

The Greek and the Latin *Alexander Romance*: Comparative Readings

MICHAEL PASCHALIS
University of Crete

1. Introduction

Our earliest surviving text of what we commonly call the *Alexander Romance* but was actually entitled *The Life (and Deeds) of Alexander of Macedonia*,¹ is a single manuscript of the 11th century (*Parisinus Graecus* 1711) known as A (Pseudo-Callisthenes). This text derives from a hypothetical original recension known as α and believed to be also the source of two early translations: a Latin one by Julius Valerius of about 300 AD² and an Armenian translation dating to the 5th century AD. Recension β of the *Alexander Romance* derives mainly from α and is represented by several manuscripts. It probably dates to the 5th century AD and its chief witnesses are B (*Parisinus Graecus* 1685) of the 15th century and L (*Leidensis Vulcanianus* 93), also of the 15th century. Among other versions there is one termed δ^* , which is no longer extant and was based either on A or on another version of the archetype α . The second Latin translation belongs to this recension and was made by Leo the Archpriest in the 10th century. Citations below are made from the texts of Kroll for A; Bergson for recension β , and Van Thiel for L; Rosellini for Julius Valerius and Pfister for Leo.³

Comparison among the early recensions of the *Alexander Romance* is usually made on the basis of clear-cut differences in content. Differences in style or language are treated as separate issues and minor textual omissions

¹ Βίος Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνοϋ (the title of L adds: καὶ πράξεις).

² On occasion, however, the text of Julius Valerius shares material with recension β , as in the cases of the Centaurs and Lapiths simile (1.21) or the etymology of Lysias (1.22), which are discussed in section 4 below.

³ On the recensions of the *Alexander Romance* see Jouanno 2002, 13–17; Stoneman 1996 and 1999.

or changes remain almost exclusively the concern of the editor. What I mean is that little attention has been paid to the question of how these texts compare with each other as narratives. Let me make this point clear by referring to recension β . It is commonly noted that the text of recension β is much easier to read (by that I do not mean ‘understand’) by comparison with A. It avoids complex syntactical structures, rare and poetic words, and has eliminated the embedded choliambic verses found in A. Also, the style tends to be repetitive and has a more popular flavor to it; words, names and passages that seemed obscure to the ‘author’ and would have meant little or nothing to his audience are submitted to a process of modification or elimination.⁴ But what does all this add up to? To put it plainly, do stylistic modifications or eliminations cause the story told by recension β to differ in one or more respects from the narrative of A? Do changes in narrative structure change the way we read the story being told? Does ‘repetitive style’ entail or generate differences in meaning and what kind? Is the suppression, ‘corruption’ or substitution of obscure words devoid of significance for the story told?

If there are essentially no literary studies asking questions like those put forward above, this is probably because scholarship sees no literary qualities in the *Alexander Romance*. In the words of Richard Stoneman “The *Alexander Romance* is not a literary masterpiece. It is definitely popular literature”.⁵ The *Alexander Romance* may not be a ‘literary masterpiece’, but it deserves literary studies.⁶ First, because its versions may vary widely in terms of style and narrative features—suffice it to compare the Greek text of A or Valerius with the *Historia de preliis* and the prose and rhymed Modern Greek versions. And secondly, because texts that display a fragmented structure where narrative continuity plays little or no role may develop alternative strategies for producing narrative meaning.

Below I attempt to compare certain episodes in the Greek and Latin versions of the *Alexander Romance*. I argue that slight textual changes may affect the kind of story told and that these texts have ways to create textual or subtextual ‘coherence’ where there may be a mere parataxis of self-con-

⁴ Jouanno 2002, 250–254.

⁵ Stoneman 1991, 31.

⁶ There are also different definitions of ‘popular literature’, drawing on various characteristics of the text, intent, the producer, readership, or other features. Hansen’s *Anthology*, 1998, under ‘popular fiction’ groups the *Alexander Romance* with such texts as Xenophon’s of Ephesus *An Ephesian tale* and Pseudo-Lucian’s *Onos*; all three are also found in Reardon’s *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*. On the theoretical issues the composition of Hansen’s anthology raises regarding the definition of popular literature see the review of Hansen 1998 by Laura Gibbs in *BMCR* 99.5.11.

tained stories or disconnected material or arbitrary geographical settings. Much attention is paid to the study of names (of places and people), which tend to adapt to changes in the historical and cultural context. I also investigate the ways in which a translation copes with the subtleties of the original, like wordplay, or creates new contextual meaning. A first point to be made on the basis of these comparative readings is that it is *not always* advisable to restore or correct passages of recension β by using material that comes from A or Valerius and vice versa. A second point is that a translation that *looks* faithful to the sense of the original may be telling a different story. A third point is that the *Alexander Romance* may on occasion display a degree of sophistication that should not, in my view, go unnoticed.

2. *The gates of Abdera*

Chapter 1.43 narrates Alexander's negotiations with the beleaguered citizens of Abdera. It is preserved in Julius Valerius, recension β , the Syriac translation and the Latin translation of Leo the Archpriest. The basic story is told in Julius Valerius, our earliest account. As Alexander marches to Abdera, the Abderites close the city gates and Alexander orders the destruction of the city by fire. So they send an embassy explaining that their action is motivated not by hostility against him but by fear of Darius, and promise to open their gates when he returns victorious after defeating Darius. Alexander replies that they can open the city gates and live in peace for the present but when he returns he will no longer treat them as a friend [will make them his subjects, according to recension β].

Here are the texts of Julius Valerius, recension β and Leo:

Igitur cum sibi per urbem Abderam transitus foret, obseratis urbis suae claustris Abderitae eum ne reciperent offirmaverant. id contumeliam ratus et convenire protinus milites et urbem illam igni vastare mandavit. sed legatione Abderitae docent sese illud non odio contemptuque Graeci regis eiusque iustissimi factitare, enim metuere impetum barbarorum motusque Darii inconsultiores; cui si potestatis aliquid in sese relictum foret, non absque poena Abderitum fore quod Alexandrum in amicitiam contra Persae commoda receptassent: "igitur reverso tibi," aiunt, "et victori parebimus." ad haec rex illum quem conceperint de Dario metum abicere supplices iubet neque ulterius eius vim atque impotentiam formidare. nunc tamen se velle respondit urbem quam confidentissime rese-

rent, se in praesenti oppidum haud ingressurum. "enim cum revenero," inquit, "non hospes et amicus vobis ero." (Valerius 1.43 Rosellini)
 (When Alexander was passing by the city of Abdera, the Abderites closed the gates of their city determined not to receive him within it. He interpreted it as an insult and ordered the soldiers to gather and destroy the city by fire. But the Abderites sent an embassy and explained that they were not doing it because they hated and despised a most just king like him but because they feared a barbarian attack and Darius' rather unpredictable movements. They added that if Darius had still some power over them, they should not be punished for having received Alexander against the interests of the Persian King : "Therefore" they said "we will submit to you when you return victorious". The king ordered the suppliants to let go their fear of Darius and to stop dreading his force and violence. He added that he wanted them to open their city in absolute trust and that this time he would not enter. "But when I come back" he said "I will no longer be a guest and a friend to you.")

Ἐλθὼν δὲ ἐκεῖθεν εἰς τὴν Πύλιν καὶ συνάξας τὴν Μακεδόνων στρατείαν σὺν οἷς αἰχμαλώτευσεν ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ Δαρείου, τὴν ὁδοιορίαν ἐποιεῖτο εἰς Ἄβδηραν. οἱ δὲ Ἄβδηρίται ἀπέκλεισαν τὰς πύλας τῆς πόλεως αὐτῶν· ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπὶ τοῦτο ὀργισθεὶς ἐκέλευσε τῷ στρατηγῷ αὐτοῦ ἐμπρῆσαι τὴν πόλιν. οἱ δὲ πέμπουσιν αὐτῷ πρέσβεις λέγοντες· “ Ἡμεῖς ἀπεκλείσαμεν τὰς πύλας οὐχ ὡς ἀντιτασσόμενοι τῷ κράτει τῷ σῷ, ἀλλὰ δεδουκότες τὴν τῶν Περσῶν βασιλείαν, μήπως Δαρείου ἐπιμείνας τῇ τυραννίδι πορθήσῃ ἡμῶν τὴν πόλιν ὡς παραδεξαμένων σε. ὥστε σὺ <νενικηκὼς Δαρείου> παρελθὼν ἀνοίξῃς τῆς πόλεως τὰς πύλας· τῷ γὰρ ἰσχυροτέρῳ βασιλεῖ ὑποτασσόμεθα.” Ταῦτα ἀκούσας Ἀλέξανδρος ἐμειδίασεν καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποσταλέντας παρ’ αὐτῶν πρέσβεις· “ Δεδοίκατε τὴν Δαρείου βασιλείαν, μήπως ὕστερον ὑμᾶς ἐκπορθήσῃ ἐπιμένων τῇ βασιλείᾳ; πορεύεσθε καὶ ἀνοίξατε καὶ κοσμίως πολιτεύεσθε· οὐ γὰρ εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς τὴν πόλιν ὑμῶν, ἕως ἡττήσω Δαρείον ὃν δεδοίκατε βασιλέα· καὶ τότε ὑμᾶς ὑποχειρίους λήψομαι.” Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν τοῖς πρέσβεσιν τὴν ὁδοιορίαν ἑαυτοῦ ἐποιεῖτο. (L 1.43 Van Thiel)

(From there he went to Pyle. Here he gathered together the Macedonian army and the prisoners he had taken in the war against Darius and marched to Abdera. The Abderites closed the gates of their city. Alexander was angry at this and ordered his general to burn down the city. But the Abderites sent an embassy to him who gave this message: "We closed our gates not in order to oppose your rule but because we are

afraid of the kingdom of Persia, that Darius, if he remains in power, may sack our city because we received you. Therefore <go and defeat Darius and then> come and open our gates. We obey the stronger king. Having heard their speech Alexander smiled and said to the envoys of the Abderites: “Are you afraid of Darius’ rule, that he may come and sack your city should he remain in power? Go now and open your gates and behave as usual. I will not enter your city, until I have defeated King Darius whom you dread; then I will make you my subjects.” Having said these words to the embassy, Alexander resumed his march.)

Et post hec exiit de Macedonia venitque in locum, qui dicitur Abdira. Homines autem ipsius civitatis clausurunt ei portas, ut non ingrederetur ibi. Ad hec iratus Alexander praecepit, ut incenderetur ipsa civitas. Homines ipsius civitatis videntes ignem dixerunt: “Alexander, non rebelando tibi clausimus portas, sed dubitando Darium, regem Persarum, ne audiret de nobis pacem factam tecum, dirigeret et dissiparet nos.” Alexander dixit: “Aperite portas secundum consuetudinem. Modo itaque non veni pugnare vobiscum; cum autem fecero finem cum Dario, rege Persarum, tunc loquar et vobiscum.” Timendo acquieverunt et patefecerunt portas. (Leo 1.43 Pfister)

(Then he left Macedonia and came to a place called Abdira. The people of this city closed the gates to him, so that he would not enter. Alexander was angry at their action and ordered the burning of the city. When the people saw the fire, they said: “Alexander, we did not close the gates as a gesture of revolt against you but because we were afraid that if Darius, King of the Persians, heard that we had made peace with you, he might march against us and destroy us.” And Alexander said to them: “Open the gates as you normally do. This time I have not come to wage war against you, but when I am done with Darius, the king of the Persians, then I will talk to you.” The Abderites were frightened and opened the city-gates.)

The Latin text of Valerius in its typical learned fashion attempts to make the situation as clear as possible by explaining the arguments on both sides in indirect speech. By comparison with Valerius who repeats ideas the text of recension β repeats words (as in δεδοικότες, δεδοίκατε, δεδοίκατε). The invitation extended to Alexander: “come and open our gates” (παρελθὼν ἄνοιξον τῆς πόλεως τὰς πύλας) is a feature that may be telling a different story from Valerius’ “*reverso tibi ... et victori parebimus*”. The Abderites do

not utter the word “when you return”; also they voice their submission to ‘the stronger king’ in the *present* tense (ὕποτασσόμεθα) and they may actually be saying: “we submit to *you who are* the stronger king”). Hence Merkelbach’s supplement *νενικηκῶς Δαρείον*⁷ (“having defeated Darius”), which was proposed on the basis of the story told by Valerius and was accepted by Van Thiel, is questionable.⁸

The call extended to Alexander to come and open the gates may simply be a case where the Abderites, having expressed their fear of Darius and weighed the alternatives, are inviting the Macedonian leader to enter their city *immediately*, while Alexander construes their statement as a challenge—or it may be that Alexander’s reply has not adapted to changes in the speech of the Abderites. It is a typical feature of recension β to display changes (vis-à-vis the text of A) in one part of the story through minor omissions or modifications while other parts in the same story remain the same. The ironic gap is produced of itself, i.e. out of the text we end up with. The least we can say is that this type of confrontation between Alexander and the Abderites could be an open-ended game as to the time of its fulfillment. Leo’s translation makes this point clear. It offers the narrative of recension β reduced to its bare essentials and organized around *portas*. The citizens of Abdera voice their fear of Darius; Alexander invites them to open their gates uttering a concealed threat about “having a talk with them” in the future; the Abderites are frightened and “throw the gates open” for the Macedonian leader to enter their city (*Timendo acquieverunt et patefecerunt portas*). The outcome of the confrontation in Leo’s text supports in retrospect our cautious reading of the text of recension β.

One final point that deserves our attention in recension β is the beginning of chapter 1.43. The narrative opens with Alexander’s arrival at a city called Πύλη that is not mentioned in Julius Valerius. C. Müller suggested changing Πύλην to Ἀμφίπολιν and Ausfeld to Πέλλαν;⁹ Arrian’s text suggests that Πύλην probably originated in Ἀμφίπολιν :

Ἦν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ στόλος παρὰ τὴν λίμνην τὴν Κερκινίτιν ὡς ἐπ’ Ἀμφίπολιν καὶ τοῦ Στρυμόνος ποταμοῦ τὰς ἐκβολὰς. διαβάς δὲ τὸν Στρυμόνα

⁷ Merkelbach 1977, 120.

⁸ In his critical apparatus Kroll displays caution as to whether the Greek text should be supplemented on the basis of Valerius’ Latin text (fuitne olim: *post victoriam portas aperi?* cf. Val.). He also cites a suggested emendation of *παρελθὼν* to *ἐπανελθὼν*.

⁹ See Bergson’s critical apparatus, ad loc. Two manuscripts read *πόλιν*.

παρήμειβε τὸ Πάγγαιον ὄρος τὴν ὡς ἐπ' Ἐβδηρα καὶ Μαρώνειαν, πόλεις Ἑλληνίδας ἐπὶ θαλάσση ὤκισμένας. (Arrian, *Anab.* 1.11.3–4)
 (His route was past lake Cercinitis towards Amphipolis and the delta of the river Strymon. Having crossed the Strymon he passed Mount Pangaeum on the way to Abdera and Maronea, Greek cities settled by the sea.)

In a narrative like the *Alexander Romance* strategy and military movements have limited importance and toponyms may bear little or no topographical or geographical significance. Hence, tracing the origin of the fictional toponym Πύλην is one question, but a more important one is to understand that this place name belongs with the semantic cluster of πύλη in the story told immediately next. A key feature in the Abdera narrative of recension β is the creation of a semantic texture around the gates of the city (πύλας), their closing and (expected) opening. Πύλην becomes absorbed into the main body of the narrative and consequently signals in advance the pivotal place of the gates of Abdera in the confrontation between Alexander and the Abderites.

3. *The coordinates of a fictional march*

Just as the fictional city Πύλη in chapter 1.43 anticipates the role of the gates of Abdera in the story told next, so Alexander's letter to the fictional general Scamander at the beginning of the previous chapter (1.42) anticipates, both in the text of A and in recension β, Alexander's visit to Troy and his view of (leap into) the river Scamander. Here are the texts of A, recension β and Valerius for chapter 1.42.4–13:

Αὐτὸς δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ἀναλαβὼν ἦν εἶχε δύναμιν ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὴν Ἀχαιάν· καὶ παραγενόμενος ἐκεῖ πολλὰς πόλεις ὑπέταξε, καὶ ἐκείθεν στρατιὰν συλλέξας μυριάδων ἰς' καὶ ὑπεπεράσας τὸν καλούμενον Ταῦρον καταπήξας δόρυ μέγιστον εἰς τὴν γῆν εἶπεν· “Ἐἴ τις σθεναρὸς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἢ τῶν βαρβάρων ἢ τῶν ἄλλων βασιλέων βαστάσει τοῦτο τὸ δόρυ, ἐαυτῷ χαλεπὸν σημεῖον ἔξει· ἢ γὰρ πόλις αὐτοῦ ἐκ βάθρων βασταχθήσεται.” Παραγίνεται οὖν εἰς τὴν Πιερίαν πόλιν τῆς Βεβρυκίας, ἔνθα ἦν ναὸς καὶ ἄγαλμα τοῦ Ὀρφέως καὶ αἱ Πιερίδες Μοῦσαι καὶ τὰ θηρία αὐτῷ παρεστῶτα. βλέποντος δὲ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου εἰς τὸ ἄγαλμα τοῦ Ὀρφέως ἴδρωσε τὸ ξόανον ἐν τῷ προσώπῳ καὶ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ σώματι. τοῦ δὲ Ἀλεξάνδρου ζητούντος, τί βούλεται τὸ σημεῖον τοῦτο, λέγει αὐτῷ

Μελάμπους ὁ σημειολύτης: “Καμειν ἔχεις Ἀλέξανδρε βασιλεῦ μετὰ ἰδρώτων καὶ κόπων, τὰ τῶν βαρβάρων ἔθνη καὶ τὰς τῶν Ἑλλήνων πόλεις καθυποτάσσων καὶ διὰ θηρίων τὴν ὄδοιποροῖαν ποιούμενος, ὡσπερ ὁ Ὀρφεὺς λυρίζων καὶ ἄδων τοὺς Ἑλληνας ἔπεισε καὶ τοὺς βαρβάρους πρὸς ἔρωτα γλυκεῖ λόγῳ ἔτρεψε καὶ τοὺς θῆρας ἡμέρωσεν.” Ταῦτα ἀκούσας Ἀλέξανδρος ἐτίμησε μέγालος Μελάμπουν τὸν σημειολύτην. Καὶ παραγίνεται εἰς Φρυγίαν καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς αὐτὴν Ἴλιον τὴν πόλιν ἔθυσεν Ἑκτορι καὶ Ἀχιλλεῖ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἥρωσιν. ... Καὶ θεασάμενος τὸν Σκάμανδρον ποταμόν, εἰς ὃν ἤλατο Ἀχιλλεύς, ὅτι πέντε πήχεων οὐκ ἦν τὸ εὖρος, καὶ τὸ σάκος Αἴαντος τὸ ἐπαβόειον οὐ πάνυ μέγα οὐδὲ οὕτω θαυμαστὸν καθὼς συνέγραψεν Ὀμηρος, εἶπεν: “Μακάριοι ὑμεῖς οἱ τυχόντες τοιοῦτου κήρυκος τοῦ Ὀμήρου, οἵτινες ἐν μὲν τοῖς ἐκείνου ποιήμασι μεγάλοι γεγονάτε, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ὄρωμένοις οὐκ ἄξιοι τῶν ὑπ’ ἐκείνου γεγραμμένων.” Καὶ προσελθὼν αὐτῷ ποιητῆς τις εἶπεν: “Ἀλέξανδρε, κρεῖττονα ἡμεῖς γράγομεν Ὀμήρου.” Ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος εἶπεν: “Βούλομαι παρ’ Ὀμήρῳ Θερσίτης εἶναι ἢ παρὰ σοὶ Ἀχιλλεύς.” (A 1.42.4–13 Kroll)

(Alexander also took the forces he had with him and marched ahead to Achaia and when he arrived there he subdued many cities. From there he gathered an army of 170.000 men and, after crossing the mountain called Taurus, he thrust a most heavy spear into the ground and said: “If any strong man, Greek or barbarian, or any of the other kings, pulls out this spear, it will be an evil omen for him: his city will be razed to the ground.”

Then he came to Pieria, a city in Bebrycia, where there was a temple and a statue of Orpheus and the Pierian Muses, and near the statue stood wild beasts. When Alexander looked at the statue of Orpheus, the face and the whole body of the wooden image perspired. Alexander asked about the meaning of the omen and the seer Melampus told him: “King Alexander, you will have to labor with toil and sweat, subduing the nations of the barbarians and the cities of the Greeks and marching through packs of wild beasts, just as Orpheus by means of his lyre-playing and singing won over the Greeks, turned the barbarians to love through sweet words and tamed the wild beasts.” Having heard these words Alexander honored greatly the seer. Then he came to Phrygia and entered the city of Ilion itself and offered sacrifices to Hector and Achilles and to the other heroes. ... And having seen that the river Scamander, into which Achilles had leapt, was hardly five cubits wide, and that the seven-layered shield of Ajax was not as large and wonderful as Homer had written, he

said: “Fortunate are you who found a herald as great as Homer: you became great thanks to his poetry but in reality you are not worthy of what he wrote about you.” Then a poet approached him and said: “King Alexander, we will write [of your deeds] better than Homer.” And Alexander said to him: “I would rather be a Thersites in Homer than Achilles in your poem.”)

... ipse una exercitu Achaia peragrata multisque praeterea civitatibus receptis aut quaesitis etiam centum et septuaginta milia collegit armorum Taurumque transducit. tumque summo in culmine Tauri montis hasta defixa dixisse fertur, quisque illam rex milesve Graecus aut barbarus humo evellere ausus foret, edictum sibi urbis ac patriae suae sui[s]que excidium meminisset. Ipse tamen ad civitatem Pieriam, quae Bebryciae urbs habetur, iter exim facit; qua in urbe et templum opiparum et simulacrum Orphei erat admodum religiosum. ibidem Musae etiam Pierides consecratae videbantur unaque omnigenum figmenta viventium Orphei musicam demirantia. cum igitur admirationis studio simulacrum illud Alexander intueretur, sudor repente profluere et per omne simulacri illius corpus manare visus non sine admiratione videntium fuit. motus ergo portentis novitate coniectatorem vel celebratissimum Melampoda sciscitatur quid tandem ille sudor sibi simulacri minaretur. tum ille: “sudor sane largus laborque,” ait, “quam prolixus tibi quoque in his rebus praesentibus, o rex, erit; quippe et gentium peragratio et operum difficultates tete manent, quod illi quoque Orphei fuit, qui peragrans urbes Graecas ac barbaras ad favorem sui animos admirantium flexerit.” hisce auditis Alexander honore quam largo Melampoda muneratur. eximque in Phrygiam venit atque illic Hectors Achillesque unaque alios heroes divum honore participat. praecipue tamen Achillen veneratur ac rogat uti sibi et ipse faveat et dona quae ferret dignanter admittat; haec enim a sese non ut ab externo ac superstitioso, verum ut consanguineo ac religioso dedicari ... Haec precatus in istum Alexander modum ibidem flumen Scamandrum cum videret clipeumque Achilli templo Herculis consecratum, nec alvei illius latitudinem demiratus nec magnificentiam clipei pondusve famosum, “o te beatum Achillem,” fertur saepe dixisse, qui Homero praedicator celebraris!” his auditis ab eodem cum multi admodum litterati studio eius erga amicos religioneve tracti iter eius prosequerentur parique sese stilo opera sua prosecuturos esse promitterent, optasse se dixit vel Thersiten apud

Homerum mage quam apud scriptores eiusmodi Achillem putari maluisse. (Valerius 1.42 Rosellini)

(Alexander himself traversed Achaia, received or won many cities and mastered another 170.000 troops which he led over Mt Taurus. It is reported that he fixed his spear on the highest peak of Mt Taurus and said that, if any soldier or king, Greek or barbarian, dared to pull it out of the ground, he would be sure to expect destruction on his city, his country and his people. Next Alexander marched to Pieria, which is considered a city of Bebrycia. There was in that city a splendid temple and a venerable statue of Orpheus; and one could also see statues of the Pierian Muses and images of all kinds of animals listening with admiration to Orpheus' music. As Alexander was gazing with admiration at this statue, suddenly abundant sweat was seen to ooze from the all parts of the body of the statue, which provoked the admiration of the bystanders. Intrigued by the uncanny omen Alexander inquired of Melampus, a most famous soothsayer, what kind of threat against him the sweating statue portended. "You will sweat a lot and labor greatly" he said "in the undertakings that are ahead you; the traversing of nations and difficult operations await you, as Orpheus did, who journeyed through Greek and barbarian cities and won the admiration and favor of their people." When Alexander heard the prediction, he bestowed great honors upon Melampus. Then he came to Phrygia where he imparted divine honors to Hector, Achilles and other heroes. He paid special tribute to Achilles asking for his favor and that he might graciously receive his offerings: he was not giving them as a superstitious outsider but as a pious relative ... Having concluded his prayer Alexander saw the river Scamander in the same location and the shield of Achilles that was dedicated to the temple of Heracles; he did not admire either the width of the river-bed or the splendor and famous weight of the shield, and is reported to have said this: "Fortunate are you, Achilles, for having been celebrated by a herald like Homer." When the many learned men who accompanied him, attracted by the favor he displayed towards his friends or the admiration they felt towards him, heard these words, they promised they would record his feats in a manner worthy of Homer; but Alexander replied he wished he would rather be a Thersites in Homer than be regarded as an Achilles by this sort of writer.")

Καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ἀναλαβὼν ἦνπερ εἶχε δύναμιν τὴν ὄδοιπορίαν ἐποιεῖτο. καὶ ὑπερπεράσας τὸν καλούμενον Ταῦρον καταπήξας δόρυ

μέγιστον εἰς τὴν γῆν εἶπεν· “εἴ τις σθεναρὸς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἢ τῶν βαρβάρων ἢ τῶν ἄλλων βασιλέων βαστάσει τοῦτο τὸ δόρυ, ἐαυτῷ χαλεπὸν σημεῖον ἔξει. ἢ γὰρ πόλις αὐτοῦ ἐκ βάθρων βασταχθήσεται.” Παραγίνεται οὖν εἰς τὴν Ἱπερίαν πόλιν τῆς Βεβρυκίας, ἔνθα ἦν ναὸς καὶ ἄγαλμα τοῦ Ὀρφέως καὶ αἱ Πιερίδες Μοῦσαι καὶ τὰ θηρία αὐτῷ παρεστῶτα ζόανα. βλέποντος δὲ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου εἰς τὸ ἄγαλμα τοῦ Ὀρφέως ἴδρωσε τὸ ζόανον τοῦ Ὀρφέως ὅλον. τοῦ δὲ Ἀλεξάνδρου ζητοῦντος τί τὸ σημεῖον τοῦτο, λέγει αὐτῷ Μελάμπους ὁ σημειολύτης· “καμῆν ἔχεις, Ἀλέξανδρε βασιλεῦ, μετὰ ἰδρώτων καὶ κόπων τὰ τῶν βαρβάρων ἔθνη καὶ Ἑλλήνων πόλεις καθυποτάσσω. ὥσπερ καὶ Ὀρφεὺς λυρίζων καὶ ἄδων Ἑλληνας ἔπεισεν, βαρβάρους ἔτρεπεν, τοὺς θήρας ἡμέρωσεν, οὕτως καὶ σὺ κοπιάσας δόρατι πάντας ὑποχειρίους σου ποιήσεις.” ταῦτα ἀκούσας Ἀλέξανδρος τιμήσας μεγάλως τὸν σημειολύτην ἀπέλυσεν. Καὶ παραγίνεται εἰς Φρυγίαν καὶ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὸν Σκάμανδρον ποταμὸν, ὅπου ἦλατο Ἀχιλλεύς, ἐνήλατο καὶ αὐτός. θεασάμενος δὲ τὸ ἑπταβόειον Ἀλέξανδρος οὐ πάνυ μέγα οὐδὲ οὕτως θαυμαστὸν καθὼς συνέγραψεν Ὅμηρος εἶπεν· “μακάριοι ὑμεῖς οἱ ἐντυχηκότες τοιοῦτου κήρυκος Ὀμήρου, οἵτινες ἐν μὲν τοῖς ἐκείνου ποιήμασι μεγάλοι γεγόνατε, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ὀρωμένοις οὐκ ἄξιοι τῶν ὑπ’ ἐκείνου γεγραμμένων.” καὶ προσελθὼν αὐτῷ ποιητῆς τις εἶπεν· “Ἀλέξανδρε βασιλεῦ, κρεῖττον ἡμεῖς γράψομεν τὰς σὰς πράξεις Ὀμήρου.” ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος εἶπεν· “βούλομαι παρ’ Ὀμήρῳ Θερσίτης εἶναι ἢ παρὰ σοὶ Ἀγαμέμνων.” (Recension β 1.42 Bergson)

(Alexander also took the forces he had with him and marched ahead. After crossing the mountain called Taurus, he thrust a most heavy spear into the ground and said: “If any strong man, Greek or barbarian, or any of the other kings, pulls out this spear, it will be an evil omen for him: his city will be razed to the ground.” Then he came to Hipperia, a city in Bebrycia, where there was a temple and a statue of Orpheus and the Pierian Muses, and near the statue stood (carved images) of wild beasts. When Alexander looked at the statue of Orpheus, the wooden image perspired from top to bottom. Alexander asked about the meaning of the omen and the seer Melampus told him: “King Alexander, you will have to labor with toil and sweat, in order to subdue the nations of the barbarians and the cities of the Greeks. Just as Orpheus by means of his lyre-playing and singing won over the Greeks, put the barbarians to flight and tamed the wild beasts, so you by the labor of your spear will place all men under your dominion.” Having heard these words Alexander honored the seer greatly and dismissed him. Then he advanced to Phrygia

and came to the river Scamander, into which Achilles had leapt, and he leapt in also. When Alexander saw that the seven-layered [shield of Ajax] was not as large and wonderful as Homer had written, he said: “Fortunate are you who found a herald as great as Homer: you became great thanks to his poetry, but in reality you are not worthy of what he wrote about you.” Then a poet approached him and said: “King Alexander, we will write of your deeds better than Homer.” But Alexander said to him: “I would rather be a Thersites in Homer than Agamemnon in your poem.”)

a. The historiographical background

In the text of A after the battle of Issos (chapter 1.41) Alexander marches *backwards* towards Troy and Macedonia and ends up dealing with Greek uprisings (Thebes, Athens and Sparta). In historiographical accounts Alexander deals with the affairs of Greece when he first becomes king; there follows the march through Thrace, the crossing of the Hellespont and the visit to Troy. The text of recension β narrates Alexander’s backward march till the destruction of Thebes (chapters 1.42–46), leaving out the long debate in Athens and negotiations with the Spartans, which in the text of A take up chapters 1–6 of Book 2. Recension β , however, includes also a brief account of Alexander’s campaigns against the northern tribes immediately after his accession, the destruction of Thebes—which is narrated again in chapter 1.46—the crossing of the Hellespont and the battle of Granicus (chapters 1.26–28, not found in A).¹⁰

In both A and recension β Chapter 1.42 begins with the letters Darius sends to his subject nations after the battle of Issos in order to assemble a greater army and Alexander’s letter to general Scamander¹¹ to join him with his forces. Next it mentions the crossing of the Taurus mountain range (an event which in historiographical accounts precedes the battle of Issos) and the thrusting of a spear into the ground (an event that occurred when Alexander first crossed into Asia); it describes his visit to Pieria and the omen of Orpheus’ statue (which occurred before the beginning of the campaign); and it concludes with Alexander’s visit to Troy which took place directly after

¹⁰ Ausfeld 1907, 146 ff.; Merkelbach 1977, 112–114, 120–122; Centanni 1988, XXVI–XXVII; Jouanno 2002, 139–144.

¹¹ He has been identified with Cassander or Amyntas (Bergson, ad loc.), but the identification remains uncertain.

his crossing into Asia. As pointed out above, the events of the chapter are bracketed by Alexander's letter to the general by the fictional name 'Scamander' and Alexander's view of [leap into] the river 'Scamander' in the Troad.

γενόμενος δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον ἀφήλατο τῆς νηὸς ἐκ τῆς Εὐρώπης εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν. καὶ πήξας τὸ δόρυ δορυκτικὸν ἔφη τὴν Ἀσίαν ἔχειν. (recension β 1.28 Bergson)

(When he reached the Hellespont he leapt off the ship from Europe on to Asia. And having fixed his spear in the ground he said that he had won Asia with it.)

Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ μετὰ τῆς δυνάμεως πορευθεὶς ἐπὶ τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον διεβίβασε τὴν δύναμιν ἐκ τῆς Εὐρώπης εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν. αὐτὸς δὲ μακρὰς ναυσὶν ἐξήκοντα καταπλεύσας πρὸς τὴν Τρωάδα χώραν πρῶτος τῶν Μακεδόνων ἀπὸ τῆς νεῶς ἠκόντισε μὲν τὸ δόρυ, πήξας δ' εἰς τὴν γῆν καὶ αὐτὸς ἀπὸ τῆς νεῶς ἀφαλλόμενος παρὰ τῶν θεῶν ἀπεφαίνετο τὴν Ἀσίαν δέχεσθαι δορυκτικὸν. καὶ τοὺς μὲν τάφους τῶν ἡρώων Ἀχιλλέως τε καὶ Αἴαντος ... ἐτίμησεν ... (Diodorus Siculus 17.17.1–3)

(Alexander marched with his army to the Hellespont and transported it from Europe to Asia. He personally sailed with sixty fighting ships to the Troad. First of the Macedonians he flung his spear from the ship and fixed it in the ground, and then leapt ashore himself, signifying that he received Asia from the gods as a spear-won prize. He visited and honored the tombs of the heroes Achilles and Ajax ...)

Ἀλέξανδρον δὲ ἐξ Ἐλαιούντος ἐς τὸν Ἀχαιῶν λιμένα κατὰραι ὁ πλείων λόγος κατέχει, καὶ αὐτὸν τε κυβερνῶντα τὴν στρατηγίδα ναῦν διαβάλλειν καὶ, ἐπειδὴ κατὰ μέσον τὸν πόρον τοῦ Ἑλλησπόντου ἐγένετο, σφάζαντα ταῦρον τῷ Ποσειδῶνι καὶ Νηρηῖσι σπένδειν ἐκ χρυσοῦς φιάλης ἐς τὸν πόντον. λέγουσι δὲ καὶ πρῶτον ἐκ τῆς νεῶς σὺν τοῖς ὅπλοις ἐκβῆναι αὐτὸν ἐς τὴν γῆν τὴν Ἀσίαν ... ἀνελθόντα δὲ ἐς Ἴλιον... (Arian, *Anab.* 1.11.6–7)

(According to most accounts Alexander sailed from Elaeus to the Achaean harbor and during the crossing he steered the flag-ship himself; and when he reached the middle of the Hellespont he sacrificed a bull to Poseidon and the Nereids, pouring into the sea a drink offering from a golden bowl.)

Chapter 1.28 of recension β narrates Alexander's crossing of the Hellespont in its original chronological order. In this narrative the Macedonian hero "jumped off the ship from Europe to Asia¹² and then thrust his spear into the ground claiming Asia as won by his spear". The narrative proceeds with the battle of Granicus. Diodorus' account of the crossing quoted above tells the same story in a very similar language and thus sheds light on the original position of the passages composing chapter 1.42 of the *Alexander Romance*.

As already noted by Ausfeld,¹³ chapter 1.42 (in both recensions) contains remnants of Alexander's crossing from Europe to Asia. According to Ausfeld the region of 'Achaia', mentioned in A, the Armenian translation, Valerius and Leo, would be the Ἀχαιῶν λιμὴν, the harbor where in Arrian's account Alexander landed when he crossed from Europe to Asia. Therefore, the thrusting of the spear into the ground and the visit to Troy, given separately in chapter 1.42, originally belonged together. The original crossing of the Taurus range is mentioned in chapter 1.41 but Ausfeld believed that the fictional crossing in 1.42 echoed the sacrifice of a bull (ταῦρον) to Poseidon during the crossing of the Hellespont (Arrian 1.11.6–7, quoted above). We will discuss this point in subsection 3c below. We have no clue as to how the account of the omen of Pieria was interpolated between the spear-thrusting scene and the visit to Troy.

b. Thematic unity and narrative versions

We must always assume that the narrative of the *Alexander Romance* passed through various stages before reaching the earliest form we possess, the text of A. As it stands, the text of A 1.42 presents some kind of thematic unity for what looks like an accidental compilation of unrelated passages. The section beginning after the letters of Darius and Alexander brings together gestures, predictions and signs pertaining to the magnitude of Alexander's conquests and rule. Specifically, after the crossing of Mt Taurus a threat is launched by Alexander against those Greeks and barbarians who dare to challenge him by pulling out his spear from the ground. In Pieria the seer Melampus predicts the struggle of Alexander-Orpheus to subdue all barbarian and Greek nations. And at Troy Alexander enters into rivalry with Homer's heroes and utters an ironic *makarismos* implying that his achievements are or will be infinitely greater than theirs. If, as we believe, the fictional crossing of Mt

¹² I follow the text of Bergson's edition, which is preferable to the text of L in Van Thiel.

¹³ Ausfeld 1907, 147–148.

Taurus can be envisaged as a portentous event, then it would belong with the above-mentioned sequence of signs.

But the texts of the two Greek recensions and the two Latin translations present notable differences as to the kind of story told. In recension β the thematic unity described above becomes tighter by comparison with A and Valerius. Textual changes in the same recension end up creating subtextual semantic associations.

In what follows we will discuss differences in the various recensions, first as regards the thematic organization of chapter 1.43 (this subsection) and next its semantic subtext (subsections 3c and 3d).

The omen of Pieria

Ταῦτα δὲ διαπραξάμενος ἐπανήλθεν εἰς Μακεδονίαν· καὶ τῷ τε Διὶ τῷ Ὀλυμπίῳ τὴν θυσίαν τὴν ἀπ' Ἀρχελαίου ἔτι καθεστῶσαν ἔθυσσε καὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα ἐν Αἰγαῖς διέθηκε τὰ Ὀλύμπια· οἱ δὲ καὶ ταῖς Μούσαις λέγουσιν ὅτι ἀγῶνα ἐποίησε. καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἀγγέλλεται τὸ Ὀρφέως τοῦ Οἰάγρου τοῦ Θρακὸς ἄγαλμα τὸ ἐν Πιερίδι ἰδρῶσαι ξυνεχῶς· καὶ ἄλλοι ἄλλα ἐπεθείαζον τῶν μάντεων, Ἀρίστανδρος δέ, ἀνὴρ Τελμισσεύς, μάντις, θαρρεῖν ἐκέλευσεν Ἀλέξανδρον· δηλοῦσθαι γὰρ, ὅτι ποιηταῖς ἐπῶν τε καὶ μελῶν καὶ ὅσοι ἀμφὶ ὥδην ἔχουσι πολὺς πόνος ἔσται ποιεῖν τε καὶ ἄδειν Ἀλέξανδρον καὶ τὰ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔργα. (Arrian, *Anab.* 1.11.1–2)

(Having conducted these operations Alexander returned to Macedonia. There he offered to Olympian Zeus the sacrifice established by Archelaus and celebrated the Olympian games at Aegae; others say that he held games in honor of the Muses. In the course of these events it was reported to him that in Pieria the statue of Orpheus, son of Oeagrus the Thracian, had sweated continuously. The seers offered various interpretations of the omen, but Aristandros of Telmissus, encouraged Alexander: in his view it meant that epic and lyric poets and writers of odes would labor much in their effort to compose poetry and songs in honor of Alexander and his feats.)

In Arrian the miraculous event occurs in Pieria and is reported to Alexander while he is celebrating a musical contest to honor the Muses in Aigai, the capital of his kingdom.¹⁴ Alexander is informed that Orpheus' statue kept oozing sweat; in interpreting the omen Alexander's seer Aristandros explains that epic and lyric poets will put much labor in narrating his deeds. The text

¹⁴ See also Plut. *Alex.* 14.8.

of A has moved Pieria to Bebrycia in Asia Minor and has placed the sweating statue inside a temple, surrounded by the Muses—who were of course at home in Greek Pieria but not in Bebrycia—and by wild beasts. Also the event is witnessed by Alexander himself. As he is gazing at the statue it starts sweating all over. The omen is interpreted by the mythical seer Melampus. The seer does not see a connection with the *πόνοϋ* of poets to narrate and extol Alexander’s campaigns, as in Arrian, but with the *πόνοϋ* involved in Alexander’s own campaigns. Specifically, he draws a parallel between Alexander’s laboring toil and sweat to subdue barbarian nations and Greek cities while marching among wild beasts, and the enchanting power of Orpheus’ music and song in winning over the Greeks, in turning the barbarians to love through sweet words and in taming wild beasts.

The Latin text of Valerius privileges the enchanting power of Orpheus’ music that wins universal ‘admiration’ and the favor of Greeks and barbarians (‘admiration’ is a key word in Valerius’ text: *demirantia, admirationis studio, non sine admiratione, admirantium*). There is much sweat and *labor* in Orpheus’ and Alexander’s course but *every trace or potential of violence has disappeared*: the submission of nations to force has been transformed into ‘admiration’ for Alexander-Orpheus; the wild beasts in the temple have become ‘images of all kinds of animals’ (*omnigenum figmenta viventium*)¹⁵ and the wild beasts mentioned in connection with Alexander and Orpheus have been eliminated.

Relatively minor changes in recension β created a text that tells a slightly different story. In contrast to Valerius the text emphasizes *violence*: it omits the complement of *ἔτρεψεν* and thus makes Orpheus “put the barbarians to flight” instead of “turning the barbarians to love through sweet words”; and it adds the means of the spear in the achievement by Alexander of world domination: “you will make all men your subjects by the labor of your spear”. Thus the spear (*δώρατι*) becomes the explicit equivalent of Orpheus’ lyre playing and singing (*λυρίζων καὶ ἄδων*). The spear appears to have intruded into the seer’s prediction from the previous spear-thrusting scene. The omission of the complement of *ἔτρεψεν* and the addition of the spear are in harmony with Alexander’s threat, in the previous scene, of devastating violence to whoever dares challenge him by pulling out his spear from the ground.

¹⁵ The *θηρία* in the A may also be artistic representations but the text does not mention it. Most manuscripts of recension β qualify them as *ξύανα* (‘wooden images’) but the word is missing in L (see Bergson’s critical apparatus). Like ‘Mt Taurus’ the beasts in the Orpheus scene vacillate between fantasy and reality.

Alexander at Troy

In the text of A Alexander is disappointed by the five-cubit width of the river Scamander and the actual dimensions of Ajax's seven-layered shield and exclaims that the heroes [of the Trojan war] were fortunate to have been celebrated by Homer: they owe their greatness to his poetry because in reality they were not worthy of what was written about them. In Arrian's well-known second prologue to the narrative of Alexander's campaigns (1.12.1–4) Alexander accounts Achilles fortunate for having had his deeds sung by Homer and the historian argues that Alexander's deeds are less known than much less significant accomplishments but he does not downplay the greatness of Homer's heroes. Alexander's status is here greatly enhanced by comparison with historiographical accounts, where as a rule he pays tribute to his hero and ancestor Achilles. The representation, in the previous passage, of Alexander as a new Orpheus possessing universal superhuman powers undoubtedly contributes to the attitude of superiority Alexander assumes vis-à-vis the heroes of the Trojan War.

Valerius' expanded narrative of Alexander's visit to Troy is significantly different. It mentions Hector and "other heroes" but focuses exclusively on Achilles. Alexander pays special tribute to Achilles, makes him offerings and sings a verse prayer expounding the line of descent from him and asking for his favor in his plans to become a *kosmokrator*. Also the shield of Ajax is replaced by the shield of Achilles (here dedicated to the temple of Heracles, another ancestor of his) and Alexander's *makarismos* concerns specifically Achilles. The passage avoids absurd points (like the five-cubit width of Scamander) and concentrates on Alexander's ties and rivalry with Achilles. In spirit it stands closer to historiographical and biographical accounts, where Alexander's rivalry with and emulation of Achilles is a common feature. By contrast in the *Alexander Romance* the presence of Achilles is restricted to the Troy episode and even there in the early Greek recensions¹⁶ his role as model for Alexander is downplayed.¹⁷

In recension β the visit to Troy contains only one mention of Achilles (as opposed to three in A) and no sacrifices to the hero (as in A); a significant development is the substitution of Agamemnon for Achilles in Alexander's

¹⁶ For similarities with Valerius cf. the account of recension ϵ (14.6 Trumpf).

¹⁷ The limited importance of Achilles in the *Alexander Romance* would not, therefore, support Centanni's argument (1988, XXVI–XXVII) concerning the 'double' destruction of Thebes. According to her the second case (chapter 1.46) would allude to the destruction by Achilles of Thebe Hypoplakia. On Alexander as a model for Achilles outside the *Alexander Romance* see Ameling 1988; Cohen 1995; Flower 2000.

reply to the anonymous poet. There is rivalry with Achilles but it assumes a *physical* aspect: Alexander leaps into the waters of the river Scamander, probably in imitation of Achilles' fight with the formidable river-god in *Iliad* 21.¹⁸ This striking detail does not appear in any other version of the *Alexander Romance* and fits in with the emphasis in recension β on the physical as opposed to the intellectual side of the hero (compare the Orpheus scene). Of Ajax's shield only the epithet ἑπταβόειον ('having seven folds of bull's hide') survived in recension β.¹⁹ Thus, by comparison with A and Valerius, the motivation for the *makarismos* of Homeric is shaky, even non-existent: the view of Scamander (cf. θεασάμενος in A; *cum videret* in Valerius) is replaced by the action of leaping into the river; and the view of Ajax's shield is replaced by the view of something called τὸ ἑπταβόειον.

c. From Mt Taurus to the seven-layered shield of Ajax

The noun τὸ ἑπταβόειον may have survived by accident in recension β, but its preservation obliges us to consider its significance in a broader context. It is now time to take a look at the subtextual semantic unity of chapter 1.42, of which we spoke above. In the text of A the section of 1.42 we have been discussing is bracketed by the notion of 'bull' and accompanying notion (implied or expressed) of something extraordinary: Alexander crossing Mt 'Taurus', a homonym of ταῦρος, 'bull', and Alexander sighting the shield of Ajax with its 'seven folds of bull's hide' (τὸ σάκος Αἴαντος τὸ ἑπταβόειον). From this perspective, the reader should not, in my view, fail to notice neither the preservation of τὸ ἑπταβόειον in recension β nor the fact that the text no longer applies the description μέγα καὶ θαυμαστόν, attributed to Homer, to Ajax's shield but to 'bull hides'. The reader should also consider the extraordinary presence of animals in the interpolated Orpheus scene: the statue of Orpheus surrounded by wild beasts and Alexander-Orpheus enchanting and taming beasts with his music. We will next discuss the semantics of Mt Taurus and the corruption of Pieria into Hipperia in recension β.

¹⁸ Centanni 1988, XXVI gives a questionable reading of the passage: "Come Achille, Alessandro si bagna nello Scamandro e per quel bagno rischia la vita".

¹⁹ Actually it is a restoration of the text: four manuscripts, among them L, read ἑπτάβαιοιον, which may have arisen from ἑπτάβαιοιον, a variant of ἑπταβόειον, found at Soph. *Aj.* 576; B reads ἑπτάβουνον ('seven mountains' or something similar) and F reads πῆδημα, which means 'leap' and pursues the image of Alexander leaping into Scamander.

The crossing of Mt Taurus

There is evidence suggesting that the crossing of Mt Taurus *substituted for* the crossing of the Hellespont. As Diodorus 17.17.1–3 shows, in historiographical accounts the crossing of the Hellespont formed a pair with the thrusting of the spear.²⁰ The crossing of Mt Taurus in chapter 1.42 (of both recensions) is fictional and is rendered through the intriguing participle ὑπερπεράσας, a *dis legomenon*. By contrast, in the original crossing of the same mountain, which occurred before the battle of Issos and is narrated in the immediately preceding chapter of recension β, the verb used is διοδεύσας (‘passing through’) and the mountain is qualified with the epithet ‘Cilician’: the language leaves no doubt that this is a ‘real’ crossing concerning a ‘real’ mountain. The verb περάω is commonly employed of traversing water space and in the *Alexander Romance* the case is *always* so—except for chapter 1.42. Ausfeld suggested that the present passage may echo Alexander’s crossing of the Hellespont (cf. Plut. *Alex.* 15.7 τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον διεπέρασεν), in the course of which, according to Arrian, he sacrificed a bull to Poseidon and the Nereids (1.11.6 ἐπειδὴ κατὰ μέσον τὸν πόρον τοῦ Ἑλλησπόντου ἐγένετο, σφάξαντα ταῦρον τῷ Ποσειδῶνι καὶ Νηρηΐσι). Ausfeld assumed that ὑπερπεράσας Ταῦρον (in recension γ it became περάσας Ταῦρον) arose out of a hypothetical εἰς Ἀσίαν περᾶσαι Ταῦρον σφάττοντα or something similar.²¹ The Armenian translation provides an intriguing account of the crossing of Mt Taurus: “when he [Alexander] was near the Keraton called Tauros”. The modern translator reports Dashian’s suggestion that “the Armenian might have had a Greek word such as κεράτιον to translate and rendered it as a proper name”.²² Whatever may be the case, “horn” and “bull” go together and it is again possible that a real bull was originally mentioned or that the ancient translator chose to suggest an association of ‘Mt Taurus’ with ταῦρος, ‘bull’. In Valerius’ version Alexander thrusts his spear into the ground while at the highest peak of this mountain: *summo in culmine Tauri montis hasta defixa*. The learned reader may recall at this point that Catullus 64.105–111 evokes the meaning ‘bull’ in Mt Taurus: an oak tree is uprooted and falls *summo ... in Tauro*, portraying the collapse of the monstrous *Minotaurus*. The Catullan passage is bracketed by *Taurus* (105) and *cornua* (111). Furthermore Seneca in his *Phaedra* cleverly inserts

²⁰ In addition to Diodorus quoted above see also Just. 11.5.6–12.

²¹ Ausfeld 1907, 147–148.

²² Wolohojian 1969, 66, 171; Traina 2003, 84.

Mt Taurus into the semantic texture of the play and the pervasive bull theme.²³

Hipperia in Bebrycia

In recension β Alexander after crossing Mt Taurus comes to Ἰπερία, a city in Bebrycia (πόλιν τῆς Βεβρυκίας). The city of Πιερία was at some stage corrupted to Ἰπερίαν. The toponym evokes ἵππος ('horse') and actually two of the manuscripts read Ἰππορίαν. There is indeed a word that sounds the same and is derived from ἵππος: Aristophanes (*Nub.* 74) coined the word ἵπερος (with a pun on ἔρωσ) to indicate 'horse-love' (τὸν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἵπποις ἔρωτα). The fictional toponym is etymologically at home with the 'beasts' in the Orpheus section and in the region of Βεβρυκία, a place name in antiquity etymologized from βρυχάομαι ('roar' of lions, 'bellow' of bulls).²⁴

The taming of Bucephalus

But what does the identification of this semantic subtext point to? We have already noted that the presence of animals in chapter 1.42 is accompanied with the implicit notion of something wondrous and explicitly associated with Alexander-Orpheus as enchanter and tamer of beasts. In this respect I would like to draw attention to a passage in the *Alexander Romance* that 'thematizes' semantic components of the present narrative. Here is the text of recension β, which does not differ substantially from A:

Ἐπανελθὼν δὲ Φίλιππος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀποδημίας ἐξῆλθεν εἰς Δελφοὺς χρησιμοδοτηθῆναι τίς ἄρα μετ' αὐτὸν βασιλεύσει. ἡ δὲ ἐν Δελφοῖς Πυθία γευσάμενη τοῦ Κασταλίου νάματος διὰ χθονίου χρησιμοῦ οὕτως εἶπεν· "Φίλιππε, ἐκεῖνος ὅλης τῆς οἰκουμένης βασιλεύσει καὶ δόρατι πάντας ὑποτάξει, ὅστις τὸν Βουκέφαλον ἵππον ἀλλόμενος διὰ μέσης τῆς Πέλλης διοδεύσει." ἐκλήθη δὲ Βουκέφαλος, ἐπειδὴ ἐν τῷ μηρῷ εἶχεν ἔγκαιμα βοδὸς φαίνοντα κεφαλῆν. ὁ δὲ Φίλιππος ἀκούσας τὸν χρησμόν προσεδόκα νέον Ἡρακλῆν. (recension β 1.15 Bergson)

(When Philip returned he went to Delphi to inquire of the oracle who would rule Macedonia after him. The Delphic Pythia, having drunk from the water of the Castalian spring, gave the following chthonic response:

²³ On Catullus and Seneca see Paschalis 1994, 111–115.

²⁴ Paschalis 1997, 192 with literature. Another etymology was from βρύχω ('devour'; 'gnash' or 'grind' the teeth).

“Philip, the person to rule the whole world and conquer all nations by his spear is the one who will ride Bucephalus through the middle of the city of Pella.” The horse was called Bucephalus because he had on his haunch a mark shaped like an ox’s head. When Philip heard the oracle he began to expect a new Heracles.)

When Philip inquired of the Delphic oracle who would succeed him to the throne of Macedonia the prophetess predicted that whoever tamed Bucephalus and rode through the middle of Pella would rule the world and subjugate all nations with his spear (δόρατι). The response led Philip to expect a new Heracles. Alexander’s first and highly prominent feat is the taming of the man-eating Bucephalus (τὸν Βουκέφαλον ἵππον). The text itself provides the etymology of its name: it is a horse that “bears a mark on its haunch shaped like an ox’s head” (ἔγκωμα βοῶς φαίνοντα κεφαλὴν).²⁵ Chapter 1.42 combines, as we saw above, the crossing of Mt Taurus that could be construed as ‘bull-taming’ or a prodigious event involving a ‘bull’; the spear-thrusting scene accompanied with the threat of devastation; and a seer’s prediction that Alexander “will subdue all nations with his spear” (δόρατι). Recension β places the omen scene not in Pieria but in Hipperia, a toponym suggesting a ‘horse’. In the Bucephalus story (Chapters 1.15 and 1.17) and in chapter 1.42 the taming of beasts is linked directly with the notion of Alexander as *kosmokrator* and in both cases Alexander’s figure is provided with a divine counterpart, respectively Heracles and Orpheus.

d. *The laudes of Clitomidis*

Word play involving Greek words would have been unintelligible to the readers of 10th century AD Naples. The same applies to explicit etymologies, which Leo either omits or adapts. Unlike Valerius he does not quote Greek words. In the pseudo-etymology of *Paratonion* (chapter 1.31) Leo creates a play based entirely on Latin words: he changes the toponym to the fictional *Sagittarius* and explains its name from *sagittare*.²⁶ In the case of Alexander’s prophetic dream before the destruction of Tyre (chapter 1.35), which in-

²⁵ On the various ancient explanations of the origin of the name see Anderson 1930, 3–7; on the story see Baynham 1995 with literature.

²⁶ Cum autem (h)abiret accipere divinationem ab ipso deo, obviavit ei cervus, praecipitque militibus suis, *ut sagittarent eum*. Illi vero *sagittare* nullomodo potuerunt. Ille autem apprehendit arcum et *sagittam*; dixit militibus suis: “*Sic sagittatis!*” Et continuo *sagittavit eum*, et usque hodie vocatur locus ille *Sagittarius* (1.31 Pfister).

volved a play on Σάτυρος and τυρὸς ('cheese'), Valerius mentions Greek τυρός but Leo skips the problem altogether by changing the story and substituting *uva* and *vinum* for 'cheese' and 'milk'. On the other hand, Leo's translation, regardless of errors or misunderstandings, shows preoccupation with the meaning of proper names: common names become proper and vice-versa, on the basis of (real or assumed) meaning.²⁷ Therefore implicit etymologizing becomes part of the act of translating and should be considered independently of Leo's readership.

Leo's abbreviated account of events in Pieria and at Troy differs substantially from what we have seen:

Et post hec applicavit cum ipsa preda in Achaïam, et ibi subiugat[a]e sunt ei mult[a]e civitates, et superiunxit in milicia sua decem et septem dena milia. Inde ascendit montem Taurum et venit in ciuitatem qu[a]e dicitur Persopolis, in qua sunt novem Mus[a]e. Deinde uenit Frigiam in templum, quod dicitur Solis, in quo et offertionem fecit. Inde uenit ad fluuium, qui dicitur Scamandro, qui erat in latitudine cubitorum quinque, et dixit: "Beati estis, qui habetis laudem doctoris Homeri." Stetit ante eum homo, cui nomen Clitomidis, et dixit: "Alexander rex, maiores laudes possum facere tibi de tuis accionibus, quam fecisset Homerus, quia plus miraculosas virtutes fecisti quam hi, qui fuerunt Troi[a]e." Alexander dixit: "Antea voluissem fieri discipulus Homeri quam habere laudem, quam habuit Achilles." (Leo 1.42 Pfister)

(Next he landed with his booty in Achaia, where he conquered many cities and added to his forces 170,000 men. From there he ascended Mt Taurus and reached a city called Persopolis, where the nine Muses are found. He went on to Phrygia and reached a temple said to be sacred to the Sun-god, in which he made an offering. Next he came to the river called Scamander, which was five cubits wide, and said: "Fortunate are you who were praised by Master Homer." A man called Clitomidis stood before him and said: "King Alexander, I can praise your deeds better than Homer, because you performed more wonderful actions than the heroes who were at Troy." And Alexander said to him: "I would rather become Homer's pupil than receive the praises given to Achilles.")

²⁷ This can be easily deduced from Pfister's comments (21–24) on Leo's divergences from other recensions and his 'misunderstandings', and there is definitely much more material to consider.

In this translation Pieria has been replaced by Persopolis, and Ilion, possibly through confusion with ἥλιος ('sun'), has become 'a temple of the Sun-god'.²⁸ The *makarismos* of heroes is unmotivated, because only the small width of Scamander is mentioned, without further comment. The offer to glorify his deeds is made to Alexander by a person named *Clitomidis*,²⁹ not mentioned anywhere else in the *Alexander Romance*. Leo probably found it in his source but the triple repetition of *laus* in this section may be an attempt to evoke the meaning of the first component of the name: κλυτός means 'famous', 'renowned' and would thus point to the singing of κλέα ἀνδρῶν, as in Homer.³⁰ The reader's impression is reinforced by Leo's treatment of *Clitomachus* (chapter 1.47), the only other name in his text that has the same first component. The Theban athlete who wins a triple victory at the Isthmian Games is introduced in Pseudo-Callisthenes as εἷς τῶν ἀθλητῶν, παράδοξος ἀνὴρ, Θηβαῖος τῷ γένει, Κλειτόμαχος ὀνόματι, and in Valerius as *Thebanus quidam, cui Clitomachus nomen esset*. In Leo he is presented as *magnus et vir gloriosus, cui nomen Clitomachus*. The athlete's words: *ego recepta potestate pugnandi pugnabo et vinco* may also allude to μάχη ('fight'), the second component of the name. As regards Alexander's desired relationship with Homer, in Leo it becomes one of *discipulus* ('pupil') and *doctor* ('teacher'), probably reflecting the medieval times of composition.

4. *An Olympic victory, and post-Olympic victories: saving Olympias*

Three successive episodes in the life of the young Alexander before his accession to the throne illustrate the significance of relatively minor textual differences and provide evidence for narrative sophistication in the *Alexander Romance*. In both the text of A and recension β chapters 1.18–19 tell of Alexander's participation in the Olympic games, his confrontation with young Nikolaos and how he achieves victory and the youth's death in the course of the chariot-race; chapters 1.20–22 narrate his intervention during Philip's wedding with Cleopatra and how he later manages to reconcile his parents with each other; and chapter 1.24 tells of the murder of Philip by

²⁸ Pfister 1913, 24.

²⁹ *Krintimos* in the Syriac translation may be a corruption of *Clitomidis*.

³⁰ Κλυτομήδης is a character in Hom. *Il.* 23.634. The name properly means 'famous for his counsels'; see Kamptz 1982, 203–204 and 210. In recension ε those who offer to narrate Alexander's deeds better than Homer are "the persons around Menander and Aristokles" (14.6 Trumpf): Ἀριστοκλέα also includes κλέος and on the whole it is most appropriate for the occasion.

Pausanias and how Alexander saves his mother from his hands and avenges his father's murder.

Alexander's participation in the Olympic contest (episode 1) is balanced in chapter 24 of recension β (episode 3) by Philip's presiding (ἀγωνοθετοῦντος) in theatrical contests (ἀγῶνος τελουμένου θυμελικού) which are quite significantly held in the Olympic theater (ἐν τῷ Ὀλυμπίῳ θεάτρῳ). The text of A mentions Philip's theatrical activity, but an Olympic theater is nowhere cited as the place of Philip's murder: it is pure invention found only in the text of recension β. Vital to the framing contests are the notions of violence, victory and death. Alexander's opponent in the chariot race is Νικόλαος, king of the Acarnanians.³¹ His name means "conqueror of people", but Alexander defeats and kills him nonetheless. The name Νικόλαος forms semantic clusters with νικᾶν on four pivotal moments of the first episode (A 1.18–19): Reacting to an insult Alexander swears solemnly to beat him in the race (Νικόλαε ... ἄρματί σε νικήσω); during the race Nikolaos chases Alexander not in order to win (Νικόλαος οὐχ οὕτως ἔχων τὸ νικῆσαι) but to kill him because Nikolaos' father had been killed in war by Philip; Alexander deliberately lets Nikolaos overtake him and Nikolaos assumes falsely that he has won and that he will be crowned victor (Νικόλαος ... νενικηκέναι ... νικητής). In the end an attendant of the temple of Olympian Zeus tells Alexander that the victory over Nikolaos prefigures future victories in war (ὡς Νικόλαον ἐνίκησας, οὕτω καὶ πολλοὺς πολεμίους νικήσεις).³² In the third episode (chapter 1.24) Pausanias, who wounds Philip mortally and is subsequently killed by a sword Alexander puts in his father's hand, is presented in both recensions as the most powerful and rich person among the Thessalonians. The city of Thessalonike (Θεσσαλονίκη) was, of course, founded by Cassander after Alexander's death and hence this piece of information is pure fiction. But Pausanias' origin from a city, the name of which was etymologized from "victory over the Thessalians", fits in perfectly with the notion of victorious contest balancing the framing episodes. The 'Thessalonican' Pausanias in the third episode constitutes the semantic counterpart of 'Nikolaos' in the first episode.

A pervasive feature of all three episodes falling within the semantics of victory is the interaction of 'Olympic' and 'Olympian' with the fates of 'Olympias', Alexander's mother. The semantic patterns created are given

³¹ In recension β he is the son of the king but the king's name is corrupt.

³² The four citations are from A, chapter 1.18–19. In recension β, chapter 1.18–19 the first citation reads "Νικόλαε, ἄρτι σε νικήσω", the second reads the same, the third is missing, and the fourth is slightly different.

greater emphasis in recension β in comparison with the text of A. In the wedding episode Olympias is rejected by Philip for the sake of Cleopatra, his new wife; in the third episode Pausanias, who has fallen in love with ‘Olympias’ and requested without success that she might abandon Philip and marry him, murders the king of Macedonia; in recension β this happens at the ‘Olympic theater’ and for the purpose of ‘seizing Olympias’. In both episodes Olympias is being separated from Philip and is saved by Alexander, her son. Alexander is away when the events unfold and returns ‘victorious’ (νικηφόρος) in the nick of time: in the second episode he returns νικηφόρος from the ‘Olympic games’ as the wedding is being celebrated and in the third he returns νικηφόρος from an unspecified war at the moment Pausanias has seized ‘Olympias’ and she is screaming for help.

In Pseudo-Callisthenes at the conclusion of the Olympic chariot-race (chapter 1.19) Alexander is crowned victor by the attendant of the temple of Olympian Zeus, who predicts that he will in the future defeat many enemies in war just as he defeated Nikolaos in the games. Here are the texts of A and of recension β :

καὶ ἀναβαίνει ἐστεμμένος τὸν κότινον παρὰ τὸν Ὀλύμπιον Δία. ὁ δὲ νεωκόρος φησὶν αὐτῷ· “Ἀλέξανδρε, ὡς Νικόλαον ἐνίκησας, οὕτω καὶ πολλοὺς πολεμίους νικήσεις.” (A 1.19 Kroll)

(Wearing the wreath Alexander goes up to the temple of Olympian Zeus and the temple attendant says to him: “Alexander, as you have conquered Nikolaos, so you will conquer many enemies in war.”)

στεφανοῦται λοιπὸν ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ ἀναβαίνει τὸν νικητικὸν ἐστεμμένος [στεφανοῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν Ὀλυμπίων τὸν] κότινον [στέφανον] παρὰ τῷ Ὀλυμπίῳ Δίῳ. καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ τοῦ Διὸς μάντις· “Ἀλέξανδρε, προμηγύει σοι ὁ Ὀλύμπιος Ζεὺς ταῦτα· θάρσει· ὥσπερ Νικόλαον ἐνίκησας, οὕτως πολλοὺς νικήσεις ἐν πολέμοις.” (L 1.19 Van Thiel)

(Alexander is crowned victor and goes up to the temple of Olympian Zeus wearing the victor’s wreath. There the seer of Zeus says to him: “Alexander, the Olympian Zeus gives you this prophecy: have courage; as you have conquered Nikolaos, so you will conquer many enemies in war.”)

The text of recension β has doubled the references to Olympian Zeus and has enhanced the status of the person speaking, from a temple attendant to a seer (in Valerius he is a *sacerdos*); the prophecy is attributed to Olympian Zeus

himself in whose name the seer addresses Alexander. The athetized line, not found in A but incorporated in the text of recension γ , deserves a comment: it adds the qualification ‘Olympic’ to Alexander’s crown (there are three manuscript readings: Ὀλύμπιον / Ὀλύμπιος / Ὀλυμπίων³³) which combines with the two references to ‘Olympian Zeus’. Furthermore in recension β the conclusion of the Olympic games episode (chapter 1.19) picks up its very beginning (chapter 1.18): while in the text of A Alexander asks his father to let him sail to Pisa, the text of recension β adds the phrase “in order to participate in the Olympic games” (ἐπὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα τῶν Ὀλυμπίων).

The two texts differ also as regards a significant detail linking Alexander’s return from the Olympic games with the events at the wedding banquet. Here is the text of A:

Ταύτην λαβὼν τὴν κληδὸνα Ἀλέξανδρος ὑποστρέφει καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τὴν Πέλλην καὶ εὐρίσκει ἀπόβλητον γεναμένην τὴν Ὀλυμπιάδα ὑπὸ Φιλίππου, γαμοῦντα δὲ τοῦτον τὴν ἀδελφὴν Ἀττάλου Κλεοπάτραν. ἐπιτελουμένων δὲ τῶν γάμων ἔχων τὸν Ὀλύμπιον τὸν νικητικὸν στέφανον εἰσέρχεται καὶ ἀνακλιθεὶς λέγει· “Πάτερ, δέξαι τῶν πρώτων μου ἰδρώτων τὸν νικητικὸν στέφανον. ὅταν μέντοι καὶ γὰρ ἐκδώσω τὴν ἔμμαντοῦ μητέρα πρὸς γάμον, καλέσω σε εἰς τοὺς ἐμῆς μητρὸς γάμους.” Ὁ δὲ Φίλιππος ἐπὶ τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἐτρώχετο. (A 1.20 Kroll)

(Having received this omen, Alexander returns home to Pella and finds that Olympias has been rejected by Philip who is about to marry Cleopatra, the sister of Attalus. While the wedding is celebrated Alexander comes in wearing the victor’s crown, leans back on a couch and says to him: “Father, receive this garland of victory, the prize of my first toils. And when I give away my mother in marriage, I will invite you to her wedding.” And Philip was angry at his words.)

In the text of A Alexander, having heard the omen of his victorious future (Ταύτην λαβὼν τὴν κληδὸνα), returns home, finds Philip celebrating his wedding with Cleopatra, sister of Attalus, and enters the place wearing the ‘victorious Olympic wreath’ (τὸν Ὀλύμπιον τὸν νικητικὸν στέφανον), which he offers to his father uttering these words: “Father, receive the victor’s crown (τὸν νικητικὸν στέφανον), the fruit of my first sweat; when I give away my own mother in marriage, I will invite you to her wedding”. Philip is angered at his words.

³³ See Bergson’s critical apparatus ad loc.

Here now is the text of recension β:

Ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος λαβὼν τὴν κληδὸνα ταύτην νικηφόρος ἀναστραφεὶς εἰς Μακεδονίαν εὕρισκει τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ Ὀλυμπιάδα ἀπόβλητον γεναμένην ὑπὸ Φιλίππου τοῦ βασιλέως, τὸν δὲ Φίλιππον γήμαντα τὴν ἀδελφὴν Λυσίου Κλεοπάτραν τοῦνομα. αὐτῇ δὲ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἀγομένων τῶν γάμων Φιλίππου ἔχων τὸν νικητικὸν στέφανον Ἀλέξανδρος τὸν Ὀλυμπιακὸν εἰσήλθεν εἰς τὸν δεῖπνον καὶ λέγει τῷ βασιλεῖ Φιλίππῳ· “πάτερ, δέξαι μου τῶν πρώτων ἰδρώτων τὸν νικητικὸν στέφανον. καὶ ὅταν μέντοι καὶ γὰρ δίδωμι τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ μητέρα Ὀλυμπιάδα βασιλεῖ ἑτέρῳ πρὸς γάμον, καλέσω σε εἰς τὸν γάμον Ὀλυμπιάδος.” καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν Ἀλέξανδρος ἀνεκλίθη ἐναντίον Φιλίππου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ γελωτοποιός. Φίλιππος δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις παρὰ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐτρύχετο. (recension β 1.20 Bergson)

(Having received this omen, Alexander returns victorious to Macedonia and finds that his mother Olympias has been rejected by King Philip who this very day is marrying Cleopatra, the sister of Lysias. While Philip’s wedding is celebrated Alexander comes into the banquet hall wearing the Olympic victor’s crown and says to King Philip: “Father, receive this garland of victory, the prize of my first toils. And when I give away my mother Olympias in marriage to another king, I will invite you to her wedding.” Having said this, Alexander leaned back on a couch opposite Philip, his father, making a fool of him. And Philip was angry at his words.)

The manuscripts of recension β have added the epithet νικηφόρος (‘victorious’) in the first line, have made of Cleopatra a sister of Lysias (in A Lysias is a jester) and have twice replaced ‘mother’ with ‘Olympias’ in Alexander’s taunting address to Philip. The epithet νικηφόρος, reinforcing the ‘victor’s crown’ Alexander is wearing, proceeds directly from the seer’s prediction (κληδὸνα) about Alexander’s future victories against his enemies and in light of what happens at the banquet induces the reader to envisage the *immediate fulfillment* of the prophecy—as is the case in later versions of the *Alexander Romance*.³⁴ In both versions of the next chapter (1.21) Alexander kills Lysias for making an insulting innuendo about his true father and then slaughters all of Philip’s guests. The text of recension β reinforces the description of the events and hence the association in the reader’s mind with

³⁴ In the Byzantine poetic version the prediction includes not only Alexander’s future victories in war but also “the avenging of father and mother” (908–909 Reichmann).

Alexander's war victories: it represents them as a mythical battle, as the fight of the Lapiths with the Centaurs and the killing by Odysseus of Penelope's suitors (actually Alexander is referred to as νέον ἄλλον Ὀδυσσεά, 'a new Odysseus'). In this way public and private are closely linked in the text of recension β.

The text of chapter 1.20 in recension β not only triples the references to Olympias (Ὀλυμπιάδα) by comparison with A but also arranges them so as to bracket Alexander's victorious Olympic crown (τὸν νικητικὸν στέφανον ... τὸν Ὀλυμπιακόν). In both versions the cluster formed out of 'Olympias' and the 'Olympic crown' (Ὀλύμπιον in A, Ὀλυμπιακόν in recension β) picks up the immediately preceding references to the 'Olympic crown' and 'Olympian Zeus' at the end of chapter 19. The reader is thus alerted to the meanings of Ὀλυμπιάς, which involved both Olympus and Olympia: as an epithet it was applied to the Muses and to goddesses as dwelling on Olympus, and also to the Olympic olive-crown; as a noun it indicated the Olympic games, an Olympic victory and an Olympiad.

To make a long story short, 'Olympian Zeus' sanctioned Alexander's 'Olympic victory' and through the seer, his agent, predicted Alexander's future victories; the prediction was first fulfilled after his victorious return from the games through the bloody defense of his mother 'Olympias' in two successive episodes—which by an intriguing coincidence occurred in Macedonia where Mt Olympus was then located. The semantic associations of chapters 19–20 recur in varied form in the events of chapter 1.24 and especially in the version of recension β: Pausanias kills Philip in the 'Olympic theater' in order to seize 'Olympias' but Alexander 'returns victorious' from the war and saves her. Here are the texts of A and of recension β:

Ἦν δέ τις Πausανίας ὀνόματι, μέγας ἀνὴρ <καὶ> πλούσιος Θεσσαλονικεύς, πλείστην δύναμιν καὶ μεγάλην περὶ ἑαυτὸν ἔχων. οὗτος ἠράσθη Ὀλυμπιάδος καὶ πέμπει τοὺς δυναμένους αὐτὴν πείσαι, ὅπως καταλείψασα τὸν Φίλιππον αὐτῷ γαμηθῆ. οὐ κατένευσεν ἢ Ὀλυμπιάς ἐν τούτῳ. ἐπιβουλίαν οὖν μελετᾷ ὁ Πausανίας πυνθανόμενος περὶ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου, εἰ ἄρα εὖροι αὐτὸν ποτε ἀποδημοῦντα. καὶ δὴ χρόνου ἐμπεσόντος καὶ ἐπὶ πόλεμον ὄντος τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου εἰς τινὰς πόλεις καὶ ἀγῶνων ἐπιτελουμένων θυμελικῶν, μαθὼν ὁ Πausανίας τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἀποδημοῦντα καὶ τὸν Φίλιππον ὄντα ἐν ταῖς θεωρίαις ἐπέρχεται ξιφῆρης καὶ βάλλει τὴν λόγχην κατὰ τοῦ Φιλίππου καὶ ἠῶστόχησε κατὰ τῆς πλευρᾶς πληξῆσαι· οὐκ ἀνηρέθη δὲ παραυτά.... Αὐτῇ δὲ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ εἰσήρχετο νενικηκῶς ... ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος.... (A 1.24 Kroll)

(There was a certain man named Pausanias, an important and rich man of Thessalonike, surrounded by a powerful and big retinue. He conceived a desire for Olympias and sent some powerful men to persuade her to abandon Philip and marry himself. But Olympias rejected his offer. And Pausanias begins to plot seeking an opportunity when Alexander would be away from Macedonia. Some time later Alexander happened to be campaigning against some cities while at home a theatrical performance was taking place. When Pausanias heard that Alexander was away and that Philip was at the theater he came in armed with a sword and hurled his spear against Philip and struck him in the side but did not kill him rightaway. ... On that very day Alexander entered the city victorious ...)

Ἦν δέ τις ἐκεῖ Πausανίας ὄνοματι, ἀνὴρ μέγας καὶ πλούσιος σφόδρα καὶ ἐξάρχων πάντων Θεσσαλονικέων. οὗτος οὖν εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν ἔλθων Ὀλυμπιάδος τῆς μητρὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔπεμψε πρὸς αὐτὴν τινὰς τοὺς δυναμένους πείσαι αὐτὴν καταλείψαι Φίλιππον τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς καὶ γαμηθῆναι αὐτῷ πέμψας αὐτῇ χρήματα πολλά. τῆς δὲ Ὀλυμπιάδος μὴ κατανευσάσης ἔλθων Πausανίας, ἔνθα ἦν Φίλιππος, γνοὺς τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἐπὶ πόλεμον πορευθέντα, εἰσῆλθεν ἀγῶνος τελουμένου θυμελικοῦ. καὶ τοῦ Φιλίππου ἐν τῷ Ὀλυμπίῳ θεάτρῳ ἀγωνοθετοῦντος ἐπεισέρχεται ξιφῆρης ὁ Πausανίας ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ μετὰ καὶ ἐτέρων γενναίων ἀνδρῶν ἀνελεῖν βουλόμενος τὸν Φίλιππον, ἵνα τὴν Ὀλυμπιάδα ἀρπάσῃ. καὶ ἐπιβὰς αὐτῷ ἔπληξεν αὐτὸν ξίφει κατὰ τῆς πλευρᾶς. οὐκ ἀνήρησε δὲ αὐτόν. ... συνέβη οὖν νικηφόρον ἐπανελθεῖν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον αὐτῇ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκ τοῦ πολέμου ... (recension β 1.24 Bergson)

(There was a certain man named Pausanias, an important and very rich man, and ruler of all the Thessalonians. He conceived a desire for Olympias, Alexander's mother, and sent some powerful men to persuade her to abandon Philip, her husband, and marry himself; he also sent her a great deal of money. But Olympias rejected his offer. And having heard that Alexander was away campaigning, Pausanias came where Philip was, during a theatrical performance. While Philip was presiding over the contests in the Olympic theater, Pausanias came into the theater, armed with a sword and accompanied by a number of noblemen. He intended to murder Philip, in order to seize Olympias. He attacked him and struck him in the side with his sword, but did not kill him ... It happened that on that very day Alexander returned victorious from the war.)

One final point concerns the names of the people Alexander confronts in the episodes of the wedding banquet and the attempted rape of Olympias. As noted above, recension β makes Lysias the brother of Cleopatra and identifies him with the jester by the same name in the narrative of A. Thus the innuendo about Alexander's true father ("King Philip, now you will breed legitimate children") comes from the lips of Philip's own brother-in-law. The significance of Lysias' name is explained in chapter 1.22 of recension β , at the conclusion of the whole episode: "Thereafter people who get married avoid mentioning the name Lysias (τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Λυσίου ... ὀνομάζειν), for fear his mention (ὀνομασθέντος) should set up a division between them (διάλυσιν)". Following the killing of Lysias Alexander makes efforts to achieve a reconciliation (διαλλαγήναι) between his father and mother and it is immediately after he has done so (δίηλλαξε τοὺς γονεῖς) that the text of recension β explains the derivation of 'Lysias' from (δια)λύειν. Therefore, from a semantic viewpoint the etymology of 'Lysias' functions like a concluding comment *e contrario* on the efforts of 'reconciliation' which take up the whole chapter. One final point: since, like the name 'Nikolaos', the name 'Lysias' is viewed as an omen, Alexander's first killing after the games fulfils in etymological terms his 'prophetic' victory in the chariot race.

'Pausanias', who in chapter 24 attempts to make Olympias abandon (καταλείπειν) Philip, has a name that derives from παύειν ('bring to an end') and may overlap in meaning with (δια)λύειν and 'Lysias', the agent of 'separation' between Alexander's parents. This Pausanias that conceives a desire for Olympias and attempts to abduct her is not found in our historiographical sources but only in the *Alexander Romance*. The fictional account makes him another agent of attempted separation, like Lysias, and his origin in 'Thessalonike' makes him the semantic counterpart of 'Nikolaos'. Alexander's successful confrontation with these three characters is fraught with significance for the learned reader of the romance.

Most of the semantic associations and clearly the subtler ones among those noted above would not have been obvious to those readers of Valerius who did not know Greek; and even if they knew Greek, it would have been almost impossible for them to derive etymological associations of this kind from a Latin text. With explicit etymologies we stand on firmer ground. Sometimes Valerius attempts to make explicit etymologies intelligible to his readers, if necessary by quoting the Greek. This would be, for instance the case of *aitia* of toponyms in 1.31. I quote one example, the etymology of Παρατόνιον (real name: Παρατιόνιον):

Ipse autem rex cum forte in agro, ut adsolet, spatiaretur, cervam intuitus pastui occupatam unum ex his qui destinandis sagittis sollertior habebatur iaculari bestiam iubet. qui cum rem non ex opinione praeiudicata fecisset leviusque ictum animal evasisset, exclamare Alexander fertur, Graeco scilicet verbo, quod remissior arcus intentio sagittam imbecillius exegisset, παρὰ τόνον istud factum videri. ex eoque dictum Paratonium; etiam post frequentatae urbi nomen indidem datum.

(When the king happened to be taking his habitual walk in the fields he spotted a deer grazing. He ordered one of his archers who was considered particularly accurate in shooting, to hit the animal. When the archer did not perform as expected of him and the lightly wounded deer escaped, it is said that Alexander exclaimed (in Greek, of course) that he thought the slack bowstring had led to a feeble arrowshot, that this was ‘a shot from an ill-strung bow’ (παρὰ τόνον). Because of this the place was called Paratonium; and when later the city was peopled it received its name from this event.)

In the case of the significant name ‘Lysias’ Julius Valerius renders the Greek aetiological comment in Latin but does not include the Greek word διαλύσις in order to become more specific: “*placet denique Lysiae nomen coniugali-bus ritibus in perpetuum aboleri, quod appellatio illa solutionem coepti cum Cleopatra <coniugii> fecisset*” (1.22). As regards the repeated puns on Νικόλαος and νικᾶν, he condenses the first passage (*Nicolae ... in hoc presenti certamine et Acarnaniae telo superabo*), omits the next two and concentrates on the priest’s prediction: here a quadruple repetition of *vincere* and derivatives emphasizes the connection between the athletic victory and future war victories and alerts the learned reader to the meaning of *Nicolaum* in Greek:

Exin victor corona redimitus consensio templo cum Iovem Olympium salutaret, aestimatione rei gestae aut instinctu dei sacerdotem ferunt sic fortunam victoriae interpretatum ut, quod primo certamine Nicolaum vicisset, esset sibi coniectare perfacile multos eum populos vinciturum universitatisque dominio potiturum. (Valerius 1.19 Rosellini)

(When next Alexander had gone up to the temple wearing the victor’s crown and was worshipping Olympian Zeus, it is said that the priest, either because he appreciated the achievement or through divine admonition, interpreted the future significance of the victory as follows: he said that since Alexander in his first contest had defeated Nikolaos he

very easily foresaw that he would defeat many nations and would achieve world dominion.)

In Leo's narrative (1.18–19 Pfister) there are no Olympic games, no Olympic crown and no Olympian Zeus, and hence 'Olympias' stands alone. The contest is presented as a 'fight' (*pugna*) between Alexander and Nikolaos but there is no pun on the latter's name and Alexander's victory. Chapters 1.21–22 mention Lisias as one of the guests (*unus ex discumbentibus*) and his killing but not the etymology of his name (it was probably not found in his source). Finally in chapter 1.24 Thessalonike, Pausanias' city of origin, is omitted (though it is found in Pseudo-Callisthenes). As regards later Greek versions of the *Alexander Romance* a new twist to Alexander's victory over 'Nikolaos' is given in the Modern Greek prose version: Alexander is crowned by the people (λαός) and his name is proclaimed everywhere for his victory (νίκην):³⁵

ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος βλέπων ὅτι ὁ Νικόλαος ἐσκοτώθη, ἐχάρη κατὰ πολλὰ πῶς ἐκέρδεσεν. τότε ὁ λαὸς εὐθὺς ἐστεφάνωσεν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον, καὶ ἐκηρύχθη παντοῦ τὸ ὄνομά του διὰ τὴν νίκην του. (*Διήγησις Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνο* p. 15 Veloudis)

(Seeing that Nikolaos was killed Alexander was very happy to have won. Then the people crowned Alexander victor without delay and his name was proclaimed everywhere for the victory he had achieved.)

Bibliography

- Ameling, W. 1988. "Alexander und Achilleus. Eine Bestandsaufnahme", in W. Will and J. Heinrichs (eds), *Zu Alexander der Grosse. Festschrift Gerhard Wirth zum 60. Geburtstag am 8.12.86*, vol. 2, Amsterdam: Hakkert, 657–692.
- Anderson, A.R. 1930. "Bucephalus and his legend", *AJPh* 51: 1–21.
- Ausfeld, A. 1907. *Der griechische Alexanderroman*. Leipzig: Teubner
- Baynham, E.J. 1995. "Who put the 'romance' in the Alexander-romance? The Alexander romances within Alexander historiography", *AHB* 9: 1–13
- Bergson, L. 1965. *Der griechische Alexanderroman. Rezension β*, Stockholm – Göteborg – Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.

³⁵ In the rhymed version Nikolaos appears after Alexander has defeated his other opponents; there may be a pun in these lines: καὶ ὅλους τοὺς ἐνίκησε ... Καὶ ἦλθεν ὁ Νικόλαος ... (322–324 Holton).

- Cohen, A. 1995. "Alexander and Achilles – 'Macedonians and Mycenaeans'", in J. B. Carter and S. P. Morris (eds), *The Ages of Homer: A Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 483–505.
- Centanni, M. 1988. *Il romanzo di Alessandro*, Venezia : Arsenale editrice.
- Flower, M. 2000. "Alexander the Great and Panhellenism", in A. B. Bosworth and E. J. Baynham (eds), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hansen, W. 1998. *An Anthology of Ancient Greek Popular Literature*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Holton, D. 2002². *Διήγησις Ἀλεξάνδρου. The Tale of Alexander: The Rhymed Version*, Athens: Morfotiko Idryma Ethnikis Trapezis.
- Jouanno, C. 2002. *Naissance et métamorphoses du Romance d'Alexandre. Domaine grec*, Paris: CNRS éditions.
- Kamptz, H. von 1982. *Homerische Personennamen*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Lauenstein, U. von 1962. *Der griechische Alexanderroman, Rezension Γ*, Buch I, Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain.
- Kroll, W. 1926. *Historia Alexandri Magni (Pseudo-Callisthenes)*. Volumen I, *Recensio vetusta*. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Pfister, F. 1913. *Der Alexanderroman des Archipresbyters Leo*, Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Merkelbach, R. 1977. Die Quellen des griechischen Alexanderromans, München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Paschalis, M. 1994. "The Bull and the Horse: Animal Theme and Imagery in Seneca's *Phaedra*", *AJP* 115: 105–128.
- 1997. *Virgil's Aeneid: Semantic Relations and Proper Names*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Reichmann, S. 1963. *Das Byzantinische Alexandergedicht nach dem Codex Marcianus 408*, Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain.
- Rosellini, M. 2004². *Iulius Valerius. Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis*, Stuttgart – Leipzig : K.G. Saur Verlag
- Stoneman, R. 1991. *The Greek Alexander Romance*, London: Penguin Books.
- 1996. "The Metamorphoses of the *Alexander Romance*", in G. Schmeling (ed.), *The Novel in the Ancient World*, Leiden – New York – Köln: Brill, 601–612.
- 1999. "The Latin Alexander", in H. Hofmann (ed.), *Latin Fiction: The Latin Novel in Context*, London: Routledge, 167–186.
- Traina, G. 2003. *La storia di Alessandro il Macedone*, Padova: Bottega d'Erasmus (Aldo Ausilio).
- Trumpf, J. 1974. *Anonymi Byzantini Vita Alexandri Regis Macedonum*, Stuttgart: Teubner.
- Van Thiel, H. 1983². *Leben und Taten Alexanders von Makedonien. Der griechische Alexanderroman nach der Handschrift L*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Veloudis, G. 1977. *Διήγησις Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνοϋ*, Athens: Ermis.
- Wolohojian, A.M. 1969. *The Romance of Alexander the Great by Pseudo-Callisthenes*, New York: Columbia University Press.