Abstracts

Alexander – 'the new Sesonchosis':
an early Hellenistic propagandist fiction and its possible background
IVAN LADYNIN

The comparison of Alexander the Great in the *Alexander Romance* to the legendary Egyptian king-warrior Sesonchosis warrior, seems to be a replica of an Egyptian propagandist fiction: in the remotest past Egypt established its dominion over the world, which completed its making; this dominion was lost to other peoples, which broke the world order; but it returned to Egypt under Alexander as its legitimate king. The components of this fiction are attested by Dicaearchus of Messena and Pompeius Trogus; it probably emerged in Egypt still before Hellenism (allegedly, under Tachos in the mid 4th century B.C.) and soon penetrated the Greek tradition.

The fantastic four:
Alexander, Sesonchosis, Ninus and Semiramis
YVONA TRNKA-AMRHEIN

This paper considers two case studies to investigate whether *The Alexander Romance, The Sesonchosis Novel*, and *The Ninus Novel* can all be understood as a specific type of prose fiction about legendary rulers that was originated by *The Alexander Romance*. The first uses new evidence provided by a recently published papyrus of *Sesonchosis* (P. Oxy. 5263) to explore how *Sesonchosis* and different instantiations of *The Alexander Romance* may have played with and competitively varied the narrative conventions of a journey to the ends of the earth. The second considers how the interpretation of two mosaics from Roman Imperial Syria that have been associated with *Ninus* would change if the interpretative paradigm applied to them changed from the 'ideal' Greek novel to *The Alexander Romance*. It concludes with a discussion of why *Ninus* and *Sesonchosis* may have developed along the pattern of *The Alexander Romance*.

The *Alexander Romance* and the rise of paradoxography
RICHARD STONEMAN

The *Alexander Romance* is replete with wonder tales. This paper seeks to define the kind of 'wonders' that feature in it – natural not man-made – and to situate these in the development of the Greek (and later) paradoxographical tradition. It concludes that the *AR* is not a paradoxographical text as such, inasmuch as it does not discuss or analyse the wonders it relates; rather it is a source for later 'scholarly' collections of wonders. In the *AR*, the wonders do not prompt philosophical speculation, but only terror in the protagonists. Nonetheless, the deployment of 'wonders' in the *AR* made such content an essential feature of later fictions.

The king and the wizard:
Apollonius of Tyana in the *Iskandarnāma* of Nizāmi Ganjavi (1141–1209)
HAILA MANTEGHI

Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*,[1] the novelistic biography of a first-century Pythagorean philosopher and ascetic, contains numerous parallels with the *Alexander Romance*. Flavius Philostratus makes Apollonius travel in the virtual footsteps of Alexander, including a visit to the Brahmans, to Taxila, Meroe, and a visit to the Great king's palace, the Parthian king Vardane I (approximately AD 40-47). The Persian *Alexander Romance* of Nizāmi goes even further and combines these two works: Apollonius not only goes where Alexander had gone before, but also accompanies him in his adventures. The purpose of this paper is to study this character in different passages of the *Iskandarnāma*, in order to provide an answer to the question why and how Apollonius appears in this Persian *Alexander Romance*.

Alexander in the Indies
DANIEL SELDEN

The ancient Indic historical and literary record preserves only the faintest of traces of Alexander's invasion of the Punjāb in 327 BCE—that is, his conquest of the eastern Achaemenid satrapies of Gandāra, Hinduš, and Θataguš. By contrast, Greek and Roman historians of the Imperial period, from Diodorus Siculus through Marcus Junianus Justinus (1st cent. BCE – 2nd cent. CE), describe his

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[1] Philostratus 1970.

expedition in considerable detail. Arrian's *Anabasis*, for example, allocates only a few chapters to Alexander's conquest of Iran proper, but devotes the better part of three books to the Macedonians' adventures in the borderlands of Bhāratavarṣa. These reports, however much they differ in detail, make for a coherent account, and a rhetorically aware reading of this collective narrative reveals a discursive organization the displays all the characteristic features of what Jacques Derrida famously called *la mythologie balance*, which as such prepares the way for the paraphilosophical episodes that cluster around the Alexander Romance (Alexander and the Gymnosophists, Alexander's Letter to Aristotle, Alexander's Trip to Paradise, and so forth). The peculiarly Hellenic nature of these Greco-Roman "inquiries" ([ϝ]ιστορίαι) transpires when set against contemporary Sasanian accounts of Alexander's expedition, as well as when placed within the larger context of classical Greek Indology and its successors (Ctesias, Megasthenes, Arrian, al-Biruni, etc.) where literary devices (прнемы) such as asymmetric binarism, chiastic inversion, and specular mimesis tend to dominate the discourse. Accordingly, the Macedonians' defeat of Porus, *rājan-* of the Pauravas, who famously asks Alexander to treat him like a king (βασιλικῶς), not only renders the Indian Alexander's double—*un altro Alessandro*, as Metastasio would later put it—but forms the climax of the narrative as a poetic adventure in which Alexander, having reached the ends of the earth, finds his complement and effigy in a world now symmetrically closed off. In this regard, Emmanuel Lévinas has called attention to the ethical ambivalence intrinsic to such gestures in which the Other, as it enters the horizon of apperception and understanding, perforce renounces its alterity in what effectively amounts to an imposition of the same. It is this legacy that we continue to call "Hellenism" today.

The *Alexander Romance* and the Hellenistic political economy
GRAHAM OLIVER

This chapter revisits the *Alexander Romance* (*AR*) to see what can be gained from looking at a familiar text through a lens that has been crafted by current approaches to the political economy. First I outline the problem of Alexander, the political economy, and the *AR*, by focusing on one passage by way of illustration (2,21,6-12). Second, I suggest that the political economy offers a crucial context for understanding part of the *liber de Morte*, the Rhodian involvement in Alexander's will, that throws arguments for the late 4th century creation of this passage into doubt. There is more that one might do to explore the economy in the

Alexander Romance but in this chapter I limit myself to demonstrating the value of examining afresh literary texts with an understanding of the ancient economy.

Alexander's circuit of the Mediterranean in the *Alexander Romance*
BENJAMIN GARSTAD

One of the remarkable deviations from the reliable historical record in Alexander's route in the *Alexander Romance*, the circuit of the western Mediterranean at the outset of his campaign, from Italy to Carthage and then to Egypt, may seem like a gross error, but actually reveals the sympathies and intentions behind the *Romance*. Alexander's dealings with the Romans and even more his confrontation with the Carthaginians show a pro-Roman attitude in the *Romance*, which has been denied and contradicted in previous interpretations of these incidents. Up to his invasion of the Persian Empire from Egypt Alexander also seems to be engaged in liberating his proper realm and assembling his army of willing followers before encountering the enemy in earnest. Alexander's route, then, seems to argue for the integrity of Egypt to the Graeco-Roman world. If this argument is seen as a response to Egypt's tenuous position in the midst of the crisis of the third century, it may help us to date the final composition of the Greek *Alexander Romance* to shortly before Julius Valerius' Latin translation.

History into literature in the account of the Campaign of Gaugamela in the *Alexander Romance*
KRZYSZTOF NAWOTKA

In the *Alexander Romance* the battle of Gaugamela is split between two battles: by the Tigris and on the Stranga. Both are largely fictitious but the whole story of the Gaugamela campaign and its aftermath is built of elements borrowed from earlier Greek authors and from the Iranian tradition. Ps.-Callisthenes often borrows from obscure sources, rejected by mainstream Alexander historians, showing himself an erudite author. He mixes evidence coming from divergent traditions, sometimes pertaining to Philip rather than to Alexander. All of these demonstrates that he never thought of his book as fiction, even if historical facts are here but a literary fabric.

Intertextuality through translation: the foundation
of Alexandria and Virgil in Julius Valerius' *Alexander Romance*
HARTMUT WULFRAM

The lexis, syntax, and style of Julius Valerius' Alexander Romance require the refined readership of the late-antique Latin school. My paper argues that this 'implied audience', reading the essential foundation tale of Alexandria (*AR* 1,29-34), must necessarily draw numerous thematic parallels to Virgil's foundation epic *Aeneid*, the crest of higher Roman education at this time. Against the intention or perhaps even temporal possibility of the Greek *Alexander Romance* (alpha recension), Julius' free and ambitious translation not only engenders but deliberately enlarges an 'intertextuality of the second degree'.

"Joining the gods": Alexander at the Euphrates;
Arrian 7.27.3, *Metz Epitome* 101-102 and the *Alexander Romance*
ELIZABETH BAYNHAM

One of the more curious episodes in the web of stories surrounding Alexander's demise relates that when the weak and dying king felt that his end was very near, he sent his friends away and began to crawl on his hands and knees (*ME* 101: *deinde quadrupes ostium*) towards the Euphrates, as conveniently, the river was close to his bedroom), intending to throw himself in to its waters and disappear. This paper examines the probable sources and purpose of this episode.

Revisiting Alexander's gates against 'Gog and Magog':
observations on the testimonies before the *Alexander Romance* tradition
CHRISTIAN THRUE DJURSLEV

The current and convincing scholarly consensus is that Syriac texts of the seventh century AD were the first to associate Alexander's Gate with the enclosure of the apocalyptic peoples, Gog and Magog. This article explores the evolution of the tradition of Alexander's Gate in Greek and Latin tradition prior to that association being made. It pays particular attention to some striking literary features and over-looked passages in Ps.-Hegesippus's *De excidio urbis Hierosolymitanae*, which are critical for demonstrating that, contrary to previous scholarly misunderstanding, these early narratives were not yet imbued with any apocalyptic significance. These tales do, however, have much to tell us about the creative engagement with

the figure of Alexander in and beyond the confines of the *Alexander Romance* (*AR*) tradition as a whole.

The universal rule of Alexander in *Tamid* 32: an overview
ALEKSANDRA KLĘCZAR

The present paper discusses a number of scenes in ancient and medieval Jewish writings, presenting the legendary Alexander the Great in debate with the figures of Jewish sages and rabbis. In these Alexander is often presented as at the same time a foreigner and a Jewish sympathizer, chosen by God. The texts discussed include three main groups of texts: firstly, those discussing the meeting of Alexander and the mythical King Kazia (these include mainly the Talmudic narratives). Secondly, the text deals with the stories of Alexander in Jerusalem, known from Josephus, but also from the Talmud. The third set of stories I would like to analyse is the meeting between Alexander and the Elders of the South (known from the Talmud, but being by itself the reworking of the scene of Alexander's meeting with the Gymnosophists, known from the Greek sources).

Alexander Romance and Byzantine world chronicles: history cross-fertilized by fiction and the reverse
CORINNE JOUANNO

In the chapter they devote to the reign of Alexander the Great, the authors of Byzantine world chronicles often borrow elements from the *Alexander Romance*, they evidently considered as a source of historical information; their further, occasional references to Pseudo-Callisthenian episodes in other historical contexts point to the practice of actualizing interpretation ('lecture actualisante') of the *Romance*. Conversely, Byzantine rewritings of the *Alexander Romance* (*epsilon*, *Marcianus gr.* 408, *dzeta*) have been influenced by chronographic literature, and offer new versions of Alexander's adventures, enlarged with episodes borrowed from chronicles. Such examples of cross-influence illustrate the porosity of boundaries between history and fiction in Byzantine culture: these generic exchanges were probably encouraged by the belonging of both categories of texts to the same corpus of midway, instrumental literature.

Alexander at the Buyid Court
Emily Cottrell

The Pseudo-Callisthenes has long been known to have circulated in the medieval
Islamic realm in at least two languages, Arabic and Syriac, but its reception in
Persian is less well-understood. The Buyid court, named after a Persian family of
North-Iranian condottieri who expanded towards the south of Persia and west-
wards to Iraq (to the point of reducing the caliph into tutelage), is mainly known
through Arabic-speaking literary productions although the decorum of ancient
Persia was somehow claimed in order to compete with rival Persian dynasties.
One of the witnesses of the intellectual activity at the Buyid courts, the Ṣiwān al-
ḥikma, has been little-studied although it betrays the influence of the Pseudo-Cal-
listhenes and that of the Pseudo-Aristotelian Epistolary Novel. However, it is
unique in claiming Seleucos as the designated heir of Alexander.