

# ALEXANDER THE GREAT: HERO, WARRIOR, LOVER

*Our narration of the Alexander Story comes from Arrianos, Plutarch, Alexander de Paris, Thomas of Kent, İskendername, Seyahatname, The Septuagint and The Holy Koran.*

## **The Boston Camerata**

Anne Azéma, voice, direction  
Shira Kammen, vielle, harp  
Tom Zajac, winds

## **DÜNYA**

Robert Labaree, voice, ceng, percussion  
Cem Mutlu, voice, percussion  
Mehmet Sanlıkol, voice, ud, ney, saz

### **Introit:**

Alexander's Ascent

Arrianos c 86-160 AD  
Plutarch 46-120 AD

*Glorious are the deeds of those who undergo labour and run the risk of danger; and it is delightful to live a life of valour and to die leaving behind immortal glory. This is Fortune's discourse, who declares that Alexander is her own characteristic handiwork, and hers alone.....Many a night did he spend without sleeping, Many a blood-stained day did he pass amid combats unceasing, against irresistible forces and innumerable tribes, against impassable rivers and mountain fastnesses whose summit no arrow could reach, furthered by wise counsels, steadfast purpose, manly courage, and a prudent heart.*

Daniel's prophecy (Book of Daniel, XI, 2,4)

Jewish Cantilation, Baghdad  
Early Byzantine Tradition

*Hear the truth! A mighty king will stand up, that shall rule with great dominion; his kingdom shall be broken and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven.*

Kürdi Peşrev

Sultan Korkud (1467-1513)

## **I. Becoming King**

***Narration: The education of Alexander, by Alexandre de Paris (ca.1180)***

*Philip (Alexander's father) has called upon the wisest from far away; the first one to respond is Aristotle of Athens. Aristotle educates Alexander nobly: greek, hebrew, chaldean, latin, all about the sea and the winds, the stars, rhetorics... life.*

***Narration: Aristotle's advice from İskendername (1390) by Ahmedi (14<sup>th</sup> c.)***

*Leave your pride aside and try to be humble; always worry about helplessness. Great people don't take notice of simple tasks, great tasks cannot be accomplished by simple people...*

İlim ilim bilmektir

Text: Yunus Emre, 13<sup>th</sup> c.

Music: Evc nefes

*Knowledge is to understand/To understand who you are/If you know not who you are  
What's the use of learning?*

Bel m'es

Bertran de Born (fl.1159-1195)

*I am pleased to see authority change hands, and old men leave their houses to the young.  
So it seems to me the world is better renewed that way than by flowers and birdsong.  
Young is a man when he spends generously, grants splendid gifts, organizes fights,  
jousts, tourneys, and knows how to be courteous.*

## II. To Battle!

***Narration: Darius's Second Envoy to Alexander from İskendername***

*The envoy greeted Alexander and gave him a message from Darius: I'll bring an infinite number of soldiers and destroy Greece.*

Ecce Rex Darius

The Play of Daniel (c. 1227-1234)

*Here is King Darius, coming with his nobles men; Babylon and his own land live in constant awe of him. Like a whirlwind he will smile, sweeping with his armed hosts, scattering the cohorts, shattering even the strongest... Let us praise him with loud acclaim, for his might feasts of arms, let the drum resound for him, the strings of harps be smitten... all the instruments at hand loudly sound the praise of Darius!*

***Narration: To battle, by Alexandre de Paris.***

*At dawn, when the lark sings, the army gets on horse-back, to the sound of horns and trumpets, followed by the men on foot and the king, with his barons. What a sight!*

Be.m platz lo gais temps,

Text: Bertran Born

Melody: Guiraut Borneil (fl.ca 1215)

*I love the time of Easter, that makes the leaves and flowers come fourth and it pleases me to see upon the meadows tents and pavilions planted, and I have great joy when I see knights and horses armed for war. It pleases me when I see a great mass of armed men together; I am well pleased by a lord when he is first in the attack, armed, upon his horse, unafraid! Maces and swords and painted helms we shall see at the fighting starts... a man is worth more dead than alive and beaten.*

Estampies (Tristano - Belicha)

Anonymous (13-14<sup>th</sup> c.)

Buselik Semai

Zurnazenbaşı İbrahim Ağa, 17<sup>th</sup> c

### III. Love

***Narration: Alexander and Candace, by Thomas de Kent (12thc)***

*How marvelous is love! It will make you loose your senses. The wisest in the world behaves like a fool, once ensnared. How can man measure up to woman? She is sweet as a dove, and roars as a dragon. Alexander comes to the queen's tent. She was most beautiful and graceful, her crown of gold from frisia: she was listening to a new song to the harp and vielle.*

Novel Amor

Anonymous

***Narration: by Thomas de Kent***

*Alexander, since you are under my power, let's go and play under the covers; no one will know about it, save for my servant girl. Candace was beautiful, white as hawthorn, girdled in a purple tunic; they lie on the bed to speak of courtly love and practice its law.*

Estat ai, en greu cossirier

Comtessa de Dia (fl. 1175)

*How would I love to hold my knight one evening in my naked arms, so that he should be happy that I only offer him my breast as a pillow. For I have made myself more beautiful for him than Floris for Blanchaflor; I give him my heart, my love, my spirit, my eyes, and my life. Fair, gracious, pleasant friend, if ever I get you in my power, and if ever I can lie down with you and give you a lover's kiss -- know then that I will be greatly gifted at offering you the husband's place -- if you promise me to do everything that I ask.*

Her Gördüğü Periyeye Gönül Müptela Olur

Buselik Beste by Itri (1640-1711)

*This heart gets addicted to all angels/But never knows that they become invisible troubles.*

Quant voit l'aube du jour venir

Text: Anonyme, 13<sup>th</sup> c.

Music: based on

*When I see daybreak coming on, there's nothing I could hate so much, for it makes my lover whom I love with true love part from me. Now I hate nothing as much as day, which parts me, love, from you. When I lie down in my bed, and look to my side, I find no trace of my love, and so make this lament to other true lovers. Now I hate nothing as much as day... Dear sweet love, you will go away, God have your body in keeping. In God's name I beg you, do not forget me, there is nothing I love as much as you. Now I hate nothing as much as day...*

### IV. Marvels 1

***Narration: The king's entertainment, by Alexander de Paris.***

*A harper from Tarsi comes close to the king (Alexander); he is very good at playing lays on his flute, and is versatile on all instruments. He sits in front of the king's tent, and begins to play a lay he knows well, but never before played that way.*

Alexander's Arrival at the City of the Amazons

Music: Saba Şarkı (anon.)

Text: İskendername

... It took them a month to get to a city named Sadkam. This was a gigantic great city in which only women lived and there were no signs of men. The children, elders, soldiers, servants and their sultans were all women...

## V. Marvels 2

Fontes  
Spirits, and all living things who move in the water, praise God and sing an hymn to him!

Gregorian

Flores apparuerunt (Song of Songs, II, 12-14) Gregorian

*The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come; and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock.*

**Narration: The Tree from Evliya Çelebi's (1611-1682) Seyahatname (17<sup>th</sup> c.)**  
Gabriel said to Alexander "O Alexander! God greets you and he sends you this tree as a gift, which is the like of the Tuba tree in paradise."

**Narration: The fountain of youth, by Alexander de Paris**  
Let me share the following with you, Lords. This fountain was surrounded by marvelous, odoriferous trees. Many a precious stones was shining in its waters. Alexander approaches the fountain. Its waters came from Paradise, from the Euphrates which is born out of the Tigris. More than forty six elders bathed in it: they came out as young, thirty old knights. Alexander is happily smiling at this sight.

## VI. İskender the Prophet

**Narration: Evliya Çelebi**  
... since Alexander had two horns he was called Alexander the two-horned... when Alexander's was seeking a cure so that he no longer carried these horns, God's word descended upon him!

Tilavet, Surah al-Kahf (The Cave) The Holy Koran  
... "Alexander!" We said, "you must either punish them or show them kindness." He replied: "the wicked we shall surely punish. Then shall they return to their Lord and be sternly punished by Him. As for those that have faith and do good works, we shall bestow on them a rich reward and deal indulgently with them."... "Alexander!" they said, "Gog and Magog are ravaging this land. Build a rampart between us, and we will pay you tribute."

Uşşak ilahi & zikir Music: Anonymous  
Text: Yunus Emre

God is great. Servants of him follow his word and believers of him follow his word.

## VII. Death of a Hero King

***Narration: Alexanders lament, by Alexander de Paris and Thomas de Kent.***

*Ha, Death, miserable thing; your menace is like the beat of a drum.*

*'Lords', said Alexander, 'do not sigh!*

*What good would it be to tear you hear, clap you hands, and rip your clothing? It is the fate of all: what lives, must die. If I count my days, they are few. But if I count the victories, there are many, granted by Fortune. I am ensnared by felony, certainly not the first king to die poisoned by a close counselor...*

*Lords, do not sigh! We have to part, it cannot be otherwise: death is taking my heart.'*

***Narration: Aristotle's Lament for Alexander from Iskendername***

*O the young man who ruled the world! Since you were not satisfied, see what the Tyrant has done to you...*

Mon chan fenisc,

Text: Bertran de Born

Based on: Guiraut Riquier

*I end my song in grief and misery. I hold it ended for ever, for I have lost my cause and my pleasure, losing the greatest king ever born, large –handed, nobly spoken, well riding, graceful in his form. For you came to be called the Young King. You were the guide and the father of all who are young. Hauberts and swords, handsome fabrics, helms and gonfalons, these things have no one to preserve them, no one to keep them here – no, they will follow you there. Gentle receptions, giving without a changing heart, grands lodgings nobly kept, gifts, garments, meals to the noise of vielle and song, with a brave companion valiant and strong....Lord, for you I want to wrestle myself from joy, and everyone who saw you – let them weep.*

Nihavend nefes,

Text by Yunus Emre, 13<sup>th</sup> c

Music: Anonymous

*Alexander too, came and wondered in this world /He destroyed the throne of Darius  
He swam across the oceans with a dolphin /But, he could not escape death as well.*