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Krzysztof Nawotka, Robert Rollinger,  
Josef Wiesehöfer and Agnieszka Wojciechowska (Eds.)

# The Historiography of Alexander the Great

Harrassowitz



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Herausgegeben von  
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Olej na płótnie – Öl auf Leinwand. 90,4 × 145,2 cm.

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# Historiography of Alexander the Great: An Introduction

*Krzysztof Nawotka (University of Wrocław), Josef Wiesehöfer (Kiel University) and  
Agnieszka Wojciechowska (University of Wrocław)*

The series “Classica et Orientalia” started in 2011 with the volume *Ktesias' Welt/Ctesias' World* edited by Josef Wiesehöfer, Robert Rollinger and Giovanni Lanfranchi and containing the acts of a 2006 conference on Ctesias, one of the most influential classical authors writing on the Achaemenid Persian empire. The volumes which followed were initially devoted to Achaemenid Persia and to its classical, Western sources. The scope of the series has then evolved to cover the Seleucid empire, the earlier and later history of Iran and its empires, and increasingly Alexander the Great and the impact of his conquest on Iran and the East. For a variety of topics covered in nineteen volumes published to this day, the series has been true to its primary research interest of assessing our inadequate, often fragmentary and almost always biased Western sources on the empires of the Middle East and Asia. It has been very firm and successful in rejecting the long-established scholarly view of the separate routes taken by the Western civilization of the Mediterranean and cultures of the Middle East and Asia in antiquity.

Modern studies on Alexander the Great are no less immune to the problem of inadequate sources than research on the Achaemenid Persian empire. All surviving historiographical accounts are late, at least three hundred years younger than the lifespan of Alexander, and their underlying sources are primarily Greek, but not Macedonian or Eastern, which obviously promotes the one-sided view of the age of Alexander and positions Alexander within the narrow bounds of a Western conqueror. For all their shortcomings, the sole ancient continuous accounts of the history of Alexander by Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian and Justin are and are likely always to remain the mainstay of modern Alexander study, much like Herodotus, Xenophon and Ctesias are for Achaemenid history. No surprise, therefore, that the continuous ancient accounts of Alexander's history are the principal point of interest of the papers included in this volume. They are viewed with their source tradition in mind, stretching back to the first-generation authors. Another angle of this volume are the twists and turns of the subsequent historiographical tradition on Alexander from the Hellenistic Age to Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the world of medieval Jewish intellectuals.

This volume contains re-worked versions of papers delivered at the *Classica et Orientalia* conference held at the University of Wrocław, Poland from October 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The conference gathered some of the most renowned experts on the Achaemenid Persian empire, Alexander the Great, Greek historiography, ancient warfare and Byzantine literature, to name only Pierre Briant, Robin Lane Fox, Reinhold Bichler, Nicholas Sekunda and Corinne Jouanno.

Pierre Briant builds his study of the ancient and modern image of Alexander around the well-known episode of Alexander diverting from the route to the Granicus to pay respect to



his ancestor, Achilles. In the centuries to come Alexander's gestures at Troy inspired characters so dissimilar as Emperor Caracalla, Mehmed the Conqueror, and the Allied officers of the Gallipoli Campaign. The heroic image of Alexander sacrificing to and rivaling Achilles is largely a product of the age of the Second Sophistic. In historical reality of the second half of the fourth c. BC Troy, its symbolic value apart, was a town of marked strategic importance, well-recognized by Greek and Persian commanders of the age. For both military and ideological reasons Alexander, Briant shows, could not begin his campaign in Asia without paying a visit at Troy.

Departing from the well-attested ties between the late Argeads and the leading Greek philosophers of the fourth c. BC, Plato, Aristotle, Euphraeus, Speusippus, Kenneth Moore proceeds to the question about the source tradition pertaining to Philip's appointment to govern a territory in Macedonia which, in due course, proved to be a springboard for him to take over Macedonia upon the death of his brother Perdiccas III. The tradition of Philip owing this appointment to Euphraeus, Plato's emissary to Perdiccas III, comes to us through a chain of intermediate relations, from Speusippus (4th c. BC), through libraries of Hellenistic Pergamon or Alexandria, to Carystius (2nd c. BC), and then to Athenaeus (early 3rd c. AD). The tradition of Plato's influence on the appointment of Philip II is, Moore shows, authentic, even if no final judgment can be reached on Plato's authorship of his *5th letter*, the source for the mission of Euphraeus. In his assessment of the veracity of this tradition Moore invokes innumerable examples of political interests of Plato and his students and their involvement in modifying constitutional arrangements of various Greek *poleis*, as well as Plato's connections to the court of Perdiccas III. In Moore's reconstruction, the circumstantial evidence drawn from Plato's interests in politics, his understanding of Macedonia and his ties to Perdiccas III and to Philip II, speak for the veracity of the story of the role he, or at least his associate Euphraeus, played in advancing the career of Philip II during the reign of his brother Perdiccas III. Thus, Plato's efforts also indirectly contributed to the dramatic turn in history under Alexander the Great.

Possibly the most shadowy piece of evidence to the history of Alexander the Great is the account of a Greek soldier on the Persian pay, by the sources of Diodorus and Curtius, after W.W. Tarn referred to as "the mercenaries' source". Consenting to the now majority opinion, derived from Pearson and Brunt, that an account of a Greek mercenary was not the only original source of information on the events within the Persian camp during the war with Alexander, Nicholas Sekunda attempts to identify the most likely author of the famed "mercenaries' source". He notices that Curtius relies on more than one source in his account of the events after Gaugamela and that his perspectives shift from the Persian to the Macedonian camp, presumably in keeping with the perspective of the authors he follows. Already Tarn identified Patron the Phocian, a Greek mercenary officer in the Persian army, as the possible ultimate authority for the events in the camp of Darius III. Sekunda comes back to this hypothesis bringing additional support to it: the unique testimony of John of Lydia on the otherwise unknown military author Patron, the only ancient military writer of this name. If he indeed is Tarn's "mercenaries' source", Patron's book may have also been behind Curtius' account of the fall of Charidemus executed on Darius' orders.

The surviving accounts of Alexander's expedition to India agree in their principal story line, retaining, however, subtle but significant differences in the depiction of social and political institutions of India. Having noticed that Arrian is highly dependent on Ptolemy's

rendition of Alexander as the overlord above all rulers of India, Reinhold Bichler searches for sources of the vulgate tradition on Alexander in India. He analyses in depth several episodes: the encounter with the Sibae and the Sambastae and the depiction of Nysa and Mount Merus, of the region of Taxila and the lands across the Ganges region. Bichler's close reading of these episodes identifies a combination particularly of several features: natural conditions, beyond the usual experience, good governance exercised usually by aristocratic elites and often characterized by customs/laws limiting royal power. Idealizing descriptions of India's natural and political landscape serving as a backdrop against which praises of Alexander were uttered point to the common source accessed by vulgate authors, but also by Arrian and some other ancient writers, Strabo and Orosius among them. The majority opinion that this common source was Onesicritus must be right, Bichler shows, and Onesicritus' particular position among Alexander's companions in India and authors writing in flattering terms about his Indian exploits is underscored by a matter of fact remark of Seneca making them both target of his moral criticism for pointless pursuit of conquests.

With quite extensive coverage of Alexander's expedition to Egypt, ancient authors pay surprisingly little attention to his interest in famed monuments of the land. Adam Łukaszewicz dissects from Curtius a rare bit of information on Alexander's penchant for sightseeing: his desire, most likely never implemented, to see the palace of Memnon and Tithonus in Thebes. The names of Memnon and his mythological parents Eos and Tithonus are, Łukaszewicz shows, phonetic corruptions of Egyptian ones: Mery-Amun, Ese (Isis) and Tatenen, the first and last of which are attested among the names of pharaoh Ramesses III. The fame of this great warrior-king may have given birth to the myth of Memnon, son of Eos and Tithonus, and it may have instilled in Alexander the wish to visit Memnon's palace.

Prior to leaving Egypt to fight another battle with Darius Alexander established his set of appointees to run the country in his absence. For all his real, even if not official power, and insightful knowledge of Egypt, classical sources convey few biographical details of Cleomenes of Naucratis, concentrating on the harsh economic measures and tricks he used to enrich the satrap's treasury. Ivan Ladynin proposes to look at the Ps.-Aristotelean *Economics*, the most substantial piece of evidence on Cleomenes, through the clichés of Egyptian propaganda of the Late Period, itself a creation of the priestly elite of Egypt. There is a striking similarity, Ladynin shows, between some stratagems of Cleomenes and the Egyptian *topoi* of an impious foreign ruler inflicting harm on sacred animals or a foreign ruler deporting priests and seizing sacred objects and texts only to return them after ransom was paid by the priests. Thus, in a way, Cleomenes, a representative of the foreign king of Egypt, Alexander, threatening to harm sacred crocodiles, is juxtaposed to Cambyses or Artaxerxes III notorious for killing/eating the Apis bull. The Egyptian tradition must have been shaped on the pattern of stories about abuse and chaos brought to Egypt by Persian rule. In Ladynin's reconstruction of the tradition on Cleomenes, the decidedly negative overtones of Egyptian anti-foreigner propaganda must have been adopted to Greek writing in the age of Ptolemy I with the discernible aim of defaming his Greek predecessor in the rule of Egypt.

The notion of propaganda is a modern one, associated expressly or implicitly with actual or expected reactions of its recipients, public opinion in the first place. There are, of course, severe limitations of any modern study of propaganda in antiquity, both in terms of our deficient knowledge of means of propaganda in antiquity and of the reaction of its desired target. They are duly acknowledged in the two papers on the issue of propaganda in the age

of Alexander: Ivan Ladynin's on Egyptian propaganda patterns applied to shape the image of Cleomenes of Naucratis and Giuseppe Squillace's on Alexander's propaganda during his expedition to Asia as reflected in literary sources. Squillace selects a few telling examples of Alexander's propaganda related to waging war and to suppressing undesired public opinion among his soldiers. In his analysis, the story of the Gordian knot betrays a wide array of features typical of a propaganda gesture, set in the wider context of Alexander's ideological strategy connected with an exploitation of religion for political purpose, through visiting important temples, consulting oracles, performing sacrifices. The sources record a number of oracular responses obtained by Alexander on the eve and during his expedition to Asia, always propitious, if on occasion extracted by manipulating the oracle. Another example of a skillful usage of propaganda by Alexander is his manipulation of letters received from Darius, not without a recourse to forgery, successfully applied to sway the Macedonian soldiers in the direction desired by their king.

With core source bases to Alexander defined by a group of ancient literary works dated from the late first c. BC (Diodorus) until perhaps the third c. AD (Justin), any new find is a welcome addition, likely to influence academic discussion. Robin Lane Fox brings to the discussion of ancient historiographical tradition on Alexander P.Oxy. 4808, a papyrus scrap from the late first or the early second c. AD, containing an early Imperial or late Hellenistic text, in form of critical notes on ancient historiographers. Lane Fox understands this text as notes taken by a "history buff", who possibly received his education at a gymnasium in Egypt, and who wanted to offer to his similarly-minded readers directions as to the moral and historical value of a number of historiographers of the Hellenistic age, professing his judgments to be much in line with Polybius. Even if P.Oxy. 4808 does not bring much new data on Alexander, its critical remarks on some lost authors who are behind the surviving Alexander historians may clarify some points of contention. Using the comments on Chares, Lane Fox acknowledges Chares' good knowledge of Persian language and culture and summarizes modern opinions attributing to him various Persian anecdotes to be found in Alexander historians. In his view Chares was a source, but not the only one, of derogatory remarks on Parmenion to be found in Plutarch and other ancient accounts on Alexander. Lane Fox builds a strong case against using the testimony of P.Oxy. 4808 on Cleitarchus, the tutor of the future Ptolemy IV, to date this author to ca. the mid-third c. BC. In Lane Fox' view the anonymous author of P.Oxy. 4808 may have confused Cleitarchus with Phylarchus, a contemporary of Ptolemy IV, while, on testimony of other sources, the traditional date of the work of Cleitarchus at the end of the fourth c. BC still holds.

Gościwit Malinowski reminds us that the term "Peripatetic historiography", although a commonplace in modern scholarship, is not an ancient name but a concept of the 19th-c. German classical philology. The adherents of the theory of peripatetic historiography, Tarn in the first place, cite the example of the opinion of Alexander tarnished by authors of the Peripatetic school in an act of revenging the mistreatment of Callisthenes, a nephew of Aristotle, the founder of the Peripatos. Malinowski investigates in depth whether a specific and coherent Peripatetic view of Alexander can be identified in writings of Agatharchides of Cnidus, a Hellenistic historiographer identified in our sources as an adherent of the Peripatetic school. Although surviving in fragments and testimonies only, Agatharchides is known to have had pronounced opinions on Alexander's and his companions' luxury. To him Alexander was quite helpless in his personal relationships to the point of interpreting

mockery as flattery and paying for his general's extravagant lifestyle. But for failings of his human nature, he is not a tyrant in the surviving writings of Agatharchides. This opinion, allegedly typical of the Peripatetic school, Malinowski shows, was formulated first by Aelian in the early third c. AD, long after the Hellenistic flourishing of "Peripatetic historiography".

As most surviving continuous accounts on Alexander are late, the issue how their authors handled their sources is of course paramount in any modern Alexander study. Sabine Müller analyses this through the example of a small and contorted episode of mysterious sources of water and oil encountered by Alexander in Sogdiana. This story originates ultimately in Callisthenes, while its adoption in works of the Early Empire much depends on the ideological agenda of their authors. Thus, to Curtius it was an *exemplum* of the importance of Fortuna/Tyche in Alexander's career, to others it served as a miraculous sign of the divine providence. For the authors of the age of the Second Sophistic, Arrian and Plutarch in the first place, this episode was, Müller shows, a part of their Panhellenic agenda in which Alexander played the most significant role.

Writings of Plutarch, possibly the most erudite author ever writing on Alexander, need to be approached in the context of the time when they were written, the age of the Second Sophistic on the one hand, and the context of Roman intellectual debates on the other, both unenthusiastic about Alexander and Macedonia. Since Cicero Alexander was an object of strong moral criticism by Latin writers, with landmark names such as Livy and Seneca, and Plutarch had to assume its influence on his readers. Among the themes permeating the Roman writing on Alexander were the role of Fortuna in his meteoric rise and the *imitatio Alexandri* by the leading Roman figures, surely covered profusely in now lost lives of Roman emperors. Federicomaria Muccioli remarks that almost all modern academic discussion of Plutarch's Alexander concentrates on the *Life of Alexander* and on the *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*, leaving the rest of the *Corpus Plutarcheum* largely unexplored. In dealing with Macedonia and Alexander Plutarch walks his own way: he does not share the Roman recognition of Philip, making all the same Alexander a pan-Hellenic hero by diminishing the (perceived) Macedonian features in his rendition of Philip's son. Muccioli's review of primary (first-generation) sources on Alexander quoted in the *Corpus Plutarcheum* shows a surprisingly weak position of Callisthenes and Cleitarchus, even if Plutarch was fully aware of the latter's position in the historiographical tradition of his days. Plutarch often follows Aristobulus, while neglecting Ptolemy who had to wait another generation to earn appreciation as a primary source by Arrian. Important is also, Muccioli shows, what Plutarch skips: one thing is the divinity of Alexander, sidelined by Plutarch, who was sharing Greek intellectuals' of the Imperial age ambiguity about the ruler cult. Muccioli's analysis shows that the image of Alexander in the *Corpus Plutarcheum* was far from a one-sided idealization: in some writings, most notable in the *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*, he is a virtual philosopher-king, while elsewhere he betrays qualities of an Oriental monarch, to the point of being directly referred to as a despot in the *Life of Pelopidas*.

The persona of Alexander the Great has been identified in a few places in the Bible clad in prophetic metaphors, and only once named expressly, in the beginning of chapter one of I *Maccabees*. Alexander of I *Maccabees* defeats the Persian empire and on his deathbed divides his kingdom among his officers. Krzysztof Nawotka investigates the position of this clearly ahistorical statement within the tradition of the last days of Alexander. It belongs to the parallel tradition, disproven by mainstream sources, Curtius in particular, who states that

Alexander died without leaving a last will, and for this reason it is largely ignored in modern scholarship. The parallel tradition is attested as early as Berossus and then reemerging in Flavius Josephus and Ammianus Marcellinus among others. But its most detailed exposition can be found in two late anonymous texts, the *Alexander Romance* (third c. AD) and the *Liber de Morte Testamentoque Alexandri Magni* (fourth c. AD). Nawotka gathers additional evidence to support the majority view that both these accounts are based on a common source, a political pamphlet of the age of the Successors. From this pamphlet, it sprang to some Hellenistic writers partisan to the Seleucid cause, as attested by the prominent position of Seleucus I in the line of succession to Alexander in this line of tradition. It further became entrenched in the East, from the *Alexandrian World Chronicle* to John Malalas and numerous medieval Greek and Aramaic writings. Its particular feature is the line of succession to Alexander going from his brother Philip III Arrhidaeus to Seleucus I and then to Antiochus I, practically always leaving Alexander IV out of the picture.

A prominent part of the later Jewish tradition on Alexander is the book of Josippon which conveys the story of Alexander's visit in the Temple of Jerusalem. Refraining from pronouncing his opinion on the historicity of Alexander's trip to Jerusalem, Ory Amitay looks at the counter contamination of this tale and the much later episode of the Emperor Caligula demanding that his statue be placed in the Temple. Josippon is not a direct translation from the Greek, he accessed Flavius Josephus through a fourth c. Latin free rendering of Hegesippus. Since Hegesippus lacks some important elements of the story of Alexander and the Temple in Jerusalem, in that the alleged wish of Alexander to have his statue erected in the Temple, a source beyond Hegesippus must have influenced Josippon. Amitay adduces two sources which shed light on Josippon: scholia to the Talmudic *Megillat Taanit* or "The Scroll of Lamentation" containing the episodes of Alexander and Caligula, both demanding their statue to be placed in the Temple but, understandably, resolved in a different way, with Alexander relenting to the High Priest and Caligula's sacrilegious wish cancelled by his death. It is their obsessive pursuit of dignity which led to conflating Alexander and Caligula in the Talmud. This Talmudic story may have been known to Josippon, although it is not possible to say precisely, Amitay concludes, in what way it found its way into the book, directly from a scholion or through oral tradition, both known to be much in use in medieval Jewish learning.

Considering how significant a figure in Greek medieval and early modern culture was Alexander, a review of the reception of ancient literary works devoted to Alexander is of prime importance in any historiographic study of the great Macedonian. Corinne Jouanno undertakes a survey of the manuscript tradition of the principal Alexander historians, Diodorus, Plutarch and Arrian, and examines the "primary testimonia" of Byzantine reading (scholia, excerpts, summaries, literary criticism). In Byzantium, Diodorus, Arrian and Plutarch enjoyed separate textual traditions, with just one example of a joint codex which betrays the interest in Alexander rather than in the author covering his exploits. The manuscript tradition shows the dominance of Plutarch in Byzantine Alexander study, marked by manuscripts coming from the most prestigious imperial scriptoria, in Constantinople of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus or in Mistra, or associated with the leading intellectual of the 13th c., Michael Planudes. Other testimonies of the position Plutarch enjoyed in Byzantium are summaries of his *Life of Alexander* in Zonaras and Photius, frequent reference to his works in rhetorical treaties, and his *Lives* as a foil against which to build praise of

Byzantine emperors, beginning with the *Heraclias* of George Pisides and apparent also in the *Life of Constantine the Great* of Nicephorus Gregoras, the famous polymath of the Palaeologan Renaissance. Precisely because of the greater availability of manuscripts of Plutarch, less accessible authors, Diodorus and Arrian, were more frequently excerpted in Byzantium, and often with the aim of presenting the image of Alexander purified from vices. Quotations from Plutarch on Alexander, although sometimes misattributed, are on the other hand common in Byzantine florilegia and gnostic collections. The *Alexander Romance*, for its wide circulation in Byzantium clearly did not enjoy high reputation among the *pepaideumenoi* and for this reason was rarely quoted in serious works dealing with Alexander, the exception being the *Chiliades* of John Tzetzes. The decision as to what ancient Alexander historian to follow was made by the Byzantine authors, Jouanno convincingly shows, on the basis of appreciation of their literary style, with no regard to historical veracity.

The paper contained in this volume mark some avenues to be further explored in future research on Alexander the Great. One is certainly the need to approach ancient Alexander Historians not simply as accounts of deeds and facts but primarily as literary works, to study their genre and to decode them in the light of the cultural climate of the epoch in which they were produced. Despite all the remarkable work of Hamilton, Pédech, Bosworth, there is, e.g., always room enough for further investigations on the ultimate sources of the authors we have today: Callisthenes, Cleitarchus, "mercenaries' source" and others. But what emerges from these proceedings most clearly is the possibility of extracting new information and of better understanding ancient interpretations of Alexander by perusing lesser used sources, for example the *Corpus Plutarcheum* beyond the *Life of Alexander* or the *Alexander Romance*. To the same category belong contemporary Eastern, mostly Egyptian evidence and late, Byzantine and Syriac literary works and the largely untapped resources of Jewish writings, the *Talmud* in the first place.

Finally, it is our most pleasant task to acknowledge the contribution of people and institutions which made the Wrocław conference "Historiography of Alexander the Great" and this volume possible. Our thanks go first of all to all participants for their papers and thorough discussion which has helped many an author to work further on their ideas presented during the conference. The idea of the conference was Josef Wiesehöfer's, its implementation the collaborative effort of the Wrocław team (Krzysztof Nawotka, Agnieszka Wojciechowska and Michał Halamus). We would like to acknowledge the financial support for research provided among others by the National Science Centre, Poland, for covering much of the cost of the conference and for publication subsidy by the Institute of History and the Faculty of Historical and Pedagogical Sciences, University of Wrocław. We are grateful to the Board of Editors and the Harrassowitz Verlag for accepting this book in their *Classica et Orientalia* series and for the speedy and very professional handling of the publication process.





# Alexandre à Troie: images, mythe et realia\*

Pierre Briant

Qu'un lieu retienne, imprimé dans son sol, le souvenir des hauts faits qui l'ont rendu fameux, ou, plus vraisemblablement, qu'avant même d'y parvenir, les visiteurs soient pleins de la mémoire d'un site prestigieux que, tels des pèlerins inspirés, ils se réjouissent d'investir à la recherche de l'odeur des héros, – le fait est que Troie n'a cessé de hanter celles et ceux qui, au cours de leur enfance et de leur adolescence, se sont laissé – es bercer par l'épopée iliadique. Elizabeth Vandiver a récemment montré combien les officiers britanniques de la première guerre mondiale envoyés sur le front de des Dardanelles (l'Hellespont des Anciens), aimaient à évoquer images et citations homériques, comme pour mieux se convaincre qu'ils menaient une seconde Guerre de Troie, parfois même en l'identifiant à une Croisade contre Constantinople. En dépit des résultats désastreux de la campagne de 1915, les combattants aimaient à se parer de la vertu combattante (*aristeia*) des héros antiques, s'imaginant en pairs des anciens Achéens, quitte à réunir en un seul assaut le glorieux passé homérique et le rêve d'une victoire remportée sur les Turcs dans la plaine de Troie.<sup>1</sup> Nourris de la lecture d'Homère et des auteurs classiques, ils ignoraient probablement que, selon Kritoboulos, un chroniqueur grec rallié au nouveau pouvoir ottoman, Mehmed II, dix ans après être entré en vainqueur à Constantinople, était venu se recueillir lui aussi sur le site de Troie, non sans se situer, à sa manière, dans le sillage d'Alexandre.<sup>2</sup> Le sultan marcha ainsi dans les pas de nombreux rois, stratèges, consuls et empereurs de l'Antiquité grecque et romaine, qui avaient visité Troie dans le sillage du roi macédonien,<sup>3</sup> quand ils ne l'y avaient pas précédé: le 'pèlerinage homérique' d'Alexandre ne se situait – il pas un siècle et demi après la visite que le Grand roi Xerxès avait lui aussi rendue aux héros ?

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\* Lors du Colloque de Wrocław en 2014, j'avais présenté une communication, qui prenait en compte l'historiographie d'Alexandre sur la longue durée, sous le titre: « Alexandre le Grand, icône de l'expansion européenne en Orient. (Remarques préliminaires sur une recherche en cours) ». Depuis lors le livre annoncé est paru sous le titre P. BRIANT, *Alexandre. Exégèse des lieux communs*, Paris 2016), dont j'ai fait une courte présentation en ligne : <http://cvuh.blogspot.fr/2016/11/alexandre-le-grand-au-rythme-des.html>. Je suis revenu ici à un sujet plus ciblé, plus adapté à la publication des Actes.

1 E. Vandiver, *Stand in the Trench, Achilles: Classical Receptions in British Poetry of the Great War*, Oxford 2010, en particulier 228–280: « The second Trojan war ».

2 Voir Briant, *Alexandre* (n. 1), 129–141.

3 Voir C.C. Vermeule, « Neon Ilion and Ilium Novum: Kings, Soldiers, Citizens, and Tourists at Classical Troy », in: J.B. Carter and S.B. Morris (eds.), *The Ages of Homer: A tribute to E.T. Vermeule*, Austin 1995, 467–482; A. Cohen, « Alexander and Achilles – Macedonians and “Mycenaeans” », in: Carter and Morris (eds.), *Ages of Homer* (n. 4), 483–505; M. Sage, « Roman Visitors to Ilium in the Roman Imperial period: the symbolic functions of a landscape », *ST 10* (2000), 211–232; A. Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local Tradition and Imperial Power*, Oxford 2001; F.I. Zeitlin, « Visions and revisions of Homer », in: S. Goldhill (ed.), *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, Cambridge 2001, 195–266.



## Alexandre et Achille

Le désir d'Alexandre de se situer dans les pas des héros homériques se manifesta dès le printemps 334, alors qu'il parvient à Éléonte, en Chersonèse de Thrace, non loin de Sestos, où Parménion fut chargé de faire traverser la mer à la cavalerie et à la plus grande partie de l'armée. C'est dans ce lieu qu'on connaissait le tombeau de Protésilas, qui, malgré des oracles défavorables, fut le premier de l'armée grecque d'Agamemnon à sauter sur le sol de l'Asie : succombant sous le nombre, il fut tué par un Troyen (Hector lui – même selon des exégètes antiques). Alexandre vient saluer le héros, « et il offrit un sacrifice, [dont] le but était d'obtenir un débarquement plus heureux que Protésilas », – écrit Arrien, dans le cours d'un récit rythmé par les références à des *on-dit* (*legomena*),<sup>4</sup> dont la répétition rend compte des incertitudes de l'information colligée.

Dans la continuité du récit, Arrien affirme que « le roi pilota lui-même le navire-amiral pendant la traversée, et, arrivé au milieu du détroit de l'Hellespont, il égorgea un taureau au en l'honneur de Poseidon et des Néréides, puis fit une libation dans la mer en se servant d'une coupe en or. *On dit* aussi qu'il fut le premier à sauter tout en armes du navire sur la terre d'Asie ». Une fois débarqué, il rendit grâce aux dieux en élevant des autels à Zeus Protecteur-des-débarquements, à Athéna et à Héraclès. Puis c'est l'arrivée à Ilion, ainsi décrite par le même auteur : « Il monta ensuite à Ilion sacrifier à Athéna Ilias, consacra son armure dans le temple et s'appropriä en échange certaines armes consacrées qui dataient de la Guerre de Troie; ... *le bruit prévaut aussi* qu'il offrit un sacrifice également à Priam sur l'autel de Zeus-Protecteur-de-la-maison, pour écarter par ses prières le courroux de Priam contre la descendance de Néoptolème, qui aboutissait précisément à lui, Alexandre » (*An.* I 11.6–8). Puis, au cours de son séjour à Ilion, ont lieu plusieurs épisodes et cérémonies, en particulier, un sacrifice à Athéna Ilias, et, « *d'après certains* », le dépôt d'une couronne sur la tombe d'Achille; « Héphéstion – *dit-on* – en mit une sur le tombeau d'Achille », marquant ainsi que son association avec Alexandre était identifiable à celle bien connue entre Achille et Patrocle, comme ultérieurement Alexandre en fit la démonstration publique lors du deuil consécutif à la mort d'Héphéstion (du moins selon la réflexion que fait Arrien *An.* VII 14.4). D'après Plutarque (15.8), Alexandre, en outre, organisa une course avec ses compagnons, et, d'après Diodore (XVII 17.6), le devin et sacrificateur Aristandros sut interpréter les présages de manière favorable, annonçant au roi qu'il allait remporter un combat de cavalerie.

Adoptant sans réserve informations et interprétations venues des auteurs antiques, sans en mettre en relief les contradictions, Georges Radet, dans le chapitre 3 de son *Alexandre* de 1931, développa ce qu'il appelle le thème de la « Résurrection de l'épopée homérique », qu'il ouvrait par ces mots : « C'est le propre de la conquête d'Alexandre de relever autant de l'épopée que de l'histoire ». Radet n'était pas le premier et il ne fut pas le seul à donner de l'importance à l'héritage homérique : la même année Wilcken évoquait un Alexandre « se plongeant avec exaltation dans les souvenirs de la Guerre de Troie », et il soutenait que « cette excursion à Ilion révèle le tréfonds romantique de l'âme du jeune roi » (1931, 75).<sup>5</sup> Mais Radet fut probablement le premier, voire le seul, à en faire l'élément explicatif décisif

4 Sur l'utilisation des *legomena* chez Arrien, voir H. TONNET, *Recherches sur Arrien. Sa personnalité et ses écrits atticistes*, I: *Texte*, Amsterdam 1988, 120–131.

5 Sur les Alexandres de G. RADET, *Alexandre le Grand*, Paris 1931 et de U. WILCKEN, *Alexander der Grosse*, Leipzig 1931, voir BRIANT, *Alexandre* (n. 1), 386–397.

de l'action d'Alexandre et de ses motivations. En opposant en tous points la marche d'Alexandre à l'expédition conduite par Xerxès contre la Grèce en 480, Radet enivre sa prose du « ravissement qu'éprouve le spectateur à marcher sur les pas du nouvel Achille », bercé d'une « émotion [qui] vient des vestiges du passé, de l'auréole de souvenirs qui flotte au sommet des collines ». Quant à la traversée du détroit, il en fait une « opération plus religieuse que militaire. ... Commencé au tombeau de Protésilas, le pèlerinage homérique s'est clos au temple d'Athéna »; et c'est rempli de la ferveur née de sa rencontre avec Achille que « l'Homéride » se lance dans la mêlée du Granique. Ainsi est née l'image d'un Alexandre conduit par ses émotions et par ses pulsions, à cent lieues de tout préparatif tactique rationnellement élaboré. La conclusion du chapitre résume bien la pensée de l'auteur:

« L'aventure, malgré des improvisations remarquables, apparaît, non comme l'émanation d'une haute pensée militaire, mais comme une poussée de l'héroïsme atavique. En dirigeant la charge contre les satrapes, Alexandre ne se soucie nullement de créer, tel Épaminondas à Leuctres, une nouvelle formule de guerre. Il n'a pour le guider, que cette seule flamme : l'âme épique d'Achille. Elle lui dicte l'obéissance. La bataille du Granique n'est point de nature à illustrer un manuel du parfait tacticien. Elle relève d'Homère. C'est de l'*Illiade* en action ».

Qu'Alexandre ait vécu sa vie en référence constante aux héros de ce que nous appelons 'mythologie grecque' n'a rien pour étonner : dans les cités grecques, et probablement plus encore dans la société aristocratique macédonienne, l'*Illiade* et l'*Odyssée* constituaient la colonne vertébrale de l'éducation des jeunes gens, qui se lançaient des défis virils comme le faisaient les héros de la Guerre de Troie.<sup>6</sup> Selon Plutarque, le roi spartiate Agésilas, en partant combattre les Perses en Asie mineure, une cinquantaine d'années avant Alexandre, se serait imaginé en un nouvel Agamemnon, partant lui aussi du port d'Aulis, là où les Grecs se seraient embarqués pour voguer vers Troie.<sup>7</sup> « Alexandre considérait l'*Illiade* comme un viatique pour la valeur guerrière », – écrit le même auteur, qui également évoque l'histoire de la luxueuse cassette de Darius: partie du butin fait après la victoire d'Issos, elle fut précieusement conservée par Alexandre, qui y rangea la recension de l'*Illiade* due au talent et à la science d'Aristote. Une légende tardive ne prétendait-elle pas en outre qu'Alexandre connaissait par cœur toute l'*Illiade* et une bonne partie de l'*Odyssée*?<sup>8</sup>

Au-delà des flatteries insensées de ses proches, l'intense admiration d'Alexandre pour Achille ne saurait faire de doute. Au cours de la campagne, certains gestes symboliques vont dans le même sens, à ceci près qu'ils sont transmis de manière souvent contradictoire par des auteurs tardifs. Prenons l'exemple du siège de « la plus grande ville des Malles », un peuple de la vallée de l'Indus, tel qu'il est rapporté par Arrien dans son *Anabase* (VI 7–10). Tout le passage est marqué par une intense admiration pour Alexandre, qui, dès le siège de la première ville, se donne à voir en héros triomphant : « Il monta le premier sur le rempart, et apparut à tous les regards comme s'étant rendu maître », et il incita ainsi ses proches compagnons à suivre son exemple: « Pris de honte, les Macédoniens montèrent sur le rempart ». Peu après, le siège fut mis devant une autre ville fortifiée, où s'étaient réfugiés des combattants indiens pris de peur. Exaspéré par la lenteur des porteurs d'échelles, Alexandre, à nouveau, agit seul et il appliqua lui-même l'une des échelles contre la muraille, suivi

6 Voir par exemple H.-I. MARROU, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'Antiquité*, Paris 1950, 27–39, 226–227.

7 Plu. *Agés.* 6.6–10.

8 Voir ZEITLIN, « Visions » (n. 4), 200–201.

seulement de « Peukestas, le porteur du bouclier sacré qu’Alexandre avait pris dans le temple d’Athéna à Troie, le conservant toujours après lui et le faisant porter devant lui au combat ». Puis, désigné aux yeux de ses ennemis « par l’éclat de ses armes et par ce trait de folle audace », il sauta à l’intérieur de la citadelle, où il fut bientôt grièvement blessé, seulement protégé par Peukestas, « qui tenait au-dessus de lui le bouclier sacré de Troie ».

En menant son récit, Arrien entend restituer l’événement dans sa vérité originelle (celle de l’historien) afin de couper court à des versions trompeuses, et il définit ainsi son objectif : « Afin que les générations futures n’éprouvent pas de l’indifférence devant le récit de telles prouesses et de telles épreuves ». Il reconstitue en discours indirect les propres pensées d’Alexandre protégé par le bouclier héroïque : « Il lui fallait courir des risques, il ne mourrait pas sans avoir lutté, mais avoir accompli des actes héroïques qui mériteraient d’être connus de la postérité ». On a réellement l’impression qu’Alexandre rejoue une scène de l’*Illiade*, et que, de son côté, Arrien parachève son autoportrait en mémorialiste inspiré d’un héros qui – toujours selon son témoignage – « proclama Achille heureux, à ce qu’on dit, d’avoir trouvé un Homère comme héraut pour passer à la postérité ». Le couple Alexandre-Arrien est ainsi transformé en une sorte de double du couple Achille-Homère : au demeurant, Arrien « ne [s’]estime pas indigne des plus grands écrivains grecs, puisque aussi bien [il] écrit sur Alexandre, qui compte parmi les plus grands capitaines » (*An.* I 12.5). Autant dire que, sous forme de défis, l’un lancé à Homère, l’autre à Achille, l’exaltation homérique est autant le fait du mémorialiste qui « ne se croit pas indigne de faire connaître aux hommes la geste d’Alexandre », que celui du héros combattant chanté par le premier.<sup>9</sup>

La réserve que je marque ici ne vise pas à nier le désir qu’avait Alexandre d’imiter et même de surpasser les héros, en particulier Achille, ni celui de construire sa propre mémoire de son vivant; elle a simplement pour but de rappeler que cette image a été également construite *post eventum* par des écrivains d’époque romaine, particulièrement à l’époque de la Seconde Sophistique (entre le premier et le troisième siècles de notre ère) – un contexte dans lequel s’inscrit lui aussi Arrien.<sup>10</sup> Nourris d’admiration pour Homère, comme le montre (entre autres) le discours (II) *Sur la royauté* de Dion de Pruse (vers 40 – vers 110 ap. J.-C.),<sup>11</sup> ils aiment à comparer Alexandre à Achille, et faire dire au premier « qu’il voudrait surpasser de beaucoup Achille et les autres »; un autre représentant de la Seconde Sophistique, Aelius Aristide, n’aimait-il pas à dire que, dans un rêve, il avait vu à Pergame un monument dédié conjointement à Alexandre et à lui-même? Remarquons également que, peu après, en 214, l’empereur Caracalla, adepte d’une *imitatio Alexandri* débridée, vint à Ilion, où il marqua particulièrement

9 Sur cet épisode, voir P. BRIANT, *Darius dans l'ombre d'Alexandre*, Paris 2003, 537 sq. (= P. BRIANT, *Darius in the Shadow of Alexander*, Harvard 2015, 435sq.).

10 Sur ce thème bien connu, voir ZEITLIN, « Visions » (n. 4), 196–207 (Homère dans la Seconde Sophistique) et A. TRACHSEL, *La Troade: un paysage et son héritage littéraire. Les commentaires antiques sur la Troade, leur genèse et leur influence*, Diss., Basel 2007, 385–458 (« La Troade au temps de la Seconde Sophistique »); on verra récemment J. CARLSEN, « Greek History in a Roman context: Arrian’s *Anabasis of Alexander the Great* », in: J.M.Madsen and R. Rees (eds.), *Roman Rule in Greek and Roman Writing: Double Vision*, Leiden 2014, 210–223 et S. MÜLLER, « Arrian, the Second Sophistic, Xerxes and the statues of Harmodios and Aristogeiton », in: R. Rollinger and S. Svärd (eds.), *Cross-cultural Studies in Near-Eastern History and Literature*, Münster 2016, 173–202.

11 L. PERNOT, *Alexandre le Grand. Les risques du pouvoir. Textes philosophiques et rhétoriques*, Paris 2013, 29–107.

son respect pour Achille, en l'honneur duquel il érigea une statue et institua des jeux et des sacrifices.<sup>12</sup> Nous sommes donc dans une période où tendent à se confondre passé reconstitué et présent réimaginé (d'Achille à Alexandre, et d'Alexandre aux empereurs romains).

On est donc justifié à se demander comment distinguer, chez les auteurs de cette période, ce qui relève de l'histoire d'Alexandre, et ce qui relève de la mémoire de son temps. Posons une question simple, sous une forme faussement naïve: Alexandre avait-il toujours près de lui le bouclier et les armes du héros achéen, comme Arrien le suggère fortement? Nul ne peut le dire, puisque l'épisode indien est la première et la seule fois que l'on voit « en action » l'une des armes saisies à Troie – introduite, qui plus est, dans le cours de ce qui ressemble fort à une théâtrale mise en scène héroïque élaborée après coup à partir de faits réels, plus particulièrement la grave blessure alors reçue par Alexandre, qui fit craindre le pire à l'armée; celle-ci fut bientôt rassurée par une mise en scène non moins spectaculaire de la guérison du roi (celui-ci exposant son corps, d'abord sur un bateau, puis sur son cheval, enfin en marchant au milieu des soldats, qui vinrent le toucher pour se persuader que leur roi était bien vivant). Tout au plus peut-on penser que le titre de « porteur du bouclier sacré » était devenu un signe de distinction parmi les proches Compagnons du roi, selon une pratique que l'on rencontre dans toutes les cours royales, y compris à la cour achéménide (sur le relief de la tombe de Darius I<sup>er</sup>, son « porteur » et son « porte-lance et porte-hache » sont représentés près du Grand roi).

Un autre exemple illustre la difficulté de l'enquête, c'est celui du châtiment de Bétis (ou Batis), le commandant de la ville fortifiée de Gaza, devant laquelle parvint Alexandre après la prise si difficile de Tyr. Il y mit le siège, s'en empara, et ne fit pas de quartier: les soldats combattants furent tués sur place, les femmes et les enfants furent vendus en esclavage. Quinte-Curce (IV 6) est le seul auteur à présenter de façon positive le chef ennemi, un nommé Bétis, « dont la fidélité à son roi [Darius] sortait de l'ordinaire », et à le louer pour la résistance personnelle qu'il opposa les armes à la main, jusqu'au moment où il fut capturé et amené à Alexandre. Parmi les historiens anciens, il est aussi le seul à décrire son supplice dans la veine homérique. Face au jeune roi, qui manifeste sa colère et qui lui promet les pires châtiments, Bétis garde son calme, ce qui ne fit qu'exacerber la rage d'Alexandre: « Bétis dirigea vers le roi un regard où il y avait non pas de la crainte, mais de la fierté ». Mal lui en prit: « On traversa par des courroies les talons de Bétis qui respirait encore, on l'attacha à un char, et des chevaux le traînèrent autour de la ville. Le roi, en punissant ainsi un ennemi, se fait gloire d'imiter Achille dont il descendait » (au livre XXII de l'*Iliade*, Achille conduit lui-même le char auquel il a fait attacher Hector).

La question est la même que dans le cas précédent, et elle suscite des réponses contradictoires: Alexandre a-t-il consciemment voulu imiter Achille (mais, dans l'*Iliade*, Achille traîne Hector déjà réduit à l'état de cadavre), ou n'est-ce pas là plutôt une invention postérieure, que Quinte-Curce a pu trouver chez Hégésias de Magnésie, un auteur de la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle av. J.-C., connu et décrié pour son style « asianique », c'est-à-dire excessivement dramatique et « décadent » (mais son récit n'évoque pas l'imitation homérique)?<sup>13</sup> Il est clair que, dans l'esprit de Quinte-Curce, l'*exemplum* (car c'en est un) a pour fonction première de porter un jugement d'ordre moral sur certains traits de caractère

12 VERMEULE, « Neon Ilion » (n. 4); SAGE, « Roman », 214.

13 BRIANT, *Darius* (n. 10), 168–169 (= BRIANT, *Alexandre* (n. 1), 136–137).



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déplorables d'Alexandre, accentués encore par son adoption des mœurs propres aux despotes orientaux. Telle fut bien la leçon qu'en tira Rollin, lui-même éminent représentant de l'histoire « maîtresse de vie » dans le premier tiers du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Tel est le sens également du tableau réalisé par le peintre Jean Lagrenée en 1787, conservé aujourd'hui au Musée d'art et d'histoire d'Aurillac, sous le titre (plutôt hostile à Alexandre) de *Fidélité d'un satrape de Darius* [Fig. 1]: au centre, Alexandre de trois quarts face contemple le vaincu, Bétis, jeune, de type européen, grand, beau, et plutôt bien fait de sa personne, attaché par les pieds à l'arrière d'un char qui, tiré par deux chevaux, va le traîner sur le sol à toute vitesse, et le démembrer; à gauche, la tente royale; à droite, la famille du supplicié implorant le vainqueur.<sup>14</sup> Depuis lors, les avis se partagent entre ceux qui considèrent le passage de Quinte-Curce comme relevant de l'invention littéraire nourrie de *mimèsis* homérique, et ceux qui, convaincus de la totale absence de scrupules d'Alexandre, jugent, à l'image de Brian Bosworth, que « le fait que l'épisode est particulièrement révoltant n'est pas un argument

14 C. GRELL and C. MICHEL, *L'école des princes, ou, Alexandre disgracié: essai sur la mythologie monarchique de la France absolutiste*, Paris 1988, 131–135; P. BRIANT, *Alexandre des Lumières. Fragments d'histoire européenne*, Paris 2012, 290 (= P. BRIANT, *The First European: A History of Alexander in the Age of Empire*, Cambridge, Mass. 2017).

contre son historicité ».<sup>15</sup> Pour rester fidèle à l'idée qu'il s'est faite de la constante imitation homérique d'Alexandre, G. Radet lui-même, dans son court chapitre IV dédié à « La colère d'Achille », doit admettre qu'en cette occasion « s'est manifesté un dégradant oubli de la dignité humaine ». Sans jamais s'interroger sur la valeur des sources qu'il utilise ni sur la méthode qui doit présider à leur utilisation, il emprunte à Hégésias de Magnésie la description répugnante et raciste du barbare, qui renverse peu subtilement le sens du récit au profit du nouvel Achille, opposé à « un monstre obèse, un nègre à la taille gigantesque, surchargé d'embonpoint et dont la chair adipeuse exhale une odeur fétide, ... et dont le ventre ensanglanté bondit à travers la plaine de sable » (104–105)!

### De Xerxès à Alexandre

À l'Alexandre homérique de Radet (et de quelques autres) a répondu en 1949 un livre de H.U. Instinsky (*Alexander der Grosse am Hellespont*), petit par la taille (70 pages), mais riche d'interprétations nouvelles – ce qui fut reconnu par tous les recenseurs, même par ceux qui émirent des réserves. L'ambition historienne est d'ailleurs explicitée par l'auteur et par l'éditeur sur la page de couverture, où on peut lire la déclaration suivante, qui, à coup sûr, est une puissante incitation à poursuivre la lecture: « Une explication du passage d'Alexandre le Grand d'Europe en Asie. À travers ses modalités, se révèle l'idée de l'empire mondial d'Alexandre, dont la genèse et les fondements sont ici exposés sous une lumière entièrement nouvelle ».<sup>16</sup> On aurait donc ici, enfin, des informations sur ce que taisent tous les textes anciens, à savoir: quel était le plan d'Alexandre ? Seul Diodore (XVII 16.1) rapporte qu'avant le départ, Alexandre aurait réuni les généraux et les plus éminents de ses Amis, et aurait débattu avec eux des questions suivantes: « À quelle époque fallait-il se mettre en campagne ? De quelle manière devait-on conduire la guerre ? » Mais rien n'est dit de plus.

Sans nier l'intérêt que le jeune Alexandre avait pour Homère et l'*Iliade*, l'auteur proposait de substituer une grille de lecture hérodotéenne à la grille de lecture homérique, et, ainsi, d'établir un rapprochement entre les gestes accomplis par Alexandre entre Sestos et Troie, et les gestes et proclamations jugés identiques de Xerxès en 480: à un siècle et demi de distance, Alexandre aurait voulu répondre au Grand roi. On sait en effet par Hérodote (VII 33 ; IX 116, 120), que le Perse Artayctès, nommé gouverneur de la province par Xerxès, aurait pillé le tombeau du héros Protésilas, « situé au milieu d'un enclos sacré »; il se serait fait concéder la région par Xerxès, au motif que Protésilas « aurait attaqué les états du Grand roi », c'est-à-dire l'Asie, et il aurait emporté à Sestos les trésors que contenait l'enclos sacré, et « aurait transformé les terres sacrées en labours et pâturages »; il aurait même « amené des femmes dans le sanctuaire ». À l'issue de la défaite perse, Artayctès fut capturé par les Athéniens, puis mis à mort au cours d'une cérémonie chargée de symboles: « On emmena le Perse au bord de la mer, à l'endroit où Xerxès avait fait aboutir le pont de bateaux (d'autres disent que

15 A.B. BOSWORTH, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1988, 68: « The fact that the episode is singularly revolting is no argument against its historicity »; sur l'Alexandre de Bosworth, voir BRIANT, *Alexandre* (n. 1), 406–414, 475–476, 498–499.

16 « Ein Deutung des Übergangs Alexanders des Großen von Europa nach Asien. In seinen Formen offenbart sich die Weltreichsidee Alexanders, deren Entstehung und Voraussetzungen hier in einem völlig neuen Licht gezeigt werden ».



ce fut sur la colline qui est au-dessus de la ville de Madytos), et là il fut cloué sur des ais que l'on planta en terre; et son fils fut lapidé sous ses yeux ».

C'est en pensant à ce précédent qu'Alexandre serait venu honorer le tombeau de Protésilas, de manière à réaffirmer que l'Europe reprenait la préséance sur l'Asie. De même pour les sacrifices à Ilion, qui répondraient à ceux que, sur sa marche vers l'Europe en 480, Xerxès (toujours selon Hérodote VII 43) aurait organisés sur le même lieu: « Il sacrifia mille bœufs à l'Athèna d'Ilion, et les Mages offrirent des libations aux héros ». Ces héros sont évidemment les héros du côté troyen, les proches du roi Priam, et non les héros achéens, à preuve aussi le rôle des Mages. En inversant le sens donné aux sacrifices, Alexandre aurait réaffirmé la victoire des Grecs sur les Asiatiques, et ouvert de manière favorable la campagne qu'il allait ouvrir contre les armées du Grand roi. Instinsky accorde également une grande importance à un geste qu'une tradition antique (connue exclusivement par Diodore et par Justin) attribue à Alexandre arrivant sur le rivage asiatique: « Du navire, il lança sa lance et, l'ayant fichée dans le sol, il fut le premier des Macédoniens à sauter à terre, déclarant recevoir l'Asie des dieux comme un bien conquis à la pointe de la lance ». On devrait ainsi reconnaître dans les actions et démonstrations d'Alexandre l'indice d'un plan préétabli – celui de réunir l'Europe et l'Asie (dont l'Hellespont marquait la frontière) – et d'une vision à long terme: sur chacune des deux rives marines, Alexandre aurait exprimé publiquement sa volonté et son plan de conquérir tout l'empire achéménide.

Les pages d'Instinsky ne manquent pas d'intérêt, et l'on peut postuler assez aisément qu'Alexandre avait lu Hérodote et les explications qu'il avait données au Livre I des *Enquêtes*, remontant aux origines « du conflit qui mit Grecs et Barbares aux prises »; selon Hérodote, la version perse affirmait qu'à l'origine de la haine des Perses pour les Grecs venait la capture d'Ilion, car « ils considèrent que l'Asie et tous les peuples barbares qui l'habitent leur appartiennent, tandis que l'Europe et les peuples grecs sont pour eux un monde distinct » (I 4). Dans la même logique, Xerxès vint en 480 saluer la Troie de Priam et honorer les héros qui avaient défendu la ville contre l'armée conduite par Agamemnon.<sup>17</sup> On peut donc admettre sans difficulté l'explication selon laquelle la visite d'Alexandre au tombeau de Protésilas était également liée dans son esprit au précédent de 480. Mais tous les rapports logiques établis entre 480 et 334 ne sont pas aussi convaincants: le rapprochement entre les sacrifices marins d'Alexandre et ceux de Xerxès n'empêche pas la pleine adhésion, et l'épisode de la lance « fichée sur le sol de l'Asie » pourrait bien être avoir été introduit tardivement (il est absent chez Arrien) et illustrer l'un des articles de l'idéologie monarchique hellénistique, à savoir que la domination territoriale est justifiée par « le droit de la lance » (il fut particulièrement invoqué lors des luttes acharnées qui se déroulèrent entre les Successeurs d'Alexandre, dont chacun tentait de justifier et d'imposer sa légitimité par l'exaltation de ses propres victoires sur le champ de bataille).<sup>18</sup> Alexandre était sans aucun doute inspiré par la

17 Sur Xerxès à Troie, voir P. BRIANT, *Histoire de l'empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*, Paris 1996, 564–566 (P. BRIANT, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Winona Lake 2002, 547–549) avec maintenant les importantes remarques de J. HAUBOLD, « Xerxes' Homer », in: E. Bridges, E. Hall and P.J. Rhodes (eds.), *Cultural Responses to the Persian Wars: Antiquity to the Third Millennium*, Oxford 2007, 47–64. (qui conteste l'interprétation de M.A. FLOWER and J. MARINCOLA, *Herodotus: Histories: Book IX*, Cambridge 2002, 304).

18 Voir la discussion de M. ZÄHRNT, « Alexanders Übergang über den Hellespont », *Chiron* 26 (1996), 136–144, qui juge que l'épisode a été inventé par Clitarque.

mythistoire des conflits entre Perses et Grecs, mais ses pensées ne se réduisaient pas à la rivalité avec Achille ni à la revanche contre Xerxès. Substituer la lecture hérodotéenne à la lecture homérique ne résout donc pas tous les problèmes, et cette voie d'accès ne permet pas de restituer les plans d'Alexandre à l'orée de la campagne.

### Alexandre et Troie : mythe et stratégie

Il convient de s'interroger sur ce que représentaient Troie et la Troade à cette date, non seulement au plan symbolique, mais aussi au plan politique et stratégique. On doit remarquer, en premier lieu, qu'Alexandre n'était pas le premier des chefs grecs à venir s'incliner devant les héros.<sup>19</sup> L'on apprend par exemple qu'en 411, lors des affrontements entre Lacédémoniens et Athéniens dans l'Hellespont, le chef spartiate Mindaros y était venu faire des sacrifices à Athènes. Une dizaine d'années plus tard, alors qu'Ilion et toute la région étaient sous l'autorité d'un subordonné de Pharnabaze, satrape perse de Daskyleion, un autre chef spartiate, Derkyllidas, « députa aux villes d'Éolide, leur demandant de reprendre leur indépendance, de le recevoir dans leurs murs et de devenir ses alliés. Les habitants de Néandria, d'Ilion et de Cocylion se rendirent à ses propositions ». En 387, Ilion retomba aux mains des Perses, au terme de la Paix du Roi. Les hostilités ne cessèrent jamais dans cette région. Un commandant athénien, Charidèmos, s'empara d'Ilion en 360–359. Un peu plus tard, un autre Athénien, Charès, se découpa une sorte de petite principauté dans la région autour de Sigeion, dans l'orbite de laquelle se situait Ilion. En 334, il vint rejoindre Alexandre à Ilion. Même sous la forme décousue et partielle qu'elles revêtent au sein d'une documentation essentiellement narrative, ces informations montrent que la Troade n'a jamais été isolée: riche (la numismatique en atteste) et bien ouverte sur la mer, elle fut constamment disputée entre les Perses et les Grecs. En raison de l'intérêt stratégique que la région représentait, surtout pour une puissance européenne préparant une invasion de l'Asie mineure, il est tout à fait possible qu'Ilion ait été l'un des objectifs des troupes macédoniennes envoyées en 336 par Philippe: il apparaît qu'elles tentèrent de s'emparer de la Troade, jusqu'au moment où Memnon conduisit victorieusement la contre-attaque perse.

Les intérêts et positions achéménides n'étaient pas moindres en effet. Région–frontière entre les deux satrapies de Daskyleion (Phrygie–Hellespontique) et de Sardes (Lydie), la Troade fut l'objet de litiges internes à l'empire, même si elle était théoriquement dans le ressort de Daskyleion.<sup>20</sup> Selon Diodore (XVII 17.6–7), au moment de la visite d'Alexandre, « on remarqua, gisant à terre devant le temple d'Athènes, une statue d'Ariobarzanès, un ancien satrape de Phrygie »: preuve que non seulement les satrapes de Daskyleion ont revendiqué la région, mais encore qu'ils n'hésitaient pas à honorer la déesse, ou/et à se réclamer de son

19 Sur les épisodes ici relevés, voir sources *apud* VERMEULE, « Neon Ilion » (n. 4), 468 et A. BERLIN, « Ilion before Alexander: A Fourth century B.C. ritual deposit », *ST* 12 (2002), 140–146.

20 Là-dessus voir les développements de M. WEISKOPF, *Achaemenid Systems of Governing in Anatolia*, Diss. Univ. of Berkeley 1982, en particulier 82–143, 470–490, 505–524; l'auteur a résumé ses vues dans M. WEISKOPF, *The So-called « Great Satraps' Revolt », 366–360 B.C.: Concerning Local Instability in the Achaemenid Far West*, Stuttgart 1989.



patronage et de sa protection.<sup>21</sup> La statue peut aussi avoir été érigée par Ilion elle-même en reconnaissance pour le satrape, puis abattue dans des circonstances que nous ignorons.

Un autre dignitaire achéménide réputé avait des intérêts dans la région: il s'agit du Rhodien Memnon, qui, lié par des inter-marriages à la dynastie satrapique de Daskyleion, fut l'un des généraux qui, au printemps 334, participèrent au Conseil de guerre réuni sous l'autorité du satrape de Daskyleion en vue de définir tactique et stratégie. Selon une anecdote rapportée par un auteur tardif (Polyaen. IV 3.15), Alexandre, après son débarquement, aurait donné ordre à ses fourrageurs d'épargner les propriétés de Memnon, de manière à le rendre suspect aux autres généraux du Grand roi. L'anecdote peut être apocryphe, mais la réalité de grands domaines et de villes reçus du Grand roi en don, y compris en Troade, ne peut être mise en doute. En témoigne également la découverte, dans la proche vallée du Granique, de tombes à tumulus, où l'on a mis au jour des sarcophages somptueusement ornés de bas-reliefs peints, dont l'un porte des scènes de guerre et de chasse typiques des valeurs confondues de l'aristocratie perse et des élites locales.<sup>22</sup>

On trouve une histoire résumée de la région dans le Livre XIII de la *Géographie* de Strabon (le seul auteur ancien à situer la visite à Ilion après et non avant la bataille du Granique).<sup>23</sup> Selon Strabon (XIII 1.26), Ilion n'était alors qu'un village, et son temple était plutôt petit et peu luxueux: ce fut Alexandre qui, par ses bienfaits et ses donations, permit d'enrichir et d'embellir le temple, et qui accorda au « village » (*kômè*) le rang de « cité » (*polis*). L'intervention d'Alexandre n'est pas niable, y compris dans une étape ultérieure: toujours selon Strabon, après la défaite de Darius, Alexandre envoya aux Iliens une lettre particulièrement favorable, « promettant de transformer Ilion en une grande cité, d'y construire un vaste sanctuaire, et de proclamer des Jeux sacrés » – une déclaration qui semble trouver confirmation et attestation dans un dossier épigraphique, qui démontre également l'intérêt pris en l'affaire par ses successeurs.<sup>24</sup>

En revanche, les découvertes archéologiques faites récemment ont permis de rectifier très sensiblement l'image strabonienne d'un lieu isolé et réduit à la pauvreté à l'arrivée d'Alexandre.<sup>25</sup> Bien datées, les offrandes votives mises au jour illustrent en effet l'existence d'une activité culturelle considérable à Ilion avant et après le milieu du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, soit déjà une génération avant Alexandre. La part considérable de céramiques de facture athénienne montre l'intérêt constant manifesté par Athènes pour Ilion et la région: un intérêt politique et militaire, sans aucun doute, mais aussi la preuve que, « pour un Grec, Ilion véhiculait un poids symbolique plus encore que stratégique. Tenir Ilion était détenir un morceau du passé

21 On connaît un exemple parallèle à Sardes, où le Perse Droaphernès consacra une statue au temple de Zeus : là-dessus voir ma mise au point dans P. BRIANT, *Kings Countries and Peoples: Selected Studies on the Achaemenid Empire*, forthcoming, *Foreword* §3.

22 B. ROSE, *The Archaeology of Greek and Roman Troy*, Cambridge Mass. 2014, 116–142, avec mes remarques dans P. BRIANT, « À propos de l'empreinte achéménide' (*Achaemenid impact*) en Anatolie. (Notes de lecture) », in: E. Winter and K. Zimmermann (eds.), *Zwischen Satrapen und Dynasten. Kleinasien im 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Bonn 2015, 182–183.

23 Sur la Troade et son histoire vues par Strabon, voir TRACHSEL, *Troade* (n. 11); 354–374

24 Sur les débats autour du dossier épigraphique, voir F. VERKINDEREN, « The honorary decree for Malusios of Gargara and the koinon of Athena Ilias », *Tyche* 2 (1986), 247–269.

25 Voir BERLIN, « Ilion » (n. 20) et A. BERLIN and K. LYNCH, « Going Greek: Atticizing Pottery in the Achaemenid World », *ST* 12 (2002), 167–178.

grec. ... Avec la prise de la ville par Charidèmos, Ilion émerge à nouveau tout d'un coup comme une puissante icône de prestige ».<sup>26</sup> Il est non moins intéressant de remarquer que nombre d'objets mis au jour révèlent des formes perses-achéménides: ils peuvent donc avoir fait l'objet d'offrandes de la part des Perses de la région ou/et de la part des élites locales.

En définitive, ces découvertes amènent à réévaluer le sens de ce que l'on a pris l'habitude paresseuse de dénommer « le pèlerinage homérique » d'Alexandre: avec Andrea Berlin, dont j'ai adopté ici les observations et les conclusions, on dira que « le désir d'Alexandre de s'associer avec Ilion n'était donc ni singulier ni nouveau ; bien au contraire, il a suivi les modèles de Charidèmos et de Charès ».<sup>27</sup> En même temps, les décisions prises par Alexandre (agrandissement de la ville, construction d'un nouveau sanctuaire, exemption de tribut, etc.) ont donné à l'antique cité un lustre nouveau, peut-être encore augmenté par la fondation d'une Confédération des cités de Troade, dont le sanctuaire d'Athèna était le centre. Y participa aussi l'audacieuse et inédite manipulation de symboles, par l'emprunt des armes des héros – ni plus ni moins une captation de reliques homériques, associée à la transformation des armes du roi en reliques héroïques – qui établissait un lien intime et durable entre le roi et Ilion.

Au patronage d'Athènes classique, qui s'était posée comme le protagoniste de la Guerre de Troie, y compris à travers sculptures et peintures, dans lesquelles les Troyens étaient identifiés aux Perses (en particulier par les vêtements), succéda un patronage exclusif d'Alexandre, qui, lui, pouvait se targuer en outre de descendre d'Achille par sa mère Olympias. Autrement dit, Alexandre s'est approprié en totalité un lieu de mémoire collectif immensément prestigieux, qu'il transforma en caisse de résonance de sa propre gloire et de son statut de héros. Personnelle et pieuse, la démarche était aussi dictée à l'évidence par des considérations politiques pressantes: pour asseoir son pouvoir territorial naissant et pour assurer la promotion de son entreprise dans le monde grec tout entier, Alexandre ne pouvait pas ne pas venir à Ilion.

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26 BERLIN, « Ilion » (n. 20), 145.

27 BERLIN, « Ilion » (n. 20), 146.



# Of Philosophers and Kings: Concerning Philip II of Macedon's Alleged "Debt" to Plato

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## **Abstract**

A fragment of Carystius' Historical Notes, preserved by Athenaeus in Book IX of the *Deipnosophistae*, reports that Phillip II owed his kingship to Plato because the latter had sent an emissary to Perdiccas III of Macedon, Phillip's brother and the king at that time, one Euphraeus of Oreus, who persuaded him to put Philip in charge of a territory of Macedon. This placed him in a prime position to ascend to the throne when Perdiccas was killed by the Illyrians in 359 BC and, by extension, made it possible for Alexander III of Macedon to become king. This article will consider the validity of that assertion through a close examination of this source, along with Demosthenes' Third Philippic, 59–62, Diogenes Laertius' Plato 3.40, Favorinus, *Memorabilia* 3 (quoting Theopompus) and others that lend some credibility to the assertion. Could this extraordinary claim actually be true? Or were the likes of Athenaeus and others promoting their own pro-Platonic agenda, trying to garner some credit for Alexander's legacy? Or could both be the case? This article is at once a study in Hellenistic receptions of Alexander and a kind of "thought experiment" in terms of historical causation. Phillip was a resourceful man. Even if he had not been so readily placed to assume the kingship (either through Plato's interference or otherwise) he might still have become king on the death of Perdiccas by other means. This is one of the great "what ifs?" of history and I fully acknowledge that there are limitations as to what we can know about the causal effects of these events for certain. A careful examination of the sources and their claims will no less shed some light on the matter.

The causes of major historical events can seldom be attributed to a single action. Where they have been, the arguments run the risk of being oversimplifications or over-generalisations on the part of those who hazard to make them. In the case of Alexander the Great's rise to power and conquest there have been, and will likely always be, various attempts to attribute his success to the influence of his tutor, Aristotle, and a comparable number, if not more, refutations of that position. How does one measure the intangible influence of philosophy on an individual and his accomplishments? We have no definitive metric that may be applied in order to evaluate that. In the case of the reported actions of individual philosophers, however, causal links may be better established. Even so, many sober-minded scholars might think it ludicrous to attribute the rise of the Kingdom of Macedon under Philip II, along with Alexander's subsequent conquests, to a decision made by Aristotle's teacher, Plato, sometime before the Conqueror was born. Yet we have that very assertion, in at least two sources, that Philip II of Macedon acquired the beginning of his kingship through Plato's agency. It is my intention here to interrogate this claim, to examine the evidence and to determine if there can be any merit to such a remarkable

assertion. I shall do so through a careful examination of the sources, their transmission and historical context along with considering whether Plato had the motive, means and opportunity to exert such influence as reported.

Plato allegedly had some kind of relationship with Perdiccas III of Macedon, Philip's brother and king before him. Certainly the controversial 5<sup>th</sup> *Letter* supports such a position and the question of its authenticity looms large over this issue. Much of the evidence for this relationship comes from Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* and the older material which it contains. He indicates:

And this is the very same Plato whom Speusippus represents as having, while he professed to be a great friend of Archelaus assisted Philip to get possession of the kingdom. At all events, Carystius of Pergamum, in his *Historical Notes*, writes as follows:

"Speusippus, hearing that Philip used calumnious language in disrespecting Plato, wrote something of this sort in his letter to him: 'Just as if men did not know that Philip originally obtained the kingdom by the assistance of Plato.' For Plato sent Euphraeus of Oreus to Perdiccas, who persuaded him to apportion a certain district to Philip; and so he, maintaining a force in that country, when Perdiccas died, having all his forces in a state of readiness, seized the supreme power."

But whether all this is true or not, God knows.<sup>1</sup>

This excerpt directly references the extant *Letter of Speusippus to Philip II*, to which I shall presently return. The portioning of territory to Philip probably took place in 364 BC. He may have been training his troops "and experimenting with different military equipment and tactics" for at least five years prior to the disaster of 359, when his brother was killed by the Illyrians.<sup>2</sup> If the contents of this letter are correct, then Plato (via Euphraeus) facilitated Philip being ideally poised to assume the kingship on his brother's demise—a situation that perhaps neither of them originally imagined. A misunderstanding by the Roman writer Justin, writing probably in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, in his *Epitome* of Trogus, has led to the assumption that Philip had held the regency for Perdiccas' heir, Amyntas, and then usurped him to seize the throne.<sup>3</sup> Anson has demonstrated that there was no formal system of succession established in the Kingdom of Macedon at this time and that no regency existed for Amyntas.<sup>4</sup> Philip assumed the kingship since he was the eldest and most capable heir *in situ*, with the support of the nobles and the army, on his brother's death. Amyntas Perdicca, still a child, would have been considered Philip's primary heir until his first son Arrhidaeus was born, probably in 337, when Amyntas would have then been relocated to the second tier of potential heirs.<sup>5</sup> Philip ascended the throne of Macedon because he was a royal heir who was present and able to do so at the time. And, if the letter of Speusippus is to be believed, he was present and able due to Plato's interference by proxy in Macedonian politics.

1 Ath. XI 115.

2 E.M. ANSON, *Alexander the Great: Themes and Issues*, London 2013, 49.

3 Just. VII 6.6.

4 ANSON, *Alexander* (n. 2), 23.

5 See W. GREENWALT, "The Search for Arrhidaeus", *AncW* 10 (1984), 69–77; contra C. EHRHARDT, "Two Notes on Philip of Macedon's First Interventions in Thessaly", *CQ* 17 (1967), 296–301 on the date of Arrhidaeus' birth.

Plato's friend and student Euphraeus of Oreus (fl. ca. 4th century BC; d. ca. 342 BC/341 BC), from northern Euboea, appears to have been highly active in Macedonian politics in addition to his speculative studies, acting first as an adviser to Perdiccas III of Macedon and then as an opponent of Philip II and his supporters in Oreus. Information regarding his life is very limited, however, and few facts about it are mentioned in more than one source. He first appears in the 5th Letter of Plato (499), later in Demosthenes' 3rd Philippic (59–62), and in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*, which repeats the information about him contained in Carystius of Pergamum's *Historical Notes*, now lost. I shall return to Euphraeus in more detail later.

The fact that Speusippus, Plato's successor in the Academy, corresponded with Philip II is attested by the survival of at least one extant letter.<sup>6</sup> This *Letter of Speusippus to Philip II* is a sustained attack on Isocrates and his school, along with the polemics of Theopompus, and the influence that they were attempting to assert over Philip. It appears to have been a private letter rather than a public one.<sup>7</sup> Natoli has made a strong case for accepting its validity on the grounds of "1) language and style, 2) coherence, depth and subtlety of argument and 3) historical allusions that point to a particular date of composition" and I will leave that exhaustive commentary for the reader to peruse at their leisure.<sup>8</sup> The historical allusions in the letter point to a date for its composition between 342 and 341 BC.<sup>9</sup> Markel argues that the "letter of Speusippus, when it is considered in its precise historical context, displays more open support of the Macedonian king than the *Philippus* of Isocrates".<sup>10</sup> It was part of an ongoing rivalry between the Academy, the School of Isocrates and Theopompus at a time when Philip's popularity was at an all-time low in Athens due in no small part to Macedonian hegemony over Amphipolis and the additional powers that Macedon demanded through the embassy of Python. In the Athenian Assembly that met in 344/3 to discuss the king's terms, Demosthenes delivered his famous *2nd Philippic*.<sup>11</sup> With Macedon in ascendance, there was clearly an active interest amongst philosophers and their schools in cultivating close ties with her king. For sixteen years since Euphraeus had his falling out with Philip, the Academy had lacked close ties with Macedon, and their major source of support in the tyrants of Syracuse had completely vanished. Philip was now the most powerful ruler in Europe, and many intellectuals looked hopefully towards him for patronage. The head of a given philosophic school in 343/2 would have regarded the appointment of one of his pupils as tutor to the king's son Alexander as the most promising means of gaining any long-term influence over, and support from, the Macedonian court.

In the surviving letter, Speusippus reminds Philip of Plato's beneficial involvement in the affairs of Macedon whilst condemning the influences of rival philosophers. Speusippus also

6 E. BICKERMANN and J. SYKUTRIS, *Speusipps Brief am König Philip: Text, Übersetzung, Untersuchungen*, Leipzig 1928.

7 A.F. NATOLI, *The Letter of Speusippus to Philip II: Introduction, Text, Translation and Commentary; with an appendix on the thirty-first Socratic letter attributed to Plato*, Stuttgart 2004, 22. BICKERMANN and SYKUTRIS, *Speusipps* (n. 6), thought it must be a public letter.

8 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 24.

9 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 27–30.

10 M.M. MARKLE III, "Support of Athenian Intellectuals for Philip: A Study of Isocrates' *Philippus* and Speusippus' Letter to Philip", *JHS* 96 (1976), 80–99, 92.

11 See I. WORTHINGTON, *By the Spear: Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Rise and Fall of the Macedonian Empire*, Oxford 2014, 73 ff.

gives support for Philip's claims to privileges and territories which had not been discussed during the negotiations with Python's embassy in 344/3. As an additional bid for favour, he bolstered Antipater's mythological backing for Philip's control of the Amphictyonic League, the leadership of Delphi and for his aims at Ambracia.<sup>12</sup> It would have been particularly indiscreet of Speusippus to support Philip's claim to Ambracia *after* he had failed in an attempt to capture it; Antipater and Speusippus likely presented their arguments shortly in advance of his march against that city, or in the later part of 343, which helps to date the letter.<sup>13</sup> Speusippus was keen to attack Plato's opponents.<sup>14</sup> He writes:

“And I hear too that Theopompus is acting in an altogether reprehensible manner at court and that he is slandering Plato; and this as if Plato had not laid the basis for your rule during the reign of Perdiccas...”<sup>15</sup>

This reiterates the claim made in the fragmentary letter quoted above from Athenaeus and should be considered alongside it. If we accept Natoli and others' conclusions that the *Letter of Speusippus to Philip II* is authentic, then it is clearly alluding to the involvement of Euphraeus of Oreus as a well-known and accepted fact. There is, of course, room for doubt. It could be that Speusippus believed this version of events to be true, whether it was or not, and one might also point out that there was a kind of propagandistic campaign on the part of pro-Academy individuals, at the time and later on, who sought to promote the notion of the debt that Philip II owed to Plato. While the latter was surely the case, the substance of the letter's claim seems no less valid. That the letter of Speusippus was, either in whole or in part, successful in winning Philip's favour could be surmised by the appointment of Aristotle in *ca.* 343 as tutor for Alexander. But this causal link is tenuous. The philosopher had been a resident “in Macedonia as son of the personal friend and physician of Amyntas III,” and he had joined the Academy in 367/6.<sup>16</sup> Markle, following Fredricksmeyer, argues that the persuasiveness of Speusippus' letter was instrumental in Aristotle's appointment. However, Vatai favours the position that it was on account of the relative unpopularity of both Isocrates' school and the Academy in Athens at the time along with Aristotle's close connections with the royal household, saying that Philip picked him for his “proven qualities”.<sup>17</sup> We do not know all of the negotiations, deliberations and finer details that led to this decision. Speusippus himself would have been the obvious choice if Philip were to pick someone from the Academy. It was a Pyrrhic victory for them at any rate since Aristotle, who was engaged in researches at Mytilene at the time, had distanced himself from the Academy in the five or so years since Plato's death, perhaps being regarded by some there as a kind of apostate due to his rejection of the Theory of Forms.<sup>18</sup> Arguably

12 MARKLE, “Support” (n. 10), 95; see too F.L. VATAI, *Intellectuals in Politics in the Greek World: From Early Times to the Hellenistic Age*, London 1984, 111.

13 MARKLE, “Support” (n. 10), 92, n.29; *cf.* D. 9.72.

14 See G. SQUILLACE, “Consensus Strategies Under Philip and Alexander: The Revenge Theme”, in: E. Carney and D. Ogden (eds.), *Philip II and Alexander the Great: Father and Son, Lives and Afterlives*, Oxford/New York 2010, 69–80, 74 ff.

15 BICKERMANN and SYKUTRIS, *Speusippus* (n. 6), 30.12.

16 E.A. FREDRICKSMEYER, “Once More the Diadem and Barrel-Vault at Vergina”, *AJA* 87 (1983), 99–102, 101; see MARKLE, “Support” (n. 10), 96.

17 VATAI, *Intellectuals* (n. 12), 111.

18 See I. DÜRING, *Aristotle and the Ancient Biographical Tradition*, Göteborg 1957, 318, 462–3.

Aristotle's appointment could be read as a slight against the Academy; still, he was one of their *alumni* and that counted for something or, at any rate, assuming they were able to choke down their bile, it could be repurposed as useful spin.

The Academy's fortunes aside for the moment, how did the fragmentary letter purporting Plato's role in sending Euphraeus to Macedon get preserved first in Carystius (2<sup>nd</sup> BC) and thence in Athenaeus of Naucratis (*fl. ca.* late 2<sup>nd</sup>, early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD)? Athenaeus was a Greek who was born in Romanised Egypt, in a city that had Hellenic roots dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. Naucratis was almost directly between Memphis and Alexandria and enjoyed a cultural heritage combining both Greek and Egyptian traditions. One can assume some interest on Athenaeus' part in the legacy of Alexander the Great due to this, the extent of which however is not attested in the sources. Athenaeus probably lived during the reign of the Stoic philosopher/emperor Marcus Aurelius. There are a number of negative allusions in the text of the *Deipnosophistae* to Commodus which indicate that its author at least outlived Marcus by a number of years. The famous physician Galen and (apparently) the jurist Ulpian are present as characters in this dialogue, although there is some debate about the identity of the latter. As with Plato's characters who are based on real-life individuals, they are all heavily fictionalised in Athenaeus, and the majority of the 24 guests at the banquet take no part in the conversation. If the character of Ulpian is in fact identical with the well-known jurist of the same name, then the *Deipnosophistae* was probably written after his death in 223.<sup>19</sup> This late-Second Sophistic treatise evokes the literary symposium, again similar to that of Plato's, of learned disquisitions on a range of subjects suitable for such an occasion although it entails a satirical dimension as well as presenting subversive views at times.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, as Baldwin remarks, "the dialogue is ushered in on a note of parody of Plato's *Phaedo* (1.2a)".<sup>21</sup> We can deduce a kind of affinity for Plato in Athenaeus; but does it amount to sufficient bias to alter the facts in his favour? Some have thought precisely the opposite.

It is undoubtedly the case that a number of sources employed by Athenaeus were hostile to Plato and his associates. Most of this anti-Platonic polemic, some of which is quite vicious and self-consciously absurd, may be found at *Deipnosophistae* V 52 ff. and XI 117 ff., proximate to our fragmentary letter of Speusippus. The hostile tradition preserved in Athenaeus does "not hesitate to accuse Plato of such faults as pride, greed, plagiarism, jealousy, gross errors, self-contradiction, lying and flattery of tyrants."<sup>22</sup> For example Athenaeus' interlocutors take up a definition found in Aristotle's *Poetics*, to the effect that the Socratic dialogues are examples of mimetic prose, in order to sophistically condemn Plato for himself using μίμησις, on account of which he had cast Homer and other poets out of the *Republic*.<sup>23</sup> Aristotle's definition of μίμησις was purely descriptive and not polemical, as it

19 G. KAIBEL, *Athenaei Naucratis Dipnosophistarum Libri XV*, III, Leipzig 1890, 561–564, had put it at 228 AD but more modern scholarship has placed around 223, see BALDWIN below.

20 See L. MCCLURE, "Subversive Laughter: the Sayings of Courtesans in Book 13 of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*", *AJPh* 124 (2003), 259–294.

21 B. BALDWIN, "Athenaeus and His Work", *AClass* 19 (1976), 21–42, 41.

22 W.K.C. GUTHRIE, *A History of Greek Philosophy IV: Plato: the Man and His Dialogues: earlier period*, Cambridge 2000, 9–10.

23 Arist. *Po.* 1447a28–b11; on the tradition that Plato was indebted to Sophron for the origin of the mimetic prose dialogue, see M.W. HASLAM, "Plato, Sophron, and the dramatic dialogue", *BICS* 19 (1972), 17–38



is deployed in Athenaeus or his sources. However, at *Deipnosophistae* XI.118 not only is Plato criticised for effectively being a hypocrite, he is also “further attacked on the grounds that he did not invent the dialogue genre himself.”<sup>24</sup> This passage is considered by Düring to have been derived directly out of the material used by Athenaeus from Herodicus of Babylon (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC).<sup>25</sup> The latter produced one of the most vehement attacks on the Socratics written in antiquity, *Reply to a Socrates-worshipper* (Πρὸς τὸν Φιλοσωκράτην).<sup>26</sup> Significant extracts of this treatise have been preserved in books 5 and 11 of the *Deipnosophistae*. Herodicus’ pamphlet is directly referenced only once by Athenaeus, although there are several other references to him without a title being given.<sup>27</sup> Karl Schmidt has argued that most of the attacks on philosophers in general, and on Plato in particular, in these books of the *Deipnosophistae* were taken from Herodicus.<sup>28</sup> Other polemics against Plato in Athenaeus come from Theopompus of Chios (fl. 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC), a student of Isocrates, who wrote *Against the School of Plato* and who had also, at different times, been alternatively laudatory of and hostile to Philip II of Macedon.<sup>29</sup> These and other traditions of thought are preserved in Athenaeus’ dramatic dialogue. As with many works of fiction, it is not possible to know precisely what the author believed or intended.

The trend in the scholarship on Athenaeus around Kaibel’s time, in the mid/late-19<sup>th</sup> Century, had been to regard him merely as a “diffuse antiquarian” presenting a miscellany of data uncritically, and also as a source of humour. Others, like Schleiermacher took considerable umbrage at the negative representations of Plato. Commenting on *Deipnosophistae* XI 507, he writes “we see hence what bad authorities Athenaeus followed in what he says against Plato, or what inconsiderate use he made of his *collectaneae*”; although, he does pointedly uphold the authenticity of *Letter of Speusippus* cited in this passage to the effect that Plato was instrumental in the rise of Philip II of Macedon.<sup>30</sup> Schleiermacher’s view, being perhaps overly defensive of Plato, is that Athenaeus was too indiscriminate in his selection and presentation of source material, lacking critical judgement and discretion. However, this rather dismissive stance has been largely rejected in current scholarship, which has sought to

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along with D. CLAY, “The origins of the Socratic dialogue”, in: P.A. Vander Waerdt (ed.), *The Socratic Movement*, Ithaca/London 1994, 23–47, 33–37.

24 A.D.R. SHEPPARD, *Studies on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Essays of Proclus’ Commentary on the Republic*, Göttingen 1980, 125.

25 I. DÜRING, *Herodicus the Crateteian: A study in anti-Platonic Tradition*, Stockholm 1941, 25.

26 See J.J. FLINTERMAN, “‘... largely fictions ...’: Aelius Aristides on Plato’s dialogues”, *AncNarr* 1 (2000–2001), 32–54.

27 Ath. V 53 ff; Athenaeus refers to Herodicus twice without mentioning a title. At V 18 there is a comparison of the convivial traditions of Homeric heroes with the proceedings of *symposia* as described by Plato, Xenophon, and Epicurus (Ath. V 12 ff.), this is presumably derived from a treatise titled the *περί Συμπόσιον*, and it is rounded off with a quotation from Herodicus; at V 61 Herodicus is cited as the source for a poem, allegedly by Pericles’ famous mistress Aspasia, that portrayed Socrates as chasing after Alcibiades rather than the latter chasing the former.

28 K. SCHMIDT, *De Herodico Crateteo*, Elbing 1886. Schmidt was followed Düring’s *Herodicus* (n. 25), which entailed an edition with commentary of Herodicus’ fragments; see also J. GEFFCKEN, “Antiplatonica”, *Hermes* 64 (1929) 87–109, 98–101, esp. 99 n. 1, and, more recently, M.B. TRAPP, “Plato in the *Deipnosophistae*”, in: D. Braund and J. Wilkins (eds), *Athenaeus and his World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, Exeter 2000, 353–363, 359ff.

29 *FGrH* 115 F259. See GUTHRIE, *History* (n. 22), 9 n. 2.

30 F. SCHLEIERMACHER, *Schleiermacher’s Introductions to the Dialogues of Plato*, Cambridge 1836, 425–426.

reform the opinion of Athenaeus as a skilled polymath and relevant social commentator. Scholarly interest in him has markedly increased in recent decades.<sup>31</sup> As such, the *Deipnosophistae* is now considered both an important literary work, replete with symbolic meaning, as well as an amassed body of useful information from sources that we would not otherwise possess. Whatever else he may have been, Athenaeus was certainly a consummate antiquarian who collected sayings, letters and fragmentary texts, many of which are no longer extant except in his preservation of them. In this way he must have acquired the letter of Speusippus which was preserved in Carystius of Pergamum's *Historical Notes*. It remains impossible to determine with certainty whether Athenaeus introduced biased information on Plato and Philip II; yet, he appears to have been meticulous and accurate in preserving citations from prose works and, in some cases, he has transmitted them in a better state than they can be found in the other extant manuscripts.<sup>32</sup> I am inclined to think that Athenaeus' antiquarian tendencies might have been sufficient to represent an accurate account of the material within a given source and to that source we shall turn next for consideration.

Both the extant *Letter of Speusippus to Philip II* (in excerpts) and the fragment quoted above from Athenaeus are referenced as being located in the works of Carystius of Pergamum, a 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC writer described by Jacoby as a "Literatur-historiker".<sup>33</sup> Carystius quotes from section 12 of the full letter that we have today, attributing Philip's kingship to Plato.<sup>34</sup> Very little is known about Carystius apart from the references to him in Athenaeus which mostly come from his now lost *Explanatory Notes on Historical Subjects* or sometimes just referred to as the *Historical Notes*. He produced another work, *on Dramatic Performances*, no longer extant, in which he recorded authors, dates, notable activities and interpretive issues such as the origins of terms. The material available to Carystius appears to have been extensive and he is regarded by modern scholars as having been a serious historian.<sup>35</sup>

The letters themselves were probably preserved both in the Academy's archives as well as in the court records of the Kingdom of Macedon. Some two centuries after Speusippus' time, Carystius probably had access to them through the library of Pergamum. The *Letter of Speusippus to Philip II* is typically included amongst those of Isocrates, in the extant manuscripts, which implies that the latter may have obtained it from his associates at the Macedonian court as part of his campaign to besmirch the reputation of the Academy.<sup>36</sup> It is also possible that both the letter and the fragment quoted in Athenaeus were part of the collection of documents of Speusippus, said to have been purchased by Aristotle for one talent, which was then bequeathed to his successor Theophrastus. Either of these men may have allowed the Great Library of Alexandria to make copies of them or Alexandria, and later Pergamum, may have obtained them from additional copies that their owners or others had made.<sup>37</sup> It is

31 J. PAULAS, "How to Read Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists*", *AJPh*, 133 (2012), 403–439; see too BALDWIN, "Athenaeus" (n. 21), *passim*.

32 See K. ZEPERNICK, "Die Exzerpte des Athenaeus in dem *Dipnosophisten* und ihr Glaubwürdigkeit", *Philologus* 77 (1921), 311–363.

33 F. JACOBY, "Karystios von Pergamon", in: *RE* X.2, Stuttgart 1919, col. 2054.

34 See *FHG* IV, 356–357 (Carystius F.1)

35 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 23–24.

36 See R. HARDER, "Prismata", *Philologus* 85 (1930), 250–254.

37 See D.L. IV 5; Gel. III 17.3; Str. XIII 1.54; Plu. *Sull.* 26.1–2. Ath. I.4 also reports an alternative possibility inasmuch as he says that Ptolemy Philadelphus purchased Aristotle's library for Alexandria.

worth noting that the earliest references to the *Epistles* of Plato also come from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC, having been classified by the grammarian Aristophanes of Byzantium who was head librarian of Alexandria (appointed *ca.* 195, died 180 BC).<sup>38</sup> By contrast, the surviving letters of Isocrates and Demosthenes do not possess such an ancient pedigree in terms of confirmed historical references.<sup>39</sup>

It seems, then, that there is little reason to doubt the authenticity of the sources that make the claim of Philip II's debt to Plato; but what about the veracity of that claim? A good investigator would seek to establish motive, means and opportunity. On the former point, one can readily adduce Plato's wide-ranging interest in politics alongside his acquaintance and (established) correspondence with a number of political leaders of his era. There is every indication that Plato's interest in politics extended beyond the realm of *theoria* well into that of *praxis*. For example, there are Plato's political ventures in Sicily. Plutarch tells us that, under his influence, Dion of Syracuse sought to establish a constitution "of the Spartan or Cretan type, a mixture of democracy and royalty, with an aristocracy overseeing the administration of important affairs".<sup>40</sup> Of course, that particular experiment was, to say the least, nearly disastrous for the Athenian philosopher. Even so, he has expressed in his writings a particular fascination with kingship along with the potential for a powerful ruler to undertake sweeping political reforms.<sup>41</sup> He also wrote that philosophy *should* influence politics for beneficial ends, saying:

Mankind will not be rid of its evils until either the class of those who philosophise in truth and rectitude attain political power or when those who are the most powerful in cities, under some divine dispensation, really get to philosophising.<sup>42</sup>

And he enthusiastically encouraged this sort of activity. More than a few of his students took their lessons in political science abroad and influenced affairs all over Hellas with varying degrees of success.<sup>43</sup> The Academy is reported to have entertained many such connections. Its graduates were renowned for their expertise in political, legal and constitutional studies and, as such, they were often retained as advisors to a number of communities in the ancient world.<sup>44</sup> Their interests and activities, along with Plato's, point to a practical agenda above and beyond purely theoretical research.

It is the case that much of the Academy's reported political activity hinges on the validity of Plato's letters—especially the 5<sup>th</sup>, in which he introduced his student Euphraeus of Oreus to Perdiccas III of Macedon, the 6<sup>th</sup>, in which he recommends two of his pupils to King Hermeias of Atarneus, and the famous 7<sup>th</sup> letter to the Dionian party that temporarily ruled

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38 See D.L. III 62.

39 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 24.

40 Nep. *Di.* 2, 4.1–3, 5.4–5, 11.2, 13.1–4, 53.2. The extent of his success was considerably less than Plutarch's optimistic version here, for more on which see K. VON FRITZ, *Platon in Sizilien und das Problem der Philosophenherrschaft*, Berlin 1968, 5–62. On Plato and the Pythagoreans in Sicily cf. Cic. *Rep.* I.10; Cic. *Fin.* 5.29; Cic. *Tusc.* 1.17. Also, on Plato in Sicily, see Pl. *Ep.* 7, *passim*.

41 Pl. *R.* 501a; and see too *Lg.* 736a–b, *Plt.* 293d and *Euthphr.* 2d–3a.

42 Pl. *Ep.* 7.326a–b.

43 See Did. col. 5.52, Diels-Schubart; see Pl. *Ep.* 6.322e and Isoc. 6.135 for some examples and see too W. JAEGER, *Aristoteles: Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*, Berlin 1923, 114–115.

44 G.A. Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City: A Historical Interpretation of the Laws*, Princeton 1960, 8–9.

Syracuse. There is no indication that the authorship of these letters was regarded with scepticism in the Classical era and this alone lends no small amount of credibility to them. It was in the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD that Ficinius condemned the 13<sup>th</sup> Letter as spurious, followed two centuries later by Cudworth.<sup>45</sup> Attacks on the validity of the Platonic letters reached its climax in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as did attacks on the validity of the *Laws*, which is now almost universally considered authentic.<sup>46</sup> The same critics of the letters also cast doubt on the authenticity of the *Parmenides*, *Sophist*, *Cratylus* and *Philebus* for similar stylistic reasons. In more contemporary scholarship, the authenticity of these has by and large been upheld. Previous errors in their identification may have been due in part, as Morrow indicates, to a failure to appreciate “the changes which Plato’s style had undergone between the *Republic* and the *Laws*”.<sup>47</sup> The hypersensitivity of some 19<sup>th</sup> century philologists has since given way to better critical methods that tend to embrace most if not all of the Platonic letters.<sup>48</sup> Morrow, who accepts all of them with the possible exception of the 1<sup>st</sup>, says that the others agree “in thought, style, and diction” with the acknowledged works of the author, indicating that this is especially true of the 7<sup>th</sup> Letter.<sup>49</sup> These points will continue to be argued amongst Platonic scholars; however, it is reasonable to proceed with the assumption that the letters (especially the key political ones such as the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>) are probably valid. I will presently return to other issues concerning the 5<sup>th</sup> Letter.

The Academy “made a name for itself in the fourth century by the lawgivers it sent to assorted Hellenic cities”.<sup>50</sup> We have good evidence that they were highly politically active and directed in their efforts by their founder during his lifetime. Plutarch, who identified himself as a Platonist, gives a favourable account of Hellenistic Academics in positions of power. He regarded these as justly opposing the dangerous influences of the Epicureans who, as he says, “if they write in such matters at all, write on government to deter us from taking part in it”.<sup>51</sup> Plutarch mentions the Academic Aristonymos who reformed the constitution of Arcadia, Phormio who modified the heavily oligarchic rule of the Eleans, Menedemus who was sent to the Pyrrhaeans, Eudoxus of Cnidus who legislated for his fellow Cnidians and Aristotle who advised both the Stagiritis (and on whose account their destroyed town was rebuilt and repopulated) and, more importantly, the Macedonians on political matters.<sup>52</sup> It can be safely assumed that these philosophers benefited from Plato’s connections as well as the financial and other support of their often aristocratic families. Eudoxus of Cnidus (4<sup>th</sup> BC) was already established as a famous mathematician and philosopher and, as such, did not

45 R.S. BLUCK, *Plato’s Seventh and Eighth Letters*, Cambridge 1947, 174.

46 See BLUCK, *Plato’s* (n. 45), 175–181 and G.R. MORROW, *Plato’s Epistles*, New York 1962, 5–16, for a breakdown of the arguments and ancient corroborative evidence. All the Platonic letters are listed in the canon drawn up by Aristophanes of Byzantium (2<sup>nd</sup> BC, as we have seen) and also in the canon of Thrasyllus (1<sup>st</sup> AD). The *Laws* would probably have been cast out of the Platonic corpus by the same 19<sup>th</sup> century critics had not Aristotle vouched for it; see his *Rhetoric* 1415b30; and see too A.E. TAYLOR, *Plato: the Man and His Work*, London 2012, 13–14 and L. TARÁN, *Academica: Plato, Phillip of Opus and the Pseudo-Platonic Epinomis*, Philadelphia 1975, 128, 130, n. 543 on the authenticity of the *Laws*.

47 MORROW, *Plato’s* (n. 46), 8.

48 MORROW, *Plato’s* (n. 46), 10–11.

49 MORROW, *Plato’s* (n. 46), 16.

50 VATAI, *Intellectuals* (n. 12), 93.

51 Plu. *mor.* 1127a.

52 Plu. *mor.* 1126c–d.

depend solely on the auspices of the Academy. Aristotle, while arguably somewhat more *bourgeois* than Plato (although his family owned large estates), had intimate connections with the Macedonian monarchy, as mentioned above, and readily mingled with Athenian elites along with the courts of aristocrats and autocrats.

Perhaps one of the Academy's most noteworthy reported political successes involved Hermeias the ruler of Atarneus. Hermeias had risen from the merchant class to dominate his home *polis*, allegedly purchasing a title from the Persians in order to bolster his political accomplishments.<sup>53</sup> He is said to have cultivated a close relationship with two of Plato's students, Erastus and Corsicus. As scholarly representatives of the famous Academy, they would have been valuable advisors as well as providing some useful 'spin' for the tyrant.<sup>54</sup> Plato requested that Hermeias look after his students, who were somewhat lacking in worldly experience, and that he extend to them his protection.<sup>55</sup> Securing from Hermeias his *aegis* over Erastus and Corsicus, themselves two leading citizens of Scepsis, also seems to have secured the protection of Scepsis itself. This allowed them to undertake whatever reforms (or experiments) on Scepsis, and later Assos, that they wished with considerable facility.

Hermeias evidently benefited from his pursuit of philosophy and its application to government as he reportedly took up geometry and dialectics and may have continued with his studies even after the novelty wore off.<sup>56</sup> Arius Didymus, the Augustan-era stoic philosopher, offers an account of the effect that the Academy's agents produced on Hermeias:

"Into the surrounding country he made expeditions; and he made friends of Corsicus and Erastus and Aristotle and Xenocrates; hence all these men lived with Hermeias...he listened to them...he gave them gifts...he actually changed his tyranny into a milder rule; therefore he also came to rule over the neighbouring country as far as Assos, and then, being exceedingly pleased with these same philosophers, he allotted to them the city of Assos. He accepted Aristotle most of all of them, and was very intimate with him."<sup>57</sup>

Hermeias was by all accounts a successful ruler, himself having studied philosophy under Plato. He was tricked by Memnon of Rhodes who had been dispatched by King Artaxerxes III of Persia, captured and brought to Susa where he died under torture as the Persians were seeking intelligence from him on Philip II of Macedon. Aristotle is said to have dedicated a statue of Hermeias at Delphi and had written a hymn in his praise. His reputed last words were that he had done nothing unworthy of philosophy.<sup>58</sup>

The degree of veracity represented by the above-quoted fragment is open to debate. Even so, both it and Plato's 6<sup>th</sup> *Letter* serve to corroborate such momentous political involvements on the part of Academics. Some of the more ambitious members of Plato's mostly aristocratic Academy, we are told, even tried to establish themselves in the roles of tyrants. Some evidently succeeded. Clearchus, who studied under both Plato and Isocrates, was regarded

53 JAEGER, *Aristoteles* (n. 43), 112.

54 JAEGER, *Aristoteles* (n. 43), 112–113

55 Pl. *Ep.* 6.322e.

56 Pl. *Ep.* 6.322d, unlike the tyrants of Syracuse.

57 Jaeger's translation and restoration in *Aristoteles* (n. 43), 114–15. From Did. col. 5.52, DIELS-SCHUBART.

58 A.H. CHROUST, "Aristotle's Sojourn in Assos", *Historia* 21 (1972), 170–176; see too the *Suda*, s.v. Ἐρμίας.

by the latter as the kindest, most humane and most liberal student in the school.<sup>59</sup> This future tyrant was sponsored for Athenian citizenship by Timotheus in 375 BC, and in 362 Clearchus named his son after that famous general.<sup>60</sup> However, after gaining his tyranny, Clearchus allegedly earned the disfavour of the Academy, as well as that of the Platonist philosopher Chion of Heraclea, through his harsh policies and his abusive treatment of local aristocrats. With the help of some of the city's nobles, Chion facilitated Clearchus' assassination in 353.<sup>61</sup>

Other Academics purportedly sought their own crowns. Timolaus of Cyzicus is said to have followed in the pattern of Clearchus, revealing a different personality once he had assumed power. We are told that he went from being a benevolent distributor of free grain and money to suddenly overthrowing Cyzicus' constitution and instituting a tyrannical regime.<sup>62</sup> Euaeon of Lampascus was another Academic who allegedly attempted a similar rise to power. His tactics involved loaning money to his native city and, as Athenaeus' source indicates, "taking as surety the *acropolis* which he retained with the design of becoming tyrant, until the people of Lampascus combined to resist him; and after repaying his money they threw him out".<sup>63</sup> Most of these accounts come from Athenaeus' book 11 and are likely to entail elements of slander derived from Plato's detractors.

The Academic Chaeron of Pellene was supposedly even more extreme than Clearchus or Timolaus, according to this narrative of dystopian Academics in Athenaeus. As tyrant, he allegedly banished all of the male nobility, redistributed their land to their slaves and forced all of the aristocratic women to marry the newly freed and propertied slaves in a kind of parody of the dispensation in the *Republic*. This seems rather unlikely and probably represents Athenaeus' sources' attempts at maligning the Academy with embellished half-truths and exaggerations. In what must be a kind of fossilised echo of Herodicus and/or Theopompus, his interlocutors seem to be sneering when they say that "these were the beneficial results he derived from the noble *Republic* and from the lawless *Laws*!"<sup>64</sup> Even so, Timolaus of Cyzicus, Euaeon of Lampascus and Chaeron of Pellene were all three used by Sophocles of Sunion's legalist, Demochares, as exhibits to justify the ban on philosophers at Athens in 307/6, suggesting that these accounts were not entirely fictionalised. Burkert has described Plato's Academy as a kind of "cult organisation", arguing that there is no inconsistency between this and its political activities.<sup>65</sup> Chroust, after giving a list of Plato's disciples and associates, even concludes that "one could justly refer to the Platonic Academy as the 'seedbed' of political tyrants".<sup>66</sup> But should one conclude such a thing? As we have seen, political opponents of the Academy desired to spread just such views and they were clearly aimed at defaming the institution and its founder. It can only be said with certainty

<sup>59</sup> Isoc. *Ep.* 7.135.

<sup>60</sup> See D. 20.84; on his son's name see VATAI, *Intellectuals* (n. 12), 88, n. 158.

<sup>61</sup> Memn. *FGrH* 434 F1; see too Just. XVI 5.

<sup>62</sup> Ath. *Deip.* XI 119–120.

<sup>63</sup> Ath. XI 119

<sup>64</sup> Ath. XI 119–120.; see too Paus. VII 27.2; Ath. *Deip.* XI 508d–509b. Both Chaeron and Timolaus appear to have received Macedonian assistance.

<sup>65</sup> W. BURKERT, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, Cambridge, MS 1972, 119, esp. n. 62 and n. 63.

<sup>66</sup> A.H. Chroust, "A Second (and Closer) Look at Plato's Philosophy", *Archiv für Staatswissenschaften und Geschichte* 48 (1962), 575–597, 586.



that the Academy was well connected to the political landscape of ancient Greece from its inception. Much more could be said about its other potential political dealings but will be omitted here for want of space and time. We may assume that its aims were more benevolent, despite perhaps some of the actual results and criticisms, than malign.

It bears emphasising that we cannot know for certain if most or all of the negativity found in the descriptions of politically minded Academics is the direct result of smear campaigns by the likes of Herodicus, Theopompus and Isocrates; but, we can assume that no small part of it is. These accounts do at least demonstrate that Academics were being sent to exercise political influence abroad, whatever their reception through later, revisionist interpretations. The precedent of philosophers meddling in political affairs had, of course, been around well before Plato's time with not the least being his famous ancestor, Solon of Athens. The Pythagoreans in particular illustrate this preoccupation with real-world politics and it would continue long after Plato's era with the Stoics, Cynics, Epicureans and others making connections with, and wielding influence over, various states and statesmen.<sup>67</sup> The motivation for Plato to be interested in the affairs Macedon (the rising star of the age) and to be able to exert some influence over them, albeit by proxy, is therefore highly plausible. The numerous examples of politically-minded, 'meddling' Academics also goes a long way towards showing that Plato had the means necessary at his disposal to influence Perdiccas III in favouring Philip. It does not however adequately demonstrate that he had the opportunity to do so.

Leaving aside for the moment the alleged actions of Euphraeus of Oreus, how might Philip have come onto Plato's "radar", so to speak? Could Plato have heard of, corresponded with or encountered Philip whilst he was in Thebes? The future leader of the Macedonian superpower had been held as a guest/hostage in Thebes during his youth, from about the ages of fourteen to eighteen (c. 368–364 BC). It was common practice for a leading power to retain children of the aristocracies of lesser *poleis* in order to insure their compliance. While there, Philip received a military and diplomatic education from Epaminondas, the Theban supreme commander who had been the hero of Leuctra in 371. Ptolemy of Alorus, regent for Perdiccas III, the lover and later husband of Eurydice, widow of Amyntas III, probably sent Philip to Thebes. This is based on Aeschines (II.26 ff.), who places Philip at the court of Ptolemy when he succeeded to the regency following the death of Alexander II (in 369).<sup>68</sup> Philip's adoption of the "oblique order of battle" from Epaminondas is probably the most striking result of his time in Thebes.<sup>69</sup> We are told that Philip became the *eromenos* of Pelopidas, another Theban general and lived with one Pammenes, who was reputedly an enthusiast of the Sacred Band

67 See K.R. MOORE, "Persaeus of Citium: A lapsed stoic?", *Rosetta: Papers of the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity* 7 (2009), 1–21 for one notable example of a politically minded Stoic philosopher; on the Pythagoreans and their political meddling see K.R. MOORE, "Was Pythagoras ever really in Sparta?", *Rosetta: Papers of the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity* 6 (2009), 1–25; for the alleged Pythagorean influence on Croton and Taras see Lamb. *VP* 25. In both places, the Pythagorean communities supposedly held close relations with the oligarchic governments of these *poleis*. Similar stories are told of Lycurgus' travels to Crete and Ionia in search of the best laws for Sparta (Plu. *Lyc.* 4).

68 J. BELOCH, *Griechische Geschichte*, III.1, Strassburg 1912, 182, note; G. GLOTZ and R. COHEN, *Histoire Grecque*, III.1, Paris 1929, 182; and see too F. GEYER, "Philippos 7", in: *RE* XIX.2, Stuttgart 1938, col. 2266.

69 U. WILCKEN, *Alexander the Great*, London/New York 1967, 30.

of Thebes, which Philip later honoured with a monument after defeating them at Chaeronea.<sup>70</sup> On this we have Dio Chrysostom's (c. AD 40 – c. 115) account amongst others:

“And yet previously Philip himself, while a hostage at Thebes, not only was associated with Pelopidas, a man of cultivation — in consequence of which it was even said that Pelopidas had been his lover — but he also witnessed the deeds of Epaminondas and listened to his words; and it was no mere accident that Epaminondas had acquired such power amongst the Greeks and had wrought so great a change in Greece as to overthrow the Spartans, despite their long-continued rule, but because he had conversed with Lysis, the disciple of Pythagoras. This, I fancy, explains why Philip was far superior to those who previously had become kings of Macedonia.”<sup>71</sup>

In ca. 364 BC, Philip returned home which is also about the same time that Euphraeus seems to have made his appearance at the Macedonian court.<sup>72</sup> Could Plato have developed an interest in Philip on account of some connection with the Pythagorean Lysis?

Plutarch's *De Genio Socratis* (mor. 584b) shows that Lysis died shortly before the Theban victory over the Spartans at Leuctra in 371. Also, according to Plutarch, Philip was a hostage in the house of Pammenes and not in the house of Epaminondas' father, Polymnus, with whom Lysis had been associated.<sup>73</sup> Certainly Epaminondas was no longer Lysis' student when Philip was a “guest” in Thebes; the philosopher was dead and Epaminondas had already won the battle of Leuctra by that point. Even so, Diodorus Siculus indicates that:

“Philip, who was reared along with him, acquired a wide acquaintance with the Pythagorean philosophy. Inasmuch as both students showed natural ability and diligence they proved to be superior in deeds of valour. Of the two, Epaminondas underwent the most rigorous tests and battles, and invested his fatherland almost miraculously with the leadership of Hellas, while Philip, availing himself of the same initial training, achieved no less fame than Epaminondas.”<sup>74</sup>

Lysis of Taras was not the only Pythagorean in Thebes and Diogenes Laërtius mentions others from Croton, already on hand, with whom Lysis would have been acquainted.<sup>75</sup> A Pythagorean presence at Thebes is plainly attested, especially associated with the household of Epaminondas' father, and they would definitely have still been present when Philip was there. If Philip truly did have some education in Pythagorean philosophy, albeit not at the hands of Lysis nor whilst Epaminondas was a student and, moreover if he showed some actual interest in it, then it is possible that word might have reached the Academy. Plato, of course, had connections with Pythagoreans from Taras, not the least of which being his friend Archytas (428–347 BC) who had facilitated his escape from Syracuse, as detailed in the *7<sup>th</sup> Letter*. One of the Pythagorean philosophers mentioned in Plutarch as part of the contingent

70 See S.O. MURRAY, *Homosexualities*, Chicago 2000, 42.

71 D.Chr. 49.5; this account is reiterated in Paus. IX 13 and also in Ael. *VH* 3.17. See too D.L. VIII 39; Nep. *Ep.* 2; Iamb. *VP* 35.

72 ANSON, *Alexander* (n. 2), 49 gives 364 BC as the probable date for Philip's homecoming based on his reading of Just. VII 5.3.

73 Plu. *Pel.* XXVI 5; see too Plu. *Pel.* XV 94.2 and Plu. *Pel.* XVI 34.1–2; and see Nep. *Ep.* 1.1 and 2.2.

74 D.L. XVI 2.

75 Plu. *mor.* XIII 506.



in Thebes, Simmias, appears as a character in Plato's *Crito* (and in several other dialogues), along with another Pythagorean names Cebes, offering to financially support Socrates if he would be willing to escape to Megara or Thebes.<sup>76</sup> In fact, these two city-states were "strongholds politically and philosophically of the Pythagorean brotherhood" who had fled there after being run out of Italy.<sup>77</sup> Any Pythagoreans present would have likely taken note of a princeling from Macedon who showed interest in, and aptitude for, their teachings. Granted, in the absence of any definitive textual evidence specifically stating that the Pythagoreans in Thebes recommended Philip, the links here are hypothetical possibilities at best. Even so, the Pythagorean connection remains an interesting opportunity for Philip's "introduction" to Plato.

While it is difficult to pin down a precise connection between the Macedonian prince and the Athenian philosopher prior to Euphraeus, there does seem to have been a clear enough interest on Plato's part in the affairs of Macedon. But here too there is controversy. As we have seen, the 5<sup>th</sup> Letter purports to send Euphraeus of Oreus to Perdicas III. The author states that he recommends Euphraeus to the newly crowned monarch "for the man is useful for many things, the most important being that in which you yourself are deficient owing to your youth, and also because it is a matter about which there are not many counsellors available for the young".<sup>78</sup> The letter goes on to reference a number of points found in Plato's teachings, specifically from the 7<sup>th</sup> Letter, the *Republic* and the *Laws*.<sup>79</sup> There can be no doubt that the 5<sup>th</sup> Letter is Platonic; but, did Plato himself write it? Bury observes that the discussion of the "voices" of various regimes is borrowed directly from the *Republic* and that the explanation of when it is beneficial to give counsel seems derived from the 7<sup>th</sup> Letter. He argues that it seems as if the author had these works before him and was consciously trying to make the letter seem authentic rather than Plato, as the genuine author, merely being consistent with his own ideas.<sup>80</sup> Post also considered it spurious for similar reasons.<sup>81</sup> Hamilton and Cairns, while not defending its authenticity themselves, noted that others have defended it (without naming them) and offer perhaps a more even-handed view.<sup>82</sup> The debate over this is ongoing. Willamowitz believed that the letter was not a genuine work of Plato's but was written by Speusippus or one of his students.<sup>83</sup> Momigliano disputed this and argued that the letter's validity was unobjectionable on grounds of style.<sup>84</sup> However, Neumann and Kerchensteiner rejected it on internal grounds.<sup>85</sup> Griffith, following Hackforth, also argued it was spurious for

76 Pl. *Cri.* 45b; and see too *Phdr.* 242b; *Ep.* 8.363a; *Phd.* 86a, 92a7–95a6.

77 VATAI, *Intellectuals* (n. 12), 70–71.

78 Pl. *Ep.* 5.321c.

79 Pl. *Lg.* VII 321d3, on forms of government, references *R.* 493a–c; 322b, discussing giving council to statesmen, references *Lg.* VII.325a–c; and, for a theory of "counsel," *Lg.* VII 330c.

80 R.G. BURY (ed.), *Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*, Cambridge, MA 1942, *Epistle V*, 449.

81 L.A. POST (ed.), *Thirteen Epistles of Plato*, Oxford 1925.

82 E. HAMILTON and H. CAIRNS (eds.), *The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including Letters*, Princeton 1989, 1516.

83 U. VON WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Platon, II: Beilagen Und Textkritik*, Berlin 1920, 280; and see U. VON WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Platon: Sein Leben und Seine Werke*, Berlin 1929, 576, n. 1

84 A. MOMIGLIANO, *Filippo il Macedone: Saggio sulla storia greca del IV secolo a. C.*, Florence 1934, 36, n. 1

85 W. NEUMANN and J. KERCHENSTEINER, *Platon: Briefe*, Munich 1967, 180.

similar reasons.<sup>86</sup> A.E. Taylor, in turn, dismissed Hackforth's objections as "trivial" and argued, in agreement with Momigliano, that its language and content seemed consistent with the other, accepted works of Plato. Harward and Natoli reached the same conclusion.<sup>87</sup>

While I maintain that the 5<sup>th</sup> *Letter* was probably genuine, the apparently direct references to the *Laws* within it could potentially be problematic. Perdiccas III ascended the throne in 368. The *Laws* was probably composed during the last twenty years of Plato's life (his death is given as ca. 348/7 BC) and, as such, it is generally regarded as his final philosophical treatise.<sup>88</sup> It is thought to have been written in the 350s and early 340s; although, as Saunders indicates, "some passages may conceivably be earlier".<sup>89</sup> The apparent references to the *Laws* in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Letter* could be anachronistic, given the dates, but we do not know when precisely Plato was composing that treatise and, as Saunders suggests, he may well have already been drafting parts of it in the 360s. Bury, Post and others may also have been basing their judgement of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Letter* in no small part on the now outmoded assumption that the *Laws* was spurious. This view has been dismissed for sound textual and epistemological reasons and, as such, can no longer be employed to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the 5<sup>th</sup> *Letter*.<sup>90</sup> The authenticity of this epistle has certainly been questioned and fervently contested; but, whether Plato or one of his contemporaries or successors wrote it, "the presence of Euphraeus at the court of Perdiccas III is not in dispute".<sup>91</sup>

Perdiccas III was king of Macedon from 368 to 359 BC, succeeding his brother Alexander II.<sup>92</sup> He was the son of Amyntas III and Eurydice, and he was underage when Alexander II was killed by Ptolemy of Alorus, who then either ruled as regent (*epitropos*, "guardian") according to Plutarch and Aeschines or, according to Diodorus Siculus and Eusebius, as monarch with Perdiccas as the first-tier heir.<sup>93</sup> Anson argues that Ptolemy of Alorus was a true regent, unlike Philip II with Amyntas Perdicca, and that Perdiccas III was technically king from 368.<sup>94</sup> Anson makes this argument using a range of points but, perhaps most conspicuously, Ptolemy's name is frequently rendered in the demotic form ("of Alorus") in the surviving texts whereas the tradition with Macedonian monarchs was to simply use their given name. In 365 BC, Perdiccas slew Ptolemy and assumed the sole government. He also served as one of the *θεωποδοκοί* (sacred envoy-receivers) in the Epidaurian Panhellenic games about that same time which no doubt boosted his popularity.<sup>95</sup> Of the reign of Perdiccas III, we have relatively little information. He engaged in hostilities with Athens

86 N.G.L. HAMMOND and G.T. GRIFFITH, *A History of Macedonia*, II: 550–336 BC, Oxford 1979, 207, n.2; R. HACKFORTH, *The Authorship of the Platonic Epistles*, Manchester 1913.

87 J. HARWARD, *The Platonic Epistles*, Cambridge 1932, 183–185; NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 32.

88 The *Minos* is probably later than the *Laws*. So is the *Epinomis* but these two dialogues, although clearly inspired by Platonic thought, are generally considered to be works of other hands.

89 T.J. SAUNDERS, *Plato: The Laws*, Harmondsworth 1970, 26.

90 See K.R. MOORE, *Sex and the Second Best City: Sex and Society in the Laws of Plato*, London 2005, chapter 2, *et passim*.

91 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 32 n. 66.

92 D. NAILS, *The People of Plato: A Prosopography of People and Other Socratics*, Indianapolis 2002, 223, s.v. Perdiccas III.

93 Aeschin. 2.29 and Plu. *Pel.* 27.3 make Ptolemy of Alorus as regent; D.S. XV 71.1, 77.5 and Eus. *Chron.* 228 make him a king in his own right.

94 E. ANSON, "Philip II, Amyntas Perdicca, and Macedonian Royal Succession", *Historia* 58 (2009), 276–286.

95 Theoc. 22.

over Amphipolis and tried to reconquer upper Macedonia from the Illyrian Bardylis, but the expedition ended in disaster and the king was killed in battle.<sup>96</sup>

Perdiccas III was also distinguished for his patronage of scholars and appears to have had a sincere interest in philosophy. Amongst the notables whose company he cultivated, as we have seen, was Euphraeus of Oreus who rose to so high a position of favour as to exert considerable influence over the young king. He seems to have excluded from his society all but his own hand-picked philosophers. Carystius' description of Euphraeus' tenure with Perdiccas is a somewhat comical portrait but it probably also entails some elements of truth. He writes:

“Euphraeus for example, when staying at the court of King Perdiccas in Macedonia, lorded it as regally as the king himself, though he was of low origin and given to slanderous speech; he was so pedantic in his selection of the king's associates that nobody could share in the common mess if he did not know how to practise geometry or philosophy.”<sup>97</sup>

Carystius attributes Euphraeus' downfall, following the ascension of Philip II, to the enmity that his domineering behaviour had aroused. Demosthenes favourably notes in his 3<sup>rd</sup> *Philippic* that Euphraeus once resided in Athens and portrays him as being active in politics, albeit in opposition to Philip II, toward the end of his life.<sup>98</sup> After Euphraeus returned to his hometown following the king's coronation, Philip II is reputed to have bribed agents in Oreus to bring the *polis* under Macedonian control. This would be highly consistent with his expansionistic policies. Euphraeus took active measures to oppose these efforts and was thrown into prison where he probably committed suicide, after Philip was fully in charge and when his opponents in Oreus were being hunted down and executed, and thereby earned Demosthenes' praise.<sup>99</sup> If, while in the service of Perdiccas III, Euphraeus was as officious as the sources suggest, then it is perfectly plausible to imagine him urging the alleged apportionment of territory to Philip if the latter had in fact aroused Plato's interests, perhaps by way of the Pythagoreans. It is, of course, possible that he was packed off to govern his distant province simply in order to get him out of Euphraeus' way.

There was precedent for Macedonian princes and heirs-apparent to be apportioned their own subordinate principalities. Two of Alexander I's sons, Philip and Alcetas were reportedly given their own areas to govern.<sup>100</sup> However, Euphraeus' encouragement to let Philip have his own region appears to have transpired in order to prevent that political situation which Plato most despised: civil war. Philip and Perdiccas quarrelled and Euphraeus' decision may have been a pre-emptive act designed to remedy a political crisis.<sup>101</sup> “It was only by giving the ambitious Philip a share of real power,” writes Natoli, “that Euphraeus felt he could avert a potentially disastrous challenge to Perdiccas and the ruin of the experiment he

96 See C. ORRIEUX and P. SCHMITT-PANTEL, *A History of Ancient Greece*, Malden, MA/Oxford 1999, 256.

97 Ath. XI 119–120.

98 D. 9. IX 59–65; see Demosthenes with an English translation by J. H. Vince, M.A. Cambridge, MA & London 1930, 59–62.

99 NAILS, *People* (n. 92), 148, s.v. Euphraeus.

100 On Philip, see Th. II 100.3; on Alcetas, Pl. *Grg.* 417b, though this example is more open to debate.

101 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 12 and see too the 31<sup>st</sup> *Socratic Letter*.

had begun in the practical application of philosophical principles”.<sup>102</sup> As with Plato’s failed attempts at influencing Syracuse, there was resentment building at the Macedonian court amongst the nobles over the power being wielded by the Academy’s representative. A campaign of slander and innuendo got underway in Macedon, no doubt urged by disgruntled nobles, with the likes of Theopompus and Isocrates maligning the Academy, not that they needed much encouragement.<sup>103</sup> Philip perhaps had mixed feelings over his appointment to govern distant areas of the kingdom whilst concurrently suffering a diminished influence at court in favour of a meddling philosopher whose agenda might have been regarded by a military mind with no small degree of scepticism. He could have regarded his “promotion” as being, in actuality, a hindrance to his progress. And he might well have resented it.

Yet there is some indication of surprise in the sources that Philip would be at odds with Plato. According to Speusippus, Plato had sought to promote good relations between Philip and his brother, had “always been most concerned should anything uncivilised or unbrotherly occur at court”, and was also in no small part responsible for Philip becoming king.<sup>104</sup> Of course, in the *Deipnosophistae* we are also told that Speusippus wrote to Philip precisely because he had heard that the latter was slandering Plato.<sup>105</sup> Athenaeus then details the apportionment of territory which led to Philip’s premiership as an explanation for why that monarch should be grateful to the philosopher. Athenaeus’ character Pontianus expresses disbelief in the whole story (“...whether all this is true or not, God knows!”). But if this disbelief is aimed at the fact that Philip could have slandered Plato or that Plato could have been friendly with anyone, given the rather misanthropic depictions of him later on in book 11 of the *Deipnosophistae*, is less clear. Certainly, most of the negative representations of Plato in Athenaeus come directly from his enemies. It is fair to say that Philip II’s relationship with Plato was complex and it became so embroiled in the conflicts between philosophical schools, and their subsequent spin, that it is difficult to form a clear impression of what actually happened.<sup>106</sup>

While I have been largely concerned with the influence that Plato exerted over Macedon, there is evidence of reciprocity here as well that bears some mention. The royal tombs at Agai (Vergina), dated approximately around the reign of Philip II, “constructed of a barrel-vaulted roof of cut stone”, are strikingly similar to the proposed tombs of priests and heroes in Plato’s *Laws*.<sup>107</sup> There, the Athenian Stranger describes them as follows:

“Their tomb shall be constructed underground, in the form of an oblong vault of spongy stone, as long-lasting as possible, and fitted with couches of stone set side by side; when they have laid him who is gone to his rest in this, they shall make a mound in a circle round it and plant thereon a grove of trees, save only at one extremity, so

102 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 36.

103 On the events in Sicily, see Pl. *Ep.* 7.329d–330b, 338e, 344e–345a; Plu. *Dio* 14.1–2; Nep. *Di.* 3.

104 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 12–13.

105 Ath. XI 115 = F1 *FHG* 4.356.

106 L. BERTELLI, “La lettera di Speusippo a Filippo: il problema dell’ ‘autenticità’”, *Atti della Accademia di Scienze e Lettere di Torino, Classe di Lettere* 111 (1977), 75–111, 100, has posited that Carystius and Diogenes Laërtius erroneously transferred Theopompus’ negative views of Plato and the Academy to Philip because they confused the opinions expressed by Theopompus, in a letter that he wrote to Philip, with those held by the latter.

107 Fredricksmeier, “Once More” (n. 16), 99–100.

that at that point the tomb may for all time admit of enlargement, in case there be need of additional mounds for the buried”.<sup>108</sup>

Lehmann maintains that Plato was describing a corbel-vaulted tomb whose construction was known and employed in the Greek world from the Bronze Age to the Hellenistic. She adduces as closest parallel a fourth century underground rectangular stone corbel-vaulted tomb at Kul Oba near Kerch (Panticapaeum-Kerch).<sup>109</sup> However, Kul Oba lay on the distant Cimmerian Bosphorus, and there is no evidence that Plato had any personal connections with that far-flung locality. Moreover, the discovery of the “Eurydice tomb” at Aigai, securely dated to *ca.* 340 BC, “vindicates Plato’s description” and demonstrates that the Macedonian tomb, albeit developed through a fusion of Greek traditions (from the Mycenaean *tholos* onwards) and Eastern influences (relations with Persia beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC), was not solely the result of Alexander’s campaigns.<sup>110</sup> As it happens, the Athenian philosopher may have played an even bigger role in this development beyond just describing it in his *Laws*.

We know, of course, that Plato did have personal connections with the court at Macedon, even if only through Euphraeus and Aristotle.<sup>111</sup> The latter no doubt was and continued to be well-informed of developments there on account of his association with the royal family. He would almost certainly have been aware of the introduction of vaulted tombs. Such a tomb provided a “closer parallel, and a more likely inspiration, for Plato’s conception of his Priestly Tomb” in the *Laws* than the corbelled ones on the Cimmerian Bosphorus.<sup>112</sup> Hammond concludes that Plato “derived the idea presumably not from the Greek city-state, where it was unknown, but from Macedon, where his disciple, Euphraeus, lived for a time in the 360s at the court of Perdiccas III”.<sup>113</sup> Andronikos is more specific:

“[Plato’s] text, written before 348 B.C. (the year of Plato’s death), could not be clearer. Not only was Plato familiar with the form of the vaulted Macedonian tomb, but also had precise knowledge of certain characteristic details: (a) Construction with ‘spongy stones’ which are none other than the porous stones which constitute the building material of all Macedonian tombs. (b) The existence of the couch within the tomb is a distinctive Macedonian custom. (c) The building of a *tumulus* planted with trees, except at the place where there is the *dromos* of the entrance which was to facilitate later burials which, we must accept, were made in Macedonian tombs”.<sup>114</sup>

108 Pl. *Lg.* 947d–e.

109 P.W. LEHMANN, “The So-Called Tomb of Philip II: an Addendum”, *AJA* 86 (1982), 437–442.

110 C. SAATSOGLOU-PALIADELI, “The Arts of Vergina-Aegae, the Cradle of the Macedonian Kingdom” in: R. Lane Fox (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to Ancient Macedon: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Macedon, 540 BC–300 AD*, Leiden 2011, 271–296, 288–289.

111 They also include Python of Aenus, Delius, Phocion and Leon of Byzantium; see NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 39–42.

112 FREDRICKSMEYER, “Once More” (n. 16), 101–102.

113 N.G.L. HAMMOND, “The Evidence for the Identity of the Royal Tombs at Vergina”, in: W.L. Adams and E.N. Borza (eds.), *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage*, Washington, D.C. 1982, 117–118, 115.

114 M. ANDRONIKOS, “The Royal Tomb at Vergina and the Problem of the Dead”, *Analekta ex Athenon (Athens Annals of Archaeology)* 13 (1980), 168–78, 175.

The similarity between actual Macedonian tombs and Plato's description in the *Laws* appears more than coincidental. More recent archaeological discoveries have pointed to a potentially even greater Platonic connection with Macedonian monumental architecture through the realm of mathematics and geometry. It has been discovered that the Pythagorean golden triangle, with a ratio of 3:4:5, is incorporated into the plan of Philip II's palace at Aigai. This ratio played a crucial role in its architect's calculations. From the centre of the peristyle, the sequence of Platonic numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 8 and 27<sup>115</sup> correspond to the sequence of inscribed and circumscribed canonical shapes which define the plan of the building. The number  $\phi$ , the *golden ratio* ( $\frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \approx 1.618033988749894848204586834\dots$ ), known as the ratio of beauty or the "divine proportion", is the common denominator that runs throughout the entire structure. The ratio of 1.6 delineates the relations between the height of the storeys and the arrangement of spaces as well as all other elements including the heights of different columns, triglyphs, metopes and the undercuts of the threshold. It is remarkable, and clearly not accidental, that even "the smallest detail obeys the harmony from the world of Pythagoras and conforms to the golden rule that marks the presence of God in the Platonic universe".<sup>116</sup> These, along with the other architectural matters discussed above, strongly suggest that influence ran both ways.<sup>117</sup> Plato's tomb of priests and heroes in the *Laws* could even be read as a kind of literary monument to Macedon, if not to Philip himself, as much as the Macedonians' insistence on Platonic geometry in their architecture could also be regarded as a credit to the Athenian philosopher. However, unequivocal proof remains elusive and the above-mentioned references to Philip II's interest in Pythagoreanism may point more to the origins of these mathematical influences rather than to Plato alone; although, it is tempting to perceive a connection here.

That Philip II might have also expressed some positive sentiment towards Plato, despite their apparent differences, is attested in another kind of monument. According to a fragment of Theopompus quoted in Diogenes Laërtius, when Plato died in the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Philip II's reign, we are told that "the king paid honours to him".<sup>118</sup> Aelian's *Varia Historia* also indicates "honours" given by Philip to Plato on his death.<sup>119</sup> The precise nature of these reported "honours" is unclear. It could have been an actual monument or statue which does not survive (or is yet to be identified) or it could have been some kind of public proclamation. Apart from perhaps expressing some approval for his teachings, the gesture may have been designed, as Worthington suggests, "to curry favor with the Athenians as he was then seeking a diplomatic resolution to their war with him".<sup>120</sup> Some have even interpreted Theopompus' account to mean that Philip II was himself present at Plato's funeral.<sup>121</sup> This seems unlikely but perhaps should not be altogether dismissed.

115 See Pl. *Ti.* 35b4–c2.

116 A. KOTTARIDI, "The Palace at Aigae", in: FOX (ed.), *Brill's* (n. 110), 297–334, 331–332.

117 Robin Lane Fox, with whom I discussed this at a conference in Wrocław in 2014, is skeptical about Plato's influence on Philip II's kingship, but he admits that the Pythagorean connection is highly suggestive and I am grateful to him for pointing out some of the most recent scholarship on the subject.

118 D.L. III 40; see Fav. *Mem.* (F 13 Mensching)—quoting Theopompus (*FGrH* 115 F294).

119 Ael. *VH* 4.19.

120 WORTHINGTON, *By the Spear* (n. 11), 69.

121 See A. NTINTI, "The Death(s) of Plato", in: A. Merz and T. Tieleman (eds.), *The letter of Mara bar Sarapion in context: proceedings of the symposium held at Utrecht University, 10–12 December 2009*, Leiden/Boston 2012, 183–192, 185 ff.



Yet it is somewhat troubling that this report of Philip honouring Plato should come from such a source as Theopompus. And the passage itself is problematic. The Loeb edition of Diogenes Laërtius' *Lives* points out the "awkwardness" of the last clause of the sentence ("...according to Theopompus honours were paid to him by Philip").<sup>122</sup> It largely hinges in the meaning of ἐπιτιμάω (in the aorist passive infinitive ἐπιτιμηθῆναι, as a deponent) which can mean both "to honour" and "to censure" depending on context.<sup>123</sup> The term is variously used with either meaning in Herodotus and Demosthenes. Natoli has argued, citing a range of philological sources, that "the fact that Diogenes cited Theopompus as his authority makes it likely that the reference is to the censure of Plato" and not to offer any kind of praise.<sup>124</sup> However, it is worth noting that ἐπιτιμάω usually (but not universally) takes the dative when it means "to censure" and the accusative when it means "to honour"; in the extract from Diogenes Laërtius, it has an accusative object (αὐτὸν).<sup>125</sup> The meaning of this passage remains contested.

We should also take into account the volatile and sometimes ambiguous nature of its author. Theopompus had made some negative comments about the court of Philip II of Macedon, as well as praising the king at other times. He scandalously reported that men would mount each other in sexual congress, "though they had beards", for the king's amusement.<sup>126</sup> It is noteworthy that Theopompus likely held some pro-Spartan inclinations (for which his father had been earlier exiled) and possibly sought to slander Philip and Macedon on that account.<sup>127</sup> Theopompus is also known for his fondness for sensational and incredible stories. And he might have made the statement about honours paid to Plato by Philip as a means of casting aspersions against both philosopher and king as objects of equal contempt—especially since he too had been passed over as a potential tutor for Alexander. This does not necessarily verify the claim of honours paid by Philip to Plato but could be seen to bolster it. Aelian conspicuously did *not* cite Theopompus as his source for Plato's honours, although he is known to have used him extensively elsewhere.<sup>128</sup>

There is another possibility. Aristotle is said to have established an altar of *Philía* in honour of Plato after his death and one could speculate that he paid for it with money obtained from Philip—whether as part of his *honorarium* or gifted for that specific purpose.<sup>129</sup> If Plato helped Philip attain his throne in an indirect and not unproblematic manner, possibly then Philip chose to honour Plato similarly, by proxy, through Aristotle. This altar of *Philía* may be the very "honours" to which our sources are referring, depending on when and if it was

122 D.L. III 40, citing Hdt. VI 39 as a precedent: ὑφ' οὗ καὶ ἐπιτιμηθῆναι φησιν αὐτὸν Θεόπομπος; see K.G. BOEHNECKE, *Demosthenes, Lycurgos, Hypereides und ihr Zeitalter*, I, Berlin 1864, 451 and VON WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Platon* (n. 83), 571 and see too R.D. HICKS (ed.), *Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. Cambridge, MA 1972, 312, n. c;

123 H.G. LIDDELL, R. SCOTT and H.S. JONES, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford 1994, s.v. ἐπιτιμάω. (*LSJ*)

124 NATOLI, *Letter* (n. 7), 38, n. 87.

125 *LSJ* s.v. ἐπιτιμάω and see too H.W. SMYTH, *Greek Grammar*, Harvard, MA 1984, 1471.

126 Theopompus, *FGrH* 115 F225a; see T.K. HUBBARD (ed.), *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents*, Berkeley, CA 2003, 74.

127 R.L. FOX, *Alexander the Great*, New York 2004, 49, 57 *et passim*.

128 See H.D. WESTLAKE, *Essays on the Greek Historians and Greek History*, Manchester/New York 1969, 239 ff.

129 See A.S. REGINOS, *Platonica: The Anecdotes Concerning the Life and Writings of Plato*, Leiden 1976, 130, 198 and n. 40.

established by Aristotle. However, there is considerable uncertainty over whether this was an actual altar or a metaphorical one, existing only in poetry. The account comes from Olympiodorus (*Carmina*, fr. 2), the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century AD Neo-Platonist. He tells us that Aristotle dedicated some poetic lines to one Eudemus (otherwise unknown) at the altar of Friendship and that in so doing he was praising Plato.<sup>130</sup> Jaeger's interpretation is that the dedication "To Friendship" was aimed at the Platonic ideal of *philia*, with Plato as the implied object of devotion.<sup>131</sup> Wilamowitz goes further, arguing that the altar was dedicated to Plato himself.<sup>132</sup> Düring asserts that Aristotle set up the altar and then wrote the ode about it, pretending due to poetic license that it had already been established by someone else.<sup>133</sup> We even have one reconstruction of the verses quoted in Olympiodorus which goes "on the grounds of august friendship, I dedicate this altar to Plato", although that translation is highly questionable.<sup>134</sup> But, in Ford's words, "this altar is, for us, an object made purely of discourse".<sup>135</sup> The evidence is too ephemeral for definitive conclusions and we are left, again, with indeterminacy alongside some tantalising prospects.

It is impossible to prove that Plato had directed Euphraeus to obtain for Prince Philip his allotment of territory. But it is fair to say that Philip would probably not have gotten it, particularly if he and his brother were quarrelling, had Euphraeus not been sent to Macedon by Plato. This likely prevented a civil war and put Philip into a position that he could then exploit when circumstances became ripe; although, as stated, neither Plato, Euphraeus nor Philip could have known that things would turn out as they did. Perhaps Philip II would have achieved supremacy without the involvement of meddling philosophers. He was a resourceful man by all accounts and had received a superb military education at Theban expense. He might have killed or exiled Perdiccas and seized the throne early, advancing his plans for conquest by several years. Alternatively, without Euphraeus' aid, Philip might not have been in a position to assume command on his brother's death and Macedon could have been torn by civil strife as various nobles vied for supremacy, condemning their kingdom to the status of a political backwater. Alexander the Great might not have been born, no one might have planned the invasion of Persia and history as we know it would have been dramatically different. Or, perhaps Alexander would have still managed to conquer the Persian Empire and beyond even if his father had not succeeded in consolidating his kingdom, absorbing much of the rest of Greece by the time of his death; although, that outcome seems less likely.

These and many other alternative histories can be imagined. But, as pure speculation, they amount to so much dust in the wind. The actual events are a matter of record, albeit contested and unclear at key points. I have sought here to demonstrate that Plato had the motive, means and opportunity to influence Philip's career and to examine the historiography that make such

130 See T. GOULD, *The Ancient Quarrel Between Poetry and Philosophy*, Princeton 1990, 15.

131 JAEGER, *Aristoteles* (n. 43), 108; the same interpretation can be found in W.W. JAEGER, "Aristotle's Verses in Praise of Plato", *CQ* 21 (1927), 13–17.

132 U. VON WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Aristoteles und Athen*, II, Berlin 1893, 413–416.

133 I. DÜRING, "Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition", *Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis* 63 (1957), 317; see too I. DÜRING, *Aristoteles: Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens*, Heidelberg 1966, 15–16.

134 A.L. FORD, *Aristotle as Poet: the Song for Hermias and its Contexts*, New York/Oxford 2011, 162, n. 10.

135 FORD, *Aristotle* (n. 134), 162.



assertions. Some doubt will always hang over this, but if Plato's actions did lead to Philip being given command over a region of Macedonia in which he developed his war machine, with which he rolled back the Illyrian invaders in or around 359 B.C., following the death of his brother against them in battle, then he may certainly be said to have owed no small part of the attainment of his kingdom to the political manoeuvrings of that famous Athenian philosopher. In which case it may be fairly said that some significant credit—or perhaps blame—for the eventual successes of Alexander and his subsequent impact on global history derives in no small part from him to whom, as some have said, all of Western philosophy consists merely of footnotes. And to that somewhat dubious legacy, then, another brief annotation is here added.

# Patron the Phocian: a written “mercenary source”\*

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## Abstract

The narrative of events surrounding the flight of Darius from Ecbatana to Bactria in Curtius (V 8–13) largely consists of scenes in which Patron the Phocian, commander of the Greek mercenaries plays a key role. Tarn tentatively suggested that Patron was the written source used by Curtius in his account. This suggestion would be mere speculation, was it not for the fact that one Patron is also attested as a Greek military writer in Johannes Lydus *De Magistratibus* (I 47). I suggest that Patron the Greek military writer, and Patron the Greek military commander, are one and the same person. In addition to his work on the military art, Patron, who lived through the dramatic events surrounding the downfall of Persian Empire and the death of Darius III, may well have written an account of his times. He is one, but not necessarily the only, “mercenary source” suggested by Tarn.

The suggestion that one of the Greek mercenaries serving with Darius III might have supplied some of the information incorporated into the Alexander Histories, and specifically into the text of Diodoros, was first proposed by Kaerst, following a suggestion by Ranke.<sup>1</sup> “This conjecture was developed into an elaborate theory by Sir William Tarn”, who additionally suggested that Curtius was heavily reliant on what he termed “the mercenaries’ source”.<sup>2</sup> Tarn’s theory at first found some favour, but was seriously criticized first by Pearson,<sup>3</sup> and then in an influential article by Brunt, which sought to demonstrate “that the Alexander historians did derive information from those who fought on the Persian site, possibly indeed from mercenaries, as Kaerst maintained, but not exclusively from them”.<sup>4</sup> In particular Brunt suggests that much information was gleaned by the historical writers who were present on Alexander’s staff from those Persians who had previously been with Darius, but had gone

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1 J. KAERST, *Geschichte des Hellenismus* I, Berlin 1927, 544 “Und dann dürfen wir, einer Vermutung von Rankes folgend, noch einen besonderen Grund für diese Griechenfreundlichkeit daraus herleiten, daß die Quelle Diodors Informationen aus dem Lager der hellenischen Söldner, die für Dareios gekämpft hätten, erhalten haben wird”.

2 W.W. TARN, *Alexander the Great*, II: *Sources and studies*, Cambridge 1948, 71–75, 105–6, e.g. 72 “an unknown Greek”, 74 “mercenaries’ source”, 105 “the excellent mercenaries’ source”.

3 L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York 1960, 78–82.

4 Quotations from P.A. BRUNT, “Persian Accounts of Alexander’s Campaigns”, *CQ* 12 (1962), 141–155 (quotations in my text from 141).

over to the Macedonian camp “who were much better acquainted with the *arcana imperii*” than any Greek mercenary could be.<sup>5</sup>

This appears to be the current opinion, which I do not dispute. The aim of this paper is to suggest that one of the written sources, used by Curtius in particular, was, indeed, one of the Greek mercenaries in Persian service, namely Patron the Phocian. The narrative of the events surrounding the flight of Darius from Ecbatana to Bactria and his pursuit by Alexander in Quintus Curtius Book V chapters 8 to 13 largely consists of scenes in which Patron the Phocian plays a key role, and it will be suggested in the pages below, that Patron was the author of a set of written memoirs or histories, which served as the principal source for the Curtius in his account of the last days of Darius.

This suggestion would be mere speculation, was it not for the fact (which has to my knowledge, never been noted before) that one Patron is also attested as a Greek military writer. It will be suggested that Patron the Greek military writer, and Patron the Phocian the Greek military commander, are one and the same person. If this is the case, in addition to his work on the military art, Patron, who lived through the dramatic events surrounding the downfall of Persian Empire and the death of Darius III, may well have written a volume of histories or memoirs.

### Patron the Phocian

“Patron the Phocian” is mentioned for the first time in the Alexander narratives by Arrian (*An.* III 16.1) who tells us that when Darius fled from the battlefield of Gaugamela, he was accompanied by the Bactrian cavalry, who had been posted with him in the battle, and the “Royal Kinsmen”,<sup>6</sup> and a few of the so-called *mēlophoroi*. He was joined in his flight by some 2,000 of the foreign mercenaries, led by Patron the Phokian,<sup>7</sup> and Glaukos the Aitolian.<sup>8</sup>

Glaukos the Aitolian does not appear subsequently in any of the Alexander Historians, and subsequently Patron the Phocian was in sole command of the Greek mercenaries, the number of whom swelled to 4,000 (*Curt.* V 8.3; V 12.4) after Gaugamela.<sup>9</sup> The description in Curtius of the flight of Darius from Ecbatana to Bactria starting at Book V Chapter 8 as far as 12, when Darius was imprisoned and the Persians split into two camps, has all the hallmarks of an eyewitness account, and I believe that Patron the Phocian was the source. From Chapter 13 onwards there is a switch in viewpoint, and the action is taking place in Alexander’s camp, not that of Darius, which indicates a change of source. In my opinion, the point at which the account of Curtius starts to be based on Patron may well be at V 8.3, where Curtius mentions the 4,000 Greek mercenaries “whose long fidelity to the king remained invincible to the end”. At V 8.6 to V 9.14 Curtius reports a council of war convened by Darius, and reports in direct speech the opening words of Darius, and then following the

5 BRUNT, “Persian” (n. 4), 144–5.

6 This was a Persian regiment of household cavalry.

7 Whose name appears as Πάρον in the manuscripts of Arrian, corrected to Πά<τ>ρων (A. SCHAEFER, *Demosthenes und Seine Zeit*, III, Leipzig 1887, 173).

8 J. KIRCHNER, “Glaukos (29)”, in: *RE* VII, Stuttgart 1910, 1417; H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II: *Prosopographie*, Munich 1926, no. 230; J.D. GRAINGER, *Aitolian Prosopographical Studies*, Leiden 2000, 177 Glaukos (1).

9 Although cf. BRUNT, “Persian” (n. 4), 151 n. 4 on this number.

speeches of Artabazus and Narbarzanes. It is at this point that the traitorous intentions of Narbarzanes and Bessus are first revealed. Following the council of war, Patron resolved to talk to the King himself.<sup>10</sup>

[V 11.1] “But Patron, the leader of the Greeks, ordered his men to put on their arms, which before were carried with the baggage, and to be ready and on the alert for every order of his. [2] He himself was following the king’s chariot, eager for a chance to speak to him; for he had a premonition of the evil design of Bessus. But Bessus, in fear of that very thing, did not move from the chariot, acting as a guard rather than as a companion. [3] Therefore Patron, after waiting for a long time and often being restrained from speaking, kept his eyes fixed upon the king, wavering between loyalty and fear. [4] When at last the king turned towards him, he ordered Bubaces, a eunuch who was following the chariot among those nearest Darius, to ask the Greek whether he wished to say anything to him. Patron replied that he did in fact wish to talk with him, but without witnesses, and when bidden to come nearer without an interpreter [5] —for Darius was not unacquainted with the Greek language—he said: ‘My king, out of 50,000 Greeks we are the few that are left, companions of all your fortune, and in your present state unchanged from what we were in your prosperity, ready to seek, in place of our native land and our homes, whatever lands you shall select. [6] Your prosperity and adversity have linked us with you. By this invincible loyalty I beg and conjure you, pitch your tent in our camp; suffer us to be your body-guards. We have abandoned Greece, no Bactra belongs to us, all our hope is in you; would that it were true also of the rest! It is needless to say more. I, a foreigner and of an alien race, should not demand the guard of your person, if I believed that another could guarantee it.’ [7] Although Bessus was unacquainted with the Greek language, yet, pricked by conscience, he believed that Patron had surely revealed his plot; and since the words of the Greek were concealed from interpreters, any doubt was removed. [8] Darius, however, being so far as could be inferred from his expression not at all alarmed, began to question Patron as to the reason for the advice which he brought. The Greek, thinking that there was no room for further delay, said: ‘Bessus and Nabarzanes are plotting against you, your fortune and your life are in extreme danger, this day will be the last for the traitors or for you’. [9] And in fact Patron had gained the illustrious glory of saving the king. [10] Those may scoff at my belief who haply are convinced that human affairs roll on and take place by mere chance, or that each man runs his ordered course in accordance with a combination of hidden causes determined long beforehand by an immutable law; [11] at any rate, Darius replied, that although the loyalty of the Greek soldiers was well known to him, yet he would never separate himself from his own countrymen; that it was more difficult for him to condemn than to be deceived. Whatever Fortune should offer him he preferred to endure among his own subjects rather than to become a deserter. He was perishing too late, if his own soldiers did not wish him to be saved. [12] Patron, despairing of the king’s safety,

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10 Translation following J.C. ROLFE, *Quintus Curtius with an English translation*, London 1971, 407–411.

returned to those whom he commanded, prepared to submit to every possible trial to the best of his loyalty".<sup>11</sup>

It goes without saying that the exact contents of the dialogue between Darius and Patron would be known to no other persons than themselves. Following his exchange with Patron, Darius ordered Artabazus to be summoned, and reported what Patron had revealed to him (Curt. V 12.7). Artabazus advised the King to cross over to the Greeks' camp, but he declined. So the gist of the conversation between Darius and Patron would also have been known to Artabazus.

Modern commentators are divided on how to interpret these sections of direct speech. It is perfectly possible, of course, that Curtius has composed the series of speeches himself, without reference to any source at all. In the opinion of Baynham these speeches are, essentially, philosophical digressions.<sup>12</sup> This is one of the positions adopted by Badian, citing Atkinson in his support. In the opinion of Badian "It is necessary to insist that these dialogues are fictitious, since they have at times been regarded as partly historical".<sup>13</sup>

There are those who completely deny the possibility that there was a "mercenaries' source" at all. According to Brunt "though information from the faithful mercenaries and also from loyal Persians may behind some statements in our sources, there is no justification for invoking a mercenary writer" as a source for "the romantic stories of Darius' last days".<sup>14</sup> More recently Briant expressed the opinion that the mercenaries' source "n'est rien d'autre qu'un fantôme".<sup>15</sup>

Badian is surely correct, however, in stating of the last conversations of Darius "What was actually said, within the small circle of nobles around him could never be known. The only accounts come (demonstrably) from the leader of the Greek mercenaries who had left Darius while the final plot was hatched, and had to explain why, and from the Persian nobles who joined Alexander after Darius' death and had their own, far from disinterested, stories to tell".<sup>16</sup>

Artabazus later went over to Alexander, as did the Greek mercenaries who surrendered unconditionally (Arrian *An.* III 23.6–9). Thus both of Badian's potential groups of informants were available for questioning, and the written source could be some historian at Alexander's court who questioned Artabazus as to what went on in the council of war, and indeed the whole sequence of events leading up to the death of Darius.

Wolf proposed that it was Cleitarchus who transmitted the story of Darius' final days to later Alexander Historians,<sup>17</sup> a proposition which was wholly accepted by Schachermeyr,<sup>18</sup>

11 Cf. TARN, *Alexander* (n. 2) 105 "but the loyalty of the mercenary leader Patron must be from the "mercenaries' source".

12 E. BAYNHAM, *Alexander the Great: The Unique History of Quintus Curtius*, Ann Arbor 1998, 112–113.

13 J.E. ATKINSON, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 5 to 7.2*, Amsterdam 1994, 142; E. BADIAN, "Darius III" *HSCP* 100 (2000), 241–267 at 263.

14 BRUNT, "Persian" (n. 4) 153.

15 P. BRIANT, *Darius dans l'ombre d'Alexandre*, Paris 2003, 198.

16 BRIANT, *Darius* (n. 15) 262.

17 R. WOLF, *Die Soldatenerzählungen des Kleitarch bei Quintus Curtius Rufus*, Diss., Vienna 1963, passim.

18 F. SCHACHERMEYR, *Alexander der Grosse: Das Problem seiner Persönlichkeit und seines Wirkens*, Vienna 1973, 196 n. 214.

Goukowsky,<sup>19</sup> and, initially, partially accepted by Atkinson also.<sup>20</sup> In the opinion of the present author, this proposal amounts to nothing more than unwarranted speculation, as it is, by its very nature, incapable of being proved. Furthermore, as Cleitarchus was a young man in Athens when the action was going on, this is hardly helpful in deciding who on Alexander’s staff, was responsible for writing down an account of the last days of Darius based on the accounts of eyewitnesses.

I am more inclined to the belief that the speeches in Curtius were based on an account of the final days of Darius in some written source, without denying the possibility, indeed the probability, of their embellishment at the hand of the Roman historian. Badian, to some extent contradicting himself, has stated “These and similar items are obviously Curtius’ own, decorating the basic account from Patron”,<sup>21</sup> and elsewhere “The apologia for the mercenaries may be based on the report by Patron”.<sup>22</sup> If the apologia for the mercenaries is based on a report by Patron, it is, however, *ipso facto* partly historical – it may even be completely historical.

Badian is presumably here thinking of a verbal report that Patron made to Alexander’s staff after the surrender of the Greek mercenaries, following the death of Darius, which was recorded by one of the historians accompanying the expedition. Elsewhere, Badian expresses more certainty that the source is, in fact, Patron “Our information comes mainly, as has often been conjectured, from the Greek mercenaries and the leader Patron”,<sup>23</sup> which is the position adopted, with some hesitancy, by Battistini.<sup>24</sup>

As we have seen, there are a certain number of historians who are prepared to admit the existence of the “mercenaries’ source” relating the last days of Darius, and more specifically to identify it as the report that Patron gave after his capture. It is thus far understood, however, that we are dealing with some written document drawn up by some third party (presumably a historian) working on Alexander’s staff. No modern historian has ever suggested that the author of the document was Patron himself, other than at one point Tarn himself, who, in discussing the use made by Curtius of the “mercenaries’ source” stated that it “may suggest that the mercenary leader Patron supplied a good deal of the material to the author of this document, if he indeed was not the author himself”.<sup>25</sup> So Tarn did entertain the possibility that Patron was the author of the “mercenaries’ source”. Presumably the reason he did not commit himself further on this point was because the information that one Patron was also the author of a work on military affairs was not known to him at the time. The exchange between Patron and the King had no influence on future events. It was irrelevant. Darius did not entrust his person to the protection of Patron and the Greek mercenaries. Patron had not “gained the illustrious glory of saving the king” however much he would have had wished

19 P. GOUKOWSKY, *Diodore de Sicile: Bibliothèque historique Livre XVII*, Paris 1976, xxvi–xxviii.

20 J.E. ATKINSON, “Primary Sources and the Alexandereich”, *AC* 6 (1963) 125–137 at 133–4; ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 13) 134; J.E. ATKINSON, “Q. Curtius Rufus’ *Historiae Alexandri Magni*”, *ANRW* 34 (1997) 3447–3483 at 3462.

21 Thus E. BADIAN, “Conspiracies” in: A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 50–95 at 86 n. 70.

22 BADIAN, “Darius III” (n. 13) at 263.

23 BADIAN, “Conspiracies” (n. 21) at 87.

24 O. BATTISTINI, “Sources de l’histoire d’Alexandre le Grande” in: O. Battistini and P. Chauvet (eds.), *Alexandre le Grand: Histoire et dictionnaire*, Paris 2004, 968–971 at 968.

25 TARN, *Alexander* (n. 2) 129.

to. But it would be only natural for Patron to exaggerate his role in these dramatic events, if, indeed, he was the author.

### Patron the Military Writer

An author called Patron is mentioned as a Greek writer on military matters by Joannes Lydus (Ioannes Lydos) in his *De Magistratibus* “On the Magistracies” at I 47. That Patron is mentioned as a writer on military matters solely by Joannes Lydus should not cause us undue suspicion, for Ioannes quotes extensively from sources which are otherwise lost. Joannes Lydos “a teacher of Latin in Justinian’s Constantinople, author of three works (in Greek), and disgruntled employee of the praetorian prefecture, has been largely neglected by modern scholarship. Two of his works, ‘On the Magistracies of the Roman State’ and ‘On the Months’ (a treatise on the Roman calendar that survives in extensive excerpts), have played an important role in classical scholarship, as they preserve precious information and fragments of lost ancient authors, including those from the Latin tradition. The third work, ‘On Celestial Signs’, is more technical (meteorological and astrological)”.<sup>26</sup> In this passage Lydus gives a list of the Latin and then Greek authors, in whom, Lydus claims, the word *veterani* (βετερανοί) is used. One is at a loss to know what Greek term would stand in place of the Latin *veterani*. Notwithstanding this problem, the first six names in the list of Greek authors runs as follows:<sup>27</sup>

Ἑλλήνων δὲ Αἰλιανὸς καὶ Ἀρριανὸς, Αἰνεΐας, Ὀνήσανδρος, Πάτρων

The list is evidently not in any chronological order, in contrast to the list given at the beginning of the *Taktika* of Aelian, and so, therefore, gives no clue as to when Patron could have been writing. But the only historical character of the same name of any note is Patron the Phocian. Of the list of only eight holders of the name Patron contained in Pauly-Wissowa, our Patron the Phocian the mercenary commander, who figures as no. 5 in the list, is overwhelmingly the most likely candidate.<sup>28</sup> Possible homonymous counter-candidates on the list are no. 8, who was an Epicurean philosopher of the first century BC, as he was possibly a writer (although we have no evidence that he was), and no. 7, who was the father of Patrocles, the Macedonian admiral in Ptolemaic service in the middle of the third century BC, who simply figures in the list as a patronym. The rest are mere names.

The personal name Patron is especially popular in Phocis. The *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* lists no less than 43 Phocian examples, 37 at Delphi alone. Although the Phocian city where Patron the mercenary general was based is never given in our sources, he possibly came from Lilaia, where a descendent of the same name also distinguished himself militarily.<sup>29</sup>

26 See the review of A.C. BANDY, *Ioannes Lydus: On the Months (De mensibus): The Three Works of Ioannes Lydus, 1*, Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter 2013 by A. Kaldellis in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*.

27 A.C. BANDY, *Ioannes Lydus: On Powers or The Magistracies of the Roman State: Introduction, Critical Text, Translation, Commentary, and Indices*, Philadelphia 1983, 74; M. DUBUISSON and J. SCHAMP, (eds.), *Jean Le Lydien: Des magistratures de l'État romain, 1.2: Introduction générale, Livre 1*, Paris 2006, 63.

28 A. PHILIPPSON, “Patron (5)”, in: *RE XVIII*, Stuttgart 1949, 2291; BERVE, *Alexanderreich* (n. 8) no. 612.

29 A. PHILIPPSON, “Patron (6)”, in: *RE XVIII*, Stuttgart 1949, 2291; *LGPN III.B*, 339 no. 63. I owe this suggestion to John Ma.



The title of the book Patron wrote on military matters is unknown, as likewise, the title of the book in which he gave an account of the last days of Darius. The latter work, though the contents may have had the nature of personal reminiscences, is likely to have borne the title *Histories*, as alternative titles for these kinds of work and not developed by the end of the fourth century BC.<sup>30</sup>

### Appendix: The Death of Charidemos.

Tarn seems to have believed that the Alexander Historians had only one source at of their disposal giving the history of the campaign from the Persian viewpoint – the “mercenaries’ source”. In fact they seem to have had several. Other than the account of the final days of Darius that appears in Curtius, it is very difficult, nigh on impossible, to attribute any specific material to Patron. A good case in point is the account of the death of Charidemos, which, it seems to me, is the second passage which can be most plausibly attributed to Patron.

The passage comes in Curtius (III 2.11–19) once again. Darius had asked Charidemos of Oreus, who had been exiled from Athens for his hostility to Alexander, for his opinion of the Persian army’s chances, the forthcoming battle against Alexander (the conversation takes place before Issus), Charidemos was less than discreet, the consequences are described by Curtius.<sup>31</sup>

[III 2.10] “But there was nothing which he lacked less than numbers of soldiers. Extravagantly happy at the appearance of the throng then assembled, while his courtiers puffed up his hope with their usual empty flattery, turning to Charidemus, an Athenian skilled in warfare and because of his banishment hating Alexander—for it was by his order that Charidemus had been expelled from Athens—he proceeded to ask the Greek whether he seemed to him sufficiently equipped to trample down his enemy. [11] But Charidemus, forgetting his condition and the pride of kings, replied: ‘You perhaps would not wish to hear the truth, but I, if I do not speak now, at some other time shall admit it in vain. [12] This army so splendidly equipped, this throng of so many nations and of the whole Orient, called forth from their homes, may be a cause of terror to their neighbours; it gleams with purple and gold, is resplendent with arms and with riches so great that those who have not seen them with their own eyes cannot imagine them. [13] But the Macedonian army, grim, it is true, and unkempt-looking, covers with its shields and spears immovable wedges and serried power of men. They themselves call it the phalanx, a steadfast body of infantry; man stands close to man, weapons are joined to weapons. Intent upon the nod of their commander, they have learned to follow the standards, to keep their ranks; what is ordered all obey. [14] How to oppose, make circuits, run to support either wing, to change the order of battle the soldiers are as well skilled as their leaders. [15] And do not suppose that they are led by a desire for gold and silver; so far they have maintained that discipline in the school of poverty; when they are wearied, the earth is their bed, such food as they can snatch

30 Eg. W.W. TARN, “Alexander’s ὑπομνήματα and the World-Kingdom”, *JHS* 41 (1921) 1–17 at 10 “in and after the third century had one very common meaning; the term was often applied to a book of extracts or stories on this or that or any subject, the sort of thing we call a commonplace book, full of snippets”; cf. U. WILCKEN, “Ὑπομνηματισμοί”, *Philologus* 53 n.f. 7 (1894) 80–126.

31 Translation following ROLFE, *Quintus* (n. 10) 75–79.



amid toil satisfies them, their time for sleep is shorter than the night. [16] The Thessalian, the Acarnanian, and the Aetolian horsemen, invincible in war, will forthwith, forsooth, be repulsed by slings and by spears hardened in the fire! Strength like theirs is what you need; in that land which gave them birth you must look for aid: send that silver and gold of yours to hire soldiers'. [17] Darius had a mild and tractable disposition, but as a rule Fortune perverts even Nature. So, incapable of hearing the truth, he ordered a guest and a suppliant to be dragged off to execution, at the very moment when he was giving most salutary advice. [18] The Greek, not even then forgetful of his free birth, said: 'I have at hand an avenger of my death; that very man against whom I have warned you will exact punishment for the scorning of my advice. You for your part, so suddenly changed by the licence of royal power, will be a lesson to coming generations that when men have surrendered themselves to Fortune, they forget even their very nature'. As Charidemus was shouting these words, those to whom the order had been given cut his throat. [19] Afterwards, too late, the king repented, and admitting that the Greek had spoken the truth, gave orders that he be given funeral rites".

The account is replete with the dramatic *pathos*, which we also encounter in Curtius' account of the last days of Darius. At line 17 there is a reference to intervention of Fortune which we also find in Curtius' account of the last days of Darius, at the start of the speech of Darius which opens the council of war, and repeatedly throughout the dialogue between Patron and Darius. The account in Curtius of the death of Charidemus was in all probability ultimately due to the account of an eyewitness, which Patron almost certainly would have been. On the other hand, the treatment of the figure of Darius lacks something of the sympathy which we encounter in the account of the last days of Darius in Curtius. In fact Baynham has suggested that the description of the death of Charidemus in Curtius may have been Cleitarchan, showing as it does "the negative aspects of regnum".<sup>32</sup> I would not go as far as that.

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32 BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 12) 79–81.

# On the Traces of Onesicritus. Some Historiographical Aspects of Alexander's Indian Campaign

*Reinhold Bichler\**

## **Abstract**

The extant Alexander historians present a series of idealizing descriptions of Indian autonomous political communities and kingdoms, some of which even include elements of utopian thought. In two cases – concerning the lands of King Sopeithes and of King Musicanus – Onesicritus is the testified source. Also Diodorus's account of the political institutions in Patala has been attributed to him (by Paul Pédech). – I am proposing now to examine a further series of idealizing portrayals of Indian communities made with the intention of praising Alexander, and I am asking myself and the audience if these descriptions could go back to the same author. The episodes I shall deal with are (apart from the three countries mentioned above): the encounter with the Sibae and the Sambastae and the depiction of Nysa and Mount Merus, of the region of Taxila and the lands across the Ganges region. In those descriptions we will find a combination of particularly blessed natural conditions with the good administration of the country, and we will find a similar tendency to mention excellent government by either aristocratic elites or even democratic institutions, or by customs and laws able to limit the possibilities of monarchical power. Those idealizing descriptions go hand in hand with a more or less visible tendency to flatter Alexander, which in total may underline the idea of crediting Onesicritus with a greater impact on the extant image of India than the explicit testimonies allow us to assume. – I am aware that my proposal is restricted to pure hypothesis. Nevertheless, in an epilogue I shall present a neglected testimony (by Seneca) which could encourage us to move further in the proposed direction.

## **Exposé**

First of all, the somewhat vague title of the paper in hand will require some comment. On occasion of a conference chiefly devoted to Megasthenes at the University of Kiel in 2012, I had the opportunity to present some considerations on “Herrschaft und politische Organisation im älteren Indien-Bild der Griechen und in der klassischen Alexander-Historie”.<sup>1</sup> One

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\* Thanks to Franz Pramhaas for the translation!

1 The paper will be published in: Megasthenes und seine Zeit/Megasthenes and His Time. Akten der Internationalen Tagung “Megasthenes, Apollodoros und Isidoros. Greek Views of India and the Parthian Empire”, Kiel, 27.30.6.2012. Teil 1 /Part 1. – I want to express my gratitude to Krzysztof Nawotka and Agnieszka Wojciechowska who gave me the occasion to present my ideas about Onesicritus' impact on the Alexander historiography which I developed since then at the great conference organized by them at Wrocław!

finding was related to the differences in the coverage and evaluation by Arrian and the representatives of the so-called ‘vulgate tradition’ of the structures of power and domination in the Indian regions conquered by Alexander. Let me summarise the respective observations.

Arrian seems to avoid as consequently as possible attributing the status of king – βασιλεύς – to the various local rulers. Instead, he uses terms such as ἡγεμών, ἄρχων, νομάρχης, ὑπαρχος, σατράπης. A priori, Alexander has to be respected by them as vassals recognise their lord. He may appoint the one or the other of them king, but this is his free decision. The authors who follow the vulgate-tradition are much more careless in this respect. There is some reason to point to Ptolemy as a main source for Arrian not only in military matters, but also in the strict conceptualisation of Alexander’s status as overlord. Finally Arrian avoids the tendency to include elements of Greek utopian thought and political ideals within the presentation of special customs and institutions in some regions of India. If in a few cases there is a tendency to idealize (see Arrian for the city of Nysa or the region of the river Ganges), Arrian points to practices of aristocratic rule. The vulgate-tradition is richer in depicting astonishing institutions and governmental practices. Partly, authors explicitly mention democratic elements (see Curtius and Diodorus for the Sambastae/Sabarcae); mostly, they present customs and institutions which may limit or even prohibit the development of dynastic monarchic power (see Diodorus and Curtius for the kingdom of Sopeithes or Diodorus for the city of Patala). It is Diodorus who seems to offer the richest set of such ‘political marvels’, if we concentrate on the extant works, but one has to bear in mind that authors like Onesicritus probably developed such ‘utopian inclusions’ on a wider scale, not only in the well known case of his depiction of King Musicanus’ land.

It is the last-mentioned observations that I wanted to scrutinise more closely. There is still by no means a final result, but the impression is deepening that Onesicritus could have exerted a not inconsiderable impact on the image the extant Alexander-historians held of India – hence the cautiously worded title of this paper. In it, I am going to deal with nine stages of Alexander’s Indian campaign, though not in the chronological order of expedition events but from a thematic point of view.<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Alexander in the footsteps of Heracles and Dionysos

### 1.1 The capture of Aornus

An episode described by Curtius, which takes place at the beginning of Alexander’s march into India, may serve as a starting point: “After entering the boundaries of India, Alexander was met by the petty kings (*reguli*) of the area, who were prepared to submit to his authority. He was, they said, the third son of Jupiter to have reached them but, whereas they knew of Father Liber and Hercules only by report (*fama*), Alexander had come in person and was before their eyes” (VIII 10.1).<sup>3</sup> The *Metz Epitome* retains the same scene but without differentiating between the *fama* and the sight of the king present in the flesh and blood: “...hi, qui trans flumen habitabant,

2 List of the stages dealt with according to campaign chronology: Nysa and Mount Merus – conquest of Mount Aornus – the region of Taxila – the country of King Sopeithes – the lands across the Ganges – the encounter with the Sibae – the encounter with the Sambastae/Sabarcae – the country of King Musicanus – Patala and the Patalene.

3 Translations of Curtius are taken from John Yardley.

ubi vident Alexandrum advenisse, gavisī sunt. Primum Iovis filium (Liberum Patrem), alterum Herculem, tertium Alexandrum venisse commemorabant” (*ME* 34). In contrast to the *Metz Epitome*, Curtius moreover lends his report a sceptical overtone. Arrian, finally, depicts the very same scene, the encounter with Taxiles and other hyparchs (ὑπαρχοί), without any reference to Dionysos and Heracles as Alexander’s predecessors at all (IV 22.6).

The fact that, as a mythologizing tribute to Alexander, Dionysos’ and Heracles’ legendary campaigns were also extended to India was already subjected to criticism relatively early. Strabo relies on Eratosthenes when he has doubts about certain tales told about Dionysos’ and Heracles’ deeds in India (XV 1.7–9). To him, these stories are the products of flatterers: “But that these stories are fabrications (πλάσματα) of the flatterers of Alexander is obvious; first, not only from the fact that the historians do not agree with one another, and also because, while some relate them, others make no mention whatever of them; for it is unreasonable to believe that exploits so famous and full of romance were unknown to any historian, or, if known, that they were regarded as unworthy of recording, and that too by the most trustworthy of the historians ...” (XV 1.9).<sup>4</sup> Strabo’s critical voice about Alexander’s flatterers can amongst other instances be exemplified in the capture of Aornus, which Alexander was said to have achieved at one go, while Heracles had failed a full three times (XV 1.8). But if we look at how this glorious deed is depicted in the records passed down to us,<sup>5</sup> the picture presented not only looks quite controversial. Alexander also does not cut the fine figure that might actually be expected of a staging created for his mythical idealisation.<sup>6</sup>

According to Diodorus, Alexander achieves his decisive success by a ruse: he allows the Indians, who fear the combat strength of the Macedonians, to flee under cover of night. In this way he avoided further fighting (XVII 85–86.1). Curtius uses dramatic terms to describe the losses of the Macedonians when climbing the rockface and the fatal falls of the Indians who fled into the night under the yells of the Macedonians (VIII 11.2–25). Alexander’s achievement is commented on disrespectfully by him: “Although his victory was over the terrain rather than the enemy, the king nonetheless fostered the belief that he had won a decisive victory by offering sacrifices and worship of the gods” (VIII 11.24). Whereas Curtius mentions the *fama* of Heracles’ futile attempt at taking the rock only in passing (VIII 11.2), Arrian examines it with a critical eye. He doubts that a Heracles, whichever hero of that name it may be, had got that far (IV 28.1–2). Additionally, Alexander’s success was overshadowed by his order to have the Indians, who had already offered their submission, massacred on ill-founded suspicion (IV 30.2–4).<sup>7</sup> The *Metz Epitome* succinctly reports the

4 Translations of Strabo are taken from Horace Leonard Jones.

5 For a short survey of the sources cf. E. MEDERER, *Die Alexanderlegenden bei den ältesten Alexanderhistorikern*, Stuttgart 1936, 95–96.

6 The conquest of an *Aornus* in the sense of a ‘birdless mountain’ constitutes the transfer of an ancient mythical motif to Alexander. It can be traced back in cuneiform sources as far as the second millennium and served the glory of those in power. Cf., *in extenso*, R. ROLLINGER, “Aornos and the Mountains of the East. The Assyrian Kings and Alexander the Great”, in: S. Gaspa et al. (eds.), *From Source to History: Studies on Ancient Near Eastern Worlds and Beyond: Dedicated to Giovanni Battista Lanfranchi on the occasion of his 65th birthday on June 23, 2014*, Münster 2014, 597–635.

7 A. ABRAMENKO, “Alexander vor Mazagae und Aornus. Korrekturen zu den Berichten über das Massaker an den indischen Söldnern”, *Klio* 76 (1994), 192–207 assumes that the report on a massacre of the Indian mercenaries after the capture of Massaga is based on an erroneous transfer of the record relating to Aornus. Cf., however, A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian’s History of Alexander*, II:

difficult storming of the plateau. It too refers to a subsequent massacre (*ME* 46–47). The brief depiction in Justin’s history, on the other hand, does not cast a dark shadow on Alexander’s conquest of the mountain (XII 7.12–13). The same applies to Orosius’ description (III 19.2). In both cases, however, this might be due to the brevity of the report.

The distinct variants of the account give the impression that here a coherent scenario in which Alexander in terms of heroism outdid his ancestor Heracles was reshaped in different ways and to the detriment of the hero. The original intention of this construction, however, was still recognisable. Otherwise, Strabo, who largely follows Eratosthenes here, could not have reprimanded Alexander’s flatterers. A similar case is attested in the sources about another stage in the Indian expedition at which Alexander is said to have come across the traces of his ancestor Heracles: It is the encounter with the Sibae.

### 1.2 The encounter with the Sibae

According to Strabo, Alexander’s flatterers are also accountable for the narrative “that the Sibae were descendants of those who shared with Heracles in the expedition, and that they retained badges of their descent in that they wore skins like Heracles, carried clubs, and branded their cattle and mules with the mark of a club” (XV 1.8). Arrian knew the story and viewed it sceptically (*Ind.* 5.12).<sup>8</sup> He did not even mention it in his *Anabasis*. But it had its place in manuscript tradition. Justin reports briefly and without comment on Alexander’s encounter with the Sibae at the river Acesines: “Ibi Agensonas Sibosque, quos Hercules condidit, in deditionem accepit” (XII 9.1). Orosius kept it even briefer (III 19.6). And even as late as in Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca* they appear – bearing arms (θωρήσοντο Σίβαι) – as part of the Indian troops (XXVI 218). Curtius, however, had put his own stamp on the narrative of the Sibae.<sup>9</sup> He portrayed them as a people living in primitive conditions who claimed that its ancestors had been left behind by Heracles as invalids (IX 4.1–3). Curtius’ disparaging terms imply a tradition that connoted positively. In fact, Diodorus still preserves clear traces of an episode adjusted in honour of Alexander which also reflects a positive characterisation of the political community of the Sibae. He mentions “a very fine city” (ἐπιφανεστάτη πόλις), whose founding the Sibae attributed to Heracles, and describes how “the leading notables of the city” (οἱ δόξη πρωτεύοντες τῶν πολιτῶν) stepped up to Alexander, pledged allegiance, presented gifts and referred to their kinship with him (τὴν συγγένειαν). The king thereupon is said to have declared the cities free and moved on (XVII 96.1–3).<sup>10</sup>

Two episodes in which Alexander allegedly followed in the footsteps of his divine ancestor Dionysos also allow similar observations: an internally consistent depiction that had

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*Commentary on Books IV–V*, Oxford 1995, 174–175 on Alexander’s breach of promise and the massacre of the mercenaries at Massaga and, particularly, 191 on Alexander’s conduct at Aornus: “Arrian’s story is not wholly flattering to Alexander and is reminiscent of the massacre of the mercenaries at Massaga”.

8 On the Sibae and the local worship of Śiva as a stimulus for the allusions to Heracles cf. BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 8), 218 with further references.

9 The encounter with the Sibae is one of the cases Diodorus and Curtius dealt with in a different way although they clearly followed the same basic source; J.R. HAMILTON, “Cleitarachus and Diodorus 17”, in: K.H. Kinzl (ed.), *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in Ancient History and Prehistory: Studies Presented to Fritz Schachermeyr on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*, Berlin/New York 1977, 126–146, 132, does not mark the differences.

10 Translations of Diodorus are taken from C. Bradford Welles.

originally served as an idealising representation of Alexander was tainted by additions and omissions. First, I would like to deal with the more well-known case: Alexander's arrival in Nysa and the subsequent visit to the mountain Merus.

### 1.3 Nysa and Mount Merus

As has been said, Arrian doubted that Heracles' campaigns had led him as far as Mount Aornus and the Sibae. In the case of the historical sources on Dionysos' Indian expedition, he is more restrained in his criticism. Thus, to him the city of Nysa and Mount Merus with its growth of ivy are no small reminders – μνήμα οὐ φανῶν – of Dionysos' campaign to India (*Ind.* 5.9). Indeed, the episode of the king's arrival in the city, supposed to have been founded by Dionysos, and his visit to the mountain, which still testifies to the cult of the god, maintained its firm place in Alexander history. The variants among the sources, however, differ quite considerably.<sup>11</sup>

In his chiding of Alexander's flatterers, Strabo, very likely under the influence of Eratosthenes, had criticised this story, too, (XV 1.8). This points towards a narrative which had been intended as a mythologizing tribute to Alexander and initially had been consistently crafted. Its traces can indeed be clearly seen in the sources handed down to us. Diodorus' account is no longer extant, but according to the surviving summary, he had described "How he (Alexander) benefited the city named Nysia because of his relationship to it through Dionysus". This by all means sounds like a peaceful scenario. Justin's depiction is in the same vein. Trusting in their divine founder ("fiducia religionis Liberi Patris, a quo condita urbs erat"), the inhabitants of the city put up no resistance to Alexander's army. Alexander was pleased to note that he was following in the footsteps of the god and spared the city. Then he led his troops to the sacred mountain. There the soldiers suddenly got into Bacchantic ecstasy and ran all over the place. The king realised – now that he was in a dangerous position – that the sparing of the city had benefited his army (XII 7.6–8).

In Curtius' description the setting changes. First he comes up with an element from the source material which questions the peaceful surrender of the city to Alexander. The city is under siege and the ensuing fire destroys the sepulchres of the townspeople (*oppidanorum sepulcra*). Only after unsuccessful resistance do the residents surrender (VIII 10.7–10).<sup>12</sup> They now point to the origin of their city, and Curtius confirms that their account of the case was correct: "A Libero patre conditos se esse dicebant, et vera haec origo erat" (VIII 10.11). Without wasting any words on the treatment of the city, Curtius follows up with the visit to Mount Merus. Here he takes up the story about the religious rapture of the army and comments on it in his own way: "Personally I do not believe it was as a result of divine inspiration but simply to amuse themselves that the soldiers began to pick ivy and vine fronds here and there,

11 For a short survey of the sources cf. MEDERER, *Alexanderlegenden* (n. 6), 97–99. Cleitarchus' note on 'mount' Nysa and the local name of the ivy (*FGrH* 137 F17) is the earliest preserved testimony. "But the source for Cleitarchus' statement, the Scholiast to Apollonius Rhodius (II 904), is too brief to permit any reconstruction of the original, and on this occasion the later sources ... are too diverse in their reports to be grouped together as a vulgate"; BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 8), 198–199.

12 The details Curtius provides sound strange. Cf. the commentary in J. YARDLEY and W. HECKEL, *Justin, Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus: Books 11–12: Alexander the Great*, Oxford 1997, 252–253, 239: According to that, the fall of the city took place "after a bizarre tale of how Alexander did not know he had reached Nysa until he had accidentally burned the wooden sepulchres".

and wandered the length of the wood wearing leaf-garlands like Bacchants”. He reports that the soldiers celebrated boisterously for ten days, ignoring the precariousness of the situation. It is only thanks to *fortuna* that the Macedonians emerged unscathed. And here, Curtius straight away bridges Alexander’s entrance into India, so resonant of Dionysos, with his exodus: “The same good fortune protected the Macedonians while they were returning from the ocean and held a drunken revel before the eyes of their enemy” (VIII 10.12–18).

Curtius obviously assumes his public to know about the army’s losses on its march through the desert, which had preceded this festivity in honour of Dionysos.<sup>13</sup> His depiction of the capture of Nysa and the visit to the sacred mountain no longer lends itself to Alexander’s glorification. It holds, however, another element of an idealising description, which was also conveyed by Justin: it is the fascinating plant life on Mount Merus that allows the reference to Dionysos. Let us first have a look at Justin. He has Alexander lead “ad spectaculum montis...naturalibus bonis, vite hederaque, non aliter vestiti, quam si manu cultus colentiumque industria exornatus esset” (XII 7.7). In the passage by Curtius the idyllic nature of the terrain is expressed even more clearly: “Ivy and vines grow in large quantities all over the mountain, and many year-round streams flow down it. There are also various fruits whose juices have health-giving properties, the soil spontaneously producing a harvest from any seeds that happen to fall there. There are laurels and berry-bushes – a thick forest on the mountain’s cliffs” (VIII 10.13–14).

Other traces of an idealising depiction are preserved in the version which Arrian provides on Alexander’s appearance in Nysa and which contrasts sharply with Curtius. Arrian goes his own way. He is aware of the questionable nature of the historical sources and gives this some thought (V 1.1–2; 3) but presents a fairly positive picture of the political conditions in the city which traces its roots back to Dionysos. On Alexander’s arrival, the Nysaians sent out to him Acuphis, who was holding ruling power – τὸν κρατιστεύοντα σφῶν –, together with thirty of the most distinguished citizens. They were amazed at Alexander’s sight, fell to the ground and eventually entreated him to grant them the freedom and autonomy they had enjoyed since the foundation of the city by Dionysos. They also pointed out that they were keeping their community in good order – ἐν κόσμῳ πολιτεύοντες. Alexander consented and learnt that the government lay in the hands of the best men: ὅτι πρὸς τῶν ἀρίστων τὸ πολίτευμα ἔχεται. In a conversation with the king, Acuphis demonstrates his statesmanlike prudence: instead of having Alexander accompanied by his best men as escort, he would rather send 100 of the bad ones.<sup>14</sup> Arrian also mentions the visit to Mount Merus. But he deems it doubtful that there had been scenes of Bacchantic rapture (V 1.3–2.7). – In its main features, the account given in the *Metz Epitome* is in keeping with this version. The surrender of Nysa happens of the residents’ own volition. Out of reverence for its founder Liber Pater, Alexander grants the city its old privileges and puts Acuphis at the top of the city’s administration: “oppidi libertatem suaque omnia reddidit Acuphinque imperio praefecit”.

13 In Curtius’ eyes the triumph in Carmania was rather a *bacchantium lusus* (IX 10.24–28. So this *triumphus* forms a sharp contrast to the heavy losses on the army’s former march through the desert (IX 10.8–18) and the brutal execution of the satrap Ataspes which followed the festivities: “adeo nec luxuriae quicquam crudelitas nec crudelitati luxuria obstat” (IX 10.29).

14 BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 8), 198, suggests that Arrian’s source could have been Nearchus.



The visit to Mount Merus is brought up, but there is no mention of the army's Bacchantic revelry (*ME* 36–37).

Plutarch, on the other hand, provides an incoherent collage of historical source elements. Just like Curtius, he mentions hostilities prior to the capitulation of Nysa. Here he starts with a unique scene: the Macedonians were reluctant to attack Nysa, as the city seemed to be protected by a river. Alexander, however, wanted to throw himself into the waters straight away.<sup>15</sup> Then a sudden change of scene takes place.<sup>16</sup> After having surrendered, envoys came to Alexander. They were filled with wonder at his appearance. He then commenced the well-known exchange of words with the eldest of them, Acuphis, and recommended to appoint him archon. Plutarch ignores the visit to Mount Merus; he also does not establish an explicit link between Nysa and Dionysos (*Alex.* 58.4–5).<sup>17</sup>

In summary, we can determine two elements in the heterogeneous tradition about Nysa and Mount Merus that give the whole scenario an idealising, respectively idyllic, aspect: the depiction of the natural conditions of the sacred mountain, which create a mystic atmosphere, and the references to the good internal state of the local community and the political prudence of its foremost representative. But these positive elements are counteracted by omissions or negative traits in the narrative, such as the depiction of hostilities, especially the burning of the wooden sepulchres, and the interpretation of the Bacchic celebration as a lack of discipline on the part of the soldiers. What remains striking is the discrepancy between a forcible conquest of the city (in Plutarch and Curtius) and a voluntary surrender (in Justin, the *Metz Epitome* and also in Arrian). The sudden change from a hostile atmosphere to a peaceful setting could, in my opinion, already have formed an essential part of a first literary shaping of the conquest of Nysa.<sup>18</sup> A corresponding situation concerning the tradition of sources can be stated for another encounter with alleged traces of Dionysos' Indian campaign. This episode, however, is far from having attracted the same attention as the story about Nysa and Mount Merus. Thus, the essential testimonies are restricted to Diodorus and Curtius. It is Alexander's encounter with the Sambastae.

15 Following Plutarch, Alexander deeply deplored the fact that he had not learnt to swim; on the question if Alexander really could not swim cf. R. BICHLER, "Konnte Alexander wirklich nicht schwimmen? Überlegungen zu Plutarch, Alex. 58.4", in: P. Mauritsch and Ch. Ulf (eds.), *Kultur(en) – Formen des Alltäglichen in der Antike: Festschrift Ingomar Weiler*, Graz 2013, 301–315.

16 J.R. HAMILTON, *Plutarch Alexander: A Commentary*, Oxford 1969, 160–161, underlines the author's narrative purpose: Plutarch in brief describes a number of incidents merely in order to illustrate the king's character<sup>4</sup>.

17 Cf. also Pliny *Nat.* VI 79, who treats the stories about Liber Pater, Nysa and Mount Merus, but without any reference to Alexander.

18 A.B. BOSWORTH, "Alexander, Euripides and Dionysos. The Motivation for Apotheosis", in: R.W. Wallace and E.M. Harris (eds.), *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History, 360–146 B.C., in Honor of E. Badian*, Norman/London 1996, 140–166 assumes an aggressive approach to the place. In his view, the notables of the city, however, used Alexander's aspiration to cross India in the wake of Dionysos in their defence. "But Alexander was not creating the myth. He was reacting positively to a story from his Indian hosts that happened to harmonize with his own aspirations"; cf. loc. cit. 150–151.



### 1.4 The encounter with the Sambastae

While the fleet took its course down the Indus in the direction of the coast, Alexander also came upon the people called Sambastae. Diodorus initially emphasises their military potential: “These, in numbers of men and in good qualities, were inferior to none of the Indian peoples. They lived in cities governed in a democratic manner (οἰκουντες δὲ πόλεις δημοκρατουμένας), and learning of the coming of the Macedonians assembled sixty thousand infantry, six thousand cavalry, and five hundred armoured chariots” (XVII 102.2). This gives the impression of a pending confrontation, but the unexpected happens. Awe-struck by the strange sight and the glory of the Macedonians’ military exploits, the elders (πρεσβύτεροι) advised against a battle. They sent out fifty of their most distinguished men (ἐπιφανεστάτους πρεσβευτάς) to Alexander, beseeching him to treat them kindly (φιλανθρώπως), which he also did, and they honoured the king with gifts (XVII 102.3–4).

The minor reference to cities governed by democratic rule could easily be overlooked. But it must have been an inherent part in the traditional sources. Curtius mentions Alexander’s expedition to the Sabarcae and calls them a “validam Indiae gentem, quae populi, non regum imperio regebatur”. He gives the same troop numbers as Diodorus; in addition he refers to a military command consisting of three combat-experienced generals (*duces*). Curtius’ depiction, now, reflects a gleam of the reason which in the original tradition had been decisive for the fact that the bloody confrontation did not occur: in view of the huge Macedonian fleet, the people in the fields believed that an army of gods had arrived and with them a second Liber Pater, *celebre in illis gentibus nomen*. This caused great turmoil and arms were taken up, but they realised that it would be madness to fight against the enormous army. Therefore envoys were sent to Alexander, who accepted their submission (IX 8.4–8).

Curtius increases the drama of the encounter. An overall examination of both accounts shows that the original scenario was conceived as praise to Alexander as Dionysos’ successor and to this end entailed an idealising description of the political order and the military strength of the country of the Sambastae.<sup>19</sup> Traces of such idealising descriptions are also to be found outside the context of Alexander’s mythical elevation. They will be dealt with below.

## 2. Three significant stages of the Indian campaign: from Taxila to the turning point at the Hyphasis and to the Indus delta

### 2.1 Alexander’s arrival in Taxila

Taxila, the residential city of Alexander’s strategically most important vassal, naturally lent itself to such idealisation in a very particular way. But here, too, the picture in the surviving sources varies. The depiction of how Alexander arrives in the Taxila region – traditionally associated with the vulgate – and there encounters the young king Mophis (or Omphis)<sup>20</sup> remarkably resembles the description of Alexander’s encounter with the Sambastae first of all in one respect. What at first sight appears to be a quite dangerous situation immediately turns into an act of reverence for Alexander. The initial impression suggests that Mophis was

19 Arrian VI 15.1 just mentions that Perdiccas subdued the autonomous Abastanians; cf. K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 2010, 324.

20 On the names see W. HECKEL, *Who’s Who in the Age of Alexander the Great: Prosopography of Alexander’s Empire*, Malden, MA/Oxford 2006, 260–261, s.v. Taxiles.

about to confront Alexander in battle with all his forces, but the atmosphere changes quickly: the young king submits to Alexander and is restored by him to his father's former rights. Diodorus's account of this is relatively brief (XVII 86.3–7). Curtius paints this scene more vividly and in a conversation with Alexander has young Omphis reveal his good qualities as ruler. Even in the contest of exchanging gifts he proves his worth as a young, noble prince. The scene is only clouded by the Macedonians' displeasure at the generosity with which Alexander rewarded the young king's presents (VIII 12.4–18). The *Metz Epitome*, too, provides the encounter with Mophis in detail, but without indicating that Alexander's high regard for the young king had alienated the Macedonians (*ME* 49–54).

In Plutarch, the supposed confrontation with the king's army is not to be found; the competition in exchanging presents, however, and the resentment that Alexander's largess aroused among the Macedonians are highlighted. But this, according to Plutarch, benefited Alexander's esteem among the barbarians. He portrays Taxiles as a wise ruler (σοφὸς δέ τις ἀνὴρ) who acquits himself well when dealing with Alexander (*Alex.* 59.1–3). Above all, in Plutarch we catch a glimpse of the source material – λέγεται – in which the capital and the king's realm were depicted in an idealising manner (*Alex.* 59.1). According to it, Taxiles allegedly held control of a part of India as large as Egypt, with good pastures and excellent fruits (μοῖραν ... εὖβοτον δὲ καὶ καλλίκαρπον ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα).

Arrian, again, who treats Alexander's encounter with Taxiles very briefly and only refers to him as a ὑπαρχος, recognises Taxila as a large and prosperous city (πόλιν μεγάλην καὶ εὐδαίμονα) (V 8.2). The first traces of such an idealising portrayal are to be found in Strabo, who praised the city and its environs alike. "Between the Indus and the Hydaspes lies Taxila, a city which is large and has most excellent laws (πόλις μεγάλη καὶ εὐνομοτάτη); and the country that lies round it is spacious and very fertile (σφοδρά εὐδαίμων)". He, too, mentioned the Macedonians' envy caused by Alexander's generous gifts to Taxiles, the king (βασιλεύς) of the local people. And he imparts the view, though in a detached manner, that this region is larger than Egypt (XV 1.28). So the picture of a prudent local ruler emerges who maintains friendly relations with Alexander and whose realm prospers and enjoys exemplary administration. In this way also Alexander, on occasion of entering the Indus region, can be presented as the future sovereign of a blessed country. But what is the situation with regard to the countries on the Ganges which Alexander did not conquer anymore?

## 2.2 The unreachd countries on the Ganges

Alexander's arrival at the Hyphasis represented a turning point in his campaign, which he marked by erecting monuments. Whether he was forced to change his plans because of his troops' resistance or whether he never intended to advance into the region of the Ganges continues to remain a matter of controversy in research studies.<sup>21</sup> The tradition of sources conventionally termed 'vulgate' conveys the impression that the news of the tremendous military force of the king who ruled over the countries on the Ganges caused great awe. If we look at the strength figures given and compare them with those reported for Porus' troops

21 For a sceptical view in regard to the reported 'mutiny' see T. HOWE and S. MÜLLER, "Mission Accomplished: Alexander at the Hyphasis", *AHB* 26 (2012), 21–38, with the résumé loc. cit. 37–38: "Alexander planned to end his campaign at the Hyphasis ... By having extended his control over the whole of the Achaemenid Empire at this point, Alexander's mission was accomplished".

in the tough battle at the Hydaspes, we can get an idea of the dismay. Hence, the fight against Porus would have been an easy matter.<sup>22</sup>

Diodorus ascribes 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2,000 chariots and 4,000 elephants to King Xandrames; Porus confirms the figures (XVII 93.2–3).<sup>23</sup> Curtius provides the same figures for King Aggrames' armed forces, which are again attested by Porus; only the number of 3,000 elephants differs from Diodorus's data. In Diodorus and Curtius, there is also a disparaging reference to King Xandrames'/Aggrames' low birth. According to the *Metz Epitome*, Xandrames had 200,000 foot soldiers, 20,000 horsemen, 2,000 chariots and 180 elephants. Here, too, Porus verifies the information. Plutarch takes up the tradition, but also his figures differ more widely: so the kings of the Gandarites and Praesii have 200,000 infantry, 80,000 cavalry, 8,000 chariots and 6,000 elephants at their command. Plutarch affirms the credibility of these figures by referring to Androcottus (= Chandragupta), who only shortly afterwards was able to subdue all of India with an army of 600,000 and to give Seleucus a present of 500 elephants (*Alex.* 62).

Only Arrian does not make any mention of such troop numbers. In this way he avoids giving the impression that Alexander's turning back at the Hyphasis was *also* owed to this potential risk of war. The name of the king ruling the Ganges region does not appear; there is not even the idea that the whole region is ruled by a king. Instead, Arrian relates the valuable features of the country and its exemplary administration: "The country beyond the Hyphasis was reported to be fertile, and the inhabitants good farmers and excellent fighting men, with their affairs (τὰ ἴδια) under orderly government (ἐν κόσμῳ), for the masses were ruled by the best men (τῶν ἀρίστων), who did not exercise leadership unfairly".<sup>24</sup> There, the elephants are also said to be more numerous and larger than elsewhere in India. All this supposedly gave rise to Alexander's desire to proceed (*An.* V 25.1–2). But then the discouragement among his veteran troops gained ground.

Arrian's tacit correction of the 'vulgate' is obviously based on an older tradition. Strabo, for instance, can report the following about the political organisation of the region across the Hyphasis: "They tell also of a kind of aristocratic order of government (ἀριστοκρατικὴν τινὰ σύνταξιν πολιτείας) that was composed outright of five thousand counsellors, each of whom furnishes the new commonwealth with an elephant" (XV 1.37). Strabo does not give any concrete indication of his source.<sup>25</sup> If we can assume that Arrian here follows the same tradition of sources, they definitely conveyed the impression that there was a well-governed,

22 Diodorus gives Porus's army at the battle at the Hydaspes more than 50,000 infantry, about 3,000 cavalry, more than 1,000 chariots and 130 elephants; XVII 87.1. – Curtius mentions 30,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry, 300 chariots and 85 elephants; VIII 13.6; 14.2. – Arrian gives nearly the same the numbers: 30,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry, 300 chariots, but 200 elephants; *An.* V 15.4. – Plutarch mentions 30,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry; *Alex.* 62.1. – The *Metz Epitome* mentions 30,000 infantry, 300 chariots and 85 elephants; *ME* 54.

23 Xandrames /Aggrames is usually identified with Mahapadma, the last king of the Nanda dynasty; cf. HECKEL, *Who's* (n. 21), 271.

24 Translations of Arrian are taken from P.A. Brunt.

25 Cf. BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 8), 341–342: "The source for Strabo's comments is an enigma". Bosworth assumes Megasthenes as the basic source. And he tries to reconcile Arrian's version with the vulgate tradition: "The only feasible explanation is that Arrian's source did not focus upon the Nanda monarch at the top of the pyramid but described the system of city government which Megasthenes was to describe with evident admiration".

affluent country beyond the borders of the Achaemenid Empire conquered by Alexander. So the events at the Hyphasis appear in a more favourable light than might be suggested by the idea that the king's army had feared the military strength of a dubious upstart.

So, once again, within the body of sources underlying the coherent Alexander narratives handed down to us, a tradition of records can be discerned that distinguish certain regions of India by giving an idealising portrayal of their natural features and political conditions. These descriptions, however, have partly been overshadowed by revising and editing them with a critical distance and partly been eliminated. An interesting case, in which Diodorus as the author of such an idealising representation is in significant contrast to Curtius as well as Arrian, is provided by the source material on the government of the region of Patalene.

### 2.3 Political rule in Patala

Patala was the last major stage on the lower reaches of the Indus before the delta spreads out to the open sea. The unexpected experience of the extreme tidal changes and Alexander's ostentatious voyage out onto the ocean have attracted the full attention of Alexander history. In contrast, the governmental system in the Patalene seemed to be of lesser interest.<sup>26</sup> According to Curtius, Moeris, the king (*rex*) of the *Patalia gens*, had left the city, and Alexander's troops made a rich haul of livestock and grain (IX 8.28–29).<sup>27</sup> Arrian reports that the local commander (ὁ τῶν Πατάλων ὑπαρχος) had fled, and with him the majority of the population, so that Alexander found the city empty. Only after the inhabitants had returned was it possible to have Hephaestion erect a fortified citadel. Alexander also had new wells dug in order to ensure the cultivation of the country (*An.* VI 17.5–18.1).

Diodorus, on the other hand, presents an entirely different picture. He refers to Patala as a famous city (πόλιν ἐπίσημον), whose political order (πολιτεία) resembles that of Sparta: “Two kings descended from two houses inherited their office from their fathers. They had charge of all arrangements concerning war, while the council of elders (τῶν γεροντῶν ἀρχεῖον) was the principle administrative body” (XVII 104.1–2). Strabo, too, finds the capital of the Patalene a noteworthy city (πόλις ἀξιόλογος). But he does not address its political organisation (XV 1.33). So Diodorus's account remains a singular testimony. It fits nicely, however, into the series of idealising depictions thus far considered whose traces are preserved in varying degrees.

The cases of buried idealising accounts dealt with so far (with the exception of Aornus, irrelevant here) related to forms and institutions of political organisation characterised by aristocratic to democratic features, or to the reign of a noble prince, such as Taxiles, whose country thrives and is apparently well administered. Diarchy, reminiscent of Sparta, and the strong position of the elders in Patala blend in harmoniously inasmuch as they imply a significant limitation of monarchical power. This connects the portrayal of the Patalene, which is still tangible in Diodorus, with more or less noticeable traces of depictions of other regional kingdoms, as whose author for the first time Onesicritus is explicitly attested. The countries at issue here are the kingdoms ruled by Sopeithes and Musicanus.

26 Cf. HAMILTON, *Cleitarchus* (n. 10), 134: “C devotes most of his narrative to the surprise of the Macedonians at encountering the tides ... and in general has little in common with D”.

27 On King Moeris see HECKEL, *Who's* (n. 21), 169.

### 3. The traces of Onesicritus

#### 3.1 Customs and traditions in the country of Sopeithes

If we only look at the extant Alexander historians, the customs and traditions in the country of King Sopeithes, passed on by Diodorus and Curtius, represent the most striking case of an exotic foreignness, which at the same time recalls familiar motifs of philosophical-utopian reflection. Diodorus first stresses the renown which the cities of King Sopeithes' dominion enjoyed: "These are exceedingly well-governed" (εὐνομούμενας καθ' ὑπερβολήν). Then he specifies two principles which shape public life: "All the functions of this state are directed toward the acquiring of good repute (πρὸς δόξαν), and beauty (τὸ κάλλος) is valued more than anything". Above all two radical social practices serve this purpose, a rigid selection of infants who exhibit any physical deficiencies and a specific marriage policy which only focuses on a good physical appearance: "So they plan their marriages without regard to dower or any other financial consideration, but consider only beauty and physical excellence". The outward appearance of the king, who entertained Alexander's army royally, confirms the picture. He stands out due to his handsomeness and towering height. (XVII 91.4–6).

Curtius records something very similar about the selection of children and the marriage policy pursued in the *regnum Sopithis*. But his statement that people there, in the barbarians' view – *ut barbari credunt* –, are said to distinguish themselves by their wisdom and good customs is not without scepticism (IX 1.24–26). A vivid description is devoted to the appearance of the king, focusing less on his outstanding physical appearance than the luxuriant decoration of his robe (IX 1.28–30). A noteworthy detail in Curtius' account is identical to the description of Alexander's encounter with the young king at Taxila and the people of Sambastae. The situation at first appears threatening as Alexander approaches the residential city: "The gates were closed but there were no armed men in evidence on the walls or parapets, and the Macedonians could not decide whether the inhabitants had abandoned the town or were laying in ambush. Suddenly a gate opened and the Indian king came out with two adult sons. In handsomeness he surpassed all other barbarians" (IX 1.27–28). Then the mood changes. Alexander and his army are offered a warm and honourable reception.

Both authors follow up with an episode in which the extreme fighting power of Sopeithes' fighting dogs is demonstrated, an episode commented on laconically by Curtius: *equidem plura transcribo quam credo* (Diodorus XVII 91; Curtius IX 1.31–34).<sup>28</sup> The *Metz Epitome* links the *oppidum, in quo Sopithes regnabat*, only with the story of the dogs carrying tiger's blood, but with no other marvels (*ME* 66–67). Aristobulos, too, had reported on the famous dogs Alexander had received as presents (*BNJ* 139 F40).<sup>29</sup>

It is also important to note that with regard to the chronology of the expedition Diodorus and Curtius follow the same tradition, though with minor differences. Alexander's peaceful stay in the country of Sopeithes follows a series of battles which, according to Diodorus, his

28 Curtius on this occasion alludes to Herodotus' famous formula *λέγειν τὰ λεγόμενα* (Hdt. VII 152.3): "nam nec adfirmare sustineo, de quibus dubito, nec subducere, quae accepi" (IX 1.34).

29 L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York 1960, 106, supposes that Strabo's account of the famous hounds refers to Aristobulos; cf. also loc. cit. 175. Cf. also the commentary on *BNJ* 139 F40 by Frances (Alberta) Pownall. But, Aristobulos' testimony does not eliminate Onesicritus as the basic source. On this point see below.

troops faced in the country of the Cathaeans (XVII 91.2–4). Curtius' version is very vague in this respect. He does not mention the Cathaeans by name but tells us of 8,000 casualties during the capture of an anonymous big city located in a marshy area (IX 1.14–18). Thereupon the fear and terror of the Macedonian army caused the inhabitants of the next besieged city to capitulate. Their pardoning by Alexander set an example for the surrender of other cities (IX 1.19–23). Arrian accorded great weight to the fight against the Cathaeans. But he ignores, presumably for dramaturgical reasons, the sources of the Macedonians' stay with Sopeithes.<sup>30</sup>

The depiction of the customs in the country of Sopeithes is obviously based on source material by Onesicritus (*BNJ* 134 F21). But the respective references in Strabo (XV 1.30) relate to the country of the Cathaeans, whose location and distinction from the dominion of Sopeithes remain quite vague. This has naturally led to different interpretations.<sup>31</sup> I will be as brief as possible on this. Cathaea, according to Strabo, is famous for its horses and dogs. He credits Onesicritus as his source of information about three local customary practices: they elect the handsomest man as king; two months after a child's birth, magistrates decide on its physical aptitude for being reared; men dye their beards in various colours. – Strabo next proceeds to the Indians' love of colour, colourful dress and adornment in general. He then returns to the people of Cathaea: "The following too is reported as a custom peculiar to the Cathaeans: the groom and bride choose one another themselves, and wives are burned up with their deceased husbands for a reason of this kind – that they sometimes fell in love with young men and deserted their husbands or poisoned them; and therefore the Cathaeans established this as a law, thinking that they would put a stop to the poisoning. However, the law is not stated in a plausible manner, nor the cause of it either". This expression of his scepticism is immediately followed by a notice on the country of Sopeithes. "It is said that ... there is a mountain of mineral salt sufficient for the whole of India". Other mountains are said to contain excellent gold and silver mines, "as has been plainly shown by Gorgus the mining expert". The Indians, however, were not in the least familiar with exploiting these mines. Strabo follows up this passage (Str. XV 1.30 = Onesicritus *BNJ* 134 F21) with the account of the legendary dogs presented to Alexander in Sopeithes' country (XV 1.31).

The question which information relates to the customs and traditions of the Cathaeans and which to the territory of Sopeithes cannot be conclusively clarified. At any rate, the above-quoted passages make it clear that a distinction is to be made between the two regions. The customs and traditions Strabo states in regard to Cathaea are in line with the accounts Diodorus and Curtius give of the country of Sopeithes. This also applies to the note that the handsomest is selected as king. This custom would preclude dynastic policies. Such a restriction of royal power would definitely fit into the picture.

Onesicritus' report on the country of Sopeithes, in my view, might also have included the story of those splendid hunting dogs with a tiger in their bloodline. After all, Onesicritus was

30 On Arrian's historiographical concept esp. cf. BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 8), 336–337: "It is clear that Arrian had little or no interest in events between Sangala and the Hyphasis. His reasons are likely to have been compositional ... The antithesis would be spoiled if between Sangala and the Hyphasis there was an interlude of comparative ease and soft living".

31 Cf. Whitby's commentary on *BNJ* 134 F21.



known for spectacular depictions of exotic animals and plants.<sup>32</sup> Also the abundance of salt could be well in keeping with what we know about Onesicritus.<sup>33</sup> What proportion of Strabo's depiction is derived from the otherwise unknown Gorgus remains uncertain. The key problem is the ritual practice of suttee, the tradition of burning widows, which for India Onesicritus is the first to chronicle.<sup>34</sup> If this report is applied to the country of Sopeithes, discrepancies emerge. On the one hand, the custom referred to tarnishes the otherwise quite idealised picture of the country of Sopeithes. On the other, Strabo's report that among the Cathaeans the spouses choose each other themselves, so marriages are not arranged, does not fit in very well to the above-mentioned report on marriage politics in the service of eugenic considerations. As a decisive point, there is the additional fact that Diodorus, too, mentions widow burning in his account of the Cathaeans but does not in the context of the distinct country of Sopeithes (XVII 91.2–3). Such an allocation would not resolve all problems associated with Strabo's report but would alleviate them. In this case, the idealising picture of Sopeithes' country would remain internally consistent.

If we only considered the classic Alexander historians and disregarded Strabo for a moment, we would not conclude that there was another description of a local principality which in terms of exoticism and the motifs incorporated from Greek concepts of the ideal state even surpassed the depiction of Sopeithes' country. It is Onesicritus' report on the territory of Musicanus in the south-east of the Indus region.

### 3.2 *The country of Musicanus*

It is only due to Strabo's references to Onesicritus' depiction of the land of Musicanus that the author from Astypaleia occupies a firm place in treatises on the topic of utopian portrayals in ancient, predominantly Hellenistic, literature. To what extent the category 'utopian' applies remains to be seen. Marek Winiarczyk has taken a critical look at this question.<sup>35</sup> Since there is a whole body of literature surrounding Onesicritus' respective account, I will be very brief here.

32 Onesicritus also reports that the Bactrians bred a special type of dogs in order to eliminate the sick and the old. "One can see that outside the wall of the Bactrian metropolis is clean, whereas most of the interior is full of human bones. Alexander terminated this custom"; *BNJ* 134 F5 Whitby (= Str. XI 11.3). On the image of Alexander as a "civilizing force" cf. Whitby's commentary; cf. also P. PÉDECH, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre: Callisthène, Onésicrite, Néarque, Ptolémée, Aristobule*, Paris 1984, 15–69, 85; A. DEMANDT, *Alexander der Große. Leben und Legende*, Munich 2009, 241.

33 Onesicritus says that in Carmania there are mines of silver, copper and cinnabar "and that there are two mountains, one of arsenic and the other of salt"; cf. PÉDECH, *Historiens* (n. 33), 147; Whitby on *BNJ* 134 F32 (= Str. XV 2.14). – In Strabo, the mention of the above-named 'mountain of mineral salt' in the country of Sopeithes is not explicitly linked to Onesicritus. However, in a completely different place, there is a reference to Strabo to the effect that Cleitarchus mentioned a 'salt-rock' in India. *FGrH* 137 F28 = Str. V 2.6.

34 Cf. Whitby on *BNJ* 134 F21: "Onesikritos provides the earliest account of the practice of suttee; Aristobulos (*BNJ* 139 F42) offers some additional information, though whether this is from his own researches in India or a fuller representation of the original text of Onesikritos is unknown". Pownall on the contrary underlines in her commentary on *BNJ* 139 F42 the differences between the moralizing report of Onesicritus (and Hieronymus) and Aristobulos.

35 M. WINIARCZYK, "Das Werk 'Die Erziehung Alexanders' des Onesikritos von Astypalaia (*FGrHist* 134 F 1–39). Forschungsstand (1832–2005) und Interpretationsversuch", *Eos* 94 (2007 [2009]), 197–250; M. WINIARCZYK, *Die hellenistischen Utopien*, Berlin/New York 2011, 73–115.

The extant Alexander historians focused on the untrustworthiness of the local ruler, who initially submitted to Alexander but then raised a rebellion and was put to death.<sup>36</sup> Neither Diodorus nor Curtius make mention of any peculiarities in the country of King Musicanus (D.S. XVII 102.5), or alternatively the *princeps* of the Musicani (Curt. IX 8.8, X 16). Only Arrian refers briefly to the country's merits. He speaks of the "kingdom (ἐπικράτειαν) of Musicanus, which was reported to be the richest (εὐδαιμονεστάτην) of all India". And he recounts that Alexander "much admired his (Musicanus') city and the country" (VI 15.5–7). To my mind, we could see in this a reflex of Onesicritus' depiction of Musicanus' kingdom, a depiction which we get to know about through Strabo and which is charged with utopian-like elements (*FGrH* 134 F24–25).<sup>37</sup> But this shimmer of utopian scenery in Arrian is overshadowed by Musicanus' rebellion and execution (*An.* VI 17.1–2).

Since Onesicritus' idealising depiction received wide attention,<sup>38</sup> I would like to highlight but one aspect. Beside a region blessed with rich nature and a frugal way of living, which enables people to reach an age of 130 years, beside wise laws (for example on the handling of poisonous and healing plants), there is a range of rules and institutions which are hard to reconcile with the power and pomp of a king: abstinence from the use of gold and silver, disdain for the art of war, absence of slavery, but a kind of helotry and syssitia similar to those in Sparta. Krzysztof Nawotka has outlined the overall impression concisely: "In the account of Onesicritus this kingdom had less in common with India than with a conventionally idolized image of an aristocratic country similar to Sparta or Crete".<sup>39</sup>

### Résumé: Onesicritus' impact on the image of India within the histories of Alexander

The comparison of the portrayal of Musicanus' country with conditions in Sparta and Crete, already broached in Strabo, brings to mind Diodorus' brief reference to the system of double government in Patala, which is so reminiscent of diarchy in Sparta (XVII 104.1–2). Therefore Onesicritus would also be eligible as a source for this report. A look at Strabo supports the assumption. Strabo immediately continues his report on the Patalene and the city of Patala (XV 1.33) with a reference to Onesicritus' depiction of the coastal area (XV 1.34 = *BNJ* 134 F26). This passage, again, is seamlessly followed up by the presentation of the land of Musicanus, which is also based on Onesicritus (XV 1.34 = *BNJ* 134 F24). This makes it all too understandable that Paul Pédech wants to ascribe the portrayal of the political organisation in Patala to Onesicritus.<sup>40</sup> That the latter recounted even more of the Patalene region and the Indus delta is suggested by further testimony (*BNJ* 134 F10 = Plin. *Nat.* II 184–185).

36 For details cf. NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 20), 325–327.

37 T.S. BROWN, *Onesicritus: A Study in Hellenistic Historiography*, Berkeley 1949, 55, supposes that Curtius, who mentions the *gens* of the *Musicani*, but not a ruler named *Musicanus*, refers to yet another primary source: "Arrian's account probably goes back in part to still a third source, distinct from Onesicritus, yet sharing with Onesicritus in the error of calling the king Musicanus".

38 Cf., for example, BROWN, *Onesicritus* (n. 38), esp. 54–62; PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 30), 100–105; PÉDECH, *Historiens* (n. 33), 114–123; WINIARCZYK, "Werk" (n. 36), 219–224; WINIARCZYK, *Hellenistischen* (n. 36), 102–115.

39 NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 20), 325.

40 PÉDECH, *Historiens* (n. 33), 125–126: "La séduction du régime spartiate lui a inspiré [scil. à Onésicrite] une autre idéalisation sur laquelle nous n'avons qu'une indication fugitive chez Diodore, celle de la ville de Patala". – P. RIEGER, *Kleitarchos und die Alexander-Vulgata. Zur Frage der Quellenbenützung Diodors im XVII. Buch*, Diss. Graz 2005, 126, opines that Diodorus himself or his source transferred



In my view, it is possible to extend reflections on this matter still further, for instance on the description of Taxiles' residence and territory. After all, Onesicritus' detailed account of his encounter with the naked Indian sages at Taxila, recorded by Strabo and Plutarch, became legendary (*BNJ* 134 F17). There is clear evidence that he also described the region at the Hyphasis (*BNJ* 134 F9). Therefore, would it not also be possible to attribute the difference from the vulgate version in the description of the region beyond the river to him? The statement that across the river the largest elephants occur (*Arr. An.* V 25.1–2) would tie in only too nicely with the well-known testimonies on India's fauna (*BNJ* 134 F13–14).<sup>41</sup> However, the crucial aspect of these reflections is a different one. All of the descriptions discussed here show traces of an idealising presentation in which Alexander – at least originally – appeared in a favourable light. These traces, which are – as we have seen – noticeable to a greater or lesser extent, have been pointed out in detail wherever appropriate, so that I can now be brief in summarising the major points.

I will start with a series of episodes in which – quite skilfully in terms of narrative technique – an initially threatening scenario all at once changes into a hospitable atmosphere. This links Alexander's arrival in the country of Sopeithes with his entry in Taxila or the encounter with the Sambastae. It might well be possible that also the contradictory records of Alexander's entry into Nysa – peaceful or after initial resistance – are attributable to different adaptations of a version that preserved such a moment of surprise. – A not very specific means of meeting the public's expectations, but one that Onesicritus readily used, is the depiction of a country's exotic features. But what matters here is the combination of particularly blessed natural conditions with the good government and administration of the country. This is what the countries of Sopeithes and Musicanus have in common with the situation in the dominion of Taxila or the territory at the Ganges, but also in Nysa. It is still more important to see, however, that a number of the local communities addressed are governed in an exemplary manner by aristocratic elites or even on the basis of democratic conditions. This applies to Nysa and the countries at the Ganges as well as to the ethnic groups of the Sibae and Sambastae. Where monarchical rule prevails, the exercise of power seems to be curbed, either by institutions, customs and traditions, as in Patala and Sopeithes' and Musicanus' countries, or only by the maturity of character and the wisdom of the ruler, as in Taxila.

It is a matter of course that these reflections on Onesicritus' impact on the image of India in the works of the surviving Alexander historians cannot be more than assumptions. Their justification will have to stand the test of criticism. That it is worth the effort to look for traces of Onesicritus' impact also beyond the well-known fragments or testimonies will finally be demonstrated in another case. For, as Sabine Müller put it in her book on Alexander, Onesicritus rates among the most interesting and at the same time most elusive primary authors.<sup>42</sup>

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“Eigenschaften des musikanischen Königreichs ... was nämlich die Lage und grundsätzliche Wohlgeordnetheit im Vergleich mit Sparta betrifft, auf die Stadt Patala [...]”. But this would rule out Onesicritus as a source. Cf., on the other hand, N.G.L. HAMMOND, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The so-called Vulgate Authors: Diodorus, Justin and Curtius*, Cambridge 1983, 68, who supposes Diodorus' description of Patala's constitution to go back – via Diyllus – to Onesicritus.

41 Cf. generally on Onesicritus' reports about exotic animals BROWN, *Onesicritus* (n. 38), 92–95; PÉDECH, *Historiens* (n. 33), 147–148.

42 S. MÜLLER, *Alexander, Makedonien und Persien*, Berlin 2014, 58: “Onesikritos ... gehört zu den interessantesten und zugleich am wenigsten fassbaren Primärautoren”.

### Epilogue: On the high seas with Onesicritus

The general opinion on Onesicritus agrees that he not only created a highly idealising image of Alexander but also did not forget to make mention of his own significance.<sup>43</sup> This fact may also have influenced his relationship to Nearchus.<sup>44</sup> Among scholars, views on the conflict between the two and the question as to what rank Onesicritus held continue to be divergent.<sup>45</sup> One matter of contention – by Nearchus’ own account in Arrian – was the question as to whether or not and how to sail into the Persian Gulf.<sup>46</sup> The relevance and the essence of the dispute, however, have been assessed most diversely. A few references may suffice here.

To Wilhelm Capelle, author of the article on Nearchus in the *Realencyclopädie*, he was “the natural leader”, which he also demonstrated in his attitude towards Onesicritus.<sup>47</sup> Less in accordance with the prevailing zeitgeist but equally resolute in his judgement, Hermann Strasburger expressed his view on Onesicritus. Nearchus, and later on certainly also Alexander himself, had quite rightly reacted strongly to his “lunatic plan”. Strasburger decidedly speaks of the “phantastischen Vorschlag, anstatt in den Golf einzufahren, den Weg längs der arabischen Küste zu nehmen ... , was also auf eine Umschiffung Arabiens hinausgelaufen wäre” [fantastical proposal to take the route along the Arabian coastline instead of entering the Gulf ..., which in effect would have amounted to a circumnavigation of Arabia]. Well, “fool” (ῥήτιον) was the term which – according to Arrian (*Ind.* 32.10) – Nearchus himself used to chide his rival. He had exposed the fleet to the greatest risks (*An.* VII 20.10). However, both of Arrian’s reports, which moreover differ in detail, do not demonstrate clearly that Onesicritus intended to sail around Arabia. Thus, Truesdell S. Brown, for instance, emphasised the sharpness of the dispute but wanted to interpret Onesicritus’ intention in a different way: “Very likely Onesicritus knew they had reached the gulf, but believed that the opposite shore would prove more hospitable ...”. But he also noted that a final judgement could hardly be reached.<sup>48</sup> Lionel Pearson, in principle, shared a similar view on this matter but additionally noted, “One may suspect that Onesicritus gave a somewhat

43 Cf., for example, Helmut Berve’s statement, “daß der Verfasser [scil. Onesicritus] mit Vorliebe von seiner eigenen Person sprach, natürlich nicht ohne eine gewisse Selbstgefälligkeit”. He viewed Nearchus, by contrast, as “eine der prachtvollsten Persönlichkeiten in Al.s Heer” and acknowledged him as the only one “der neben dem Könige eine ganz eigene Leistung aufzuweisen hat”; H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II: *Prosopographie*, Munich 1926, 290, 272.

44 Andrea Zambrini refers to Onesicritus and Nearchus as “deux ennemis inséparables”; A. ZAMBRINI, “Néarque, un ami fidèle à Alexandre jusqu’à la fin?”, *GeorgAnt* 22 (2013), 35–42, 38. – However, Zambrini also warns against overestimating the conflict between the two as a motive for Nearchus’ report. Positioning himself as a loyal friend of Alexander’s and defending himself against suspicions of having been among the conspirators against Alexander was even more important to Nearchus than the polemics against Onesicritus. Cf. A. ZAMBRINI, “The Historians of Alexander the Great”, in: J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, Malden, MA/Oxford 2010, 210–220, 214–215; Zambrini, “Néarque” (n. 45).

45 Cf. S. MÜLLER, “Onesikritos und das Achaimenidenreich”, *Anabasis* 2 (2011), 45–66, 53–55, with further references.

46 *BNJ* 133 F1 IX (= Arr. *Ind.* 32.9–12; *An.* VII 20.9–10).

47 “Sehr schön zeigt sich sein (scil. Nearchus’) klarer Führerblick gegenüber einem abwegigen Einfall des Onesikritos, der das Gelingen des ganzen Unternehmens gefährdet hätte”; W. CAPELLE, “Nearchos”, in: *RE* XVI Stuttgart 1935, 2132–2154, 2143–2144.

48 BROWN, *Onesicritus* (n. 38), 9–10.

different account of this incident”.<sup>49</sup> Paul Pédech even sought to calm the situation: “La collaboration entre Néarque et lui connut des moments de désaccord, qu’il ne faut pas exagérer. Dans le détroit d’Ormuz, Onesicrite voulait cingler sur le cap Massandâm, promoteur de la côte d’Arabie, tandis que Néarque, s’en tenant à ses instructions, entendait longer la côte iranienne et, comme il était juste, son avis prévalut”. Nearchus had sung his own praise and blown up the importance of the dispute.<sup>50</sup> The recent commentary by Michael Whitby also does not assume Onesicritus to have pursued risky plans: “It appears from Arrian, *Indica* 32.9. ... that Onesikritos had not suggested that the fleet should transfer to following the southern shore of the Persian Gulf, but merely that it should avoid the full circuit around the northern coast of the Straits of Hormuz by sailing due west to the headland and then, presumably, continue straight on for the northern shore near the island of Queshm”.<sup>51</sup> But the voices that in this case ascribe to Onesicritus greater ambition towards exploring the ocean have equally not died away. Marek Winarczyk has pointed this out.<sup>52</sup> The passage on Nearchus’ justification of his conduct, “that in fact he had not been sent to navigate the Ocean” (Arr. *An.* VII 20.10), could suggest that Onesicritus would not have been opposed to seeing himself as an explorer of the ocean. This does in no way mean that at that time he proposed risking a circumnavigation of Arabia.

Whatever the case may be, the question as to the concrete plans which Onesicritus had developed in this controversy with Nearchus can no longer be answered unequivocally. But we can assume that the rivalry between these two made itself felt in their writings not only in this one issue.<sup>53</sup> So it would not be surprising if Onesicritus had underscored his status as navigator and explorer of the seas.<sup>54</sup> After all, Alexander had made preparations for a large expedition to Arabia still in his lifetime. And very soon after Alexander’s death, people’s imagination set to work, ascribing to Alexander ever bolder plans for future conquests and discoveries. Isn’t it reasonable to suppose that also Onesicritus should have sought literary elevation, amplifying his role and his merits as an explorer on the high seas?

We know that Onesicritus’ critic Nearchus provided marvels in his report and in the fulfilment of his tasks was guided by the role model of his king.<sup>55</sup> Lionel Pearson has in particular pointed to the fact that Nearchus created the impression of having crossed the equatorial

49 PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 30), 83–84.

50 Cf. PEDECH, *Historiens* (n. 33), 74: “Néarque a monté cet incident en épingle, se vantant d’avoir, par cette décision, sauvé la flotte”.

51 Whitby on *BNJ* 133 F1 IX.

52 Cf. WINARCZYK, “Werk” (n. 36), 204–205.

53 Cf. MÜLLER, *Alexander* (n. 43), 60–61: “Die Animositäten endeten nicht mit dem Alexanderzug. Auf der Basis ihrer historiographischen Betätigung setzten sie die Rivalität fort”.

54 It is noteworthy that Curtius mentions Nearchus and Onesicritus in the same breath when describing Alexander’s order for the naval expedition: “... Nearchos atque Onesicrito nauticae rei peritis imperavit, ut validissimas navium deducerent in Oceanum progressique, quoad tuto possent, naturam maris noscerent ...” (IX 10.3).

55 Cf. MÜLLER, *Alexander* (n. 43), 69: “Weitere Tendenzen neben der für Alexander günstigen Darstellung sind wohl die aufs literarische Gebiet übertragenen Rivalitäten mit Onesikritos und Nearchos’ Verpflichtung gegenüber den Konventionen des Reiseberichtsgenres und der traditionellen Indienbilder”; see also V. BUCCIANTINI, “L’isola del Sole nel Periplo di Nearchos. Problemi d’identificazione e rappresentazione”, *OTerr* 8 (2002), 49–58; V. BUCCIANTINI, “Margaritai. Perle d’Oriente nella storiografia alessandrina”, in: E. Olshausen and V. Sauer (eds.), *Die Schätze der Erde. Natürliche*

regions on his voyage. He assumes that Nearchus wanted to follow the role model of Scylax of Caryanda.<sup>56</sup> In doing so, Nearchus' focus had been on the geographical expectations both of his audience and his king. This placed him in a comparable situation to his rival Onesicritus: "It remained, however, to find some proof that the Indus was the boundary of the normally habitable world, that the country beyond was not a 'white man's country'. It was desirable that Alexander should reach the tropic of Cancer in India, and so we find Onesicritus asserting that he did so, while Nearchus claimed to have made observations on his voyages which proved not only that he had crossed the tropic but that he actually crossed the equator".<sup>57</sup> What if Onesicritus not only reported on appropriate 'observations' of the sun's position and the stars of the night sky in India, which was what the audience expected, but also magnified the significance of his role on the voyage as explorer of the edges of the navigable world and as a pioneer for Alexander's potential future deeds? In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to a statement on Onesicritus which, to my knowledge, has attracted little notice and was penned by Seneca.

Seneca's repeated criticism of Alexander's limitless striving for conquest is widely known. At his time, all kinds of possible and impossible plans of exploration and conquest had been attributed to the king of the Macedonians. Remarkably enough, Seneca at one point in his moralising criticism of Alexander expressly refers to Onesicritus. The context addresses the wise man's striving for the possession of essential knowledge: the distinction between the base and the honourable – *illa turpis honestique distinctio* (*Ben.* VII 2.1). The pursuit of this possession is contrasted with Alexander's pointless pursuit of conquest, "... who, although he stood upon the shore of the Indian Ocean, had need of more territory than he had passed through. Nor did he own the kingdoms that he was holding or had conquered, while Onesicritus, who had been sent ahead to discover new ones, was wandering about the ocean and stirring up war on unknown seas" – "cum in oceano Onesicritus praemissus explorator erraret et bella in ignoto mari quaereret" (*Ben.* VII 2.5).<sup>58</sup> We do not know what Seneca in his mention of Onesicritus specifically referred to. But the taken-for-grantedness with which the latter's name crossed his mind in this context could give us food for thought.

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*Ressourcen in der antiken Welt: Stuttgarter Kolloquium zur Historischen Geographie des Altertums 10, 2008*, Stuttgart 2012, 67–74.

56 Cf. PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 30), esp. 15–16 and 142–144, with reference to Arr. *Ind.* 25.4–6.

57 PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 30), 15, with reference to Onesicritus *BNJ* 134 F9 (Plin. *Nat.* II 183); Arr. *Ind.* 25.4–6.

58 Translation taken from John W. Basore (1964).



# Alexander and the palace of Memnon

*Adam Lukaszewicz (University of Warsaw)*

In 332 BC Alexander in his new role of an Egyptian pharaoh had before him a few months on the Nile in a favourable season. From the *History of Alexander* by Curtius Rufus we learn that Alexander, when in Egypt, desired to visit Thebes including the *Memnonis Tithonique celebrata regia*.<sup>1</sup> However, the project of visiting the palace of Memnon and Tithonos was never realized. The most probable reason was Alexander's fear of advancing too far toward south, because of the risk of being cut off from the sea by the Persian enemy.

Why did Alexander desire to visit a palace of Memnon in Thebes? Misinterpretation of a pharaonic temple as a palace is a well known error, which may be illustrated by the example of buildings in Abydos or – in more recent times – by a wrong interpretation of the temple of Luxor. Memnon was in the Greek mythology a king of Ethiopia, among other versions. However, Ethiopia in Greek literature sometimes includes also Thebaid.<sup>2</sup>

Which one of the Memnonian sites in Thebes was called by Curtius the palace of Memnon? Various Memnonia were known in Egypt. An important temple built by Seti I at Abydos was, according to the testimony of Strabo, called Memnonium.<sup>3</sup> A similar statement can be found in Pliny: “Abydos Memnonis regia et Osiris templo inclutum”.<sup>4</sup> Also Athenaeus confirms the connection of the temple of Abydos with the Ethiopian Memnon.<sup>5</sup> Strabo supposes that the Labyrinth might also be a Memnonium built by the same ruler who built the Memnonia in Abydos and in Thebes.<sup>6</sup>

The most famous monument in Egypt attributed to Memnon can still be seen in western Thebes. Two giant statues of Amenhotep III of the Eighteenth dynasty are known as the colossi of Memnon. These statues stood in front of the king's temple. Current excavations allow us to see some remnants of the enormous building. This temple did not exist any more in the Roman period. The temple of Luxor, in large part a work of the same Amenhotep, was never considered a Memnonium.

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1 Curt. IV 8.3.

2 Philostratus mentions two Memnons, the Trojan and the Ethiopian: Philostr. *Her.* 3.4. A still useful general discussion of Memnon can be found in A.-J. Letronne, *La statue vocale de Memnon considérée dans ses rapports avec l'Égypte et la Grèce*, Paris 1833. See A. Bataille, *Les Memnonia: Recherches de papyrologie et d'épigraphie grecques sur la nécropole de la Thèbes d'Égypte aux époques hellénistique et romaine*, Cairo 1952, 1–21; A. Gardiner, “The Egyptian Memnon”, *JEA* 47 (1961), 91–99; G. Haeny, “L'origine des traditions thébaines concernant Memnon”, *BIFAO* 64 (1966), 203–212; R.S. Bianchi, “Memnonskolosse”, in: W. Helck and W. Westendorf (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, IV, Wiesbaden 1982, 23–24; G.W. Bowersock, “The miracle of Memnon”, *BASP* 21 (1984), 21–32; A. Bernand and É. Bernand, *Les inscriptions grecques et latines du Colosse de Memnon*, Cairo 1960.

3 Str. XVII 1.42.

4 Plin. *Nat.* V 60.

5 Ath. XV 680.

6 Str. XVII 1.42.

The name of Memnon is a Greek misinterpretation of an Egyptian royal epithet. The Ramesside appellation *Mery-Amun*, pronounced approximately Meamun, produced the Greek name of Memnon.<sup>7</sup> Strabo states that another name of Memnon is Ismandes. The names Ismandes Memnon are undoubtedly an equivalent of *Usermaatre Mery-Amun*.<sup>8</sup>

The name of the western Theban area of Memnonia originates from the Memnonium of Ramesses II (Ramesseum) and the Memnonium of Ramesses III (Medinet Habu). The Greek name of Memnonia for the Theban West appeared long before the earliest record of the voice uttered at dawn by the statue of Amenhotep III. The area had been already called Memnonia when the Greek-speaking visitors understood the colossal statues as images of the eponym of western Thebes. When the strange voice appeared in the northern colossus of “Memnon” in the early Roman period, an appropriate legend was created to explain the phenomenon as a cry of Memnon directed to his mother Eos.<sup>9</sup> The tomb of Ramesses VI (a son of Ramesses III, who was both *Mery-Amun* and *Neb-Maat-Re*) in the Valley of the Kings was consequently considered the “tomb of Memnon”.<sup>10</sup>

The giant statue of Memnon vocalis was later silenced as a result of repair works being a part of preparations for the visit of the emperor Antoninus Caracalla in AD 215.<sup>11</sup> In later antiquity the temple and palace complex of the Memnonium of Ramesses III was called kastra Memnoneion.<sup>12</sup> In the Coptic period it was called Djeme; the name in Arabic is Medinet Habu.<sup>13</sup>

In the present writer’s opinion it is the complex of Medinet Habu that is recorded by Curtius Rufus in the *History of Alexander* as *Memnonis Tithonique celebrata regia*.<sup>14</sup> A coproprietor of the “palace” mentioned by Curtius was Tithonos, the father of Memnon. There is no satisfactory Greek explanation of the name of Tithonos.<sup>15</sup> Already under the Nineteenth dynasty, in the reign of *Mery-Amun* Ramesses II, the god Tatenen appears in the titles of kings. He is mentioned in some inscriptions as king’s father.<sup>16</sup> Sethnacht, the father of Ramesses III, used in his *Nebty*-name the name of Ptah-Tatenen. Also some rulers of the Twentieth dynasty, including Ramesses III, had in their secondary names a mention of this

7 A. ŁUKASZEWICZ, *Aegyptiacae quaestiones tres*, Warsaw 1995, 55–73; A. ŁUKASZEWICZ, “Memnon, king of Egypt”, *JJP* 25 (1995), 131–146.

8 Cf. J. VON BECKERATH, *Handbuch der ägyptischen Königsnamen*, Munich 1984, 94.

9 A. ŁUKASZEWICZ, “Memnon, his ancient visitors and some related problems”, in: K. Lembke, M. Minas-Nerpel and S. Pfeiffer (eds.), *Tradition and Transformation: Egypt under Roman Rule: proceedings of the international conference, Hildesheim, Roemer- and Pelizaeus-Museum, 3/6 July 2008*, Leiden/Boston 2010, 255–263.

10 The present writer carries out a survey of the graffiti of visitors in the tomb of Ramesses VI under the auspices of the Foundation for Polish Science (Fundacja na rzecz Nauki Polskiej) and the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology (University of Warsaw).

11 A. ŁUKASZEWICZ, *Aegyptiaca Antoniniana: Działalność Karakalli w Egipcie (215–216)*, Warsaw 1993, 163–166; ŁUKASZEWICZ, *Aegyptiacae* (n. 7), 58; Cf. ŁUKASZEWICZ, “Memnon” (n. 7), 131.

12 Cf. *UPZ* II 180b. 22–26, commentary on 173; H. Kees, “Memnon, Memnonia”, in: *RE* XV Stuttgart, 1931, 650; A. BATAILLE, “Thèbes gréco-romaine”, *CE* 26 (1951), 325–353, 327 n. 3.

13 H. MESSIHA, “Memnonia”, in: A.S. Atiya (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, V, New York/Toronto 1991, 1586.

14 Curt. IV 8.3

15 Cf. E. Würst, “Tithonos”, in: *RE* VI Stuttgart 1937, 1512–1522, especially 1512–1513.

16 Cf. H.A. SCHLÖGL, *Der Gott Tatenen: Nach Texten und Bildern des Neuen Reiches*, Freiburg/Göttingen 1980, 56 ff; BECKERATH, *Handbuch* (n. 8), 89 (Ramesses II), 94 (Ramesses IV), 95 (Ramesses VII).



god.<sup>17</sup> The transformation of Tatenen into Tithonos of the Greeks seems evident. Also *Ese* = Isis, a frequent element of the names of Ramesside queens, could produce an association with Eos, the mother of Memnon.

It seems relevant to the origin of the palace of Memnon that the complex of Medinet Habu built by Ramesses III contained not only a temple but also a royal palace. Ramesses III (c. 1184–1153 BC) was a great king, a victorious warlord who saved Egypt from invasion of the Sea Peoples. P. Harris 1 contains evidence of prosperity of Egypt under his rule.<sup>18</sup> We may take for granted that the renown of the king reached the Aegean. The victories of Ramesses III found artistic expression on the walls of the “Memnonium”. They are likely to have influenced the Greek legend of Memnon. Memnon, a hero of Troy and a king of a southern country, was a legendary ruler of Ethiopia, but in reality he resided in Upper Egypt.

It is no wonder that Alexander wanted to visit the famous “palace”. If he came to Thebes, he would certainly visit other temples of Amun, the god whom the Macedonian conqueror met in the Western Desert of Egypt.<sup>19</sup>

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17 BECKERATH, *Handbuch* (n. 8), 93–95.

18 W. ERICHSEN, *Papyrus Harris I: Hieroglyphische Transkription*, Brussels 1933; J.H. BREASTED, *Ancient Records of Egypt: historical documents from the earliest times to the Persian conquest*, IV, Chicago 1906, 87–206.

19 It is a question whether the god of the oasis of Siwa was originally the same god as Amun, king of gods, worshipped at Thebes. Even if initially they had been two different deities, in the times of Alexander they were considered the same god.



# Cleomenes of Naucratis in Pseudo-Aristotle's *Oeconomica* and the *topoi* of the Ancient Egyptian Propaganda

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## Abstract

The article considers the pieces of evidence about Cleomenes of Naucratis in Pseudo-Aristotle's *Oeconomica* ([Arist.] *Oec.* II. 2.33b, 1352a.23–28; 33c, 1352a.29–1352b.4; 33f, 1352b.20–25). This evidence seems inspired by the *topoi* of the Egyptian propaganda, which would normally be directed against the foreign or impious rulers of the country of the highest, royal, status (ascribing to Cleomenes sacrilege against the sacred animals, in a plausible parallel to the Classical tradition on the invasion of Artaxerxes III in Egypt and to the plot of the mythological *Book of Victory over Seth*; ascribing to him a menace to stop the temple ritual, which has also been said about Pharaoh Tachos, considered by the Egyptians an impious ruler in Egyptian tradition). The plots connected in *Oeconomica* with Cleomenes must have been intended to represent unfavourably not only him but also Alexander backing his activities and were probably consequently re-used by the propaganda of the Satrap Ptolemy.

The name of Cleomenes of Naucratis is undoubtedly the most famous among those known to us in connection with Alexander's organization of newly occupied Egypt in 332–331 BC.<sup>1</sup> One can say that the very denotation attached to his name (Arr. *An.* III 5.4; Ps.-Callisth. A I 31; Jul. V I 25) is tell-tale: it shows that its bearer was a Greek originating from the ancient pan-Hellenic colony in Western Delta;<sup>2</sup> thus, unlike the Macedonian newcomers, he must have “known the ropes” inside Egypt perfectly well. In a way this must have defined his ascent in Alexander's administration of Egypt: first a governor of a special border district of “Arabia at Heroopolis” (Arr. *An.* III 5.4: Λιβύης δὲ τῆς προσχώρου ἄρχειν δίδωσιν

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1 F. STÄHELIN, “Kleomenes (8)”, in: *RE* XI, Stuttgart 1921, 710–712; H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II, Munich 1926, 210–211 (no. 210); W. HECKEL, *Who Was Who in the Age of Alexander the Great? Prosopography of Alexander's Empire*, Malden, MA/Oxford 2006, 88–89; also: A. ANDRÉADÈS, “Antimène de Rhodes et Cleomène de Naucratis”, *BCH* 53 (1929), 1–18; B.A. VAN GRONINGEN, “De Cleomene Naucratis”, *Mnemosyne* 53 (1925), 101–130; B.A. VAN GRONINGEN, *Aristote, le second livre de l'économie*, Leiden 1933; J. SEIBERT, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Ptolemaios' I.*, Munich 1969, 39–51; J. SEIBERT, *Alexander der Große*, Darmstadt 1972, 125–126; J. SEIBERT, “Nochmals zu Kleomenes von Naukratis”, *Chiron* 2 (1972), 99–102; J. VOGT, “Kleomenes aus Naukratis – Herr von Ägypten”, *Chiron* 1 (1971), 153–157; K. POLANYI, *The Livelihood of Man*, New York/London 1977, 240–251; G. LE RIDER, “Cléomène de Naucratis”, *BCH* 121 (1997), 71–93.

2 See on Naucratis under Alexander and in the Hellenistic time: G.M. COHEN, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, the Red Sea Basin and North Africa*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 2006, 414–416.

Ἀπολλώνιον Χαρίνου, Ἀραβίας δὲ τῆς πρὸς Ἡρώων πόλει Κλεομένην τὸν ἐκ Ναυκράτιος)<sup>3</sup> and a collector of taxes from the “nomarchs” (ibid.: καὶ τούτῳ παρηγγέλλετο τοὺς μὲν νομάρχας ἔαν ἄρχειν τῶν νομῶν τῶν κατὰ σφᾶς καθάπερ ἐκ παλαιοῦ καθειστῆκε; the “nomarchs” were probably Petisis and Doloaspis, who were given this rank by Alexander with allegedly different areas of responsibility: Arr. *An.* III 5.2),<sup>4</sup> he soon came to be a doubtless leader among the officials in charge of Egypt. Alexander trusted to him the building and the settlement of Alexandria ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1352a.28–31; see in this source his denotation as “Alexandrian” and not “Naucratis”: ([Arist.] *Oec.* 33a; Just. XIII 4.11),<sup>5</sup> and this mission was, in all probability, a part of his authorities as Egypt’s financial administrator (they were taken on by Cleomenes due to his function of centralized collection of taxes gathered by the governors–“nomarchs”).<sup>6</sup> A number of sources state that Cleomenes performed functions of satrap over Egypt (Paus. I 6.3; [Arist.] *Oec.* 1352a.16; Dexipp. *FGrH* 100 F.8.2; Arr. *FGrH* 156 F.1.5); but his authorities were certainly confined to the civil administration and finances, while the military sphere was a charge of special commanders appointed by Alexander (Arr. *An.* III 5.2–3, 5; Curt. IV 8.4).

The Classical tradition on Cleomenes tells few details of his biography and personality; it nevertheless gives an idea of his harshness and readiness to ignore obstacles (also moral) in performing his tasks; this, however, did not lead Alexander to a disappointment about him as a governor of Egypt. In this way Cleomenes was presented in the statement by Arrian probably going back to the work by the king Ptolemy:<sup>7</sup> in his last year, after the oracle of Ammon sanctioned the worship of Hephaestion (Arr. *An.* VII 23.6), Alexander ordered to Cleomenes (“a bad man making a lot of wrong in Egypt”; ibid.: ἀνδρὶ κακῷ καὶ πολλὰ ἀδικήματα ἀδικήσαντι ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ) to take care about the establishment of Hephaestion’s cult at Alexandria (Arr. *An.* VII 23. 7–8) and promised for that to forgive to him all previous and future misdoings (εἴ τέ τι πρότερον ἡμάρτηκας, ἀφήσω σε τούτου, καὶ τὸ λοιπόν, ὅπῃλίκον ἂν ἡμάρτης, οὐδὲν πείσῃ ἐξ ἐμοῦ ἄχαρι). A detailed (in Arrian’s idea, a petty) enumeration of honours that had to be paid to Hephaestion (including a demand that all Alexandrian merchants should use signet-rings depicting the king’s friend), makes believe

3 This district is undoubtedly equivalent to “Arabia” in the list of Egyptian nomes under Ptolemy II (*PRev.Laws.* Col. 31a) and to the XXth nome of the Pharaonic Egypt (W. HELCK, *Die altägyptischen Gaue*, Wiesbaden 1974, 197–198, 212 (map 12)).

4 E. BADIAN, “The Administration of the Empire”, *G&R* 12 (1965), 171–172; J. YOYOTTE, “Le nom égyptien du “ministre de l’économie” de Saïs à Méroé”, *CRAI* 133 (1989), 81–82.

5 The “version A” of the *Romance of Alexander* presented Cleomenes taking part in the foundation of the city (and, moreover, as the king’s advisor in this act: Ps.-Callisth. A I 31.5). This evidence is hardly reliable: it is supported by neither description of Alexandria’s foundation in the historical narratives (see on this episode in general: P.M. FRASER, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Oxford 1972, I, 3–7; II, 1–12). The tradition of the *Romance* rather makes Cleomenes a participant of this episode due to his eventual well-known role in the establishment of this metropolis; see also our next note.

6 The “version β” of the *Romance of Alexander* tells that the Macedonian king obliged the Egyptians to pay taxes previously imposed by Darius and stated that this should be done not for his enrichment but for the possibility to create on their land the capital of entire world (Ps.-Callisth. β I 34). These words must allude indirectly to the financial functions of Cleomenes, which were thought inseparable from the erection of Alexandria.

7 N.G.L. HAMMOND, *Sources for Alexander the Great: An Analysis of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's Anabasis Alexandri*, Cambridge 1993, 304–305.

that Cleomenes was an obedient effector of king's will, even if it was troublesome for subjects; and this must have been the reason for Alexander to value him. After Alexander's death and Ptolemy's appointment as the satrap of Egypt Cleomenes opposed him but had no luck and was executed (Paus. I 6.2–3; cf. D.S. XVIII 14.1–2).

The basis for the observations of the present paper is the evidence on Cleomenes of Naucratis preserved in a long passage of *Oeconomica*, a treatise ascribed to Aristotle, which in fact was a combination of three peripatetic writings dating back to the last quarter of the 4th century BC.<sup>8</sup> *Oeconomica*'s Book Two, which contains the evidence on Cleomenes, is a separate treatise characterizing four types of “economies”, i.e. the systems of financial administration and profit-making: “royal”, “satrap”, “politic”, “private” ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1345b.11–14: Οικονομίαι δέ εἰσι τέτταρες ... βασιλική, σατραπική, πολιτική, ιδιωτική).<sup>9</sup> Aside from the general description of these four types at the start of the treatise, this characteristic is given through a number of examples relevant of each of them; these examples are anecdotes describing the profit-making strategies of the representatives of all the four systems. The descriptions of Cleomenes' financial strategies ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1352a.16–1352b.25; 1353b.1–7), like the neighbouring evidence on the stratagems of the Achaemenid and Alexander's vicegerents ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1351b.36–1352a.15; 1352b.26–1353a.4; 1353b.24–28) give the idea of the “satrap economy”. According to one of these statements, “when he (Cleomenes) was crossing the nome where the god is the crocodile”,<sup>10</sup> this reptile seized his slave; after that, having declared to the local priests that he was attacked and would punish crocodiles for that, Cleomenes ordered to open hunting on them and gave it up only when the priests paid to him as much gold as they could.<sup>11</sup> The statement following the former tells that during the building of Alexandria Cleomenes intended to move the sea port there

8 VAN GRONINGEN, *Aristote* (n. 1), 183–193, 204–205; LE RIDER, “Cléomène” (n. 1), 71; R. ZOEPFFEL (ed.), *Oikonomika: Schriften zu Hauswirtschaft und Finanzwesen*, Berlin 2006, 626–629, 633; cf. also: U. WILCKEN, “Zu den Pseudo-Aristotelischen *Oeconomica*”, *Hermes* 36 (1901), 187–200; S.K. EDDY, *The King is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism, 334–31 B.C.*, Lincoln 1961, 268–270, 309.

9 This treatise is believed to have been compiled in the Seleucid Empire either at the start of its history, ca. 300 BC. (R. DESCAT, “Qu'est-ce que l'économie royale?”, in: F. Prost (ed.), *L'Orient méditerranéen de la mort d'Alexandre aux campagnes de Pompée: cités et royaumes à l'époque hellénistique: Actes du colloque internationale de la SOPHAU*, Rennes, 4–6 avril 2003 Rennes 2003, Rennes 2003, 154), or under Antiochus I (G. APERGHIS, *The Royal Seleukid Economy: The Finances and Financial Administration of the Seleukid Empire*, Cambridge 2004, 135).

10 The matter is certainly about not one of the two big units under the authority of Petisis and Doloaspis, into which Egypt was divided under Alexander (see above; Arr. *An.* III 5.2 and n. 4) but about a traditional small province of Egypt. Judging from the verb used here, the nome in question was not the Faiyum, where the travel would be rather overland but probably one of the Nile valley nomes, where the flow of the river had really to be crossed by boat (perhaps, it was the 6th Upper Egyptian nome where the crocodile was worshipped under the name of *Ikr* and his figure was placed on the nome standard; see on the nomes with crocodile worship: L. KÁKOSY, „Krokodilkulte“, in: W. Helck, E. Otto and W. Westendorf (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, III, Wiesbaden 1980, 801–811). Some scholars believe nevertheless that this nome was the Faiyum: VAN GRONINGEN, *Aristote* (n. 1), 185; EDDY, *King* (n. 8), 270 (this author asserted mistakenly that this passage mentioned directly Crocodilopolis).

11 [Arist.] *Oec.* 1352a.23–28: Διαπλέοντος δ' αὐτοῦ τὸν νομόν, οὗ ἐστὶ θεὸς ὁ κροκόδειλος, ἡρπᾶσθη τις τῶν παίδων αὐτοῦ. Καλέσας οὖν τοὺς ἱερεῖς ἔφη πρότερος ἀδικηθεὶς ἀμύνεσθαι τοὺς κροκοδείλους, καὶ προσέταξε θηρεύειν αὐτούς. Οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς, ἵνα μὴ ὁ θεὸς αὐτῶν καταφρονῇ, συναγαγόντες ὅσον ἡδύναντο χρυσίον ἔδωσαν αὐτῷ καὶ οὕτως ἐπαύσατο.

from the region of Canopus and to resettle there the priests and all local proprietors; having got money for giving up this plan he returned to Canopus once more with a demand of an additional sum, which, as he said, made a difference between having the port established near the Pharos and at Canopus; and when the residents of Canopus refused, he resettled them.<sup>12</sup> According to the third statement, Cleomenes said to the Egyptian priests that the expenditures on temples were excessive and that it was necessary to close a number of temples and to dismiss a greater part of priests; at hearing that the priests, individually and collectively, gave to him the temple values as they believed he really intended to do so and they all wanted to preserve their temples and their ranks.<sup>13</sup>

From these statements one sees that the stratagems ascribed to Cleomenes (with a possible exception of the episode of the crocodile hunting) did not serve solely to his personal profit but were aimed to increase the income of the state (or, specifically, of its part trusted to Cleomenes' direction). These stratagems, though showing Cleomenes' resourcefulness, were not purely arbitrary on his part. In each of the three cases he used a situation, which was somewhat overdone by him but not completely contrived: the preservation of the old trade centers was really contrary to the royal will to transfer the foreign trade to Alexandria; the exaggerated expenses on temples could really affect other state needs; and even Cleomenes' menace to hunt the sacred crocodiles could, as we will see, be logically motivated. Each time Cleomenes acted according to the same basic scheme: he, so to say, specified a problem, and then proposed quite imperatively its solution, which was painful to his Egyptian subjects; finally he showed to them an alternative solution that included certain expenses on their part to the benefit of his treasury.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the protest of the Egyptians, well seen in these statements, was directed personally against Cleomenes, due to his rigidity combined with inventiveness; however, he

12 [Arist.] *Oec.* 1352a.28–1352b.4: Ἀλεξάνδρου <τε> τοῦ βασιλέως ἐντεταλμένου αὐτῷ οἰκίσει πόλιν πρὸς τῇ Φάρῳ καὶ τὸ ἐμπόριον τὸ πρότερον ὄν ἐπὶ τοῦ Κανώβου ἐνταῦθα ποιῆσαι, καταπλεύσας εἰς τὸν Κάνωβον πρὸς τοὺς ἱερεῖς καὶ τοὺς κτήματα ἔχοντας ἐκεῖ ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἤκειν ἔφη ὥστε μετοικίσει αὐτούς. Οἱ <δὲ> ἱερεῖς καὶ οἱ κάτοικοι εἰσενέγκαντες χρήματα ἔδωκαν ἴν' ἑᾷ κατὰ χώραν αὐτοῖς τὸ ἐμπόριον. Ὁ δὲ λαβὼν τότε μὲν ἀπηλλάγη, εἰτα δὲ καταπλεύσας, ἐπεὶ ἦν εὐτρεπὴ αὐτῷ τὰ πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομίαν, ἦται αὐτούς χρήματα ὑπερβάλλον τῷ πλήθει· τοῦτο γὰρ αὐτῷ τὸ διάφορον εἶναι, τὸ αὐτοῦ εἶναι τὸ ἐμπόριον καὶ μὴ ἐκεῖ. Ἐπεὶ δ' οὐκ ἂν ἔφασαν δύνασθαι δοῦναι, μετόκισεν αὐτούς.

13 [Arist.] *Oec.* 1352b.20–25: Τοὺς τε ἱερεῖς καλέσας ἔφησε πολὺ τὸ ἀνάλωμα ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ γίνεσθαι εἰς τὰ ἱερά· δεῖν οὖν καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν τινα καὶ τῶν ἱερέων τὸ πλῆθος καταλυθῆναι. Οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς καὶ ἰδίᾳ ἕκαστος καὶ κοινῇ τὰ ἱερά χρήματα ἐδίδονσαν, οἰόμενοι τε αὐτὸν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ τοῦτο ποιεῖν, καὶ ἕκαστος βουλόμενος τό τε ἱερὸν τὸ αὐτοῦ εἶναι κατὰ χώραν καὶ τὸς ἱερεῖς.

14 The story of the transfer of the port from the Canopus region showed that whenever the Egyptians were not able to carry necessary expenses Cleomenes was ready to put into effect the painful measures that he initially forwarded. A similar scheme worked in an episode that we did not discuss: when a hunger occurred, “severe in other places and more moderate in Egypt”, Cleomenes at first prohibited to export bread and then, when nomarchs protested that he deprived them even of a possibility to pay taxes, he allowed the export but imposed on it a high fee ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1352a.16–23). This stratagem is well-compatible with an assumption that the Macedonian authorities had in view to control the Egyptian bread export (D. COHEN, “Alexander de Groote en Egypte”, *TG* 46 (1931), 225–234; cf. SEIBERT, *Alexander* (n. 1), 111). In two other cases (the exposure of a purchaser who overpriced his goods: [Arist.] *Oec.* 1352b.4–14; the permission to purchasers to sell their goods for the same price as did the merchants buying from them: [Arist.] *Oec.* 1352b.15–20) Cleomenes was even presented a fair ruler knowing his interest but at the same time protecting those who occupied in the system of trade the most important but also the most vulnerable place.

was addressed this protest rather as an agent of state, than as a private person, so this protest was directed also against the state, which encouraged such acts on his behalf.

The fact that Cleomenes' actions were sanctioned by Alexander's will is seen especially well in Arrian's quotation of the king's letter to Cleomenes. This statement has a definite motif of disapproving not only Cleomenes but also Alexander, and probably not just for his readiness to forgive Cleomenes' misuses. In fact, the reason for writing that letter was the permission by the oracle of Ammon to establish to Hephaestion a heroic cult (see above), since the complete divinization was refused to him (Arr. *An.* VII 14.3),<sup>15</sup> thus, this statement actually tells that the oracle of Ammon, the Egyptian temple center widely known to the Greeks and having a fundamental role in shaping Alexander's sacralty,<sup>16</sup> rejected an earlier demand of the Macedonian king as excessive.<sup>17</sup> At the same time the mission trusted in this letter to Cleomenes – to build a large and luxurious temple to Hephaestion and to impose on merchants the use of seals with his image (Arr. *An.* VII 14.7) – is quite in accord with the qualities of Cleomenes known from the tradition of *Oeconomica* about him, *i.e.* with his ability to mobilize the financial recourses of Egypt and to interfere with the life of Egyptians. As this statement by Arrian probably goes back to the work by the king Ptolemy (see note 7 above), *i.e.*, chronologically, to the time not later than the late 280s B.C. and perhaps considerably earlier,<sup>18</sup> one will be hardly wrong to assume that this statement joins both in its trend and in its dating the tradition on Cleomenes presented in *Oeconomica* (perhaps, it was just a part of this tradition).

The point to be substantiated in this paper about the statements on Cleomenes in *Oeconomica*'s Book Two is that they (in fact, their plots) were strongly influenced by the *topoi* of the traditional Ancient Egyptian propaganda, that were used to present unfavoured rulers, Egyptians as well as the foreigners who happened to seize the country. However, before analyzing these statements from such point of view it is advisable to say a few words on the very notion of the Ancient Egyptian propaganda. It is used in Egyptology first of all in the research of royal monuments (*e.g.*, temple reliefs) and inscriptions, which shaped the images of the Ancient Egyptian kings and affirmed their right to power by defining their sacral status, connection to gods and the divine sanction of their authority; this term is

15 S. Eddy was wrong to assume that these statements represent alternative traditions: EDDY, *King* (n. 8), 270, n. 26. On the contrary, they are mutually complementary.

16 See on the temple at Siwa Oasis: K.P. KUHLMANN and W.M. BRASHEAR, *Das Ammoneion. Archäologie, Geschichte und Kulturpraxis des Orakels von Siwa*, Mainz 1988; on the role of Ammon in the divinization of Alexander: A.B. BOSWORTH, "Alexander and Ammon", in: K. H. Kinzl (ed.), *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in Ancient History and Prehistory: Studies Presented to Fritz Schachermeyr on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*, Berlin/New York 1977, 51–75; D. KIENAST, "Alexander, Zeus and Ammon", in: W. Will and J. Heinrichs (eds.), *Zu Alexander d. Gr.: Festschrift G. Wirth zum 60. Geburtstag am 9.12.86.*, I, Amsterdam 1988, 309–334; E. FREDRICKSMEYER, "Alexander's Religion and Divinity", in: J. Roisman (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Alexander the Great*, Leiden 2003, 270–274; E.M. ANSON, *Alexander the Great: Themes and Issues*, London 2013, 97–102.

17 The indignation against the efforts of Alexander in his last year to achieve Hephaestion's heroisation as well as self-divinization is seen, for instance, in Hyperides' *Posthumous Speech*: Hyp. *Epit.* 21; J. HERRMANN, *Hyperides: Funeral Oration*, New York/Oxford 2009, 88–91.

18 A. ZAMBRINI, "The Historians of Alexander the Great", in: J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, I, Malden, M.A./Oxford 2010, 210–220, 217–218.



regularly used in the compendia that systematize the terms of such sources<sup>19</sup>. According to the author of one of them, N.-Chr. Grimal, the distinction of the function described as “the Ancient Egyptian propaganda” from the modern propaganda is that it “ne correspond pas, en effet, à besoin de démonstration ou de conversion, puisque le ‘discours’ pharaonique s’adresse exclusivement à ceux qui participent du système qu’il décrit. Il s’agit, simplement, d’une présentation des faits selon une formulation que ne cherche nullement à leur faire violence, mais, bien au contraire, à les restituer dans leur réalité essentielle”.<sup>20</sup>

The specifics of the Ancient Egyptian propaganda, as far as it can be recognized as a function of certain monuments and texts, was also determined with the nature of its audience and of the social strata that produced its phenomena. Many “propagandist monuments” located in temples could, indeed, be perceived only by the priests, who had access to the respective rooms;<sup>21</sup> however, one should mind that their indicated function to “restitute things in their essential reality” was relevant of the communication not only (and even not so much) to the humans but to gods. A.-I. Blöbaum believed that the basic propagandist mottoes were belaboured at royal court though locally they could be articulated in many various ways.<sup>22</sup> This is certainly true for the epochs, when the Egyptian throne was occupied by the bearers of the Ancient Egyptian culture; however, in the First Millennium BC the major practical function of the kingship was not ritual but rather military and administrative activities; and the “propagandist projects” representing rulers as sacral ritual kings had to be developed not directly by the court but rather by the part of the elite, which upheld the religious tradition, *i.e.* by the priesthood. Moreover, when the rulers of Egypt were foreigners totally alien to its culture, the propagandist function must have passed completely to the members of priesthood maintaining contacts with the foreign power. This, certainly, does not mean that the foreigners did not take part at all in defining the propagandist priorities of their epochs: in fact, Cleomenes of Naucratis and his fellows Egyptian Greeks would have been invaluable for Alexander and his followers in presenting to them Egyptian religious life and establishing contacts with its native leaders. However, the natives must have finally chosen specific propagandist *topoi* from their rather wide spectrum, which had to be put to the service of the new foreign rule, and the specific accents clear for the Egyptians, which had to be made at that. Besides the official propaganda serving to a foreign rule had to perform a function inappropriate to it, according to Grimal’s definition, – that of “demonstration and conversion”, as the sacral qualities of foreign rulers and the very possibility of their display in the framework of traditional Egyptian notions had, indeed, to be proved.<sup>23</sup> And nuances of

19 N.-C. GRIMAL, *Les termes de la propagande royale égyptienne de la XIX dynastie à la conquête d’Alexandre*, Paris 1986; A.I. BLÖBAUM, “Denn ich bin ein König, der Maat liebt”: Herrscherlegitimation im spätzeitlichen Ägypten. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung der Phraseologie in der offiziellen Königsinschriften vom Beginn der 25. Dynastie bis zum Ende der makedonischen Herrschaft, Münster 2006, 21–23.

20 GRIMAL, *Termes* (n. 19), 5; cf. BLÖBAUM, “Denn” (n. 19), 22. The meaning of this assertion is that, for instance, any outcome of Egyptian military activities abroad, whatever their real current and outcome were, had to be presented as victory, since in the traditional notions a legitimate king of Egypt was determined to be victorious over every enemy.

21 BLÖBAUM, *Denn ich bin ein König* (n. 19), 22.

22 BLÖBAUM, *Denn ich bin ein König* (n. 19), 22–23.

23 In fact that was equally true about the Egyptian kings, who ascended to throne in an indefinite dynastic collision (like Hatshepsut or Thutmose III) or through an usurpation (like Amasis).

propagandist motifs could implicitly express even a degree of repulsion towards a specific ruler, e.g. his rejection as a ritualist, thus revealing not the official position of the foreign rule but its criticism on behalf of a certain faction inside the Egyptian elite; symptomatically, the categories and motifs employed at that must have been largely the same as in the normal “positive” propaganda.

Previous remarks apply in the first place to the contemporary monuments of each specific Egyptian reign; however, it would not be right to confine the notion of the Ancient Egyptian propaganda only to them. Like its analogies in other historical conditions, it had not only synchronous but also diachronous effect and shaped an idea of not just a contemporary reign singled out but equally of its place in the history of Egypt. The field for performing this task was certainly not only the decoration of the monuments and their epigraphic texts but also narratives of a different kind, i.e. historical and moralistic writings. Such historical assessment was hardly a vital need of each individual reign; however, this need was certainly stronger in the transitional epochs of the Egyptian history (as it can be seen starting from the First Intermediate Period at the cusp of the Third and Second Millennia BC). Thus, it had to be almost invariably strong throughout the Late Period, especially in the time from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C., when the transitional epochs of foreign conquests and restorations of native rule (as well as the expectations of such restoration) were virtually following one another. The integral picture of the Egyptian past as seen at the start of the Macedonian time was presented, certainly, in the monumental work by Manetho of Sebennytyos;<sup>24</sup> however, a more concise and, perhaps, a more authentic example of this discourse is the so-called *Demotic Chronicle*, a collection of locutions assessing the reigns of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, which was written down in the early Ptolemaic time but probably dated back to a much earlier period, at least to the time of Dynasty XXX, and reflected the position of the Egyptian priestly elite.<sup>25</sup> The activities of the kings of Dynasties XXVIII to XXX were evaluated in this text in the categories of following the “way of god” (*B mi(t) p3 ntr*) and the “law” (*hp*), which allowed to articulate quite definitely positive and negative assessments of these rulers.

Thus, the function of the propaganda in Late Egypt could be performed not only by the royal monuments but also by a wide spectrum of narratives, which would include loyalist as well as oppositional discourse carried out in more or less similar categories. The protagonists of this discourse were, by the start of the Macedonian time, primarily the members of the Egyptian priesthood preoccupied with the preservation of the religious and ideological tradition and evaluating their contemporary rulers from the viewpoint of their correspondence to its standards. The most important of them was certainly the standard of a king performing ritual, which by the time of the *Demotic Chronicle* transformed rather into a standard of a king acting beneficently towards temples and priesthood (practically performing ritual). It seems that the

24 See, most recently: R. GOZZOLI, *The Writing of History in Ancient Egypt during the First Millennium B.C. (ca. 1070–180): Trends and Perspectives*, London 2006, 191–226; I.S. MOYER, *Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism*, Cambridge 2011, 84–141; J. DILLERY, “Manetho”, in: T. Whitmarsh and S. Thomson (eds.), *The Romance between Greece and the East*, Cambridge 2013, 38–59.

25 H. FELBER, “Die Demotische Chronik”, in: A. Blasius and B.U. Schipper (eds.), *Apokalyptik und Ägypten: Eine kritische Analyse der relevanten Texte aus dem griechisch-römischen Ägypten*, Leuven 2002, 65–111, 67–68; J.F. QUACK, “Menetekel an der Wand? Zur Deutung der *Demotischen Chronik*”, in: M. Witte and J.F. Diel (eds.), *Orakel und Gebete: Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Sprache der Religion in Ägypten, Vorderasien und Griechenland in hellenistischer Zeit*, Tübingen 2009, 23–51.

clichés, which were belaboured within this discourse and intended to label a non-beneficent ruler can actually be traced in the image of Cleomenes presented in *Oeconomica*.

It should be said in advance that if these clichés can be really detected, this will have a considerable importance for defining the trustworthiness of these statements. Standard negative clichés could be attached to the figures of “bad” Egyptian kings (especially foreign kings) mostly as a reaction to their deeds, which were unpopular with the priesthood as the major generator of this tradition. It can hardly be decided if either of these statements had an authentic peg in reality; however, finding their affinities with Egyptian propagandist clichés will mean, to say the least, that the extant form of these statement appeared due to a certain “fitting” of the reality up to these clichés.

We will start with certainly the most picturesque statement on Cleomenes’ menace of the crocodile hunting. An important point in it is Cleomenes’ position stated before the priests that an attack by a crocodile was in fact a conscious act (probably, performed by the deity) that had to be revenged. For Cleomenes this position defined the effectiveness of his stratagem; however, it was ultimately rooted in the purely Egyptian idea of crocodiles as incorporations of the divine<sup>26</sup> or agents of god’s will (aggressively smiting agents at that),<sup>27</sup> so that the damage caused by one of these animals could be revenged to the divinity by means of answering damage to another animal.<sup>28</sup> The plot of this statement is definitely associated with a *topos* of sacrileges against sacred animals, which was, in fact, basic for the negative presentation of Egypt’s foreign rulers ever since it had been firstly actualized in the story of Cambyses’ murdering the sacred bull Apis. When Herodotus told this story (Hdt. III 16, 27–29) he certainly relied on Egyptian evidence; and in due course it was replicated in quite a number of later writings (Just. I 9.1; Clem. Al. *Protr.* IV 52.6; Plu. *Mor.* 368F). As known to the Egyptologists, the trustworthiness of this episode is strongly doubted due to a find of an Apis’ funeral stele dated to Cambyses Year 6 (calculated from his accession at Persia, i.e. 524 BC) and, moreover, of the sarcophagus of this bull, which, according to its inscriptions, was granted by the king himself.<sup>29</sup> The texts of these monuments are corroborative with the evidence of the autobiography of the priest Udjahorresnet about Cambyses’ benevolence towards Egyptian cults.<sup>30</sup> Besides, such sacrilege would have brought Cambyses into a

26 See about the incorporation of divinity (of a god’s “force” – *ba*) in a sacred animal: D. KESSLER, “Tierische Missverständnisse: Grundsätzliches zu Fragen des Tierkultes”, in: M. Fitzenreiter (ed.), *Tierkulte im pharaonischen Ägypten und im Kulturvergleich*, Berlin 2003, 33–68, 57 ff.

27 See similar quality of crocodile in two episodes of the Middle Egyptian *Tales of Westcar Papyrus* (a punishment to the unfaithful wife of the priest Webaoner: *PWestc.* 3.1 ff.; an attempt of a girl-servant to betray to the King Khufu three sons of the solar god and future kings: *PWestc.* 12.19, 26), as well as in Manetho’s statement about the death of the cruel king Achtoes (Manetho, fr. 27–28a–b Waddell; P. VERNUS, “Ménès, Achtoès, l’hippopotame et le crocodile. Lecture structurale de l’historiographie égyptienne”, in: U. Verhoeven and E. Graefe (eds.), *Religion und Philosophie im Alten Ägypten: Festgabe für Philippe Derchain zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 24. Juli 1991*, Leuven 1991, 331–340).

28 One would object to this “logic” that Cleomenes’ revenge was disproportionately vast: however, first, the damage inflicted on him was serious, as it was a death of a human, though a slave; and, second, the hunting he was about to launch would not have killed all the crocodiles in the nome – it would kill *some* of them, like one crocodile killed someone in Cleomenes’ equipage.

29 G. POSENER, *La première domination perse en Égypte: recueil d’inscriptions hiéroglyphiques*, Cairo 1936, 30–35 (no. 3); 35–36 (no. 4).

30 POSENER, *Première* (n. 29), 1–26 (no. 1), 170–171. A.B. Lloyd reasonably argued that the accent on this

conflict with the divinity embodied in the sacred bull, which would have been contrary to the normal Persian religious policy: the Persians could have confiscated from a subdued people the divine images and temple utensils, so as to break its ritual contact with the gods; but on their own part they would have been respectful to these very gods providing their benevolence to themselves.<sup>31</sup> According to the almost unanimous opinion of scholars, this story penetrated into Herodotus' account due to the biases of his informers willing to represent Cambyses' conquest most unfavourably:<sup>32</sup> aside from the general hostility towards the Persians this plot could be inspired with the sympathies of Herodotus' informers towards Amasis, whose family lost kingship due in the Persian invasion,<sup>33</sup> with the old indignation against Cambyses' policy in Egypt diminishing the temple incomes (in fact, this is the probable foundation of the *topos* of his sacrileges)<sup>34</sup> and with the poor state of temples during the Persian invasion.<sup>35</sup>

However, even independently from defining the trustworthiness of Herodotus' story, one should say that it occupied a highly important place in the Late Egyptian presentation of foreign

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in Udjahorresnet's text compiled under Darius I (much earlier than the time of Herodotus, in the years when the reign of Cambyses must have been still vivid in Egyptian memory) would have been pointless if it contradicted to the widely known information about Cambyses' sacrileges: A.B. LLOYD, "Herodotus on Cambyses. Some thoughts on recent work", in: A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (eds.), *Achaemenid History, III: Method and Theory: Proceedings of the London 1985 Achaemenid History Workshop*, Leiden 1988, 64.

- 31 The most tell-tale example is certainly the episode in Athens during Xerxes' invasion into Greece: on seizing Athens and destroying Acropolis the Persians gathered the Athenian exiles that followed them and caused them to perform sacrifices to gods according to the local tradition: Hdt. VIII 54. See on this problem in general: М.А. ДАНДАМАЕВ, В.Г. ЛУКОНИН, *Культура и экономика древнего Ирана*, Moscow 1980, 340–343.
- 32 Most scholars addressing this plot followed the view of G. Posener (POSENER, *Première* (n. 29), 171–175; see a summary of their opinions at: L. DEPUYDT, "Murder in Memphis: The story of Cambyses's mortal wounding of the Apis bull (ca. 523 B.C.E.)", *JNES* 54 (1995), 122). L. Depuydt himself kept the view that the Apis murdered by Cambyses could be the successor of the Apis that passed away in Cambyses' Year 6 and the predecessor of the Apis that passed away in Darius' I Year 4 (see his epitaph: POSENER, *Première* (n. 29), 36–41); nevertheless this assumption is itself speculative. One might question the trustworthiness of the epigraphic data attesting Cambyses' piety towards Apis; it would be permissible, however, to ask why one should seek biases in the documentary sources and not in Herodotus' account where they can be seen anyway (in the first place, in the evident sympathies of Herodotus' informers towards the house of Amasis)?
- 33 See about the biases in Herodotus' account, which disguises the unfavourable circumstances of Amasis' accession: I. LADYNIN, "The Elephantine Stela of Amasis: Some Problems and Prospects of Study", *Göttinger Miszellen* 211 (2006), 31–57.
- 34 E. BRESCIANI, "La morte di Cambise ovvero dell'empietà punita: a proposito della 'Cronaca Demotica', verso, col. C, 7–8", *EVO* 4 (1981), 217–222; LLOYD, "Herodotus" (n. 30), 64–65 (evidence on Cambyses' decrees concerning the financial administration of temples on the back side of the papyrus with the text of the *Demotic Chronicle*: *P.dem.Bibl.Nat.* 215, verso, d).
- 35 This was stated in Udjahorresnet's account about the state of the temple of Neith at Sais; nevertheless, the same source ascribed the improvement of the situation to the interference of Cambyses himself (indeed, it played a legitimating role in his presentation (lines 17–23 of Udjahorresnet's autobiography: POSENER, *Première* (n. 29), 14–16; cf. G. BURKARD, "Literarische Tradition und historische Realität. Die persische Eroberung Ägyptens am Beispiel Elephantine", *ZÄS* 121 (1994), 93–106; G. BURKARD, "Literarische Tradition und historische Realität. Die persische Eroberung Ägyptens am Beispiel Elephantine. II: Indizien gegen eine Zerstörung der Tempel", *ZÄS* 122 (1995), 31–37).

conquests. According to J. Dillery, Herodotus' narration on Cambyses' behavior in Egypt went back to an integral narrative, which told not only about the murder of Apis but also about the sacrileges in the Memphite necropolis and temples (desecration of royal tombs; impiety towards the cult representations of Ptah and related deities: Hdt. III 37).<sup>36</sup> In its setting and style this narrative must have corresponded to the Egyptian tradition of *Chaosbeschreibung* typical of the accounts of transitional periods and foreign conquests: Dillery saw its variations also in the early Christian reminiscences of Cambyses (in the Coptic *Romance of Cambyases* and the *Chronicle* of John, bishop of Nikiu, known in the Ge'ez fixation).<sup>37</sup> At the same time the chronologically close analogies to this narrative (though irrelevant of Cambyses' conquest) can be seen in Manetho's account of the second Hyksos invasion into Egypt in the reign of Amenophis, when these invaders were allied by the Egyptian lepers (this plot must have already appeared in the pre-Hellenistic Late Egyptian tradition, to be used by Manetho in the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) and in the Classical evidence on the atrocities of Artaxerxes III at his invasion into Egypt in 343 BC (these statements are relatively late<sup>38</sup> but they were undoubtedly inspired by the immediate and highly emotional reaction to this conquest). According to Manetho, the second Hyksos invasion was followed by the destruction of cities and villages, the plunder of temples and the desecration of gods' statues; as for murdering the sacred animals, the sacrilege of this act was reinforced by the invaders' "turning temples into kitchen" and preparing the meat of sacred animals for meal, while the priests were forced to slay them like for sacrifice (J. Ap. I 249 = Manetho, fr. 54 Waddell):

καὶ γὰρ οὐ μόνον πόλεις καὶ κώμας ἐνέπρησαν οὐδὲ ἱεροσυλοῦντες οὐδὲ  
 λυμαινόμενοι ξόανα θεῶν ἠρκοῦντο, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὀπτανίοις τῶν  
 σεβαστευομένων ἱερῶν ζώων χρώμενοι διετέλουν καὶ θύτας καὶ σφαγεῖς τούτων  
 ἱερεῖς καὶ προφῆτας ἠνάγκαζον γίνεσθαι καὶ γυμνοὺς ἐξέβαλλον.

The very idea to pervert the divine worship and the ritual of sacrifice was ascribed by Manetho to Moses, as the leader of the Egyptian lepers (J. Ap. I 261 = Manetho, fr. 54 Waddell: καὶ τοῦτον αὐτοῖς εἰσηγήσασθαι μήτε θεοὺς προσκυνεῖν μήτε τῶν ἐπ' Αἰγύπτῳ θρησκευομένων ζώων ἀπέχεσθαι, πάντα δὲ θύειν καὶ κατεσθῆιν; further, independently of Manetho's quotations, Josephus Flavius mentioned similar Persian sacrileges, which shows perfectly neatly the connection of this plot to the story of Cambyses and Apis: J. Ap. II 129). The motif of murdering the sacred animals is also extant in the evidence on the invasion of Artaxerxes III into Egypt, which started the epoch of the Second Persian Domination: the Persian king was ascribed the murder of Apis (Plu. Mor. 363B, Ael. VH VI 8, Suda, s. v. κακοῖς ἐπισορεύων κακά), sacrificing Apis to the donkey, i.e. to the god Seth,<sup>39</sup> whose cult

36 J. DILLERY, "Cambyses and the Egyptian Chaosbeschreibung Tradition", *CQ* 55 (2004), 397.

37 See generally: A.B. LLOYD, "Cambyses in Late Tradition", in: C.J. Eyre, M.A. Leahy and L.M. Leahy (eds.), *The Unbroken Reed: Studies in the Culture and Heritage of Ancient Egypt in Honour of A.F. Shore*, London 1994, 195–204.

38 See generally: J. SCHWARTZ, "Les conquérants perses et la littérature égyptienne", *BIAO* 48 (1949), 68–71.

39 See on donkey's association to Seth: H. TE VELDE, *Seth, God of Confusion: A Study of His Role in Egyptian Mythology and Religion*, Leiden 1967, 26; incidentally, this statement might be a far-fetching transfer on Artaxerxes III of the motif of special piety towards Seth on behalf of the Hyksos kings (though unregistered by Manetho, this motif is present in the New Egyptian *Story of Apophis and Sekhnenre: PSallier I 1.3*).

Artaxerxes III allegedly imposed on the Egyptians (*Ael. VH* IV 8; cf. *Ael. NA* X 28), and finally, eating the meat of Apis (*Suda*, s.v. Ἀπιδες; Ὠχος; cf. an adjacent story about Bagoas' eating Artaxerxes himself as a revenge for his eating Apis:<sup>40</sup> *Ael. VH* VI 8; *Suda*, s.v. λαβαῖς). The fancy of this evidence on Artaxerxes and, again, its discrepancy with the normal Persian course towards alien religions tell, as it seems, of its fictitious character; symptomatically, it is much similar to Manetho's story about the second Hyksos invasion into Egypt (the affinity to it is found in the statement of not only Artaxerxes eating Apis but also, probably, of his sacrificing Apis to Seth, i.e. perverting the normal ritual).

It is worth a special notice that the statements connected with these two plots are similar not only with one another but also with a hieroglyphic text of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (i.e. more or less contemporary with these traditions), which presented a kind of ideal mythological model of an alien invasion into Egypt – the so-called *Book of Victory over Seth*.<sup>41</sup> It described an attempt by Seth to invade Egypt after his defeat in the struggle with Horus for Osiris' heritage and attributed to Seth a great number of sacrileges in various cult places of Egyptian gods (*Urk.* VI 19–26), including the destruction of sacred trees and eating sacred fishes: among the other things, Seth ate the sacred ram in the temple of Amun (*Urk.* VI 23.1–2) and threw lasso on Apis (*Urk.* VI 23.15–16).<sup>42</sup> The meaning of Seth's sacrifices is summed in the following passage: "He devised a plan of his ascent as a robber, he thought over rising himself; evil (is) beginning with the place of his being; the disorder is in what you (the solar god Re) ordered (*Urk.* VI 23.21–25.2: *k3.n.f zḥ (n) ḥ<sup>c</sup> m ḥwtf ḥmt.n.f s<sup>c</sup>ḥ s(w) ds.f qnw s3<sup>c</sup>-r st wnn.f <sup>c</sup>-pn<sup>c</sup> m wdy.n.k*).<sup>43</sup> Probably, this phrase reflects the idea of selfish and mocking perversion of the normal order once established by the supreme god:<sup>44</sup> it backed Seth's sacrileges and correlated to the perversion of ritual seen in his deeds as well as in the deeds of foreign invaders described by Manetho and in the tradition on Artaxerxes III. These plots as well as the *Book of Victory over Seth* are distinct of the narration on Cambyses in following point: though his deeds included sacrileges in temples and the murder of sacred animal, they were much less fancy and variable, and their motif was not the deliberate perversion of ritual but a mere arrogance and anger bordering with madness or even equivalent to it. One

40 The motif of revenge to the king guilty of Apis' murder is seen in Herodotus' story about Cambyses' mortal wounding on the spot of his thigh, on which he stroke Apis with his sword (Hdt. III 64). Perhaps, this story of Artaxerxes' death is a rather *recherché* extrapolation of the same motif of revenge on him.

41 J. YOYOTTE, "L'Égypte ancienne et les origines de l'antijudaïsme (communication dans la Société Ernest Renan, séance du 24 novembre 1962)", *RHR* 163 (1963), 140–141; GOZZOLI, *Writing* (n. 24), 219; a recent study of this source: V. ALTMANN-WENDLING, *Die Kultfrevel des Seth: Die Gefährdung der göttlichen Ordnung in zwei Vernichtungsritualen der ägyptischen Spätzeit (Urk. VI)*, Wiesbaden 2010.

42 ALTMANN-WENDLING, *Kultfrevel* (n. 41), 42–43, 51.

43 ALTMANN-WENDLING, *Kultfrevel* (n. 41), 55–56 (the transliteration and the translation proposed by the scholar want a correction, as she omitted the word *a* before the word *pn<sup>c</sup>*, cf. A. ERMAN and H. GRAPOW, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, I, Leipzig 1926, 158; probably, <sup>c</sup>-pn<sup>c</sup> is the "condition of disorder").

44 V. Altmann believed that *wdy.n.f* defined a territory "ordered" by the god Re-Kharakhte, probably, to Horus, as opposite to the lands given to Seth (*st wnn.f* – "the place of his being"); she substantiated this interpretation with the use of the verb *wdy* in the context of Re-Kharakhte's dividing lands between Horus and Seth after their struggle (*Urk.* VI 17.13 ff.): ALTMANN-WENDLING, *Kultfrevel* (n. 41), 55, n. 366. However, the context of the verb seems to show definitely enough that here it denotes not just territorial division but, much wider, the entire founding activity of the supreme god (cf. also: *Urk.* VI 17.11) distorted by Seth.



remembers that, according to J. Dillery, Herodotus' narration of Cambyses corresponded to the Egyptian tradition of *Chaosbeschreibung*, to which the stories of the sacrileges performed by foreigners and Seth obviously belonged. However, if one looks for a component of this Late Egyptian tradition providing a model for the rest of it, one should probably point at the story of Cambyses. One might say that it gave the elementary themes of this tradition; and eventually they were given a more picturesque belabouring as well as a sort of "theoretical motivation" explaining that the purpose of sacrileges in temples was specifically a well-considered perversion of ritual, and their protagonists were existentially hostile to the religious life of Egypt.

In one way or another, the sources characterized above show that the motif of sacrileges against the sacred animals is extant in the negative presentation of foreign invasions into Egypt and since at least the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, when the *Book of Victory over Seth* appeared, implied a comparison of a foreign ruler performing them with Seth. It seems that a variation of this *topos* is exactly the story of *Oeconomica*'s Book Two about Cleomenes' menace to hunt sacred crocodiles in a revenge for the death of his slave. The qualification of Cleomenes as a foreigner allowing to transfer on him a *topos* shaped for foreign conquerors is clear enough: as a resident of a Greek city, though located at Egypt, he had to be considered an alien to the religious tradition of the country,<sup>45</sup> all the more so as he was an agent of a foreign king who seized power over Egypt. As for the plot of hunting sacred animals, such variation of the theme of sacrileges seems quite plausible, especially in the light of the plots presented in the *Book of Victory over Seth*. Certainly, the story of *Oeconomica* about Cleomenes is less dramatic than the evidence on Artaxerxes III, let alone the deeds of the god Seth himself; and Cleomenes' menace in it seems not less accomplishable than the other stratagems ascribed to him in *Oeconomica*. As it has already been said, one can hardly decide if this story about Cleomenes had any sort of prototype precedent in reality. However, if he tried to put his stratagem into life, he would have certainly brought into remembrance a standing and a definitely negative *topos* of the Ancient Egyptian propaganda: being born in Egypt, he would have probably been aware of that. Another important point might be found again in the tradition on Artaxerxes III: according to Diodorus, Bagoas returned to the Egyptians sacred texts once seized by Artaxerxes for a huge bribe of gold and silver (D.S. XVI 51: ἀπήνεγκε δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐκ τῶν ἀρχαίων ἱερῶν ἀναγραφάς, αἷς ὕστερον Βαγῶας πολλῶν χρημάτων ἀπελύτρωσε τοῖς ἱερεῦσι τῶν Αἰγυπτίων). The similarity of the story about Cleomenes with the evidence on the Second Persian Domination in Egypt thus manifests itself in two points: in Cleomenes' readiness to commit a sacrilege, and in his willingness to refrain from it for gaining a profit. This similarity shows if not modeling the story of Cleomenes after the accounts of the Second Persian Domination, then, say the least, a simultaneity or a chronological proximity in the appearance of both traditions, which absorbed much similar propagandist *topoi*. As for the tradition of the Second Persian Domination, an "overpainting" of this epoch that is found in it certainly worked for the contrasting positive image of Alexander; so its emergence can reasonably be placed in the early Macedonian time (cf. Curt. IV 7.1–2; D.S. XVII 49.2).

The evidence about Bagoas reveals another strong propagandist *topos* well-attested already in Ptolemaic official texts: the idea that the Persian rulers seized and removed from

45 See, incidentally: EDDY, *King* (n. 8), 309.



Egypt a great number of images of gods and other cult utensils.<sup>46</sup> The alleged seizure of cult texts by Artaxerxes III must have been an act of this kind: one should take into account a mention of sacred texts (“the souls of Re” – *b3w R*) in the earliest reflection of this *topos* in the Satrap Stela of 311 BC (*Urk.* II 14.9–11). Besides, according to the tradition about the Second Persian Domination, Artaxerxes III undertook deportations of certain categories of Egyptians (*Suda*, s.v. ἄσματο); and the deportation of priestly corporations was probably close in its meaning to the confiscations of cult objects, as it was also intended to deprive Egyptians of mediators necessary for the ritual contact to gods.<sup>47</sup> At the same time, one of the statements in Book Two of *Oeconomica* tells about Cleomenes’ resettling priests and local proprietors from the region of Canopus to Alexandria (cf. above). Indeed, the victims of this “mini-deportation” can be taken for a kind of corporation: on one side, for an early Hellenistic author thinking in the categories of the Greek polis’ mind (this was certainly the case for the author of *Oeconomica*) it was natural consider residents of a vicinity integrated about local temples a sort of community; and on the other side, in the Ptolemaic time one really finds in Egypt communities of worshippers united around local temples.<sup>48</sup> It has already been said that the tradition on Cleomenes must have been shaped in a kind of parallel with the tradition on the Second Persian Domination, which, in its turn, can be dated to the early Macedonian time. One cannot decide if the evidence on Cleomenes’ deporting priests and local proprietors of Canopus had something real behind it; however, one might assume that its attachment to the tradition on Cleomenes might have also been inspired by the reminiscences of the recent Persian deportations.

Finally, the statement about Cleomenes’ menace to “economize” on temples’ expenses by diminishing the number of temples and priests in Egypt is analogical and in some part of its wording even coinciding with the evidence of the same treatise *Oeconomica* about a stratagem of the king Taos, i.e. Tachos (Djed-Hor; Dynasty XXX; 361/0–359/8 BC) intended to mobilize Egyptian resources on the eve of his offensive against Persia (on the advice of the Athenian Chabrias Taos menaced to close temples and to dismiss their priesthood but

46 J.K. WINNICKI, “Carrying off and bringing home the statues of the gods: On the aspect of the religious policy of the Ptolemies towards the Egyptians”, *JJP* 24 (1994), 149–190; P. BRIANT, “Quand les rois écrivent l’histoire: la domination achéménide vue à travers les inscriptions officielles lagides”, in: N. Grimal and M. Baud (eds.), *Événement, récit, histoire officielle. L’écriture de l’histoire dans les monarchies antiques. Colloque du collège de France, amphithéâtre Marguerite-de-Navarre, 24–25 juin 2002*, Paris 2003, 173–186.

47 The autobiography of the Heracleopolitan dignitary Somtutefnakht at the Stela of Naples implies that the entire corporation of the priests of the goddess Sokhmet was removed from Egypt and resided at the Achaemenian metropolitan region before the advent of Alexander (*Urk.* II 3.14–4.2; I. LADYNIN, “An Egyptian Priestly Corporation at Iran: A Possible Case of “Forced Mobility” on the Eve of the Macedonian Conquest”, in: E. Olshausen and V. Sauer (eds.), *Mobilität in den Kulturen der antiken Welt: Stuttgarter Kolloquium zur Historischen Geographie des Altertums II, 2011*, Stuttgart 2014, 343–354).

48 There was a special space in their structure intended for their gathering – a wide court before a pronaos designated *wsht-mšc*, “the hall of army”. i.e. of the people, according to the word-use of the Graeco-Roman time (P. SPENCER, *The Egyptian Temple: A Lexicographical Study*, London 1984, 77); the “publication” of the Ptolemaic priestly decrees for Egyptian audience consisted exactly in their exhibiting on stelae in these parts of temples (*OGI* I 56, ll. 75–76; 90, l. 38 – resp. *Urk.* II 154.4, 190.1).

finally agreed to take 90 per cent of the temples' income;<sup>49</sup> cf. Polyae. III 5–7).<sup>50</sup> The measures of this king are thought to be alluded in the *Demotic Chronicle* V.12 (“Ptah, Re, Horus, son of Isis, the possessors of the royal rank – you forgot them while you were thinking about acquiring wealth!”);<sup>51</sup> and this allusion shows the negative attitude towards them on behalf of the Egyptian priestly elite that was shaping the propagandist notions of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. One might recall here a “model” figure of “impious king” in the Classical reception of the Egyptian tradition – the image of Cheops (Khufu) registered by Herodotus: according to his evidence, Cheops closed all the Egyptian temples and stopped their sacrifices before starting his great pyramid building (Hdt. II 124–126); and this Herodotus' theme might reflect a much earlier purely Egyptian notion that under Khufu and his successors the concentration of the official cult in the royal necropolis brought the temples of gods in poor condition.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps, due to this ancient reminiscence the infringement of temples' incomes on selfish motives (including those of political ambition) came to be a standard propagandist cliché labeling impious kings (Tachos among them, as can be seen from the passage of the *Demotic Chronicle*). As for the statement of *Oeconomica* on Tachos, it rather “deciphers” the actual meaning of this cliché for him by narrating his specific deeds, which were thus labeled. A close coincidence of the evidences on Tachos and Cleomenes makes to believe that they come back to some common initial tradition, obviously Egyptian in origin. As to their historicity, there can be little doubt that both Tachos on the eve of his war against Persia (perhaps, really on the advice of Greeks) and Cleomenes when centralizing Egypt under the Macedonian rule had to establish a firm control over temple economy; but even so, they would have hardly verbalized a menace of closing temples, which would irreparably damage the reputations of Tachos and Alexander as ritual kings of Egypt.<sup>53</sup> The literal meaning of these statements hardly reflected reality, and they probably overpaint it considerably. Notably, this statement transferred on Cleomenes the negative image of an earlier “impious

49 [Arist.] *Oec.* 1350b.33–1351a.12: Χαβρίας Ἀθηναῖος Ταῶ τῷ Αἰγυπτίων βασιλεῖ ἐκστρατεύοντι καὶ δεομένῳ χρημάτων συνεβούλευε τῶν τε ἱερῶν τινα καὶ τῶν ἱερέων τὸ πλῆθος φάναι πρὸς τοὺς ἱερεῖς δεῖν παρὰλῦθαι διὰ τὴν δαπάνην. Ακούσαντες δὲ οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἕκαστοι βουλόμενοι εἶναι καὶ εἶναι αὐτοὶ ἱερεῖς, ἐδίδονσαν χρήματα. Ἐπεὶ δὲ παρὰ πάντων εἰλήφει, προστάζει αὐτοῖς ἐκέλευσεν εἰς μὲν τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τῆς δαπάνης ἥς πρότερον ἐποιούοντο τὸ δέκατον μέρος ποιῆσθαι, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ αὐτῷ δανεῖσαι ἕως <ὁ> πόλεμος ὁ πρὸς βασιλέα διαλυθῇ.

50 É. WILL, “Chabrias et les finances de Tachos”, *REA* 62 (1960), 254–275.

51 J.H. JOHNSON, “The Demotic Chronicle as a statement of a theory of kingship”, *Journal of the Society of the Studies of Egyptian Antiquities* 13 (1983), 66–67.

52 А.Е. ДЕМИДЧИК, *Безымянная пирамида: Государственная доктрина древнеегипетской Гераклеопольской монархии*, Санкт-Петербург 2005, 92–93 (based on *PWestc.* 9. 24–27); I. LADYNIN, “The ‘Crisis of the Pyramid Builders’ in Herodotus’ Book II and Diodorus’ Book I and the Epochs of Egyptian History”, in: V. Gousschin and P.J. Rhodes (eds.), *Deformations and Crises of Ancient Civil Communities*, Stuttgart 2015, 22.

53 There are in fact the monuments of Tachos from the Egyptian temples, which attest his attention and care for them: BLÖBAUM, *Denn ich bin ein König* (n. 19), 355; similarly, the temple building performed in Egypt in the name of Alexander and following a certain concept showed his interest (or, rather, the interest of his vicegerents) for maintaining there his image of a ritual king: I. LADYNIN, “The Argeadai building program in Egypt in the framework of Dynasties’ XXIX–XXX temple building”, in: V. Grieb, K. Nawotka and A. Wojciechowska (eds.), *Alexander the Great and Egypt: History, Art, Tradition*, Wiesbaden 2014, 221–240 (the concentration of his building in the major cult centers of Thebes and Hermopolis could perhaps be viewed as the disregard or even the “closing” of other minor temples).

king" (Tachos, *i.e.*, in this case, not a foreigner but an Egyptian); however, the stratagem of Cleomenes was paralleled in the actions of not only Tachos but also Chabrias. Thus, the "guilt" for the planned infringement of temple incomes was in one case shared between the Egyptian king and the foreigner and in another case put on the foreigner completely. One might say that the description of these stratagems in Book Two of *Oeconomica* gives a synthesis of two Egyptian propagandist clichés: those of an "impious king" and foreigners' enmity towards Egyptian cults (see above, on the accounts of foreign conquests and the *Book of Victory over Seth*); however, this synthesis was strictly limited to the description of these two episodes and to the images of those involved in them. Probably, the propagandist impulse in the background of these two statements on Tachos and Cleomenes have not been already clear to the codifier of the early Hellenistic prototype of *Oeconomica*'s Book Two.

Thus, the observations presented above seem to allow concluding that the image of Cleomenes of Naucratis in Book Two of *Oeconomica* was considerably influenced by the *topoi* of the Ancient Egyptian propaganda used in the negative presentation of foreign and Egyptian rulers. Shaping this image probably took place in a sort of interrelation to the assessment of the other figures of the Egyptian history (this can be seen in the correlation between the images of Tachos and Cleomenes that must have occurred within a common tradition). The image of Cleomenes was shaped with the help of categories specific for the Egyptian milieu and employed in constructing the propagandist concepts; but soon enough it must have been reflected in a Greek narrative that probably was written in Egypt and in due course became known to the author of the prototype of *Oeconomica*'s Book Two.

The time when this tradition on Cleomenes appeared can be determined on the base of several points. First, the second of the statements considered is introduced with the phrase: "When the king Alexander trusted to him to settle the city near Pharos..." ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1352a.28–30: Ἀλεξάνδρου <τε> τοῦ βασιλέως ἐντειλαμένου αὐτῷ οἰκίσαι πόλιν πρὸς τῇ Φάρῳ ...). The short, "everyday" denotation of Alexander if not as a contemporary than at least as a recent ruler and the descriptive characteristic of Alexandria appropriate to its early period, when it has not yet been widely known as the Ptolemaic capital, allows, to say the least, to date the evidence containing this phrase to the time before 311 BC, when the transfer of capital to Alexandria was mentioned in the Satrap Stela (*Urk.* II 14.13–16).<sup>54</sup> Second, the message of this article is that the tradition about Cleomenes was strongly influenced by the Ancient Egyptian *topoi*; however, the intensive Graeco-Egyptian interrelation, which gave the framework for the reception of these *topoi*, is well attested in the satrapy of Ptolemy, when Hecataeus of Abdera created his work on Egypt ca. 310s BC.<sup>55</sup> Last but not least, the general trend of this tradition on Cleomenes might be defined as his defamation, quite compatible with the interest of Ptolemy soon after Cleomenes was disposed of; and the implicit juxtaposition of Cleomenes as a bad ruler to Ptolemy as a beneficent ruler had to improve the latter's position in Egypt. It is hard to suspect that accomplishing such task could be topical for Ptolemy's propaganda at his late rule or even in its middle.

54 See a similar approach to the dating of the work on Egypt by Hecataeus of Abdera: O. MURRAY, "Hecataeus of Abdera and Pharaonic Kingship", *JEA* 56 (1970), 143–144, n. 6.

55 S. BURSTEIN, "Hecataeus of Abdera's History of Egypt", in: J.H. Johnson (ed.) *Life in a Multi-Cultural Society: Egypt from Cambyes to Constantine and Beyond*, Chicago 1992, 45–49; we believe that the argumentation for the early dating of this work is reasonable: MURRAY, "Hecataeus" (n. 54), 142–144.

For these reasons it seems probable that the negative assessment of Cleomenes in the tradition of *Oeconomica*'s Book Two came back to a propagandist effort of Ptolemy and his satrap administration. However, if the Egyptian *topoi* were detected in this evidence correctly, they represent, so to say, the highest possible level of the propaganda: they were appropriate for the criticism of an impious Egyptian king or a foreign ruler of royal rank. If so, then the criticism of Cleomenes conveyed in such notions might have been implicitly directed against his master Alexander as a conqueror and a ruler of Egypt. It is hard to say for sure if Ptolemy's team had in view such "double target" of these propagandist messages; it is possible, however, that it did, and in this case its aim was also to feature the advantages Ptolemy as a ruler in comparison not just to Cleomenes but to Alexander himself. If the quotation from the letter of Alexander to Cleomenes preserved by Arrian (see above) really came back to this block of early tradition, its "anti-Alexandrian" message is additionally supported by the assertion in this piece of evidence of royal sanction to Cleomenes' actions.

# P.OXY. 4808 and Historians

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## About the Author

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P.Oxy. 4808 is of great interest for historians of Alexander and for all students of Hellenistic historiography and its reception in antiquity. The text is incomplete and even what survives is fragmentary, but its contents, when legible, are not readily paralleled in any other text known to us. The first editors did a fine job of presenting it but inevitably, left questions open or unanswered. Since its publication in 2007, the main discussion has been in Italian and has resulted in a text which is revised at one or two points. It has also raised possibilities which might help to place it in a context. I wish to add to these contributions by discussing first, the author's comments about historians of Alexander and their considerable significance and then, second, the possible nature of the text, its author and his intellectual context. I will have new suggestions about translating and restoring parts of the text. I will also contrast it with texts which others have adduced as parallels. On a central question, I will revisit the vexed question of its dating of Cleitarchus, the author underlying our 'vulgate' tradition for Alexander's campaigns and time in Asia.

The date of the papyrus itself has been admirably discussed by its first editors.<sup>1</sup> They conclude that the hand is datable to the late first or early second century AD. The date of the author of the text being copied is necessarily less certain. He might be the copyist's contemporary or he might be earlier, no earlier, however, than c. 120–110 BC, because he discusses Polybius's *Histories*, surely as a finished product. It might even be that his text was an epitome of an earlier, longer original. Our extract from it reads like a series of summary notes about historians, although it approaches each of them, so far as we know, from a similar angle.

The text which survives discusses named historians in three defined sections, marked off by a gap and by spacing of the first letter of each new section. It starts when the author has already been commenting in lines lost to us on a first group, historians of Alexander. The first historian about whom we can read is manifestly Onesicritus. He is not named in the text which we have, but he is described as 'pupil of Diogenes the cynic', allowing us to identify him. Next comes a discussion of Chares of Mytilene and then one of Cleitarchus. Each of these three is criticised, but it seems clear that other Alexander historians had been discussed in an earlier part of the text, now missing. It is quite likely that they received less critical

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<sup>1</sup> A.B. BERESFORD, P.J. PARSONS and M.P. POBJOY (eds.), "No. 4808. On Hellenistic Historians", *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, LXXI, London 2007, 27.

comment and that our three ‘bad historians’ are being contrasted with them. One of the missing group might be Ptolemy, another perhaps Nearchus, though neither was entirely above reproach. The Alexander section is immediately followed by a section about Hieronymus of Cardia and then by one about Polybius. We do not know if there were other sections on historians after Polybius, because our text breaks off.

Our author’s comments about Chares are the first in the text which survive more or less intact. For the first time in antiquity, we find Chares, Alexander’s Master of Ceremonies, being attacked for telling many lies. The word *gar* in line 4 appears to explain that judgement: “for he narrates very many things”, then a gap of three letters, then, *xenikoteron*. Parsons and his fellow-editors propose *oun* or *kai* (intensifying the impact of *xenikoteron*) for the three letter gap. They then translate it as “in an even stranger way”. What, though, does *xenikoteron* imply? It does not have to mean non-Greek. According to Diodorus XII 53.4, as Dylan James has pointed out to me, Gorgias was well received because of the *xenon* of his composition, exemplified by his use of antithesis and so forth. Gorgias, of course, was speaking Greek. In his *Rhetoric*, at 1406A15, Aristotle applies *xenikos* to a style which uses too many long or inappropriate epithets, with no hint that they might be foreign words. At 1405A8 he considers that metaphor, if well chosen, will contribute especially what is “clear, pleasant and *xenikon*”, although a metaphor, he also says, must not be too far-fetched. In his *Poetics* at 1458A22, however, he amplifies the point usefully and explicitly relates it to foreign words. *Xenikon* in the choice of words, he explains, means loan words, metaphor, lengthening and everything which is beyond *to kyrion*, the standard. He explains that *xenikon* becomes barbarism if it uses too many foreign loan words.

Following Aristotle in the *Poetics*, but differing from our text’s first editors, I suggest that *xenikoteron* when applied to Chares means “in a decidedly strange, that is, foreign, way”. Chares was the court Master of Ceremonies and therefore dealt with arrivals who wanted an audience with Alexander.<sup>2</sup> Like his fellow Mytilenean at court, Laomedon, he was surely bilingual.<sup>3</sup> (It is indeed he whose text included the superb tale of Zariadres and Odoatis, a love story, he tells us, which was often depicted in Persians’ palaces, temples and homes and after which they often named their daughters.<sup>4</sup> This single remark is far the best insight into Persians’ domestic taste, far better than anything known as yet from archaeology. As Marquart first brilliantly demonstrated in the 1860’s, Chares’s story, worthy of Walter Scott, is a Hellenised version of an authentic Iranian story, the tale of Zarir, best known to us from Sassanian sources.<sup>5</sup> Chares had heard it, manifestly, from Iranian informants, either directly himself, as I assume, or, less plausibly, from another bilingual Greek. However, his style and vocabulary when telling this particular story are not in fact *xenikon* in the sense of foreign. His sentences are quoted for us and they are short and purely Greek.

If we follow Aristotle’s application of the term, non-Greek content alone would not cause Chares to be criticised as *xenikon*. Aristotle applies the term to style and vocabulary. However, elsewhere in our few surviving fragments, Chares’s choice of words is indeed

2 FGrH 125 T2, F12 and L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York/Oxford 1960, 50–60.

3 Arr. An. III 6.6.

4 FGrH 125 F5.

5 M. BOYCE, “Zariadres and Zarir”, *BSOAS* 17 (1955), 463–477, giving the earlier bibliography.

suggestive. In India, in F17, he gives the Indian name of a divinity, *daimon*, and explains it in Greek. In F3 he describes what to us is pearl-fishing and says that the fishers call the white bones inside the shell *margaritai*, the first appearance of this non-Greek word. There may be more. Without citing Chares, Polyaeus IV 3.27 gives the lengthy list of the Persian king's dinner, seen on a pillar by Alexander, and brilliantly shown by D.M. Lewis in 1987 to overlap with terms known in Elamite in the Persepolis ration tablets. In a footnote Lewis recorded the suggestion made to him by Pierre Briant that the ultimate source for this list was surely one of the Alexander historians and if so, the likeliest candidate is Chares, Master of Ceremonies.<sup>6</sup> Indeed Chares was interested in detail about dinners.<sup>7</sup> If he is Polyaeus's source (Lewis hesitated to accept this), not only is he again including information discovered from non-Greek sources. This list and its words seem in places decidedly foreign, relating as they do to dinner items known to Lewis in Elamite and therefore made intelligible to puzzled modern readers. P.Oxy. 4808's *xenikoteron* refers, I therefore think, primarily to Chares's use of non-Greek words, and only secondarily to his inclusion of non-Greek tall stories.

For the first time we also discover something very unexpected. The history by Chares, Alexander's Master of Ceremonies, "blackens those around Parmenion". This remark is extremely interesting. There has always been evidence that people who rebelled or failed might be denigrated at Alexander's court. Plutarch and Arrian refer to denigratory songs being sung in 328BC in Alexander's presence against the generals who had recently been defeated by Sogdian rebels.<sup>8</sup> These songs were being sung at the dinner party which ended in the killing of Cleitus, another episode in which personal insults and denigration were prominent. In India, on the Hydaspes river, Alexander even had a drama, the *Agen*, composed and acted so as to mock the absent Harpalus and his relations with a top Athenian tart, Pythionice, and his behaviour after her death at Tarsus.<sup>9</sup> Also in India, when the Athenian prize-wrestler Dioxippus defeated a Macedonian in single combat in Alexander's presence, angry Macedonians repeatedly insulted and denounced him and caused him to kill himself within days.<sup>10</sup> Those around Alexander were clearly adept at what sports fans now know as 'sledding'. Even Alexander's respected cavalry officer, Medeios the Thessalian, once stated that insults hurt, but that they are all the better if they really hurt.<sup>11</sup> Histories by Alexander's officers also blacken those accused of conspiracy, implausibly according to Badian, not always so implausibly, according to other modern historians. Here, Chares tells a gruesome tale of the treacherous Callisthenes's punishment, one unique to his history. Callisthenes, he wrote, was kept bound for seven months and although he was to be sent to be tried by the allied synedrion in Aristotle's presence, he died after having become hyper-fat and riddled with lice.<sup>12</sup>

6 D.M. LEWIS (ed.), *Selected Papers in Greek and Near Eastern History*, Cambridge 1997, 332–341, esp. 335 n. 9.

7 *FGrH* 125 F4, 14A, 19A; LEWIS, *Selected* (n. 6) 335 n. 9 thinks Chares is an unlikely source for Polyaeus to use, but he may have used him indirectly through a later intermediary author.

8 Plu. *Alex.* 50.8–9.

9 B. SNELL, *Scenes From Greek Drama*, Berkeley 1964, 99 and R. LANE FOX, "Theopompos of Chios and The Greek World", in: J. Boardman and C.E. Vaphopoulou-Richardson (eds.), *Chios: A Conference at the Homereion in Chios, 1984*, Oxford 1986, 105–120, esp. 118–119 and n. 99.

10 D.S. XVII 101.3–5; Curt. IX 7.25.

11 *FGrH* 129T 5; Plu. *Mor.* 65 C–D.

12 *FGrH* 125 F15.



In the surviving histories of Alexander, the most famous and abundant rebuttals concern Parmenion. He is often presented as Alexander's unwise adviser. Arrian, Plutarch and Curtius included famous exchanges between Alexander and Parmenion in which usually, but not always, Parmenion came off worse.<sup>13</sup> One apparent counter-example may actually be the opposite. Plutarch quotes Aristobulus for the view that it was Parmenion who urged Alexander to attach himself to a woman so "beautiful and nobly born", the Persian Barsine in November 333.<sup>14</sup> Even here, the apologetic Aristobulus may be using Parmenion as a means of excusing Alexander from complaints that he had taken a Persian concubine out of lust.

Attempts have been made to isolate the passages which reflect badly on Parmenion and credit them all to one anti-Parmenion source. The fullest and most recent such attempt has been by Claude Bearzot.<sup>15</sup> On the publication of P.Oxy. 4808, Luisa Prandi even concluded that we can now put a name, Chares, to this source, "the only source about the general Parmenion that had been left without a name, even though it had been identified and re-examined", that is, by Bearzot's study.<sup>16</sup> However, I do not accept Bearzot's over-precise demarcation of a single anti-Parmenion source. The tradition about Parmenion's advice is more varied and I would not wish to ascribe it all to Chares alone. Curtius includes some of it but there is no evidence that he read Chares or that either of his two main sources had done so, either.<sup>17</sup> The best place to look nowadays for traces of Chares's blackening is Plutarch's *Life*, because Plutarch certainly knew Chares in some detail (for instance, 20.9 on Alexander's wounding by Darius at Issus or 54.4 on the true ceremony of *proskynesis*). In the light of P.Oxy. 4808's revelation, I suggest that bits of biased information which are peculiar to Plutarch go back ultimately to Chares's text. The complaint about Philotas's enormously long hunting-nets is one example.<sup>18</sup> The tales about Philotas's arrogance after Issus and his subsequent boasts to his concubine Antigone are another.<sup>19</sup> I propose that Plutarch found them in Chares. They indeed blacken someone in Parmenion's family, whether Chares invented them or perhaps developed what he overheard during his court role as Master of Ceremonies.

Nonetheless, Chares was not the only blackener. A crucial source here is Plutarch, *Alex.* 32–33. First it uses Parmenion as a foil to Alexander's supreme confidence on the morning of Gaugamela, so great, indeed, that Alexander actually over-slept. Then it states that Parmenion put up a poor performance in the battle itself, a judgement for which Callisthenes is explicitly cited. Above all, Plutarch states that *holos aitiontai*, or "generally they accuse", Parmenion of being slothful and incompetent in the battle. From what Plutarch goes on to say, Callisthenes was manifestly one such accuser, but in the light of P.Oxy. 4808 we can now assume that Chares was another.<sup>20</sup> Unlike Callisthenes, Chares was probably not writing his memoir on Alexander's orders as an official history in order to shape posterity's opinion

13 Arr. *An.* I 13.3–7, II 4.9–10, III 10.1–2, III 18.11–12; Plu. *Alex.* 29.8–9. His advice is followed, however, in Curt. III 9.8–10 and Arr. *An.* III 9.4.

14 Plu. *Alex.* 21.9–10

15 C. BEARZOT, "La tradizione su Parmenione negli storici di Alessandro", *Aevum* 61 (1987), 89–104.

16 L. PRANDI, "New evidence about the dating of Cleitarchus (P.Oxy. LXXI, 4808)?", *Histos* 6 (2012), 15–26.

17 Curt. III 7.8–10, IV 13.4–10.

18 Plu. *Alex.* 40.1.

19 Plu. *Alex.* 48.1–49.2; Plu. *Mor.* 339E.

20 Plu. *Alex.* 33.10–11.

and to inform Greeks back home. He wrote in this biased way because such accusations were a way of remaining in Alexander's high favour. Indeed he remained there right on into 324, as our FF4 and 19 of his work prove.

So much for Chares. I now turn to the author's words about Cleitarchus, ones which have attracted particular interest. They are, however, fragmentary, so first, I must revisit the text. In P.Oxy. 4808 lines 13 to 15, Parsons and his fellow editors restore "*k[atalo]gei[ou]*", thereby putting Cleitarchus in charge of the record-office, one which they locate, plausibly enough, in Alexandria. A fragmentary passage of Philodemus already attested a Cleitarchus as an Alexandrian, and the identification of this Cleitarchus with Cleitarchus the historian has been accepted as a working hypothesis even by P.M. Fraser, albeit as "a probability, but no more".<sup>21</sup> For the following words the editors read a capital phi after *katha phesin* and restore *P[hilip]po[s]*, understanding him to be Philippos of Megara, an author cited by Diogenes Laertius for the detail that Cleitarchus was a pupil of Stilpo. If this suggestion is correct it would make the author of our papyrus exceptionally erudite.

Are these restorations compelling? "Philippos" is not, for two reasons. In 2012, G.O. Hutchinson observed in an important footnote that he could not see traces of this phi, even in a top class image.<sup>22</sup> Independently the Italian re-editors of the text have also rejected it.<sup>23</sup> Secondly, Diogenes Laertius quotes verbatim Philippos, not for his views about Cleitarchus, but for his views about the philosopher Stilpo. Philippos merely remarked in passing that Cleitarchus was one of the pupils of Aristotle of Cyrene who transferred to Stilpo. This remark does not suggest that Philippos of Megara had any independent interest in Cleitarchus's later career for its own sake or said anything more about him. Like the Italian re-editors, I conclude that "Philippos" should be dropped from P.Oxy. 4808 lines 14–15 and with it, evidence that its author was a man of unusual erudition.

Earlier in line 14, Italian re-editors of the text have now also rejected the first editors' tentative iota after the gamma and epsilon, a reading which had allowed the word *katalogeion*, or record-office, to be restored. Surprises are always possible, but I find it extraordinarily difficult to imagine Cleitarchus, famous for his lies, his exaggerations and his sky-high literary style, as a bureaucrat in charge of a Ptolemaic record office. Without the iota, very different restorations are possible. As an example, one possibility, attractive to me personally, is *kynegesiou*, hunting. *Katha phesin* can be left to refer to Cleitarchus's own words and by building on the assured pi and omicron in line 15 we can follow with, say, *epitropos* or even *episkopos*. Lo and behold, so far from enduring life in a record-office, Cleitarchus then becomes the officer in charge of hunting. It strikes me as an apt job for an author who certainly liked tall stories and who told one about how to catch animals in India.<sup>24</sup> Certainly, we need a job-description in line 15 to suit the following *kai didaskalos*, whether or not my suggestion about hunting is accepted.

Lines 15–16 then state that Cleitarchus was tutor of Philopator, a truly amazing detail. Philopator is Ptolemy IV, born c. 245/244, and tutored therefore in the 230's. If our author is correct, it becomes almost impossible to retain a modern consensus that Cleitarchus the

21 *FGrH* 137 T12; P.M. FRASER, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, II, Oxford 1972, 717 n. 3.

22 G.O. HUTCHINSON, *Greek Into Latin: Frameworks and Contexts for Intertextuality*, Oxford 2013, 14 n. 17.

23 F. LANDUCCI and L. PRANDI, "P.Oxy.LXXI 4808: Contenuto e problemi", *RFIC* 141 (2003), 79–97, esp. 82.

24 *FGrH* 137 F19.

historian wrote c. 310 BC.<sup>25</sup> This new statement is extremely important because ultimately, Cleitarchus is the author behind much of the vulgate material about Alexander. Persistent argument by modern scholars has re-asserted, convincingly, that he is indeed the one source behind Diodorus book XVII and ultimately behind one strand of Curtius's histories.<sup>26</sup> In modern scholarship Schachermeyr has even suggested that Cleitarchus, resident in Alexandria c. 310, talked with veterans and survivors of Alexander's expedition and that despite his exaggerations and mistakes, this source-material gives his histories a special value for modern studies of Alexander.<sup>27</sup> Throughout his major commentary, A.B. Bosworth has been using the vulgate of Diodorus and Curtius line by line to subvert individual phrases and sentences of Arrian. Such piecemeal citation of the vulgate, with no wider preliminary assessment of its mass of errors (visible in Diodorus XVII, its purest epitome), is a weak point, in my judgement, of Bosworth's entire approach. If we follow P. Oxy 4808, Cleitarchus, prime author of this vulgate material, comes down about sixty years after Alexander's death and loses any claim to have had contemporary awareness of what happened on Alexander's march or any access to survivors who did.

Before assessing this new information, I wish to amplify it by a suggestion about line 16. What stood after the surviving 't'? Parsons and his fellow editors suggest *teleutai*, in the present tense, "he died", and they compare the use of present tenses for the deaths of historic persons in biographic entries in the *Suida*. However, our author is not the *Suida* and I note that he likes *te kai* elsewhere (Col 2 line 6). I therefore suggest we read "[*e kai Maga*]", Magas being Philopator's brother, though a shortlived one as he was murdered in the 220's. In the genitive case his name became "Maga" according to Plutarch, *Agis and Cleomenes*, 54.5. If we restore "Maga", we can then drop the hypothetical iota proposed by the editors for the end of line 17.

This suggestion tells against a view that the word Philopator was a casual slip by the author. He was, in my view, being precise. In the Elysian Fields of modern scholars, one hero will therefore have received news of P.Oxy. 4808 with jubilation, William Tarn, who concluded in 1948, after 127 pages of close argument, that Cleitarchus "could not possibly be *earlier* than 280 BC; he probably wrote in the decade 280–70, but as late even as c. 260 is quite possible".<sup>28</sup> None of Tarn's arguments has prevailed since, although L. Pearson

25 BERESFORD, PARSONS and POBJOY, *Oxyrhynchus* (n.1), 34–35, with bibliography; the widely-accepted date of c. 310 BC for Cleitarchus is fully defended by L. PRANDI, *Fortuna e realtà dell'opera di Clitarco*, Stuttgart 1996.

26 J.R. HAMILTON, "Cleitarchus and Diodorus 17", in: K. Kinzl (ed.), *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in History and Prehistory: Studies Presented to Fritz Schachermeyr on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*, Berlin/New York 1977, 126–146; V. PARKER, "Source-critical Reflections on Cleitarchus' Work", in: P. Wheatley and R. Hannah (eds.), *Alexander and His Successors: Essays from the Antipodes: A Companion to Crossroads of History: the Age of Alexander; Alexander's Empire: Formulation to Decay*, Claremont 2009, 28–55, esp. 32–33 with nn. 7–8.

27 F. SCHACHERMEYR, *Alexander der Grosse: Das Problem seiner Persönlichkeit und seines Wirkens*, Vienna 1973, 153.

28 W.W. TARN, *Alexander The Great, II: Sources and Studies*, Cambridge 1948, 127: his primary argument, that Cleitarchus used Patrocles directly, has often been rebutted, as FRASER, *Ptolemaic* (n. 21), 718 summarises, with earlier bibliography.

reached a broadly similar conclusion in 1960. However Pearson's reasoning has been refuted since.<sup>29</sup> Does P.Oxy. 4808 suffice to vindicate him and Tarn?

I do not think it does. The question of Cleitarchus's date has been frequently discussed since Tarn, most fully by Luisa Prandi in 1996 who opted for a date of c. 310 BC. Independently of Prandi, I will state here five reasons why testimonia about Cleitarchus and traces of his work, best visible in Diodorus XVII, make him an author before c. 300 BC. Firstly, his father Deinon wrote a *Persica*, a sort of work which would not be composed after Alexander's invasion of Asia.<sup>30</sup> Diodorus II 7.3 cites "Cleitarchus and some of those who crossed into Asia with Alexander", implying, to my mind, that like his father Deinon, Cleitarchus already lived in Asia, presumably, like Deinon, in Colophon at the time of Alexander's arrival. Secondly, Pliny the Elder places Cleitarchus temporally between Theopompus and Theophrastus, that is, between 320 and 280 BC.<sup>31</sup> Thirdly, the adult Cleitarchus is presented as a pupil of Stilpo to whom he transferred his loyalties and Stilpo who was flourishing by 307 BC can hardly be dated down to the mid-third century.<sup>32</sup> Fourthly, Cleitarchus's work was the ultimate source, on the most defensible view, of Diodorus XVII and from it we can see that Cleitarchus already used Nearchus and Onesicritus, authors who wrote on Alexander before 315 BC.<sup>33</sup> Tarn claimed, memorably, that "if any one had happened to remember that a baboon is not a monkey, it could have been seen long ago that it was Cleitarchus who used Aristobulus."<sup>34</sup> In 1960, Pearson also accepted that Aristobulus wrote before Cleitarchus, a point which is very important because we know that Aristobulus wrote only after 301 BC.<sup>35</sup> However, despite Tarn and Pearson, the case that Cleitarchus used Aristobulus has now been refuted in detail. Nor did he use Ptolemy, writing in my view after Aristobulus. Famously, he contradicts Ptolemy in several places, surely because Ptolemy had not yet written his own authoritative account of his actions.<sup>36</sup> Fifthly, there are two relevant points about Diodorus's account of Alexander's death. It includes words about Cassander which Schachermeyr has quite plausibly related to a date of c. 315 BC for the underlying source, surely Cleitarchus. To judge from Diodorus in the same passage, his source, surely Cleitarchus, also showed no knowledge of the bogus Royal Diaries, in my view a work composed after c. 305–300. If Cleitarchus wrote after, say, 301, he would surely have used one or other of these texts, just as he used Onesicritus and Nearchus, earlier writers on Alexander's campaign.<sup>37</sup> I should add that like Brunt and others I do not think that Arrian is necessarily referring to Cleitarchus's own claims when he cites, but corrects, authors who connect Ptolemy's assumption of the name Soter with his supposed

29 PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 2), 226–234.

30 Plin. *Nat.* X 136, where all Mss. read 'Dinon'; PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 2), 216 n. 19 and 226.

31 Plin. *Nat.* III 57, where I take *hic iam plus quam ex fama* to refer back to Theophrastus and the previous words to be a parenthesis.

32 *FGrH* 137 T3.

33 PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 2), 226.

34 TARN, *Alexander* (n. 28), 28.

35 PEARSON, *Lost*, (n. 2), 234, 237, 242.

36 Curt. IX 5.21. with F. JACOBY, "Kleitarchos", in: *RE* XI, 625–626 and PEARSON, *Lost* (n. 2), 234–237.

37 D.S. XVII 117 and 118.2, with F. SCHACHERMEYR, *Alexander in Babylon und die Reichsordnung nach seinem Tode*, Vienna 1970, 211–214, endorsed by P.A. BRUNT, *Arrian, Anabasis*, II: *Anabasis Alexandri, books V–VII; Indica*, Cambridge 1983, 555; on the Diaries, R. Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great*, London 1973, 549.

saving of Alexander's life at the Malloi town. That claim could only be made after the taking of the name Soter c. 304 BC, but there is no good reason, as Brunt justly observes, to think that Arrian is "expressly" correcting Cleitarchus here, rather than a later "embellished version of Cleitarchus's story".<sup>38</sup>

For none of these reasons can I accept a Cleitarchus active still in c. 230, let alone as a tutor of Ptolemy Philopator. I add a sixth reason which relates to the sequence of what our author includes. In our bit of papyrus he is discussing historians in chronological sequence, first Onesicritus, then Chares, then Cleitarchus, then Hieronymus. Hieronymus of Cardia was credited with a great old age, 104 according to Agatharchides.<sup>39</sup> In her excellent book, Jane Hornblower opted for a life-span for Hieronymus from c. 350 to c. 260 BC, plausibly crediting the historian himself with a remark about his own extreme age: P.Oxy. 4808 now presents him as being 90, knowledge which could derive from its author's reading of Hieronymus's text. Hieronymus's history ended, it seems, in the late 260's.<sup>40</sup>

In P.Oxy. 4808, discussion of him is then followed by discussion of Polybius. The author is thus discussing historians in chronological order, a point which seems to require a date for Cleitarchus's *floruit* and death before Hieronymus's own in c. 260 BC. There is, however, one proviso. The bit of text we have is structured round three sections, Alexander-historians, Hieronymus, Polybius. It is just possible, therefore, that Cleitarchus was put in the first section because he wrote about Alexander in a bad way, like Chares and Onesicritus, but not because he wrote before Hieronymus, subject of the next section. I consider this possibility to be remote.

In the light of this counter-evidence, I opt for something which modern scholars of historiography are reluctant to infer: a mistake by the author in question. Taking a similar view, independently, Prandi has proposed that the author muddled the real Cleitarchus with another one and that his comment about a tutorship of Philopator should be rejected.<sup>41</sup> In his important note, Hutchinson has now taken the same line, suggesting our author was indeed confused by the existence of another Cleitarchus, number 4 in the modern Pauly-Wissowa, who was a grammarian of the later Hellenistic period.<sup>42</sup> However, the date of this grammarian is most uncertain and although a hunting grammarian is possible, suiting my proposed restoration of *kynegesiou*, nothing else associates this person with a tutorship of Ptolemy IV. I am very doubtful that our author would have conjured up such an obscure person from his own mental Pauly and muddled him with Cleitarchus 1. Maybe Cleitarchus 1 was indeed a royal tutor, but of Ptolemy Soter's children, not Euergetes's (and therefore not of Philopator).

We still need a more detailed explanation of our author's mistake, the only one he makes in what we can read of him. Here, Simon Hornblower has kindly sent me a very acute suggestion. He notes that in the texts of two citations, or fragments, the Hellenistic historian Phylarchus is indeed confused with Cleitarchus.<sup>43</sup> One testimony, the *Suida*'s, shows that Phylarchus had things to say about some of the third-century Ptolemies.<sup>46</sup> It also presents him

38 Arr. *An.* VI 11.8 with BRUNT, *Arrian* (n. 37), 134–135 and n.6.

39 *FGrH* 154 T2.

40 J. HORNBLOWER, *Hieronymus of Cardia*, Oxford 1981, 5–6; A. PRIMO, "Il termine ultimo delle 'Storie' di Ieronimo di Cardia", *Athenaeum* 94 (2006), 719–722.

41 PRANDI, "New", (n. 16), 15–26.

42 HUTCHINSON, *Greek* (n. 22), 14 n. 17.

43 *FGrH* 81 F22 and F 77, with Jacoby's textual apparatus.

as a man from Naucratis, though others put him where we best know him, in the Peloponnese.<sup>44</sup> Hornblower suggests that our author, too, muddled Cleitarchus with Phylarchus, who was indeed a contemporary of the young Ptolemy IV. Others in antiquity, as the ‘fragments’ show, made the same mistake and Phylarchus was indeed a historian, the class of writers in whom our author is interested. A problem with this ingenious theory is that Phylarchus is not otherwise attested as a tutor of Ptolemy IV and his Egyptian links are uncertain. It is, however, a most elegant explanation of what has gone wrong and why. Hornblower also suggests in line 15 a restoration of “Hermippos”, not “Philippos”, and indeed Hermippos is a biographic writer who could well have discussed Phylarchus’s career and who might be known to our author.<sup>45</sup>

I now turn to the lines about Hieronymus where I merely wish to make one historical and one textual point. Historically, I propose that the word ‘*diaitetes*’ in col. I, line 25 refers to Hieronymus’s mediation between Eumenes, his commander in the fortress at Nora, Antipater in Macedon (later, Polyperchon) and Antigonus outside the fortress in autumn 319, for which see D.S. XVIII 42.1 and 50.4. Textually, my one point is that P.Oxy. 4808 col. II lines 3–5 have been restored very tentatively by the editors so as to allude to Hieronymus’s career under Alexander the Great. Jacoby assumed that Hieronymus was indeed already with Eumenes and Alexander before 323 and Jane Hornblower concurred, though admitting there is no clear evidence. As Billows and others have observed, details about Alexander in Polybius are likely to have derived from Hieronymus, but in my view they were only retrospective comments in his history of the Successors.<sup>46</sup> However, Parsons and the editors cannot be right to propose a supplement for the very damaged lines 9–10 which makes Hieronymus be with (*sunen*) Cleitos the brother of Alexander. Alexander had no such brother called Cleitus. Instead I suggest for lines 9–10 *protā men Alexandroi -(au)toi gar sunen toi paidi Alexandrou*, i.e. Hieronymus was at first with the actual son of Alexander, Alexander IV, perhaps while he was with Eumenes in Babylon in 323–322 BC. My supplement fills the papyrus’s required ten letter-space in line 10. Hieronymus’s later loyalty to Eumenes, the agent of the kings and a man especially close to Olympias, fits with this very well.

I have nothing much to add about the Polybius section, except to note that just as our author praises Hieronymus for being *empraktos*, practically involved, so he praises Polybius likewise in Col. II lines 23–25. He also describes him as *philaletes*, on a likely restoration of line 27, and then also as *polymathes* in lines 28–34. In fact, erudite *polymathia* is not a quality which Polybius himself wholeheartedly admired in others, as Giusy Monti has well observed to me. In line 31 Polybius is praised by our author for being related in some way to political affairs, but W. Luppe has recently proposed neat and convincing restorations for lines 31–34 which emphasise Polybius’s polymathy in other areas too.<sup>47</sup>

44 FGrH 81 T1.

45 For use of Hermippos by another critic, perhaps a near contemporary of P.Oxy. 4808’s author, D.M. LEWIS, “The Dating of Demosthenes’ Speeches”, in: Lewis, *Selected* (n. 6), 230–251, esp. 238–244.

46 HORNBLOWER, *Hieronymus*, (n. 40), 9 and 80–87; R. BILLOWS, “Polybius and Alexander Historiography”, in: A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 286–306, esp. 303, where I too consider Hieronymus’s detailed remarks about Alexander to be asides in his history of the Successors.

47 Plb. XII 25E and 27–28; W. LUPPE, “Würdigung des Polybios in P.Oxy. 4808”, *ZPE* 163 (2007), 40.



What is P.Oxy. 4808 an extract from? It comments on Onesicritus, Chares, Cleitarchus, Hieronymus and Polybius, apparently in sequence. It is therefore more than a book-list, for which the relevant comparison is the Rhodian book-list, related to books in a library in Rhodes, probably in a gymnasium on whose wall the list was inscribed c. 100 BC. It gives authors, titles, and the number of their books, without comment on their merits, although, as Aneurin Ellis-Evans has pointed out to me, the books named are mainly oligarchic in tone where they are known have political connections.<sup>48</sup> At first sight a more interesting comparison can be made with inscriptions on fragments of wall-plastering from another such gymnasium-library, one in Tauromenium, tentatively dated c. 130–100 BC.<sup>49</sup> They discuss Callisthenes, calling him Alexander's epistolographos. They refer to Fabius Pictor, giving his praenomen, his parentage, and describing his work, beginning with Heracles's arrival in Italy and going on to Romulus and Remus and much else. They also refer to Philistus, giving what "they say" about his studying with wise Euenos the elegist, and then some details, also which "they say", which are apparently details of Syracusan civic history. Perhaps they were related by Philistus himself. These fragments are indeed Hellenistic examples of brief comments about historians, their origins and the scope of their works, and they were indeed put up in a relatively public place, presumably for interested general readers. A gymnasium was a space, we must remember, which was used for lectures as well as physical work-outs. However, more fragments have now been published by Battistoni in 2006 which show that not all the authors on the wall were historians. They include Anaximander.<sup>50</sup> As E. Bispham has pointed out to me, there is another crucial difference between P.Oxy. 4808 and these fragments. The Tauromenium entries give summaries and a few interesting facts about the authors they mention, befitting a library-setting in which interested readers might then take out a scroll of the author in question. P.Oxy. 4808 says nothing about the contents of its historians' books. It criticises some of the authors and their moral approach, implying the very opposite of the comments inscribed at Tauromenium: they are authors not worth reading. The Tauromenium fragments are not a model or parallel for what our author is doing. Nonetheless, they are suggestive, I will conclude, for his milieu.

Other explanations of his work are needed, and naturally, the first editors reviewed some possibilities. One is that the text is "part of a larger historical work, whether as a prefatory list and evaluation of sources or a justification for writing the history of the period". As a parallel they cite Dionysius of Halicarnassus's remarkable survey of previous authors on Rome and his explanation of his own extra information, which is based, he says, on oral discussions. Hieronymus, Timaeus, Antigonos, Polybius and Silenus are among those named in passing, but Dionysius explains his decision to focus on an earlier period.<sup>51</sup> He also states that history aims at "truth and justice" and so forth. These values conform to those of our author, but otherwise, I agree with the editors that this sort of prefatory survey does not closely correspond to P.Oxy. 4808.

48 M. SEGRE, "Epigraphica I", *RFIC* n.s. 13 (1935), 215–217 with J. and L. ROBERT, *B.Ep.* 1936, 377 and L. CASSON, *Libraries in the Ancient World*, New Haven/London 2001, 59–60.

49 SEG 26.1123, with earlier bibliography.

50 F. BATTISTONI, "The Ancient Pinakes from Tauromenium: Some New Readings", *ZPE* 157 (2006), 169–180, with SEG 59.1131 and 61.761.

51 D.H. I 6.4.



Another fruitful comparison is Polybius book XII although the editors do not happen to discuss it. It is both slightly like, and instructively unlike, the P.Oxy. text. Book XII is most famous for its attack on the inaccuracies and incompetences of Timaeus. Although it also mentions failings in Ephorus, Demochares and especially Callisthenes, it only discusses and attacks them because Timaeus had attacked them too. No such **thread runs behind the sequence of historians discussed in P.Oxy. 4808. Nor is there the forensic** tone, with plentiful use of the first person, which Polybius adopts in book XII, (for instance XII 17.1, “so that I do not seem arbitrary”).<sup>52</sup> P.Oxy. 4808’s judgements are plain statements and are not made in the first person, which nowhere appears. If the author was defending his own practice or writing a preface to his own history, I submit that the first person would be evident throughout and there would, as in Polybius, be an atmosphere of an ongoing debate with others. Famously, Polybius also gives his own general views on *historia* while he criticises others. He even digresses on its ideal type. P.Oxy. 4808 does no such thing explicitly. I therefore concur with the editors that P.Oxy. 4808 is not an extract from a bigger work of history by one author.

Nonetheless, to a degree not always appreciated, the author shares certain views with Polybius whom he has read carefully. Like Polybius, he takes a moral view of historians. Hieronymus is a “good man”. Chares displays *kakoetheia*, a malignant disposition. We need only compare Polybius calling Timaeus *philapechthes*, *pseustes*, *tolmeros* at XII 25.6 and as utterly depraved in his psyche at XII 23.2. In this context our author’s otherwise puzzling remarks about Cleitarchus’s *diathesis* become intelligible. Cleitarchus is described as blameless in his *diathesis*, words, however, which the editors of P.Oxy. 4808 take to be a purely literary judgement, referring to Cleitarchus’s manner of composition. They well compare Polybius’s use of the word *diathesis*.<sup>53</sup> For good reasons, Walbank prefers to translate *diathesis* in Polybius not as “composition” but as “rhetorical elaboration”.<sup>54</sup> If we adopt this Polybian sense of the word, the author of P.Oxy. 4808 is saying that Cleitarchus was blameless in his rhetorical elaboration, a very surprising view to those of us who respect Longinus and his observation that Cleitarchus’s style was sky high, even more so than Callisthenes’s.<sup>55</sup> However, John Marincola has proposed to me a different interpretation which is wholly convincing and solves the problem. *Diathesis*, he realises, is being used by our author in a moral sense, meaning “purpose” or “frame of mind”, as often in Plutarch, possibly a near-contemporary.<sup>56</sup> This translation fits the context very neatly. Cleitarchus was rhetorically excessive, but he cannot be criticised for having evil motives, as, say, Chares can.

Our author also insists on the importance of truth in history. Chares, he complains, told many lies (col. I line 4), whereas Polybius was, on a near-certain restoration, a historian who was *philaletes* (col. II line 27). The editors cite only Diodorus II 32.1 as a parallel, but the

52 Plb. XII 25A, 25C, 25 i–k and 26.9 are good examples.

53 Plb. II 61.1 and XXXIV 4.1, to which can be added X 27.8 as corrected by Schweighaueser.

54 F.W. WALBANK, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, I: *Commentary on books I–VI*, Oxford 1957, 264 and II, Oxford 1967, 234 and III, Oxford 1979, 584.

55 *FGrH* 137 T9.

56 D. WYTTEBACH, *Plutarchi Chaeronensis Moralia*, VIII, Oxford 1830, 404 lists nearly thirty uses of the word with this sense in the *Moralia* alone.

virtue of loving the truth is cardinal in Polybius from beginning to end.<sup>57</sup> The author of P.Oxy. 4808 also admired Hieronymus, a “good man”, for his involvement in practical affairs and campaigns and for being an eyewitness. He says the same about Polybius (col. II lines 23–25), thereby emphasising the very values which were valued by Polybius himself. Here, Polybius’s remarks on the Rhodian historians Zeno and Antisthenes in book XVI are especially telling. Their stress on honesty, truth-telling and practical engagement exemplify the sort of standards which the author of P.Oxy. 4808, a reader of Polybius, is also applying.<sup>58</sup>

One exception is more apparent than real. In col. I line 29 our author seems to criticise rhetorical speeches given by Hieronymus. In her excellent study, Jane Hornblower even proposes speeches which Hieronymus might have given at length, but which were omitted in Diodorus, books XVIII–XX.<sup>59</sup> She suggests as examples the debate at Athens, in Diodorus XVIII 10.4, for which Hieronymus’s first-hand sources would surely be non-existent, and she also notes the speech of the Nabataean elder at Diodorus XIX 97 whose “philosophical content” certainly owed more to Hieronymus’s invention than to a Nabataean who at this date knew no Greek. These speeches would be good examples of what P.Oxy. 4808 criticises. However, Hornblower also argues persuasively that Hieronymus may have included several speeches by Eumenes to his commanders and troops and as Hieronymus was present with Eumenes, he could have heard and noted these as they were delivered. He could also have heard, a little later, Antigonus’s ringing proclamation at Tyre, abbreviated by Diodorus.<sup>60</sup> If so, not all of the speeches in Hieronymus were inventions of the type which P.Oxy. 4808 seems to criticise.

With our author’s disapproval of invented rhetorical speeches, we can again compare Polybius. By contrast, other ancient critics and historians, including Callisthenes, valued and recommended aiming for the “appropriate”, *to prepon*, not for “accuracy so far as possible”.<sup>61</sup> If the author of P.Oxy. 4808 was disapproving of invented rhetorical speeches, he was noticeably close to Polybius on this point too. His first editors restored the missing lines rather boldly and made him disapprove of Hieronymus’s “pleasure in speeches” of any sort, an aspect, as they supplement the text, “which is alien to true history and any kind of utility”. They cite Diodorus XX 1.1 for this view but there, Diodorus was only criticising historians who included over-long speeches and “frequent” rhetorical ones. If P.Oxy. criticised Hieronymus in this fragmentary passage, it was surely not for including speeches of any kind, but for including some extremely rhetorical speeches, with the implication that they were invented. Again, Polybius would have approved.

Reading Polybius, I suggest, has not only reinforced, perhaps actually shaped, the evaluations of historians which our author gives. It has also shaped his choice of them. It is very striking, and worth stressing, that he says nothing about Timaeus, nothing about Phylarchus, nothing about Duris. I suggest that he omitted them because his reading of Polybius reinforced, or even formed, his view that they were no good and needed no further

57 Plb. I 14.6, XII 12.3; more generally, compare P.A. BRUNT, “Cicero and Historiography”, in: P.A. Brunt, *Studies in Greek History and Thought*, Oxford 1993, 181–209, esp. 187–188 and 204–209.

58 Plb. XVI 14–20, esp. 14.1–3 and 7–10, XVI 17.9–11 and XX 3.8.

59 J. HORNBLOWER, *Hieronymus* (n. 40), 100 n. 88.

60 D.S. XIX 61.

61 Plb. XII 25 A–B, 26.1 and 26C4 with F.W. WALBANK, *Speeches in the Greek Historians*, Oxford 1963; Callisthenes, *FGrH* 124 F44.

discussion.<sup>62</sup> The editors of the papyrus incline to the possibility that the work was “a simple catalogue (but more than a simple list) of historians, with summary comment”. They also incline to see it as “an individual’s short notes on Hellenistic historiography”, locating him convincingly in Egypt.<sup>63</sup> I agree in general with their diagnosis, but wish to add two points. I think the author is much taken with Polybius and his views and that he is writing quite soon after Polybius’s entire work began to be diffused. He has also been a tireless reader. We can ascribe at least 12 books to Chares, another 15 or so to Cleitarchus, many to Hieronymus and nearly forty to Polybius. Nonetheless, our author seems to have read them carefully.

When did he write? At or near to the date of our papyrus, perhaps c. 110 AD? Or earlier? I note with his Italian editors that in the fragment we have, he expresses a special interest in what could be called the “Macedonian times”. His interest in them relates to the excellent study of this theme in the Roman era by Spawforth, made available in 2006, a year before P.Oxy. 4808 was published.<sup>64</sup> However, I do not think Macedon was the author’s only interest, although Italian scholars have since implied as much. There was more to Polybius than that one theme, and our author is not interested simply in how Egypt had come to be ruled by Macedonians. However, in the absence of his full text any judgements on his horizons of interest can only be very cautious.

Nor is he writing with an eye mainly on rhetoric and rhetorical training, as some have implied when trying to put him in context. Hieronymus receives warm praise and much discussion although his style was not considered to be much good by other ancient critics.<sup>65</sup> Our author is interested in substance and bias, not just style. His approach is therefore different to the emphasis in, say, Cicero *De Oratore* II 55ff or bits of Quintilian which list historians simply as rhetorical models. More is going on in his discussion than a mere list for rhetorical pupils would require.

G.O. Hutchinson points out to me that a papyrus-text from Tebtunis, probably of the third century BC, also lists authors of one genre in a text laid out like ours and written in a similar literary hand. In this text the authors are tragedians. However, they are merely listed without critical comment.<sup>66</sup> I propose that the text copied in P.Oxy. 4808 was also the personal noting of a Greek, perhaps in Egypt, someone who was familiar with an array of historical authors from the library in his local gymnasium: here, at least, the contents of the Tauromenium library are a suggestive parallel. He sat down by himself and read them. He had an ear for style (col. I line 5 and 12) which was probably enhanced by the sort of lectures he heard in the gymnasium. Like most opinionated reviewers, he was not a faultlessly stylish writer himself (col. I 3–9 is very clumsy, as is 28–30, at least as reconstructed by his modern editors). He really liked Hieronymus who was not a stylish writer. He was really keen on Polybius too, whose views enhanced his own. What he detested was bias and personal prejudice, tall stories and lies. His ideals partly anticipate Quintilian’s famous ideal, a *vir*

62 Plb. II 55–63, with WALBANK, *Historical* (n. 54), I, 259–260.

63 BERESFORD, PARSONS and POBJOY, *Oxyrhynchus* (n. 1), 28; with Philippos now out of the text, their case rests on the unqualified mention of Philopator by name in col. I 13.16.

64 T. SPAWFORTH, ““Macedonian Times”: Hellenistic Memories in the Provinces of the Roman Near East”, in: D. Konstan and S. Said (eds.), *Greeks on Greekness: Viewing the Greek Past under the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 2006, 1–26.

65 *FGrH* 154 T12.

66 P.Teb. III 695.

*bonus, dicendi peritus*, but he minded profoundly about an author's experience. He admired personal engagement in public and political affairs. His observations on the moral standing of the historians he discusses do not, to my mind, relate to an increasing emphasis on moral qualities in public discourse, visible to us, for instance, in Hellenistic decrees of the second century BC.<sup>67</sup> They are merely the age-old emphasis of a reader who linked vices of bias and style to vices in their author's personal character.

Behind our fragmentary papyrus I sense a kindred spirit. He is an excellent chap. Nowadays we argue keenly over what this or that historian thought. We think less about the people who were likely to read them, the general readers in antiquity. Our no-nonsense author was a gymnasium-trained history buff, writing notes to guide like-minded readers and to uphold moral values. He was not, however, correct in linking Cleitarchus to Philopator. He does not oblige us to date the major source of the Alexander vulgate about eighty years later than current orthodoxy holds.

I am very grateful to Professor Krzysztof Nawotka, Dr. Agnieszka Wojciechowska and the organisers and participants in Wrocław for their help and comments. I am especially grateful to members of an Oxford seminar on Hellenistic Historiography who heard and commented invaluablely on this paper in May 2016, especially the convenor John Marincola, Ed Bispham, Aneurin Ellis-Evans, Gregory Hutchinson and Simon Hornblower, all of whom have contributed importantly to my text.

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67 A.Ellis-Evans helpfully discussed this wider moral context with me on first hearing this paper.

# Agatharchides of Cnidus and the idea of a Peripatetic view of Alexander

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Ancient authors distinguished among many schools of philosophy one founded by Aristotle – peripatetic philosophy (ή περιπατητική φιλοσοφία – D.H. *Amm.* 2), its pupils, students, successors and followers being known as the Peripatetics (e.g. ό Περιπατητικός Δικαίαρχος). The Peripatetic School placed emphasis on a scientific recognition of the world; Aristotle and Theophrastus created the foundations for many scientific disciplines, writing treatises on virtually every subject, from logic to zoology and botany. However, in the field of historiography, although many individuals engaged with the writing of history were defined as Peripatetic (e.g. Dicaearchus – Δικαίαρχος ό Περιπατητικός, Callisthenes – Καλλισθένης ό Περιπατητικός, Satyrus – Σάτυρος ό περιπατητικός), the ancients did not individualise any separate Peripatetic school. It is only modern scholars who have begun to distinguish the Peripatetic trend in ancient Greek historiography: “‘Peripatetic art criticism’ and ‘peripatetic historiography’ have no ancient authority but have been coined by modern scholars to describe certain ‘schools’ of art criticism and historical writing which seem to have been based on principles established in the Athenian Peripatos”.<sup>1</sup>

The term ‘Peripatetic historiography’ (die peripatetische Historiographie) was invented by Eduard Schwartz.<sup>2</sup> This popular trend in Hellenistic historiography is also called ‘tragic’ and ‘pathetic’. Prominent opponents of Schwartz included Fritz Wehrli and F.W. Walbank.<sup>3</sup> The developed concept of peripatetic historiography assumes that the theoretical basis for it was created by Aristotle; the methodological basis by Praxiphanes of Mytilene Περί ιστορίας and Theophrastus Περί ιστορίας. The main representatives are considered to be Callisthenes – first generation; Duris of Samos – second generation; Phylarchus – third generation.

One of the arguments supporting the hypothesis regarding the existence in the Hellenistic period of a specific peripatetic trend in historiography was meant to have been the hostility shown to Alexander by Hellenistic schools of philosophy, the Peripatetic and the Stoic. This hostility would have been typical of this trend in historiography, while other historians tended to refer to Alexander with admiration and respect. Arguments for the presence of this hostility in the writings of the peripatetic historians are as follows:

1. the historian Callisthenes of Olynthus was a relative and protégé of Aristotle, so the Peripatetics should somehow avenge his death in their writings;
2. the title of Theophrastus’ work Καλλισθένης ή περί πένθους α’, Callisthenes, or On Grief, one book (D.L. V 44);

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1 J.P. LYNCH, *Aristotle’s School: A Study of a Greek Educational Institution*, Berkeley 1972, 138.

2 E. SCHWARTZ, “Die Berichte über catilinarische Verschwörung”, *Hermes* 32 (1897), 560.

3 F.W. WALBANK, “Tragic History: A Reconsideration”, *BICS* 2 (1955), 4–14.

3. the testimony of Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* III 21:

“nam qui dolet rebus alicuius adversis, idem alicuius etiam secundis dolet, ut Theophrastus interitum deplorans Callisthenis sodalis sui, rebus Alexandri prosperis angitur, itaque dicit Callisthenem incidisse in hominem summa potentia summaque fortuna, sed ignarum quem ad modum rebus secundis uti conveniret”.

“For a person who is pained by another’s misfortune will also be pained by another’s good fortune. For instance, while Theophrastus was mourning the death of his friend Callisthenes, he was simultaneously pained by the good fortune of Alexander. That was why he remarked that Callisthenes had fallen in with one who had great power and wealth, but who did not know how to make proper use of his advantages”. (transl. Margaret Graver 2002).

When Plutarch decided to write the tract *On the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander* (Περὶ τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου τύχης ἢ ἀρετῆς), this was an attempt at responding to the doubts sown by precisely those Peripatetic historians. As A.E. Wardman writes, “The Peripatetics worked out a theory of *τύχη* and applied it to Alexander, in order to belittle his achievements”.<sup>4</sup> The founder of the theory of a specific Peripatetic view of Alexander was J.F. Stroux;<sup>5</sup> however the main adherent of this idea was W.W. Tarn: “The outline of that [Peripatetic] portrait has already been noticed: Aristotle turned out a perfectly good and virtuous pupil, but he was ruined by his own fortune and became a cruel tyrant. The portrait was the revenge of the school upon Alexander for putting Callisthenes to death, and revenge they have indeed had”.<sup>6</sup> In turn, the main opponent of this view was E. Badian,<sup>7</sup> but a modification of these extreme positions was achieved by E. Mensching.<sup>8</sup>

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The aim of this article is to examine the question of whether a specific Peripatetic view of Alexander can be observed on the basis of just one Hellenistic historian, Agatharchides of Cnidus. Agatharchides, who lived in Alexandria in the second century BC, is separated by several generations from the youngest of the Peripatetic historians, Phylarchus. So to what types of arguments do scholars incline in order to answer the question of whether Agatharchides was a Peripatetic historian? These include:

## 1. the testimony of Strabo XIV 2.15:

ἄνδρες δ' ἀξιόλογοι Κνίδιοι (...) εἶτ' Ἀγαθαρχίδης ὁ ἐκ τῶν περιπάτων, ἀνὴρ συγγραφεύς, “Notable Cnidians were: (...) then Agatharchides, one of the Peripatetics, a historian”; (transl. H.L. Jones 1929)

2. Agatharchides was a secretary and lector of Heraclides Lembos, a historian and epitomist of Peripatetic writings;
3. Agatharchides continued the traditions of Aristotle and Theophrastus in his historical theory, research methodology, writing style and vocabulary;<sup>9</sup>

4 A.E. WARDMAN, “Plutarch and Alexander”, *CQ* N.S. 5 (1955), 96.

5 J.F. STROUX, “Die stoische Beurteilung Alexanders des Großen”, *Philologus* 88 (1933), 222–240.

6 W.W. TARN, *Alexander the Great, II: Sources and Studies*, Cambridge 1948, 97.

7 E. BADIAN, “The Eunuch Bagoas”, *CQ* 52 N.S. 8 (1958) 144–157.

8 E. MENSCHING, “Peripatetiker über Alexander”, *Historia* 12 (1963), 274–282.

9 H. LEOPOLDI, *De Agatharchide Cnidio*, Rostock 1892; E.A. WAGNER, *Agatharchides und der mittlere*

4. the historical works of Callisthenes, Duris and Phylarchus were Agatharchides' sources.

If, however, we accept that Agatharchides was a Peripatetic historian, it is surprising that Agatharchides' fragments and excerpts have never been used as evidence for or against a special Peripatetic view of Alexander. What then was Agatharchides' attitude towards Alexander? – or can sufficient material be found in the extant fragments for us to be able to make some conclusions on this matter?

Before we turn to the analysis of Agatharchides' information on the subject of Alexander, it is necessary to make two preliminary assumptions:

1. None of Agatharchides' writings have survived except as fragmentary excerpts and quotations, so any argumentum ex silentio is excluded.
2. The volume of preserved excerpts and quotations from his works is large enough to allow us an analysis of his attitude toward Alexander.

In the extant excerpts and fragments of Agatharchides' historical works we have six testimonia regarding Alexander:

*Three testimonia useless for our main question:*

GGM 1 – an objection by Photius that elephants were used in war by kings before Ptolemy II, Alexander is mentioned as fighting with Porus' elephants;

GGM 103 – “Most of those encountered there [Fortunate Islands] are from the port [Potana] Alexander built by the Indus River” [transl. Stanley Burstein 1989];

GGM 21 – “How a person whose situation is free from danger ought properly to recount the extreme misfortunes that have befallen some men” [transl. Stanley Burstein 1989] – as an example of misfortunes which have befallen Olynthus and Thebes, which were looted by Philip and Alexander.

*Three testimonia useful for our main question:*

GGM 17 – Alexander as an example in the Preceptor's Speech to a young King.

FGrH 86 F2 – The extravagance of Alexander's companions vs. the frugality of Philip.

FGrH 86 F3 – Luxuries of Alexander's companions and his extravagant tent.

However, let us look more closely at these three testimonia on Agatharchides, in which we can find not only references to historical events, but also to Agatharchides' personal relationship with Alexander. The first is preserved by Photius in his extracts from the first book of *On the Red Sea*, where he included, among other things, an eclogue with his particular opinion of the rhetorical turns of speech of the advisor/tutor to the young King:

*GGM 17 – Preceptor's Speech to a young King*

Ὁ γοῦν Ἀλέξανδρος, ἀήττητος ὢν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις, ἀσθενέστατος ἦν ἐν ταῖς ὁμιλίαις· ἤλiskeτο γάρ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπαίνων, καὶ Ζεὺς καλούμενος οὐ χλευάζεσθαι ἐνόμιζεν ἀλλὰ τιμᾶσθαι, τῶν μὲν ἀδυνάτων ἐπιθυμῶν, τῆς δὲ φύσεως ἐπιλελησμένος.

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*Peripatos (Wiss. Beilage zu d. Jahreshb., k. Realgymn. zu Annaberg)*, I, Leipzig 1901.



“Thus, Alexander, who was invincible on the battlefield, was completely helpless in his personal relationships. For he was ensnared by praise; and when he was called Zeus, he did not think he was being mocked but honoured in his passion for the impossible and his forgetfulness of nature”. (transl. S. Burstein 1989).

Here these are the key words: ‘Ἀλέξανδρος ἀσθενέστατος ἦν ἐν ταῖς ὁμιλίαις “Alexander was completely helpless in his personal relationships”’.

*FGrH 86 F2 – Luxury of Alexander’s companions vs. the frugality of Philip*

The next testimonium is found in Athenaeus, but here Agatharchides’ source was a second-generation Peripatetic historian, Duris of Samos. Below we display in the table two passages from Athenaeus side by side, one with the actual fragment from Agatharchides and the other, in abbreviated form, the description of Philip’s frugality and only a reference to Duris, from which we can assume that this passage found its way into the works of Athenaeus without Agatharchides’ mediation:

| Ath. IV 42   | Ath. VI 19  |
|--|---|
| Ἀγαθαρχίδης δ' ὁ Κνίδιος ἐν ὀγδόῃ Ἀσιατικῶν ἱστορεῖ ὡς οἱ ἐστιῶντες Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Φιλίππου τῶν φίλων τὸ μέλλον παρατεθήσεσθαι τῶν τραγημάτων περιεχρύσουν· ὅτε δὲ θέλοιεν ἀναλίσκειν, περιελόντες τὸν χρυσὸν ἅμα τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐξέβαλλον, ἵνα τῆς μὲν πολυτελείας οἱ φίλοι θεαταὶ γίνωνται, οἱ δ' οἰκέται κύριοι.       |   |
| ἐπιλεησμένοι δ' ἦσαν οὗτοι,  |   |
|  | σπάνιος γὰρ ὄντως ἦν τὸ παλαιὸν παρὰ τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν ὁ μὲν χρυσὸς καὶ πάνυ, ὁ δὲ ἄργυρος ὀλίγος ἦν ὁ ἐν τοῖς μετάλλοις.  |
| ὡς καὶ Δοῦρις ἱστορεῖ, ὅτι καὶ Φίλιππος ὁ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου πατὴρ ποτήριον χρυσοῦν ὀλκὴν ἄγον πεντήκοντα δραχμὰς κεκτημένος τοῦτο ἐλάμβανε κοιμώμενος ἀεὶ καὶ πρὸς κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ κατετίθετο.  | διὸ καὶ Φίλιππον τὸν τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως Ἀλεξάνδρου πατέρα φησὶν Δοῦρις ὁ Σάμιος φιάλιον χρυσοῦν κεκτημένον ἀεὶ τοῦτ' ἔχειν κείμενον ὑπὸ τὸ προσκεφάλαιον. |
| Ath. IV 42   | Ath. VI 19  |
| Agatharchides of Cnidus in the eighth book of his <i>Asiatic History</i> records that whenever the friends of Alexander, son of Philip, entertained him at dinner, they encased everything that was to be served as dessert in gold; and when they desired to eat the dessert, they tore off the gold with the rest of |   |

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| the waste and threw it away, that their friends might be spectators of their extravagance, while their slaves enjoyed the profit.  |   |
| But these gentry had forgotten,  |   |
|  | as a matter of fact, gold was really very scarce in Greece in ancient times, and the silver to be found in the mines was not considerable.  |
| what Duris also records, that Philip, Alexander's father, possessed a gold cup weighing fifty drachms, and that he always took it to bed with him and placed it at his head. [transl. Charles Burton Gulick] | Duris of Samos, therefore, says that Philip, the father of King Alexander the Great, always kept the small gold saucer which he owned lying under his pillow. [transl. Charles Burton Gulick] |

The dominant theme of Agatharchides' fragment is:

- the opposition between the profligate companions of Alexander and the humble needs of Philip;
- the companions of Alexander are initiators of that abuse; Alexander is only a passive participant (οἱ ἐστιῶντες Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Φιλίππου τῶν φίλων).

Therefore, this is, as it were, a continuation of the idea from the previous testimonium – that Alexander may have had problems with his interpersonal relationships, if he allowed his companions such extravagances.

*FGrH 86 F3 – Luxuries of Alexander's companions and his extravagant tent*

The third and final testimonium is the most complex in terms of content, and can be reconstructed today thanks to a few sources. We know this thanks to a passage in Athenaeus, where both Agatharchides and his source, Phylarchus, a third-generation Peripatetic historian, are both cited by name; we also have Aelianus, where this same anecdote is anonymous. The contents of this fragment can be divided up into the following:

1. a catalogue of the most extravagant luxuries of Alexander's companions;  
comparison of expenses between masterly golden plane-trees and vine made for a Persian king and everyday costs of luxuries of Alexander's companions;
2. a description of Alexander's luxurious tent;  
the aim of the audience;
3. Alexander's demand for purple for his companions and the response of the sophist, Theocritus of Chius – only in Athenaeus; it does not appear in Aelianus.

The description of the tent and the aim of the audience conducted inside it is also known to us from the account of Polyaeus, equally anonymous, but, similarly to the case of Aelianus, clearly dependent on Agatharchides.

| Ath. XII 55  |  | Ael. <i>VH</i> IX 3  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>καὶ τοὺς ἐταίρους φησὶ τοὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου ὑπερβαλλούσῃ τρυφῇ χρήσασθαι. ὧν εἷς ὧν καὶ Ἄγων χρυσοῦς ἦλους ἐν ταῖς κρηπίσι [καὶ τοῖς ὑποδήμασιν] ἐφόρει. Κλεῖτος δ' ὁ Λευκὸς καλοῦμενος ὅτε χρηματίζειν μέλλοι, ἐπὶ πορφυρῶν ἱματίων διαπεριπατῶν τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν διελέγετο. Περδίκκα δὲ καὶ Κρατερῷ φιλογυμναστοῦσιν ἠκολούθουν διφθέραι σταδιαῖαι τοῖς μεγέθεσιν, ὕφ' αἷς περιλαμβάνοντες τόπον ἐν ταῖς καταστρατοπεδείαις ἐγυμνάζοντο· ἠκολούθει δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ ὑποζύγια πολλὰ τὰ τὴν κόνιν κομίζοντα πρὸς τὴν ἐν τῇ παλαίστρᾳ χρεῖαν. Λεοννάτω δὲ καὶ Μενελάῳ φιλοκυνήγοις οὓσιν αὐλαῖαι σταδίων ἑκατὸν ἠκολούθουν, αἷς περιστάντες τὰς θήρας ἐκυνήγουν.</p> |  | <p>Ὅτι διέθρυπτε τοὺς ἐταίρους Ἀλέξανδρος, τρυφᾶν ἐπιχωρῶν αὐτοῖς, εἴ γε καὶ Ἄγων χρυσοῦς ἦλους ἐν ταῖς κρηπίσιν ἐφόρει. Κλεῖτος δὲ εἶποτε μέλλοι τισὶ χρηματίζειν, ἐπὶ πορφυρῶν εἰμάτων βαδίζων τοὺς δεομένους προσίετο. Περδίκκα δὲ καὶ Κρατερῷ φιλογυμναστοῦσιν ἠκολούθουν διφθέραι σταδιαῖαι τὸ μέγεθος, ὕφ' αἷς περιλαμβάνοντες τόπον εὐμεγέθη ἐν ταῖς καταστρατοπεδείαις ἐγυμνάζοντο. εἶπετο δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ πολλὴ κόνις δι' ὑποζυγίων ἐς τὰ γυμνάσια λυσιτελεῖς οὖσα. Λεοννάτω δὲ καὶ Μενελάῳ φιλοθηροῦσιν αὐλαῖαι σταδίων ἑκατὸν ἠκολούθουν.</p> |  |
| <p>τὰς δὲ χρυσᾶς πλατάνους καὶ τὴν χρυσὴν ἄμπελον, ὕφ' ἣν οἱ Περσῶν βασιλεῖς ἐχρημάτιζον πολλάκις καθήμενοι, σμαραγδίνους βότρυς ἔχουσαν καὶ τῶν Ἰνδικῶν ἀνθράκων ἄλλων τε παντοδαπῶν λίθων ὑπερβαλλόντων ταῖς πολυτελείαις, ἐλάττω φησὶν ὁ Φύλαρχος φαίνεσθαι τῆς καθ' ἡμέραν ἐκάστοτε γινομένης παρ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δαπάνης.</p>  |  |  |  |
| Ath. XII 55 cont.  | Ael. <i>VH</i> IX 3 cont.  | Polyaen. IV 3.24:  |  |
|  |  | <p>Ἀλέξανδρος ἐν μὲν τοῖς Μακεδόσιν ἢ ἐν τοῖς Ἑλλήσι δικάζων μέτριον καὶ δημοτικὸν ἔχειν τὸ δικαστήριον ἐδοκίμαζεν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς βαρβάροις λαμπρὸν καὶ στρατηγικόν, ἐκπλήσσων τοὺς βαρβάρους καὶ τῷ τοῦ δικαστηρίου σχήματι.</p>   |  |
| <p>ἦν γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἡ σκηνὴ κλινῶν ρ', χρυσοὶ δὲ κίονες ν' κατεῖχον αὐτήν. οἱ δὲ ὑπερτείνοντες οὐρανίσκοι διάχρυσοι ποικίλμασιν ἐκτεπονημένοι πολυτελέσιν</p>  | <p>αὐτῷ δὲ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ἡ μὲν σκηνὴ ἦν κλινῶν ἑκατόν, χρυσοὶ δὲ κίονες πεντήκοντα διεληφέναι αὐτήν καὶ τὸν ὄροφον αὐτῆς ἀνεῖχον, αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ ὄροφος διάχρυσος ἦν καὶ</p> | <p>ἐν γοῦν Βάκτροις καὶ Ὑρκανίοις καὶ Ἰνδοῖς δικάζων εἶχε τὴν σκηνὴν ὥδε πεποιημένην. ἡ σκηνὴ τὸ μέγεθος ἦν κλινῶν ἑκατόν· χρύσειοι κίονες</p>   |  |

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| <p>ἐσκέπαζον τὸν ἄνω τόπον. καὶ πρῶτοι μὲν Πέρσαι φ' ἡμελοφόροι περὶ αὐτὴν ἐντὸς εἰστήκεσαν πορφυραῖς καὶ μιλίναις ἐσθῆσιν ἐξησκημένοι· μετὰ δὲ τοὺς τοξόται τὸν ἀριθμὸν χίλιοι, οἱ μὲν φλόγινα ἐνδεδυκότες, οἱ δὲ ὑσγινοβαφεῖ, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ κυάνα εἶχον περιβόλαια. προεἰστήκεσαν δὲ τούτων ἀργυράσπιδες Μακεδόνες πεντακόσιοι. κατὰ δὲ μέσσην τὴν σκηνὴν χρυσοῦς ἐτίθετο δίφρος, ἐφ' οὗ καθήμενος ἐχρημάτιζεν ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος τῶν σωματοφυλάκων πανταχόθεν ἐφεστηκότων. ἔξωθεν δὲ κύκλῳ τῆς σκηνῆς τὸ τῶν ἐλεφάντων ἄγλημα διεσκευασμένον ἐφειστήκει καὶ Μακεδόνες χίλιοι Μακεδονικὰς στολὰς ἔχοντες, εἴτα μύριοι Πέρσαι, τὸ τε τὴν πορφύραν ἔχον πλεῖθος εἰς πεντακοσίους ἦν, οἷς Ἀλέξανδρος ἔδωκε φορεῖν τὴν στολὴν ταύτην.</p> | <p>ἐκτεπόνητο ποικίλμασι πολυτελέσι. καὶ πρῶτοι μὲν Πέρσαι πεντακόσιοι οἱ καλούμενοι ἡμελοφόροι περὶ αὐτὴν ἐντὸς εἰστήκεσαν, πορφυράς καὶ μιλίνας ἡσθημένοι στολὰς· ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δὲ τοξόται χίλιοι, φλόγινα ἐνδεδυκότες καὶ ὑσγινοβαφεῖ· πρὸ δὲ τούτων οἱ ἀργυράσπιδες πεντακόσιοι Μακεδόνες. ἐν μέσῃ δὲ τῇ σκηνῇ χρυσοῦς ἐτίθετο δίφρος, καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ καθήμενος Ἀλέξανδρος ἐχρημάτιζε, περιεστώτων αὐτῷ πανταχόθεν τῶν σωματοφυλάκων. περιῆει δὲ τὴν σκηνὴν περίβολος, ἔνθα ἦσαν Μακεδόνες χίλιοι καὶ Πέρσαι μύριοι.</p> | <p>ὑπετίθεντο αὐτῇ πεντήκοντα· ὑπερτείνοντες οὐρανίσκοι διάχρυσοι, ποικίλμασιν ἐκτεπονημένοι, τὸν ἄνω τόπον ἐσκέπαζον. Πέρσαι μὲν πρῶτοι πεντακόσιοι ἡμελοφόροι περὶ τὴν σκηνὴν ἐντὸς ἴσαντο πορφυραῖς καὶ μιλίναις ἐσθῆσιν ἐξησκημένοι. μετὰ δὲ τοὺς ἡμελοφόρους τοξόται τὸν ἴσον ἀριθμὸν ἔχοντες ταῖς ἐσθῆσι διήλλαττον· οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν φλόγινα, οἱ δὲ κυάνα, οἱ δὲ ὑσγινοβαφεῖ περιεβέβληντο. τούτων προϊστάντο Μακεδόνες ἀργυράσπιδες πεντακόσιοι τῶν μεγίστων ἀνδρῶν. κατὰ δὲ τὸ μέσον τῆς σκηνῆς ὁ χρυσοῦς ἔκειτο θρόνος, ἐφ' οὗ προκαθήμενος ἐχρημάτιζεν· οἱ σωματοφύλακες ἐφειστήκεσαν ἐκατέρωθεν τοῦ βασιλέως δικάζοντος. ἐν κύκλῳ τῆς σκηνῆς τὸ τῶν ἐλεφάντων ἄγλημα διεσκευασμένον ἐφειστήκει καὶ Μακεδόνες χίλιοι στολὰς Μακεδονικὰς ἔχοντες. ἐπὶ τούτοις πεντακόσιοι Σούσιοι πορφυροσχήμενες, καὶ μετὰ τοὺς ἐν κύκλῳ πάντων Πέρσαι μύριοι (Περσῶν) οἱ κάλλιστοι καὶ μέγιστοι, κεκαλλωπισμένοι παντὶ κόσμῳ Περσικῷ, πάντες ἀκινάκας ἔχοντες.</p> |
| <p>τοσούτων δὲ ὄντων καὶ τῶν φύλων καὶ τῶν θεραπευόντων οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα προσπορεύεσθαι Ἀλέξανδρῳ· τοιοῦτον</p>  | <p>καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα ῥαδίως προσελθεῖν αὐτῷ· πολὺ γὰρ ἦν τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ δέος ἀρθέντος ὑπὸ φρονήματος καὶ τύχης ἐς τυραννίδα.</p>   | <p>τοιοῦνδε ἦν Ἀλεξάνδρου τὸ δικαστήριον ἐν τοῖς βαρβάροις.</p>  |

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| ἐγγόνει τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν ἄξιωμα.  |  |                     |
| ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ ποτε Ἀλέξανδρος [καὶ] ταῖς ἐν Ἰωνίᾳ πόλεσιν καὶ πρώτοις Χίοις, ὅπως αὐτῷ πορφύραν ἀποστείλωσιν. ἤθελεν γὰρ τοὺς ἐταίρους ἅπαντας ἀλουργὰς ἐνδῦσαι στολάς. ἀναγνωσθείσης δὲ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς Χίοις παρὼν Θεόκριτος ὁ σοφιστὴς νῦν ἐγνωκέναι ἔφη τὸ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ εἰρημένον (E 83).<br>ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταή.   |  |                     |
| Ath. XII 55  |  | Ael. <i>VH</i> IX 3 |
| Phylarchus in Book XXIII of his <i>History</i> and Agatharchides of Cnidus in Book X of <i>On Asia</i>   |  |                     |
| claim that the members of Alexander's inner circle lived in extraordinary luxury. Hagnon, who was one of them, wore gold nails in his boots and his sandals. When Cleitus (the one known as "the White") was going to conduct business, he walked around on purple robes while talking to the people he was meeting. Perdiccas and Craterus loved to work out, their baggage included hides that totaled 100s of yards in length, with which they fenced off an area wherever the army camped to exercise in. Their baggage-train also included a large number of draft-animals that carried the dust needed for their wrestling pit. And because Leonnatus and Menelaus liked to hunt, their baggage included about 12 miles of fabric screens, with which they surrounded the areas where they hunted. | Alexander made his Companions effeminate by allowing them to be Luxurious. For Agno wore golden nails in his Shoes. Clitus, when any came to ask counsel of him, came out to his Clients clothed in Purple. Perdiccas and Craterus, who loved exercise, had always brought after them Lifts made of Skin of the length of a Stadium, which upon occasion they pitched on the ground, and exercised within them. They were attended with a continual cloud of dust raised by the Beasts that brought these Carriages. Leonnatus and Menelaus, who were addicted to Hunting, had Hangings brought after them which reached the length of a hundred Stadia. |                     |
| As for the gold plane-trees and the gold grapevine beneath which the Persian konhs commonly sat to conduct their business, and which featured grapes made of emeralds as well as of Indian rubies and extremely expensive jewels of all other types, Phylarchus claims that these appeared to be worth less than what Alexander routinely spent in a day.;   |  |                     |
|  |  |                     |

| Ath. XII 55 cont.  | Ael. <i>VH</i> IX 3 cont.   | Polyaen. IV 3.24  |
|--|---|---|
|  |   | <p>Among the Macedonians and among the Greeks, Alexander's court of justice was plain and simple; but among the barbarians, in order to strike them with the greater awe, it was most splendid and imperial.</p>  |
| <p>For his tent was large enough to accommodate 90 couches; 50 gold columns supported it; and the canopies that extended overhead and covered the top had gold woven into them and were expensively embroidered. 500 Persian "applebearers" stood in a first ring around its inside perimeter, dressed in purple and quince-colored clothing; after them were 1000 bowmen, some wearing flame-colored robes, others crimson, while many had cobalt-blue wraps; and in front of them stood 500 Macedonians carrying silver shields. A gold throne stood in the middle of the tent; Alexander sat on it to conduct his business, with his bodyguards stationed on all sides. Outside the tent and surrounding it stood the elephant corps in full armor, along with 1000 Macedonians wearing Macedonian clothing, and then 10,000 Persians, while the group that wore purple, and to whom Alexander had granted the privilege of</p> | <p><i>Alexander</i> himself had a Tent that held a hundred Couches; the partitions made by fifty Pillars of Gold which upheld the Roof: the Roof itself was of Gold curiously wrought. Within it round about were placed first five hundred <i>Persians</i>, called <i>Melophori</i>, clothed in purple and yellow Coats. Next those a thousand Archers in flame-colour and light red. Withall a hundred <i>Macedonian</i> Squires with silver Shields. In the middle of the Tent was placed a Golden Throne, upon which <i>Alexander</i> sate and heard suits, encompassed round about with this Guard. The Tent itself was surrounded with a thousand <i>Macedonians</i>, and ten thousand <i>Persians</i>.</p> | <p>In Bactria, Hyrcania, and India when he heard causes, the apparatus and formality of his court were as follows. The pavilion was large enough to contain a hundred tables; and was supported by fifty pillars of gold: and the canopy was adorned with various gold ornaments. Stationed round the pavilion within were, first, five hundred Persian bodyguards [melophoroi], dressed in purple and white uniforms: and next to those an equal number of archers in different uniforms, yellow, blue, and scarlet. Before those stood five hundred Macedonians, with silver shields, the tallest men that could be picked out. In the middle of the pavilion was a golden throne, on which the monarch sat to hear causes: attended on either side by his guards. Round the pavilion on the outside were ranged a number of elephants, and a thousand Macedonians in Macedonian costumes. Behind those were five hundred Susians in purple uniforms: and the whole was surrounded with</p> |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>dressing this way, numbered 500.</p>  |  | <p>ten thousand Persians, distinguished for their appearance, and size, and dressed in the Persian manner, with scimitars at their sides.</p> |
| <p>Although Alexander had so many friends and servants, no one dared to approach him; this is how extraordinary the majesty was that surrounded him.</p>   | <p>Neither might any man without much difficulty get access to him, for he was much dreaded, being raised by Fortune and exalted with Pride to so large a Tyranny. (transl. T. Stanley 1665)</p> | <p>Such was the court of Alexander among the barbarians. (transl. E. Shepherd 1793)</p>   |
| <p>Alexander wrote at one point to the Ionian cities, and in particular to the Chians, asking them to send him purple fabric, because he wanted to dress all the members of his inner circle in sea-purple clothing. After the letter was read to the Chians, the sophist Theocritus, who was there, said that he now understood the Homeric line:</p> <p>Purple death and a harsh fate lay hold of him. (transl. S.D. Olson 2010)</p> |  |   |

Catalogue of luxuries – a conventional topic:

The catalogue of excesses in which Alexander's companions indulged is a conventional topos in ancient texts dedicated to the Macedonian conqueror. We find a somewhat different list in Plutarch:

Plu. *Alex.* 40:

Ἐπεὶ δὲ τοὺς περὶ αὐτὸν ἑώρα παντάπασιν ἐκτετραφηκότας καὶ φορτικοὺς ταῖς διαίταις καὶ πολυτελείαις ὄντας, ὥσθ' Ἄγωννα μὲν τὸν Τήιον ἀργυροῦς ἐν ταῖς κρηπῖσιν ἡλούς φορεῖν, Λεοννάτω δὲ πολλαῖς καμήλοις ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου κόνιν εἰς τὰ γυμνάσια παρακομίζεσθαι, Φιλῶτα δὲ πρὸς θήρας σταδίων ἑκατὸν αὐλαίας † γεγενέναι, μύρω δὲ χρωμένους ἰέναι πρὸς ἄλειμμα καὶ λουτρὸν ὅσῳ <πρότερον> οὐδ' ἐλαίῳ, τρίπτας δὲ καὶ κατευναστὰς περιαγομένους, ἐπετίμησε πρῶως καὶ φιλοσόφως, “He saw that his favourites had grown altogether luxurious, and were vulgar in the extravagance of their ways of living. For instance, Hagnon the Teian used to wear silver nails in his boots; Leonnatus had dust for his gymnastic exercises brought to him on many camels from Egypt; Philotas had hunting-nets a hundred furlongs long; when they took their exercise and their baths, more of them actually used myrrh than olive oil, and they had in their train ubbers and chamberlains. Alexander therefore chided them in gentle and reasonable fashion”. (transl. B. Perrin 1919)



This list is similar to that known to us from the fragment of Agatharchides; however, it is not the same:

| Agatharchides   | Plutarch  |
|---|---|
| Ἄγων χρυσοῦς ἦλους ἐν ταῖς κρηπίσι [καὶ τοῖς ὑποδήμασιν] ἐφόρει.  | ὥσθ' Ἄγωνα μὲν τὸν Τήϊον ἀργυροῦς ἐν ταῖς κρηπίσιν ἦλους φορεῖν,                |
| Κλεῖτος δ' ὁ Λευκὸς καλούμενος ὅτε χρηματίζεῖν μέλλοι, ἐπὶ πορφυρῶν ἱματίων διαπεριπατῶν τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν διελέγετο.  |   |
| Περδίκκα δὲ καὶ Κρατερῶ φιλογυμναστοῦσιν ἠκολούθουν διφθέραι σταδιαῖαι τοῖς μεγέθεσιν, ὅφ' αἷς περιλαμβάνοντες τόπον ἐν ταῖς καταστρατοπεδείαις ἐγυμνάζοντο· ἠκολούθει δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ ὑποζύγια πολλὰ τὰ τὴν κόνιν κομίζοντα πρὸς τὴν ἐν τῇ παλαίστρᾳ χρεῖαν. | Λεοννάτῳ δὲ πολλαῖς καμήλοις ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου κόνιν εἰς τὰ γυμνάσια παρακομίζεσθαι, |
| Λεοννάτῳ δὲ καὶ Μενελάῳ φιλοκυνήγοις οὗσιν αὐλαῖαι σταδίων ἑκατὸν ἠκολούθουν, αἷς περιστάντες τὰς θήρας ἐκυνήγουν.  | Φιλώτᾳ δὲ πρὸς θήρας σταδίων ἑκατὸν αὐλαίας † γεγονέναι,                        |

Contamination of *FGrH* 86 F3 and *FGrH* 86 F2:

Both of the known fragments in Athenaeus of the historical work of Agatharchides, or maybe also of the originals of Duris and Phylarchus, must have found their way quite early on into the inventory which we have at hand of *topoi* on the theme of Alexander's companions and their penchant for extravagance, which was tolerated by the great chief. This is testified to by the fact that in Pliny we find the information that in the 30s BC Valerius Messala made use of both these *topoi* in his polemic against Antony:

Plin. *Nat.* XXXIII 50:

“Messalla orator prodidit Antonium triumvirum aureis usum vasis in omnibus obscenis desideriis, pudendo crimine etiam Cleopatrae. summa apud externos licentiae fuerat Philippum regem poculo aureo pulvinis subdito dormire solitum, Hagnonem Teium, Alexandri Magni praefectum, aureis clavis suffigere crepidas: Antonius solus contumelia naturae vilitatem auro fecit”.

“The orator Messala has told us that the triumvir Antony used vessels of gold in satisfying all the indecent necessities, an enormity that even Cleopatra would have been ashamed of. Till then the record in extravagance had lain with foreigner – King Philip sleeping with a gold goblet under his pillows and Alexander the Great's prefect Hagnon of Teos having his sandals with gold nails; but Antony alone cheapened gold by this contumely of nature”. (transl. H. Rackham 1952)

Valerius Messala made a contamination of the motif of Alexander's companions' excesses (*FGrH* 86 F3 "Hagnonem Teium, Alexandri Magni praefectum, aureis clavis suffigere crepidas") and references to the luxurious goblet of Philip (*FGrH* 86 F2 "Philippum regem poculo aureo pulvinis subdito dormire solitum"). Messala made here a reinterpretation of the meaning of Philip's goblet, which from the subject of Alexander's father's evident frugality becomes an example of a luxury item. This reinterpretation is incompatible with the meaning of the fragment from Agatharchides, but it does testify to the fact that in Messala's time both these *topoi* regarding the extravagances of Alexander's companions functioned in isolation from any historical works as *topoi* which were useful for orators. We can presume that Athenaeus also extracted them not directly from the works of Agatharchides (Duris/Phylarchus), but rather from some type of collection compiled with the aim of providing examples to orators.

Let us now review the attitude towards Alexander in the fragments of Agatharchides as found in Athenaeus and in the authors who cite the same content anonymously, while making a reinterpretation.

### Athenaeus

*FGrH* 86 F2 – Athenaeus ← Agatharchides ← Duris

οἱ ἐστῖωντες Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Φιλίππου τῶν φίλων – Alexander is a passive participant

*FGrH* 86 F3 – Athenaeus ← Agatharchides ← Phylarchus

- a. τοὺς ἐταίρους φησὶ τοὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου ὑπερβαλλούσῃ τρυφῇ χρῆσασθαι – Alexander's companions are initiators of luxuries
- b. ἐλάττω φησὶν ὁ Φύλαρχος φαίνεσθαι τῆς καθ' ἡμέραν ἐκάστοτε γινομένης παρ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δαπάνης – Alexander pays for these luxuries
- c. τοσοῦτων δὲ ὄντων καὶ τῶν φίλων καὶ τῶν θεραπευόντων οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα προσπορεύεσθαι Ἀλεξάνδρῳ· τοιοῦτον ἐγγέγονει τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν ἀξίωμα – ostentation as means for obtaining veneration
- d. ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ ποτε Ἀλέξανδρος [καὶ] ταῖς ἐν Ἰωνίᾳ πόλεσιν καὶ πρώτοις Χίοις, ὅπως αὐτῷ πορφύραν ἀποστείλωσιν. ἤθελεν γὰρ τοὺς ἐταίρους ἅπαντας ἀλουργὰς ἐνδύσαι στολάς – Alexander's demand for his companions

### Claudius Aelianus

*FGrH* 86 F3 – Claudius Aelianus

- a. διέθρυπτε τοὺς ἐταίρους Ἀλέξανδρος, τρυφᾶν ἐπιχωρῶν αὐτοῖς – Alexander was initiator of luxuries for his companions, he corrupted them.
- b. καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα ῥαδίως προσελθεῖν αὐτῷ· πολὺ γὰρ ἦν τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ δέος ἀρθέντος ὑπὸ φρονήματος καὶ τύχης ἐς τυραννίδα. – Alexander raised by Pride and Fortune (τύχη) to tyranny.

*FGrH* 86 F3 – reinterpretation by Plutarch, *Alex.* 40

Ἐπεὶ δὲ τοὺς περὶ αὐτὸν ἑώρα παντάπασιν ἐκτετρυφηκότας καὶ φορτικούς ταῖς διαίταις καὶ πολυτελείαις ὄντας, (...) ἐπετίμησε πρῶως καὶ φιλοσόφως, – Alexander is aware of disadvantages of his companions, so he chides them.

*FGrH* 86 F3 – Polyaeus

- c) Ἀλέξανδρος ἐν μὲν τοῖς Μακεδόσιν ἢ ἐν τοῖς Ἑλλήσι δικάζων μέτριον καὶ δημοτικὸν ἔχειν τὸ δικαστήριον ἐδοκίμαζεν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς βαρβάροις λαμπρὸν καὶ στρατηγικόν, ἐκπλήσσω τοὺς βαρβάρους καὶ τῷ τοῦ δικαστηρίου σχήματι. – Alexander is a tyrant only for barbarians, for Greeks he is simple.

*FGrH* 86 F3 – D.S. XVII 16.4, similar to Polyaeus' interpretation:

σκηνὴν δὲ κατασκευασάμενος ἑκατοντάκλινον τοὺς τε φίλους καὶ τοὺς ἡγεμόνας, ἔτι δὲ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων πρέσβεις παρέλαβεν ἐπὶ τὴν εὐωχίαν. Λαμπραῖς δὲ παρασκευαῖς χρησάμενος καὶ πολλοὺς μὲν ἐστίασας, πάσῃ δὲ τῇ δυνάμει διαδοὺς ἱερεῖα καὶ ἄλλα τὰ πρὸς τὴν εὐωχίαν ἀνήκοντα προσανέλαβε τὸ στρατόπεδον.

“He erected a tent to hold a hundred couches and invited his Friends and officers, as well as the ambassadors from the cities, to the banquet. Employing great magnificence, he entertained great numbers in person besides distributing to his entire force sacrificial animals and all else suitable for the festive occasion, and put his army in a fine humour”. (transl. C.H. Oldfather)

From the above-mentioned fragments emerges a specific view of Alexander on the part of Agatharchides:

- Alexander was completely helpless in his personal relationships (*GGM* 17);
- Alexander participated in the debauched extravagances of his companions;
- Alexander paid for their extravagances;
- Alexander demanded extravagances from others.

Why did Alexander do it?

- he was powerless against flatterers (“he was ensnared by praise”);
- he was naïve (“when he was called Zeus, he did not think he was being mocked but honoured”).

Why he was naïve?

- because of “his passion for the impossible and his forgetfulness of nature”.

So, the desire for transgression, inherent in human nature, is Alexander's main disadvantage, and also the reason for his errors. In Agatharchides Alexander is therefore an individual who is completely defenseless against the claims of his companions and is in no way pictured as a tyrant.

The so-called Peripatetic view of Alexander, “who was ruined by his own fortune (τύχη) and became a cruel tyrant”, seems to be a new reinterpretation by Claudius Aelianus (ca. 175–235). He is the only author who accuses Alexander of the corruption of his companions and describes how he became a tyrant through his pride and fortune. Among all authors who directly or indirectly transmitted to us the quotations from Agatharchides or from another similar tradition contemporary to him, Aelianus is the only writer who uses word τύχη and τυραννίς.

The probable explanation is that at least in this case the Peripatetic historian Agatharchides was not aware of the ‘Peripatetic view of Alexander’, and the presumed

‘Peripatetic attitude toward Alexander’ was applied only by Aelianus, a teacher of rhetoric, whose work *Various History* is a miscellany of anecdotes and biographical sketches conveying allegorical moral lessons.

# In search of the many images of Alexander at Chaeronea. Historical and literary traditions in Plutarch's *Corpus*

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## About the author

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## Abstract

Scholarship usually opposes the Alexander of the *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute* to the Alexander of the *Life*, looking for the true image of the Macedonian king in Plutarch. The philosopher-king who civilizes the barbarians of these epideictic orations is quite different from that of the biography, full of light and shadow. But the image of Alexander is more complex and we must take into account all the passages of the *Corpus*, without forgetting that Plutarch adjusts his *exempla* according to his target audience. The king emerges as a controversial figure, and some negative aspects of his behaviour or his policy, neglected or underestimated in the orations, play an important role in the economy of other treatises.

How many images of Alexander the Great can we discern in the *Corpus Plutarcheum*? Every scholar is well aware that Alexander in the orations called *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute* is quite a hero very different from the figure depicted in his biography, given the different goals and literary contexts.<sup>1</sup> The image of the philosopher-king who civilizes the barbarians in these epideictic orations has little room in the *Corpus*, although the problem of the importance of philosophy is by no means an irrelevant topic for a ruler.<sup>2</sup>

It is not my intention here to once again investigate such a widely debated topic. This representation of Alexander as a philosopher in practice has or may have roots in authors such as Onesicritus, Eratosthenes and in Greek rhetorical tradition, but it remains doubtful whether or not it had some echoes in the Roman intellectual world. At the same time, one

1 Cp. T. WHITMARSH, "Alexander's Hellenism and Plutarch's Textualism", *CQ* 52 (2002), 174–192.

2 Vd. the unhistorical meeting with Diogenes in Corinth. In *Mor.* 331e–f, Alexander is proud to say to the philosophers that he is a philosopher in practice, not in theory; cp. *Mor.* 782a–b, where the theme prevails of the burden of the glory and the power for the king. Both aspects are totally absent in *Mor.* 605e; *Alex.* 14.2–5.

must be somewhat prudent in accepting this precise image of the empire of Alexander as a prefiguration of the Roman empire, and transforming the Macedon into a man for all seasons, useful even under the *Roman imperium*. In my opinion, Plutarch's Alexander is a multi-sided figure and our speculations and suggestions on this subject are somewhat lacking.<sup>3</sup>

The fact is that unfortunately we do not have Plutarch's *Lives of the Caesars*, in which *imitatio/aemulatio Alexandri* probably played an important role. It is well known that Octavian also spared Alexandria, because this city was founded by the Macedonian king.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Alexander's lament over having no new lands to conquer (which became a topos, especially in the stoic tradition) is criticized by Augustus in *Mor.* 207d, a passage that obviously could have occupied its rightful place in the *Life* of the emperor. This topic can be paralleled by Caesar's tears at reading about Alexander's exploits, compared to his unworthy *imperium* in Spain.<sup>5</sup> Another important point is the different role played by the personification of Fortune for Alexander and for Rome. Plutarch nowhere says, explicitly or not, that the Macedonian conqueror could really have defeated the Romans, if had taken the time to move against the West. This constitutes a commonplace in Greek historical and rhetorical literature, criticized by Livy (IX 17–19: the famous polemic against the *levissimi ex Graecis*) and echoed in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.<sup>6</sup>

The strong criticism of Alexander's vices and excesses, expressed by Livy and other Roman authors (among others, Cicero, Seneca, Lucan), probably still had a strong influence on Plutarch's audience, even if Alexander was mostly referred to as a positive *exemplum* during the Roman empire under Trajan. Even in a rhetorical treatise like *De fortuna Romanorum* Plutarch admits that Alexander received his power from a flighty Fortune, adding that the struggle between him and the Romans was forbidden by Fortune. The unlucky adventure of Alexander the Molossian in the West probably foresaw the result of such war.<sup>7</sup> I think that Dillon is right in remarking the importance accorded to the *imperium Romanum* (or, better, to the *pax Romana*), in a *locus* of the treatise.<sup>8</sup>

Other hints on this theme can be retraced in the *Life of Pyrrhus*. In this respect the speech of Appius Claudius Caecus in the Roman Senate is particularly important: the statesman exhorts the Romans not to make peace with Pyrrhus and he underlines that if Alexander, who was considered Great and Invincible, had come to Italy and had engaged the Romans in battle, he would have fled or possibly fallen.<sup>9</sup> There are some inconsistencies in the text (in my opinion, both the allusions to the greatness and to invincibility could hardly be pronounced by a Roman statesman in 280 BC) This speech is similar to a passage of Appian, who speaks only of Macedonians, without any direct allusion to Alexander, and another in the *Ineditum Vaticanum*,

3 F. MUCCIOLI, *La Storia Attraverso gli Esempi: Protagonisti e Interpretazioni del Mondo Greco in Plutarco*, Milan/Udine 2012, 193 ff., esp. 199.

4 *Ant.* 80.1–2; *Mor.* 207a–b; *Mor.* 814d. Plutarch's view of Alexandria and its history is studied by P.A. STADTER, *Plutarch and his Roman Readers*, Oxford 2014, 188–198 (“Plutarch's Alexandria”); cf. 56–69 (“Revisiting Plutarch's *Lives of Caesars*”, orig. 2005).

5 *Mor.* 206b; *Caes.* 11.5–6 and, with some variations, Suet. *Jul.* 7.1.

6 *Rhet. Her.* IV 31.

7 *Mor.* 326a–c.

8 Plu. *Mor.* 316e–317c. Vd. J. DILLON, “Plutarch and the End of History”, in: J. Mossman (ed.), *Plutarch and his Intellectual World: Essays on Plutarch*, London 1997, 233–240, esp. 236–238.

9 *Pyrrh.* 19.1–4. More elusive is *Mor.* 794d–e.

even more elusive in this respect.<sup>10</sup> Plutarch's text probably echoes a Roman source, hostile to the Macedonians but useful to Plutarch to remark the *imitatio Alexandri* of the Molossian king, a *Leitmotiv* of the biography, although seen from the counterpart.<sup>11</sup>

Scholarship usually only compares the Alexander of the two orations with the Alexander of the *Life*, looking for the true image of the Macedonian king in Plutarch. In this respect the *Quellenforschung* about the biography is still active (despite the *excusatio* of the first chapter: Plutarch's specialists agree that the famous words – "For it is not Histories that I am writing, but Lives" – have no general value, but they must be taken in account only for this particular context: books on Alexander were already many in the age of Plutarch, so that the *pepaideumenoi* could not expect to find everything in the *Life*).<sup>12</sup>

And, in any case, writing a biography of Alexander deserves some respect and great caution in using (and manipulating) the sources. This is true for some episodes of the life of the Macedonian. The meeting with the queen of the Amazons is probably the best example: Plutarch inclines to deny the authenticity of the meeting, after giving an impressive list of writers pro or against truthfulness.<sup>13</sup> In a wider sense he was aware that his *pepaideumenoi*, and especially the Greek ones, had not a great feeling with the Macedonian history of classic and Hellenistic times. The presentation of the Macedonians in the Second Sophistic (*lato sensu*) is often very negative. From a Greek perspective, they were still considered half-Greek or even no-Greek subjects (see, e.g., the works of Aelius Aristides).<sup>14</sup> This is true particularly in the case of Philip II, as it appears in the *Lives* of Plutarch. Reading the biographies of the Athenian politicians and personalities of the fourth century BC (Demosthenes, Phocion), we notice that Philip is always represented in the worst way. Plutarch has no great sympathy for him and he avoids writing a biography of the king, because he sees him only as a negative *exemplum*, just like other great figures of antiquity (above all, Dionysius I). He is the champion of barbarism and fights against the Greeks (Chaeronea was an open wound still in the imperial times, as stated by other authors, in *primis* Pausanias).<sup>15</sup> It does not come as a surprise that another writer, Amyntianus, wanted to complete the *Parallel Lives*, adding the biographies of Philip and Dionysius I (comparing the former to Augustus, and the latter to Domitian).<sup>16</sup>

10 App. *Sam.* 10.1–6, esp. 5; *Ined. Vat. FGrHist* 839 F 1.2.

11 Cp. J.M. MOSSMAN, "Plutarch, Pyrrhus and Alexander", in: P.A. Stadter (ed.), *Plutarch and The Historical Tradition*, London/New York 1992, 90–108; J.M. MOSSMAN, "Taxis ou Barbaros: Greek and Roman in Plutarch's *Pyrrhus*", *CQ* 55 (2005), 498–517; B. BUSZARD, "Caesar's Ambition: A Combined Reading of Plutarch's *Alexander-Caesar* and *Pyrrhus-Marius*", *TAPhA* 138 (2008), 185–215. Some useful observations are in A. ERSKINE, "Introductions and Notes" in: R. Waterfield, *Plutarch: Hellenistic Lives: Including Alexander the Great*, Oxford 2016.

12 *Alex.* 1.4.

13 *Alex.* 46.1. Some of them are only shadows for modern scholarship. It is highly probable that the biographer found this list in some source (one might think of Istros or Eratosthenes).

14 Cp. S.R. ASIRVATHAM, "No Patriotic Fervor for Pella: Aelius Aristides and the Presentation of the Macedonians in the Second Sophistic", *Mnemosyne* 61 (2008), 207–227.

15 MUCCIOLI, *Storia* (n. 3), 182–184, with quotes from Plutarch and Pausanias. Cf. also C. COLONNESE, *Le Scelte di Plutarco: Le Vite non Scritte di Greci Illustri*, Roma 2007, 11–17.

16 This author is rather obscure: vd. *FGrH* 150/1072 T 1. Among his other works, he wrote a book *On Alexander*, dedicated to Marcus Aurelius and another one about Olympias, mother of Alexander. Nev-



Alexander, in Plutarch's view, is quite different from his father. Some Latin sources present Philip as the good paradigm, often opposed to the degenerate son (from Cicero to Seneca, under strong philosophical influences).<sup>17</sup> This topic is quite absent in the *Corpus Plutarcheum*,<sup>18</sup> where a negative image of Philip prevails, to be interpreted, in my view, in close connection with that of Alexander. We can discern many differences between the two orations and the *Life*, but there is a similarity we must underline. Alexander becomes or tends to become an universal hero, or almost a pan-Hellenic hero, purified – one could say – from his Macedonian origin. This is clear not only in the idealized and hagiographical description of the orations (needless to say, somehow very far from historical truth) but even in the *Life*, although the king is often represented with light and shadow, a dynast who is acting too often as a *thymoides* person.<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., the destruction of Thebes and the anecdote of Timoclea, where Plutarch extensively uses Aristobulus.<sup>20</sup> The responsibility of Alexander for this action (really a *vulnus*, in the Greek tradition) is deliberately underestimated. The biographer idealizes the figure of Alexander, by deleting or minimizing the Macedonian imprinting in his behaviour, unlike his father Philip.

Until now, an unexplored research field in the huge bibliography about Plutarch is to seek the many sides of the tradition about our hero by exploring the quotations, the crypto-quotations and the anecdotes in the whole *Corpus Plutarcheum*. Scholars agree that the *Lives* and the *Moralia* constitute a literary macro structure, even if we should avoid thinking that Plutarch is wholly coherent in his use of historical *exempla* or simply anecdotes. Needless to say, usually the choice of genre makes the difference (not only in the biographical works, but above all in the treatises) and one could quote many passages in order to show the contradictions or, better, the different points of view expressed in Plutarch's *Corpus*. In any case, we must not forget the ethical and argumentative importance of the *exemplum* in the interplay between author and reader.

Besides the *Life of Alexander* and the double oration *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*, the use of the so-called historiography of Alexander is rather puzzling.<sup>21</sup> Such historians are sometimes quoted in the *Corpus*, but often not properly for topics related to Philip's

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ertheless, Plutarch devotes some attention to the queen, characterizing her in the *Moralia* in a more favorable way than in the *Life of Alexander*. Cf. E. CARNEY, *Olympias: Mother of Alexander the Great*, New York/London 2006, 132–135.

17 Cf. A. GRILLI, "Alessandro e Filippo nella filosofia ellenistica e nell'ideologia politica romana", in: G. Amiotti and M. Sordi (ed.), *Alessandro Magno tra Storia e Mito*, Milano 1984, 123–153; A. MOLINIER, "Philippe le bon roi de Cicéron à Sénèque", *REL* 73 (1995), 60–79; E. KOULAKIOTIS, *Genese und Metamorphosen des Alexandermythos im Spiegel der Griechischen Nichthistoriographischen Überlieferung bis zum 3. Jh. n. Chr.*, Konstanz 2006, 106–112, for the problem of the influence of Panaetius over Cicero's criticism of Alexander, denied by J.R. FEARS, "The Stoic View of the Career and Character of Alexander the Great", *Philologus* 118 (1974), 113–130. Vd. also S.R. ASIRVATHAM, "His Son's Father? Philip in the Second Sophistic", in: E. Carney and D. Ogden (eds.), *Philip II and Alexander the Great: Father and Son, Lives and Afterlives*, Oxford 2010, 294–299.

18 But vd. *Mor.* 806b (and *Mor.* 178b): Philip exhorted his son to have many friends and to be lovely and kind, when he was still not a king.

19 This point was already stressed by A.E. WARDMAN, "Plutarch and Alexander", *CQ N.S.* 5 (1955), 96–107.

20 *Alex.* 12; *Mor.* 1093c; *Mor.* 259d–260 (= Aristobul. *FGrHist* 139 F2a, 2b). Cp. MUCCIOLI, *Storia* (n. 3), 201–202.

21 *FGrH* 124 ff.

son. In other words, the connection between these authors and Alexander in the *Corpus Plutarcheum* is less obvious than we could imagine and the quotes are related to other topics.

In particular, the quotations of Callisthenes might sound a bit odd. Plutarch never mentions him expressly about Alexander and his training, but only for political or erudite topics. Thus the relative of Aristotle is quoted in the *Life of Cimon* for military questions and for the problems concerning the authenticity of the peace of Callias. Analogous observations can be offered for other quotations (see Callisthenes *FGrH* 124 F 49, about the month called *Bysios* and the day called *polyphthoos*, in the erudite treatise *Quaestiones Graecae*).<sup>22</sup>

Clitarchus, probably the most elusive, but also popular and one of the most read historians of Alexander (responsible for the so-called vulgata),<sup>23</sup> is quoted explicitly only for the highly debated question about Themistocles arrival in Asia. Alongside other authors, Clitarchus was interested in exploring the last years of the Athenian statesman in Asia Minor, surely setting a precedent for Alexander's expedition.<sup>24</sup> In this respect the tradition over Themistocles in Asia and the *proskynesis* (the Athenian accepted this act of obedience and was ready to do it in front of the Great King, as stated in *Them.* 27, depending on the Peripatetic tradition, in particular Phanias/Phaenias of Eresus) constitutes among Greek intellectuals a good case for the debate over the Alexander's introduction of this eastern gesture.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, Plutarch was well aware of the importance of Clitarchus for his *pepaideumenoi*, so that his influence could be detected at least both in the *Life*<sup>26</sup> and in *De Alexandri Magni aut fortuna*.<sup>27</sup>

In particular, two important authors like Ptolemy and Aristobulus, appreciated some years later by Arrian, have different fortune in the *Corpus*. The former is quoted only as *agens in rebus*, not as a reliable source on Alexander's expedition,<sup>28</sup> whereas the latter is used, directly or not, in particular as regards the case of Timoclea, as already shown.<sup>29</sup> The same historian is followed, implicitly, in some passages, where Plutarch rejects the image of a drunken Alexander, so vivid in tradition.<sup>30</sup>

If Plutarch's relationship with Alexander's historiography is rather problematic, one can notice too that our author, as often in the *Parallel Lives*, avoids quoting all the sources of his narrative. Moreover, he deliberately 'forgets' late historiography and literature on the

22 *Cam.* 19.7; *Cim.* 12.5; 13.4; *Pel.* 17.4; *Ages.* 34.1–4; *Arist.* 27.2–3; *Mor.* 292d–f (= Callisth. *FGrH* 124 F10, 15, 16, 18, 26, 48, 49). Cf. *FGrH* 124 F56–59 (Callisthenes of Sybaris in the non-Plutarchean treatises obviously is not Callisthenes of Olynthus).

23 On this historian of Alexander cf., lately, A.M. CHUGG, *Concerning Alexander the Great: A Reconstruction of Cleitarchus*, s.l. 2015 (in many points very speculative).

24 *Them.* 27.1–2 (= Clitarch. *FGrH*/BNJ 137 F 33). His fabulous description of the death of Themistocles (by drinking bull's blood) is condemned by Cicero *Brut.* 42 (= *FGrH*/BNJ 137 T 7).

25 *Them.* 27.4 (= Phaenias *FGrH* 1012 F 20 = F 32 Engels). On this topic cf. F. MUCCIOLI, "Classical Sources and *proskynesis*: History of a Misunderstanding", in: *Alexander's Legacy*, Rome (forthcoming).

26 Cp. J.R. HAMILTON, *Plutarch Alexander: A Commentary*, Oxford 1969, LIX, LXIII–LXV; N.G.L. HAMMOND, *Sources for Alexander the Great: An Analysis of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's Anabasis Alexandrou*, Cambridge 1993, 149–151; CHUGG, *Concerning* (n. 23), 595–596.

27 Cp. M.R. CAMMAROTA, *Plutarch: La fortuna o la virtù di Alessandro Magno. Seconda Orazione*, Naples 1998, 56–57, 60–61.

28 Cf., nevertheless, *Alex.* 46.1 (= Ptolemaeus *FGrH* 138 F 28).

29 Vd. *supra* and n. 20.

30 *Mor.* II 337e–f; *Mor.* 623e. Cf. Arr. *An.* VII 29.4 (= Aristobul. *FGrH* 139 F 62). On the image of Alexander as a drunkard, which originated already in the contemporary sources (Ephipp. *FGrH* 126 F3; cf. F1) vd. HAMILTON, *Plutarch. Alexander* (n. 26), 58–59, 209.

Macedonian, which was surely excessive. One noticeable, apparent exception could be the polygraph and *makrobios* Potamon of Mytilene, mentioned in the biography as an authority on Alexander. He describes the history of the dog Peritas and the city founded with its name, a tale already narrated by Theopompus (*FGrH* 115 F 340) and known to Plutarch only through Sotion.<sup>31</sup> According to the *Suda*, Potamon wrote a work – a historical/rhetorical one? – called *On Alexander of Macedon*.<sup>32</sup>

We must mention Timagenes too, who wrote, *inter alia*, an important work called *About kings* where he deals with Alexander, following the steps of Clitarchus. This writer, quoted by Plutarch only in the *Life of Antony*, in *De adulatore et amico* and in the *Quaestiones convivales*,<sup>33</sup> is probably responsible for the false description of an important episode described in some different ways in the *Life of Alexander*, in *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute* and in other sources (the dangerous struggle of the conqueror against the Oxydrakai, or better, the Malli in 326/5 BC).<sup>34</sup> In Timagenes' view the epithet Soter was given to Ptolemy because he saved Alexander's life from enemies. In point of fact, Ptolemy did not participate in that fight and the epithet has a totally different origin: the Rhodians called him Soter, for he saved them from Demetrius Poliorketes in 304 BC.<sup>35</sup>

Plutarch knows the fake tradition of the presence and of the role of Ptolemy in the fight, directly from Clitarchus/Timagenes or through diatribic tradition (as we can discern from the *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*: I 327b; II 344d with a version different from that which appears in II 341c and *Alex.* 63.8, deriving from Aristobulus) but he avoids discussing it extensively, both in the orations and in the *Life*. This may seem an oddity, because methodologically Plutarch tends to offer a second, neglected version when describing some discussed tales (a source usually not followed but interesting for the readers) and this could be a very good study case: a tradition over Ptolemy contradicted by Ptolemy himself. By the way, we can observe that Ptolemy as a historian is totally neglected by Plutarch in the *Corpus*, and that is a proof that in the imperial times (at least until Arrian's re-evaluation), the historical work of the Lagid dynast was overshadowed by the grandiloquent and bombastic, but very popular work of Clitarchus.

Looking for the image of Alexander in Plutarch, there are some important inconsistencies, that we should underline. In his construction of a multi-sided hero such as was Alexander, he has to face with the cult of the Macedonian. Like other Greek imperial intellectuals, Plutarch has a special idiosyncrasy to the ruler cult. His criticism over some Hellenistic excesses probably reflects and hides a silent criticism of the imperial cult: Nero and Domitian are the

31 *Alex.* 61.3 (= Potamon *FGrH* 147/1085 F1/T4a).

32 *Suda* s.v. Ποτάμων, Μιτυληνῖος (= Potamon *FGrH* 147/1085 T1/1a). Cf. E. BOWIE, "Men from Mytilene", in: A. Schmitz and N. Wiater (eds.), *The Struggle for Identity: Greeks and their Past in the First Century BCE*, Stuttgart 2011, 181–195, esp. 183–185. According to this scholar, Livius's attack against the *levissimi ex Graecis* was addressed against Potamon.

33 *Ant.* 72.3; *Mor.* 68b; *Mor.* 634e (only the first quote is included in Timag. *FGrH*/BNJ 88 T5).

34 Vd. Arr. *An.* VI 11.7–8 and, explicitly, Curt. IX 5.21 (= Timag. *FGrH* 88 F3; Clitarch. *FGrH*/BNJ 137 F24; Ptolemaeus *FGrH* 138 F26). On the whole episode cf. F. MUCCIOLI, *Gli epiteti ufficiali dei re ellenistici*, Stuttgart 2013, 87–93; F. MUCCIOLI, "Lo scontro di Alessandro con i Malli in Plutarco. Realtà storica e deformazione nella tradizione", *DHA* (forthcoming).

35 Vd. Paus. I 8.6.

‘worst’ candidates.<sup>36</sup> But in the case of Alexander he tends to omit the problem in the orations (showing interest only in divine filiation from Zeus and emulation of Heracles, Perseus and Dionysus)<sup>37</sup> and to confine it to some anecdotal tradition in the *Life*<sup>38</sup> and in other works,<sup>39</sup> missing in some respect the crucial importance of this topic for the evolution of the Hellenistic kingship.

Other authors are more explicit in criticizing the Macedonian. In particular, Lucian, in his *Dialogues of the dead*, let Philip II say when addressing Alexander, with striking irony: “You cannot deny that you are my son now, Alexander; you would not have died if you were Ammon’s son”.<sup>40</sup> Plutarch’s silence on Alexander’s cult remains thus rather puzzling, but it may be explained as a way to avoid embarrassment in front of his readers (the Greek and Roman *pepaideumenoi*) or to offer a somewhat idealized depiction of Alexander, and this consideration may have some validity especially in *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*.

Nevertheless he devotes more attention to the problem of the *proskynesis*, a topic which should be properly separated from that of the ruler cult: ancient sources are often misleading about it, especially Curtius Rufus and Arrian, who in some pages full of rhetorical topoi link the cult to this ritual.<sup>41</sup> It constitutes one of the main topics of the *Life of Alexander*, with the opposition between the king and Callisthenes.<sup>42</sup>

If we seek the word *proskynesis* (and other items related to it) in the whole *Corpus Plutarcheum*, we find many entries, mostly written with a negative tone.<sup>43</sup> For Plutarch (and other classical authors) *proskynesis* is only an act of submission, more appropriate in case of devotion to the gods. This is a practice totally condemned, a silly exhibition of inferiority of the barbarians. In particular, in *De adulatore et amico* Plutarch heavily criticizes Alexander for accepting it and other forms of *kolakeia*.<sup>44</sup> This passage is one of the strongest attacks against Alexander with the accusation of the murders of Callisthenes, Parmenio and Philotas and of being in the hands of people like Hagnon, Bagoas, Agesias and Demetrius.<sup>45</sup> The

36 Cp. MUCCIOLI, *Storia* (n. 3), 266.

37 *Mor.* 330f–331a, 332a–b; II 334d, 335b, 339e, 341e–f (cf. *Mor.* 326b). Cp. CAMMAROTA, *Plutarco* (n. 27), 39.

38 Particularly important is the passage where Plutarch clearly affirms that, in his view, the filiation from Zeus is only a form of *instrumentum regni* (*Alex.* 28.6; similarly, *Arr. An.* VII 29.3). The author, on the other hand, is interested mainly in the cult of Hephaestion (*Alex.* 72.3–4).

39 *Mor.* 65f (cf. *Alex.* 23); *Mor.* 804b (and *Mor.* 187e). Cf. *Mor.* 542d, where Plutarch approves the special devotion of Alexander to Heracles (and of Andrakottos to Alexander), because they proposed themselves to be in like manner honored by others (this allusion is paralleled by the antiphrastic example of Dionysius I, who mocked Gelon, calling him the clown of Sicily: Γέλωνα/Γέλῳτα is the word pun in Greek; cf. *Dio* 5.9); *Mor.* 181d; [Plu.] *Mor.* 826c–d.

40 *DMort.* 12.

41 *Curt.* VIII 5.6–24; cf. VI 6.3; *Arr. An.* IV 9.9–12.2 and 12.3–5. Cf. *Just.* XII 7.1 and XV 3.3–6 (an alternative and unreliable version of the whole episode).

42 *Plu. Alex.* 45.1; 54, 2–6; 74.1–2.

43 *Mor.* 321a; 1100a, 1100c, 1102b; 1117c; cf. *Crass.* 31.1; *Flam.* 21.12; *Luc.* 24.3; *Pomp.* 27.5; 33.4; *Rom.* 27.9. But vd. *Them.* 27–29, where all the attention is devoted to the *synesis* of Themistocles and to his ability to adapt to the circumstances, being ready even to accept *proskynesis*.

44 65c–d, esp. d.

45 The murders of Callisthenes and Cleitus, which constituted a true rhetorical topos in antiquity, are often criticized in the *Corpus* (vd. also *Mor.* 71c; 449e; 454d, 458b; 623f–624a; 781a–b), but are quite ignored in *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute* (alongside with that of Philotas; cf. *Mor.* 339d–340a).

origin of it all is attributed to Medius, considered the leader and skilled master of the choir of *kolakes* around the Macedonian.<sup>46</sup> In a more general way, in *De superstitione* Plutarch speaks of *allokotoi proskyneseis*, similar to other *barbara kaka*, enhanced by Greeks because of their *deisidaimonia*.<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, there are in the *Corpus* some anecdotes or topics not mentioned in the *Life* or in *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute*, which can be considered sometimes positive or, often, negative. To mention just some examples, an important theme is the envy towards Alexander, which represents a *Leitmotiv* of many *bioi*.<sup>48</sup> We can read it in *De invidia et odio*, where Alexander is compared to Cyrus as the same victims of envy. It is probably a commonplace in the rhetorical tradition, somehow related to the theme of the *translatio imperii*.<sup>49</sup> This classical topic in fact had a noticeable fortune in Greek and Roman historiography and literature, from Herodotus onwards (Ctesias, Polybius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Appian, etc.), with its chronological steps and its changes (Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Macedonians, Romans, with the Appendix of *Roma aeterna*, not forgetting the insertion of the Greek *poleis*'s hegemony).

This historiographical theme, to be honest, has no great room in the Plutarchean *Corpus* in its wider form.<sup>50</sup> True, one could read the famous passage of the *Life of Alexander* as a form of *translatio imperii*:<sup>51</sup> Alexander was proclaimed king of Asia by a herald and this act, according to some scholars, supports the idea that he was or was thought to be the true heir/successor of the Achaemenids (otherwise, one must think that he wanted to build a new and different image of the kingdom of Asia, which in my opinion is more likely).

But setting apart this theme, we may mention some other interesting passages. First, it is interesting to notice Alexander's indignation against the runner Crison, who ran a race with him and was ready to let the king win, as a form of respect. The behaviour of the Macedonian is completely different from that of Dionysius, which was cruel with Plato and Philoxenus. Although the anecdote is obviously unhistorical because the athlete was active around the middle of the 5th century BC, it may be a clear indication of the proudness of the Macedonian.<sup>52</sup> The same proudness, but with some ironical touch by Plutarch, is confirmed by another anecdote, in which our author writes that Alexander thought that his exploits needed a good commemoration for posterity, that means a new Homer.<sup>53</sup>

More explicitly, Plutarch criticizes the behaviour of Alexander towards his sister (Cleopatra), who had a love affair with a young man: the justification of the king is not convincing in Plutarch's view because such acts are a destruction and shame for power.<sup>54</sup>

46 So *Mor.* 65c–d; cf. *Demetr.* 19.2–3 (= Medius *FGrHist* 129 T5, 7d) and *Mor.* 124c; 338d; 472d; *Alex.* 75.4, 76.2.

47 166a.

48 Cf., e.g., S. VERDEGEM, "Envy at Work. Φθόνος in Plutarch's *Lives* of Fifth-Century Athenian Statesmen", in: M. Jufresa et al. (eds.), *Plutarc a la seva època: paideia i societat. Actas del VIII Simposio Español sobre Plutarch: Barcelona, 6–8 de Novembre, 2003*, Barcelona 2005, 673–678.

49 538b. On Cyrus, seen mostly as a positive figure in Plutarch, vd. esp. *Mor.* 360b (again paralleled with Alexander) and the other passages quoted in MUCCIOLI, *Storia* (n. 3), 200 and n. 33.

50 Vd., e.g., *Mor.* 317f; 324b–d. For a fuller analysis vd. MUCCIOLI, *Storia* (n. 3), 219–230.

51 34.1.

52 *Mor.* 471e. Cf. *Mor.* 58e (but without the comparison with the tyrant).

53 *Mor.* 85c.

54 *Mor.* 818b–c.

If the theme of the relationship of Alexander with Aristotle plays an important role in the biography, on the contrary we find some critical remarks here and there in the *Corpus*, even towards the philosopher.<sup>55</sup> In three passages the same letter by Aristotle to Antipater about Alexander is quoted.<sup>56</sup> The idealized representation of the *Life* clearly contrasts with this (apocryphal?) epistle and its criticizing tone, where there is a hint against the unjustified proudness of the Macedonian. Aristotle underlines that military life (Alexander who held sway over many) is not superior to philosophical research (to have correct ideas about god). Some criticism is shared by some pupils of the philosopher, such as Theophrastus, especially about the accident of Callisthenes.<sup>57</sup>

More important from the historical point of view is the destruction of a city and the massacre of its citizens, near the Oxus River in Central Asia. This was an act of revenge on the part of Alexander, because their ancestors, known as Branchidae, betrayed the temple of Apollo at Didyma to gratify Xerxes and then moved to the East. Plutarch, as a form of *excusatio*, counts himself among the greatest admirers of the Macedonian, but he cannot avoid condemning the massacre as an act of *asebeia* by Alexander.<sup>58</sup> The episode is recorded by some other sources but is not mentioned in the *Life*.<sup>59</sup> *Prima facie*, we could remember the starting words of the biography, where Plutarch explains that it is not his goal to describe exhaustively all the life, wars and accidents of his hero. Thus, should we consider the massacre of the Branchidae unnecessary in the relationship between author and reader, being part of the tradition of the negligible history? It is not the case to speculate here about the truth of the episode, although most scholars believe in its authenticity.<sup>60</sup> What is surprising, is that Strabo (and before him, probably, Callisthenes) offers a positive view of this Alexander's behaviour, whereas Plutarch shows the 'dark side' of the Macedonian king.<sup>61</sup> We have to face a source or a tradition which presents Alexander as a ruthless tyrant, as in Curtius Rufus. Hammond argued that the author on the background was Clitarchus.<sup>62</sup> This

55 Vd. *Mor.* 603c: Theocritus of Chius reproached Aristotle, who preferred a court-life with Philip and Aristotle instead of the Academy.

56 *Mor.* 78d; 472e; with some changes, *Mor.* 545a (Aristotle addresses directly Alexander, not Antipater). Cf. Aristotle F 664 Rose<sup>3</sup> and Jul. *ad Them.* 265a.

57 Theophrastus wrote a treatise called *Callisthenes or on the grief*, on which cf. KOULAKIOTIS, *Genese* (n.17), 84–88; MUCCIOLI, "Classical" (n. 25). The successor of Aristotle is quoted in *Mor.* 648c (Theophr. *HP* IV 4.1) about the failure of planting ivy in the parks of Babylon by Harpalus.

58 *Mor.* 557b.

59 Str. XI 11.4–5; XIV 1.5; XVII.1.43 (= Callisth. *FGrH* 124 F14). Cf. D.S. XVII Ep.; Curt. VII 5.28–35; Ael. fr. 54 Domingo-Forasté (= *Suda* s.v. Βράγχιδαι).

60 See the different opinions of W.W. TARN, "The Massacre of the Branchidae", *CR* 36 (1922), 63–66 (against the reliability); H.W. PARKE, "The Massacre of the Branchidae", *JHS* 105 (1985), 59–68; N.G.L. HAMMOND, "The Branchidae at Didyma and in Sogdiana", *CQ* 48 (1998), 339–344; D. PANCHENKO, "The City of the Branchidae and the Question of Greek Contribution to the Intellectual History of India and China", *Hyperboreus* 8 (2002), 244–255; K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 2010, 273–274 (on the possibility that the community survived for a long time after the massacre, on the ground of archeological evidence).

61 According to H.W. PARKE, "The Massacre of the Branchidae", *JHS* 105 (1985), 59–68, partic. 65, n. 22, Alexander is here criticized "in the same lines as in Curtius Rufus".

62 N.G.L. HAMMOND, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-Called Vulgate Authors: Diodorus, Justin and Curtius*, Cambridge 1983, 141.



suggestion seems sound, but it remains only a possibility.<sup>63</sup> I suspect that Plutarch could have found this episode in some rhetorical source or some collection of *hypomnemata*, an episode useful for ethical purpose, as Aelian clearly shows.<sup>64</sup>

Following this line, Plutarch ends up defining Alexander not as a king, or much less as a philosopher-king like in *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute*, but as a true despot. This definition is expressed in a somewhat neglected passage of the *Life of Pelopidas*. After describing the funeral rites of the Theban statesman, the biographer compares them with the splendour and the fake luxury of the funerals of Dionysius I (quoting Philistus) and of Hephaestion. In his words, “these honours, however, were dictated by despots, were performed under strong compulsion, and were attended with envy of those who received them and hatred of those who enforced them; they were a manifestation of no gratitude or esteem whatever, but of barbaric pomp and luxury and vain-glory, on the part of men who lavished their superfluous wealth on vain and sorry practices”.<sup>65</sup> The comparison of Alexander with Dionysius I, a tyrant who is a true negative example in the *Corpus*,<sup>66</sup> is odd, because the differences between him and Dionysius and his son (Dionysius II) are well noticed in other passages.<sup>67</sup> Anyway, it is historically true that Dionysius I and his *dynasteia* was or could have been a model for the Macedonian. In fact we know that he ordered Harpalus to send him, *inter alia*, Philistus’s books in his expedition to the upper satrapies, although this passage is overrated by modern scholars, in my view.<sup>68</sup>

Anaxarchus, the famous philosopher of Abdera, is considered by Alexander to be his most valuable friend.<sup>69</sup> In the treatise *De tranquillitate animi* the Macedonian cries hearing Anaxarchus’ discourse upon the infinite number of worlds, because he is not even able to conquer one.<sup>70</sup> We can also read the same anecdote in Valerius Maximus.<sup>71</sup> This seems only an *exemplum* of no great value in the huge theme of relationship between the philosopher and the ruler, which finds its good place in the speech of Callisthenes and Anaxarchus himself after the murder of Cleitus.<sup>72</sup> But one could propose a different and more elaborated explanation, with two levels of interpretation. First, we know from historiographical tradition (Plutarch included) that Alexander wanted to be the World Ruler and the words of Anaxarchus sounds like a warning against this claim.<sup>73</sup> But it is also true that all Plutarch’s

63 Cp. CHUGG, *Concerning* (n. 23), 455–457, 581, 598, 625.

64 Fr. 54 Domingo-Forasté (= *Suda* s.v. Βράγχιδαι).

65 *Pel.* 34.1–3 (= Philist. *FGrH* 556 F40). The tone is quite different from *Alex.* 72.3–5.

66 Cp. COLONNESE, *Scelte* (n. 16), 45–59. There are passages, anyway, which are or appear to be less negative: vd. *Mor.* 552e; *Tim.* 15.7.

67 In other *loci*, Plutarch underlines the difference in the behaviour between Alexander and the western tyrant: *Mor.* 471e; 542d (vd. *supra*, n. 39) or *Mor.* 330f; II 333f–334a, 334c, 338b (Dionysius II). In the two orations the difference is even more striking, due to the particular context.

68 *Alex.* 8.3. Cp., e.g., N.V. SEKUNDA, “Philistus and Alexander’s Empire (Plutarch, *Vita Alexandri* 8.3)”, in: J. Pigoń (ed.), *The Children of Herodotus: Greek and Roman Historiography and Related Genres*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 2008, 181–186.

69 *Mor.* 331e. On the death of the philosopher, and the tortures inflicted on him by Nicocreon, tyrant of Cyprus, Vd. *Mor.* 449e–f; cf. D.L. IX 58–59.

70 *Mor.* 466d. Plutarch believes that there are lot of *kosmoi*, as explained in *Mor.* 422a–431a.

71 VIII 14 ext. 2.

72 See the words used by the philosopher, according to *Alex.* 52.5–6 (cf. *Mor.* 781a–b).

73 *Alex.* 18.1–2; 27, 6–7; cf. D.S. XVII 51.2; Curt. IV 7.26; Just. XI 11.10.



readers could catch the allusion to the theme of the *cupiditas vastandi*, so used and probably abused especially by the Stoics (see many passages of Seneca and Lucan).<sup>74</sup> Thus, we could suggest that this was part of the topics on Alexander developed in the schools of rhetoric. This explanation is justified by the fact that the Macedonian is compared to Agamemnon and Phaeton, considered examples of dissatisfaction and *dysthymia*, against the good examples like Crates, Diogenes and Socrates.<sup>75</sup>

To sum up, Alexander in the whole *Corpus* is a controversial figure, with positive and negative sides. Here and there he becomes just the opposite of the philosopher-king, protégé par his fortune and virtue. Plutarch is not Livy, who goes so far to depict the son of Philip as a barbarized and oriental despot, but in some passages (not related to each other and without a true link with the *Life* and the *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*) he tends to underline some negative aspects, partly typical of the oriental kingship.

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<sup>74</sup> For an overview and a discussion see the articles quoted above, n. 17.

<sup>75</sup> *Mor.* 466e–f. Cp. E. PETTINE, *La tranquillità dell'animo di Plutarco*, Salerno 1984, 178, with a comparison with *M. Ant.* VIII 3.



# The Miracles of Water and Oil in the Historiography by Alexander

Sabine Müller\*

## Abstract

Miraculous springs of liquids suddenly occurring at Alexander's arrival are a certain theme in the historiography on the Asian campaigns of Alexander. The motif formed part of the official report by Callisthenes of Olynthus and was associated with panhellenic ideas and legitimating symbols of Alexander's rightful supported rule over the conquered regions as the Gods' chosen one. The theme also served to cover up military setbacks by literary reworking. In the context of the revolt in Bactria and Sogdiana, a spring of oil is said to have occurred. The paper examines this tradition's symbolic meaning, primary sources, and reception in the Second Sophistic.

## Introduction

In context of the revolt in Bactria and Sogdiana against the Macedonian invasion in 329/328 BC,<sup>1</sup> in his *Anabasis*, Arrian mentions the occurrence of a natural phenomenon. Labeled τέρας, φάσμα and σημεῖον, it was interpreted by Alexander's mantic Aristander from Telmessus, famous throughout antiquity for its skillful seers,<sup>2</sup> as a miraculous sign:

αὐτὸς δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν Ὅξον τε ποταμὸν ἦει αὐθις καὶ εἰς τὴν Σογδιανὴν προχωρεῖν ἐγνώκει, ὅτι πολλοὺς τῶν Σογδιανῶν ἐς τὰ ἐρύματα ξυμπεφευγένα ἠγγέλλετο οὐδὲ ἐθέλειν κατακούειν τοῦ σατράπου, ὅστις αὐτοῖς ἐξ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐπετέτακτο. στρατοπεδεύοντος δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῷ ποταμῷ τῷ Ὅξῳ οὐ μακρὰν τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς αὐτοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου πηγὴ ὕδατος καὶ ἄλλη ἐλαίου πηγὴ πλησίον αὐτῆς ἀνέσχε. καὶ

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1 On the revolt see F.L. HOLT, *Alexander the Great and Bactria: The Formation of a Greek Frontier in Central Asia*, Leiden 1989, 52–65. Cf. S. MÜLLER, *Die Argeaden: Geschichte Makedoniens bis zum Zeitalter Alexanders des Großen*, Paderborn 2016, 296–297; K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, 274–278; P. BRIANT, “The Empire of Darius III in Perspective”, in: W. Heckel and L.A. Tritle (eds.), *Alexander the Great: A New History*, Oxford 2009, 141–170, here 148–155; W. HECKEL, *The Conquests of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 2008, 92–99; A.B. BOSWORTH, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1988, 110–112.

2 Arr. *An.* I 25.6–8; II 3.3; Hdt. I 78.1–2; I 84.3; Cic. *Div.* I 41.91. Cf. B. BURKE, “Anatolian Origins of the Gordian Knot Legend”, *GRBS* 42 (2001), 255–261, here 259, n. 10. However, there is confusion about the location of Telmessus as there were two cities called Telmessus, one in Caria, one in Lycia. Cf. D. HARVEY, “Herodotos, I, 78 and 84: Which Telmessos?”, *Kernos* 41 (1991), 245–258. He argues in favor of Carian Telmessus. This is also supposed by W. BURKERT, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*, Cambridge, Mass. 1985, 114. On seers as professionals in antiquity see M. FLOWER, “Religious Expertise”, in: E. Eidinow and J. Kindt (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Greek Religion*, Oxford 2015, 293–308.

Πτολεμαῖω τῷ Λάγου τῷ σωματοφύλακι ἐπειδὴ ἐσηγγέλη τὸ τέρας, Πτολεμαῖος Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ἔφρασεν. Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ἔθυσεν ἐπὶ τῷ φάσματι ὅσα οἱ μάντις ἐξηγοῦντο. Ἀρίστανδρος δὲ πόνων εἶναι σημεῖον τοῦ ἐλαίου τὴν πηγὴν ἔφασκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ νίκην ἐπὶ τοῖς πόνοις σημαίνειν.

“Alexander then returned to the river Oxus, with the intention of advancing into Sogdiana, because news was brought that many of the Sogdians had fled for refuge into their strongholds and refused to submit to the viceroy whom he had placed over them. While he was encamping near the river Oxus, a spring of water and near it another of oil rose from the ground not far from Alexander’s own tent. When this prodigy was announced to Ptolemy, son of Lagos, the confidential body-guard, he told Alexander, who offered the sacrifices which the prophets directed on account of the phenomenon. Aristander affirmed that the spring of oil was the sign of labors; but it also signified that after the labors there would be victory.”<sup>3</sup>

Plutarch confirms the Macedonian discovery of the spring of crude oil at the Oxus.<sup>4</sup> However, his version differs in certain aspects:

ὁ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν στρωματοφυλάκων τεταγμένος ἀνὴρ Μακεδὼν, ὄνομα Πρόξενος, τῇ βασιλικῇ σκηνῇ χώραν ὀρύττων παρὰ τὸν Ὠξον ποταμὸν ἀνεκάλυψε πηγὴν ὑγροῦ λιπαροῦ καὶ πιμελώδους: ἀπαντλουμένου δὲ τοῦ πρώτου καθαρὸν ἀνέβλυζεν ἤδη καὶ διαυγὲς ἔλαιον, οὔτε ὁσμὴ δοκοῦν οὔτε γεῦσει ἐλαίου διαφέρειν, στιλπνότητά τε καὶ λιπαρότητα παντάπασιν ἀπαράλλακτον, καὶ ταῦτα τῆς χώρας μηδὲ ἐλαίας φερούσης. λέγεται μὲν οὖν καὶ τὸν Ὠξον αὐτὸν εἶναι μαλακώτατον ὕδωρ, ὥστε τὸ δέρμα τοῖς λουόμενοις ἐπιλιπαίνειν. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ θαυμαστῶς Ἀλέξανδρος ἤσθεις δῆλός ἐστιν ἐξ ὧν γράφει πρὸς Ἀντίπατρον, ἐν τοῖς μεγίστοις τοῦτο τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγονότων αὐτῷ τιθέμενος, οἱ δὲ μάντις ἐνδόξου μὲν στρατείας, ἐπιπόνου δὲ καὶ χαλεπῆς τὸ σημεῖον ἐποιοῦντο: πόνων γὰρ ἀρωγὴν ἔλαιον ἀνθρώποις ὑπὸ θεοῦ δεδόσθαι.

“The Macedonian, namely, who was set over those in charge of the royal equipage, Proxenus by name, as he was digging a place for the king’s tent along the river Oxus, uncovered a spring of liquid which was oily and fatty; but when the top of it was drawn off, there flowed at once a pure and clear oil, which appeared to differ from olive oil neither in odor nor in flavor, and in smoothness and lustre was altogether the

3 Arr. *An.* IV 15.7–8. Trans. P.A. Brunt.

4 The location of the river is debated. Cf. HECKEL, *Conquests* (n. 1), 92–94; A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian’s History of Alexander*, II: *Commentary on books IV–V*, Oxford 1995, 110; N.G.L. HAMMOND, *Sources for Alexander the Great: An Analysis for Plutarch’s Life of Alexander and Arrian’s Anabasis Alexandrou*, Cambridge 1993, 103. See Str. XI 11.5; cf. XI 7.3 He refers to Apollodorus of Artemita. While his lost work *Parthica* used to be regarded as a major source for the Parthian Empire because Apollodorus was credited with close ties to the Arsacid court, currently, scholarship tends to doubt that there can be said anything about its value with certainty. Cf. K. NAWOTKA, “Apollodorus of Artemita. Beyond New Jacoby”, in: J. Wiesehöfer and S. Müller (eds.), *Parthika: Greek and Roman Authors’ Views of the Arsacid Empire*, Wiesbaden 2017, 47–58 (forthcoming). According to F. GRENET and C. RAPIN, “Alexander, Aï Khanoum, Termez: Remarks on the Spring Campaign of 328”, *Bulletin of Asia Institut* 12 (1998), 79–89, here 81, the Oxus is to be identified with the Wakhsh and the Ochus with the Panj. A double crossing was indicated marking the entry into Sogdiana. Oil deposits were known in the Kunduz plain.

same, and that too though the country produced no olive trees. It is said, indeed, that the Oxus itself also has a very soft water, which gives sleekness to the skin of those who bathe in it. However, that Alexander was marvelously pleased is clear from what he writes to Antipater, where he speaks of this as one of the greatest omens vouchsafed to him from Heaven. The seers, however, held that the omen foreshadowed an expedition which would be glorious, but difficult and toilsome; for oil, they said, was given to men by Heaven as an aid to toil.”<sup>5</sup>

Strabo also knows the tradition:

τοῦ δὲ Ὀχου ποταμοῦ πλησίον ὀρύττοντας εὐρεῖν ἐλαίου πηγὴν λέγουσιν: εἰκὸς δέ, ὥσπερ νιτρῶδη τινὰ καὶ στύφοντα ὑγρὰ καὶ ἀσφαλτώδη καὶ θειώδη διαρρεῖ τὴν γῆν, οὕτω καὶ λιπαρὰ εὐρίσκεσθαι, τὸ δὲ σπάνιον ποιεῖ τὴν παραδοξίαν.

“It is said that people digging near the Ochus River found oil. It is reasonable to suppose that, just as nitrous and astringent and bituminous and sulphurous liquids flow through the earth, so also oily liquids are found; but the rarity causes surprise.”<sup>6</sup>

Discussing oily liquids, Athenaeus mentions a letter written by Alexander:

καὶ παρ’ ἄλλοις δ’ εἰσὶ λίπος ἔχουσαι τοιοῦτον, ὡς ἡ ἐν Ἀσίᾳ, ὑπὲρ ἧς Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπέστειλεν ὡς ἐλαίου κρήνην εὐρηκώς.

“and in other districts, too, there are fountains of a greasy nature,—like the one in Asia concerning which Alexander wrote a letter, saying that he had found a fountain of oil.”<sup>7</sup>

Curtius’ version of the incident is specific to his criticism of Alexander’s alleged hubristic pretensions.<sup>8</sup> He mentions the basic facts common to all the versions of the story but gives the account a negative twist. Mentioning the river Oxus, he states:

*Hic, quia limum vehit, turbidus semper, insalubris est potui. Itaque puteos miles coeperat fodere, nec tamen humo alte egesta existerat humor. Tandem in ipso tabernaculo regis conspectus est fons: quem quia tarde notaverant, subito extitisse finxerunt, rexque ipse credi voluit, deum donum id fuisse.*

“This is invariably dirty because of its silt content, and it is unhealthy as drinking water, so the men had proceeded to dig wells. However, no water was forthcoming, although they dug down deep in the earth. At last, a spring was discovered right inside the king’s tent and as the men had taken a long time to notice this they pretended it had appeared all of a sudden. Alexander himself was happy to have it believed that the spring was a gift from the gods.”<sup>9</sup>

5 Plu. *Alex.* 57.4–5. Trans. B. Perrin. Cf. Phot. *Bibl.* 396a 22–34.

6 Str. XI 11.5. Trans. H.C. Hamilton/W. Falconer.

7 Ath. II 17. Trans. C.D. Yonge.

8 On Curtius’ portrayal of Alexander see S. MÜLLER, “Alexander, Dareios und Hephaestion. Fallhöhen bei Curtius”, in: H. Wulfram (ed.), *Der Römische Alexanderhistoriker Curtius Rufus: Erzähltechnik, Rhetorik, Figurenpsychologie*, Vienna 2016, 13–48; E. BAYNHAM, *Alexander the Great: The Unique History of Quintus Curtius*, Ann Arbor 1998.

9 Curt. VII 10.13–14. Trans. J. Yardley.

This paper analyzes the primary sources the tradition may originate from. It will examine their cultural and socio-political background as well as the intentions of the authors and the symbolic meaning of the sign. Subsequently, it will scrutinize the possible perception of this tradition by Arrian, thereby discussing what the symbolism may have meant to him in his time, the Second Sophistic, and his political and social context, especially his links to Hadrian. It will be argued that Arrian's account probably stems from Ptolemy's history of Alexander while Ptolemy himself may have followed Callisthenes on the matter, thereby perhaps relying on one of the very last parts of the *Praxeis Alexandrou* Callisthenes wrote before he lost favor, his job and life.<sup>10</sup> For, significantly, the theme of the miraculous springs occurring at Alexander's arrival was used by Callisthenes as a propagandistic device before. The report on the spring of oil and water was colored by panhellenic ideology and Herodotean influences. In the reception in Roman times, living in an era when the appreciation of the Greek cultural legacy in the Roman Empire was at its heights, Arrian will have recognized the Herodotean color of this "subtext". Thus, it will be suggested that he chose to paraphrase the episode because it suited his own associational frame with his special connections to Athens and Hadrian.

### The evidence: common and different features

The basic story is that a spring of liquid was discovered by the Macedonians at the river Oxus. Only Athenaeus is unspecific about its location. Further elements common to most of the versions of the story are the aspects that the spring of liquid came up in the area of the Macedonian camp when the men had just encamped there (Arrian, Plutarch, Curtius), specifically, in the area of Alexander's tent (Arrian, Plutarch, Curtius). In addition, the spring of liquid was associated with olive oil, *elaion* (Arrian, Plutarch, Strabo, Athenaeus), announced as a miraculous sign and omen regarding the future of the campaign (Arrian, Plutarch, polemically distorted by Curtius), interpreted by the seers (Arrian, Plutarch), namely by Aristander (Arrian), and taken for an omen that foretold toil and victory (Arrian, Plutarch). Furthermore, most of the authors agree that Alexander did not discover the spring himself (Arrian, Plutarch, Curtius, Strabo) but was informed about it (Arrian, Plutarch, Curtius) and happy about the sign (Arrian, Plutarch, Curtius). While these are the predominant elements in the different versions, varying elements are:

- there were two springs of liquid, one of water and the other of oil (Arrian)<sup>11</sup>
- the liquid rising from the ground was a spring of water (Curtius)
- Alexander discovered the spring himself (Athenaeus)

10 While there are doubts that Callisthenes' work extended to that point of the campaign, the crossing of the Oxus and advance into Sogdiana (spring 328 BC), there is at least a fragment on the Branchidae in 329 BC stemming from the context of the Bactrian and Sogdian revolt testifying to the fact that at this time, Callisthenes still worked as Alexander's historiographer. This might also have been true for the account on the springs. Alternatively, the tradition might have stemmed from another Alexander historiographer who modeled it on a theme developed by Callisthenes, namely the miracle of the suddenly appearing spring at Alexander's arrival.

11 It is debated whether Arrian's two springs formed part of the original account. According to BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 4), 111, "Arrian appears to conflate two separate phenomena, the appearance of a spring of water and the discovery of a seepage of petroleum. Both probably occurred, but perhaps not in such close conjunction as Arrian implies". However, perhaps the two springs occurred already in his sources.

- Ptolemy told Alexander about the discovery (Arrian)
- Proxenus, being in a supervisory activity, told Alexander about the discovery (Plutarch)
- Alexander mentions the spring in a letter (Plutarch, Athenaeus)
- the letter was addressed to Antipater and did also mention the prophetic meaning of the sign (Plutarch)
- the water of the Oxus was smooth (Plutarch)
- the river Oxus was dirty and filthy (Curtius)
- the soldiers tried to conceal their failure to notice the spring of water earlier by claiming that it appeared all of a sudden and Alexander supported this lie in order to style himself as heavenly protected (Curtius).

Obviously, while the exact chronological context differs in the sources, regarding the basic storyline, Arrian, Plutarch and Curtius seem to agree: the Macedonians encamped near the river Oxus where a spring of liquid bubbled up and was announced as an encouraging sign of the Gods' favor. The changes and differences in each text reflect the varying priorities set by the authors. Probably, they also hint at the primary sources they had used. Arrian emphasizes the role of Ptolemy and the favorable omen for Alexander while Strabo leaves all the propagandistic miraculous elements and prosopographic information aside focusing on geographic observations. Plutarch adds further information about the water of the Oxus to the basic story and mentions a letter by Alexander. This may have formed part of a collection of letters allegedly written by Alexander that was published in Hellenistic times and that Plutarch is partly suspected to have used.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps, the letter he quotes is the same letter mentioned by Athenaeus. Regarding the evidence on this miracle, Curtius' version plays a special role. As often in his *Historiae Alexandri Magni*, the Roman writer reworks the basic elements of the episode in his sources by turning them into something negative: according to him, the river is dirty, the soldiers are slow in the mind, the miraculous event is just a pretext for their incapability and Alexander unmasks himself (again) as the great pretender.<sup>13</sup> If his source(s) had mentioned two springs, he may have focused on the spring of water instead of oil because of the context: he described the problems of the army lacking food and water. It is possible that in fact, due to the spring rise, the water of the river had turned muddy.<sup>14</sup> Thus, facing the fear of thirst in the future, Alexander was extremely relieved when the spring was found. This episode suited Curtius' purpose to argue that Alexander owed more to fortune than to virtue.<sup>15</sup>

### Callisthenes' miracles

Trying to identify the primary source from which the account about the miraculous spring(s) originated, there may be pointers to Callisthenes. In the fragments of his *Praxeis Alexandrou*, the theme of a spring of liquid suddenly bubbling up at Alexander's arrival as a miraculous sign occurs twice. Obviously, Callisthenes used it as a literary device in order to glorify the

12 Cf. L. PEARSON, "The Diary and Letters of Alexander the Great", *Historia* 3 (1955), 429–454, here 448–449. However, HAMMOND, *Sources* (n. 4), 105 with n. 10 argues in favor of the historicity of this letter.

13 At this point of Alexander's character development, the depravation is already in full bloom. Cf. MÜLLER, "Alexander" (n. 8), 35–36; BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 8), 165–200.

14 Cf. GRENET and RAPIN, "Alexander" (n. 4), 81.

15 Curt. X 5.26. Cf. R. STONEMAN, "The Origins of Quintus Curtius' Concept of Fortuna", in: H. Wulfram (ed.), *Römische* (n. 8), 301–322; BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 8), 101–131.



young ruler as a panhellenic savior. The first case is described in the context of the Macedonian conquest of Lycia after the battle of Granicus in 334 BC. Plutarch reports:

ἔστι δὲ τῆς Λυκίας κρήνη περὶ τὴν Ξανθίων πόλιν, ἣς τότε λέγουσιν αὐτομάτως περιτραπίσης καὶ ὑπερβαλούσης ἐκ βυθοῦ δέλτον ἐκπεσεῖν χαλκῆν τύπους ἔχουσαν ἀρχαίων γραμμάτων, ἐν οἷς ἐδηλοῦτο παύσεσθαι τὴν Περσῶν ἀρχὴν ὑπὸ Ἑλλήνων καταλυθεῖσαν.

“Now, there is in Lycia, near the city of Xanthus, a spring, which at this time, as we are told, was of its own motion upheaved from its depths, and overflowed, and cast forth a bronze tablet bearing the prints of ancient letters, in which it was made known that the empire of the Persians would one day be destroyed by the Greeks and come to an end.”<sup>16</sup>

Significantly, the term *αὐτομάτως* “is used for phenomena for which there is no visible cause”.<sup>17</sup> Often, it refers to the action of fate and the impact of *tyche*. Obviously, Callisthenes wanted to imply that the natural phenomenon was caused by gods in order to show the divine approval and support of the Macedonian mission.<sup>18</sup> Thus, in this passage, Callisthenes uses the motif to style Alexander as the predestined savior king whose arrival was welcomed by the forces of nature itself. As nature reflects the divine order, it was hinted that the Persian dominion had disturbed this divine order thus causing the drying up of the spring.<sup>19</sup> When the legitimate ruler advanced, however, nature lived up again. Callisthenes’ Greek and Macedonian audience was expected to read this sign as a divine confirmation of Alexander’s predestination to rule Asia Minor. In panhellenic colors, he pointed out that Alexander was the chosen “liberator” of the Ionians from the alleged Persian yoke. The associational pattern seems to be obvious. However, maybe either due to Callisthenes’ tendency to exaggerate,<sup>20</sup>

16 Plu. *Alex.* 17.2. Trans. B. Perrin. Cf. W. WILL, *Alexander der Große: Geschichte und Legende*, Darmstadt 2009, 28; HAMMOND, *Sources* (n. 4), 46. On Lycian Xanthus in Alexander’s time see BRIANT, “Empire” (n. 1), 156–159.

17 A.S.F. GOW (ed.), *Theocritus: Edited with a Translation and Commentary*, II: *Commentary, Appendix, Indexes, and Plates*, Cambridge 1950, 376. See also J.R. HAMILTON, *Plutarch, Alexander: A Commentary*, Oxford 1969, 43.

18 Cf. HAMMOND, *Sources* (n. 4), 46: At a time when natural phenomena were thought to be controlled by gods, this was a clear assumption.

19 The narrative pattern was common to Near Eastern perceptions of the dichotomy of the legitimate reign of a savior king and the chaos under an illegitimate usurper. Cf. A. BLASIUS and B.U. SCHIPPER, “Apokalyptik und Ägypten? – Erkenntnisse und Perspektiven”, in: A. Blasius and B.U. Schipper (eds.), *Apokalyptik und Ägypten: Eine kritische Analyse der relevanten Texte aus dem griechisch-römischen Ägypten*, Leuven 2002, 277–302.

20 Str. XVII 1.43; Plu. *Alex.* 17.2. See also Plb. XII 17–18. However, BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 8), 71 suggests that Callisthenes’ style might have been overemphasized by later authors. On Callisthenes’ propaganda see S. MÜLLER, *Alexander, Makedonien und Persien*, Berlin 2014, 44–57; W. HECKEL, *Who’s Who in the Age of Alexander the Great*, Malden, MA/Oxford 2006, 76–77; M. BÖHME, “Das Perserbild in den Fragmenten der Alexanderhistoriker”, in: M. Rathmann (ed.), *Studien zur antiken Geschichtsschreibung*, Bonn 2009, 161–186, here 163–167; E. BAYNHAM, “The Ancient Evidence for Alexander the Great”, in: J. Roisman (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to Alexander the Great*, Leiden 2003, 3–29, here 6–7; A.M. DEVINE, “Alexander’s Propaganda Machine: Callisthenes as the Ultimate Source for Arrian”, in: I. Worthington (ed.), *Ventures into Greek History*, Oxford 1994, 89–104. On the Macedonian panhellenic propaganda see G. SQUILLACE, “Consensus Strategies under Philip and Alexander: The

revealing himself to be a “producer of bombast”,<sup>21</sup> or because he wanted the message to be unmistakable, he felt the need to stress the prophetic sign. Thus, he added another element proving Alexander’s predestination to establish “Greek” rule by introducing the age old bronze tablet that the spring brought up.<sup>22</sup> Emphasizing the age of this prophecy written in ancient letters, Callisthenes transfers the Macedonian campaign in Asia Minor to a universal level of world history. In addition, the episode mirrors Callisthenes’ tendency to allude to Herodotus in order to create a panhellenic coloring. Thus, the choice of Xanthus is telling. It may have implied a hint at Herodotus’ report:

Λύκιοι δέ, ὡς ἐς τὸ Ξάνθιον πεδίον ἦλασε ὁ Ἄρπαγος τὸν στρατόν, ἐπεξιόντες καὶ μαχόμενοι ὀλίγοι πρὸς πολλοὺς ἀρετᾶς ἀπεδείκνυντο, ἐσσωθέντες δὲ καὶ κατελιγθέντες ἐς τὸ ἄστυ συνήλυσαν ἐς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν τὰς τε γυναῖκας καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὰ χρήματα καὶ τοὺς οἰκέτας, καὶ ἔπειτα ὑπῆσαν τὴν ἀκρόπολιν πᾶσαν ταύτην καίεσθαι. ταῦτα δὲ ποιήσαντες καὶ συνομόσαντες ὅρκους δεινούς, ἐπεξελθόντες ἀπέθανον πάντες Ξάνθιοι μαχόμενοι.

“When Harpagus led his army into the plain of Xanthus, the Lycians came out to meet him, and showed themselves courageous fighting few against many; but being beaten and driven into the city, they gathered their wives and children and goods and servants into the acropolis, and then set the whole acropolis on fire. Then they swore great oaths to each other, and sallying out fell fighting, all the men of Xanthus.”<sup>23</sup>

According to Herodotus, Harpagus, a kinsman of Cyrus II’s grandfather Astyages, the Median ruler, was a key figure in the legend of Cyrus’ childhood and rise to power.<sup>24</sup> Harpagus arranged a conspiracy against Astyages and transferred the leadership to Cyrus who started his victorious expansion. Harpagus served him as his loyal general, assisted him in conquering Lydia and the cities of Western Asia Minor.<sup>25</sup> Thus, if Callisthenes had the conquest of Xanthus under Harpagus in mind when writing about the spring near Xanthus

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Revenge Theme”, in: E.D. Carney and D. Ogden (eds.), *Philip II and Alexander the Great: Father and Son, Lives and Afterlives*, Oxford 2010, 69–80; M. FLOWER, “Alexander the Great and Panhellenism”, in: A.B. Bosworth and E. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 96–135. On the panhellenic codes see D. GRIESER-SCHMITZ, “Kulturbestimmte politische Vorstellungen des Isokrates”, in: W. Orth (ed.), *Isokrates – Neue Ansätze zur Bewertung eines politischen Schriftstellers*, Trier 2003, 111–127; M. WEIBENBERGER, “Isokrates und der Plan eines panhellenischen Perserkriegs”, in: W. Orth (ed.), *Isokrates* (n. 20), 95–110.

21 HAMMOND, *Sources* (n. 4), 46.

22 Comparably, according to the legend of Vespasian’s rise to royal power, while he heard about Vitellius’ defeat and was distinguished by Alexandrian Sarapis, at Arcadian Tegea, by the direction of some soothsayers, several ancient vessels were dug out of a consecrated place, bearing images resembling Vespasian (Suet. *Ves.* 7).

23 Hdt. I 176.1–2. Trans. A.D. Godley. Except for 80 households (I 176.3)

24 Hdt. I 108–110; 113; 117–120; 123; 127; 129. Astyages told Harpagus to expose the newborn Cyrus but Harpagus delegated the task to a shepherd who raised the child. When Astyages figured it out, he punished Harpagus by having the latter’s son slaughtered, cooked and served to him as a meal. This is depicted as a reason for Harpagus to defect from Astyages and support Cyrus. Cf. M.A. DANDAMAYEV, “Harpagos”, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 12/1 (2003), 13; R. BICHLER, *Herodots Welt: der Aufbau der Historie am Bild der fremden Länder und Völker, ihrer Zivilisation und ihrer Geschichte*, Berlin 2000, 260–261; M.A. DANDAMAYEV, “Cyrus iii. Cyrus II the Great”, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 6/5 (1993), 516–521.

25 Hdt. I 80; 164–177. Cf. DANDAMAYEV, “Harpagos” (n. 24), 13.

and expected his audience to recall it, he thereby alluded to the times and expansive successes of Cyrus II, the founder of the Persian Empire, on whose behalf Harpagus operated in Asia Minor.<sup>26</sup> Despite the fact that Cyrus is not directly involved in this scene, Callisthenes' audience, familiar with Herodotus' *Histories*, will not have failed to associate Harpagus, inextricably linked with Cyrus in the Greek cultural memory, with the Persian king. This association might perhaps also explain the term *archaios* regarding the age of the inscription of the bronze tablet. Thus, Callisthenes would have connected the contemporary events with the reign of the empire's founder. It is uncertain whether thereby, Callisthenes echoed Alexander's propaganda to follow in Cyrus II's footsteps. This would mean that this policy occurred very early while the explicit examples for Alexander's deliberate association with Cyrus stem from later stages of the campaign.<sup>27</sup> For example, he visited Cyrus' tomb in Pasargadae. Obviously, in this context, Cyrus' epitaph was forged by the Macedonians.<sup>28</sup> Especially telling is Aristobulus' version in which Cyrus is called the "king of Asia", a title in accordance with Greek perceptions but in contradiction to the Eastern ideology of the Persian king's universal rule.<sup>29</sup> While there is at least the possibility that the propagandistic theme of the connection between Cyrus II and Alexander was established very early and literarily developed by Callisthenes, alternatively, the reference to Xanthus with its allusion to Cyrus may not necessarily have mirrored Alexander's political self-fashioning at this time.

26 On the brief interval of dependence from Athens and the Greek cultural influence see P.H.J. HOUWINK TEN CATE, *The Luwian Population Groups of Lycia and Cilicia Aspera during the Hellenistic Period*, Leiden 1961, 7–9. On Cyrus II's reign see R. ROLLINGER, "Das teispidisch-achaimenidische Imperium", in: M. Gehler and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Imperien und Reiche in der Weltgeschichte: epochenübergreifende und globalhistorische Vergleiche*, I: *Imperien des Altertums, mittelalterliche und frühneuzeitliche Imperien*, Wiesbaden 2014, 149–191, here 150.

27 On Alexander's imitation of Cyrus II see Str. XI 11.4; XV 1.6; XV 2.4; XV 2.6, XV 3.7–8; Arr. *An.* VI 29.4–11; Arr. *Ind.* 1.4; Curt. X 1.22–38; D.S. XVII 107. Cf. M.J. OLBRYCHT, "An Admirer of Persian Ways: Alexander the Great's Reforms in Parthia-Hyrcania and the Iranian Heritage", in: T. Daryaei, A. Mousavi and K. Rezakhani (eds.), *Excavating an Empire: Achaemenid Persia in Longue Durée*, Costa Mesa, CA 2014, 37–61, here 52–57; S. MÜLLER, "Die frühen Perserkönige im kulturellen Gedächtnis der Makedonen und in der Propaganda Alexanders d. Gr.", *Gymnasium* 118 (2011), 105–133, here 113–117; M.J. OLBRYCHT, "Macedonia and Persia", in: I. Worthington and J. Roisman (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Oxford 2010, 342–369, here 357; NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 1), 252, 268, 331–346, 342; P. BRIANT, *Alexander the Great and his Empire: A Short Introduction*, Princeton 2010, 110–111; J. SEIBERT, "Alexander der Große an den Gräbern der Perserkönige", in: H. Seibert and G. Thoma (eds.), *Von Sachsen bis Jerusalem: Manchen und Institutionen im Wandel der Zeit: Festschrift für W. Giese zum 65. Geburtstag*, Munich 2004, 13–30; K. NAWOTKA, "Alexander the Great in Persepolis", *AntHung* 43 (2003), 67–76, here 75; O.B. RADER, "Prismen der Macht. Herrschaftsbrechungen und ihre Neutralisierung am Beispiel von Totensorge und Grabkulten", *HZ* 271 (2000), 311–346, here 345–346; J. WIESEHÖFER, *Die 'dunklen Jahrhunderte' der Persis. Untersuchungen zu Geschichte und Kultur von Färs in frühhellenistischer Zeit (330–140 v. Chr.)*, Munich 1994, 36.

28 On the forgery see D. STRONACH, "Of Cyrus, Darius and Alexander: A New Look at the Epitaphs of Cyrus the Great", in: R. Dittmann et al. (eds.), *Variatio delectat: Iran und der Westen. Gedenkschrift für Peter Calmeyer*, Münster 2000, 681–702; J. HEINRICHS, "'Asiens König'. Die Inschriften des Kyrosgrabs und das achämenidische Reichsverständnis", in: W. Will and J. Heinrichs (eds.), *Zu Alexander d. Gr., Festschrift für G. Wirth zum 60. Geburtstag am 9.12.86.*, I, Amsterdam 1987, 487–540. The former Old Persian epitaph will have been a forgery by Darius I who tried to style Cyrus II as an "Achaemenid" in order to underline his own (in fact debatable) membership of Cyrus' family.

29 Arr. *An.* VI 29.8. Cf. Strab. XV 3.7. Cf. Heinrichs, "'Asiens'" (n. 25), 511.

Rather, it may have been a literary device by Callisthenes being influenced by the portraits of rulers controlling Persia in the Greek literary heritage: While Callisthenes styled Alexander as the counter-image of Xerxes, a fitting role-model seems to have been Cyrus II who, thanks to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and the Herodotean childhood legend of Cyrus, was mostly perceived in favorable terms.<sup>30</sup> Alexander's own policy of posing as following into Cyrus' footsteps may either have come later in the campaign, perhaps inspired by Callisthenes' literary allusions, or even be dated to this early stage. However, this is uncertain. Possibly, regarding the occurring spring, Callisthenes also thought about the theme of Persian ambassadors demanding earth and water in order to establish dependence from the Great King.<sup>31</sup> This could mean that Alexander did not even have to ask for earth and water. As the legitimate ruler, the land and the sea do their obeisance to him. This theme is also mirrored by the famous scene in which Callisthenes made the sea make a bow at the Pamphylian coast when Alexander passed by.<sup>32</sup>

In the second case of a spring miraculously flowing again, Callisthenes even surpassed his first example: Alexander's arrival did not only trigger the reactivity of a spring but also of an oracle. The historicity of this episode is debated and its allusions to the Persian Wars are mostly regarded as "patently false", an example of inventing traditions:<sup>33</sup>

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- 30 Cf. J. WIESEHÖFER, *Das antike Persien von 550 v. Chr. bis 650 n. Chr.*, Düsseldorf/Zürich 2005<sup>3</sup>, 73–74, 79–80; P. BRIANT, "History and Ideology: The Greeks and 'Persian Decadence'", in: T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*, Edinburgh 2002, 193–210, here 193–194; C. MUELLER-GOLDINGEN, *Untersuchungen zu Xenophons Kyrupädie*, Stuttgart/Leipzig 1995, 274. According to A. KUHRT, "Der 'gute' und der 'schlechte' König – Kyros und Xerxes. A Footnote", in: C. Binder, H. Börm and A. Luther (eds.), *Diwan. Untersuchungen zu Geschichte und Kultur des Nahen Ostens und des östlichen Mittelmeerraums im Altertum. Festschrift für J. Wiesehöfer zum 65. Geburtstag*, Duisburg 2016, 127–132, this view and constructed contrast between Cyrus II and Xerxes was mainly a Greek perspective the inhabitants of the Persian Empire did not necessarily share.
- 31 Hdt. V 18; VI 48.2; VI 49.1; VII 131; VII 133.1; VII 138.2. Cf. A. KUHRT, "Earth and Water", in: A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (eds.), *Achaemenid History, III: Method and Theory: Proceedings of the London 1985 Achaemenid History Workshop*, Leiden 1988, 87–99.
- 32 Callisthenes, *FGrHist* 124 F 31. Cf. Plu. *Alex.* 17.3–4. See WILL, *Alexander* (n. 17), 28–29; Cf. M. ZÄHRNT, "Alexander an der Küste Pamphyliens. Zum literarisch-propagandistischen Umgang mit Naturgewalten", in: E. Olshausen and H. Sonnabend (eds.), *Stuttgarter Kolloquium zur Historischen Geographie des Altertums 6, 1996: Naturkatastrophen in der antiken Welt*, Stuttgart 1998, 329–336; HAMILTON, *Plutarch* (n. 17), 44; E. MEDERER, *Die Alexanderlegenden bei den ältesten Alexanderhistorikern*, Stuttgart 1936, 3–4. On the symbolism of sea and water in the Near Eastern royal representation see R. ROLLINGER, "Dareios und Xerxes an den Rändern der Welt und die Inszenierung von Weltherrschaft – Altorientalisches bei Herodot", in: B. Dunsch and K. Ruffing (eds.), *Herodots Quellen. Die Quellen Herodots*, Wiesbaden 2013, 95–116. On Alexander and the significance of water, sea, and rivers see R. ROLLINGER, *Alexander und die großen Ströme. Die Flussüberquerungen im Lichte altorientalischer Pioniertechniken*, Wiesbaden 2013.
- 33 J. FONTENROSE, *Didyma: Apollo's Oracle, Cult, and Companions*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1988, 12–13, with n. 19–20. He argues that the Branchidae who disappeared from history after the Persian sack of Miletus in 494 BC did never deliver the temple treasures to Xerxes or settle in Sogdiana. He points out that there is no evidence of Milesian hostility to the Branchidae and that they might have been no Medizers. Cf. HOLT, *Bactria* (n. 1), 73–75. He doubts the existence of the Branchidae in Alexander's time and the historicity of the massacre. Contra FLOWER, "Alexander" (n. 20), 118; N.G.L. HAMMOND, "The Branchidae at Didyma and in Sogdiana", *CQ* 48 (1998), 339–344; H.W. PARKE, "The Massacre of the Branchidae", *JHS* 105 (1985), 59–68.

προστραγῶδει δὲ τούτοις ὁ Καλλισθένης, ὅτι τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος τὸ ἐν Βραγχίδαῖς μαντεῖον ἐκλελοιπότες, ἐξ ὅτου τὸ ἱερὸν ὑπὸ τῶν Βραγχιδῶν σεσύλητο ἐπὶ Ξέρξου περσισάντων, ἐκλελοιπυίας δὲ καὶ τῆς κρήνης, τότε ἦ τε κρήνη ἀνάσχοι καὶ μαντεῖα πολλὰ οἱ Μιλησίων πρέσβεις κομίσαιεν εἰς Μέμφιν περὶ τῆς ἐκ Διὸς γενέσεως τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τῆς ἐσομένης περὶ Ἀρβηλα νίκης καὶ τοῦ Δαρείου θανάτου...

“Callisthenes adds, (after the exaggerating style of tragedy), that when Apollo had deserted the oracle among the Branchidae, on the temple being plundered by the Branchidae (who espoused the party of the Persians in the time of Xerxes,) and the spring had failed, it then re-appeared (on the arrival of Alexander); that the ambassadors also of the Milesians carried back to Memphis numerous answers of the oracle respecting the descent of Alexander from Jupiter, and the future victory which he should obtain at Arbela, the death of Darius ...”<sup>34</sup>

Similar to Menander’s mockery,<sup>35</sup> Strabo’s criticism might mirror Callisthenes’ tendency to be over the top. Again, as in the case of the spring near Xanthus, he feels the need to underline the aspect that these signs were heavenly sent by adding prophecies of Alexander’s predestination to conquer and rule put into words. Important to note, the incident concerning the oracle and spring of the sanctuary of Apollo at Didyma is to be dated in the context of the revolt in Bactria and Sogdiana. So is the occurrence of the sign occurring at the Oxus.<sup>36</sup> Thus, it might have been the last trace of Callisthenes’ official report that was interrupted by his elimination in 327 BC.<sup>37</sup>

All these episodes on miraculously flowing springs during Alexander’s campaign are modeled on an identical narrative pattern: when Alexander arrives, a spring bubbles up (again) as a sign of divine approval. It is accompanied by prophecies in word or letter about his predestination to rule the territory the Macedonian have marched in. In addition, in each case, real military problems have to be covered up by literary reworking. First, the Macedonians had trouble in Ionia trying to conquer the resistant cities of Miletus and Halicarnassus.<sup>38</sup> Then, the Macedonians unsuccessfully attempted to suppress the severe resistance by the Sogdian-Bactrian alliance. As they failed to stand up militarily against the revolt, they were forced to fall back on diplomacy and marriage policy: by marrying Roxane, Alexander became the son-in-law of Oxyartes, one of the Bactrian leaders who left the rebellious alliance and negotiated an agreement. Thus, while the Macedonian strategy was far from glorious, it finally worked out.<sup>39</sup> However, the Macedonians may have remembered

34 Str. XVII 1.43. Trans. H.C. Hamilton/W. Falconer.

35 Plu. *Alex.* 17.2.

36 Cf. P. JAMZADEH, *Alexander Histories and Iranian Reflections: Remnants of Propaganda and Resistance*, Boston/Leiden 2012, 128. On the Branchidae: Str. XI 11.4; XVII 1.43; Curt. VII 5.28–35. Contra Hdt. VI 9.1–3. See MÜLLER, “Frühen” (n. 27), 127–128; FLOWER, “Alexander” (n. 20), 118; HAMMOND, “Branchidae” (n. 33), 339–344; FONTENROSE, *Didyma* (n. 33), 3, 9, 12–13, 77, 108.

37 Cf. C.A. ROBINSON Jr., “The Seer Aristander”, *AJPh* 50 (1929), 195–197. On Callisthenes’ fate see D. GOLAN, “The Fate of a Court Historian: Callisthenes”, *Athenaeum* 66 (1988), 99–120; L. PRANDI, *Callistene. Uno storico tra Aristotele e i re Macedoni*, Milan 1985.

38 Str. XIV 1.7; Arr. *An.* I 18.3–19.4; I 20.2–23.8. Cf. BOSWORTH, *Conquest* (n. 1), 47–49. In the Aegean, there was also resistance by Mytilene.

39 This was certainly a less-than-ideal-solution. Cf. S. MÜLLER, “Stories of the Persian Bride: Alexander and Roxane”, in: R. Stoneman, K. Erickson and I. Netton (eds.), *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, Groningen 2012, 295–310; BRIANT, *Alexander* (n. 27), 116–117; HECKEL, *Who’s* (n. 20), 242; M.J.



that Alexander's father Philip II usually married into foreign leading families *after* the establishment of political control over their regions and not *instead* of a military conquest.<sup>40</sup>

Against this background, presumably, Callisthenes and the authors on Alexander following him regarded panhellenic allusions as the literary best weapon to conceal military set-backs and missing glorious deeds. Interestingly, Callisthenes carried on relying on panhellenic codes even after the dismissal of the Greek troops in the summer of 330 BC marking officially the accomplishment of the (alleged) panhellenic mission.<sup>41</sup> This phenomenon is also visible in the works of other primary authors on the Macedonian conquest such as Onesicritus, Ptolemy, and Clitarchus who published their works after Alexander's death.<sup>42</sup>

Presumably, the reference to the seer Aristander interpreting the sign might also be a hint that the episode about the spring(s) at the Oxus originated from Callisthenes.<sup>43</sup> As Charles Robinson, Luisa Prandi, Franca Landucci Gattinoni and Michael Flower have shown, Aristander seems to have been a relevant character in his *Praxeis Alexandrou*.<sup>44</sup>

Granted that Callisthenes' official report is the primary source that mentioned the spring of oil that appears in most of our testimonies (either with or without the spring of water), he might have tried to trigger panhellenic associations again. As in the case of the spring near Xanthus and the holy spring of the Didymean Apollon, therefore, he may have alluded to

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OLBRYCHT, *Alexander Wielki i świat irański*, Rzeszów 2004, 29–30. On Roxane's shadowy role at Alexander's court see E.D. CARNEY, "Women in Alexander's Court", in: J. Roisman (ed.), *Brill's* (n.20), 227–252.

40 Ath. XIII 5.

41 Arr. An. III 19.5–6.

42 Cf. BAYNHAM, "Ancient" (n. 20), 3–29. On the debate on the date of Clitarchus see A.G. BERESFORD, P.J. PARSONS and M.P. POBJOY, "On Hellenistic Historians", *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* LXXI, London 2007, 27–36 dating him to the time of Ptolemy IV. This new dating is rejected by L. PRANDI, "New Evidence for the Dating of Cleitarchus (POxy LXXI.4808)?" *Histos* 6 (2012), 15–26. On the role of Athens after Alexander see A.J. BAYLISS, *After Demosthenes: The Politics of Early Hellenistic Athens*, London 2011; M. RATHMANN, "Athen in hellenistischer Zeit – Fremdbestimmung und kulturelle Anziehungskraft", in: R. Krumeich and C. Witschel (eds.), *Die Akropolis von Athen im Hellenismus und in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, Wiesbaden 2010, 55–94.

43 It was suggested that the tradition might stem from Aristander's own works. Cf. O. AMITAY, *From Alexander to Jesus*, Berkeley 2010, 19, 33. Orig. *Cels.* VI 8.10 mentions an Aristander who wrote about Plato's alleged supernatural nature. However, it is not clear whether this Platonist was the mantic Aristander. Contra: A. NICE, "The Reputation of the Mantis Aristander", *AC* 48 (2005), 87–102. Aristander disappeared from the records in 328 BC and might have died in 328/327 BC. Cf. M. FLOWER, *The Seer in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley/L.A./London 2008, 181, n. 72.

44 Cf. FLOWER, *Seer* (n. 43), 180–181; F. LANDUCCI GATTINONI, "L'indovino Aristandro e l'eredità dei Telmessii", in: M. Sordi (ed.), *La profezia nel mondo antico*, Milan 1993, 123–138; PRANDI, *Callistene* (n. 37), 138–139; ROBINSON Jr., "Seer" (n. 37), 195–197. On Aristander's role during Alexander's campaign see also FLOWER, "Religious" (n. 2), 302; HECKEL, *Who's* (n. 20), 45–46; NICE, "Reputation" (n. 43), 87–102; W. GREENWALT, "A Macedonian Mantis", *AncW* 5 (1982), 17–25. Cf. H. BOWDEN, "The Eagle has Landed: Divination in the Alexander Historians", in: T. Howe, S. Müller and R. Stoneman (eds.), *Ancient Historiography on War and Empire*, Cambridge 2016, 149–168; C. KING, "Plutarch, Alexander and Dream Divination", *JCS* 38 (2013), 81–111. BURKE, "Anatolian" (n. 2), 259, n. 10, suggests that Aristander was also responsible for the transmission of the legend of the Gordian knot. However, E. KOULAKIOTIS, "Aspects de la divination dans la monarchie macédonienne", *Kernos* 26 (2013), 123–138, here 132–133, points out that the image of Aristander and divination at the Macedonian court was transformed by the Roman reception.

Herodotus.<sup>45</sup> In this context, the term *elaion* (olive oil) for the liquid coming from the earth seems to be of particular significance. The association of the substance with olive oil is common to all the testimonies except for Curtius who does not mention the spring of oil. However, usually, crude oil is termed *asphaltos* or *naphtha* in the ancient Greek sources (and *bitumen* in the Roman texts).<sup>46</sup> This is also the case with other manifestations of crude oil that occurred during the Macedonian campaign.<sup>47</sup> Thus, Plutarch is right stressing the miraculous dimension of this specific liquid.<sup>48</sup> The mention of olive oil, however, may perhaps point at a central point of reference of the commemoration of Xerxes' Greek campaign:<sup>49</sup> the Persian sack of the Acropolis including the legend of the (unsuccessful) destruction of the holy olive tree of Athena:

ἔστι ἐν τῇ ἀκροπόλει ταύτῃ Ἐρεχθεὺς τοῦ γηγενέος λεγομένου εἶναι νηός, ἐν τῷ ἐλαίῳ τε καὶ θάλασσᾳ ἐνι, τὰ λόγος παρὰ Ἀθηναίων Ποσειδέωνά τε καὶ Ἀθηναίην ἐρίσαντας περὶ τῆς χώρας μαρτύρια θέσθαι. ταύτην ὧν τὴν ἐλαίην ἅμα τῷ ἄλλῳ ἰρῶ κατέλαβε ἐμπρησθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν βαρβάρων: δευτέρῃ δὲ ἡμέρῃ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐμπρήσιος Ἀθηναίων οἱ

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- 45 On Callisthenes and Herodotus see MÜLLER, *Alexander* (n. 20), 47–55; MÜLLER, “Frühen” (n. 27), 129–130; WILL, *Alexander* (n. 16), 22–24; BÖHME, “Perserbild” (n. 20), 166; J. SEIBERT, “‘Panhellenischer Kreuzzug’, Nationalkrieg, Rachefeldzug oder makedonischer Eroberungskrieg?“, in: W. Will (ed.), *Alexander der Große. Eine Weiteroberung und ihr Hintergrund: Vorträge des Internationalen Bonner Alexanderkolloquiums, 19.–21.12.1996*, Bonn 1998, 5–58; WIESEHÖFER, “‘Dunklen’” (n. 27), 24; G. WIRTH, *Der Brand von Persepolis. Folgerungen zur Geschichte Alexanders des Grossen*, Amsterdam 1993, 53–54. See also O. MURRAY, “Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture”, *CQ* 22 (1972), 200–213. On Herodotus in the Hellenistic Empires see J. PRIESTLEY, *Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture: Literary Studies in the Reception of the Histories*, Oxford 2014.
- 46 Cf. R.J. FORBES, “The Nomenclature of Bitumen, Petroleum, Tar, and Allied Products in Antiquity”, *Mnemosyne* 4 (1936), 66–77, here 70–71. It is uncertain when the word *naphtha* was adapted into Greek. Amm. Marc. XXIII 6.38 calls it a Persian *vocabulum gentile*. Procop. *Bell.* VIII 11.36 speaks of a Median oil. Cf. P. HUYSE, “Sprachkontakte und Entlehnungen zwischen dem Griechisch/Lateinischen und dem Mitteliranischen”, in: M. Schuol, U. Hartmann and A. Luther (eds.), *Grenzüberschreitungen: Formen des Kontakts zwischen Orient und Okzident im Altertum*, Stuttgart 2002, 197–202, here 202.
- 47 For example, Plutarch and Strabo describe their encounter with *naphtha* in Babylonia: Plu. *Alex.* 35.1–5; Str. XVI 1.15. Cf. D. SANSONE, “Plutarch, Alexander, and Naphtha”, *GRBS* 21 (1980), 63–74. Curt. V 1.16 mentions that in Babylon, it was used as construction material. Cf. J.E. ATKINSON, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus's Historiae Alexandri Magni, Books 5 to 7.2*, Amsterdam 1994, 41. See also Arr. *An.* VII 17.1 (*asphaltos*). On crude oil in antiquity see R.J. FORBES, *Bitumen and Petroleum in Antiquity*, Leiden 1936.
- 48 On the signs in Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* see P. BOSMAN, “Signs and Narrative Design in Plutarch's *Alexander*”, *Akroterion* 56 (2011), 91–106. According to him, the signs support an ascending and descending line in Alexander's career hinting at divine reasons for his successes and eventual demise.
- 49 On Xerxes' image in Greek literary tradition see R. STONEMAN, *Xerxes: A Persian Life*, New Haven/London 2015; E. BRIDGES, *Imagining Xerxes: Ancient Perspectives on a Persian King*, London 2015; R. ROLLINGER, “Herodotus VII. Xerxes according to Herodotus”, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 12 (2003), 270–276; P. BRIANT, *Histoire de l'empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*, Paris 1996, 531–533. On Greek literary stereotypes regarding the Persians in general see I. MADREITER, *Stereotypisierung – Idealisierung – Indifferenz, Formen der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Achaimeniden-Reich in der griechischen Persika-Literatur*, Wiesbaden 2012; BRIANT, “History” (n. 30), 193–210; J. WIESEHÖFER, “‘Griechenland wäre unter persische Herrschaft geraten...’ Die Perserkriege als Zeitenwende?“, in: S. Sellmer and H. Brinkhaus (eds.), *Zeitenwenden: Historische Brüche in asiatischen und afrikanischen Gesellschaften*, Hamburg 2002, 209–232.



θύειν ὑπὸ βασιλέος κελεύόμενοι ὥς ἀνέβησαν ἐς τὸ ἱρόν, ὧρων βλαστὸν ἐκ τοῦ στελέχεος ὅσον τε πηχυαῖον ἀναδεδραμηκότα. οὗτοι μὲν νυν ταῦτα ἔφρασαν.

“In that acropolis is a shrine of Erechtheus, called the “Earthborn,” and in the shrine are an olive tree and a pool of salt water. The story among the Athenians is that they were set there by Poseidon and Athena as tokens when they contended for the land. It happened that the olive tree was burnt by the barbarians with the rest of the sacred precinct, but on the day after its burning, when the Athenians ordered by the king to sacrifice went up to the sacred precinct, they saw a shoot of about a cubit's length sprung from the stump, and they reported this.”<sup>50</sup>

The story underlines the symbolic meaning of the olive tree as a sign of collective Athenian identity, memory and successful resistance against the Persian intruders. It represented “the eventual revival of Athens, an interpretation so obvious that Herodotus need not to give it.”<sup>51</sup> Athena signaled her refusal to abandon Athens and in consequence, the olive leaves that began to decorate her crested helmet on Athenian coins were a symbol of triumph over the enemy.<sup>52</sup> The message will still have been clear to Callisthenes’ audience and re-interpreted in accordance with his protagonist’s deeds: Alexander as the (still) panhellenic warrior fights against Persian wrongs blessed and is thereby protected and legitimized by Athena. This might also have been considered as a propagandistic means in order to neutralize critical Greek voices calling Alexander himself a tyrant of “Eastern style”.<sup>53</sup> Given the Greek symbolism, it is hard to believe that the episode on the discovery of the springs is “a clear reference to Anahita, the Iranian goddess of waters” whose support Alexander enjoyed, indicated by her gifts of the springs.<sup>54</sup>

This favorable portrayal of Alexander as a defender of the “Greek agenda” even in the very last stage of Callisthenes’ career as the ruler’s court historiographer is no contradiction to his

50 Hdt. VIII 55.1. Trans. A.D. Godley. Cf. A. HOLLMANN, *The Master of Signs: Signs and Interpretation of Signs in Herodotus*, Cambridge, Mass./London 2011, 85, n. 75; A.M. BOWIE, *Herodotus: Histories Book VIII*, Cambridge 2007, 141–142, 144; J.P. MIKALSON, *Herodotus and Religion in the Persian Wars*, Chapel Hill/London 2003, 73; C. DEWALD, “Reading the World: The Interpretation of Objects in Herodotus’ *Histories*”, in: R.M. Rosen and J. Farrell (eds.), *Nomodeiktēs: Greek Studies in Honor of M. Ostwald*, Ann Harbor 1993, 55–70, here 69–70; E.S. FORSTER, “Tree and Plant in Herodotus”, *CR* 56 (1942), 57–63, here 60. On the myth see W.R. AGARD, “Athens’ Choice of Athena”, *CW* 38 (1944), 14–15. On the significance of the olive tree and its oil in the Athenian ideology see J.L. SHEAR, “Prizes from Athens: The List of Panathenaic Prizes and the Sacred Oil”, *ZPE* 142 (2003), 87–108; M. BLECH, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen*, Berlin/New York 1982, 258. On the topographic aspects see G. FERRARI, “The Ancient Temple on the Acropolis of Athens”, *AJA* 106 (2002), 11–35.

51 MIKALSON, *Herodotus* (n. 50), 73. Cf. Plu. *Art.* 19.5; D.H. XIV 4. Cf. BOWIE, *Herodotus* (n. 50), 141.

52 Cf. HOLLMANN, *Master* (n. 50), 84 (“a symbol of Greekness”); R. ZIEGLER, “Zum politischen Nachwirken der Perserkriegsidee in der Zeit der Zweiten Sophistik”, in: B. Bleckmann (ed.), *Herodot und die Epoche der Perserkriege: Realitäten und Fiktionen. Kolloquium zum 80. Geburtstag von Dietmar Kienast*, Köln 2007, 151–168, here 162; BOWIE, *Herodotus* (n. 50), 118; DEWALD, “Reading” (n. 50), 69.

53 Cf. D. TEEGARDEN, *Death to Tyrants! Ancient Greek Democracy and the Struggle against Tyranny*, Princeton 2014, 140. See also in general G. SQUILLACE, *Βασιλεῖς ἢ τύραννοι. Filippo II e Alessandro Magno tra opposizione e consenso*, Soveria Mannelli 2004.

54 JAMZADEH, *Alexander* (n. 36), 128–129. It is equally hard to believe that authors such as Callisthenes or Ptolemy adapted pieces of propaganda addressing an Iranian audience and made them compatible with Greek ideas.

fate and obvious growing discomfort with Alexander's changing regal style. Callisthenes did his job as a court historiographer and glorifying Alexander formed part of this commissioned work. Apparently, he was able to differentiate between his job and personal opinion of Alexander's rule. His reservations regarding Alexander's political self-fashioning did not influence his writing.<sup>55</sup> In this respect, being a kind of "non combatant mercenary",<sup>56</sup> apparently, Callisthenes was very 'professional'. Anyway, the exact circumstances that led to his elimination and what went wrong with Alexander and him are hidden from us.<sup>57</sup>

As the speeches of the Attic orators attest,<sup>58</sup> looking back on the Persian Wars in order to evoke panhellenic strength and unity, Athenian merits, and opposition to tyranny was a major political device in these days. In this context, the image of burnt temples and damaged cult statues was a key issue.<sup>59</sup> As it is not clear whether the element of the simultaneously rising spring of water also originated from Callisthenes, it is uncertain whether it was meant to be a pointer at the salted spring next to the holy olive tree on the Athenian acropolis. This salted spring was a gift by Poseidon when he was in contest with Athena regarding the patronage over Athens. She brought the olive tree.<sup>60</sup> Thus, the tradition could also have pointed at the divine protection of Alexander's campaigns by Athena and Poseidon (besides Zeus). Crossing the Hellespont, reportedly, Alexander sacrificed to Poseidon, thereby acting as a counter-image of the Herodotean Xerxes.<sup>61</sup> In any case, the panhellenic dimension of the association of the olive oil flooding from the ground with Athena's indestructible olive tree might have been in Callisthenes' mind when he wrote the report. Thereby, regarding the various functions of olive oil in the Greek world, Alexander was also styled as an exponent of culture and civilization.<sup>62</sup>

### From Ptolemy to Arrian

Plutarch may have used Callisthenes' account naming Proxenus as the messenger who informed Alexander about the miraculous event. Arrian seems to have used a version reworked by Ptolemy, one of his main sources. Writing his own history of the campaigns and

55 Cf. DEVINE, "Alexander's" (n. 20), 97; HAMILTON, *Plutarch* (n. 17), 89; C. BEARZOT, "La tradizione su Parmenione negli storici di Alessandro", *Aevum* 61 (1987), 89–104, here 93; FLOWER, "Alexander" (n. 20), 108; T.S. BROWN, "Callisthenes and Alexander", *AJPh* 70 (1949), 225–248, here 234–235.

56 GOLAN, "Fate" (n. 37), 101.

57 Cf. G. SHRIMPTON, "The Callisthenes Enigma", in: T. Howe, E. Garvin and G. Wrightson (eds.), *Greece, Macedon and Persia: Studies in Social, Political and Military History in Honour of Waldemar Heckel*, Oxford 2015, 114–117.

58 Cf. L. PEARSON, "Historical Allusions in the Attic Orators", *CPh* 36 (1941), 209–229.

59 Isoc. 4.155–156; Lycurg. 1.81. Cf. R. KOUSSER, "Destruction and Memory on the Athenian Acropolis", *The Art Bulletin* 91 (2009), 263–282, here 269–270; M.M. MILES, "Burnt Temples in the Landscape of the Past", in: C. Pieper and J. Ker (eds.), *Valuing the Past in the Greco-Roman World: Proceedings from the Penn-Leiden Colloquia on Ancient Values VII*, Leiden 2014, 111–145, here 126–133; M.M. MILES, *Art as Plunder: The Ancient Origins of Debate about Cultural Property*, Cambridge 2008, 26.

60 Hdt. V 83; VIII 55; Paus. I 26.5; I 27.2. Poseidon brought a salt spring and a war horse. According to BOWIE, *Herodotus* (n. 50), 144, the wilder forces of nature represented by his gifts were conquered by the olive as an exponent of the more civilized culturing forces.

61 Arr. *An.* I 11.6–7. Cf. Hdt. VII 192.

62 Cf. S. MÜLLER, "Ptolemaios I. und das Öl Wunder (Arr. an. 4,15,8)", in: V. Iliescu and D. Nedu (eds.), *Graecia, Roma, Barbaricum: In memoriam Vasile Lica*, Galați 2014, 175–197. On olive oil in the Greek culture see M.-C. AMOURETTI, *Le pain et l'huile dans la Grèce antique: de l'aire au moulin*, Paris 1986.

thereby showing himself at his best, Ptolemy probably exchanged Proxenus with himself.<sup>63</sup> As Brian Bosworth has shown, his role as informant with direct access to Alexander stresses Ptolemy's important status in the Macedonian political structures.<sup>64</sup> In addition, his participation in the miraculous incident foreshadows his career as one of Alexander's successors. According to Ptolemaic ideology, he was also predestined to rule and spread Macedonian and Greek culture. Such a piece of propaganda suits Ptolemy's tendency as a historiographer, to style himself as Alexander's right-hand man and ideal heir.<sup>65</sup> Ptolemy also seems to have given his account a panhellenic coloring with Herodotean undertones.<sup>66</sup> Thus, he seems to have often relied on Callisthenes' *Praxeis Alexandrou* adapting the official version.<sup>67</sup> The Oxus scene will have been in accordance with Alexander's image in Ptolemy's historiography. In addition, he used it as a setting for his own appearance as Alexander's close confidant, hence participating in his glory.

Arrian might have decided to incorporate this specific episode into his *Anabasis* because he was able to decipher its symbolism.<sup>68</sup> Being an exponent of the Greek intellectuals of the Second Sophistic regarding their *paideia* as their symbolic capital,<sup>69</sup> he was familiar with literary allusions being himself eager to prove his thorough knowledge of the Greek literary tradition, especially of Herodotus and Xenophon.<sup>70</sup> The glorifying image of Alexander suited his own portrayal of the Macedonian ruler. In addition, the panhellenic dimension of this episode with its probable association with Athens, Athena, and the Acropolis might have had a particular appeal to him. The Persian Wars and the Macedonian campaigns were key elements of the commemoration of the Greek past in the Second Sophistic, hence part of the major symbols of the self-identity of Greek intellectuals under Roman rule.<sup>71</sup> Regarding Roman ideological and propagandistic interests, the paralleling of the Persians and the Parthians was not far to seek.<sup>72</sup> Comparable to its role in the Greek panhellenic discourse in the fourth century, the Persian sack of Athens in 480 BC was a significant theme in the

63 Cf. MÜLLER, "Ölwunder" (n. 62), 175–176; HAMILTON, *Plutarch* (n. 17), 158; H. STRASBURGER, *Ptolemaios und Alexander*, Leipzig 1934, 41. Contra: H. TONNET, *Recherches sur Arrien: Sa Personnalité et ses Écrits Atticistes*, I: *Texte*, Amsterdam 1988, 185–186 crediting Aristobulus with the story.

64 Cf. BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 4), 108, 111.

65 Cf. MÜLLER, *Argeaden* (n. 1), 47–48; T. HOWE, "Introducing Ptolemy: Alexander and the Persian Gates", in: W. Heckel, S. Müller and G. Wrightson (eds.), *The Many Faces of War in Antiquity*, Cambridge 2015, 166–195; T. HOWE, "Alexander in India: Ptolemy as Near Eastern Historiographer", in: T. Howe and J. Reames (eds.), *Macedonian Legacies: Studies in Ancient Macedonian History and Culture in Honor of Eugene N. Borza*, Claremont 2008, 215–233.

66 Cf. BÖHME, "Perserbild" (n. 20), 177–180.

67 Cf. f.e. Arr. *An.* I 11.6–8; III 18.11–12; III 3.3–6.

68 Cf. Paus. I 26.5; I 27.2 on the myth of the olive tree and the spring of salted water. Pausanias was Arrian's contemporary.

69 Cf. T. WHITMARSH, *The Second Sophistic*, Oxford 2005.

70 Arr. *An.* III 30.8; VII 13.1–6; VII 16.7 (cf. Hdt. I 30–33); Arr. *Peripl. M. Eux.* 1–2. Cf. MÜLLER, *Alexander* (n. 20), 128–130; WHITMARSH, *Second* (n. 69), 48; A.B. BOSWORTH, "Arrian's Literary Development", *CQ* 22 (1972), 163–185, here 167.

71 Cf. ZIEGLER, "Zum politischen" (n. 52), 162, 165; E.L. BOWIE, "Greeks and their Past in the Second Sophistic", *P&P* 46 (1970), 3–41, here 7–8, 14.

72 Cf. ZIEGLER, "Zum politischen" (n. 52), 151–168.

cultural memory, too.<sup>73</sup> The imagination of the destruction created a specific memorial landscape in which the past was visualised, idealized, and artificially kept alive.<sup>74</sup> Such association served “as a means to legitimacy, and to self-promotion as an inheritor of the legacy of the old world”.<sup>75</sup> This was true for the writers of the Second Sophistic as well as for the Roman emperors. Arrian had personal ties to Athens, one of the prime *lieux de mémoire* of Greek intellectuals in the Second Sophistic.<sup>76</sup> Athens clearly dominated the perception of the Greek cultural legacy.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, Athens had a specific meaning to Arrian’s emperor Hadrian whom he depicts as his close acquaintance in his *Periplus Ponti Euxini*.<sup>78</sup> The philhellenic patron of Greek culture was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries and had received both Athenian citizenship and an archonship (in 112).<sup>79</sup> Hadrian posed as a benefactor of Athens and created a visible impression of his presence at the city.<sup>80</sup> Thus, in Arrian’s associational frame, the imperial Hadrianic present was harmoniously conflated with the Greek past represented by Athens’ glory in the fifth century and the Macedonian victories in the fourth century BC.<sup>81</sup>

73 Cf. MILES, “Burnt” (n. 59), 137.

74 Paus. I 27.6; X 35.2. Cf. MILES, “Burnt” (n. 59), 135–137; KOUSSER, “Destruction” (n. 59), 270. On Pausanias’ Hadrianic Athens, see K.W. ARAFAT, *Pausanias’ Greece: Ancient Artists and Roman Rulers*, Cambridge 1996, 184–186. Cf. M. PRETZLER, “Pausanias and Oral Tradition”, *CQ* 55 (2005), 235–249, here 247. Cf. W. HUTTON, *Describing Greece: Landscape and Literature in the Periegesis of Pausanias*, Cambridge 2005.

75 ARAFAT, *Pausanias*’ (n. 74), 162.

76 A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian’s History of Alexander*, I: *Commentary on Books I–III*, Oxford 1981, 317. See also E. KOULAKIOTIS, “Arrian the Priest”, in: E. Koulakiotis and T. Howe (eds.), *Political Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean (6<sup>th</sup> c. BC – 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD)*, Cambridge 2017 (forthcoming); BOSWORTH, “Arrian’s” (n. 70), 172.

77 Cf. PRETZLER, “Pausanias” (n. 74), 238.

78 Arr. *Peripl.M.Eux.* 1.1–4. It is uncertain whether Hadrian and Arrian were that close friends as Arrian suggests.

79 Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.4. Cf. A. GALIMBERTI, “Hadrian, Eleusis, and the Beginnings of Christian Apologetics”, in: M. Rizzi (ed.), *Hadrian and the Christians*, Berlin/New York 2010, 71–83; A. GALIMBERTI, *Adriano e l’ideologia del principato*, Rome 2007, 121–125, 190; A.R. BIRLEY, *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor*, London/New York 1997, 58–65; R. SYME, “The Career of Arrian”, *HSPH* 86 (1982), 181–211, here 185; J.H. OLIVER, “Roman Emperors and Athens”, *Historia* 30 (1981), 412–423, here 419. Athens and Eleusis also celebrated a festival for Hadrian’s dead beloved Antinous. Also Arrian received an archonship at Athens cf. P.A. STADTER, *Arrian of Nicomedia*, Chapel Hill 1980, 14–17. On the significance of Athens in the Second Sophistic see C. HEUSCH, *Die Macht der memoria: Die Noctes Atticae des Aulus Gellius im Licht der Erinnerungskultur des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.*, Berlin/New York 2011, 289; BOWIE, “Greeks” (n. 71), 28–29. On Arrian’s career see C. LEROUGE-COHEN, “Arrien”, in: J. Leclant (ed.), *Dictionnaire de l’Antiquité*, Paris 2005, 234–235; G. WIRTH, *Studien zur Alexandergeschichte*, Darmstadt 1985, 14–50, 210–250.

80 Paus. I 20.7. Cf. ARAFAT, *Pausanias*’ (n. 71), 170–172, 184; A. DEMANDT, *Alexander der Große: Leben und Legende*, Munich 2009, 4; GALIMBERTI, *Adriano* (n. 79), 136–137. On Hadrian’s sacral building activity at Athens, cf. A.S. BENJAMIN, “The Altars of Hadrian in Athens and Hadrian’s Panhellenic Program”, *Hesperia* 32 (1963), 57–86.

81 Cf. S. MÜLLER, “Arrian, the Second Sophistic, Xerxes, and the Statues of Harmodios and Aristogeiton”, in: R. Rollinger and S. Svärd (eds.), *Cross-Cultural Studies in Near Eastern History and Literature*, Münster 2016, 173–202. Perhaps, there was also a hint at Hadrian’s Athenian Oil Decree implied. With a *terminus post quem* of 126/127 AD, it regulated the sale of olive oil produced in Athens. According to M.T. BOATWRIGHT, *Hadrian and the Cities of the Roman Empire*, Princeton 2000, 91, “Hadrian’s greater

## Results

As Callisthenes used the motif of the miraculous spring greeting Alexander as the legitimate predestined ruler twice, the tradition about the spring of oil at the Oxus may well have originated from him. In Herodotean and panhellenic colors, it will have alluded to the legendary regrowth of Athena's holy olive tree burnt by Xerxes' troops. It is unclear whether the additional spring of water formed part of the original version. The difference between Arrian's and Plutarch's version may be due to the fact that Arrian drew from the reworked version of Ptolemy. The latter adapted the basic facts glorifying Alexander and additionally staged himself as the messenger. Curtius who knew Ptolemy's work may have read his version but chose to create his own (negative) variant.<sup>82</sup> Living in a time when the commemoration of the Greek past and the Macedonian campaign boomed, Arrian will have understood well the panhellenic codes of the episode. Regarding his cultural and intellectual background, for him it made sense, too.

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attention to the matters covered by the Oil Decree may pertain to his purported revision of Athens' ancestral laws".

82 Curt. IX 5.21. His characterization of Ptolemy's work seems to be to the point. Probably, he knew the work directly. Cf. MÜLLER, *Alexander* (n. 20), 83; J.E. ATKINSON, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni Book 10*, Oxford 2009, 8, 21, 26; BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 8), 75, 78 (contra: L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York 1960, 190).



# The subtle and red line between reality and fiction: Alexander and his ‘Propaganda Machine’

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## About the Author

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## Abstract

It is hard to investigate Alexander's propaganda in presence of late authors who narrate the Asiatic expedition. Nevertheless, some episodes remark the border between reality and fiction bringing to light Alexander's propaganda machine orchestrated by the king personally or through his entourage. This paper focuses on this topic seeking to show when Alexander manipulated the information imposing ‘his own version’, or suppressing the dissenting voices.

It is hard to investigate Alexander's propaganda in presence of late authors as Diodorus, Plutarch, Curtius Rufus, Arrian and Justin who sporadically cite their sources, and mix up contemporary culture and personal opinions with the original accounts. In these writings, the original voices and the ideological messages have inevitably changed, modified or sometimes fully covered or suppressed. Therefore it is very problematic to distinguish what is true and what is false, and to verify when and where fiction, personal belief, free interpretation begin.<sup>1</sup>

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\* I would like to thank the colleagues Krzysztof Nawotka and Agnieszka Wojciechowska for inviting me to the conference and for their kindly hospitality.

1 On Alexander's historians: L. Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, Chicago, 1960; M.A. Levi, *Introduzione ad Alessandro Magno*, Milan 1977; P. Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*:



The format of this conference, well organized by Krzysztof Nawotka and Agnieszka Wojciechowska with a long and intense debate after the lecture of every paper, gives me the opportunity to return to propaganda themes concerning Alexander the Great and take in account the interesting remarks risen during the discussion.

Firstly, I want to clarify what is 'propaganda' (and what it literally means) and when a message and/or a gesture can be recognized as 'propagandistic'. According to the Cambridge Dictionary 'propaganda' is: "information, ideas, opinions, or images, often only giving one part of an argument, that are broadcast, published, or in some other way spread with the intention of influencing people's opinions".<sup>2</sup> Starting from this definition, we can say that every propagandistic message and gesture is based on:

- Reliability of the propagandistic message;
- Accessibility and of the propagandistic message by the recipients;
- Prompt understanding of the propagandistic message by the recipients.

Propaganda supports politics and has an immediate effect on the recipients for image and fame of the author. Through words and gestures it falsifies, manipulates or exploits the truth in order to influence the public opinion (common people, élites, army, etc.), create a false belief, gain consensus receiving general support.<sup>3</sup>

Although all the sources on Alexander are later, sometimes we can find in them strains of the king's propaganda. It emerges more distinctly when we can identify and select an ideological theme, follow its use and evolution over time, compare reality and fiction: i.e. what Alexander said with what he really did.

During Alexander's Asiatic expedition, some propagandistic themes announce, accompany and justify political and military goals. They are modified, fully replaced or completely neglected when Alexander's political and military purposes change.<sup>4</sup> We can mention, for instance, the 'revenge theme'. It is coined and used by Alexander from the beginning of his reign but is adapted to different circumstances according to three different and temporary goals: accession to the throne in 336;<sup>5</sup> beginning of the Asiatic expedition in 334; prosecution of the war after the final success in 331. So, we can see that the revenge is employed in three different ways:

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*Callisthène, Onésicrite, Néarque, Ptolémée, Aristobule*, Paris 1984; N.G.L. Hammond, *Sources for Alexander the Great: An Analysis of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's Anabasis Alexandrou*, Cambridge 1993. More recently see also A. Zambrini, "The Historians of Alexander the Great", in: J. Marincola, *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, Malden, MA/Oxford 2010, 210–220; S. Müller, *Alexander, Makedonien und Persien*, Berlin 2014, 29–113.

2 <http://dictionary.cambridge.org>, s.v. "Propaganda".

3 On the Propaganda features in the ancient and modern world: M. SORDI (ed.), *Propaganda e persuasione occulta nell'antichità*, Milan 1974; M. SORDI (ed.), *Storiografia e propaganda*, Milan 1975; M. SORDI (ed.), *I canali della propaganda nel mondo antico*, Milan 1976; M. SORDI (ed.), *Aspetti dell'opinione pubblica nel mondo antico*, Milan 1978; W. LIPPMANN, *L'opinione pubblica*, Rome 2000 (original English edition: 1921); S. BENTIVEGNA (ed.), *Mediare la realtà: Mass media, sistema politico e opinione pubblica*, Milan 2004; P. STRINGA, *Blogdemocrazia: Come si forma oggi l'opinione pubblica*, Rome 2011.

4 See: G. SQUILLACE, *Basileis o Tyrannoi: Filippo II e Alessandro Magno tra opposizione e consenso*, Soveria Mannelli 2004.

5 Except where differently indicated, all the dates are BCE.

- Revenge in the name of Philip: 336 after Philip's death;
- Revenge in the name of the Greeks against the Persians (from 334 until the battle of Gaugamela in 331 and burning of Persepolis in 330);
- Revenge in the name of Darius against the regicide Bessus (331: after Gaugamela).<sup>6</sup>

Some episodes of the Asiatic expedition seems to have a propagandistic feature, because they show all the components considered above. The first of them is the Gordian knot.<sup>7</sup> The story is very famous and carefully investigated by the scholars.<sup>8</sup> After the victory at Granicus in 334 and the conquest of Asia Minor, Alexander went to Gordium in Phrygia where in the temple of Zeus was the wagon of the old Gordius, father of the king Midas. The local people told a story about it: whosoever loosed the wagon bound fast to its yoke with bark of the cornel-tree was destined to become king of the whole world. Alexander entered Gordium on the eve of a new struggle against the Persians. Curtius Rufus remarks that he walked into the temple alone. Outside many Phrygians and Macedonians waited for the result ("circa regem erat et Phrygum turba et Macedonum, illa expectatione suspensa, haec sollicita ex temeraria regis fiducia").<sup>9</sup> Curtius Rufus and Arrian pointed out the negative consequences of a failure within the army: according to Curtius a failure could be seen as a negative presage (in omen verteretur inritum inceptum); according to Arrian, the failure could provoke popular unrest (ἐς τοὺς πολλοὺς κίνησιν ἐργάσεται).<sup>10</sup> The propagandistic feature of the episode emerges particularly from Arrian according to which Alexander cut the tangle of knots by the sword, but affirmed he has loosened them (λελύσθαι ἔφη). First, the closest friends believed that the king was successful; then thunder and lightning in the night confirmed Alexander's positive version. The day after, Alexander himself credited his own version sacrificing to the Gods, who had revealed the signs and helped him to undo the knot. In this way he reaffirmed openly the success, that gave him the role of 'king of Asia' and consequently announced a new victory against the Persians.<sup>11</sup>

Even if Aristobulus (in Plutarch and Arrian) reported Alexander's version supporting the propagandistic message coined by his king,<sup>12</sup> some people knew the truth, that we find in all

6 On this topic, see SQUILLACE, *Basileis* (n. 5), 18–21; 62–73; G. SQUILLACE, "Consensus Strategies under Philip and Alexander: The Revenge Theme", in: E. Carney and D. Ogden (eds.), *Philip II and Alexander the Great: Father and Son, Lives and Afterlives*, New York/Oxford 2010, 69–80.

7 Plu. *Alex.* 18.1–4; Arr. *An.* II 3; Curt. III 1.14–18; Just. XI 7; Marsyas of Pella or Philippi, *FGrHist* 136, F 4, *ap. Schol. E. Hipp.* 671.

8 On this episode: E.A. FREDRICKSMEYER, "Alexander, Midas and the Oracle of Gordion", *CPh* 56 (1961), 160–168; P. FREI, "Der Wagen von Gordion", *MH* 29 (1972), 110–123; L.E. ROLLER, "Midas and the Gordian Knot", *ClAnt* 3 (1984), 256–271; B. BURKE, "Anatolian Origins of the Gordian Knot Legend", *GRBS* 42 (2001), 255–261; M. ZAHRT, "Alexander in Gordion und die Entstehung einer Legende", in: S. Böhm and K.-V. von Eickstedt (eds.), *Ithakē: Festschrift für Jörg Schäfer zum 75. Geburtstag am 25. April 2001*, Würzburg 2001, 203–206; SQUILLACE, *Basileis* (n. 5), 144–147; G. SQUILLACE, "Propaganda macedone e spedizione asiatica. Responsi oracolari e vaticini nella spedizione di Alessandro tra verità e manipolazione (nota a Polyæn, *Strat.* IV 3.14)", *LEC* 73 (2005), 303–318, part. 312–313.

9 Curt. III 1.17.

10 Curt. III 1.17; Arr. *An.* II 3.7.

11 Arr. *An.* II 3; Curt. III 1.14–18.

12 Aristobul. *FGrH* 139 F7a–b = BNJ 139 F7a–b, *ap. Plu. Alex.* 18.4 and Arr. *An.* II 3.7. On Aristobulus: H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischen Grundlage*, II: *Prosopographie*, Munich 1926, no. 121; Pearson, *Lost* (n. 2), 150–187; Levi, *Introduzione* (n. 2), 65–83; Pédech, *Historiens* (n. 2), 331–

the sources. Immediately or thereafter, they diffused it and narrated the episode deprived of every ideological and propagandistic manipulation, pointing out that Alexander cut the tangle of knots by the sword and consequently failed to loose it and gain the kingship over Asia.<sup>13</sup>

In the Gordian episode we find all the components of a propaganda gesture: author, content, recipient, goal, channel(s) for the dissemination of the message:

*Author:*

Alexander himself produces the propagandistic message. His entourage, of which Aristobulus was member, accepts and diffuses it.

*Content:*

Alexander has loosen the knot: he will gain the kinship of Asia.

*Recipient:*

Phrygians and Macedonians who waited for the notice outside the temple;  
Army quartered in some distance from the Gordium.

*Goal:*

To support the army on the eve of the second struggle against the Persians announcing a new victory against the enemy.

*Channel(s):*

Alexander himself immediately after the exit from the temple in front of the Phrygians and Macedonians;

Alexander himself the day after in front of his army through the public thanksgiving sacrifices to the Gods;

His entourage.

The propagandistic message of Alexander at Gordium is not isolated but seems to be a part of an ideological strategy. It was based on repeated messages and gestures in many cases linked to the religion. During the Asiatic expedition, Alexander frequently consults oracles and visits sanctuaries to obtain prophecies, and asks the seers who followed him in Asia – above all Aristander the Telmessian – to sacrifice to the Gods in order to predict the future.<sup>14</sup> In all the episodes that we find in the sources, procedure and circumstances are analogous (eve of fights or strenuous sieges), as well as the responses – always positive – from sanctuaries and seers:

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405; W. Heckel, *Who's Who in the Age of Alexander the Great: Prosopography of Alexander's Empire*, Malden, MA/Oxford 2006, 46; Zambrini, "Historians" (n. 2), 218–219; A. Moretti, "Introduzione ad Aristobulo di Cassandrea", in: V. Costa (ed.), *Tradizione e trasmissione degli storici greci frammentari: Atti del Terzo Workshop Internazionale*, Rome 2011, Tivoli 2012, 209–235; F. Pownall, "Aristoboulos of Kassandreia. Biographical Essay (139)", in: BNJ; Müller, *Alexander* (n. 2), 95–98.

13 Plu. *Alex.* 18.3; Curt. III 1.14–18; Arr. *An.* II 3.7; Just. XI 7.

14 See Squillace, "Propaganda" (n. 9), 303–318. On Aristander: Berve, *Alexanderreich* (n. 13), II, no. 117; F. Landucci, "L'indovino Aristandro e l'eredità dei Telmessii", in: M. Sordi (ed.), *La profezia nel mondo antico*, Milan 1993, 123–138; Heckel, *Who's* (n. 13), 45–46.

|   |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| 335 Delphi:<br>Alexander<br>consulted the<br>oracle | Positive<br>response:<br>Alexander will<br>be 'invictus'.  | Army stationed<br>at Corinth                          | On the eve of<br>the first fight<br>against the<br>Persians   | Plu. Alex. 14.6–<br>7   |
| 335 in Pieria                                       | Positive<br>prophecy of<br>Aristander  |   | On the eve of<br>the beginning of<br>the Asiatic<br>strateia. | Plu. Alex. 14.8–<br>9;<br>Arr. An. I 11.2   |
| 334: Ilium  | Positive<br>prophecy of<br>Aristander  |   | On the eve of<br>the first fight<br>against the<br>Persians   | D.S. XVII 17–<br>18.1   |
| 334: siege of<br>Halicarnassus                      | Positive<br>prophecy   |   |   | Arr. An. I 25   |
| 333: Gordium  | Positive<br>prophecy   | Army quartered<br>more distant<br>from the<br>Gordium | On the eve of<br>the second fight<br>against the<br>Persians  | Plu. Alex. 18.1–<br>4; Arr. An. II 3;<br>Curt. III 1.14–<br>18; Just. XI 7;<br>Marsyas of<br>Pella or Philippi<br>FGrH 136 F4,<br>ap. Schol. E.<br>Hipp. 671. |
| 332: siege of<br>Tyros                              | Positive<br>prophecy   |   |   | Plu. Alex. 25.1–<br>3   |
| 332 Siwah:<br>Alexander<br>consulted the<br>oracle  | Positive<br>response:<br>Alexander is<br>son of Zeus and<br>will success<br>over the<br>Persians | Army stationed<br>at Memphi                           | On the eve of<br>the third fight<br>against the<br>Persians   | Callisth. FGrH<br>124 F14; ap.<br>Str. XVII 1.43;<br>Plu. Alex.<br>26.12–27.9;<br>Curt. IV 7.25;<br>Just. XI 11.7   |
| 331: Gaugamela                                      | Positive<br>prophecy   |   | On the eve of<br>the third fight<br>against the<br>Persians   | Arr. An. III 7.6  |

It's not a coincidence that oracles and prophecies are positive and perfectly in accordance with Alexander's purposes and will. In some circumstances the king does not hesitate to manipulate the truth. This procedure is attested in 335 at Delphi, where Alexander forced Pythia to give out a positive response;<sup>15</sup> in 333 at Gordium where – as said – he coined 'his truth';<sup>16</sup> in 329 when, according to Curtius Rufus, Alexander was going to attack the Scythians. In this circumstance, the seer Aristander obtained from the sacrifices a negative response that he confided to Erigyius, an Alexander's friend, before his king. Alexander, angry with Aristander for divulging it, forced him to instruct new sacrifices. This time the seer obtained a positive response and informed the king, who immediately disclosed it among the army.<sup>17</sup>

### Against the truth, against the dissent

If in 333 Alexander coined and disseminate his truth on the Gordian knot and in 329 he obliged Aristander to show a positive response about the next Scythian expedition, in two other circumstances we find the king as author of propagandistic message aimed to cover the truth or to suffocate the dissenting voices.

The first episode deals with the letter of Darius. The Persian king sent it in 332 at Marathus some months after the defeat of Issus.<sup>18</sup> We find the best account in Arrian and Curtius Rufus, who probably used the same sources. According to Arrian, Darius in his letter, recalled the friendship and alliance treaty between Philip and Artaxerses. Using injustice (ἀδικία), Philip did not renew the treaty with the successor of Artaxerses Arses. Alexander followed the father and moved war to Darius in Asia. After the start of the war, Darius, as a king (βασιλεύς), asked another king to release his mother, wife and sons and to sign a new friendship and alliance treaty. Alexander replied with a letter in which he recalled the offences of the Persians to the Greeks and, showing himself as the leader of the Greeks (ἐγὼ δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἡγεμὼν), said he started the war to punish the ancient and recent guilt of the Persians. The Persians – he remarked – had supported Perinthus against Philip and had taken part in Philip's murder. Darius, in particular, had become illegally king, after murdering Arses with the aid of Bagoas, and had sought to organize in Greece revolts against Macedonia using corruption. These acts had justified the military expedition in Asia. Becoming 'master of the whole Asia' (ἐμοῦ τῆς Ἀσίας ἀπάσης κυρίου ὄντος) after two victories against the enemy, Alexander exhorted Darius to recognize him as 'king of Asia' (παρ' ἐμὲ, ὡς πρὸς βασιλέα τῆς Ἀσίας) or to continue the war.<sup>19</sup>

15 Plu. *Alex.* 14.6–7.

16 See above.

17 Curt. VII 7.9–29 but also Arr. *An.* IV 4.3; see SQUILLACE, "Propaganda" (n. 9), 316.

18 On the letters of Darius to Alexander (two or three) sent after Issus, see: G.T. Griffith, "The letter of Darius at Arrian 2,14", *PCPhS* 14 (1968), 33–48; F. Sisti, "Le proposte di pace di Dario ad Alessandro fra aneddoto e verità storica", *RCCM* 36 (1994), 209–215; E.F. Bloedow, "Diplomatic Negotiations between Darius and Alexander: Historical Implications of the First Phase at Marathus in Phoenicia in 333/332 B.C.", *AHB* 9 (1995), 93–110; G. Squillace, "La voce del vinto? La lettera di Dario III ad Alessandro Magno a Marato nel 332 a.C. Nota a Diodoro XVII 39.1–2", *MediterrAnt* 9 (2006), 355–365.

19 Arr. *An.* II 14.1–9; see A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, I: *Commentary on Books I–III*, Oxford 1981, 227–231; but also Curt. IV 1.7–9; see J.E. ATKINSON, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus's Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 3 and 4*, Amsterdam 1980, 277–278.

In his letter, Darius used an arrogant tone inappropriate for a king defeated twice. If his aim was to obtain a new friendship and alliance treaty, his tone and his complaints against Philip and Alexander was not useful to it. Darius' letter allowed Alexander to recall in his reply's reply his propagandistic themes such as the freedom of the Greeks, the injustice of the Persians, the revenge war, Alexander once again could justify his Asiatic expedition and accredit himself as master and king of Asia after two military successes. The contents of Darius' letter is useful to Alexander's goals and perfect to recall Alexander's slogan: too perfect to be believed fully reliable! In this case we have the support of Diodorus who, mentioning a different (and independent) version, relates Darius' letter and the peace proposals too. According to him, the king offered the territories until the Halys river, if Alexander had been his friend, and many goods for the release of the prisoners. Diodorus does not mention Alexander's reply, but reminds that the Macedonian king hid Darius' letter and showed to the council of the friends a false document, that preserved his own interests. Through this stratagem, Darius' peace proposals were rejected.<sup>20</sup> In this case, Alexander, probably through an experienced rhetorician as Anaximenes of Lampsakos,<sup>21</sup> composed a new letter characterized by arrogance and charges with no concrete and advantageous peace proposals, that we find in Curtius Rufus and Arrian's accounts. If the refusal of the friends was obvious before an arrogant letter, probably their reaction had been different before Darius's authentic document. There was the concrete risk that the favourable peace proposals could be accepted and consequently stop the war. Therefore, only changing the letter's contents, only showing the enemy, just defeated twice, arrogant and imposing his will, Alexander could excite his friends' hate against the Persians and their king, prosecute the war and conquer the whole Persian empire, according to his project. The false letter stratagem orchestrated by Alexander probably with the aid of Anaximenes was efficacious. The friends not only refused these first peace proposals, but repelled also the following and very advantageous offers of Darius.<sup>22</sup>

If in 332 Alexander through a stratagem manipulates an authentic document creating 'his truth', and building a propagandistic act, in a second circumstance he suffocates the truth through the censure. It happens in 330 some time after the murder of Philotas and Parmenion. Just the death of the two officials, very popular within the army, had caused a big emotion within the soldiers. Because a latent dissent had risen within them, Alexander sought to suffocate it. According to Curtius Rufus, the king, through the deception, exhorted his

20 D.S. XVII 39.1–2: Δαρειὸς δὲ διανύσας εἰς Βαβυλῶνα καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν Ἰσσοῦ μάχης διασωζομένους ἀναλαβὼν οὐκ ἔπεσε τῷ φρονήματι, καίπερ μεγάλη περιτεπτωκῶς συμφορᾷ, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἔγραψεν ἀνθρωπίνως φέρειν τὴν εὐτυχίαν καὶ τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους ἀλλάξασθαι χρημάτων πλῆθος λαβόντα· προσετίθει δὲ καὶ τῆς Ἀσίας τὴν ἐντὸς Ἄλριοις χώραν καὶ πόλεις συγχωρήσειν, εἰάν βουληθῇ γενέσθαι φίλος. ὁ δ' Ἀλέξανδρος συναγαγὼν τοὺς φίλους καὶ τὴν μὲν ἀληθινὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀποκρυψάμενος, ἑτέραν δὲ γράψας ῥέπουσαν πρὸς τὸ ἑαυτῷ συμφέρον προσήνεγκε τοῖς συνέδροις καὶ τοὺς πρέσβεις ἀπράκτους ἐξάπέστειλεν. See L. PRANDI, *Diodoro Siculo: Biblioteca storica, Libro XVII. Commento storico*, Milan 2016, *comm. ad loc.*, 62–63; but also SQUILLACE, "Voce" (n. 19), 355–365.

21 See: G. Squillace, "La 'costruzione' di un casus belli per Filippo II e Alessandro Magno", *Athenaeum* 100 (2012), 111–125, part. 121–125. On Anaximenes: Berve, *Alexanderreich* (n. 13), II, no. 71; Pearson, *Lost* (n. 2), 243–246; Levi, *Introduzione* (n. 2), Pédech, *Historiens* (n. 2), 92–93; Heckel, *Who's* (n. 13), 27.

22 A second letter came during or after Tyre's siege or after: Arr. *An.* II 25, but also Plu. *Alex.* 29.7–8; Curt. IV 5.1 ff.; Just. XI 12.9–10; a third before the battle of Gaugamela: D.S. XVII 54.1–6; Curt. IV 11.5–6; Just. XI 12.10–11; see: SQUILLACE, "La voce del vinto?" (19), 363.

soldiers to write to their families in Greece, because later they could not do it. Then he took all the letters, read them, discovered the opponents and posted them away from them to prevent the development of the opposition within the army.<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, despite the sources are later and deform the truth with their personal beliefs, in some cases it is possible to discover in them the authentic propagandistic strategies adopted by Alexander to promote and preserve his name within the army and carry on with his military plans. The procedure, that sees Alexander himself as author of messages/gestures, and his army as the recipient, is always the same:

- Alexander covers the truth coining a ‘new truth’ personally or through his entourage
- Alexander covers the truth suffocating the dissent.

In fabricating his propaganda Alexander has the support of historians such as Aristobulus (but also Callisthenes),<sup>24</sup> rhetoricians, such as Anaximenes, seers, such as Aristander, who gave substance and reliability to messages and symbolic gestures and contributed to creating the consent.

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23 Curt. VII 2.35–37: “Alexander, quos libere mortem Parmenionis conquestos esse conpererat, separandos a cetero exercitu ratus in unam cohortem secrevit ducemque his Leonidam dedit, et ipsum Parmenioni quondam intima familiaritate coniunctum. Fere iidem erant, quos alioquin rex habuerat invisos. Nam cum experiri vellet militum animos, admonuit, qui litteras in Macedoniam ad suos scripsisset, iis, quos ipse mittebat, perlaturis cum fide traderet. Simpliciter ad necessarios suos quisque scripserat, quae sentiebat: aliis gravis erat, plerisque non ingrata militia. Ita et agentium gratias [et querentium] litterae exceptae sunt et qui forte taedium laboris per litteras erant questi. Hanc seorsus cohortem a ceteris tendere ignominiae causa iubet, fortitudine usurus in bello, libertatem linguae ab auribus credulis remoturus”. See ATKINSON, *Commentary*, 259–260; SQUILLACE, *Basileis* (n. 5), 91. Diodorus refers the same version, recalling that Alexander collected the opponents in a special battalion that he sent to remote lands: D.S. XVII 80.4; see PRANDI, *Diodoro* (n. 21), *comm. ad loc.*, 135. On the episode see also: Polyæn. IV 3.9 and Just. XII 5.4–8.

24 On Callisthenes: Berve, *Alexanderreich* (n. 13), II, nr. 408; Pearson, *Lost* (n. 2), 22–49; Levi, *Introduzione* (n. 2), 19–28; Pédech, *Historiens* (n. 2), 15–69; L. Prandi, *Callistene: uno storico tra Aristotele e i re macedoni*, Milan 1985; A.M. Devine, “Alexander’s Propaganda Machine: Callisthenes as the Ultimate Source for Arrian, *Anabasis* 1–3”, in: I. Worthington (ed.), *Ventures into Greek History*, Oxford 1994, 89–104; Heckel, *Who’s* (n. 13), 76–77; Zambrini, “Historians” (n. 2), 219–220; Müller, *Alexander* (n. 2), 44–58.



# I Maccabees and the Alexander Romance

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The first book of Maccabees begins with the overview of the Hellenistic history until a wicked shoot (ρίιζα ἀμαρτωλός), Antiochos IV arises:

Καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τὸ πατάξαι Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Φιλίππου Μακεδόνα, ὃς ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ γῆς Χεττιμ, καὶ ἐπάταξεν τὸν Δαρεῖον βασιλέα Περσῶν καὶ Μήδων καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν ἀντ' αὐτοῦ, πρότερον ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα. καὶ συνεστήσατο πολέμους πολλοὺς καὶ ἐκράτησεν ὀχυρωμάτων καὶ ἔσφαξεν βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς· καὶ διῆλθεν ἕως ἄκρων τῆς γῆς καὶ ἔλαβεν σκῦλα πλήθους ἐθνῶν. καὶ ἡσύχασεν ἡ γῆ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὑψώθη, καὶ ἐπῆρθη ἡ καρδιά αὐτοῦ. καὶ συνῆξεν δύναμιν ἰσχυράν σφόδρα καὶ ἤρξεν χωρῶν ἐθνῶν καὶ τυράννων, καὶ ἐγένοντο αὐτῷ εἰς φόρον. καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὴν κοίτην καὶ ἔγνω ὅτι ἀποθνήσκει. καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ τοὺς ἐνδόξους τοὺς συνεκτρόφους αὐτοῦ ἐκ νεότητος καὶ διεῖλεν αὐτοῖς τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ ἔτι αὐτοῦ ζῶντος. καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν Ἀλέξανδρος ἔτη δώδεκα καὶ ἀπέθανεν. καὶ ἐπεκράτησαν οἱ παῖδες αὐτοῦ, ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ τόπῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπέθεντο πάντες διαδήματα μετὰ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτῶν ὀπίσω αὐτῶν ἔτι πολλὰ καὶ ἐπλήθυναν κακὰ ἐν τῇ γῇ (1.1–9).

Or in Goldstein's translation with a tentative restoration of the first one and a half sentence missing in the surviving text:

“[This is a history of events which began in the era of the Hellenistic dynasty. The dynasty had its origins] 1 in the time of Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian. This Alexander marched out from the land of Chettim, smote . . . and smote Darius, king of the Persians and the Medes, and became king in his place and thus the first to rule over the Hellenistic empire. 2 Thereupon he waged many campaigns, conquering strongholds and slaying kings of the earth 3 until he reached the farthest point of the earth. He despoiled many nations, until the world lay quiet under his rule. Becoming proud and haughty, 4 he raised a very strong army and with it ruled over provinces, nations, and dynasts, all of whom paid him tribute. 5 Then, falling ill, he recognized that he was dying. 6 He summoned his high officers, men who had been raised with him from early childhood, and divided his kingdom among them while he was still alive. 7 So died Alexander after a reign of twelve years. 8 His officers then took power, each in his own territory. 9 They all assumed royal diadems after his death, and their descendants continued to succeed them for many years and brought much evil upon the world.”<sup>1</sup>

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Alexander the Great appears a few times in the Bible, mostly in deuterocanonical books and mostly in a covert form, the most important of which are references in the *Book of Daniel* in which he is hidden as the he-goat who overthrows the Persian empire represented by the ram to give origin to four Greek kingdoms.<sup>2</sup> This is yet another reference to the idea of the succession of empires, each rising from the ashes of the previous one, expressed earlier in the dream of Nabuchadnezzar and in the vision of Daniel,<sup>3</sup> some later interpreters of which referred back to the idealized image of Alexander.<sup>4</sup> The traditional and generally accepted interpretation of Daniel's prophecy of four kingdoms has the following sequence: Babylon, Media, Persia, Seleukid kingdom.<sup>5</sup> Although, responding to the rise of Rome which overthrew the Seleukid kingdom, some late antique readings of this prophecy saw Rome as the final empire in Daniel's sequence,<sup>6</sup> while some other added the fifth empire to the sequence, that of Rome.<sup>7</sup> But this does not need to bother us here, as in the time of composition of the *Book of Daniel*, the Seleukid kingdom was still the leading power in the Middle East and it is certainly meant as the fourth empire of Daniel. Some interpreters see a reference to the siege of Tyre by Alexander in the *Book of Zachariah* (9.3). It requires a rather late date for the second part of Zachariah but is not altogether unlikely, since the prophet tells about the destruction of this impregnable Phoenician island fortress, never overpowered by a military force prior to Alexander.<sup>8</sup> Possibly also the fall of Spitamenes treacherously killed by his Scythian allies, with his head severed and delivered to Alexander, inspired the biblical story of Judith and Holofernes.<sup>9</sup>

I *Macc.*, 1.1–9 stands out among all biblical references to Alexander: he is expressly named here, not hidden in similes, the account is quite straightforward, with some typically Semitic elements transferred directly from the Hebrew original, like Chetitim for his place of origin and with a strong moral overtone blaming Alexander for becoming “proud and haughty”. In this the

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conference in October 2014. I would like to thank all who shared their comments with me, in particular Robert Rollinger and Ory Amitay who also helped me with Hebrew.

- 1 J.A. GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Garden City 1976.
- 2 *Dan.* 8.5–22. L.F. HARTMAN, *The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Notes*, Garden City 1978, 234–235.
- 3 *Dan.* 2 and 7.
- 4 G.J. REININK, “Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History in Response to the Rise of Islam”, in: A. Cameron and L.I. Conrad (eds.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East, I: Problems in the Literary Source Material*, Princeton 1992, 149–187 (reprinted with corrections and additions in: G.J. REININK, *Syriac Christianity under Late Sasanian and Early Islamic Rule*, Aldershot/Burlington 2005), at 163–168.
- 5 HARTMAN, *Book* (n. 2), 208–214; J. WIESEHÖFER, “The Medes and the idea of the succession of empires in antiquity”, in: G.B. Lanfranchi, M. Roaf and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Continuity of Empire: Assyria, Media, Persia*, Padua 2003, 391–396.
- 6 Such as Jerome's : L. DITOMMASO, *Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature*, Leiden/Boston 2005, 74–75. P.-Methodius, on the other hand, tried to reconcile two traditions, of the fourth kingdom of Daniel as Greek and Roman: REININK, “Ps.-Methodius” (n. 4), 161–167.
- 7 WIESEHÖFER, “Medes” (n. 5).
- 8 C.L. MEYERS and E.M. MEYERS, *Zechariah 9–14: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, New York 1993, 98–99 (with reference); K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, 193.
- 9 The version known from Curt. VIII 2.15–18, VIII 3.1–16 and *ME* 20–25. See S.M. BURSTEIN, “Cleitarichus in Jerusalem. A Note on the Book of Judith”, in: F.B. Titchener and R.F. Moorton (eds.), *The Eye Expanded: Life and Arts in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1999, 105–112.

Biblical author is not much different from the pagan Alexander historians. Chettim (Χεττιμ) is the Greek rendition of Hebrew כִּתִּיִּם (Kittim), which originally in the Table of the Nations in *Genesis* (10.4) signified the sons of Japheth, together with יָוָן (Yavan); in *Jer.* 2.10 we have כְּתִיִּם אֲזִי (‘‘isles of Kittim’’), i.e. Western nations. In a narrower sense, Kittim was the Hebrew name of Cyprus, perhaps also of the city of Kition in Cyprus.<sup>10</sup> For the Jews of the Second Temple period Kittim were all who came by ship from the West. In the Hellenistic age the meaning of the name Kittim/Chettim/Chethim evolved to encompass the Islands, the Mediterranean coast, including Greece, the Seleukids, and eventually Rome.<sup>11</sup> The author of *I Macc.* decided to use the name Chettim rather than the more common Yavan for Greece/Macedonia perhaps to distinguish it from the Seleukid empire, in Hebrew called Yavan. Hence the Greek translation of *I Macc.* uses the name Chettim for the native land of Alexander, no matter whether Greece or Macedonia was originally meant.<sup>12</sup>

For all the attention the books of the Maccabees have generated in study of Hellenistic history, the initial lines of *I Maccabees* have not received adequate attention of the scholarship, with the academic discussion devoted practically exclusively to the events beginning with Antiochos IV who first appears in line 10 of chapter one of *I Maccabees*. The best illustration of this tendency is Sievers’s Synopsis which begins precisely at *I Macc.* 1.10.<sup>13</sup> And this is in spite of the enlightened observation made long time ago by E. Bickerman about the ideological importance of Alexander the Great in the worldview of the author of *I Maccabees*, undoubtedly one of the books which shaped the perception of Hellenism and Jewishness for centuries. ‘‘For Daniel, Alexander the Great was a ‘‘heroic king,’’ and the blasphemer Epiphanes ‘‘was different from the other ones’’ (*Dan.* 7.24). The narrative of *II Maccabees* begins by telling us that the kings paid honor to the holy city as long as the high priests remained virtuous. For *I Maccabees*, the rule of the evil one begins with the Greek conquest itself. Alexander ‘‘was exalted, and his heart was lifted up.’’ The appearance of the godless in Israel is understood simply as a phenomenon of the Greek era.’’<sup>14</sup>

The version of events concerning the division of Alexander’s empire conveyed by *I Macc.* differs greatly from that known from the mainstream ancient authors. Based on eye-witness accounts, Ptolemy among them, they report that Alexander died without an obvious heir to his empire and not making a decision as to who was to succeed him. While asked who would succeed him, he replied that it would be the one who was the strongest and gave his ring to

10 *Ez.* 27.6; *Is.* 23.1–12.

11 J. AJ I 128. H. Eshel, ‘‘The Kittim in the *War Scroll* and in the *Pesharim*’’, in: D. Goodblatt, A. Pinnick and D.R. Schwartz (eds.), *Historical Perspectives: From the Hasmoneans to Bar Kokhba in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 27–31 January, 1999*, Leiden/Boston 2001, 29–44; G.J. Brown, ‘‘The Kittim and Hints of Hybridity in the Dead Sea Scrolls’’, in: M. Labahn and O. Lehtipuu (eds.), *People under Power: Early Jewish and Christian Responses to the Roman Empire*, Amsterdam 2015, 17–32.

12 GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees* (n. 1), 91–92; ESHEL, ‘‘Kittim’’ (n. 11), 29–30.

13 J. SIEVERS, *Synopsis of the Greek Sources for the Hasmonean Period: 1–2 Maccabees and Josephus, War I and Antiquities 12–14*, Rome 2001. Or in G.W.E. NICKELSBURG, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction*, Philadelphia 1981 the contents of *I Macc.* is related from 1.11, i.e. from Hellenization of Jerusalem, skipping Alexander altogether.

14 E. BICKERMANN, *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt*, Leiden 1979, 19. The first (German) edition of this book was in 1937.

Perdikkas, the commander of the Companion cavalry.<sup>15</sup> A few accounts of classical authors of the events in Babylon after Alexander's death have survived with Curtius' account being most detailed. The original source is unknown, certainly it was neither Ptolemy nor Aristobulos as they ended their books with the death of Alexander. As is the rule with all unattested original sources to events associated with Alexander, modern scholars think that the original source to the power struggle in Babylon must have been Kleitarchos.<sup>16</sup> But of course Curtius and others could rely on a number of eye-witness accounts, no doubt written by people who were in Babylon at that time. Since the surviving authors do not mention their sources, the issue yields itself to speculations which will not be related here. There is an agreement of the mainstream sources that the decision as to the succession was left to Macedonian generals present in Babylon in June 323 BC. Upon stormy debates and clashes between opposing factions in the military, they elected Alexander's mentally retarded half-brother Arrhidaïos to be their next king under the name of Philip III, agreeing also that Alexander's posthumous child by his Bactrian wife Rhoxane would become king too, if it turns out to be a boy. Since indeed Rhoxane bore a male child Alexander (IV), the Macedonian empire had two kings entrusted to Perdikkas as their guardian. In addition, the generals split among themselves satrapies and other positions of authority in the seemingly unitary Macedonian empire.<sup>17</sup> The notional unity of the Macedonian empire was maintained a few years past the death of Alexander IV (309 BC.) to be ultimately rejected when the principal Macedonian generals Antigonos, Ptolemy, Seleukos, Lysimachos and Kassander declared themselves kings in 306–305 BC.

The difference between I *Macc.* and pagan authors Arrian and Curtius was noticed as early as 1739. A learned Jesuit Alexandre Xavier Panel analysed both traditions and found support for the version of events related by I *Maccabees* in the *Book of Daniel* (8.5, 11.3) where no interval between the death of Alexander and the division of his empire can be found. Thus, Father Panel concludes, the pagan authors erred and I *Maccabees* got it right.<sup>18</sup> It seems that precisely the same reason which brought Father Panel to reject the account of the pagan authors has contributed to the near total disregard of I *Macc.* 1.1–9 in modern academic writing: since we know what transpired in Babylon in June 323 B.C. from a number of good ancient accounts, there is no need to grace the clearly mistaken passage in I *Maccabees* with more than a passing remark. And this is what often takes place in modern commentaries to I

15 D.S. XVII 117. 3–4; Arr. *An.* VII 26.3; *Epitome Heidelbergensis* FGrH 155 F1(2); Curt. X 5.4–6; Just. XII 15.6–13; *ME* 112.

16 The case in point is F. SCHACHERMEYR, *Alexander in Babylon und die Reichsordnung nach seinem Tode*, Vienna 1970, 92–93.

17 D.S. XVIII 2–3; Curt. X 5–10 Arr. *Succ.* FGrH 156 F1; Dexipp. FGrH 100 F8; Just. XIII 1–4. The most thorough modern reconstruction of events in Babylon after Alexander's death is: R.M. ERRINGTON, "From Babylon to Triparadeisos: 323–320 B.C.", *JHS* 90 (1970), 49–77. See also: A.B. BOSWORTH, *The Legacy of Alexander: Politics, Warfare, and Propaganda under the Successors*, Oxford 2001, 29–63; A. MEEUS, "The Power Struggle of the Diadochoi in Babylonia, 323 B.C.", *AncSoc* 38 (2008), 39–82; J. ROISMAN, *Alexander's Veterans and the Early Wars of the Successors*, Austin 2012, 61–70; R. WATERFIELD, *Dividing the Spoils: The War for Alexander the Great's Empire*, Oxford 2011, 9–10, 16–29.

18 A.X. PANEL, *Remarques sur les premiers versets du premier livre des Maccabées, ou Dissertation sur une médaille d'Alexandre le grand*, Lyon 1739, 19–22.

*Macc.* 1.1–9: “this is legendary and has no basis in fact”;<sup>19</sup> “*divided his empire*: Alexander died so suddenly that this is unlikely; in fact the generals took what they could get”;<sup>20</sup> “*I Macc.*’s author repeats the erroneous story of Alexander’s division of his kingdom ...”.<sup>21</sup>

But having said so, one may nevertheless ponder upon the role of the Alexander passage in *I Maccabees*, upon the sources it follows and its position in ancient historical tradition. This story is of little value in establishing the sequence of events preceding Alexander’s death nor does it shed light on historical events of the first few weeks after Alexander’s death when the fate of his empire was decided. It is, however, pertinent to the study of historiographical tradition of the Hellenistic age, in particular that of the Seleukid empire, since the very reason it found its way to *I Macc.* is that it introduces a principal protagonist of the first chapters of this book, Seleukid king Antiochos IV in what is, in Goldstein’s words, a long scene-setting sentence.<sup>22</sup>

Curtius Rufus (X 10.5) says that there was a difference of opinion on the fate of Alexander’s empire: “Credidere quidam testamento Alexandri distributas esse provincias; sed famam eius rei, quamquam ab auctoribus tradita est, vanam fuisse comperimus.” So, in his times, apart from the “canonical” version of events surrounding the death of Alexander and the story of the succession to the Macedonian empire, there was another one claiming that the division of Alexander’s empire was ordered in his last will. Traces of this alternative version have survived in ancient authors. One of the earliest and the most debatable is Berossos, as Tatian attests:

Βηρωσὸς ἀνὴρ Βαβυλώνιος, ἱερεὺς τοῦ παρ’ αὐτοῖς Βήλου, κατ’ Ἀλέξανδρον γεγονώς, Ἀντίοχοι τῷ μετ’ αὐτὸν τρίτῳ τὴν Χαλδαίων ἱστορίαν ἐν τρισὶ βιβλίοις κατατάξας καὶ τὰ περὶ τῶν βασιλέων ἐκθέμενος, ἀφηγγεῖται (“Berosus, a Babylonian, a priest of their god Belus, born in the time of Alexander, composed for Antiochus, the third after him, the history of the Chaldeans in three books; and, narrating the acts of the kings, he mentions one of them”).<sup>23</sup>

In this account, Antiochos I is the third king in succession after Alexander, which in the first place shows the line of succession, not of conquest in disregard of Alexander’s will. Then it disproves the historical sequence of events: in fact Antiochos I was the fourth in row, after Philip III Arrhidaios, Alexander IV and Seleukos I. Since the father of Antiochos was certainly included in the line of succession drawn by Berossos, one of the Argead kings was omitted.<sup>24</sup> Not trying to solve this last puzzle at this time, it suffices to say that the idea of the legitimate succession from Alexander to Seleukid kings was present as early as the first half of the third c. BC. Flavius Josephus very briefly states that upon Alexander’s death his empire was divided among the Successors: Τελευτήσαντος δὲ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἡ μὲν ἀρχὴ εἰς

19 C.H. BOX, *Judaism in the Greek Period, from the Rise of Alexander the Great to the Intervention of Rome (333 to 63 B.C.)*, Oxford 1932, 82.

20 J.R. BARTLETT, *The First and Second Books of the Maccabees: Commentary*, Cambridge 1973, 20.

21 N.J. McELENNEY, “1–2 Maccabees”, in: R.E. Brown, J.A. Fitzmyer and R.E. Murphy (eds.), *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Prentice Hall 1990, 427–446, at 426.

22 GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees* (n. 1), 190.

23 BNJ 680 T2, ap. Tatianus Oratio ad Graecos 36; tr. B.P. Pratten.

24 E.J. BICKERMAN (*Institutions des Séleucides*, Paris 1938, 5, n. 5) believes that Berossos skipped Philip III Arrhidaios from the list. But there is no prove of that.

τοὺς διαδόχους ἐμερίσθη (“Now when Alexander was dead, the government was parted among his successors”).<sup>25</sup> The idea of succession from Alexander to Seleukos appears in Ammianus Marcellinus: “Qui post multa gloriose et fortiter gesta, superato Nicator Seleuco, eiusdem Alexandri successore ...” (XXXIII 6.2). The notion of Alexander dividing his empire among his companions and to the succession going to Seleukos resurfaces in Moses Khorenats’i:

“After ruling over the whole world, Alexander of Macedon, the son of Philip and Olympias, who was twenty-fourth from Achilles and after bequeathing his empire to many with the stipulation that the empire of them all would be called that of the Macedonians, he himself died. After him Seleucus reigned in Babylon, having seized the states of all the others.”<sup>26</sup>

Jordanes names Perdikkas as the king of Macedonia appointed by Alexander to succeed him: “Perdiccam Macedoniae regem, quem Alexander apud Babyloniam ministri insidiis potans interitum, Atheniensium principatui hereditario iure reliquerat successorem.” (10). John Malalas has Alexander on the deathbed divide his empire into four kingdoms: Macedonia and Europe assigned to his brother Philip, Egypt and Libya assigned to Ptolemy, Asia down to the Orontes assigned to Antigonos, in Malalas’s text conflated with his son Demetrios Poliorketes, the East assigned to Seleukos Nikator.<sup>27</sup> The eighth c. AD *Excerpta Latina Barbari*, a Latin translation of an unknown to us Greek (Alexandrian?) work of the late-fifth c. AD, mention Alexander’s last will containing arrangements for the division of his empire, either among a large group of generals or among four successors: Philip, brother of Alexander, Antigonos, Philip Ptolemy and Seleukos.<sup>28</sup> Then the Alexander passage of I *Macc.* 1.1–9 survives in two paraphrases of Georgios Monachos. The commentary to the *Book of Daniel* repeats the version of the division of Alexander’s empire corresponding to that of Johannes Malalas:

«Τέσσαρα» δέ φησιν «περὰ πετεινοῦ ὑπεράνω αὐτῆς καὶ τέσσαρες κεφαλαὶ τῷ θηρίῳ.» Μετὰ γὰρ τὸ ὑψωθῆναι τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ αὐξηθῆναι καὶ εἰς πάντα τὸν κόσμον ὀνομασθῆναι, διεμερίσθη ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ εἰς τέσσαρας ἀρχάς. Τελευταίων γὰρ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος διεῖλεν αὐτὴν τοῖς συντρόφοις τοῖς ἐκ τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ τέσσαρσιν ἀνθρώποις, Σελεύκῳ, Δημητρίῳ, Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ Φιλίππῳ, καὶ «ἐπέθεντο πάντες» οὗτοι «διαδήματα», καθὼς Δανιὴλ τοῦτο προμηνύει καὶ ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ βίβλῳ τῶν Μακκαβαϊκῶν ἀναγράφεται (“Four” he says “wings of a bird above it and four heads of the beast”. After the kingdom of Alexander had grown and had been called all of the world, it was divided among four powers. For the dying Alexander divided

25 J. AJ XI 346, tr. W. Whiston.

26 R.W. THOMSON, *Moses Khorenats’i, History of the Armenians, Translation and Commentary on the Literary Sources*, Cambridge, Mass./London 1978, II 1 (p. 129).

27 Malalas VIII 3–10.

28 *Excerpta Latina Barbari* I 8.5–6 (division of the empire more or less in line with the Testament known from the *Alexander Romance* and the *LDM*) and II 6.1 (empire left to four principes). (I quote ELB after: B. GARSTAD, *Apocalypse, Pseudo-Methodius: An Alexandrian world chronicle*, edited and translated, Cambridge, Mass./London 2012). On the ELB see now: M. WALRAFF et al., *Sextus Julius Africanus, Chronographiae: The Extant Fragments*, Berlin 2007, XXXVI–XXXVIII and GARSTAD, *Apocalypse* (n. 28), XVIII–XXXV.



it among four people from his family, with whom he had grown up, Seleukos, Demetrios, Ptolemy and Philip, and “they all assumed royal diadems”, as Daniel predicts this and as is written in the first book of Maccabees”).<sup>29</sup>

These brief overview shows that even if the story of the division of the Alexander’s empire stemming from his decision did not dominate ancient historiography, it was certainly quite popular both in the East and in the West.<sup>30</sup>

The difficulty in interpreting the Alexander passage of I *Maccabees* is compounded by the fact that we have a Greek translation of the Hebrew or Aramaic text whose author drew upon sources which were ultimately Greek.<sup>31</sup> Therefore all information has come to us through the process of double translation and interpretation done by authors imbued in Semitic and Hellenistic traditions from which they were borrowing words and concepts in a way not entirely possible to be comprehended by a modern reader who can access only the end product of this transmission process, the Greek first book of Maccabees. One crucial phrase in the Alexander passage in the interpretation of what happened in Babylon according to I *Macc.* is ἐκάλεσεν τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ τοὺς ἐνδόξους τοὺς συνεκτρόφους αὐτοῦ ἐκ νεότητος (1.6). The expression which begs for explanation is συνεκτρόφους αὐτοῦ ἐκ νεότητος (“men who had been raised with him from early childhood”). The word itself is unattested outside of the I *Macc.* and of the *Chronicon* of Georgios Monachos (VII 1) who paraphrases it, but since it is obviously derived from the well-known word, to a modern Alexander historian it brings to mind the so-called boyhood friends of Alexander, a group of Macedonian aristocrats associated with Alexander, then the crown prince, and according to a plausible theory of Heckel appointed by Philip II to be his peer mentors who would give him advice on how to act in a way deemed suitable by his father the king.<sup>32</sup> This group is usually called in our sources as: ἐταῖροι or φίλοι καὶ συνήθιοι.<sup>33</sup> But to them, as far as I can say, neither the word συνεκτρόφοι nor σύντροφοι/συντρόφοι is ever applied and in fact the word is attested in the story of Alexander the Great only in the late, medieval versions of the *Alexander Romance* (codd. E, F, V), surely repeating the common usage of this word in Byzantine literature. It can be read also in the commentary to *Daniel*, which again paraphrases I *Macc.*<sup>34</sup> To Bickerman σύντροφος was a Seleukid court title, like the title of Philippos a courtier of Antiochos IV who brought the body of the dead king from Persia to Antioch on the Orontes.<sup>35</sup> Another possibility is that the author of I *Macc.* borrowed the expression used in the Bible to describe the king’s advisors.<sup>36</sup> But this or that way the

29 *Commentarium in Daniele* IV 3.8.

30 C.F. KEIL, *Commentar über die Bücher der Makkabäer*, Leipzig 1875, 31.

31 Ancient testimony on the original text of I Maccabees: Origenes ap. Eusebius *Hist. Eccl.* VI 25.2 and Eusebius, *Prologus Galeat to the Book of Samuel*, PL XXVIII 593–595. E. SCHÜRER, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, III.1, revised and edited by F. Millar, Edinburgh 1986, 181–182.

32 W. HECKEL, *The Marshals of Alexander’s Empire*, London 1992, 205–208.

33 Plu. *Alex.* 10.3 and 5.

34 *Commentarium in Daniele* IV 3.8, quoted above.

35 BICKERMAN, *Institutions* (n. 24), 42–43, n. 11 to p. 42 refers to I *Macc.* 1.6. Philippos σύντροφος of Antiochos IV: II *Macc.* 9.29.

36 II *Chron.*, 10.8: καὶ συνεβουλεύσατο [scil. Ροβοαμ] μετὰ τῶν παιδαρίων τῶν συνεκτραφέντων μετ’ αὐτοῦ τῶν ἐστηκότων ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ; I *Regum*, 12.24r: καὶ διεσκέδασεν Ροβοαμ τὴν βουλὴν αὐτῶν, καὶ οὐκ



translators of the *Septuagint* and the author of II *Maccabees*, most probably taking up this expression from Jason of Cyrene whose five books of Maccabean history he epitomized, were using the idiom of the Hellenistic age in which quite obviously the word σύντροφος was applicable to top courtiers. All these interpretations are possible and without having the original text and without knowing what sources the author of I *Maccabees* was using, it is perhaps better to leave the issue unresolved.

The date of I *Maccabees* has not been firmly established: it is no earlier than John Hyrcanus and almost certainly it precedes Pompey's desecration of the Temple with e.g. Bickerman propounding the high dating, under John Hyrcanus and Schürer preferring a later date in the first decade of the first c. BC.<sup>37</sup> No matter what date in the second or possibly early first c. BC. is accepted, the author I *Maccabees* could not interview eye-witnesses of events in Babylon; he relied on written sources, much as we do today. A sources on which he relies or more precisely source tradition within which I *Macc.* 1.1–10 operates, in the view of some modern scholars, belongs to the realm of Seleukid propaganda or Seleukid historiography.<sup>38</sup> Incidentally, the same is claimed for some passages of the *Book of Daniel*, in particular those devoted to the succession of empires: although the idea of a string of empires, each arising from the ashes of the previous one until a universal empire is born is old, the fact that the final of them was the Macedonian empire could be born only under the Seleukids.<sup>39</sup> The good knowledge of Seleukid institutions shown throughout I *Maccabees* may be a circumstantial evidence of its author's acquaintance with Seleukid historiography.<sup>40</sup> The hypothesis that there were Seleukid court chronicles or pro-Seleukid historiography is convincing and indeed the opposite would have been utterly surprising i.e. the absence of ancient history writing partisan to the Seleukid cause, having in mind the attested ancient history writers friendly to all other major powers of the Hellenistic age, including the Parthians.<sup>41</sup> But these purported Seleukid court chronicles are no longer extant and we have no knowledge of their actual contents.

Trying to solve the puzzle of sources on the division of the Macedonian empire in the Alexander passage of I *Maccabees* one should look at the alleged last will of Alexander

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ἤρεσεν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ· καὶ ἀπέστειλεν καὶ εἰσήγαγεν τοὺς συντρόφους αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς τὰ αὐτά· καὶ ταῦτα ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς με λέγων ὁ λαός· καὶ εἶπαν οἱ σύντροφοι αὐτοῦ· Οὕτως λαλήσεις πρὸς τὸν λαὸν λέγων. Cf. GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees* (n. 1), 197.

37 BICKERMAN, *God* (n. 14), 9, 20; SCHÜRER, *History* (n. 31), III.1, 181–182.

38 B. NIESE, *Kritik der beiden Makkabäerbücher nebst Beiträgen zur Geschichte der makkabäischen Erhebung*, Berlin 1900, 94; BICKERMANN, *Institutions* (n. 24), 5; K.-D. SCHUNCK, *Die Quellen des I. und II. Makkabäerbuches*, Halle 1954, 36–45 (the strongest case for a Seleukid Syrian chronicle as a major sources for I *Maccabees*, including 1.1–10); GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees* (n. 1), 197.

39 WIESEHÖFER, “Medes” (n. 5).

40 C.L.W. GRIMM, *Das erste Buch der Maccabäer*, in: O.F. Fritzsche (ed.), *Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zu den Apokryphen des Alten Testaments*, IV, Leipzig 1857, XXIII; SCHUNCK, *Quellen* (n. 38), 36–45; GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees* (n. 1), 25–26.

41 Greek partisans of Parthia are best known from Livy's quote: leuissimi ex Graecis qui Parthorum quoque contra nomen Romanum gloriae fauent (IX 18.6). Cf. J.-M. ALONSO-NÚÑEZ, “L'opposizione contro l'imperialismo romano e contro il principato nella storiografia del tempo di Augusto”, *RSa* 12 (1982), 131–141; F. MUCCIOLI, “La rappresentazione dei Parti nelle fonti tra II e I secolo a.C. e la polemica di Livio contro i « leuissimi ex Graecis »”, in: T. Gnoli and F. Muccioli (eds.), *Incontri tra culture nell'oriente ellenistico e romano: atti del convegno di studi: Ravenna 11–12 marzo 2005*, Milan 2007, 87–115.

quoted in Greek and Latin in Ps.-Callisth. III 33 and in the *Liber de morte testamentoque Alexandri Magni* (LDM) attached to the *Metz Epitome* as sections 115–122, respectively. These two texts are similar but not identical and almost certainly not dependent on each other.<sup>42</sup> The respective texts are:

Ps.-Callisth. III 33:

1 Διαθήκη Ἀλεξάνδρου .

2 Βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος υἱὸς Ἀμμωνος καὶ Ὀλυμπιάδος Ῥοδίων τάγμασι καὶ ἄρχουσι βουλῇ δῆμῳ χαίρειν. 3 Ἡμεῖς τὰς πρὸς Ἡρακλέους τοῦ προγόνου ἡμῶν στήλας ὀρίσθεισας

<ὑπερβαλόντες καὶ> τοῦ πεπρωμένου μετὰ τῆς τῶν θεῶν προνοίας [δὲ] τυγχάνειν μέλλοντες ἐκρίναμεν ἐπιστεῖλαι ὑμῖν ἅπερ ἐγνώκαμεν, ἡγούμενοι μάλιστα ὑμᾶς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐπιτηδεῖους φύλακας τῶν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ κατεργασθέντων πόνων, ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἀγαπῶντες τὴν ὑμετέραν πόλιν. 4 διὸ καὶ ἐγράψαμεν τὴν φρουρὰν ἐξαγαγεῖν τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως μετέχουσα τῆς παρρησίας εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διαφυλάττῃ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ βουλόμενος διαφυλαχθῆναι παρ' ὑμῖν τὸ ἡμέτερον τίμιον. 5 οἶδαμεν γὰρ τὴν πόλιν ὑμῶν εὐχάριστον οὖσαν καὶ μνήμης ἀξίαν· διὸ καὶ φανησόμεθα πεφροντικότες αὐτῆς οὐχ ἥσσον τῆς ἰδίας πατρίδος καὶ ἡμῶν ἀξίως. ἐποίησάμεθα γὰρ τὴν διαίρεσιν τῶν πραγμάτων τοιαύτην, διδόντες μετὰ παρρησίας τὴν χώραν ἐκάστω, ἀρχόμενοι πρῶτον ἀφ' ἧς γεννηθέντες εἰς τοῦτο προήλθομεν δόξης.

6 Συντετάχαμεν δὲ τοῖς ἐπιμεληταῖς τῶν χωρίων ἀποστεῖλαι ἐκ τῆς σατραπείας χρυσοῦ νενομισμένου τάλαντα <α'> τοῖς κατ' Αἴγυπτον <ιεροῖς> καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἡμῶν συντετάχαμεν ἵνα ἀποκομισθῇ. τὴν δὲ διάταξιν τῆς ἰδίας ταφῆς, <ὡς ἂν> οἱ ἱερεῖς οἱ κατ' Αἴγυπτον κρίνωσιν, καὶ ἡμεῖς συγχωροῦμεν. 7 ἐντετελάμεθα δὲ καὶ Θήβας [ἄς] ἐπανορθοῦν ἐκ τῶν βασιλικῶν χρημάτων, ἱκανῶς κρίναντες ἡτυχηκέναι καὶ σεσωφρονισμένους ἀξίως τῶν ἡμαρτημένων

εἰς ἡμᾶς. δίδοσθαι <δὲ> καὶ σῖτον ἀπὸ τῆς Μακεδονίας Θηβαίοις τοῖς κατερχομένοις εἰς Θήβας, ἄχρις ἂν εὐανδρήσῃ ἡ χώρα. 8 συντετάχαμεν δὲ καὶ ὑμῖν δοῦναι εἰς τὴν ἐπισκευὴν τῆς πόλεως χρυσοῦ τάλαντα τε' καὶ τριήρεις οὔ', ὅπως ἀσφαλῶς ἐλεύθεροι ᾗτε, καὶ σίτου † ἐλευθερίας ἐξ Αἰγύπτου δωρεὰν κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν πυροῦ μεδίμνους β' καὶ ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας διὰ

τῶν οἰκονόμων καὶ ἐκ τῶν σύνεγγυς ὑμῖν χωρῶν πυροῦ μεδίμνους β'· καὶ χώραν ὑμῖν καταμετρήσαι, ὅπως ἔχητε ἐν τῷ <λοιπῷ> χρόνῳ αὐτάρκη σῖτον καὶ μηδενὸς δέησθε, ἔχητε δὲ τῆς πόλεως ὑμῶν ἀξίως.

9 <Ταῦτα> τῷ τε ἐπὶ Μακεδονίας ἐπιμελητῇ Κρατερῷ ἐντετάλμεθα καὶ τῷ Αἰγύπτου σατράπῃ Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν Περδίκκᾳ καὶ Ἀντιγόνῳ. ὑμῖν δὲ πάλιν ἐντελλόμεθα λαβόντας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν παρὰ Ὀλκία τοῦ ἀποδιδόντος ὑμῖν αὐτὴν τὸ συμφέρον τὸ ἴδιον σταθμωμένους μὴ ἀγνοῆσαι, ὅτι [δὲ] ὑμῖν ἀνέιται τοῦτο βραβεύειν

42 J. SEIBERT, “Das Testament Alexanders, ein Pamphlet aus der Frühzeit der Diadochenkämpfe?“, in: A. Kraus (ed.), *Land und Reich, Stamm und Nation: Festgabe für Max Spindler*, I, Munich 1984, 247–260, at 247.

πρὸς <τὸ> τὴν ὑμετέραν πόλιν συναύξειν. 10 μάλιστα δὲ πέπεισμαι πειθαρχεῖν ὑμᾶς τοῖς ἔμοις λόγοις.

Πτολεμαῖος δὲ <ὁ> τοῦ ἔμοῦ σώματος γιγνόμενος φύλαξ καὶ ὑμῶν φροντίσει· ὅτι δὲ συνοίσει ὑμῖν, δεδείχαμεν κατ' ἰδίαν. μὴ οὖν νομίζετε παρατεθεῖσθαι τὴν διαθήκην ὑμῖν εἰκῇ. τοὺς δὲ ἐπιμελητάς τῆς βασιλείας βραβεύειν, εἴ τις δὴ ἔκ τινος † θεωρίας τῶν ἐπιμελητῶν ἢ διαίρεσις.

11 Ἀποδείκνυσι βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀμμωνος καὶ Ὀλυμπιάδος <υἱὸς> βασιλέα Μακεδονίας ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ παρόντος Ἀρριδαῖον τὸν υἱὸν Φιλίππου. ἐὰν δὲ γένηται ἐκ Ῥωξάνης υἱὸς Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, ἐκεῖνον εἶναι βασιλέα καὶ ὄνομα ἐπιτεθῆναι αὐτῷ, ὃ ἂν δόξῃ Μακεδόσιν. ἐὰν δὲ θῆλυ γεννηθῇ ἐκ Ῥωξάνης, ἐλέσθωσαν Μακεδόνες ὃν ἂν βούλωνται βασιλέα, ἐὰν μὴ βούλωνται Ἀρριδαῖον τὸν Φιλίππου υἱόν. ὁ δὲ αἰρεθεὶς διαφυλαττέτω τὴν τῶν Ἀργειαδῶν ἀρχήν, καὶ συντελείτωσαν Μακεδόνες Ἀργειάδαις μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως τὰ νομιζόμενα. 12 ἐφειμένον δὲ ἔστω Ὀλυμπιάδι τῇ μητρὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου κατοικεῖν ἐν Ῥόδῳ, ἐὰν Ῥόδιοι συνδοκῇσωσιν· οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἐξουσία πράσσειν τι ἄνευ Ῥοδίων. ἐὰν δὲ μὴ βούληται κατοικεῖν ἐν Ῥόδῳ, γιγνέσθω ὅπου ἂν βούληται, λαμβάνουσα τὰς αὐτὰς προσόδους ἃς καὶ ἐπὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς ἐλάμβανεν.

13 Ἄχρι τοῦ δόξαι Μακεδόσι βασιλέα ἀποδεῖξαι, βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀμμωνος καὶ Ὀλυμπιάδος υἱὸς ἀποδείκνυσιν ἐπιμελητάς τῆς ἐαυτοῦ βασιλείας πάσης Μακεδονίας μὲν Κρατερὸν καὶ γυναῖκα τούτῳ Κυνάνην τὴν Φιλίππου θυγατέρα τοῦ γενομένου βασιλέως Μακεδονίας, Λυσίμαχον δὲ ἐπὶ Θράκης καὶ γυναῖκα τούτῳ Θεσσαλονίκην τὴν Φιλίππου τοῦ βασιλέως γενομένου Μακεδόνων θυγατέρα· 14 δίδωσι δὲ τὴν ἐφ' Ἑλλησπόντῳ σατραπείαν Λεοννάτῳ καὶ γυναῖκα τούτῳ Κλεοδίκην τὴν ἀδελφὴν Ὀλκίου, Παφλαγονίαν δὲ καὶ Καππαδοκίαν Εὐμένει τῷ ὑπομνηματογράφῳ. τοὺς δὲ νησιώτας ἀφίησιν ἐλευθέρους καὶ ἐπιτρόπους αὐτῶν Ῥοδίου εἶναι· Παμφυλίαν δὲ καὶ Κιλικίαν Ἀντιγόνῳ 15 ..... τούτων δὲ πάντων μέχρι τῶν ἐντὸς Ἄλως ποταμοῦ † χώρα ἀρχέτω. τῆς δὲ Βαβυλῶνος καὶ τῆς προσηκούσης αὐτῇ Σέλευκον ὅπλοφόρον. Φοινίκην δὲ καὶ Συρίαν τὴν κοῦλην καλουμένην Μελεάγρῳ. Αἴγυπτον δὲ Περδίκκῃ καὶ Λιβυκῇ [καὶ] Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ γυναῖκα τούτῳ Κλεοπάτρῃ τὴν ἀδελφὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου. τοῖς δὲ ἐπάνω [τῇ] τῆς Βαβυλωνίας χώρας στρατάρχην καὶ ἐπιμελητὴν Φανοκράτην καὶ γυναῖκα τούτῳ Ῥωξάνην τὴν Βακτριανήν.

16 Προστάσσω δὲ τοῖς ἐπιμεληταῖς τῆς βασιλείας κατασκευάσαι πύελον χρυσῶν ἀπὸ ταλάντων ζ', εἰς ἣν τεθήσεται τὸ Ἀλεξάνδρου σῶμα τοῦ Μακεδονίας βασιλέως. ἀποστεῖλαι δὲ καὶ Μακεδόνας τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους καὶ ἡσθηνηκότας εἰς Μακεδονίαν καὶ Θεσσαλῶν τοὺς ὁμοίως διακειμένους· δοθῇτω δὲ χρυσοῦ τάλαντα γ'. 17 ἀποστεῖλαι δὲ εἰς Ἄργος τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ βασιλέως πανοπλίαν καὶ χρυσοῦ νενομισμένου τάλαντα <ν> τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ

ἀκροθίνια τοῦ πολέμου [στρατιᾶς]. ἀποστεῖλαι δὲ καὶ εἰς Δελφοὺς τῶν ἐλεφάντων τοὺς ὀδόντας καὶ τῶν δρακόντων τὰς δορὰς καὶ φιάλας χρυσᾶς ιγ' ἀκροθίνια τῆς στρατείας. 18 δοθῇτω δὲ καὶ Μιλησίοις εἰς ἐπισκευὴν τῆς πόλεως χρυσοῦ νενομισμένου τάλαντα ρν' καὶ Κνιδίοις † γέατ.

19 Βούλομαι δὲ καὶ Περδίκκαν, <ὄν> καταλείπω βασιλέα <Αἰγύπτου> σὺν τῇ κτιζομένῃ Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ... ὥστε μένειν μακαρίαν μελομένην τῷ πάντων δεσπόζοντι μεγάλῳ Σεράπιδι. καὶ † ἀνθρώπων καταστῆναι ἐπιμελητὴν τῆς πόλεως, <ὅς> κληθήσεται ἱερεὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ προσελεύσεται <ταῖς> μεγίσταις πόλεως δόξαις, κεκοσμημένος χρυσῷ στεφάνῳ καὶ πορφυρίδι, λαμβάνων ἐνιαύσιον τάλαντον. 20 καὶ οὗτος ἔσται ἀνύβριστος καὶ πάσης λειτουργίας ἀπολυθήσεται· λήψεται δὲ ὁ τοιοῦτος τὴν τάξιν ταύτην ὁ διαφέρων ἐν γένει τῶν ἄλλων πάντων, καὶ μενεῖ αὕτη ἡ δωρεὰ αὐτῷ τε καὶ ἐκγόνοις.

21 Ἀποδείκνυσι βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος Ἰνδικῆς βασιλέα τῆς μὲν παρατεινούσης παρὰ τῷ Ὑδάσπῃ ποταμῷ Ταξίλῃν, τῆς δὲ περιεχομένης ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὑδάσπου <μέχρις Ἰνδοῦ> ποταμοῦ Πῶρον, ἐπὶ δὲ Παροπανισαδῶν Ὀξυδράκῃν τὸν Βακτριανὸν τὸν Ῥωξάνης πατέρα τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου γυναικός. 22 τὴν δὲ Ἀραχωσίαν ... καὶ Δραγγηνὴν ... τὴν Βακτριανὴν καὶ Σουσιανὴν Φιλίπῳ, τὴν <δὲ> Παρθυαίαν καὶ τὰ ἐχόμενα τῆς Ὑρκανίας Φραταφέρνῃ, Καρμανίαν δὲ Τληπολέμῳ, τὴν δὲ Περσίδα Πευκέστῃ. † σατράπῃ Ὀξύντῃν μεταστήσαι ἐπὶ τῆς Μηδίας.

23 Ἀποδεικνύει βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος βασιλέα τῆς Ἰλλυρίδος Ὀλκίαν· δίδωσι καὶ ἵππους ἄγεσθαι ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας φ', τάλαντα γ'· ἀπὸ δὲ τούτων κατασκευασάτω ἱερὸν καὶ ἀναθέτω ἀνδριάντας Ἀμμωνος Ἡρακλέους Ἀθηνᾶς Ὀλυμπιάδος Φιλίππου. 24 ἀναθέτωσαν δὲ καὶ οἱ τῆς βασιλείας ἐπιμελῆται εἰκόνας † Ὀλκίου περίμετρον ἐν † ἀγγύριον καὶ ἀνδριάντας κεχρυσωμένους ἐν Δελφοῖς. ἀναθέτω δὲ καὶ Περδίκκας εἰκόνας χαλκᾶς Ἀλεξάνδρου Ἀμμωνος Ἡρακλέους Ὀλυμπιάδος Φιλίππου.

25 Τούτων δὲ πάντων ἔστωσαν θεοὶ ἐπόπται Ὀλύμπιοι, Ἡρακλῆς <ὁ> πρῶτος γενάρχης Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ βασιλέως ....”

Or in the translation of E. Haight (with some corrections):<sup>43</sup>

“1 The Will of Alexander.

King Alexander son of Ammon and Olympias sends greetings to the army and magistrates, to the council and the people of the Rhodians. I went to the Pillars of Heracles, my forefather, and restored them. Now, as I am about to meet the fate assigned to me in the wisdom of the gods, I have judged it well to announce to you my plans. I believe that you especially among the Greeks are suitable guardians of the works achieved by me, and you cherish too your city. So I wrote orders to bring out the guard of the city, so that, sharing free speech, it may forever guard its freedom. And I wished that my honour should be guarded by you. For I know your city is charming and memorable. So I shall appear to have thought of it no less than my own country and in a way worthy of myself. I will now make the following division of my possessions, assigning with clarity the land to each, beginning with the land from which I sprang and from which I came to this pinnacle of fame.

43 E.H. HAIGHT, *The Life of Alexander of Macedon by Pseudo-Callisthenes*, translated and edited, New York 1955.

6 I have directed the rulers of the countries to allegiate from the gold reserve of the satrapy one thousand talents to the Egyptian priests and cosign to them my body to be carried away. And I also concur with the arrangements for my burial as the Egyptian priests shall decide. I decree also that Thebes shall be rebuilt from the royal treasure, for I think that the people have suffered and have learned wisdom from their sins against me. And I order too that food from Macedonia be given to the Thebans who have come back to Thebes until the land is cultivated. And I have also ordered a gift to you for the restoral of the city three hundred and five talents of gold and seventy-seven triremes, so that easier you may be free, and a gift from Egypt annually two thousand measures of wheat, and from Asia from the stewards from the districts near you two thousand measures of wheat and your land shall be surveyed that in the future you may have sufficient produce and lack nothing and occupy your city in suitable fashion.

9 I have entrusted these matters to Krateros, the overseer in Macedonia, and Ptolemy, the satrap of Egypt, and to the rulers in Asia, Perdikkas and Antigonos. I enjoin upon you again that, when you have received the letter from Holkias, who will give it to you, that, while estimating your personal advantage, you will not fail to recognize that it is incumbent upon you to expend the funds for the improvement of your city. I am convinced that you will follow out my directions. Ptolemy, as the guardian of my body, will be your counselor. I have shown him privately what he will convey to you. Do not suppose that the will has been prepared for you carelessly. <Know> that the overseers of the kingdom shall act as judges if there is any dissension sown by any one among those appointed to execute the will.

11 King Alexander, son of Ammon and Olympias, appoints as king of Macedonia for the present Arridaïos, the son of Philip. If Roxane bears a son to Alexander, he is to be king and whatever name the Macedonians wish shall be given to him. But if Rhoxane's child is female, let the Maceonians choose whom they wish as king in case they do not wish Arridaïos, the son of Philip. And let the one chosen preserve the kingdom of the Argeadai and let the Macedonians together with their king pay due taxes to the Argeadai. Let Olympias, the mother of Alexander, be allowed to live in Rhodes if the Rhodians agree. For there is no authority to do anything without the consent of the Rhodians. And if she does not wish to live in Rhodes, let her reside where she wishes, taking the same income she took also in the time of her son Alexander.

13 Up to the time when the Macedonians decide to appoint a king, King Alexander, son of Ammon and Olympias, appoints as overseer of his kingdom and of all Macedonia Krateros and Kynane his wife, the daughter of Philip. Who was king of Macedonia, and over Thrace Lysimachos and his wife, Thessalonike, the daughter of Philip, who was the king of the Macedonians. He gives the satrapy on the Hellespont to Leonnatos and gives him as a wife Kleodike the sister of Holkias, and Paphlagonia and Cappadocia to Eumenes, his secretary. The inhabitants of the islands he sets free and makes the Rhodians their guardians. He assigns Pamphylia and Cilicia to Antigonos. ... Over all these countries up to those on the side of the river Alys let <Philotas> rule. Over Babylon and the outlying district, I appoint Seleucus, one of my

bodyguard. I assign Phoenicia and the part of Syria called *koile* to Meleagros and Egypt to Perdikkas and Libya to Ptolemy and I give him for wife Cleopatra, the sister of Alexander. Over those above the Babylonian land I set Phanocrates as military commander and overseer and I give him as his wife Roxane, the Bactrian.

16 And I order the overseers of the kingdom to prepare a gold coffin at the cost of two hundred talents in which the body of Alexander, the Macedonian king, shall be laid. I direct that the older and weaker of the Macedonians to be sent back to Macedonia and also the Thessalians who are in the same state. Let each be given three talents of gold. Also I order sent to Argos the panoply of King Alexander and as spoils of war for Heracles fifty talents of gold coin, and sent to Delphi the teeth of the elephants and the skins of the serpents and thirteen gold libation bowls as dedications of the army. Let there be given also to the Milesians for the restoration of the city one hundred and fifty talents of gold coinage and to the Cnidians one hundred eight talents.

19 I wish too that Perdikkas whom I leave as King of Egypt, with Alexandria which I founded <so to use the power entrusted to him> that it remain blessed <and holy> to the great Sarapis, lord of all. And I wish ... to establish an overseer of the city who shall be called priest of Alexander and shall go forth with the highest honours of the city, wearing a gold crown and a purple robe, and he shall receive a talent annually. He shall be respected, and he shall be freed from all public services. And such a man, one differing in kind from all others, shall receive the office and this gift shall be perpetual to him and his descendants.

21 King Alexander appoints as king of India, the part lying along the river Hydaspes, Taxiles, and of the part stretching from the Hydaspes rives to Indos Poros and over the Paropamisadae Oxydrakes the Bactrian, the father of Roxane, Alexander's wife; and Arachosia and Drangiana and Bactria and the Sousian lands to Philip, and the Parthian and the part next to the Hyrcanian to Phrataphernes, and the Karmanian to Tlepolemos, and Persis to Peukestas and I wish to appoint Oxyntes satrap over Media.

23 King Alexander appoints Holkias, king of Illyria. And he gives him five hundred horses to be brought from Asia and three thousand talents. From these let him prepare a shrine and set up statues of Ammon, Heracles, Athena, Olympias, Philip. And let the overseers of the kingdom also erect likenesses of Holkias of silver and statues covered with gold at Delphi. And let Perdikkas also dedicate bronze likenesses of Alexander, Ammon, Heracles, Olympias, Philip.

25 May the gods, the guardian Olympians, and Heracles, the earliest forefather of the king, establish all these proposals ..."

*LDM* 115–122:

[115] "Rex Alexander, Ammonis et Olympiadis filius, testamentum fecit. Si mihi filius ex Rhoxane uxore mea natus erit, is potissimum Macedoniae rex esto; tantisper Arrhidaeus, Philippi filius, Macedonibus imperator sit. Si mihi filia ex Rhoxane uxore mea nata erit, eam Macedones ex fide sua meaque dignitate educandam



collocandamque curent ipsique sibi regem, quem videbitur, cooptent. Qui ita cooptatus fuerit, is Macedoniae rex <esto ...>.

[116] Olympiadi matri meae potestatem facio Rhodi habitandi sive [alicubi] uspiam, <ubi> voluerit, eique rex Macedoniae eadem omnia in annos singulos denture curato, quae me vivo dabantur. Leonnato satrapeam in Hellesponto eique uxorem Cleonicen, Holciae sororem, do. Cappadociae et Paphlagoniae imperatorem facio Eumenem, qui mihi hypomnematographus fuit. Insulas omnes liberas esse iubeo: quae possederant, possideant et legibus suis utantur.

[117] Pamphyliae, Lyciae, Phrygiae maiori Antigonum imperatorem facio. Cariae Asandrum praeesse iubeo. †et ager qui est ultra† fluvium, qui Halys vocatur; in eum agrum Antipatrum imperatorem do. Ciliciae imperatorem facio Nicanorem. Syriae ad eum finem, qui Mesopotamius vocatur, Pithonem imperatorem facio. Babylonem et agrum Babylonicum, qui postea adiunctus est, Seleuco, qui mihi armiger fuit, sub imperium do. Phoenicen et Coelen Syriam Meleagro adtribuo. Aegyptiorum regnum Ptolemaeo trado et Cleopatram, sororem meam, uxorem do.

[118] Regiones, quae inter Babyloniae <et> Bactrianae fines intersunt, satrapes, quas quisque obtinet, habeat; hisque omnibus summum imperatorem Perdiccam facio, eique uxorem Rhoxanen, Oxyartis filiam Bactrianam, quae mihi uxor fuit, trado. Populo Rhodiensi ad urbem ornandam ex pecunia regia auri signati talenta CCC dentur et naves triremes XL frumentique ex Aegypto in annos singulos gratis medimna XX <milia> et ex Asiae locis proximis item gratis in annos singulos tritici medimna XX <milia>; praesidiumque, quod ibi reliqui, ex oppido exigere iubeo.

[119] Sacerdotibus, qui Aegypti sunt, auri signati talenta duo milia ex pecunia publica dentur corpusque meum Ptolemaeus <in Aegyptum> portandum curet. Id sacerdotes Aegypti, uti iis videbitur, procurent, alveusque, ubi id corpus ponatur, fiat ex auri talentis CC.

[120] Thebanis Boeotiis ad urbem reficiendam auri signati talenta MMM do exulibusque, qui inde <propter> bellum profugerant, bona sua, quae ademeram, reddo. Quos ego satis supplicii ob temeritatem, quod mihi adversati sunt, dedisse existimo. Atheniensibus detur in aedem Minervae sella aurea atque [amictus] peplus ex auro. In aedem Iunonis Argis dentur arma atque insignia mea et argenti talenta M. Apollini Delphos dentur dentes eburnei omnes et coria †duo† serpentium et paterae aureae C; Milesiis argenti talenta CL, Cnidiis argenti talenta CL.

[121] Indiae quae partes sunt secundum flumen Indum, <ibi> imperator sit Taxiles. Indiae quae partes sunt inter flumen Hydaspem atque Indum, ibi imperator sit Porus. Paropanisadarum imperatorem Oxyartem Bactrianum, patrem Rhoxanes, uxoris meae, facio. Arachosiis et Gedrosiis imperet Sibyrtius. Stasanori Solei Arium et Drangarum imperium do. Bactrianis imperet Philippus. Parthyaeam et quod proximum est Hyrcaniae, do Phratapherni; Carmaniam Tlepolemo. Persis omnibus imperet Peucestes. Ex †eis† imperiis omnibus excedat Oxydates, et pro eo Medis imperator sit Craterus. Excedat item ex Susianis Argaeus; imperator sit <pro eo> Coenus.



[122] Illyriis omnibus imperatorem do Holciam, eique equorum quingentorum evectionem et argenti signati talenta MMM do. Ex ea pecunia Holcias faciat statuas Alexandri, Ammonis, Minervae, Herculis, Olympiadis, Philippi patris. Eas in fano Olympico ponat. Imperatores summos quos feci, statuas inauratas Alexandri dent Delphis, Athenis †hiolce †. Ptolemaeus ponat in Aegypto statuas inauratas Alexandri, Ammonis, Minervae, Herculis, Olympiadis, Philippi patris.

This last will of Alexander is not to be confused with his “last plans” which, in Diodorus’ account based on a reliable early Hellenistic author Hieronymos of Kardia, was a document (*hypomnemata*) Perdikkas claimed to have found in Alexander’s office. The “last plans” were submitted to the soldiers who voted them down, probably because an important part of them was another war which they clearly did not want. There is nothing inherently false or unlikely in the “last plans” and in fact some activity prescribed in them was already in planning if not in motion in the hour of Alexander’s death. Therefore the authenticity of the “last plans” should not be questioned.<sup>44</sup> For the sake of clarity I will be using here the term Testament for what survived from antiquity as the last will of Alexander, just as Heckel does.<sup>45</sup> Unlike Alexander’s “last plans”, the Testament almost certainly is not an authentic document written on Alexander’s orders, since we know that he did not leave any disposition concerning the division of his empire.<sup>46</sup> It is a political pamphlet, from Ausfeld on generally dated to the beginning of the age of the Successors, with the notable exception of Bauer and Seibert to whom it is a literary composition of late antiquity, contemporaneous with the *Metz Epitome*.<sup>47</sup> Notwithstanding the almost universal agreement of the scholarship as to the early Hellenistic date of it, the evidence for it is circumstantial. It depends on how one reads the reflection of intrigues and infighting between the Successors in the *LDM* and Ps.-Callisth. III 30–33. The texts we have today could be interpolated and transformed at any given moment of their transmission. If the original text indeed recorded the privileged position of Antipater in the Western part of the Macedonian empire (*LDM* 117) and of Perdikkas in the Eastern part (*LDM* 118), it must have been written in the period of their political alliance of 322–321 BC.<sup>48</sup> To some the nice words about Olympias in the Testament indicate a date after her death.<sup>49</sup> The detailed study of appointments and alliances listed in the Testament conducted by Heckel may point to the inspiration of Polyperchon and the date ca. 317 BC.<sup>50</sup> Others would like to see a

44 D.S. XVIII 4; Plu. *mor.* 343d. U. Wilcken, “Die letzten Pläne Alexanders des Grossen”, *Sb.Pr.AW* 1937, 192–207; F. Schachermeyr, “Die letzten Pläne Alexanders des Grossen”, *JÖAI* 41 (1954), 118–140; E. Badian, “A King’s Notebook,” *HSCPh* 72 (1968), 183–204; A.B. Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander: Studies in Historical Interpretation*, Oxford 1988, 207–211; Nawotka, *Alexander* (n. 8), 379–380; Waterfield, *Dividing* (n. 17), 11–12.

45 W. HECKEL, *The Last Days and Testament of Alexander the Great*, Wiesbaden 1988.

46 Curt. X 10.5.

47 A. AUSFELD, “Über das angebliche Testament Alexanders des Grossen”, *RhM* 50 (1895), 357–366. History of research on the Testament is in SEIBERT, “Testament” (n. 42). The milestone study is HECKEL, *Last Days* (n. 45).

48 R. MERKELBACH and J. TRUMPF, *Die Quellen des griechischen Alexanderromans, Zweite, neubearbeitete Auflage unter Mitwirkung von Jürgen Trumpf*, Munich 1977, 75–77, 164–192.

49 E. CARNEY, *Olympias, Mother of Alexander the Great*, New York/London 2006, 116.

50 Heckel, *Last Days* (n. 45).

Ptolemaic inspiration for the work and the date of it closer to 309–308 BC.<sup>51</sup> Seibert points out how weak all these hypotheses are to discredit them altogether and to reject the notion of the *LDM* as a political pamphlet of the age of the Successors. He then refers to Bauer's hypothesis of the *LDM* as a rhetorical exercise of late antiquity (third c. AD?).<sup>52</sup>

The question posed in Seibert's paper is crucial in the discussion of sources to the tradition of the division of the Macedonian empire stemming from Alexander's decision and it cannot be answered on the bases of prosopographic study and political reconstructions alone, however plausible the line of argument in Heckel's book and in some earlier books and papers is. One prosopographic detail which speaks strongly against identifying the Testament as an rhetorical writing of late antiquity is the prominent position of Holkias in the alleged Alexander's last will. Since he is a very little known character, certainly no more than a junior officer in Alexander's army and a minor player in the age of Successors,<sup>53</sup> it is extremely unlikely that he might have been introduced to the Testament by a late author who would have sought to give more credence to his work to referring to generally-recognizable characters of the age of Alexander. This Holkias, no matter if he was a Macedonian or an Illyrian, may have been in fact the real author of the Testament.<sup>54</sup>

But there is some additional evidence rarely advocated in this debate. First of all both Diodorus (probably after Hieronymos of Kardia) expressly says that there was a Hellenistic-age document known as the last will of Alexander while Curtius provides indirect support for this statement.<sup>55</sup> This document was, according to Diodorus/Hieronymos, deposited in Rhodes, just as the Testament was to be sent to the Rhodians for safekeeping. The last will of Alexander was not, therefore, a product of a rhetorical exercise of late antiquity: a document known as the last will of Alexander preceded the *Metz Epitome* by a few hundred years. The issue whether indeed Hieronymos was the source for Diodorus in the issue of Alexander's last will or if it was a Rhodian interpolation is of secondary importance for this paper: this or that way the last will of Alexander is a product of the early Hellenistic age. The question remains whether this Hellenistic-age last will of Alexander corresponds to the Testament we have. Certainly it is not precisely either the Latin text of the *LDM* or the Greek one in the *Alexander's Romance*: they are not directly related, both stemming from the common source.<sup>56</sup> A fragmentary papyrus, now in Vienna, of the first c. BC–first c. AD

51 E.J. BAYNHAM, "An Introduction to the Metz Epitome: Its Tradition and Value", *Antichthon* 29 (1995), 60–77; E.J. BAYNHAM, "A Baleful Birth in Babylonia: The Significance of the Prodigy in the Liber de Morte – An Investigation of Genre", in: A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 242–262; A.B. BOSWORTH, "Ptolemy and the Will of Alexander", in: Bosworth and Baynham (eds.), *Alexander* (n. 51), 207–241; A. ZAMBRINI, "The Historians of Alexander the Great", in: J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, Malden, MA/Oxford 2010, 210–220.

52 G. BAUER, *Die Heidelberger Epitome*, Leipzig 1914, 86; SEIBERT, "Testament" (n. 42), 259–260.

53 Outside of the Testament Holkias is known only from the account of Polyaeus (Str. IV 6.6). See: H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, Munich 1926, II 283, no. 580; SCHACHERMEYER, *Alexander* (n. 16), 14; W. HECKEL, *Who's Who in the Age of Alexander the Great*, Malden/Oxford 2006, 140–141.

54 HECKEL, *Last Days* (n. 45), 79–81; HECKEL, *Who's* (n. 53), 140–141.

55 D.S. XX 81.3; Curt. X 10.5. Cf. Heckel, *Last Days* (n. 45), 2.

56 SEIBERT, "Testament" (n. 42), 247.

provides a clue, if not the very answer: it contains the text very similar to, although not identical, with Ps.-Callisth. III 33.11–12:

τὴν Ἀργεῖαδῶ[ν ἀρχήν]/, καὶ συντελείτω[ς]/ Μακεδόνες Ἀργεῖαδ[αις/ τ]ὰ νομιζόμενα [μετὰ τοῦ]/ βασιλέως. ἐξέστω δ[ὲ] Ὀλυμπιάδι τῇ μητρ[ὶ]/ ἀποικεῖν ἐν Ῥόδῳ, ἐάν/ δὲ μὴ βούληται ἀ[ποι]/κεῖν ἐν Ῥόδῳ, ἐξέστωι.<sup>57</sup>

Differences between this text and Ps.-Callisth. III 33.11–12 are so minute that they show the relevant passage in the *Alexander Romance* as the extended version of the Pap.Gr.Vindob. 31954. Thus there is little doubt that the archetype of the Testament of Alexander circulated in the Hellenistic age. Therefore the Testament, as we have it, can be scrutinized as a possible original source of the story of Alexander's decision on the territorial arrangement of his empire.

For all differences between the versions of the Testament we have, they both convey a very similar rendition of the fate of the Macedonian empire:

- On his deathbed Alexander drafted his last will;
- Either he had Holkias read the last will to his friends gathered around him (Ps.-Callisth. III 33.1) or Holkias read out this document to them after Alexander had expired (*ME* 114);
- Arrhidaios is appointed king of the Macedonians and if Rhoxane bears a son, he should become king too; but the final decision as who should be king rests with the Macedonians;
- Olympias may live in Rhodes or wherever she wishes;
- Until a king is elected, Krateros will supervise the Macedonian empire;
- Satrapies of the Alexander's empire are assigned to his generals.

Thus the Testament broadly speaking repeats the decisions of the council of Babylon, giving them, however, the ultimate sanction of Alexander's decision. Having in mind that the empire was his by virtue of conquest (*doriktetos chora*), his was also the right to dispose his property as saw fit.<sup>58</sup> Hence in the Testament the decision as to the division of Alexander's empire is permanent. A notable diversion from the actual state of affairs in Alexander's empire in 323 BC is the position of Seleukos: in the Testament he and not Archon is satrap of Babylon. Even if the position of satrap is lower than that of commander of the Companion cavalry which Seleukos was holding, it may in fact represent Seleukos' claim to legitimacy in Babylon which from 320 BC was the cornerstone of his policy. Seleukos received the satrapy of Babylonia in Triparadeisos and the arrangement recorded in the Testament reflects this state of affairs.<sup>59</sup>

The early Hellenistic Testament of Alexander is the earliest identifiable source of the alternative version of history on the division of the Alexander's empire. If there was something like Seleukid court chronicles, it surely adopted this version which enshrined the rights of the Seleukid dynasty to its core possessions in Babylonia in Alexander's last will. From the Seleukid court chronicles or from historiography partisan to the Seleukid cause it most probably made its way into the Alexander passage of I Maccabees. This version is

<sup>57</sup> M. SEGRE, "Pap. Gr. Vindob.," *RFIC* 11 (1933), 225–226.

<sup>58</sup> On the concept of *doriktetos chora* see A. MEHL, "Doriktetos chora: kritische Bemerkungen zum 'Speerbewerb'," in: *Politik und Völkerrecht der hellenistischen Epoche*, *AncSoc* 11–12 (1980–1981), 173–212.

<sup>59</sup> HECKEL, *Last Days* (n. 45), 60, n. 5.

reflected also in Ammianus Marcellinus and in Moses Khorenats'i. A trace of the Seleukid version may have survived in Tatian's testimony on the pro-Seleukid Babylonian historian Berossos, in the Alexandrian World Chronicle (ELB), in John Malalas, and in the Commentary to Daniel. ELB, Malalas and the Commentary to Daniel have four successor kings: Philip (Arrhidaios), Seleukos, Ptolemy and Antigonos or Demetrios conflated with his father Antigonos. In principal this succession story survived in the Middle Ages, both in the East and in the West, as illustrated by the late-seventh c. Maronite Chronicle (after 664)<sup>60</sup> and by the Syriac Apocalypse of Ps.-Methodius (perhaps 685–692).<sup>61</sup> The example of Ps.-Methodius is especially telling because of the enormous influence his Apocalypse had both in the East and the West, once translated into Greek and from Greek into Latin.<sup>62</sup> This pattern continued in later writings: the four successors in the Syriac *Chronicon ad annum Domini* 846 *pertinens* are Philip Arrhidaios (conflated with Antipater), Antigonos (conflated with Demetrios), Ptolemy and Seleukos.<sup>63</sup> A thirteen-century anonymous Syriac chronicle names only Seleukos out of four servants (*ministri* in Chabot's Latin rendition) who succeeded Alexander.<sup>64</sup> A Western example is the early-fourteenth c. *Traité de la division des royaumes* of Jean de Saint-Victor.<sup>65</sup> This may mean that all these authors follow (directly or indirectly) an intermediate (Seleukid) version derived from the Testament, the one that accepted an ahistorical position of Seleukos as one of the original territorial rulers and which, for some reason, made Philip III Arrhidaios the preferred Argead successor to Alexander, to the detriment of Alexander IV. The succession of Philip III Arrhidaios and the near absence of Alexander IV in the Hellenistic succession tradition is confirmed also in the late (eighth c. A.D.) *Excerpta Latina Barbari* and it is immaterial here that it is an Alexandrian work concerned more with the Ptolemies than with the Seleukids.<sup>66</sup> Also Syriac chronicles list among successors to Alexander his half-brother and never, as far as I can say, his son:

60 Text: J.-B. CHABOT, *Chronica Minora*, II, Louvain 1955, 37: "Hi sunt qui regnaverunt post Alexandrum: in Macedonia regnavit Philippus qui et Arridaeus, frater ipsius Alexandri; et in Asia, Antigonos; et in Macedonia, Cassander; et in Syria, Seleucus". Date: A. PALMER, R.G. HOYLAND and S.P. BROCK, *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, Liverpool 1993, 29.

61 Ps.-Methodius 9.1, in Greek rendition: τελευτήσαντος τοιγαροῦν Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ <πρώτου> βασιλέως <Ελλήνων> ἐβασίλευσαν ἀντ' αὐτοῦ οἱ τέσσαρες παῖδες αὐτοῦ· οὐ γὰρ ἔγημε ποτέ or "So then when Alexander the <first> king of <the Greeks> died, his four servants reigned in his stead. For he never married." (quoting after the edition of W.J. AERTS and G.A.A. KORTEKAAS, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, Leuven 1998. Tr. by B. Garstad). The date: A.P. BROCK, "Syriac sources for seventh-century history", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 2 (1976), 17–36, at 34; REININK, "Ps.-Methodius" (n. 4), 178, 186; GARSTAD, *Apocalypse* (n. 28), VII.

62 REININK, "Ps.-Methodius" (n. 4), 154–155.

63 Text: CHABOT, *Chronica* (n. 60), II, 130.

64 J.-B. CHABOT, *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens*, I, Louvain 1937, 82.

65 Here (510–614) the four principal kings who succeeded Alexander are: his brother Philip, Ptolemy, Antigonos and Seleukos.

66 ELB I 8.5, 9.1 (here Philip is conflated with Ptolemy). The ELB has an Alexander Ptolemaeus reigning in Egypt after Philippus Ptolemaeus: Post Philippum autem regnavit Alexander Ptolemaeus quem et ipse consiliaris Alexandri annos XII (I 9.1). Notwithstanding other details, one of his names is the same as that of Alexander IV, hence this passage may uniquely echo the tradition of the succession of Alexander IV.

Maronite Chronicle (n. 60), Michael bar Elias,<sup>67</sup> Bar Hebraeus,<sup>68</sup> Ps.-Dionysius,<sup>69</sup> Elias of Nisibis.<sup>70</sup> The disappearance of Alexander IV from the list of successors to his father's throne, although surprising at the first glance, is not utterly unexpected having in mind the (unfair) opinion of his indolence expressed in the Suda:

τὸν γὰρ υἱὸν κατὰ φύσιν οὐδὲν ὠφέλησεν ἡ συγγένεια διὰ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀδυναμίαν. τοὺς δὲ μηδὲν προσήκοντας βασιλεῖς γενέσθαι σχεδὸν ἀπάσης τῆς οἰκουμένης (“For Alexander’s natural son was in no way helped by his kinship with him, because of his weakness of spirit, while those who had no connection with Alexander became kings of almost the whole inhabited world”).<sup>71</sup>

For now it suffices to notice the absence of Alexander IV from the list of successors without going any further into the reason why it happened. If this indeed was the arrangement of the Alexander’s empire in pro-Seleukid historiography, the line of succession in Berossos would be: Alexander–Philip III Arrhidaïos–Seleukos I–Antiochos I. For now of course this is only a hypothetical reconstruction which makes all surviving evidence of the alternative history of succession to Alexander fit the same pattern.

67 V 4 in edition (with French translation): J.-B. CHABOT, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, Paris 1899, I, 115.

68 VII in edition of E.A.W. BUDGE, *The Chronography of Gregory Abū'l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, Commonly known as Bar Hebraeus; being the First Part of his Political History of the World*, London 1932: I, 39. For Bar Hebraeus Michael bar Elias is the main source.

69 J.-B. CHABOT, *Incerti auctoris Chronicon Pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum*, I, Louvain 1949, 37.

70 E.W. BROOKS, *Eliae Metropolitae Nisibeni Opus chronologicum*, Rome/Paris/Leipzig 1910, 21.

71 Suda, s.v. βασιλεία, tr. M. AUSTIN, *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation*<sup>2</sup>, Cambridge/New York 2006, 96.



# Alexander and Caligula in the Jerusalem Temple: A Case of Conflated Traditions

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## About the Author

Ory Amitay is a senior lecturer in the History dept. at the University of Haifa. His research involves the interactions of myth and history and the meeting points of Greek, Roman and Jewish cultures. His previous book is *From Alexander to Jesus* (Berkeley 2010), and he is currently working on a second book, to be called *Alexander in Jerusalem*.

## Abstract

This paper deals with a phenomenon manifest in certain stories about the meeting of Alexander the Great with the Jewish High-Priest: the mutual influence of the historical story about the demand of the Emperor Gaius Caesar (Caligula) to erect his statue in the Jerusalem temple and the largely mythical story of Alexander's visit to the same temple (or, alternatively, of his meeting with the High-Priest elsewhere). This influence can be detected on various levels and in both directions. On the philological level, certain catch phrases from the Alexander story enter the Caligula story. Regarding the cast of participants, the name of Simon the Just migrates from the Alexander story to that of Caligula. In the opposite direction, this mutual influence explains the formation of the medieval Hebrew story about Alexander's demand to have his own statue erected in Jerusalem – a innovation in the Alexander tradition inspired by Caligula's history.

One of the best-known stories about Alexander the Great is the episode of his meeting with the Jewish High-Priest, with or without a visit to the holy city of Jerusalem, as told already in antiquity by Josephus, in rabbinic literature (two very different stories, each with its own plotline, purpose and tradition), and the monotheistic strand of the *Alexander Romance* (ε, γ).<sup>1</sup> So far, the questions that dominated the scholarly discussion about this episode were essentially historical: Was there a meeting between Alexander and the Jewish high-priest, or wasn't there? Did Alexander visit Jerusalem or did he ignore it? And, since the *communis opinio* regards the story as a-historical, what were the sources, the motivation and the

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1 Josephus, AJ 11.302–345; *Megillat Taanit* on Kislev 21<sup>st</sup> (cf. *Bavli Yoma* 69a); *Megillat Taanit* on Sivan 25<sup>th</sup> (cf. *Bereshit Raba*, 61.7; *Bavli Sanhedrin* 91a); *Alexander Romance* recension ε: ch. 20 (J. TRUMPF, *Vita Alexandri Magni Regis Macedonum*, Leipzig 1974, 75–78) and recension γ: 2.23–24 (H. ENGELMANN, *Der Griechische Alexanderroman Rezension Gamma*, II: *Buch II*, Meinsheim am Glan 1963, 214–219). For *Megillat Taanit* see the edition of V. NOAM, *Megillat Ta'anit: Versions, Interpretation, History, with a Critical Edition*, Jerusalem 2003, 100–103, 262–265 (Kislev 21<sup>st</sup>) and 70–77, 198–205 (Sivan 25<sup>th</sup>). Remarkably, the lion's share of the scholarly attention has been directed towards Josephus. I intend to address this imbalance in a book, now still a work in progress, to be titled *Alexander in Jerusalem*.



intentions for this fabricated tale?<sup>2</sup> In this paper I propose to approach the topic from a different direction, which deals not with the historicity, the sources or the aims of the story, but rather with a segment of its own history.

The particular development in this episode's history, which I intend to address in this paper, appears in full for the first time in the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century Hebrew rendering of Josephus, the so-called book of Josippon:<sup>3</sup>

And afterwards it came to pass that the priest and king Alexander came to the temple of our god; and the priest showed him the nave, and the house of Yhwh<sup>4</sup> and the courts and the storehouses and the vestibules and the place of the holy-of-holies and the place of the slaughter.

And the king said:

“blessed be Yhwh, god of this house, since from now on I know that he is the master of all. His rule is over everything, and it is in his power to kill and revive every living thing; and joyous are you, his slaves, who serve in front of him in this place. Now I shall make a remembrance of myself; I shall give gold aplenty to the craftsmen, and they shall make an image of me; and let it be erected between the holy-of-holies and the house, and let my statue be a memorial in this great house of god.”<sup>5</sup>

And the priest replied to the king:

“The gold which your lips have vowed – may you give it to the sustenance of Yhwh's priests and to the poor among his people, who come to prostrate themselves in this house. And I shall make a memorial of you, which is better than what you have said: all the children of the priests to be born this year throughout the land of Judea and throughout the city of Jerusalem shall be called by your name – Alexander – and they

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- 2 The bibliography on the topic is vast. For recent gateways to this body of literature see E.S. GRUEN, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1998, 189–198; O. AMITAY, “Shim'on ha-Šadiq in his Historical Contexts”, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 58 (2007), 238 n. 7; A.D. TROPPER, *Simeon the Righteous in Rabbinic Literature: A Legend Reinvented*, Leiden/Boston 2013, 113–156. Few scholars in recent times have been willing to accept a visit as a factual basis for Josephus' story, rationalizing some of its peculiarities and explaining others as literary embellishments: A. KASHER, “The Journey of Alexander the Great in Eretz-Israel”, *Bet Miqra* 20 (1975), 187–208; D. GOLAN, “Josephus, Alexander's Visit to Jerusalem, and Modern Historiography”, in: U. Rappaport (ed.), *Josephus Flavius: Historian of Eretz-Israel in the Hellenistic and Roman Period*, Jerusalem 1982, 29–55. J.C. VANDERKAM, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile*, Mineapolis/Assen 2004, 75. I hold a similar opinion.
- 3 For the text see D. FLUSSER, *The Josippon [Josephus Gorionides]*, II, Jerusalem 1981, 55–57 (chp. 10, lines 32–45). All translations from the Hebrew are my own. For the date of Josippon's composition, 953 CE, see ch. 40, ll. 44–45 (I 177) with additional discussion in D. FLUSSER, “The Author of the Book of Josippon: His Personality and His Age”, *Zion* 18 (1953), 112–115; FLUSSER, *Josippon* (n. 3), II, 79–84. For general surveys of the Hebrew *Alexander Romance* see I.J. KAZIS, *The Book of the Gests of Alexander of Macedon: Sefer Toledot Alexandros ha-Makdoni: A Mediaeval Hebrew Version of the Alexander Romance*, Cambridge, Mass. 1962, 2–55; Y. DAN, *Alilot Alexander Moqdon*, Jerusalem 1969, 7–20; W.J. VAN BEKKUM, “Medieval Hebrew Versions of the Alexander Romance”, in: A. Welkenhuysen, H. Braet and W. Verbeke (eds.), *Medieval Antiquity*, Leuven 1995, 293–302; E. YASSIF, “The Hebrew Tradition about Alexander Moqdon: Narrative Forms and their Meaning in Medieval Jewish Culture”, *Tarbiz* 75 (2006), 75–123.
- 4 Given in the text as “”, shorthand for the *tetragrammaton*.
- 5 Or: in the house of this great god.

will be a memorial to you, when they come to perform their cultic worship in this house; for we cannot accept any idol or image in the house of our god.”

And the king listened to him; and he gave gold aplenty to the house of Yhwh, and to the priest he gave great presents.<sup>6</sup>

An initial point to be made is that while both Josippon and ‘third branch’ derive their main story from Josephus, the story of Alexander’s request to put his statue in the temple was not related by the first century CE historian. This literary unit is clearly an addition by later tradition. Can we say anything about its origins and aims?

A compelling answer to this question has been suggested by David Flusser, the leading scholar and scientific editor of Josippon. In a note to the text he claimed that the part of the story

“relating Alexander’s wish to erect his statue in the temple is an echo of the hostile orders of Gaius Caesar (i.e. Caligula). If this part of the story is not the invention of Josippon, and if it was already in his source, this source was therefore put together under the Roman Empire, extolling Alexander, who did not desire to offend the temple like Gaius Caesar, and relating how the priests of Israel honored Alexander in the same way that new citizens honored the emperors of Rome” (i.e., by taking their name).<sup>7</sup>

Flusser’s claim, that Josippon’s elaboration of the Alexander episode was inspired by the historical demand of Caligula is alluring, indeed convincing. It does, however, bear some further reflection and argumentation.

The main argument in favor of the connection between the two episodes is, obviously, the fact that the same narrative premise stands at the heart of either story: a foreign ruler desires to place his image in the Jerusalem temple, a desire which cannot be fulfilled without

6 A similar story is told in very similar terms in the uniquely original Hebrew *Romance* known to us from mss. Modena, Bibl. Estense 53; Oxford, Bodleian Cod. Heb. 2797.10, and a lost ms. from Damascus described by Harkavy (in Russian) in 1892 (I did not see any of the manuscripts; the details here according to KAZIS, “Book” (n. 3), 33 and 190 nn. 69–71). It was first published by I. LÉVI, “Sefer Alexandros Moqdon”, in: *Festschrift zum achzigsten Geburtstage Moritz Steinschneiders*, Leipzig 1896, 142–163, 235–237 (followed by DAN, *Alilot* (n. 3), 129–170) as “Sefer” and dubbed by YASSIF, “Hebrew” (n. 3), 87–117 as the “third branch” of the Hebrew *Alexander Romance*. The translation of the relevant part of the text is as follows:

“And the king took out many utensils of gold and silver and precious stone, a great many, and put them in the treasury of the house of God. And the king asked Anani the priest and the rest of the priests to take gold aplenty and to make his image in the temple of Yhwh, to serve as a token of remembrance. And Anani and the priests replied: “We cannot do this thing, to create an idol or image in the house of god. But listen to our advice: that gold, which you ordered to fashion into a statue in your image, give it to the treasury of the house of god, for the sustenance of the poor of the city and for those are weak in the knees. And we will make a good name and a remembrance: all the boys born in this year shall all be named ‘Alexander’ after your name.” And this was good in the eyes of the king, and he ordered to do so, and he measured out forty talents of good gold, and gave it to Anani the priest and the rest of the priests, and told them: “Pray you always for me!” And the king continued further and took out utensils of silver and of gold and precious stones aplenty, and gave them to Anani the priest, and told him: “If I have found favor in your eyes, pray for me always”, and Anani said he would”.

7 FLUSSER, *Josippon* (n. 3), I, 56–57, note on ch. 10 l. 41.

causing grievous offense to Jewish religious sensibilities. Caligula's demand, reported both by Philo, a participant in the events, and by Josephus a couple of generations later, thus provides a clear historical parallel to the Alexander episode.<sup>8</sup> The appearance of Caligula's story in Josephus is of crucial importance, given that Josippon's work in general, and the story of Alexander in Jerusalem in particular, are a derivation from and an adaptation of Josephus' work. In addition, Josephus' presentation of the two episodes agrees also in its basic plotline: a foreign ruler with divine aspirations presents a threat to the temple and to Judaism, only to be thwarted by divine intervention. The addition in Josippon can thus be conceived as a mixture of the two Josephan stories, including the element of problem and solution (although in the statue story there is no need for further divine intervention, merely for clever creativity on the Jewish side and for good will on Alexander's).

The picture becomes more complicated and difficult, however, when we turn to the question of Josippon's sources. In order for the narrativial explanation given above to be viable, we ought to assume that the author of Josippon was fully familiar with the story of Caligula's demand to erect his statue in the temple. At first glance, such familiarity might seem automatic for an author who was engaged so deeply with Josephan tradition. However, as Flusser demonstrated, the author of Josippon did not himself read Greek, nor did he have access to Josephus' *opera omnia*.<sup>9</sup> Rather, the author of Josippon benefitted from the lively cultural atmosphere of mid-tenth century Naples, which saw, among other works, the translation into Latin of many Josephan works as well as of the Greek *Alexander Romance*. However, Josippon is said to have worked from a Latin manuscript which contained books 1–16 of *AJ* and the Latin rendering of the *BJ* by the so-called Hegesippus, but did not contain books 17–20 of the *AJ* (presumably because Hegesippus, who was thought to be Josephus himself, covered the same period, and the latter books of *AJ* were thus deemed superfluous). The problem is that the work of Hegesippus (itself a free reworking of Josephus' *BJ*, probably from the 370's CE), although referring to disturbances under Gaius, does not mention his order to place his statue in the temple.<sup>10</sup> Nor, for that matter, does Josippon, who writes about an order of Gaius to erect altars for himself and to swear in his name as a god – but says nothing about statues (ch. 58, ll. 11–13). Whence, therefore, Josippon's knowledge about Caligula's historical demands, which allegedly inspired his story about Alexander's statue?

Flusser, who realized this difficulty (although he did not specify its details), attempted to solve it by conjecturing that

8 Ph. *Legatio* 184 *ad fin.*; J. *BJ* II 184–203 (= II 10 in Whiston and the older editions) and *AJ* XVIII 261–309 (= XVIII 8.2–9). The bibliography of modern research is extensive. For a recent and convenient starting point see E.S. GRUEN, “Caligula, the Imperial Cult, and Philo's *Legatio*”, *StudPhilon* 24 (2012), 135–147.

9 For this and what follows see FLUSSER, *Josippon* (n. 3), II, 121–131, who based his arguments on his close familiarity with Josippon and on an examination of the available Josephan manuscripts which are still known today and may have been used by Josippon.

10 II 5.5: *mortuo quoque Tiberio Gaius successit, qui dominum se et deum videri atque appellari volens causas dedit Iudaeis gravissimae seditionis, ac nisi propere fine imperium clausisset, Iudaeorum genti finem fecerat maturiorem. Non solum enim ab illicitis non revocabat suos, verum etiam missis in Iudaeam ultima supplicia minitabatur, nisi omnia adversum ius et fas religionis armis patrarent*. Hegesippus then goes on to ascribe Agrippa's attempt to fortify Jerusalem, aborted at his death, and then continues to the reign of Claudius. In reality, both Agrippa's attempt and his demise occurred during the reign of Claudius.

“the Hebrew author did not have before him the story of *AJ* 18, but rather an unknown Christian source, which included an abstract of Josephus’ text, possibly already adorned with imaginary details; this abstract was probably elaborated by Josippon with many details and reworked under the influence of Medieval anti-Jewish persecutions.”<sup>11</sup>

This is certainly a possible solution to the problem (at least, there is nothing intrinsically impossible about it). Nevertheless, the conjecture of such an anonymous source raises even more questions than it answers. In the first place, it ought to be stated that the assumption of unknown and unattested sources is a very risky practice under any circumstances, which ought to be made only when it can be supported by substantial evidence, and when no simpler explanation can be produced. This may not be the case here. While Flusser’s familiarity with the existing manuscripts is indeed awe-inspiring, the scope of his argument is limited to those manuscripts, which have survived to the present. It is impossible to know for certain what texts were available to the Hebrew writer a thousand years ago, and what oral traditions he may have been exposed to (more on this below). Secondly, Flusser’s argument relates only to *AJ* XVIII as a primary source for the story of Caligula’s demand. However, as we have seen, the story has been related also in *BJ* II 184–203 and in Philo’s *Legatio*. As for *BJ*, while Flusser demonstrates that Josippon apparently used Hegesippus rather than a Latin translation of *BJ* as his main source for the period leading up to the revolt, he admits that the Hebrew author did probably read *BJ* before he started his work, and may have had an opportunity to leaf through it on occasion.<sup>12</sup> Familiarity with Caligula’s demand to erect his statue in the Jerusalem temple could thus have been obtained directly from a Latin translation of Josephus’ *BJ*.

This explanation, although more economical than Flusser’s suggestion of the lost Christian source, nevertheless runs into difficulties of its own. Josippon’s report about Caligula’s attempt puts a special emphasis on the role of Philo, neglecting altogether both the efforts of the Jewish king Agrippa and the unflinching non-violent resistance of Jews in Judea. Josephus’ *BJ* could not have served as Josippon’s sole source in this matter, because it does not mention Philo in this context (or at all, for that matter). Philo and his mission in Rome do appear in *AJ* (XVIII 257–260), but Flusser was certain that Josippon had no access to books XVII–XX. Therefore, we can either conjecture an unknown manuscript, in this case a Latin copy containing at least *AJ* XVIII, which will have been available to Josippon at some point in his life before or during the preparation of his book, or return with Flusser to the hypothesis of the lost source.<sup>13</sup> If the latter path is chosen, we can conclude that this source ought to have accorded an important place to Philo and to the point of view from Rome.<sup>14</sup>

11 FLUSSER, *Josippon* (n. 3), II, 131. Flusser did not explain why he saw this source as particularly Christian.

12 FLUSSER, *Josippon* (n. 3), II, 128, 130.

13 FLUSSER, *Josippon* (n. 3), I 65–57 n.41; II 136–140 considered in his discussion two later medieval tellings: one by the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century German poet Rudolf von Ems, the other by the Samaritan Arabic chronicler Abu’l Fath (1355 CE). Their comparison with Josippon and with the ‘third branch’ *Romance* (not mentioned by Flusser) is likely to provide some interesting insights into the development of the story and its uses during the high Middle Ages, but must remain a future endeavor.

14 If the floor is open to suggestions about lost sources, might one not conjecture that Josippon had some access (in writing or by oral means) to Philo’s *Legatio*? Together with the report in *BJ*, which could well have been available to him, there would have been enough material for Josippon to produce his own narrative.

Some new light may possibly be thrown on the relation between the traditions about Alexander and Caligula by adding to the mix some new evidence, deriving from rabbinic sources. The source of this new evidence requires some introduction. The story of the meeting between Alexander and the high-priest (not Iaddous/Yaddua as in Josephus, but rather Simon the Just)<sup>15</sup> is told most famously in the Babylonian Talmud (*Yoma* 69a). This discussion in particular diverts our attention to the less known, and certainly less read and studied, *Megillat Taanit*.<sup>16</sup> *Megillat Taanit* or “The Scroll of Lamentation” is, contrary to its name, a list of days on which good things happened in Jewish history, from the Persian to the Roman periods. To this early stratum, a mere list of dates with a handful of explanatory words, were later added two different scholia, each preserved in a single manuscript. The scroll and the scholia have both received an excellent new scientific edition by Noam. According to Noam’s masterful argumentation, one scholion (Oxford, Bodl. Neubauer 867.2, Michael 388, henceforth **O**) represents an Eretz-Israeli tradition, whereas the other (Parma, de-Rossi 117, henceforth **P**) represents the tradition of Babylonian Jewry. Both scholia are “representatives of a group of *aggadic* compendia, attached to the scroll in tannaitic and amoraic times”.<sup>17</sup> The scholia are thus said to derive from pre-Talmudic sources, some of which even go back to the second-temple period. The following is the story of Alexander and the high-priest according to **P**.<sup>18</sup>

*On the 21<sup>st</sup> of that month [i.e. Kislev] is the day of Mt. Grizim*

A day when the Kutim asked Alexander the Macedonian for the temple; and he gave it to them. Came Israel and informed Simon the Just. He donned his priestly robes and came out ahead, he and all the magnates of Jerusalem. While they were walking in the mountains they saw lit torches. “What is this?”, said the king. The *delatores* replied: “These? These are Jews who have rebelled against you!”

They came to Antipatris when the sun came out. He saw Simon the Just, wearing the priestly robes, fell off his chariot and prostrated himself on the ground before him. They told him: to this man do you prostrate yourself? Why, he is nothing but a son of man!” He replied: “It is the image of this man that I see, when I go to war and conquer.” He said: What will you ask for?” He replied: “A house, where we pray for your kingship – Gentiles have misled you and you gave it to them.” He asked them: “Who has misled me?” He said: “These! These Kutim here.” He said: “They are hereby given to you.”

He pierced holes in them, hung them after the horses, and dragged them over briars and thorns all the way up to Mt. Grizim. Once they have arrived there, at Mt. Grizim, they plowed it and planted it with seed, just as they planned to do to the Temple. The day when they did so, they declared a festival.

15 For a general discussion of this telling, and for the uniqueness of Simon the Just as a literary character (more on that presently), see AMITAY, “Shim’on” (n. 2). A different approach and much elaboration in TROPPER, *Simeon* (n. 2).

16 The only scientific edition is NOAM, *Megillat* (n.1). For an English introduction by the same author see V. NOAM, “Megillat Taanit – the Scroll of Fasting”, in: S. Safrai et al. (eds.) *The Literature of the Sages, Part 2: Midrash and Targum, liturgy, poetry, mysticism, contracts, inscriptions, ancient science and the languages of rabbinic literature*, Assen 2006, 339–362. An English translation of the scientific edition remains an urgent desideratum.

17 NOAM, *Megillat* (n. 1), 26. For the discussion see esp. 19–27, 319–332.

18 The version in the Oxford manuscript gives the same story, but with different emphases and detail.

So far Alexander. Turning to Caligula, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month Shvat the scroll says (in Aramaic): *On the twenty-second the work (worship?) that the hated one ordered to enter the temple has been canceled.*<sup>19</sup> The two scholia explain the date in the same way: this was the day when Caligula's intent to place idols in the temple was frustrated. However, since in other respects the two scholia tell very different stories, it would be worthwhile here to give both:

**P:** Because *qsglgs* (= Gaius Caligula) sent the idols to be put in the temple, and when this became known, all the magnates of Jerusalem came out ahead. They said: "We shall die and this will not be!" And they were begging, and shouting at the messenger. Said the messenger to them: "Before you shout at me and beg me, shout and beg your god in heaven". And they anticipated him at every town. And once he got to the towns, the messenger would ask: "Are Israel so many?" And the *delatores* said to him: "These? These are the Jews, who anticipate you at every town. He entered the towns and saw the people, laying about in the market on their sackcloth and in ashes. Before he arrived at Antipatris, he heard a rumor that *qsglgs* had died. He immediately took the idols, and gave them to Israel, who dragged them. The day they dragged them they made a good day.

**O:** For in the day of *qlwsqws* (also = Gaius Caligula) they decreed to put an idol in the temple, and a rumor came to Jerusalem at the eve of the Holiday (i.e. Tabernacles). Simon the Just told them: celebrate your holidays joyfully, nothing of what you have heard is (real). He whose honor resides in this house [ *lacuna* ] ambassadors<sup>20</sup> went out and anticipated them: one messenger [...], the second to Tyre, the third to Sidon and the fourth to Kziv (=Akhziv), and they said: (in Aramaic) "Before you die this will be! Before you die will you see this!"<sup>21</sup> And Simon heard a voice: *the work (worship?) that the hated one ordered to enter the temple has been canceled. Caligula*<sup>22</sup> *is dead and his ordered are canceled.*

Saving for a future discussion many of the questions raised by these two texts, let us focus on their connection with the Alexander episode, as reported in *Megillat Taanit*. Beginning with **P**, we encounter a strange detail about a group of *delatores*, who advise "the messenger" (that is, the Roman governor Petronius) about the identity of the people who anticipate him at every town. *Prima facie*, one might suspect this to be a reference to local Gentiles, who wanted to arouse the Emperor's wrath against their Jewish enemies, possibly following the violence exerted by Jewish fanatics at Jamnia against attempts to establish an altar for the

19 For parallels in rabbinic literature to this divine message see NOAM, *Megillat* (n. 1), 284, notes 13–15. It is impossible to discern whether this phrase was borrowed from a lost text, or from oral tradition. The fact that it was retained in Aramaic in the Hebrew Eretz-Israeli scholion testifies, according to Noam, to its early origins.

20 Literally *mal'akhim*, that is ἄγγελοι.

21 The reading here is problematic, and is probably corrupt. As it stands it may mean – we will die before this happens, or alternatively – you will die before this happens. For suggested emendations see NOAM, *Megillat* (n. 1), 284. The general spirit is clear enough.

22 Throughout rabbinic literature the name of Caligula has been garbled in many ways. Some of these contain puns at his expense, as is the case here: the text gives *qlqltis*, which can possibly be understood to mean: "the wrong-doer is dead and his wrong-doings are canceled".



Emperor.<sup>23</sup> However, as it now stands the story makes very little sense at this point. Petronius had just expressed his marvel at the great number of Israelites who came out to beseech him at each town; he did not need the *delatores* to make this basic identification. A much more plausible explanation is that we have here a doublet of the Alexander story in **P**: “The *delatores* replied: ‘These? These are Jews...’” This interpretation is strengthened by the mention of Antipatris in the Caligula story. All of our other sources – Philo, Josephus and **O** – specify an array of sites in Phoenicia: Ptolemais, Kziv, Tyre and Sidon. Antipatris never comes into play, and is best explained as yet another borrowing from the Alexander story, where the Macedonian king allegedly met Simon the Just. The dragging of the idols, too, which is not reported by any of the other sources, seems to have been replicated from the vicious penalty exacted by the Jews from the Samaritan *delatores* in the Alexander story. None of this is in **O**, which does, however, display a clear borrowing on another level, bringing Simon the Just himself into the story.<sup>24</sup> Apparently, the affinity between the two stories was strong enough to overcome the glaring anachronism created by the removal of Simon from the early Hellenistic period and his transplantation in the mid first century CE.

This extensive borrowing from Alexander’s story to Caligula’s is striking, and requires an explanation. Why was Alexander so relevant to Caligula, in the minds of the rabbinic scholiasts? The answer seems to me to lie with the attitude of these two historical figures to their own deification. As Gruen remarked in a recent treatment of Philo’s story about the statue incident: “the portrait of the princeps as obsessed with his own divinity and driven by a ferocious hostility to Jews underpins the entire exposition.”<sup>25</sup> The importance of deification in the story of Alexander in Jerusalem is exemplified by the introduction of the *proskynesis* motif both in Josephus and in the *Megillat Taanit/Bavli Yoma* tradition. The attempt of Alexander to introduce obeisance into his court protocol caused chagrin and indignation among some of his men, at least in part, because of its theological consequences: Macedonians and Greeks prostrated themselves before gods, not before men.<sup>26</sup> The familiarity of the Jewish authors with this theme is most clearly evident in the telling of **P** given above. When Alexander’s men see him performing *proskynesis* before the high-priest they ask him in bewilderment: “To this man do you prostrate yourself? Why, he is nothing but a son of man!”

The relation of all this to Alexander *historicus* cannot be determined without forming an opinion about the historicity of the meeting between the Macedonian king and the Jewish

23 On the significance of this action see GRUEN, “Caligula” (n. 8), 143–144.

24 In my opinion, there were two men known as Simon the Just (allegedly a grandfather and his grandson, but possibly a great-grandfather and his great-grandson), whose lives spanned the late fourth to late third centuries (AMITAY, “Shim’on” (n. 2)). In this story, Simon the Just is clearly present in mythic time. TROPPER, *Simeon* (n. 2), 209–211 sees the rabbinic Simon the Just as a purely mythological character, rightly projected by the rabbis to the early Hellenistic period.

25 As GRUEN, “Caligula” (n. 8), argues, we should be wary of accepting Philo’s assertions about Caligula’s emotions and intentions at face value. On the other hand, the emphasis on Philo’s own contribution to the fashioning of the narrative corroborates the importance of the Emperor’s divinity to contemporary Jewish narrative. The same can be said about Josephus, in whose story Caligula is assassinated, and the news of his death arrive in the Levant *before* his menacing response to Petronius, inviting the reader to draw theological conclusions from a historical account.

26 I have treated the *proskynesis* episode in **O**. AMITAY, *From Alexander to Jesus*, Berkeley 2010, 37–38. For a broader discussion of the deification of Alexander see *ibid.* 9–77.



high-priest. If we accept a factual basis at the heart of the story, the challenge of Alexander's theological self-perception might already have been an issue after the Tyrian siege, and certainly after Siwah.<sup>27</sup> The introduction of the *proskynesis* motif must, however, be a later embellishment, since the historical attempts to introduce it took place only later on, and much further east. If, on the other hand, we join the general agreement that the Jewish traditions about Alexander and the high-priest are mythical rather than historical, the engagement of the Jewish authors with obeisance, and through it with Alexander's deification, ought to be read as a reaction to the constant challenge presented both by Alexander's ubiquity and by the popular practice of ruler cult in the Hellenistic world, and consequently in imperial Rome.

These challenges were all the more relevant to such Jews who entertained a highly positive opinion of Alexander, such as Josephus and the sages who transmitted on the *Megillat Taanit/Yoma* tradition. By this reasoning, one way to solve the theological difficulty presented by Alexander was to put a mythic spin on the historical *proskynesis* story: in the Jewish tradition Alexander does not demand obeisance from his underlings (thus signifying his own divine status), but rather performs obeisance before the representative of the one true God. As Josephus makes Alexander say: "it is not to this man that I made obeisance, but to the god, through whose priesthood this man is honored."<sup>28</sup> Another way of confronting the dilemma of Alexander's ambivalence, I suggest, was through comparison and contrast with Caligula. The Emperor raised the issue himself, and the God of Israel came to his people's defense. Unlike Alexander, singled out as invincible by divine grace, Caligula acted hubristically against God, and was consequently smitten down in an act of divine vengeance. It is this kind of thinking, I argue, which created the conditions for the extensive borrowings from Alexander to Caligula in *Megillat Taanit*.

A much harder question to answer is how these ideas found their way into the texts that have survived. There is of course a basic distinction between written and oral transmission. In the context of Jewish tradition, famous for its extensive use of both modes of communication, one is quickly reduced to circular speculation. Nevertheless, a comparison between the two versions of the Caligula story in *Megillat Taanit* may offer a clue to at least some of the processes of transmission that we can perceive today. The point is that despite the fact that the two scholia retain the same historical interpretation of the date (this is not always the case in *Megillat Taanit*), not only do they tell the story very differently, but they also reflect Alexander's influence on Caligula in dissimilar fashion. As we have seen, in **O** the detail connected with Alexander is the association of Caligula with Simon the Just. This may well be the contribution of the scholiast, a clever reference for those in the know. The borrowings in **P**, on the other hand, are of an entirely different nature: the use of recurring phrases, the borrowing of actors and narrative elements that do not fit the scene and the replication of the toponym Antipatris, all serve only to muddy the story, not to clarify or

27 For my position on these episodes see AMITAY, *Alexander* (n. 26), 16–26.

28 *AJ* I 333: οὐ τοῦτον, εἶπεν, προσεκύνησα, τὸν δὲ θεόν, οὗ τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην οὗτος τετίμηται. For an unorthodox interpretation of this detail in the story see C.H.T. FLETCHER-LOUIS, "Alexander the Great's Worship of the High Priest", in: L.T. Stuckenbruck and W.E.S. North (eds.), *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, London/New York 2004, 71–102.

enhance it. It is indeed possible that we witness here the literary confusion caused somehow by a subconscious influence of Alexander's story over Caligula's.

The gap between the original scholia on *Megillat Taanit* and medieval tradition defies even bold speculation. In both **O** and **P** Alexander's name is written *Iskndrws*, betraying a clear Arabic influence on the textual transmission. Thus, in addition to a chain of oral tradition which is to be taken for granted in a rabbinic context, and to whatever early rabbinic or even second temple texts which may or may not have contained relevant material, we ought also to assume a moment in time when elaborations and confusions could enter the written record, beyond the original words of the scholiasts. In itself, the introduction of this layer of redaction confounds our system of philological equations with too many variables. Indeed, one is hard pressed to say anything about what Josippon might have known of all this. For what it is worth, I believe that enough material could well have made it to Josippon, for him to compose his story as he did, without the postulation of unknown works. On the other hand, it is more likely than not that he had access to much material, however transmitted, that is now lost to us.

A final observation about Alexander and Caligula in Jewish tradition: the first connection was created by fully historical circumstances, which unfolded at the end of Caligula's short reign. In Josephus, three generations later, there is still no sign of the historiographical tendency to connect the two stories. When we come to the scholia of *Megillat Taanit* we observe a strong influence by Alexander on the tradition of Caligula. Returning finally to Josippon, we see for the first time a fully developed new story, which is also a clear conflation of the two traditions. True to the tone set by Josephus and maintained throughout the tradition, this chapter in our story's history, too, offers a surprising reversal: while in *Megillat Taanit* Alexander's tradition exerted its influence on that of Caligula, by the time of Josippon the tables have turned. The new addition to the story of Alexander in Jerusalem replicated Caligula's historical demand and ascribed it to Alexander.

# The Alexander historians in Byzantium

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This paper intends to offer the first results of an investigation about the reception of the historians of Alexander in Byzantium. It is focused on the three authors whose work has been fully preserved (Diodorus of Sicily, Plutarch, and Arrian) and will not tackle the controversial question of establishing whether the Byzantines could also read some of the works from which only fragments survived.<sup>1</sup> It will combine a philological approach with a literary investigation and develop the following perspectives: 1) survey of the manuscript tradition; 2) examination of the “primary testimonia” of Byzantine reading (scholia, excerpts and summaries, pieces of literary criticism); 3) presentation of four “case studies” illustrating various Byzantine ways of dealing with the legacy of the historians of Alexander.

## 1. Manuscript transmission

Although the textual history of each individual author has given way to thorough examination (see Bertrac on Diodorus; Irigoien and Manfredini on Plutarch; Roos on Arrian), no attempt has ever been made to get a synthetical view about the Alexander material available in all three of them.

A first point to be noted is the existence of important divergences in the manuscript tradition of Diodorus, Plutarch, and Arrian: while Plutarch’s *Life of Alexander* and his treatises *De Alexandri fortuna* (further *FA*) have been copied many times, without interruption, from 10th to 16th century, things are rather different for Diodorus and Arrian.<sup>2</sup> Among the seventeen manuscripts of the *Library of History* including Book XVII, only one is ancient (*Parisinus gr.* 1665, 10th c.); the other sixteen manuscripts have been copied in the 15th or 16th century. The same can be said about Arrian’s *Anabasis* and *Indica*, for which we possess only one (relatively) ancient testimony, the *Vindobonensis hist. gr.* 4 (late 11th c.), but ten manuscripts of the 13th or 14th century, and around thirty manuscripts of the 15th, 16th, and 17th century: here is a clear testimony of the popularity enjoyed by Arrian’s history of Alexander in the last years of the Byzantine empire and the immediate followings of the fall of Constantinople.

It is possible to group together some of the manuscripts of this “Alexander corpus” according to their provenance, thus outlining the first lineaments of a geographical cultural

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1 For a survey of this question, see G. ZECCHINI (ed.), *Il lessico Suda e la memoria del passato a Bisanzio*, Bari 1999.

2 On Plutarch, cf. K. ZIEGLER, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der vergleichenden Lebensbeschreibungen Plutarchs*, Leipzig 1907; Ziegler’s introduction to the Teubner edition of *Lives* (I.1, 2000; II.1, 1993; II.2, 1968); Flacelière’s and Irigoien’s general introduction to the CUF edition of *Lives and Moralia* (1957; 1987); D’Angelo’s and Rubina Cammarota’s introduction to the edition of *FA*, I–II (1998). On Diodorus, see Bertrac’s general introduction to the CUF edition of the *Library of History* (1993). On Arrian, cf. Roos’ introduction to the Teubner edition of the *Anabasis* (1907).

map.<sup>3</sup> Three manuscripts of Plutarch, *Athous Lavrae* Γ 84 and *Parisinus suppl. gr.* 686 (including *Vita Alexandri* (further *VA*)), *Vaticanus Barb. gr.* 182 (including *FA*), belong to the so-called *recensio Constantiniana*, that is to the famous 32-lines codices copied in the imperial scriptorium of the Library of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913–959).<sup>4</sup> Seven other manuscripts have a link with the prestigious figure of Planudes (*ca.* 1255–1305), who played a key role in the transmission of Plutarch's works and thus contributed to the diffusion of Plutarch's views on Alexander.<sup>5</sup> Annotated by Planudes, the 10th-century *Parisinus gr.* 1957 served as a model for the *Ambrosianus* C 126 inf (including *FA*), first stage of the so-called "*recensio* of Planudes"; this preparatory version, copied in 1294/1295, was then used as a model (along with an exemplar of the *Vitae*) to produce *Parisinus gr.* 1671, a fair copy written in 1296, and including *VA–FA*.<sup>6</sup> Two other manuscripts, *Parisinus gr.* 1674 (early 14th c., including *VA*), and *Vaticanus gr.* 139 (*ca.* 1305, including *FA*) constitute enlarged versions of the foregoing editions, copied after Planudes' death by members of his team.<sup>7</sup> To these volumes one can add the codex *Vaticanus gr.* 264 (*ca.* 1300, *FA*), corrected and annotated by Planudes.<sup>8</sup>

A third group of manuscripts, dating from the 14th and 15th century, was copied at Mistra or in the region of Morea, a very important cultural centre under the despotate of the Cantacuzenus and Palaeologan families. Two volumes of our corpus were produced in the days of Manuel Cantacuzenus, John VI Cantacuzenus' second son, despote of the Peloponnese from 1348 to 1380: both codices were written by Manuel Tzykandyles, the most

3 On the notion of "cultural geography", see J. IRIGOIN, *La Tradition des textes grecs: Pour une critique historique*, Paris 2003, 296.

4 Cf. J. IRIGOIN, "Les manuscrits d'historiens grecs et byzantins à 32 lignes" (1977), "La formation d'un corpus. Un problème d'histoire des textes dans la tradition des *Vies Parallèles* de Plutarque" (1982–1983); "Les manuscrits de Plutarque à 32 et à 22 lignes" (1976), reprinted in: *Tradition* (n. 3), n° 16–18; M. MANFREDINI, "La *recensio constantiniana* di Plutarco", in: G. Prato (ed.), *I manoscritti greci tra riflessione e dibattito: Atti del 5 Colloquio internazionale di paleografia greca, Cremona, 4–10 ottobre 1998*, Florence 2000, II, 655–663; M. MANFREDINI, "Un frammento Parigino di un codice atonita delle *Vite* di Plutarco", *ASNP*, ser. III 14 (1984), 527–530 (on the Athonite and Parisian manuscripts).

5 Cf. E. FRYDE, *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance 1261–ca. 1360*, Leiden 2000, 226–267 (241–244 about Planudes's work on Plutarch).

6 Cf. M. MANFREDINI, "Il Plutarco di Planude", *SCO* 42 (1992), 123–125; A. RESCIGNO, "Planude e il codice di Plutarco *Par. gr.* 1957", in: I. Gallo (ed.), *Ricerche plutarchee*, Naples 1992, 145–160; A. ROLLO, "Per la storia del Plutarco ambrosiano (C 126 inf)", in: F. Bonanno (ed.), *Plutarco: Parallela minora: Traduzione latina di Guarino Veronese*, Messina 2008, 95–129; P. HOFFMANN, "Parisinus gr. 1671", in: C. Astruc et al., *Les Manuscrits grecs datés des XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles conservés dans les bibliothèques publiques de France. I. XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris 1989, 69–73 and pl. 73–74.

7 P. HOFFMANN, "Deux témoins apparentés des *Vies* de Plutarque: les *Parisini gr.* 1671 (A) et 1674 (D)", *Scriptorium* 37 (1983), 259–264; on the *Vat. gr.* 139, S. MARTINELLI TEMPESTA, "Per l'identificazione della scrittura latina di Massimo Planude", *IMU* 46 (2005), 378–379. The codex *Parisinus gr.* 1672 (including *VA* and *FA*) was once considered as another representative of Planudes' recension, but it has been shown convincingly that it was copied at least half a century after Planudes' death, between 1350 and 1380, and thus loses any connection with Planudes' editorial work: cf. N.G. WILSON, "Maximus Planudes and a Famous Codex of Plutarch", *GRBS* 16 (1975), 95–97; M. MANFREDINI, "Un famoso codice di Plutarco: il *Par. gr.* 1672", *SCO* 39 (1989), 127–131.

8 Cf. D. BIANCONI, "La biblioteca di Cora tra Massimo Planude e Niceforo Gregora. Una questione di mani", *S&T* 3 (2005), 391–438, at 422, n. 63.

famous copyist of John Cantacuzenus;<sup>9</sup> the first one, containing Plutarch's *Lives* (*Ambrosianus D 538 inf.* + *Oxonius Bodl. Canon. gr.* 93, including *VA*) was achieved in 1362, and the second one, a manuscript of Arrian (*Monacensis gr.* 451), was completed a few years later, in 1370, for Demetrius Cassandrenus, a "fidèle" of John VI.<sup>10</sup> Three other manuscripts of the *Anabasis* were copied in the following century: Petros Bouas wrote one of them (*Vaticanus Ottob. gr.* 67) for George Palaeologus Cantacuzenus<sup>11</sup> in 1435/1436, and Nicholas Mellachrinus, *grammatikos* of Morea, copied the two others in the mid-15th century (*Vaticanus Pal. gr.* 256, a. 1449; *Parisinus gr.* 1684, mid-15th c.).<sup>12</sup>

Two other manuscripts of our corpus attest to the circulation of the Greek historians of Alexander in Italy already in the 13th century. The oldest extant codex including Book XVII of Diodorus' *Library*, *Parisinus gr.* 1665 (10th c.), was present at Otranto during the reign of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (1196–1250),<sup>13</sup> since it bears the mark of Nectarios of Otranto, abbey of the monastery of Casola, and contains marginal notes by Nectarios' friend and disciple, Giovanni Grasso, imperial *notarios* in the years 1219–1236 and author of philosophical opuscula and classicizing poems, some of which were composed in praise of Frederick II.<sup>14</sup> As for the *Parisinus gr.* 1678 (including Plutarch's *VA* and *FA*), it must have been present in Italy in the second half of the 13th century, for two quires of it were inserted into a codex copied around this time in the Calabro-Sicilian area, the *Vindobonensis Phil. gr.* 129.<sup>15</sup>

An important point to be noted is the quasi absence of "Alexander codices", gathering in one and the same volume various versions of Alexander's story: there does not exist even one manuscript including Diodorus' book XVII, Plutarch's *Life* and treatises *On fortune*, and Arrian's *Anabasis*. The three authors' works enjoyed separated textual tradition: when Diodorus and Arrian feature in the same manuscript, Arrian's *Anabasis* is joined with the first five books of the *Library of History*, not with the "pentade" including Alexander's history; when Plutarch and Arrian are joined, we find the *Anabasis* copied with the treatises *De Alexandri fortuna*, not with Alexander's *Life* (cf. *Laurentianus gr.* 70.1; *Laurentianus gr.* 70.9). Such a shape of things is probably due to the fact that Diodorus' and Plutarch's

9 Cf. B. MONDRAIN, "L'ancien empereur Jean VI Cantacuzène et ses copistes", in: A. Rigo (ed.), *Gregorio Palamas e oltre: Studi e documenti sulle controversie teologiche del XIV secolo bizantino*, Florence 2004, 250–262, 290–291 and pl. V–XII.

10 Cf. D.A. ZAKYTHINOS, *Le Despotat grec de Morée, II: Vie et institutions*, Édition revue et augmentée par C. Malteveu, London 1975, 316–317; S. MERGIALI, *L'Enseignement et les Lettrés pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261–1453)*, Athens 1996, 146–147.

11 George Palaeologus Cantacuzenus (*floruit* 1430–1460) was the grandson of Matthew Cantacuzenus, older son of John VI: cf. D.M. NICOL, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos (Cantacuzenus): ca. 1100–1460: A Genealogical and Prosopographical Study*, Washington 1968, 176–179 (178 on his scholarly inclination and library at Kalavryta).

12 Cf. ZAKYTHINOS, *Despotat* (n. 10), 318; MERGIALI, *L'Enseignement* (n. 10), 206.

13 On the brilliance of the Sicilian court during the reign of Frederick II, king of Germany, Sicily and Jerusalem, see N.G. WILSON, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London 1996, 227.

14 Cf. A. DILLER, "Diodorus in Terra d'Otranto", *CPh* 49 (1954), 257–258; C. MAZZUCHI, "Diodoro Siculo fra Bisanzio e Otranto", *Aevum* 73 (1999), 385–421. On Giovanni Grasso, M. GIGANTE, "La civiltà letteraria", in: G. Cavallo et al. (eds.), *I Bizantini in Italia*, Milan 1983, 633–635. The *Parisinus gr.* 1678 bears an autograph of Nikephoros Gregoras, which means it was back at Constantinople in the 14th century.

15 Cf. IRIGOIN, *Tradition* (n. 3), 90–91.

accounts on Alexander were only parts of a wider entity, so that neither Diodorus' book XVII has ever been copied independently, except in a few late manuscripts of the 16th c. (*Parisinus gr.* 1668, *Parisinus gr.* 1669, and *Parisinus gr.* 1667),<sup>16</sup> nor Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* has ever been extracted from the *Parallel Lives* (and joined with the treatises *De fortuna*): it is always coupled with other *Lives*, and even "mixed" Plutarchean manuscripts (that is manuscripts including *Lives* and *Moralia*) where the *Life of Alexander* and the treatises on Alexander's fortune feature conjointly are less numerous than manuscripts containing either the *Life* or the treatises.<sup>17</sup>

The only Byzantine manuscript which seems to bear witness to a special interest in Alexander's history is the *Marcianus gr.* 511, that includes Arrian's *Anabasis* and *Indica*, Plutarch's *De Alexandri fortuna*, a poem composed by Manuel Philes (ca. 1275–1345) in praise of Alexander, and a text intitled Ταφαι Ἀλεξάνδρου, which is an excerpt from Diodorus (XVIII 1.1–5 and 26.1–28) describing Alexander's funerals.<sup>18</sup> According to Nicolette Trahoulia, the *Marcianus gr.* 511 may have been sponsored by Alexis III Comnenus (1349–1390), emperor of Trebizond, who probably also commissioned the *codex Venetus 5*, a sumptuously illustrated version of the *Alexander Romance*: Alexis III was apparently an admirer and imitator of Alexander the Great, often compared by his encomiasts with the Macedonian conqueror.<sup>19</sup> The Trapezuntine provenance of this manuscript could explain how it came into the possession of John Bessarion (1403–1472), himself a Trapezuntine expatriate, who later on had a copy of it (*Marcianus gr.* 369, a. 1470) made by George Tzangaropulos.

16 According to P. BERTRAC, the *Parisinus gr.* 1668 was written for an "amateur" particularly interested in Alexander's history; the last two derive from it ("Le texte de la *Bibliothèque Historique*", in: F. Chamoux et al. (eds.) *Diodore de Sicile: Bibliothèque Historique*, I: *Introduction général: Livre I*, Paris 1993, CXII).

17 Cf. M. MANFREDINI, "Codici plutarchei contenenti *Vitae* e *Moralia*", in: I. Gallo (ed.), *Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei *Moralia* di Plutarco: atti del Convegno salernitano del 4–5 dicembre 1986*, Salerno 1988, 103–122.

18 The same Diodorean excerpt [Ταφαι] reappears in several later manuscripts of Arrian's *Anabasis*, as a kind of appendix: it features in *Monacensis gr.* 451 (a. 1370); *Ambros.* E 11 inf 2 (14th c.), also including Philes' poem; *Parisinus gr.* 456 (a. 1426); *Vat. Ottob. gr.* 67 (mid 15th c.); *Lugdunensis Perizon.* F 6 (15th c.); *Parisinus gr.* 1684 (mid 15th c.); *Marcianus gr.* 369 (a. 1470); *Monacensis gr.* 521 (16th c.). Another small historical piece, Appian's comparison of Alexander with Caesar (*BC* II 21.149–154), was appended in some Plutarchean manuscripts, for instance in *Vaticanus Pal. gr.* 2 (mid 14th c., containing *VA*: cf. M. MANFREDINI, "Un nuovo testimone di Appiano in un codice di Plutarco", *AFLN* 20 (1977–1978), 105–107) or in *Parisinus gr.* 1672 (containing *FA*): but in this manuscript, copied between 1350/1380, the Appian excerpt is a late 15th-century addition.

19 N.S. TRAHOULIA, *The Venice Alexander Romance, Hellenic Institute Codex gr. 5: A Study of Alexander the Great as an Imperial Paradigm in Byzantine Art and Literature*, Ann Arbor 1999, 53–64, with reference to orations by Stephanos Sgouropoulos. However, in a paper devoted to Plutarch's manuscript tradition, F. VENDRUSCOLO presents the *Marcianus gr.* 511 as the final stage of the "θ recension", he defines as a "younger sister" of Planudes' recension, later than it and founded on it, but testifying to a method more "scientific" than Planudes'. Vendruscolo puts to the fore the existence of various links between this manuscript and other codices copied in the circle of Demetrios Triklinios, and suggests the latter as a possible sponsor for *Marcianus gr.* 511 ("La 'Recensione θ' dei *Moralia*: Plutarco edito da Demetrios Triklinios?", *BollClass* 13 (1992), 63–64, 95–96.).



The existence of manuscripts containing *excerpta* of the historians of Alexander is another indicator of the Byzantine readers' interest in Alexander material.<sup>20</sup> A special mention must be reserved to the particularly rich collection featuring in two 13th-century codices (*Athous* 3624 and *Parisinus suppl. gr.* 134) written by the same copyist and containing *excerpta* of Plutarch's *Lives* that derive from the same model (itself an *epitome* of Plutarch), enlarged in the Parisian manuscript with a new series of fragments, interpolated into the original collection.<sup>21</sup> In this codex *excerpta* from the *Life of Alexander* are first in number (79), followed by the *excerpta* from the *Lives* of Lucullus (48), Caesar (45) and Demetrius (38).

A last remark concerns the absence of images in our corpus of manuscripts – with a sole exception, in the oldest extant codex of Arrian's *Anabasis*, the *Vindobonensis hist. gr.* 4 (late 11th c.), where we can find a picture of Alexander mounting Bucephalus: the miniature shows him wearing the armour of a medieval knight and crowned by a Victory. This representation of the ancient king under a medievalized appearance may have been produced in the milieu of the imperial court, for the writing of this manuscript is, according to Cavallo, of a peculiar type used in the courtly bureaucracy.<sup>22</sup>

## 2. Scholia, compilations, summaries, stylistic criticisms

Some manuscripts in our corpus contain scholia, which offer a precious insight into the Byzantine reception of the historians of Alexander, but they are in a rather limited number, for neither Diodorus, nor Plutarch and Arrian were part of the selection of authors studied at school.<sup>23</sup> In the *Parisinus gr.* 1665 (10th c., including Diodorus's book XVII) Giovanni Grasso (see above) has let traces of his reading that express admiration (ὄρα) before the story of Alexandria foundation, Alexander's order of battle at Gaugamela, or the description of Hephæstion's funerals.<sup>24</sup> In the margins of some manuscripts of Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* (*Paris. gr.* 1671, a. 1296; *Paris. gr.* 1676, 15th c.) one can find scholia especially worth of mention, for in all likelihood they go back to Arethas<sup>25</sup> and often express personal, vivid

20 *Excerpta* from Plutarch's *De Alexandri fortuna* are found in *Marcianus gr.* 452, copied between 1328 and 1336 by Macarius Chrysocephalus; Darmstadt 2773 (14th/15th c.); *Harleianus* 5612 (15th c.); *Laur. gr.* 86.08 (15th c.); *Lond. Arund.* 517 (15th c.); *Vindob. suppl. gr.* 23 (15th c.). *Excerpta* from the *Life of Alexander* feature in *cod. Athous* 3624 and *Parisinus suppl. gr.* 134 (13th c.); *Heidelberg. Pal. gr.* 129 (14th c.); *Marcianus gr.* 526 (mid 15th c.), copied by Bessarion; *Baroccianus gr.* 133 (late 15th c.). *Excerpta* from Arrian's *Anabasis* are found in *Laur. Plut.* 86.08 (15th c.), also containing *excerpta* from Plutarch's *FA*; *Leid. Rijksmus.* BPG 35 (15th c.); *Parisinus gr.* 2525 (16th c.), copied by Ance Vergece; *Parisinus gr.* 1603 (16th c.); *Leid. Rijksm.* BPG 33D (16th c.). On Plutarch's *excerpta*, see M. MANFREDINI, "Osservazioni su codicli plutarchei", *ASNP*, ser. III, 20 (1990), 803–808, 815–823, 827–829.

21 Cf. M. MANFREDINI, "Due codici di *excerpta* plutarchei e l'*Epitome* di Zonara", *Prometheus* 18 (1992), 193–215 and 19 (1993), 1–25.

22 G. CAVALLO, "Conservazione e perdita dei testi greci: fattori materiali, sociali, culturali", in: A. Giardina (ed.), *Società romana e impero tardoantico*, IV: *Tradizione dei classici, trasformazioni della cultura*, Rome 1986, 160.

23 Cf. A. GARZYA, "Plutarco a Bisanzio", in: I. Gallo (ed.), *L'Eredità culturale di Plutarco dall' antichità al Rinascimento. Atti del VII Convegno plutarco. Milano-Gargnano, 28–30 maggio 1997*, Naples 1998, 19.

24 Cf. MAZZUCHI, "Diodoro" (n. 14), 393–417. The presence of scholia is signalled in the margins of some codices of Arrian's *Anabasis* – *Vindobonensis hist. gr.* 4 (late 11th c.); *Laurentianus gr. Plut.* 9.32 (15th c.) – according to the database "Pinakes".

25 Cf. M. MANFREDINI, "Gli scolii a Plutarco di Areta di Cesarea", *SicGymn* 28 (1975), 337–350; M. MANFREDINI, "Gli scolii alle *Vite* di Plutarco", *JÖByz* 28 (1979), 83–119.



reactions to various episodes of Plutarch's biography: he compliments Alexander for his temperance, piety, and humanity,<sup>26</sup> but vigorously disapproves of his Dionysiac eccentricities in Carmania (67.4) and of the lack of self-control manifested by his excessive grief at Hephaestion's death (72.3) — all of which illustrates a moralizing appreciation of Plutarch's biography. He also introduces a comparison between Alexander and the late emperor Leo VI the Wise (886–912) in the margin of a passage mentioning Alexander's preoccupation with baths and cookery, which reminds him of the Byzantine emperor's indulgence for luxury (23.5: βαβαί · τί ταῦτα ἐγγύτατα τοῦ Βασιλείδου Λέοντος).<sup>27</sup> Such a comment is revealing of the scholiast's concern to read Alexander's biography in relevance to contemporary issues.

Collections of *excerpta* offer valuable information as well on the elements Byzantine readers mostly appreciated in the works of the historians of Alexander. The most interesting example of the kind is of course the monumental collection sponsored by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (†959).<sup>28</sup> Surprisingly, Plutarch does not feature in the volumes commissioned by the emperor,<sup>29</sup> while both Diodorus and Arrian have been used by the compilers. Though his absence in the *Constantinian Excerpta* seems at first to contradict the testimony of the manuscript tradition, it may in fact corroborate it, for the excerptors possibly chose not to make use of Plutarch precisely because his works were more easily available than Diodorus' or Arrian's.<sup>30</sup>

In the surviving volumes of the corpus, which represent in fact only a tiny part of the original project,<sup>31</sup> we can find abstracts from Diodorus' Book XVII in the *De virtutibus* (10 abstracts amounting to 2.5 pages) and in the *De sententiis* (17 abstracts amounting to

26 He praises Alexander's rebuke to Hagnon, who wanted to buy and offer him a beautiful young man (22.3), approves of his pious attitude before the battle at Gaugamela (33.1) and of his compassion towards his soldiers after the Opis sedition (71.8).

27 Leo VI, who had dismissed Photius from the patriarchal see in 886, braved the Church in contracting a fourth marriage in 907; having met the opposition of the patriarch Nicolas Mystikos, he deposed him, thus provoking a serious crisis within the Byzantine Church. Arethas played an important part among the opposers to the emperor in the affair of the Tetragamy. According to MANFREDINI, "Scoli" (n. 25), 338–342, his scholia were written between 917 and 920, a few years after Leo's death (a. 912).

28 On the Constantinian collection, see P. LEMERLE, *Le Premier humanisme byzantin: notes et remarques sur enseignement et culture à Byzance des origines au X<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris 1971, 280–288; A. TOYNBEE, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his World*, London 1973; B. FLUSIN, "Les *excerpta* constantiniens: logique d'une anti-histoire", in: S. Pittia (ed.), *Fragments d'historiens grecs: Autour de Denys d'Halicarnasse*, Rome 2002, 537–559; A. NEMETH, *Imperial Systematization of the Past: Emperor Constantine VII and his Historical Excerpts*, Diss., Budapest 2010; W.T.T. TREADGOLD, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, Basingstoke 2013, 153–165. According to LEMERLE, *Premier* (n. 28), 285, Constantin VII himself was responsible of the choice of the *excerpta* to be included into the collection.

29 There are in fact a few quotations from Plutarch in the *Constantinian Excerpta*, but they are put under the name of Dio Cassius: all are drawn from Plutarch's *Life of Sylla* and deal with the Mithridatic war and the contemporary political struggles at Rome (*De virtutibus*, e Cassio Dione, fr. 106–111; *De legationibus*, e Dione, fr. 24): cf. J. SCHAMP, "Le Plutarque de Photius", *AC* 64 (1995), 155–184, at 181–182.

30 Another possible cause for Plutarch's exclusion is suggested by A. NEMETH, "The Imperial Systematization of the Past in Constantinople", in: J. König and G. Woolf (eds.), *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, Cambridge/New York 2013, 256–257, who thinks "the omission of Plutarch's *Lives* may be explained by their favourable arrangement, which did not require restructuring because their arrangement already coincided with the literary taste of Constantine's court that favoured biography".

31 The text transmitted to us is complete only for the *De legationibus*: cf. LEMERLE, *Premier* (n. 28), 281, 283–284.

5.5 pages) — that is to say a total number of 27 abstracts amounting to 8 pages. The proportion is rather low compared with the total amount of Diodorean quotations in the *Excerpta* (35 in the *De legationibus*, 54 in the *De insidiis*, 380 in the *De virtutibus*, 481 in the *De sententiis*). Such an observation perhaps supports the view that Diodorus' version of Alexander's history was not a favourite of Byzantine readers, who appreciated this author rather as a mythographer and a historian of the Roman world.<sup>32</sup>

Abstracts from Arrian's *Anabasis* and *Indike* feature in the *De legationibus* (11 abstracts amounting to 4.5 pages) and in the *De sententiis* (18 abstracts amounting to 10 pages).<sup>33</sup> Though the total number of quotations drawn from his work (29) is comparable with Diodorus' score, the passages reproduced by the excerptors are often more extensive, and amount to 14.5 pages (thus, about twice more than Diodorus' excerpts). But it is a very small corpus, compared with the massive presence of Polybius, one of the compilers' favourite authors, whose excerpts fill no less than 177 pages in the four surviving volumes of the Constantinian encyclopaedia.

The choice of the *excerpta*, and also their relative length, are revealing of the main interests of the compilers and of the aim of the collection. It is probably not just a matter of chance if Diodorus' longest quotation (22 l.) in the *De sententiis* is related to Alexander's generosity towards Darius' family after his victory at Issos (XVII 37.3 and 5–6), for the Diodorean excerpts in Constantine's encyclopaedia generally convey a flattering image of Alexander. Even the passages alluding to the siege of Thebes (an episode of Alexander's "black legend") seem to have been selected so as to exonerate Alexander from the accusation of cruelty (the quotation from XVII 16.1–2 shows the Thebans refusing Alexander's peace proposal). In the *De virtutibus*, the longest excerpt (28.5 l.) is again related to Alexander and Darius' family (XVII 38): it is in fact the continuation of the text cited in the *De sententiis*, and the quotation is of special interest, insofar as it includes Diodorus' praise of Alexander, that is one of the very few authorial interventions of Diodorus in Book XVII. The choice of this passage is in line with the moralizing aim pursued by Constantine Porphyrogenitus in compiling the *Excerpta*: it shows his trust in the edifying value of history.<sup>34</sup>

As for Arrian, the longest passage (96 l.) quoted in the *De sententiis* relates the episode of the *proskynesis* and Alexander's conflict with Callisthenes (IV 10.5 – 12.7): such a dispute about a gesture which in Byzantium had become an integral part of the imperial ceremonial was certainly well fit to arouse the curiosity of Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his excerptors<sup>35</sup>. The emperor's concern for questions of rituals is well attested by his treatise *De caeremoniis*; one can assume that Callisthenes' reaction seemed quite silly and offensive to

32 According to M. CASEVITZ, "Sur les fragments des historiens grecs, particulièrement Diodore de Sicile", in: Pittia (ed.), *Fragments* (n. 28), 454–455, the ancient readers never considered Diodorus as a major source for the history of the classical times.

33 Arrian's name also appears in the list of authorities placed at the head of the *De virtutibus*, but the excerpts from his work have been lost : cf. LEMERLE, *Premier* (n. 28), 286.

34 Cf. LEMERLE, *Premier* (n. 28), 288: the excerptor chose his texts so as to help the readers to turn towards good, by bringing within their reach the lessons and examples of the past; his compilation, obeying a moral purpose, is an "anti-histoire".

35 Cf. TOYNBEE, *Constantine* (n. 28), 542: the word *proskynesis* "has changed colour" at Byzantium, and has been adopted "into the solemn vocabulary of East Roman Imperial protocol, while the symbolic ceremonial act itself has become an obligatory accompaniment of every phase of Court ritual".

a Byzantine reader. An interest for the relationship between a ruler and his flatterers seems to have motivated the selection of some other passages from the *Anabasis*,<sup>36</sup> and we can also remark the presence of six fragments reproducing Arrian's first-person statements, either personal pronouncements about Alexander, or metaliterary comments upon the composition of the *Anabasis*.<sup>37</sup> Such an interest of the compiler(s) for authorial discourse is a recurrent feature throughout the *Excerpta*, and the investigation conducted by Aude Cohen-Skalli on the marginal annotations present in the *De sententiis* puts to the fore the same predilection for passages of a proemial type<sup>38</sup>. As for the abstracts featuring in the *De legationibus*, they offer a "Byzantine-centered" perspective on Alexander's history (and thus echo the excerpt on *proskynesis* included in the *De sententiis*): for the compilers have chosen to classify the embassies sent to Alexander among embassies sent to "the Romans" (that is Byzantines).<sup>39</sup> They have thus adopted a presentation much indebted to the theory of the succession of the world empires, according to which the Byzantines were the successors of the Macedonians and the Romans.

If Plutarch is absent in the Constantinian encyclopaedia, he is well represented in the extensive corpus of Byzantine florilegia<sup>40</sup>, although, as far as Alexander is concerned, it is not Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* that has been used, but rather those of Plutarch's *Moralia* dealing with the Macedonian king, first of which come the treatises *De Alexandri fortuna* and the *Apophthegms of kings and generals*, where 34 apophthegms are devoted to Alexander (who thus comes first in the volume, followed by his father Philip with 32 sayings, and Cato with 29 sayings). The primacy of the *Moralia* over the *Lives* was already discernible in Stobaeus' *Anthology*, where only two fragments were drawn from the *Lives* and around 190 from the *Moralia* (from which have been borrowed all the passages concerning Alexander).<sup>41</sup> The same can be said of one of the most famous Byzantine florilegia, the *Loci communes* of Ps.-Maximus, first published in the 9th/10th c., and enlarged around the year 1000 with a new set of excerpts, among which Plutarch takes pride of place<sup>42</sup>.

36 At least three excerpts (*An.* IV 8.3, 10.5–12.7, V 2.7–3.4) are related to this theme in the *De sententiis*.

37 Excerpts from *An.* I 12.1–5 (Arrian's justification for his historical work on Alexander); IV 7.4–5 (comment, inspired by Alexander's adoption of the Median dress, about the inability of men to find happiness without mastering their passions); IV 9.6 (Arrian approves of Alexander's remorse after murdering Cleitus); IV 9.7 – 10.4 (Arrian criticizes the flattering discourse addressed by Anaxarchus the sophist to Alexander after Cleitus' murder); IV 10.5–12.7 (authorial comment on Alexander's and Callisthenes' attitude in the *proskynesis* episode); VI 11.8 (Arrian justifies his digression on Ptolemy, saviour of Alexander, by arguing it will prevent younger generations from forgetting so great feats).

38 A. COHEN-SKALLI, "Une lecture byzantine de Diodore: en marge des *Excerpta de Sententiis*", *Medioevo greco* 13 (2013), 21.

39 Cf. FLUSIN, "Les *excerpta* constantiniens" (n. 28), 553, n. 56; NEMETH, "The Imperial Systematization" (n. 30), 253: "This recognition of the Macedonian king as Roman reveals the ideological slant of *CE* and can be explained by viewing him as a positive paradigm for later emperors".

40 Cf. M. PADE, "Reception of Plutarch from Antiquity to the Italian Renaissance", in: M. Beck (ed.), *A Companion to Plutarch*, Chichester 2014, 533: Plutarch's presence in anthological literature is a mark of "his status as an educational writer".

41 R.M. PICCIONE, "Plutarco nell' *Anthologion* di Giovanni Stobeo", in: Gallo (ed.), *Eredità* (n. 23), 161–201.

42 According to P. VAN DEUM, "Les fragments de Plutarque contenus dans le florilège byzantin des *Loci communes*", *Byzantion* 63 (1993), 350, the pagan author most often quoted in the *Loci communes* is Plutarch. The same remark is true for the *Florilegium Baroccianum* (and its oldest representative, the Patmos manuscript), according to P. VAN DEUM, "Les citations de Plutarque contenues dans le

However, one should point out the somewhat uncertain boundaries of the Plutarchean material available in Byzantine gnomologies, due to the frequency of miss-attributions in this popular literary genre: 1) Plutarchean quotations do not always appear under the author's name, but feature quite often under the name of the character involved; 2) Plutarch himself must have resorted to collections of apophthegms to compose works such as the *Apophthegmata regum et imperatorum*, so that parallelisms between his work and Byzantine compilations are possibly due to the use of a common source; 3) gnomonic material is very fluid, and the attribution of sayings and anecdotes easily moves from one character to another (interferences of the kind occur frequently between Alexander and Diogenes);<sup>43</sup> 4) a certain amount of supposedly Plutarchean excerpts are in fact spurious.<sup>44</sup> An interesting example of Pseudo-Plutarchean quotation can be read in chapter 64 of the revised version of the *Loci communes*; in this chapter entitled Περὶ ὅτι οὐκ ἀεὶ τὸ πλεῖον ἄριστον ("More is not always better") there is a praise of Alexander by Darius' mother, put under Plutarch's authority:

Πλουτάρχου. Ἡ τοῦ Δαρείου μητὴρ, ἐπισκοποῦντος αὐτὴν ποτὲ Ἀλεξάνδρου μετὰ τὴν ἄλωσιν, 'οὐ θαυμαστόν, εἶπεν, ὅτι μετ' ὀλίγων συμμάχων τὸν ἐμὸν υἱὸν πολλὰς ἔχοντα μυριάδας ἐνίκησας· ἐκεῖνος μὲν γὰρ τὴν βασιλείαν ἡγεῖτο τρυφῇ, σὺ δὲ ἀνδραγαθίᾳ. Καὶ ὁ μὲν βασιλικὸν ἐνόμιζε τὸ ῥαστώνη διαφέρειν τῶν ἀρχομένων, σὺ δὲ πόνων εὐκλειαν. Καὶ μετὰ σοῦ πέντε μὲν ἐπὶ τῆς αὐτῆς κλίνης κατὰκεινται φίλοι, πολλαπλάσιοι δὲ τῶν φίλων ἡγεμόνες καὶ σύμβουλοι τὸ σὸν θεωροῦντες πρόσωπον καὶ τῆς σῆς φωνῆς ἀκούοντες. Δαρεῖος δὲ μόνος ἀνέκειτο καὶ διελέγετο γυναιξὶ τε καὶ πρὸς ἀμύητους ἄνδρας, φίλον δ' οὐ παρελάμβανεν ἀλλ' ὥς δούλοις ἐχρῆτο, ὥστε δικαίως σοι μὲν συνέβη νικῆσαι μετὰ φίλων μαχόμενον, ἐκείνῳ δὲ μετὰ δούλων ἡττηθῆναι.<sup>45</sup>

Such a passage testifies to the fame Plutarch enjoyed in Byzantium, but it is also very revealing of the moralizing approach characteristic of gnomonic collections and of the positive image they usually convey about Alexander: their selection of material is coherent on the whole, and tends to build a praise of the Macedonian king.<sup>46</sup>

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*Florilegium Baroccianum*", in: L. Van der Stockt (ed.), *Plutarchea Lovanensia: A Miscellany of Essays on Plutarch*, Leuven 1996, 283.

43 The practice of introducing many maxims with ὡς αὐτός was the cause of numerous errors on the part of the copyists, as remarked by F.R. ADRAPOS, *Greek Wisdom Literature and the Middle Ages: The Lost Greek Models and their Arabic and Castilian Translation*, Bern 2009, 143.

44 As for Arrian is concerned, a famous case of misattribution is Palladius' treatise *De gentibus Indiae et Bragmanibus*, presented as a πονημάτιον written by Ἀρριανοῦ... τοῦ μαθητοῦ τοῦ Ἐπικτήτου τοῦ φιλοσόφου (ed. W. BERGHOFF, *Palladius. De gentibus Indiae et Bragmanis*, Meisenheim am Glan 1967). This attribution bears witness to the reputation of Arrian as a philosopher.

45 "From Plutarch. Darius' mother told Alexander, one day he was visiting her after her capture: 'No wonder that with a small number of allies you prevailed over my son, who had countless soldiers: for he considers kingship as a source of luxury, and you as an occasion of bravery. And he thinks worthy of a king to surpass his subjects in indolence, while it is the glory of toil you find kingly. You share one and the same bed with five friends, and commanders and counselors are more numerous than friends to contemplate your face and listen to your voice. On the contrary Darius used to sleep by himself, he conversed with women and novices and, instead of admitting them as his friends, used them as his slaves, so that it rightly happened that you prevailed, for you were fighting with friends, while he, who was fighting with slaves, was defeated.'"

46 Cf. ADRAPOS, *Greek* (n. 43), 361.

While nearly absent in florilegia, Arrian's *Anabasis* exerted a notable influence in other fields of Byzantine literature, for instance in military treatises: five lengthy passages from the *Anabasis*, concerning the sieges of Thebes, Tyr, and Gaza, and the attack of the Rocks of Sogdiana and Chorienes, are quoted almost *verbatim* in the *De obsidione toleranda*, a 10th-century treatise written during the reign of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.<sup>47</sup> Arrian's presence is also conspicuous in some lexicographical works – Stephanus Byzantinus (6th c.),<sup>48</sup> *Lexica Segueriana* (10th–11th c.)<sup>49</sup> –, in scholarly commentaries – Eustathios' of Thessalonike *Commentary on Dionysius Periegetes*<sup>50</sup> – as well as in the *Suda* (10th c.), this "compilation of compilations",<sup>51</sup> whose author made about hundred references to Arrian (while his references to Diodorus and Plutarch oscillate between 20 and 30),<sup>52</sup> and also used the *Anabasis* as his main source, along with John of Antioch's chronicle, in his entry on Alexander.<sup>53</sup> Among other things he reproduced part of Arrian's praise of Alexander (VII 28.1–2) to serve as an introduction to his biographical notice, thus giving the tone of a predominantly laudatory presentation of Alexander's reign.

The same tendency is to be noted in the four-pages summary of the *Anabasis* which forms the codex 91 of Photius' *Library*:<sup>54</sup> as a matter of fact, Photius too offers a positive image of Alexander, and puts much emphasis upon his bravery (he repeatedly mentions the wounds Alexander received while heroically taking part in battles against various enemies). But the most interesting element in this epitome is the prominent part reserved by Photius to events related to the conquest of the Persian empire and his extensive treatment of the episode of the weddings at Susa, for it shows Photius read Alexander's history in a typically Byzantine

47 *De obsidione toleranda* (ed. Van den Berg), § 106–109 (*An.* I 8.1–5); § 245–320 (*An.* II 18.2 – 23.6); § 321–345 (*An.* II 25.4 – 27.7); § 361–381 (*An.* IV 18.4 – 19.4); § 382–395 (*An.* IV 21.2–6).

48 According to the *TLG*, the *Epitome* of the *Ethnica* includes 38 references to Arrian.

49 The *Lexica Segueriana* includes 24 references to Arrian (among which several literal quotations from the *Anabasis*: see, for instance, the entry Ἀμελητέα, with a reference to Ἀρριανὸς ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν περὶ Ἀλέξανδρου, and a quotation from I 24.1: “ἦσαν μὲν νεωστὶ πρὸ τῆς στρατείας γεγαμηκότες, καὶ τοῦτων ἔγνω οὐκ ἄμελητέα οἱ εἶναι Ἀλέξανδρος”).

50 Eustathius' commentary includes several precise references to and *verbatim* quotations from the *Anabasis* (ed. Miller, § 852, 861, 867, 907, 911, 976, 1139, 1143, 1153). According to WILSON, *Scholars* (n. 13), 204, the main source of Eustathius must have been a collection of ancient scholia.

51 Expression of LEMERLE, *Premier* (n. 28), 299, who maintains the authors of the *Suda* usually did not resort to original texts, but to compilations; among others, they made use of the *Constantinian Excerpta*, composed some years before. According to IRIGOIN, *Tradition* (n. 3), 330, the *Suda* was linked, like the *Constantinian Excerpta*, to the Constantinopolitan center formed by the library and the scriptorium of the Imperial Palace.

52 See the entries Ἡρασιτίων (quotation from *An.* II 12.6–8), Μεγαλωσί (quotation from *An.* IV 21.7–8), Παρίστασθαι (quotation from *An.* IV 22.7), Περί Πινδάρου (quotation from *An.* I 9.9–10)...

53 Arrian's tradition is an important point of reference in the *Suda*, according to C. BEARZOT, “La storia greca nella *Suda*”, in: Zecchini (ed.), *Il lessico Suda* (n. 1), 58–59.

54 On Photius and his *Library*, see LEMERLE, *Premier* (n. 28), 177–204; T. HÄGG, *Photius als Vermittler antiker Literatur. Untersuchungen zur Technik des Referierens und Exzerprierens in der Bibliothek*, Stockholm 1975; W.T.T. TREADGOLD, *The Nature of the Bibliotheca of Photius*, Washington 1980; J. SCHAMP, *Photius historien des lettres. La Bibliothèque et ses notices biographiques*, Paris 1987; A. KAZHDAN, *A History of Byzantine Literature (850–1000)*, ed. C. Angelidi, Athens 2006, 7–41 (10–25 on the *Library*).



perspective, and was primarily interested in the topic of the wars against the Persians and in the question of the succession of Empires in the East.<sup>55</sup>

A laudatory bias is also conspicuous in Photius' and Zonaras' summaries of Plutarch's *Life of Alexander*<sup>56</sup>. Among the nineteen Plutarchean *Lives* epitomized in codex 245 of Photius' *Library*, the two quoted most extensively are Demosthenes' and Alexander's (2.5 pages are devoted to each one). Photius was not content with selecting primarily in Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* the passages most favourable to the Macedonian conqueror (we thus find again the episode of his respectful attitude towards the Persian women),<sup>57</sup> but he also rewrote the original Greek text with a marked tendency to "hagiography" – clearly perceptible, for instance, in the episode of Bucephalus' taming, through the erasing of every mark of insolence of Alexander towards his father.<sup>58</sup> The same characteristic is found in the world chronicle of Zonaras, whose chapter on Alexander (IV 8–15), also a summary of Plutarch's *Life*, is much longer (26 pages) than Photius', but just as laudatory. While following his source rather faithfully, Zonaras dwells on episodes illustrating Alexander's clemency (story of the Theban prisoner Timocleia), wisdom (encounter with Diogenes), temperance (respectful attitude towards Darius' wife, once again!), and he repeatedly emphasizes Alexander's courage and heroism, but suppresses or passes very quickly on embarrassing episodes, such as the destruction of Persepolis by fire, the Dionysiac carousing in Carmania, or the murder of various friends and companions.<sup>59</sup>

While primarily open to the ethical dimension of the ancient histories on Alexander, Byzantine readers also appreciated the literary qualities of these works, and they have let stylistic appreciations on the three authors of our corpus. Plutarch alone found his way into Byzantine rhetorical treatises,<sup>60</sup> probably due to the fact that Menander Rhetor, an author much influential in Byzantium, had included into his treatise *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* a praise of the *Parallel Lives*, he found very useful "for talk" (πρὸς λαλίαν) as well as "for many other and varied educational uses" (εἰς ἄλλην πολλήν καὶ παντοδαπὴν παιδευσιν), for they were full

55 Cf. D. MENDELS, "Greek and Roman History in the *Bibliotheca* of Photius. A Note", *Byzantion* 56 (1986), 196–206; KAZHDAN, *History* (n. 54), 15: Photius was particularly interested in the Roman wars in the East (the Arab menace still pending in his day) and in the nature of imperial power (as testified by his entries on Herodotus, Flavius Josephus, or Dio of Prusa).

56 This kind of material does not exist for Diodorus' Book XVII: in codex 244 Photius gives only a summary of Books XXI–XXVI.

57 Photius also made use of the anecdote concerning Alexander and the Persian women in the mirror for princes he addressed to Michael of Bulgaria around 865: cf. J. SCHAMP, "La réception de l'histoire chez Photius sous bénéfice d'inventaire", in: I. Lewandowski and L. Mrozewicz (eds.), *L'Image de l'Antiquité chez les auteurs postérieurs*, Poznań 1996, 17. P. Magdalino calls this letter a "mini-encyclopaedia of useful knowledge for a Christian ruler" ("Byzantine encyclopaedism of the ninth and tenth century", in: J. König and G. Woelf (eds.), *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, Cambridge/New York 2013, 228).

58 According to SCHAMP, "Plutarque" (n. 29), 174, Photius' rewriting shows the hand of a hagiographer rather than a scrupulous excerptor.

59 Photius and Zonaras possibly made use of an *epitome* of Plutarch rather than of the full text of the *Life of Alexander*: SCHAMP, "Plutarque" (n. 29), 175–176, speaks of an abridged version written "*ad usum delphini vel discipuli*". This *epitome* also served as a source for the collection of *excerpta* of the *Parisinus suppl. gr.* 134 (see above). Its text of Plutarch must have been supplemented with an episode from Arrian (Alexander's attempted suicide), since this story features at the end of Zonaras' chapter on Alexander as well as in the *excerpta* of the *Parisian* manuscript: cf. MANFREDINI, "Due codici" (n. 21).

60 GARZYA, "Plutarco" (n. 23), 24–27.

of anecdotes, apophthegms, proverbs and *chreiai*, that contribute to the pleasure of talks.<sup>61</sup> This positive appreciation of Plutarch's literary qualities certainly contributes to explain why Plutarch's name reappears in several Byzantine rhetorical essays or treatises: Psellos, in his essay *On the Styles of Certain Writings*, lists Plutarch as one of the authors who most contributed to his literary formation,<sup>62</sup> and he mentions him again in his essay *On the Style of [Gregory] the Theologian* (§ 15 and 21), this time in less flattering terms, because he uses Plutarch as a foil (and denigrates him) to enhance Gregory's stylistic superiority.<sup>63</sup> In his *Commentary on Hermogenes* Gregorios Pardos (11th–12th c.) quotes Plutarch as an example of pedestrian style, on a par with Plato and "other historians".<sup>64</sup> The anonymous treatise *About the four part of the perfect discourse*<sup>65</sup> (late 12th–early 13th c.) and the *Synopsis of Rhetoric* of Joseph Rhakendytes (early 14th c.) also include references to Plutarch,<sup>66</sup> considered as an example of "mixed style", and Theodore Metochites (1270–1332), author of an essay entirely devoted to the Chaeronean philosopher, develops insightful considerations about Plutarch's stylistic peculiarities and his suspicious attitude towards rhetoric.<sup>67</sup> But interesting though they are, these literary appreciations remain of a very general kind: none of them is specifically concerned with Plutarch's works on Alexander.

Both ignored by the rhetorical tradition, Diodorus and Arrian are the subject of positive stylistic comments on Photios' part in three codices of the *Library*. In codex 58 Photius presents Arrian as the author of the best history of Alexander (Οὗτος δὲ συντάττει πάντων ἄμεινον καὶ τὰ κατὰ Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Μακεδόνα), and he devotes a whole page of codex 92 to praise his stylistic qualities, in a passage that is one of the most extensive literary judgements in the whole *Library*,<sup>68</sup> insisting mostly upon the conciseness, clarity, harmony, expressivity of Arrian's style, which he finds both plain and elevated. Though much shorter, Photius' praise of Diodorus' style in codex 70 of the *Library* values again Diodorus' clarity, "most fitting to the historical genre". Such positive comments on both authors must be put in relation with considerations of the theoreticians of rhetoric on "historical style" (see for instance Ps.-Demetrius who, in a passage of his treatise *On style* (19) dealing with the "historical period", puts the emphasis upon the virtue of ἀπλότης).<sup>69</sup> It is remarkable that Photius' comments concern only the formal qualities of Arrian's and Diodorus' works, and that he has absolutely nothing to say about their historical method, their dealing with sources and reliability.<sup>70</sup> In

61 Menander Rhetor, ed. Russell and Wilson, 122.

62 Ed. J.-F. Boissonade, *Michaelis Pselli de operatione daemonum*, Nuremberg 1838, 48–52 (50–51).

63 Ed. A. Mayer, "Psellos Rede über den rhetorischen Character des Gregorios von Nazianz", *BZ* 20 (1911), 27–100.

64 Ed. Walz, *RG*, VII 2, 1112.

65 Cf. T.M. CONLEY, "Rummaging in Walz's Attic: Two Anonymous Opuscula in *Rhetores Graeci*", *GRBS* 46 (2006), 101–122; W. HÖRANDNER, "Pseudo-Gregorios Korinthios, *Über die vier Teile der perfekten Rede*", *Medioevo Greco* 12 (2012), 87–131.

66 Ed. Walz, *RG*, III, 521, 526 and 528.

67 On this text, see L. TARTAGLIA, "Il saggio su Plutarco di Teodoro Metochita", in: U. Criscuolo (ed.), *Talariskos. Studia Graeca A. Garzya sexagenario a discipulis oblata*, Naples 1987, 339–362.

68 Two others codices of the *Library* are devoted to Arrian (n° 91 and 93).

69 Cf. R. NICOLAI, *La Storiografia nell'educazione antica*, Pisa 1992, 89–155 ("Teorie retoriche della storiografia", esp. 124–139 on historiography in *diégésis* theory).

70 Cf. N.G. WILSON, *Photius: The Bibliotheca: A Selection Translated with Notes*, London 1994, 18: "Photius was not so much a student of ancient history and society than a man of letters with a highly developed



giving the primacy to literary criteria upon historical ones, he ensures the continuation of a tendency going back to Antiquity and already observable in Dionysius of Halicarnassus.<sup>71</sup>

### 3. Four Byzantine ways of dealing with the legacy of the historians of Alexander

Though Byzantine *literati* undeniably considered Diodorus, Plutarch and Arrian as the main authorities on the reign of Alexander the Great and used their works as a primary source of references on the Macedonian king, the extent of their debt towards the three ancient authors is often difficult to determine with precision, especially because of the Byzantines' predilection for "hidden quotations"<sup>72</sup> and the tendency of the most learned among them to superimpose literary models, they submit to creative rewriting. The four works analysed below, representing various literary genres – epics and chronography, erudite poetry, and encomiastic biography –, illustrate four Byzantine ways of dealing with the legacy of the historians of Alexander, throughout the Byzantine millennium, from 7th to 14th century.

#### *George Pisides' polemical stance to Plutarch*

One of the most conspicuous references to an Alexander historian in Byzantine literature is found in an early 7th-century poet, George Pisides, who challenges Plutarch in his *Heraclias*. A close collaborator of the emperor Heraclius (610–641), Pisides acted as a spokesman of the imperial propaganda: Mary Whitby calls him the "official Constantinopolitan publicist for Heraclius" in the 620s.<sup>73</sup> He wrote several panegyric poems to celebrate Heraclius' wars and successes over the Persians (who were occupying Jerusalem and had the True Cross in their possession since 614). The *Heraclias* was composed in 628 after the announcement of Khosrow II's death. Adopting a triumphalist tone, Pisides begins his praise of Heraclius with a series of comparisons of the Byzantine emperor with various heroes of Antiquity, in accordance with the precepts of the rhetoricians about *basilikos logos*.<sup>74</sup> He successively

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sensitivity to style and an ability to see why good books are worth reading"; B. CROKE, "Tradition and Originality in Photius' Historical Reading", in: J. Burke *et al.* (eds.), *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, Melbourne 2006, 69: "For Photius and his contemporaries, factual accuracy, diligent and systematic research and critical use of sources were not the most valued aspects of an historian's work." On the same topic, see also LEMERLE, *Premier* (n. 28), 194; B. CROKE, "Uncovering Byzantium's historical audience", in: R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, Aldershot 2010, 38.

71 Cf. NICOLAI, *Storiografia* (n. 69), 92, 197.

72 They usually avoid quoting their sources when composing literary works, and are content with giving precise references in works of erudition, of a technical nature (such as lexica, encyclopaediae, and the like): while Eustathius of Thessalonike often mentions Arrian or Plutarch in his commentaries on Homer or Dionysius Periegetes, he does not follow the same path in his letters or discourses, which resort to epideictic rhetoric. In a development dealing with Plutarch's reception in Byzantium, W. HÖRANDER points out that he is usually more often used than mentioned: "La poésie profane au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle et la connaissance des auteurs anciens", *T&MByz* 6 (1976), 245–263.

73 M. WHITBY, "George of Pisidia's presentation of the emperor Heraclius and his campaigns: Variety and Development", in: G.J. Reinink and B.H. Stolte (eds.), *The Reign of Heraclius (610–641): Crisis and Confrontation*, Leuven 2002, 157. On Pisides, see also J. HOWARD-JOHNSTON, *Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century*, Oxford 2010, 16–35.

74 T. NISSEN, "Historisches Epos und Panegyrikos in der Spätantike", *Hermes* 75 (1940), 301–310. In Menander Rhetor's view, the comparison of the present reign with preceding ones (e.g. the reign of Alexander) was supposed to form the conclusion of the encomion: cf. Treatise II, ch. 1 (*basilikos logos*), ed. Russell and Wilson, 92–93.

alludes to Heracles, Scipio, Alexander, he all declares unable to compete with Heraclius' triumphs. His reference to Heracles is coupled with an apostrophe to Homer,<sup>75</sup> accused to have called Heracles a god "inconsiderately" (ἀσκόπως). Plutarch, whose name is associated with Alexander, is the next goal of Pisides' polemical remarks:

Πλούταρχε, σίγα, τοὺς Παραλλήλους γράφων·  
 τί πολλὰ κάμνεις καὶ στρατηγοὺς συλλέγεις;  
 τὸν δεσπότην ἔκφραζε, καὶ γράφεις ὅλους.  
 ἦδη γὰρ ὁ Πλούταρχος ἐξᾶραι θέλων  
 τὸν τοῦ Φιλίππου καὶ πρὸς ὕψος ἀρπάσαι,  
 ἔσπευδε δεῖξαι πᾶσιν ὡς ἐναντία  
 κατεῖχον αὐτὸν ἀντιπράττουσαι τύχαι·  
 οὐκ ἡγνόμεν γάρ, δεινὸς ὢν λογογράφος,  
 ὡς εἴπερ αὐτὸν εὐτυχοῦντα συγγράφοι,  
 δώσει τὸ νικᾶν ἀντ' ἐκείνου τῇ τύχῃ·  
 ἀλλ' εἶχεν, ὦ Πλούταρχε, τῆς τύχης πλεόν  
 ὁ σὸς στρατηγὸς δραστικούς τοὺς συμμάχους.  
 τίς δὲ στρατὸν γέμοντα Περσικοῦ φόβου,  
 παρ' οἷς τὸ φεύγειν ἦν ἀκίνδυνος μάχη  
 φύσις τε λοιπὸν ἐξ ἔθους ἐγίνετο,  
 ἔπεισεν ὅπλοις καὶ καθώπλιζεν λόγοις  
 καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτοῖς δειλίαν μεθαρμόσας  
 εὐτολμίαν ἔδειξε τὴν ἀτολμίαν,  
 εἰ μὴ τὸ σὸν φρόνημα καὶ τὸ σὸν κράτος  
 ἡγείρεν αὐτοῦς, ὡς ἀκινήτους λίθους  
 τὴν γῆν βαροῦντας τοῖς ἀκάρποις φορτίοις;<sup>76</sup>

Although Pisides quotes only the *Parallel Lives*, he evidently also had in mind Plutarch's treatises *De Alexandri fortuna*, as is clearly shown by his allusion to Plutarch's rhetorical strategy of picturing the "fortune hostile" to Alexander (ἐναντία τύχαι) in order to extol Alexander's greatness more efficiently.<sup>77</sup> To undermine Plutarch's laudatory presentation, Pisides emphasizes the help Alexander received from his "fighting allies" (συμμάχους),

75 In the same chapter on *basilikos logos* Menander recommends references to Homer as a tool for *auxêsis* in the prooemium (*ibid.* 78–79).

76 *Her.* 110–130: "Keep silent, Plutarch, author of the *Parallel Lives*! Why do you go to a lot of trouble to collect <lives of> generals? Describe our master, and you will describe all of them. Once Plutarch, eager to exalt Philip's son and raise him swiftly to the top, strove to show everybody that adverse fortune opposed and tried to stop him: as a skillful historian (*logographos*), he did not ignore that, had he pictured him favoured by fortune, he would have granted victory to fortune instead of him. But your general, Plutarch, had fighting allies more efficient than fortune. But an army full of fear of the Persians, for which flight was a fight devoid of danger, and the nature of which followed from habit, who could persuade it through weapons, arm it through discourses and cure the cowardice existing among its ranks to transform lack of audacity into audacity? Only your high spirit and authority could awake them, who were like motionless stones whose vain burden was weighing heavy on earth." The expression "vain burden..." is a paraphrase of *Il.* XVIII 104.

77 See for instance *FA* I 2 (326 e) and *II* 8 (340 a).

while Heraclius even had to restore the confidence of his troops terrified by the Persian enemy: he thus makes the Byzantine emperor appear really matchless.

The fame Plutarch's works enjoyed at the time Pisides was writing his *Heraclias* is confirmed by the epistles of the contemporary rhetor and historian Theophylaktos Simokattes, whose references to Alexander testify a good knowledge of Plutarch's biography and treatises on Alexander's fortune.<sup>78</sup> As for the comparison between Heraclius and Alexander – a comparison Pisides himself had already exploited in his *Expediatio Persica* (III 41–49), written to celebrate Heraclius' first campaign against Persia in 622/623<sup>79</sup> –, it became extremely popular during the Byzantine-Persian war: two texts of Syriac origin, the *Syriac Alexander Legend*, composed at about the same time as the *Heraclias*,<sup>80</sup> and the *Alexander Poem* falsely attributed to Jacob of Sarug, and composed in the following decade,<sup>81</sup> show the importance of the Alexander-Heraclius typology in these times of ideological crisis and cultural renewal. In the *Syriac Alexander Legend* a central role is given to Alexander in the history of salvation, as a builder of the iron gates meant to enclose the unclean peoples Gog and Magog at the edges of the earth and as an ancestor of the Byzantine emperors destined to rule over the world before the end of the times.<sup>82</sup>

One of the most striking feature of Pisides' poetry is the way he combines classical and Christian references:<sup>83</sup> in the *Heraclias*, the many pagan heroes alluded to by the poet are all surpassed by the Byzantine emperor, assimilated to Biblical figures such as Noah (I 84), Daniel (I 16), Elijah (II 133), and Christ himself (I 185). Mary Whitby has underlined Pisides' singular position in the Byzantine literary tradition: he stands, she says, "Janus-like at the junction of the classical and medieval worlds".<sup>84</sup> His challenge to Plutarch and the *Parallel Lives* may express his authorial consciousness as an innovator bold enough to introduce Biblical and contemporary material into the field of highbrow poetry. Such a literary challenge can be compared with the questioning of Homer in the Byzantine epics *Digenis Akritas*, whose veracity the anonymous author provocatively opposes to the Homeric lies.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Pisides seems to be advertising the emergence of a new kind of poetry, needed to

78 See *Ep.* 22 (Alexander and dying Darius) and 46 (Alexander and Bucephalus). On the familiarity of Simokattes with Plutarch's work, GARZYA, "Plutarcho" (n. 23), 22.

79 The work was probably commissioned by Heraclius: cf. WHITBY, "George" (n. 73), 162.

80 Cf. G. REININK, "Die Entstehung der syrischen Alexanderlegende als politisch-religiöse Propagandaschrift für Herakleios' Kirchenpolitik", in: C. Laga *et al.* (eds.), *After Chalcedon: Studies in Theology and Church History Offered to Professor A. Van Roey*, Leuven 1985, 263–281.

81 As Jerusalem is supposed to stay safe from the assault of the unclean peoples, the *Alexander Poem* must have been composed before 638, for by that time the city fell into the hands of the Arabs (cf. C. HUNNIUS, *Das syrische Alexanderlied*, Göttingen 1904, 29–31).

82 During the Byzantine-Persian war (603–628) fears for the impending definitive fall of the Empire increased and apocalyptic sentiments arose among Christians, as noted by G. REININK, "Heraclius, the new Alexander. Apocalyptic Prophecies during the Reign of Heraclius", in: Reinink and Stolte (eds.), *Reign* (n. 73), 82.

83 Cf. H. HUNGER, "On the imitation of Antiquity (μίμησις) in Byzantine Literature", *DOP* 23 (1969–1970), 23–24.

84 M. WHITBY, "George of Pisidia and the Persuasive Word: words, words, words...", in: E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, Aldershot 2003, 174. The author insists on Pisides' originality (*ibid.*, 172–173).

85 *Digenis Akritas*, version G IV 27–27 (ed. Jeffreys): "Cease writing of Homer and the legends of Achilles and likewise of Hektor; these are false."

praise Heraclius as the saviour of the world and to picture his reign as “the beginning of a new age inspired by biblical and messianic concepts”.<sup>86</sup>

*Kedrenos quoting Diodorus: a pretence to historical respectability ?*

George Kedrenos (11th/12th c.) is unique among Byzantine chroniclers in mentioning an ancient Greek historian (Diodorus) in his chapter about Alexander (ed. Bekker, 264–272). Even Zonaras, whose text is a summary of Plutarch’s *Life of Alexander*, does not mention Plutarch’s name: the only authority he puts to the fore is Flavius Josephus, whom he is indebted for the story of Alexander’s visit to Jerusalem and he quotes in IV 8, in the introductory sentence of his development on Alexander’s reign.<sup>87</sup> The few authors mentioned as authorities by the other chroniclers are late and derivative: Malalas names two obscure *chronographoi*, called Bottios and Theophilus,<sup>88</sup> and George Synkellos refers to Dexippus (3rd c.),<sup>89</sup> whose work was apparently derived from Arrian.

In his own chapter on Alexander, Kedrenos mentions Diodorus to support the genealogy of the Macedonian king, supposedly descending from Heracles on his father’s side, and from the Eacids from his mother’s side (Bekker, 264: cf. D.S. XVII 1.5). Other elements in Kedrenos’ chapter derive from Diodorus’ *Library*: notably the description of Alexander’s orientalised, with the striking detail about his three hundred concubines (Bekker, 272: cf. D.S. XVII 77.4–6) and perhaps also the story of his crown dropped into the swamp (Bekker, 271: cf. D.S. XVII 116.6) – although this bad portent is mentioned in Arrian’s *Anabasis* as well (VII 27).

While most of the Byzantine chroniclers devote pride of place to unhistorical episodes and are heavily indebted to the Pseudo-Callisthenian tradition for their story of Alexander’s reign, Kedrenos has included a lot of truly historical material, that can be traced back to Diodorus, Plutarch, or Arrian: to be sure, he has mixed these elements to fabulous ones, and we still find in his text some data borrowed from the *Alexander Romance* – Nectanebo’s novella, or Alexander’s visit to queen Candace – Kedrenos probably knew through the mediation of Malalas or George the Monk.<sup>90</sup> He also excerpted and reproduced almost literally three long passages from George the Monk’s chronicle, the first of which relates Alexander’s encounter with the Brahmins (Bekker, 267–270), while the second one is devoted to the anecdote of the Jew Mosomachos ridiculing a pagan seer (Bekker, 271–272), and the third one is a praise of Alexander compared with a winged leopard (πηγνὴ πάρδαλις, Bekker, 272). Episodes borrowed from the historical tradition are intertwined with this fictional or anachronistic, Christian material, for instance, the siege of Tyre (with the satyr presage, as narrated in Plutarch’s *Alex.* 24.8–9), the campaign against the Mardians and

86 Cf. J.W. DRIJVERS, “Heraclius and the *Restitutio Crucis*: Notes on Symbolism and Ideology”, in: Reinink and Stolte (eds.), *Reign* (n. 73), 188.

87 Zonaras, ed. Pinder, 329. However, Plutarch appears under the periphrasis ὁ Χαίρωνεύς in a development devoted to Daniel’s prophecy about the world empires (*ibid.* 193): as a matter of fact, Zonaras in this passage alludes to the very last lines of the *Life of Alexander* (77.7–8), where Plutarch is speaking of Philip Arrhidaeus.

88 Malalas, VIII.1 (Bottios) and 4 (Theophilus): ed. Thurn, 146 and 148.

89 George Synkellos, ed. Mosshammer, 318.

90 Cf. C. JOUANNO, “L’image d’Alexandre le Conquérant chez les chroniqueurs byzantins”, *Kentron* 17/2 (2001), 93–106.

Hyrceanians, Alexander's alliance with Thalestris, queen of the Amazons, his war against Poros, and the latter's enlistment among the allies of the Macedonian king.

Kedrenos has the bad repute of being a plain compiler, who composed a work with a notoriously rhapsodic character,<sup>91</sup> so that it seems highly improbable that he made direct use of the historians of Alexander. He more probably used the text of an older chronicler, close to the historical tradition (perhaps John Antiochenus, whose fragments show striking parallels with the historical passages present in Kedrenos' chapter),<sup>92</sup> and he must have sewn passages borrowed from this chronographical source with material excerpted from George the Monk (and possibly Malalas). To be sure, the result is somewhat uneven, and not devoid of internal contradictions: Kedrenos' chapter lacks chronological consistency, and his portrait of Alexander is not completely coherent, especially because the Diodorean passage about Alexander's orientalised does not fit very well with the preceding praise borrowed from George the Monk. Nevertheless, Kedrenos' choice of sources testifies to his desire to come back to a more historical presentation of Alexander's story,<sup>93</sup> and his naming of Diodorus, at the beginning of the chapter must be all the more significant since he rarely quotes his sources and, when summarizing other works, often neglects to reproduce their bibliographical references.<sup>94</sup> But he chose to keep Diodorus' name, and that can be interpreted as a pretence to historical respectability from the part of a representative of a rather "popular" literary genre.

*Tzetzes: using ancient historians and parading (Ps.)-Callisthenian sources, canonical vs vernacular literature*

In the *Chiliades* or *Biblos Historiôn* he composed as a versified commentary on his own letters,<sup>95</sup> John Tzetzes (ca. 1110–ca. 1180/1185) quotes Arrian (2 occ.), Plutarch (13 occ.), and Diodorus (30 occ.), but never in relation with Alexander, even if he mentions the

91 Cf. A. KARPOZILLOS, *Βυζαντινοὶ ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονογράφοι*, III, Athens 2009, 331 and 334. W. Adler speaks of a mass of largely non assimilated quotations (*Time Immemorial: Archaic History and its Sources in Christian Chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus*, Washington 1989, 206–207), and L. Tartaglia considers Kedrenos' work as closer to copy than to *compendium* ("Meccanismi di compilazione nella *Chronaca* di Giorgio Cedreno", in: F. Conca and G. Fiaccadori (eds.), *Bisanzio nell'età dei Macedoni: forme della produzione letteraria e artistica. 8. Giornata di Studi Bizantini, Milano, 15–16 marzo 2005*, Milan 2007, 243–244).

92 John Antiochenus, ed. Roberto, F 73–77.

93 Cf. I. NILSSON and R. SCOTT, "Towards a New History of Byzantine Literature: the Case of Historiography", *C&M* 58 (2007), 330: Kedrenos' work "can be seen as part of a broader movement towards demythologizing history, popularizing recent scientific findings, and democratizing knowledge". On his rationalizing tendency and his effort to make historical data easily attainable, by condensing material and lending it a stylistic form appropriate to *divulgazione*, see also R. MAISANO, "Note su Giorgio Cedreno e la tradizione storiografica bizantina", *RSBS* 3 (1983), 229 and 244–245.

94 Cf. M. WALLRAFF and U. ROBERTO, in: M. Wallraff *et al.*, *Julius Africanus, Chronographiae: The Extant Fragments*, Berlin/New York 2007, XLVI.

95 On Tzetzes, see P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180*, Cambridge/New York 1993, 328–329, 348–352, 402–403; A. RHOBY, "Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter", *Graeco-Latina Brunensia* 15 (2010), 155–170. According to A. KALDELLIS, "Classical scholarship in twelfth-century Byzantium", in: Ch. Barber and D. Jenkins (eds.), *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Leiden/Boston 2009, 28–29, Tzetzes "used his own letters to teach Attic prose; he then supplemented linguistic instruction with the content of the more colloquial *Histories*".

Macedonian king quite often (his name appears in no less than eighteen “historiae”). Surprisingly, when Tzetzes quotes ancient sources for anecdotes concerning Alexander, he refers to authors whose texts were probably lost in the 12th century, Onesicritus (III *hist.* 114.943), an obscure epic poet called Aischrion of Mitylene (VIII *hist.* 198, 298–400), Cleitarchos and Alexander’s companions (IX *hist.* 275.583).<sup>96</sup> He also makes four explicit references to “Callisthenes” (I *hist.* 13.331; III *hist.* 69.103; III *hist.* 89–91.330; III *hist.* 102–111.889) – that is to the anonymous author of the *Alexander Romance*. Such references to the *Romance* are indeed rather extraordinary in a Byzantine literary text for, with the exception of another 12th-century author, slightly earlier than Tzetzes, the rhetor Nikephoros Basilakes,<sup>97</sup> Byzantine *literati* were not in the habit of mentioning works of such a low standing: they probably knew the *Romance*, which seems to have been circulating widely, but they pretended to ignore it with much snobbery.<sup>98</sup>

*Chil.* III *hist.* 89–91, a 39 lines poem, where Tzetzes deals successively with the assassination of the Persian king Darius, of the Roman general Regulus, and of the Spartan mercenary Xanthippos, can be quoted as an interesting example of his disconcerting strategy. He refers to Diodorus as a source for the story of Regulus and Xanthippos, that is for an episode pertaining to the first Punic war, but chooses to place the Alexander material under Callisthenes’ authority:

Ἡ παλαιῶν ἀνώνυμος τοιαύδε ἱστορία.  
 Δαρεῖος μὲν ὁ ὕστερος Περσίδος βασιλεύσας  
 ὃν ἤττησεν Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Μακεδὼν ὁ μέγας,  
 ὑπὸ τοῦ Βήσου τέθνηκε καὶ Ἀριοβαρζάνου,  
 ἀνδρῶν Περσῶν οὓς ἔκτεινεν ὁ Μακεδὼν σταυρώσας.  
 Τοῦτο τὸ τέλος γίνεται Δαρεΐῳ μὲν τῷ Πέρσῃ,  
 ἀντὶ τιμῆς τῆς πρότερον ἀντὶ τῆς βασιλείας.<sup>99</sup>

<...>

Τῆς ἱστορίας μέμνηται τῆσδε καὶ τῆς Ῥηγούλου

96 In this notice devoted to Semiramis’ walls, one can also find a reference to book I of Diodorus’ *Library of History* (I 562–563).

97 See Basilakes’ *Ethopoia* on the Theban Ismenias forced to play the flute while his city was being destroyed (ed. Pignani, n° 24: cf. Ps.-Callisth. I 46), and his oration *In Ioannem Comnenum imperatorem* (ed. Maisano), with an allusion to Darius’ mock presents to Alexander (cf. Ps.-Callisth. I 36 and 38). On Basilakes’ originality, and his sometimes unusual literary preferences, see A. GARZYA, “Un lettré du milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Nicéphore Basilakès”, *RESE* 8 (1970), 611–621.

98 Cf. C. JOUANNO, “La réception du *Roman d’Alexandre* à Byzance”, *Ancient Narrative* 1 (2000–2001), 301–321.

99 “Here is an anonymous history told by the Ancients: once defeated by the great Alexander of Macedon, Darius, the last king of Persia, was killed by Bes(s)os and Ariobarzanes, <two> Persians whom Alexander put to death by crucifixion. Such was the end of Darius the Persian, after experiencing the honours of kingship.” Here follows the story of Regulus and Xanthippos, meant to illustrate the disloyalty of the Carthaginian people: in Walton’s edition of Diodorus (Loeb, 1957), this passage features in Book XXIII 16, but Goukowsky did not find appropriate to reprint it in his own edition (CUF, 2006), for the mention of variants in Tzetzes’ text, he maintains, leads one to suppose he made use of at least three different sources, and not of Diodorus alone.



ὁ Σικελὸς Διόδωρος· τὴν δὲ Δαρείου γράφει  
ὁ Καλλισθένης συγγραφεὺς σὺν οὐκ ὀλίγοις ἄλλοις.<sup>100</sup>

While the story of Bessos and Ariobarzanes's betrayal was available in the canonical historians of Alexander, the detail of their crucifixion is indeed borrowed from the *Romance* (II 21). In the passages of his *Chiliades* relating to Alexander, Tzetzes exploits various Pseudo-Callisthenian data on a par with historical ones: he sometimes mentions episodes attested only in the *Romance* (for instance, the plea of Ismenias the flautist before the destruction of Thebes, and the unhistorical outcome of the city's reconstruction by Alexander himself, in *Chil.* VII *hist.* 139 and X *hist.* 332),<sup>101</sup> but in most passages elements borrowed from both traditions, the popular and the canonical, are blended intricately. We can quote *Chil.* XI *hist.* 367 as an example of such a mixing of sources:

**ὅτι ἑτερόφθαλμος καὶ ἑτεροτράχηλος ἦν Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ μέγας**

Ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ μέγιστος Ἀλέξανδρος Φιλίππου,  
γλαυκὸν τὸν ἓνα ὀφθαλμὸν ἔχειν θρυλλεῖται πᾶσι,  
μέλανα δὲ τὸν ἕτερον. Τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς τοιοῦτος.  
Ἦν δὲ καὶ σιμοτράχηλος καὶ παρατραχηλῶν δέ,  
ὥστε δοκεῖν πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἐνατενίζειν τοῦτον.  
Τοιοῦτον καὶ ὁ Λύσιππος ἐκεῖνον ἐχαλκουργεῖ.  
Καὶ τούτου δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπέχαιρεν εἰκόσιν,  
ἢ Στασικράτους πλάσμασι ψευδέσι, τυφουμένοις.  
Ὅτι δ' ἦν ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος τοιοῦτος τὴν ἰδέαν,  
δηλοῖ καὶ τὸ ἐπίγραμμα ὅπερ τυγχάνει τόδε·  
“Αὐδάσονται δ' ἔοικεν ὁ χάλκεος ἐς Δία λεύσσων,  
γᾶν ὑπ' ἐμὲ τίθεται, Ζεῦ, σὺ δ' Ὀλυμπον ἔχε.”<sup>102</sup>

In this description of Alexander's physical appearance, the motif of heterophthalmy is borrowed from the *Romance* (I 13.3), but the detail of the head inclined to one side comes from Plutarch, as well as that of looking up with the eyes turned towards the heaven (*FA* II 2, *mor.* 335b; *VA* 4.2). Plutarch is also the source of Tzetzes' references to the sculptors Lysippos (*FA* II 2, *mor.* 335b; *VA* 4.1) and Stasicrates, who wanted to carve Mount Athos to Alexander's resemblance (*FA* II 2, *mor.* 335c–e).<sup>103</sup> The epigram quoted in the final verses

100 “This history (of Xanthippos) and that of Regulus are mentioned by Diodorus of Sicily; that of Darius is written by the historian Callisthenes, among many others.”

101 Cf. Ps.-Callisth. I 46 (A text). The detail of the reconstruction of Thebes features only in the oldest version of the *Romance*, so that we can be sure that Tzetzes was using a copy of the work belonging to the *alpha* recension.

102 “That Alexander the Great had eyes of different colours and a neck inclined to one side. The very great king Alexander, son of Philip, had one eye bluish green, as is common talk, and the other black. Such were his eyes. Otherwise, he had a concave neck, inclined to one side, so that he seemed to look fixely towards the heaven. That is the way Lysippus represented him in bronze, and Alexander enjoyed the latter's statues more than Stasicrates' fallacious images. That Alexander had such an outward appearance is also testified by the epigram that runs as follows: ‘This bronze statue, gazing up to Zeus, looks like a man about to proclaim: I hold earth in my power, Zeus, keep Olympus for yourself!’”

103 This passage must be a comment on *Ep.* 76 (ed. Leone) to John Kostomou, where Tzetzes contrasts Stasicrates, who wanted to represent Alexander under a gigantic appearance, with Lysippos who



of Tzetzes' poem comes from Plutarch as well (*FA* I 9, *mor.* 331a and II 2, *mor.* 335b), and confirms Tzetzes' familiarity with Plutarch's work.<sup>104</sup>

In the introductory sentence of Alexander's portrait one can remark the expression *θρυλλεῖται πᾶσι*, used by Tzetzes in connection with Alexander's heterophthalmy: however, it is not sure that one can interpret these terms as an allusion to the wide readership of the *Romance*, for the detail of Alexander's anomalous eyes, though probably invented by Pseudo-Callisthenes, had afterwards found its way into many world chronicles, and is mentioned by Malalas, George the Monk, or Michael Glykas. In *Chiliad VII hist.* 139, which is devoted to "Thebes destroyed and reconstructed by Alexander himself because of an athlete" and offers a plain paraphrase of chapter I 46 of the *Romance*,<sup>105</sup> Tzetzes introduces his narrative by an expression that seems to imply exactly the opposite – that the *Romance* was little known: *Φέρεται λόγος οὐ πολλοῖς γνώριμος δὲ βραχέσιν...* ("The story goes, known not by many people, but by a few ones..."). We must perhaps consider such an unexpected affirmation as a reminder of the rarity of Pseudo-Callisthenian references in highbrow literature: Tzetzes appears eccentric in parading a source like the *Alexander Romance*, even if he does so in a work which is (at least formally) innovative, for the *Chiliades* are written in political verses, i.e. in the medium of vernacular poetry. Tzetzes' choice of such a medium, here and in other exegetical works, may have been partly constrained, to believe Michael Jeffreys, who maintains he made use of political verse for pedagogical reasons, in order to be more easily understandable to a half-educated audience – in our case, the readers puzzled by the allusive style of his letters.<sup>106</sup> Tzetzes was, it seems, something of a reluctant innovator.<sup>107</sup> His frequent references to the *Alexander Romance* may be part of the same authorial strategy as his resorting to political verse, be they a result of a genuine liking for Alexander's fictional biography, or a mere concession to the limited historical knowledge of an audience more familiar with Pseudo-Callisthenes' affabulation than with the writings of the historians of Alexander. There is certainly a playful dimension in the scholar's combined

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showed him *ἐτεροφθαλμος* and *ἐτεροπράχηνος*, as he really was: this reference features in a development about epistolary style (plain vs bombastic). The relationship between Alexander, Lysippos and Stasicrates builds the matter of four other texts in the *Chiliades*: VIII *hist.* 199 ("On Stasicrates"); VIII *hist.* 200 ("On Lysippos"); X *hist.* 322 ("On Alexander outstripping the occasion, and Lysippos' representation of time"); XI *hist.* 367 ("On Pasistrates or Stasicrates, Bithynian sculptor, and his images of Alexander"). The mention in VIII *hist.* 200 and X *hist.* 322 of Lysippos' representation of Alexander with *kairos* is a comment on *Ep.* 70 (to Josephus, kathegumen of the Pantokrator monastery), where Tzetzes presents Lysippos' sculpture as a *parainesis* he compares with Job's saying (29.2): "Oh that I were as in months past wherein God preserved me!"

104 In his *Exegesis in Homeri Iliadem* (ed. Hermann, I. 13–18), Tzetzes explains that, forced by poverty to sell his books, he retained only a volume of mathematical texts and his copy of Plutarch's *Lives*.

105 This "Historia" is probably a comment on *Ep.* 18 (addressed to the *mystikos* Nikephoros Serblis), for it contains a brief reference to the destruction and reconstruction of Thebes "because of an athlete". In his letter Tzetzes alludes to the Pseudo-Callisthenian episode without specifying its source.

106 M. JEFFREYS, "The Nature and Origins of Political Verse", *DOP* 28 (1974), 148–157.

107 According to T.M. CONLEY, "Byzantine criticism and the uses of literature", in: A. Minnis and I. Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, II: *The Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2005, 684–685, Tzetzes' "critical allegiances were, by his own account, with the 'ancients' rather than the 'moderns'", so that his use of the political verse "is something of a paradox", for it was "a form itself not authorized by any classical, post-classical or patristic precedent".

exploitation of canonical and “fringe” material on Alexander, which is thus allowed to make its entrance on the literary scene.

*Gregoras: intertwining references to the historians of Alexander in praise of a Christian emperor*

Nikephoros Gregoras (ca. 1294–ca. 1359), one of the most remarkable polymaths of the Palaeologan Renaissance,<sup>108</sup> was a disciple and a friend of Theodore Metochites, grand logothete of the emperor Andronikos II and restorer of the Chora monastery.<sup>109</sup> When Metochites was forced to exile, after Andronikos’ deposition, he entrusted the administration of the Chora monastery and its library to the safekeeping of his friend. In this well-furnished library many recent books were available, among which exemplaries transcribed at the instigation of Metochites and Gregoras, and also copies of the edition of Plutarch achieved by Planudes, who had lived in the Chora monastery.<sup>110</sup>

Traces of Gregoras’ scholarship are discernible in various *codices*, read and annotated, commissioned, prepared and/or copied by him.<sup>111</sup> Gregoras’ autograph and/or marginal notes from his pen can be found in manuscripts of Diodorus (*Parisinus gr.* 1665, 10th–11th c., including books XVI–XX)<sup>112</sup> and Plutarch (*Vaticanus Barb. gr.* 182, late 10th–early 11th c., including the treatises *De Alexandri fortuna*; *Parisinus gr.* 1672, 14th c., including both the *Life of Alexander* and the treatises *De Alexandri fortuna*;<sup>113</sup> *Monacensis gr.* 85, late 13th–early 14th c.,<sup>114</sup> and *Pal. Heidelb. gr.* 129, 14th c.,<sup>115</sup> both including *excerpta* of the *Life of Alexander*).<sup>116</sup> The second of these miscellaneous codices, which contains twenty excerpts from Plutarch’s biography,<sup>117</sup> is of special interest, for it is an “autograph notebook” of Gregoras, and the texts it contains must represent, at least partly, Gregoras’ reading in the Chora library.<sup>118</sup>

108 Cf. S. RUNCIMAN, *The Last Byzantine Renaissance*, Cambridge 1970, 67. FRYDE, *Early* (n. 5), 357–373 is less enthusiastic than Runciman about Gregoras’ intellectual stature!

109 On Metochites, see FRYDE, *Early* (n. 5), 322–336.

110 About Planudes’ influence on Gregoras, cf. B. CROKE, “Uncovering Byzantium’s Historical Audience”, in: R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, Aldershot 2010, 51.

111 D. BIANCONI, “La biblioteca di Cora tra Massimo Planude e Niceforo Gregora, una questione di mani”, *Segno e testo* 3 (2005), 416–434 lists around 50 manuscripts where it is possible to recognize Gregoras’ hand. Many of the manuscripts where he has let traces of “intensive reading” include historical works: cf. G. CAVALLI, *Lire à Byzance*, Paris 2006, 73.

112 N° 19 in Bianconi’s list, where three other exemplaries of Diodorus, not including book XVII, are mentioned (n° 11, 29, and 36: “Biblioteca” (n. 111), 413–416). On the *Parisinus gr.* 1665, see also MAZZUCHI, “Diodoro” (n. 14).

113 Respectively n° 26 and n° 20 in Bianconi’s list: “Biblioteca” (n. 111), 414–415.

114 On this manuscript, see B. MONDRAIN, “Les écritures dans les manuscrits byzantins du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Quelques problématiques”, *RSBN* 44 (2007), 162–164.

115 N° 2 in Bianconi’s list: “Biblioteca” (n. 111), 412.

116 To this list one can add the *codices Neapolitanus* III.E.28 + *Vaticanus gr.* 1676 (one and the same volume including Plutarch’s *FA*), for it was copied by Crateros, one of Gregoras’ collaborators (cf. D. BIANCONI, “La controversia palamitica, figure, libri, testi e mani”, *Segno e Testo* 6 (2008), 371–372, n. 104).

117 Cf. MANFREDINI, “Osservazioni” (n. 20), with the detail of the *excerpta*, drawn from *VA* 15.1; 17.6; 21.10; 25.1; 25.7; 25.6; 26.7–10; 26.11–27.4; 30.2; 33.10; 33.8; 35.1–2; 35.13–14; 39.8; 39.13; 42.3; 41.7; 44.1–2; 64.8; 69.6–7.

118 Cf. A. BIEDL, “Der Heidelberger *cod. Pal. gr.* 129 – die Notizensammlung eines byzantinischen Gelehrten”, *WJA* 3 (1948), 100–106; A. DILLER, “Pausanias in the Middle Ages”, *TAPhA* 87 (1956),

It is then no wonder if we can find in Gregoras' works, which are extremely rich in references to Alexander,<sup>119</sup> many echoes from Diodorus, Plutarch, and Arrian, with a marked preponderance of Plutarchean material: Gregoras evidently followed the steps of his master and friend Metochites, who was a warm admirer of Plutarch and, in the essay he devoted to this author, praised him as "a complete treasure-house of the whole of history and knowledge, a market-place of wisdom that caters without difficulty for anybody whomsoever, according to the taste and wants of each".<sup>120</sup>

Gregoras' *Life of Constantine the Great* can be used as an example of his fascination for the Alexander theme and of his erudition on the matter: it is a work of ambiguous generic affiliation, halfway between hagiography and *basilikos logos*.<sup>121</sup> To describe Constantine as the greatest ruler of all times, Gregoras resorts to the rhetorical method of parallelism, and insistently compares the founder of the Christian empire with Alexander. He thus imitates Eusebius of Caesarea, who developed the same comparison in his own *Life of Constantine* (I 7–8),<sup>122</sup> one of the main sources of Gregoras' encomiastic biography: but Gregoras has enriched his Christian model with a lot of elements borrowed from the historians of Alexander.

Comparing the foundation of Constantinople to that of Alexandria (§ 45), he recalls (according to Plutarch)<sup>123</sup> the presage of the birds devouring the barley-meal Alexander had used to draw the outline of the city, and mentions the interpretation of the seers prophetizing that Alexandria will feed men of every nation. Then he blames such a pronouncement for being indicative of boastfulness and flattery (κόμπου καὶ κολακείας): arguing against oracles, he maintains that Constantine considered them as pure stupidity (λήρους) and chose to entrust Constantinople's helm to the safekeeping of the Virgin, the most reliable guide.<sup>124</sup>

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92–93; I. SEVCENKO, "Some autographs of Nicephorus Gregoras", in: *Mélanges Georges Ostrogorsky* II, *Zbornik Radova* 8 (1964), 447–450 (he specifies that some excerpts of the Heidelberg ms were used by Gregoras in his *Roman History*).

119 We can find references to Alexander in many of his letters (ed. Leone, *Ep.* 12; 20; 21; 24; 29; 40; 41; 43; 71; 85; 107; 109; 125; 130; 147; 157) and discourses (he successively compared to Alexander all the emperors of his time, Andronikos II and Andronikos III Palaeologus, John VI Cantacuzenus and his son Matthew); his *Roman history*, which covers the period 1204–1359, also includes no less than a dozen of allusions to Alexander, while only one features in the historical work of Cantacuzenus, contemporary with Gregoras' *Roman history*.

120 Trad. K. HULT, *Theodore Metochites on Ancient Authors and Philosophy*, Göteborg 2002. Metochites even states that Plutarch's writings can replace all the books written previously: "If someone wants to know anything that happened before Plutarch's entry into life, his work and studies, that person must either try to get hold of all the books written before Plutarch or in his time, and spend a vast amount of work, or he can content himself with acquiring his books."

121 The work is entitled "Life and encomium of the holy, highest among the *basileis* and *isapostolos* Constantine". Cf. I. PARASKEUOPOULOU, *To αγιολογικό και ομιλητικό έργο του Νικηφόρου Γρηγορά*, Thessalonike 2013, 116–127.

122 According to L. Pietri, Eusebius' information on Alexander derives indirectly from Diodorus, but he must have borrowed the substance of his parallelism from a collection of *exempla*, meant to offer material ready-made for adorning discourses (L. PIETRI and M.-J. RONDEAU, *Eusèbe de Césarée, Vie de Constantin*, Paris 2013, 34 and 186–187). For a comparison between Eusebius and Gregoras, see PARASKEUOPOULOU, *Αγιολογικό* (n. 121), 119–120.

123 Plutarch, *Alex.* 26.8–10. The same presage is mentioned by Arrian, but in *An.* III 2.1–2 the seers prophetize more vaguely prosperity to the city.

124 On the importance attached by Gregoras to the foundation of Constantinople, cf. A. CARILE, "Il mito di Costantino in Niceforo Gregora", in: A. Carile, *Teologia politica bizantina*, Spoleto 2008, 188.

Some paragraphs later, Gregoras contrasts Alexander's deceptive appearance to Constantine's great physical presence, which was, he says, in harmony with the emperor's character and authority, so that he was recognizable, without need of any interpret, in the middle of thousand soldiers (§ 50).<sup>125</sup> Gregoras thus reinterprets in a most unusual derogatory way the well-known episode of the Persian king's mother Sisygambis mistaking Alexander for Hephaestion. The details of his text show he is referring to Diodorus' version, and not to Arrian's, who did his best to play down the possibly unflattering side of the anecdote<sup>126</sup>.

Later on (§ 53), Gregoras subjects the motif of Alexander's friendliness to the same derogatory re-reading: that constitutes a sort of literary *tour de force*, for it was one of the items most frequently put to the fore by Alexander's encomiasts.<sup>127</sup> Gregoras recalls the saying of Alexander pointing to his friends as his most precious treasure, and he criticizes such a high appraisal of friendship as a pagan attitude, to which he opposes Constantine's Christian charity: the latter's treasure was to help the poor, the old people, the orphans, and to turn the eyes of his soul towards the heaven,<sup>128</sup> abandoning to the earth what belongs to the earth and observing the precepts of the Gospels. Since Antiquity the question had been much discussed whether Alexander's wealth made him dear to his friends or they were transformed into enemies by his excessive munificence<sup>129</sup> – a controversy Gregoras himself declares of little value, once again in a rather provocative way: Constantine, he remarks, chose to ignore earthly rewards, and was the friend of all men indiscriminately. Here again material initially favourable to Alexander is reinterpreted in a pejorative way, in order to denigrate the Macedonian king and use him as a foil to Constantine.

What is striking in Gregoras' *Life of Constantine* is the precision of his historical references and the very close scrutiny to which he subjects his Alexander sources, making subtle choices among conflicting versions and exploiting the most effective variants, with a

125 One can already find a similar treatment of this motive in an early work of Gregoras, *Or. 2*, a panegyric addressed to Andronikos II, some time after 1318, according to its editor, P.A.M. LEONE, "*Nicephori Gregorae ad imperatorem Andronicum II Palaeologum orationes*", *Byzantion* 41 (1971), 497–519 (reference to Alexander I. 148–149). The *Life of Constantine* is a later work, composed between 1334/1335 and 1341/1342, according to the "Praefatio" of P.A.M. LEONE, *Nicephori Gregorae Vita Constantini*, Catania 1994, IX.

126 According to D.S. XVII 37.5–6, Hephaestion was superior to Alexander in size and beauty (τῷ μεγέθει καὶ κάλλει προέχοντος τοῦ Ἡφαιστίωνος). Arrian, who also relates the episode, but only as a hearsay (II 12.6–8: λόγος ἔχει), cautiously eliminates the details that could be considered too unfavourable to Alexander, and says the king and his friend bore the same clothes, and Hephaestion *seemed* taller to Sisygambis (μεῖζω ἐφάνη)!

127 The presence of this saying in various collections of *progymnasmata* (by Theon, Libanios, Nicolas the Sophist) certainly contributed to the diffusion of the anecdote, often mentioned in letters (Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep.* 8.4; Isidore of Pelusium, *Ep.* III 236; Eust. *Ep.* 32), orations (Lib. *Or.* 8. 8–9; Them. *Or.* 16.203 b–c), mirrors for princes (Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Basilikos Andrias*, ed. Hunger and Sevcenko, § 75; Thom.Mag. *De regis officiis*, ch. 16) and collections of apophthegms (*Gnomologium Vaticanum* 86; Ps.-Maximus, *Loci communes* 6.137).

128 Rewriting of Plutarch, *FA* II 2, *mor.* 335a–b.

129 On the possibly pernicious effects of Alexander's generosity, see Plutarch, *Alex.* 39.7. The *Loci communes* reflect the interest raised by this question: four anecdotes relating to Alexander feature in the chapter Περί εὐεργεσίας καὶ χάριτος (ch. 8), which is thus the richest in references to the Macedonian king. These four anecdotes are borrowed from Plutarch's *De Alexandri fortuna et Regum et imperatorum Apophthegmata*.

undeniable originality, to improve his Eusebian model and build the most convincing praise of the first Byzantine emperor.

### **Conclusion**

The four examples just discussed confirm the predominance among Byzantine readers of a literary approach of the writings of the historians of Alexander. Quotations from Diodorus, Plutarch, or Arrian in Byzantine works are usually of a rhetorical kind, and the historical value of the three authors is rarely questioned: the preference given by Gregoras now to one source, now to another has nothing to do with their greater or lesser veracity, but is entirely dependent on his rhetorical strategy. Even when Byzantine scholars explicitly comment upon Diodorus, Plutarch or Arrian, they do not discuss their use of sources or their reliability, but seem to be mostly concerned about their stylistic qualities: in a word, they treat Diodorus, Plutarch or Arrian as authors of literary works rather than historians proper. And one may wonder if the distinction the Byzantines made between the Alexander historians on the one hand and Pseudo-Callisthenian material on the other hand was not based upon stylistic considerations rather than upon an appreciation of the contrasting historical value of both branches of the Alexander tradition: Tzetzes' insistent references to "Callisthenes" in his *Chiliades* have nothing to do with a controversy about fictionality *vs* historicity.

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