

iedoh vorhter den tôt,
yet feared-he the death,

swî stolzmûte sô er was.
however proud-spirited so he was.

daz er dâ genas,
that he there survived,

daz was gotis wunder.
that was God's wonder.

dô gerou besunder
then rued severally

allen, di dâ wâren,
to-all, who there were,

stille und offinbâre
quietly and openly

di tumplîche herevart,
the foolish campaign,

wande si liden manigen sturm hart
for they suffered many storm hard

von starken gewidere.
from strong weather.

daz treib si dicke widere
that drove them often back

in ir ungewalt.
into their helplessness.

des verzwîbelte der helt balt
of-that despaired the hero bold

der mûlîche Alexander
the troublesome Alexander

und vil manich ander, 6710
and very many other,

manich jungelinc gemeit.
many youth joyful.

di vart di was vil leit
the journey it was very grievous

Alexandro zô dem mâle,
to-Alexander at the time,

swî erz dô verhâle
however he-it then concealed

durh werltlîche scande; 6715
for worldly disgrace;

wârer dô ze lande,
were-he then at home,

er ne quême niemer mêr dar.
he — would-come never more there.

daz sult ir wizzen vor wâr,
that shall you know for true,

wande si liden ungemach
for they suffered hardship

beide naht unde tach 6720
both night and day

von dunre und von blicke.
from thunder and from lightning.

er manete sîne dicke,
he exhorted his often,

daz si balde fûren.
that they quickly fared.

er hîz si starke rûren,
he bade them strongly row,

biz si dar quâmen,
until they thither came,

dâ si volc vernâmen
where they folk perceived

unde gemach funden.
and ease found.

dar nâh in curzen stunden
there after in short hours

quâmen si an eine flûme
came they to a river

grôz und gerûme,
great and wide,

di was Eufrates genant.
which was Euphrates named.

di lûte, di er dâr vant,
the people, whom he there found,

beide cleine unde grôz,
both small and great,

di sagetin ime, daz iz flôz
they told to-him, that it flowed

ûz dem paradîse.
out-of the paradise.

dô hîz er mit spîsen
then bade he with food

sîne schif bereiten.
his ships prepare.

er ne wolde niwit beiten.
he — would not wait.

daz der wunderlîche man
what the wondrous man

hîz, daz wart schiere getân.
bade, that was quickly done.

Dô si ze schiffe quâmen,
When they to ship came,

ir rûder si nâmen
their oars they took

und swaz si haben solden,
and whatever they have should,

wande si varen wolden
for they fare would

in di starke flûme.
into the strong river.

dô mohten si vile kûme
then might they very scarcely

wider dem strâme iht gevarn.
against the stream anything fare.

dô leit dâ maniger mûter barn
then suffered there many mother's child

angist unde pîne grôz,
fear and pain great,

wande daz wazzer starke flôz.
for the water strongly flowed.

ouh mûweten daz gesinde
also grieved the household

di freislîchen winde
the fearsome winds

und donre unde blicke.
and thunder and lightning.

ouh nôte si dicke
also pressed them often

regen hagel unde snê.
rain hail and snow.

in wart dicke vil wê
to-them became often very woe

von unrehten gewidere.
from wrong weather.

daz treib si sêre widere.
that drove them sorely back.

si liden michil arbeit.
they suffered great toil.

si mohten ir manheit
they might of-their manhood

niwit vile dâ geniezen.
not much there profit.

dô sâhen si fliezen
then saw they float

dar in obiz unde loub,
there in fruit and leaves,

daz vil sûzlîchen rouch.
which very sweetly smelled.

daz loub was breit unde lanc.
the leaves were broad and long.

di dâ woneten in daz lant,
who there dwelt in the land,

dahten ir hûs dâ mite.
roofed their houses there with.

des was dâre lantsite.
of-that was there land-custom.

des obizzis si wol genozzen.
of-the fruit they well enjoyed.

ouh quam dâ mite geflozzin
also came there with floated

manic scône blûme
many fair flower

gele unde grûne.
yellow and green.

der viengen di hêren vile
of-them caught the lords many

und heten si zô einen spile.
and had them for a game.

Dô di helede gemeit
When the heroes joyful

irliden michil arbeit,
suffered great toil,

di mit dem wâge strebeten,
who with the water strove,

dô rou in, daz si lebeten.
then rued to-them, that they lived.

dô Alexander daz gesach,
when Alexander that saw,

dô trôster si unde sprach:
then comforted-he them and spoke:

‘gehabet û wol, helede gût,
‘fare you well, heroes good,

unde habet manlîchen mût.
and have manly spirit.

daz ist di rehte wârheit,
that is the right truth,

wir haben michil arbeit:
we have great toil:

nû gehabit lange
now have long

dar ûz an dem lande
there out on the land

und ouh in disen wâge
and also in this water

vil michil ungenâde
very great misfortune

irliden lanc stucke.
suffered long stretch.

geschê uns daz gelucke,
(if)-happen to-us the fortune,

daz wir mit siheiner wîs
that we in any wise

bedwungen daz paradîs
subdued the paradise

und di dâ wonent inne,
and who there dwell inside,

sô solde wir mit sinne
so should we with sense

6795 und ouh mit grôzen êren
and also with great honors

heim ze lande kêren
home to land turn

und leben frôlîche.
and live gladly.

ih gelobe û trûwelîche,
I vow to-you faithfully,

mir werde wol oder wê,
to-me become well or woe,

6800 daz ih sint niemer mê
that I afterward never more

ne wille mit here
— will with host

noh mit schilde noh mit spere
nor with shield nor with spear

neheine burg mêr gewinnen
any castle more win

noh urlûges beginnen.
nor war begin.

6805 sint lâz ihz alliz an daz heil.'
afterward leave I-it all to the fortune.'

er nam behalben dô ein teil
he took aside then a part

sîner heimlîchen holden,
of-his intimate loyal-ones,

mit den er sprehen wolde.
with whom he speak would.

den sageter vil stille
to-them told-he very quietly

allen sînen willen.
all his will.

zehant si dâr swôren,
at-once they there swore,

daz si mit im vollenfûren,
that they with him carried-through,

iz gie ze scaden oder ze fromen,
it went to harm or to profit,

swîz joh darumbe mohte comen;
however-it even thereabout might come;

si wolden mit ime blîben
they would with him remain

ze tôde und ze lîbe.
to death and to life.

Dô fûren si mit sorgen
Then fared they with cares

den âbunt und den morgen
the evening and the morning

und irliden manige grôze nôt.
and suffered many great distress.

vil dicke sâgen si den tôt
very often saw they the death

vor irn ougen gereit.
before their eyes ready.

manic recke gemeit
many warrior joyful

lebete dâ mit pînen.
lived there with pains.

Alexander hiez dô sînen,
Alexander bade then his-own,

daz si balde fûren
that they quickly fared

unde er lide rûren.
and their limbs stirred.

dô wart dâ manic wârer helit
then was there many true hero

genôtet und gequelet,
pressed and tormented,

wande si rûeten unde schielden,
for they rowed and pushed,

daz si den lîb behielden.
that they the life kept.

swanne ze grôz was ir nôt
whenever too great was their distress

und si wânden wesen tôt,
and they weened to-be dead,

sô wurfen si ûz ir anker.
so threw they out their anchors.

mit manigen gedanken
with many thoughts

wâren si dicke bevân,
were they often seized,

waz si mohten ane gân.
what they might on go.

alse si dan gerûweten,
when they then rested,

dar nâh si sih mûweten
there after they themselves troubled

und fûren aber ûf baz.
and fared again up further.

vor wâr sagen ih û daz,
for true tell I to-you that,

sô si ie langer fûren,
the they ever longer fared,

sô si mûder wâren.
the they wearier were.

Dô di vile tumbe
When the very foolish-ones

lange gevôren umbe
long fared about

in dem wâge erre,
on the water astray,

dô quâmen si sô verre,
then came they so far,

daz die jene gesâgen,
that the those saw,

di der schiffe phlâgen,
who of-the ships took-care,

verjen unde stûren,
ferrymen and steersmen,

eine hêrlîche mûren,
a lordly wall,

di was lanc unde breit.
which was long and broad.

des worden di hêren gemeit
of-that became the lords joyful

sumelîche vil unfrô,
some very unglad,

wande di mûre was vil hô,
for the wall was very high,

gebûwit vil reine
built very purely

von edelen gesteine.
of noble gems.

lange si dô fûren
long they then fared

bî der hôhen mûren
by the high wall

und ne mohten nehein ende
and — might no end

an der steinwende
on the stone-wall

nêren gevinden.
anywhere find.

doh quam daz ingesinde
yet came the household

ubir lanc zeiner ture.
over long to-a door.

dâ riefen si lange fure.
there called they long before.

dô begunden si bôzen,
then began they to-knock,

slân unde stôzen
strike and push

mit grôzem unsinne.
with great senselessness.

di sêlen dar inne
the souls there inside

und di engelische scare,
and the angelic troop,

di ne nâmen des neheine ware.
they — took of-it no heed.

iedoh quam ein alt man
nevertheless came an old man

zô der ture gegân.
to the door going.

der frâgete si, waz si wolden.
he asked them, what they would.

si sageten, daz si solden
they said, that they should

lâzen ir singen
leave their singing

unde zins bringen
and tribute bring

irem hêren Alexandro.
to-their lord Alexander.

der man frâgete si dô,
the man asked them then,

wer Alexander wêre.
who Alexander were.

dô sageten si ime ze mêre,
then said they to-him as tidings,

iz wêre der Alexander,
it were the Alexander,

dem nehein man ander
to-whom no man other

an allen ertrîche
on all earth-realm

lebete gelîche.
lived alike.

er wêre rîche unde gût
he were rich and good

und hête manlîchen mût,
and had manly spirit,

kûne unde êrhaft,
bold and honorable,

getrûwe unde wârhaft;
faithful and truthful;

und hête michelen gewalt:
and had great power:

ime wâre velt unde walt
to-him were field and forest

unde lant unde mere
and land and sea

und maniges rîchen kuningis here
and many rich king's host

al biz dar undertân.
all until there subject.

dô antworte der alde man
then answered the old man

und sprah: 'ir mûzit beiten,
and spoke: 'you must wait,

biz daz ih ûh bereiten.
until that I you prepare.

ih wil an disen stunden
I will at these hours

mînen gesellen kunden
to-my comrades make-known

uheris hêren willen.'
of-your lord's will.'

dô ginc er dane stille.
then went he away quietly.

und merrete niwit lange
and tarried not long

und quam wider gegangen.
and came back going.

er sprach: 'nû merket wol
he spoke: 'now mark well

di wort, di ih û sagen sol.
the words, which I to-you tell shall.

ir sult sagen alsô
you shall tell so

dem hêren Alexandro:
to-the lord Alexander:

wî langer alsus wil leben
how longer thus will-he live

und nâch ungenâden streben.
and after misfortune strive.

er was ubile bedâht,
he was ill bethought,

daz er mit sîner heriscraft
that he with his host-strength

heim sûhte di gotis kint,
home-upon sought the God's children,

di enbinnen diser mûren sint.
who within this wall are.

ouh sult ir ime sagen,
also shall you to-him tell,

er muhte gerne mê gedagen
he might gladly more be-silent

von sulher unmâze
of such immoderation

und varen sîne strâze.
and fare his road.

wil her den lîb behalden,
(if)-will he the life keep,

sô vare hine balde;
so fare-he hence quickly;

und ob er wille genesen,
and if he will survive,

sô sal er ôtmûte wesen.
so shall he humble be.

er weiz daz wol âne wân,
he knows that well without doubt,

er hât vil ubelis getân.
he has much of-ill done.

wider got ist er sculdih,
against God is he guilty,

und got is vil geduldich.
and God is very patient.

claget er ime sîne sculde,
(if)-laments he to-him his guilt,

got gibet ime sîne hulde.
God gives to-him his favor.

wil er sih niht bekêre,
(if)-will he himself not convert,

sîn scade wirt deste mêre.
his harm becomes the more.

wes wênet Alexander?
what weens Alexander?

ein man ist als ein ander
a man is as an other

beide fleisc unde bein.
both flesh and bone.

sehet, bringet ime disen stein.
see, bring to-him this stone.

er is vile tûre.
it is very precious.

stark is sîn natûre.
strong is its nature.

iz wizzen lutzil lûte,
it know few people,

waz der stein bedûte.
what the stone means.

den gebet ime an sîne hant
it give to-him into his hand

und heizet ime diz lant
and bid to-him this land

vil harte schiere rûmen,
very greatly quickly vacate,

er ne sol niwit sûmen.
he — shall not delay.

unde saget ime dâ mite,
and tell to-him there with,

daz er wandele sîne site.
that he change his customs.

swanne ime wirt bescheinet,
whenever to-him is shown,

waz der stein meinet,
what the stone means,

sô mûz er sih gemâzen:
so must he himself moderate:

des ne mac er niht gelâzen.'
of-that — may he not leave.'

sân nâh disen worten
at-once after these words

gienc jener von der porten,
went that-one from the gate,

und di boten karten dô
and the messengers turned then

wider ze Alexandro
back to Alexander

unde gâben ime den stein.
and gave to-him the stone.

ouh worden si des in ein,
also became they of-it in one,

daz si ime sageten,
that they to-him told,

waz si vernomen habeten
what they heard had

unde wî iz in was comen.
and how it to-them was come.

dô er daz hete vernomen,
when he that had heard,

dô ginc er ze râte,
then went he to council,

waz er dar umbe tâte.
what he there about did.

Dô rieten di wîsen,
Then counseled the wise,

di in solden wîsen,
who him should guide,

daz er sih bereite
that he himself readied

und niht langer dâ ne beite
and not longer there — waited

und begundiz dâr rûmen
and began-it there to-clear

und fûre in di flûmen
and fared into the river

wider heim ze lande.
back home to land.

dô sprâchen di wîgande,
then spoke the fighters,

di stolzen jungelinge:
the proud youths:

‘ir ne hât zô disen dingen
‘you — have to these things

uns nit wol gerâten.
us not well counseled.

di ûh daz sprechen tâten,
who you that speak made,

di wâren ubile bedâht,
they were ill bethought,

alse siz ouh hânt fure brâht.
as they-it also have forth brought.

unse hêre Alexander
our lord Alexander

der sol tûn ein ander,
he shall do an other,

er sol heizen stûren
he shall bid steer

sîn volc zû der mûren.
his folk to the wall.

wir sîn gûte knehte,
we are good knights,

wir suln si ane vehten.
we shall them on fight.

di mûre sule wir brechen.
the wall shall we break.

unse hêre der sol rechen
our lord he shall avenge

dar an sînen anden.
there on his grievance.

iz wirt in ze scanden,
it becomes to-them to disgrace,

daz si in heim hiezen varn.
that they him home bade fare.

der ne geniset nehein barn,
of-them — survives no child,

der dâ wonent innen,
who there dwell inside,

mûze wirs beginnen.'
(if)-may we-it begin.'

Dô sprah der listige man:
Then spoke the cunning man:

'wollet irs mînen rât hân,
'(if)-will you-it my counsel have,

sô râtih uns daz beste.
so counsel-I to-us the best.

wir sulen dise veste
we shall this stronghold

mit allen êren lâzen
with all honors leave

und varen unse strâze;
and fare our road;

wande si ist sô vast,
for it is so fast,

daz si ne vorhtent niht ein bast
that they — fear not a bast

uns noh alle di nû leben,
us nor all who now live,

al wolden si dar zô streben;
although would they there to strive;

wande di dar inne sint,
for who there inside are,

daz sint di wâren gotis kint.
those are the true God's children.

di beschirmet selbe got,
them protects self God,

wande si leisten sîn gebot.
for they perform his command.

dar umbe hât er in gegeben
there for has he to-them given

daz unzeganclîche leben.
the unpassing life.

ih ne wil iz niwit langer helen,
I — will it not longer conceal,

wir suln uns alle bevelen
we shall ourselves all commend

den sêlen und der engele scharen,
to-the souls and of-the angels troops,

daz si uns rûchen bewarn,
that they us deign to-guard,

daz wir sundir mûwicheit
that we without trouble

und ân allirslahte herzeleit
and without any-kind heart's-sorrow

und sunder werltscande
and without world's-disgrace

comen heim ze lande.' 7010
come home to land.'

XVII · THE STONE AND THE END

The army comes home broken, and the jewelers only guess at the stone until a very old Jew, carried to court, weighs it: it outweighs any heap of gold, yet a feather and a little earth outweigh it, for a greedy man is never filled and becomes earth. Alexander rewards him, turns from war and greed, and rules no more than twelve years before he is poisoned, his head splits, and he keeps only seven feet of earth. The poet bids his hearers seek the heavenly crown and the God of gods in Zion.

Di hêren karten dô wider
The lords turned then back

unde fûren daz wazzer nider.
and fared the water down.

dô si quâmen an daz lant,
when they came to the land,

ûz gingen si zehant
out went they at-once

und rûmeten dâr schiere. 7015
and departed there quickly.

si mûsten mit den tieren
they must with the beasts

unde mit den wurmen
and with the serpents

in den wege sturmen.
on the way struggle.

doh quâmen si ubir lanc
yet came they over long
wider heim ze Kriechlant.
back home to Greece.
dô was dâr manich Kriech
then was there many Greek
alsô cranc und alse siech,
so weak and so sick,
alser wêre verslagen.
as-if-he were slain.
den môste man ze bette tragen.
him must one to bed carry.
daz genozzen si der herevart,
that profited they of-the campaign,
daz ir ie gedâht wart,
that of-it ever thought was,
daz rou si dô ze spâte.
that rued them then too late.
dô hîz der kuninc drâte
then bade the king quickly
wîte sagen mêre,
widely tell tidings,
ob dihein man wêre,
if any man were,
der ime mohte bescheinen
who to-him might show
di craft von dem steine,
the power of the stone,
den wolder wol lônen;
him would-he well reward;
daz swôr er bî der crônen.
that swore he by the crown.
vil manige dare quâmen,
very many thither came,

dô si daz vernâmen.
when they that heard.

di sageten, daz si wisten
they said, that they knew

di natûre und di liste
the nature and the crafts

von edelen gesteine
of noble gems

grôz unde cleine.
great and small.

itislîche jâhen,
each avowed,

dô si in gesâhen,
when they it saw,

iz wêre ein edele jâchant.
it were a noble jacinth.

ein ander sagete zehant,
an other said at-once,

iz wêre ein karbunkel.
it were a carbuncle.

der naht ne wêre nie sô tunkel,
the night — were never so dark,

er ne lûhte alsein sterre
it unless shone as-a star

nâh unde verre.
near and far.

der dritte sprah alsus:
the third spoke thus:

‘iz ist ein topatius;’
‘it is a topaz;’

der vierde: ‘ein berillus;’
the fourth: ‘a beryl;’

der funfte: ‘ein ônichînus;’
the fifth: ‘an onyx;’

der seste: 'ein ametiste',
the sixth: 'an amethyst',

er kante wol sîne liste.
he knew well its crafts.

der sibende sprah: 'ih bin gewis,
the seventh spoke: 'I am certain,

iz sî ein rehter jaspis.'
it be a true jasper.'

der ahte sprah: 'er is sô schîr,
the eighth spoke: 'it is so clear,

iz ist ein edele saphîr;'
it is a noble sapphire;'

der nûnde: 'ein crisolîtus;'
the ninth: 'a chrysolite;'

der zehende: 'ein crisoprassus;'
the tenth: 'a chrysoprase;'

der eilifte: 'ein bdellius;'
the eleventh: 'a bdellium;'

der zwelifte: 'ein sardonius.'
the twelfth: 'a sardonyx.'

sus sprâchen si besunder
thus spoke they severally

manicfalden wunder.
manifold wonders.

doh ne wiste ir neheiner
yet — knew of-them none

di craft von dem steine
the power of the stone

noh sîn geslehte.
nor its lineage.

si tâten unrehte,
they did wrong,

daz si solden liegen.
that they should lie.

si wânden betrîgen
they weened to-deceive

den kuninc listiclîche.
the king cunningly.

dô sagete man wêrlîche
then told one truly

dem hêren Alexanderen
to-the lord Alexander

von einen anderen,
of an other,

der wêre ein jude vil alt,
he were a Jew very old,

sîn wîsheit wâre manicfalt,
his wisdom were manifold,

und wonete in sînen lande.
and dwelt in his land.

zehant er nâh den sande.
at-once he after him sent.

dô der alte daz vernam,
when the old-man that heard,

dô hiez er, daz man ime gewan
then bade he, that one for-him got

lûte, di in solden tragen.
people, who him should carry.

er was sô comen zô sînen tagen,
he was so come to his days,

daz er niet ne mohte gân.
that he not — might walk.

daz hattim daz alder getân.
that had-to-him the age done.

Dô trûch man den alden
Then carried one the old-man

ze hobe vile balde.
to court very quickly.

dô in der kuninc gesach,
when him the king saw,

dô grûzter in unde sprach:
then greeted-he him and spoke:

'mir is gesaget, daz du sîs
'to-me is said, that thou be

in vil manigen dingen wîs
in very many things wise

und kunnes manige grôze list,
and knowest many great craft,

und daz du der wîsisten bist
and that thou of-the wisest art

under dînen genôzen ein.
among thy peers one.

nû bescowe rehte disen stein
now behold rightly this stone

unde zeige mir rehte
and show me rightly

sînen art und sîn geslehte
its kind and its lineage

unde sîne natûre.
and its nature.

man saget mir, er sî tûre.'
one tells me, it be precious.'

der jude nam in in di hant.
the Jew took it into the hand.

schiere heter erkant
quickly had-he recognized

sîn natûre unde sînen art.
its nature and its kind.

er sprah: ‘nû nist noh nie ne wart
he spoke: ‘now is nor never — was

nehein sîn gelîche
any its like

in allen ertrîche.
in all earth-realm.

er is tûre unde gût.
it is precious and good.

er gibit harte stolzen mût
it gives very proud spirit

und den alden di jugint.
and to-the old the youth.

er hât vil manige tugint,
it has very many virtue,

des sal man mir getrouwen.
of-that shall one me trust.

ouh muget irz wol scowen,
also may you-it well behold,

wande alsirz selbe habet gesehen,
for as-you-it self have seen,

sô mûzit ir mir jehen
so must you to-me avow

der rehten wârheite.’
of-the right truth.’

dô hîz er ime bereiten
then bade he for-him prepare

eine wâge mit sinne
a scale with sense

einehalb dar inne
on-one-side there in

legeter den tûren stein,
laid-he the precious stone,

manigen guldînen zein
many golden bar

in di andren scale.
into the other pan.

der stein zucte si ze tale,
the stone drew it to valley,

swî swâr sô si wâren;
however heavy so they were;

daz sagih û zewâren.
that tell-I to-you in-truth.

dô hiez er, daz man solde
then bade he, that one should

mêr legen zô dem golde,
more lay to the gold,

durh daz man irfunde,
so that one found-out,

waz der stein kunde.
what the stone could.

dô sîn gebot was irfolt,
when his command was fulfilled,

dô swebete obene daz golt.
then floated above the gold.

der stein swebite under.
the stone floated under.

daz was ein michil wunder.
that was a great wonder.

diz ist doh daz ir merken solt:
this is yet what you mark shall:

swaz man legete ûf daz golt,
whatever one laid on the gold,

daz swebete alliz obene.
that floated all above.

diu scale zouh ie nidene
the pan drew ever below

mit dem tûren steine.
with the precious stone.

er was zemâzen cleine
it was in-measure small

alse eines menschen ouge.
as a human's eye.

dô hiez der jude tougen
then bade the Jew secretly

mit dem golde rûmen
with the gold clear

und legete eine plûmen
and laid a feather

und erde ein cleine
and earth a little

wider deme steine,
against the stone,

dâ daz golt ê lac.
where the gold before lay.

dâ der kuninc zô sach,
where the king to looked,

der wîse Alexander
the wise Alexander

und manic man ander,
and many man other,

dâr zouh an der stunde
there drew at the hour

di vedere ze grunde
the feather to ground

und di erde, di dâ bî lach.
and the earth, which there by lay.

ir iegelîcher dô jah
of-them each then avowed

mannelîch besunder,
every-man severally,

diz wêre ein michel wunder.
this were a great wonder.

Dô sprah der judische man:
Then spoke the Jewish man:

‘wollent irz rehte verstân,
‘(if)-will you-it rightly understand,

sô hîz got machen
so bade God make

sus wunderlîche sachen
so wondrous things

dem kuninge ze lêren:
to-the king to teach:

er irhûb sih grôzer êren.
he raised himself of-great honors.

ouh sît ir algemeine
also are you all-together

gemanet mit dem steine,
reminded with the stone,

daz ir ûh nihtis ne verhebet
that you yourselves of-nothing — exalt

al di wîle di ir lebet.
all the while that you live.

bewaret ûh von der giricheit,
guard yourselves from the greed,

wande si machet manige herzeleit.
for it makes many heart’s-sorrow.

wande swer sô giric wille wesen,
for whoever so greedy will be,

wî mach der imer genesen?
how may he ever survive?

der lebet mit sorgen
he lives with cares

den âbunt und den morgen,
the evening and the morning,

wî er des beginne,
how he it begin,

daz er imer gwinne
that he ever win

alliz, daz ime zô veret,
all, that him to fares,

daz verslindet er und verzeret
that devours he and consumes

und ne wirt doh niemer vol.
and — becomes yet never full.

er is daz hellische hol,
he is the hellish hole,

daz noh nie ne wart sat
that yet never — became sated

noh niemer werden ne mac;
nor ever become — may;

alser gar verslindet,
as-he wholly devours,

swaz in zô gewendet.
whatever him to turns.

nû sehet, waz is iz dan?
now see, what is it then?

niwit andirs wan ein cranc man;
nothing else except a weak man;

der glîchet dem steine,
he resembles the stone,

der in der wâgen eine
which in the scale alone

sih selben nider druckete
itself self down pressed

und daz golt ûf zuckete.
and the gold up jerked.

ir wâret unwîse,
you were unwise,

daz ir daz paradîse
that you the paradise

wândet irvehten.
weened to-win-by-fight.

doh wolde ûh unse trehten
yet would you our Lord

lâzen besunder
let especially

scowen sîne wunder.
behold his wonders.

doh ne muget ir niemer daz bewaren,
yet — may you never that prevent,

ir ne mûzet hine varen
you — must hence fare

und mûzet verterben
and must perish

und wîslîche sterben.
and wisely die.

sô mûzet ir werden
so must you be

geminget zô der erden.
mingled to the earth.

sus soldir hine rûmen.
thus should-you hence depart.

sô glîchet ir der plûmen,
so resemble you the feather,

di nider mit der erden ginc,
which down with the earth went,

dâr si in der wâgen hinc
where it in the scale hung

unde ûf zuckete den stein.
and up jerked the stone.

nû nist uher nehein,
now is of-you none,

er ne habe gehôret rehte
he unless have heard rightly

des steines geslehte,
the stone's lineage,

sîne lîhte und sîne swâre
its lightness and its heaviness

beide vil offinbâre.
both very openly.

Nû merket, waz ih û kunden:
Now mark, what I to-you make-known:

ir sult von uheren sunden
you shall from your sins

ûh schiere bekêren
yourselves quickly convert

unde sult êren
and shall honor

in allen uheren herzen got
in all your hearts God

unde leistet gerne sîn gebot.
and perform gladly his command.

ir sult in minnen
you shall him love

mit allen uheren sinnen,
with all your senses,

der ûh gewerden hiez
who you become bade

unde ûh biz here lîz
and you until hither let

von sînen gnâden leben
by his grace live

und der ûh allen hât gegeben
and who to-you all has given

sin unde wîstûm,
sense and wisdom,

êre unde rîchtûm
honor and wealth

unde lûte unde lant.
and people and land.

nû stêt an uheris hêren hant,
now stands in your lord's hand,

der hie gagenwortich is,
who here present is,

des sît ir alle gwis,
of-that are you all certain,

manich kunincrîche.
many kingdom.

nû merkit al glîche,
now mark all alike,

swaz er hât oder kan.
whatever he has or knows.

sô nist er niwit wene ein man,
so is he nothing except a man,

sô mûz er verterben
so must he perish

und ze jungist sterben:
and at last die:

er mach imer niwit leben.
he may ever not live.

waz hilfit ime sîn lange streben?
what helps to-him his long striving?

ze lest mûz er doh werden
at last must he yet be

gemischet zô der erden.
mingled to the earth.

diz merke ouh, Alexander,
this mark also, Alexander,

noh mêr dan ein ander,
yet more than an other,

unde lidige von freisen
and free from perils

wituwen unde weisen,
widows and orphans,

und kêre dîn gemûte
and turn thy mind

an allirslahte gûte,
to all-kinds goodness,

sô dir begrîfe der tôt,
when thee seizes the death,

daz dih lidige von der nôt
that thee free from the distress

got von himelrîche
God from heaven-realm

und dih in sîn rîche
and thee into his realm

mit sînen holden bestate,
with his loyal-ones establish,

und sîner gnâde dih gesate.'
and of-his grace thee sate.'

Dô dise wîslîche wort
When these wise words

der kuninc hete gehôrt,
the king had heard,

dô teter hêrlîchen
then did-he lordly

und gab grôzlîchen
and gave greatly

dem alden und mit sinnen,
to-the old-man and with wits,

und santin mit minnen
and sent-him with love

mit êren âne scande
with honors without disgrace

wider heim ze lande,
back home to land,

und dâhte an sîne lêre
and thought on his teaching

sint vorder mêre,
afterward forth more,

di wîle er hete den lîb,
the while he had the life,

und êrete man unde wîb
and honored man and woman

baz dan er dar vore tete,
better than he there before did,

und wandelte sîne site
and changed his customs

unde sîn gemûte
and his mind

in allirslahte gûte
in all-kinds goodness

und plach gûter mâzen.
and practiced good measure.

ouh begunder lâzen
also began-he to-leave

urlôge und giricheit
war and greed

und was mit zuhten gemeit,
and was with breeding joyful,

unde berihte sîn rîche
and ruled his realm

vil hêrlîche
very lordly

niwit langer wene zwelif jâr.
not longer except twelve years.

daz sult ir wizzen vor wâr.
that shall you know for true.

dô wart ime vergeben.
then was to-him poisoned.

sint ne mohter niwit leben,
afterward — might-he not live,

wandime sîn houbit gare zespielt.
for-to-him his head wholly split.

niwit mêr er behîlt
nothing more he kept

allis des er ie beranc,
of-all which he ever strove-for,

wene erden siben vôze lanc,
except earth seven feet long,

alse der armiste man,
as the poorest man,

der in die werlt ie bequam.
who into the world ever came.

Nû ist diz liet ze ende comen.
Now is this song to end come.

alle di iz habet vernomen,
all who it have heard,

beide man unde wîb,
both man and woman,

denket an den êwigen lîb
think on the eternal life

und an daz êwige leben.
and on the eternal life.

dar nâh sult ir imer streben.
there after shall you ever strive.

lâzet alle giricheit
let-go all greed

und habet imer arbeit
and have ever toil

umbe daz himelrîche.
for the heaven-realm.

got der ist sô rîche,
God he is so rich,

er mach û wol gelônen
he may you well reward

mit der himelischen crônen.
with the heavenly crown.

bûzet uher sunden,
atone-for your sins,

wande ir ne wizzit niwit di stunden,
for you — know not the hours,

daz ir hine sult varn.
that you hence shall fare.

durh daz sult ir ûh bewarn
for that shall you yourselves guard

di wîle, di ir hie sît,
the while, that you here are,

und vorhten got in alle zît,
and fear God in all time,

daz ir mit froweden mûzet varn
that you with joys may fare

zô der himelischen scaren
to the heavenly troops

beide hêren unde frowen,
both lords and ladies,

und ir dâ mûzet scowen 7300
and you there may behold

und haben daz êwige lôn
and have the eternal reward

deum deorum in Syon.
God of-gods in Zion.