

Échanges sapientiels en Méditerranée

Alien to

Énoncés sapientiels
et littérature exemplaire :
une intertextualité complexe

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Alexander the great Aristotle in the *Libro de Alexandre*

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The aim of this paper is to present a first general reading of the text of the medieval Spanish poem *El libro de Alexandre* from the perspective of a Classicist, focusing in particular on the relationship between Alexander the Great and his master Aristotle. The *Libro de Alexandre* can be dated in the first half of the 13th century and it is a product of the cultural environment of Spanish schools and universities of that period. Even if scholars propose the name of Gonzalo de Berceo, there are no strong elements to identify the author of the poem, whose work demonstrates a great knowledge and the access to a rich library with a lot of material on Alexander¹.

The content of the poem covers the whole life of the great Macedonian leader, from his birth to the burial in Alexandria, passing through his military campaigns in Asia and devoting space to mythical tales about him and erudite digressions. Even if the poem clearly reveals a process of medievalization in arranging the content and presenting the

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1. Vid. P. SUCH, R. RABONE, *Book of Alexander (Libro de Alexandre)* (Oxford, Oxbow Books, 2009), p. 4-12; Z.D. ZUWIYYA, «The Alexander Tradition in Spain», in *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, ed. Z.D. ZUWIYYA (Leiden - Boston, Brill, 2011), p. 232-235.

material, the author shows how many elements of the story of Alexander were preserved intact across the centuries. The image of the son of Philip II that emerges from the poem is as complex and contradictory as it is depicted by classical authors, whose message went through later expansions and revisions until the two main sources of the author of our poem: the *Roman d'Alexandre* and the *Alexandreis* by Gautier de Châtillon².

After the tale about Alexander's childhood and his alleged birth from Nectanebus, the poem centers stanzas 32-86 on the relationship between Alexander and Aristotle. The scene is set before Alexander's departure for his expedition and it is represented as a very evocative dialogue between the learned teacher and the young scholar, who are deeply bound as if they were father and son³. The description of the role of Aristotle and the content of his teachings reveal a mixture of classical and medieval elements, reminding at the same time the importance of the model of the Aristotelian Lyceum, which influenced not only the education of Alexander but also the formation of the Hellenistic schools, and was preserved until the Middle Ages.

The great figure who affects Alexander's approach to knowledge is Homer, whose *Iliad* was always the companion both to his studies and military enterprises. In the *Libro de Alexandre* Aristotle's reference to Hector and Achilles (s. 70) is the turning point between the image of Alexander as a pale scholar reading by an oil lamp and the medieval representation of the knight ready to leave for his mission and follow

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2. On these two works *vid.* M. LAFFERTY, «Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis*» and L. HARE-LANCNER, «Medieval French Alexander Romances», in *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, *cit.*, p. 177-199 and 201-229. For a survey of the sources of the author of the *Libro de Alexandre*, *vid.* I. MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the «Libro de Alexandre»* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1970), p. 12-25; SUCH, RABONE, *Book of Alexander (Libro de Alexandre)*, *cit.*, p. 28-33.
 3. *Cf.* the description of Alexander and Aristotle in the *Life of Alexander* by Plutarch (7-8): for the text see below.

the example of the Homeric heroes⁴. These are just some of the fascinating aspects of the *Libro de Alexandre*, which can be considered as a sort of mirror of fragments of classical literature reflected from a medieval surface, where echoes of the past live again in a chivalry scenario. Accordingly, the poem's image of Aristotle with his outstanding pupil offers interesting elements for exploring the complex phenomenon of intertextuality that interrelates sapiential statements (Aristotle's teaching and guidance) and exemplary literature (Alexander as a scholar and warrior). Moreover, intertextual analysis can be applied to different perspectives: first, to the double image of Alexander that is already present in classical sources (the historical and the mythical Alexander); secondly, to the transtextual relationships among literary works on Alexander that belong to different genres and range from antiquity down to medieval times⁵.

Before addressing contents and characteristics of the *Libro de Alexandre*, it is necessary to make a brief survey of ancient works about the great Macedonian leader starting from those authors who were his contemporaries and participated in his great expedition across Asia. At the beginning of this tradition we find the so called *ephemerides* (ἐφημερίδης), the royal diaries written by Eumenes of Cardia and Diodotus of Erythrae and describing the daily activities of Alexander when he was still alive. Unfortunately, we have only three *testimonia* and three fragments of this work, whose content dates shortly before the Macedo-

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4. On the importance of Homer for Alexander and for classical authors who wrote about him, *vid.* Th.R. MARTIN, M. BERTI, «Cani, lepri, barbari e Alessandro il Macedone. Nobiltà d'animo e d'azione nell'opera di Arriano», in *Tradizione e Trasmissione degli Storici Greci Frammentari. Atti del Terzo Workshop Internazionale (Roma, 24-26 Febbraio 2011)*, ed. E. LANZILLOTTA, V. COSTA (Tivoli, Edizioni Tored, 2012), p. 42-64.
 5. On the theme of intertextuality in classical Greek historiography, *vid.* M. BERTI, «Citazioni e dinamiche testuali. L'intertestualità e la storiografia greca frammentaria», in *Tradizione e Trasmissione degli Storici Greci Frammentari, cit.*, p. 1-20.

nian's death, but whose authenticity and chronology have been greatly doubted and debated⁶.

Many personalities took part in the enterprise of Alexander covering various roles, holding different relations with him, and recording the events as eyewitnesses or collecting the accounts of others who had personally seen those glorious deeds. The testimony of these «historians of the first generation» has been lost and we have just quotations, excerpts, and summaries of their records⁷. Even if fragmentary, these works are fundamental because they laid the foundations of the image of Alexander transmitted across the centuries, and also because they constituted the basic evidence for later classical authors whose works are almost entirely preserved (see below).

Callisthenes of Olynthus was a son of a cousin of Aristotle and the court historian of Alexander's expedition. He wrote a work on the deeds of the Macedonian, which was interrupted by his premature death because, according to the tradition, he was involved in the Pages' conspiracy and condemned to death by Alexander himself. He also wrote a *History of Greece*, that covered the period between 387/6 and 357/6

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6. These fragments have been published by Felix Jacoby in his collection of the fragments of Greek historians: *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker (FGrHist)* 117. For a debate on the origin and the nature of the *ephemerides* with bibliography, *vid.* L. PEARSON, «The Diary and the Letters of Alexander the Great», *Historia* 3, 4 (1955), p. 429-455; A.E. SAMUEL, «Alexander's 'Royal Journals'», *Historia* 14, 1 (1965), p. 1-12; N.G.L. HAMMOND, «The Royal Journal of Alexander», *Historia* 37, 2 (1988), p. 129-150; E.M. ANSON, «The *Ephemerides* of Alexander the Great», in *Historia* 45, 4 (1996), p. 501-504.
 7. For a recent survey of the so-called «historians of Alexander», *vid.* A. ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, ed. J. MARINCOLA, 1 (Malden, MA, Blackwell Publishing, 2007), p. 210-220 (with bibliography). Previous fundamental scholarly contributions are L.I.C. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great* (New York, American Philological Association, 1960), and P. PÉDECH, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre: Callisthène, Onésicrite, Néarque, Ptolémée, Aristobule* (Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1984).

BC, and a monograph on the Third Sacred War (356-346 BC)⁸. Callisthenes is also the author to whom the tradition has attributed the composition of the Greek *Alexander Romance* (see below).

Onesicritus of Astypalaea was a Cynic philosopher pupil of Diogenes of Sinope and he wrote a work on *How Alexander Was Educated*. According to Diogenes Laertius (6.84), this work reminded the *Education of Cyrus* by Xenophon. Onesicritus is not considered a very reliable author and he seems to have pointed in his work more to the ideological aspects of Alexander's expedition than to the military character of it. It is also possible that he met the Indian sophists (*gymnosophistai*) and that he was interpreter of Alexander on that occasion⁹.

Nearchus of Crete was appointed *trierarchos* of Alexander's fleet in 326 BC and during this office he made a journey along the coast from India to the Persian Gulf. Thanks to this experience and the collected

8. *FGrHist* 124 (36 *testimonia* and 59 fragments). *Vid.*, ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *cit.*, p. 219, who writes that Callisthenes' work was aimed at representing the expedition of Alexander according to an «Aristotelian» mentality», as an enterprise to avenge Persian actions against Greece and to exalt Alexander as the «new Achilles». *Vid.*, Flavius Arrianus, *Alexandri Anabasis* 4.9.9-12.6 (on Callisthenes and the *proskynesis*) and 4.12.7-14.4 (on the Pages' conspiracy) with commentary by A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, 2 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 68-101. For a reconstruction of the personality of Callisthenes *vid.*, L. PRANDI, *Callistene. Uno storico tra Aristotele e i re macedoni* (Milano, Editoriale Jaca Book, 1985). On the sources about Callisthenes and Aristotle and the story about the involvement of Aristotle in Alexander's death, *vid.*, I. DÜRING, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition* (Göteborg, Göteborg Universitets Årsskrift, 1957), p. 294-297.

9. *FGrHist* 134 = *BNJ* (*Brill's New Jacoby*) 134 (13 *testimonia* and 39 fragments). *Vid.*, T.S. BROWN, *Onesicritus. A Study in Hellenistic Historiography* (Berkeley - Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1949); ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *op. cit.*, p. 213-214.

materials, he could compose a *periplous* of India that was used by Arrian in his *Indica*¹⁰.

As far as concerns Cleitarchus of Alexandria, it is debated if he participated in the expedition of Alexander and if he made use of the testimony of others. In spite of that, he is considered the author at the beginning of the so-called "vulgate" tradition, which is the basis of the histories of Alexander written by Curtius Rufus, Diodorus Siculus, and Justine (see below). He was also particularly appreciated in Rome between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD¹¹.

Ptolemy son of Lagus is the most important historian of Alexander and also one of the main generals of the campaign. He grew up with Philip's son at the Macedonian court and, after Alexander's death, he took the government of Egypt, founding the Ptolemaic dynasty¹². In the late years of his life he wrote a work on Alexander, probably as a response to the strong attacks addressed against him. He is also credited with the foundation of the Museum and the Library at Alexandria, showing therefore to be not only a great general but also a man of letters, and in fact he was one of the protagonists of the cultural rivalries among Hellenistic kings¹³.

10. *FGrHist* 133 (16 *testimonia* and 34 fragments). *Vid.* ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *op. cit.*, p. 214-215.

11. *FGrHist* 137 (14 *testimonia* and 52 fragments). *Vid.* ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *op. cit.*, p. 216-217.

12. On the childhood of Ptolemy at the Macedonian court, *vid.* M. BERTI, V. COSTA, *La Biblioteca di Alessandria. Storia di un paradiso perduto* (Tivoli - Roma, Edizioni Tored, 2010), p. 74.

13. *FGrHist* 138 (2 *testimonia* and 35 fragments). *Vid.* J. ROISMAN, «Ptolemy and His Rivals in His History of Alexander», *The Classical Quarterly* 34, 2 (1984), p. 373-385; W.M. ELLIS, *Ptolemy of Egypt* (London - New York, Routledge, 1994); ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *op. cit.*, p. 218-219. On the role of Ptolemy of Lagus in the foundation of the Alexandrian library, *vid.* BERTI, COSTA, *La Biblioteca di Alessandria. Storia di un paradiso perduto*, *op. cit.*, p. 73-77.

Aristobulus of Cassandria was probably one of the *hetairoi* of Philip II and participated in all Alexander's campaigns. He wrote late in his life when he was 84 years old and he shows an apologetic attitude towards Alexander. Arrian quotes him together with Ptolemy as the main sources of his *Anabasis*¹⁴.

The tradition remembers many other names of historians of Alexander, such as Anaximenes of Lampsacus, Chares of Mytilene, Ephippus of Olynthus, Policlitus of Larissa, and Medeios of Larissa, who have all been preserved in fragments¹⁵.

The works of these contemporaries of Alexander have been collected by later Greek and Latin authors, who range between the 1st century BC and the 3rd century AD and are a huge mine of information on the life, figure, personality, and expedition of the great Macedonian general: Diodorus Siculus (*Historical Library*, book 17), Strabo (*Geography*, books 15-17), Quintus Curtius Rufus (*History of Alexander the Great*), Plutarch (*Life of Alexander* and *On the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander*), Arrian (*Anabasis of Alexander*), and Justine's *Epitome of the Philippic Histories* of Pompeius Trogus¹⁶.

Another important source, whose origin dates back to classical times, is the so called Greek *Alexander Romance*, which is a narrative

14. *FGrHist* 139 (6 *testimonia* and 64 fragments). *Vid.* Flavius Arrianus, *Alexandri Anabasis* 1 with commentary by A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 16-34; P.A. BRUNT, «Notes on Aristobulus of Cassandria», *The Classical Quarterly* 24, 1 (1974), p. 65-69; ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *op. cit.*, p. 218-219.

15. *FGrHist* 72 (31 *testimonia* and 41 fragments); *FGrHist* 125 (3 *testimonia* and 19 fragments); *FGrHist* 126 (3 *testimonia* and 5 fragments); *FGrHist* 128 (2 *testimonia* and 11 fragments); *FGrHist* 129 (7 *testimonia* and 1 fragment). Altogether, with the above mentioned names, Felix Jacoby records 37 different historians of Alexander: *FGrHist*, 117-153.

16. *Vid.* ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *op. cit.*, p. 211.

containing both historical and fictional elements on the life and deeds of the great Macedonian leader. The tradition has attributed this work to Callisthenes, but this attribution is not acceptable because Callisthenes died before Alexander and in the romance there is a description of the latter's death (this is the reason why the work is known as of Pseudo-Callisthenes). The core material of this work can be dated to the 3rd century BC, but it was expanded through many successive redactions that arrive to the 3rd century AD. The work contains different writings concerning the birth of Alexander from the pharaoh Nectanebus II, letters between Alexander and Darius, a letter to Aristotle about India, the account of Alexander's meetings with the Brahmins who lived near Taxila, the tale about his encounter with Candace, the Queen of Meroe, and the will of Alexander¹⁷.

The *Alexander Romance* had a great fortune in late antiquity and its tradition includes both Latin translations of the original Greek text and many secondary writings related to its content¹⁸. In the 4th century AD the Alexandrian Iulius Valerius made the first translation of the Greek *Alexander Romance* into Latin (*Res gestae Alexandri Magni*). His work has been epitomized by an anonymous author between the 8th and the 9th century, and this excerpt is known as the *Zacher Epitome*.

17. Vid. R. STONEMAN, «The Alexander Romance. From History to Fiction», in *Greek Fiction. The Greek Novel in Context*, ed. J.R. MORGAN, R. STONEMAN (London - New York, Routledge, 1994), p. 117-129; R. STONEMAN, T. GARGIULO (eds.), *Il romanzo di Alessandro* (Milano, Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, Mondadori, 2007); R. STONEMAN, «Appendix L. The Alexander Romance», in *The Landmark Arrian. The Campaigns of Alexander. Anabasis Alexandrou*, ed. J. ROMM, P. MENSCH (New York, Pantheon Books, 2010), p. 388-392; R. STONEMAN, «Primary Sources from the Classical and Early Medieval Periods», in *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, cit., p. 1-10.

18. On the tradition about the Greek *Alexander Romance*, vid. P. DRONKE, «Introduzione», in *Alessandro nel medioevo occidentale*, ed. M. LIBORIO (Milano, Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, Mondadori, 1997). For «oriental versions» of the *Alexander Romance*, vid. C. OTT, «Alexander Romance. III (Oriental)», in *Brill's New Pauly* online, ed. H. CANKI, H. SCHNEIDER (Brill 2012); cf. also various contributions on the topic published in *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, op. cit.

In the 10th century Leo the Archpriest, who was unaware of the translation by Iulius Valerius, found a manuscript of the Greek romance in Constantinople and composed a new Latin translation of the text. Leo's work was later expanded and interpolated and the result is known as *Historia de proeliis*, which is considered the «foundation stone of the whole medieval European tradition» about Alexander¹⁹.

Among the many secondary writings derived from the tradition of the Greek *Alexander Romance*, the most important is the letter to Aristotle about India (*Epistula Alexandri ad Aristotelem magistrum suum de itinere suo et de situ Indiae*), whose original Greek text is lost, but an abridged form of it is preserved in all the Greek versions of the *Alexander Romance*. Latin translations of the text date around the 7th and the 10th century²⁰.

The last text we have to mention is the so called *Metz Epitome*, which is a manuscript of the 10th century found in Metz that includes two texts of the 4th and 5th century on the deeds of Alexander (*Incerti auctoris Alexandri Magni Macedonis epitoma rerum gestarum*) and his will (*De morte testamentoque Alexandri Magni liber*). The text on the deeds of Alexander is a sort of breviary and it is possible that it is derived from Cleitarchus, while the content of the *Liber de morte* probably comes from a pamphlet written by Ptolemy against Antigonus and Cassander and dating around 309/8 BC²¹.

19. H. HARICH-SCHWARZBAUER, «Alexander Romance II.B.1, B.2, B.3», in *Brill's New Pauly* online, ed. H. CANKI, H. SCHNEIDER (Brill 2012); STONEMAN, «Primary Sources from the Classical and Early Medieval Periods», *cit.*, p. 14, 17-19.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 14-15.

21. A.B. BOSWORTH, «Ptolemy and the Will of Alexander», in *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, ed. A.B. BOSWORTH, E.J. BAYNHAM (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 207-241; ZAMBRINI, «The Historians of Alexander the Great», *op. cit.*, p. 211 and 213; STONEMAN, «Primary Sources from the Classical and Early Medieval Periods», *op. cit.*, p. 12-13.

Going back to the *Libro de Alexandre*, it is first of all worth mentioning the opening stanzas of the poem where the author not only explains the goal of his work – which is to write in the vernacular a huge poem on the life and deeds of one of the greatest heroes of ancient Greece – but he also presents formal and stylistic elements of his project²². In particular, in the second stanza the author remembers his duty as an educated clergyman and scholar (*mester de clereçia*), whose purpose is to instruct people, and he refers also to the fact that he will compose the verses of his poem in the four-line form:

*Mester traigo fermoso, non es de joglaria,
mester es sin pecado, ca es de clereçia:
fablar curso rimado por la quaderna vía,
a sílabas contadas, ca es grant maestría.*

The *quaderna vía* not only denotes the innovative poetic form used by the author, but it is also a reference to the *quadrivium*, one of the branches of the medieval studies that included arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy, and that together with the *trivium* (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) covered the Seven Liberal Arts²³. As we will see, the section of the poem devoted to the dialogue between Aristotle and Alexander, where the latter details the disciplines in which he has been instructed by the for-

22. On the importance of the first stanzas of the poem, which can be considered the «manifesto» where the poets illustrates his innovations and ambitions, *vid.* SUCH, RABONE, *Book of Alexander (Libro de Alexandre)*, *op. cit.*, p. 2-4. I follow the text edited by these two scholars for the quotations of the poem within this paper.

23. For the meaning of *mester de clereçia* and *quaderna vía*, *vid.* E. GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO GARCÍA, «Las Raíces del “mester de clereçia”», *Revista de filología española* 88 (2008), p. 195-207; *EAD.*, «El exordio de los poemas romances en cuaderna vía. Nuevas claves para contextualizar la segunda estrofa del Alexandre», *Revista de poética medieval* 22 (2009), p. 23-84; *EAD.*, *La cuaderna vía española en su marco panrománico* (Madrid, Fundación Universitaria Española, 2010); *EAD.*, «Heterodoxia en la cuaderna vía: Nueva revisión del concepto de las “sílabas contadas” a la luz de los poemas franceses e italianos», *eHumanista* 18 (2011), p. 66-85.

mer, is a perfect practical display of the contents of this medieval education.

In the fifth stanza the author reveals that his goal is to compose a work about a «worthy pagan king, about a great-hearted man of highest valour», and in doing so he hopes to succeed and have the possibility to consider himself not a «mean writer»:

*Quiero leer un libro d'un rey noble, pagano
que fue de grant esfuerço, de coraçón loçano:
conquiso tod'el mundo, metiólo so su mano.
Ternéme si lo cumplo non por mal escrivano*²⁴.

These words are a classical topos and it is worth remembering the passage of Arrian in the first book of the *Anabasis of Alexander*, where he says that he wants to celebrate Alexander's deeds as Homer did with Achilles, and that making this effort he hopes to become a writer as great as Alexander was in his military performances²⁵.

After the prologue, the author of the *Libro de Alexandre* describes Alexander's childhood and refers the rumour about his divine birth from Nectanebus II, who was the last pharaoh of Egypt before the Persian conquest of the country in 342 BC (ss. 7-20). This story had a great diffusion starting from the Greek *Alexander Romance* and its origins can be dated between the 3rd and the 2nd century BC, when different traditions, both Greek and Egyptian, arose to panegyryze the Egyptian

24. For the medievalization of the concept of kingship *vid.* MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, *op. cit.*, p. 28-87.

25. Flavius Arrianus, *Alexandri Anabasis* 1.12.1-5. On the importance of this «second preface» of Arrian's work, *vid.* F. SISTI, *Arriano. Anabasi di Alessandro*, 1 (Milano, Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, Mondadori, 2001), p. 346. Arrian's words also reveal his great passion for Homer and the fact that the Homeric poems were a model for depicting Alexanders' deeds and personality: *vid.* MARTIN, BERTI, «Cani, lepri, barbari e Alessandro il Macedone. Nobiltà d'animo e d'azione nell'opera di Arriano», *op. cit.*, p. 20.

acceptance of a new foreign ruler and legitimate the beginning of the Ptolemaic dynasty over Egypt²⁶.

After these stanzas, the author introduces Alexander's lament about the Persian domination and then the dialogue with his master Aristotle (ss. 21-88). These sections immediately precede three fundamental moments of the life of Alexander: his chivalric investiture, the long description of his horse Bucephalus, and his departure for Asia (ss. 89-126)²⁷. The arrangement and presentation of the material clearly show the mixture of different elements, from classical traditions and their Hellenistic revisions down to medieval reconfigurations and reworking of the relationship between Alexander and Aristotle²⁸.

According to classical sources, Philip II decided to appoint Aristotle to be tutor of his son Alexander and he assigned them a place in Macedonia called Mieza for their meetings. Our main source for this in-

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26. Vid. B.E. PERRY, «The Egyptian Legend of Nectanebus», *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 97 (1966), p. 327-333; R. JASNOW, «The Greek Alexander Romance and Demotic Egyptian Literature», *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 56, 2 (1997), p. 95-103. According to the Greek *Alexander Romance* (1.1-13), Nectanebus went to Macedonia and appeared to Olympia, the wife of Philip II, in the form of the god Ammon. He succeeded in seducing the woman and therefore became the father of Alexander the Great. In Diodorus Siculus (16.51.1), instead of engaging in battle with the Persian enemies at Memphis, Nectanebus decided to flee from Egypt and went to Ethiopia with as much money as he could grasp. The author of the *Libro de Alexandre* casts doubts about the birth from Nectanebus: in doing so, he follows the tradition of the *Roman d'Alexandre* and in general he is coherent with the medieval view according to which Alexander had to be the son of Philip in order to legitimately claim to the throne of Macedonia: vid. MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, *op. cit.*, p. 32-34; SUCH - RABONE, *Book of Alexander* (*Libro de Alexandre*), *op. cit.*, p. 681.
27. On the medievalization of the description of the investiture of Alexander, which is «transformed into the ceremony of the knighting of a Christian prince», vid. MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, *op. cit.*, p. 180-183.
28. Cf. DRONKE, «Introduzione», *op. cit.*, p. xli-xxvii.

formation is Plutarch, who describes contents and effects of Aristotle's teaching in his *Life of Alexander*²⁹:

(7.1) And since Philip saw that his son's nature was unyielding and that he resisted compulsion, but was easily led by reasoning into the path of duty, he himself tried to persuade rather than to command him; and because he would not wholly entrust the direction and training of the boy to the ordinary teachers of poetry and the formal studies, feeling that it was a matter of too great importance, and, in the words of Sophocles, 'A task for many bits and rudder-sweeps as well', (2) he sent for the most famous and learned of philosophers, Aristotle, and paid him a noble and appropriate tuition-fee. The city of Stageira, that is, of which Aristotle was a native, and which he had himself destroyed, he peopled again, and restored to it those of its citizens who were in exile or slavery. (3) Well, then, as a place where master and pupil could labour and study, he assigned them the precinct of the nymphs near Mieza, where to this day the visitor is shown the stone seats and shady walks of Aristotle. It would appear, moreover, that Alexander not only received from his master his ethical and political doctrines, but also participated in those secret and more profound teachings which philosophers designate by the special terms 'acroamatic' and 'epoptic', and do not impart to many. (4) For after he had already crossed into Asia, and when he learned that certain treatises on these recondite matters had been published in books by Aristotle, he wrote him a letter on behalf of philosophy, and put it in plain language. And this is a copy of the letter. 'Alexander, to Aristotle, greeting. Thou hast not done well to publish thy acroamatic doctrines; for in what shall I surpass other men if those doctrines wherein I have been trained are to be all men's common property? But I had rather excel in my acquaintance with the best things than in my power. Farewell'. (5) Accordingly, in defending himself, Aristotle encourages this ambition of Alexander by saying that the doctrines of which he spoke were both published and not published; for in truth his treatise on metaphysics is of no use for those who would either teach or learn the science, but is written as a memorandum for those already trained therein. (8.1) Moreover, in my opinion Alexander's love

29. Plutarchus, *Alexander* 7-8.

of the art of healing was inculcated in him by Aristotle preeminently. For he was not only fond of the theory of medicine, but actually came to the aid of his friends when they were sick, and prescribed for them certain treatments and regimens, as one can gather from his letters. He was also by nature a lover of learning and a lover of reading. (2) And since he thought and called the *Iliad* a viaticum of the military art, he took with him Aristotle's recension of the poem, called the *Iliad of the Casket*, and always kept it lying with his dagger under his pillow, as Onesicritus informs us; and when he could find no other books in the interior of Asia, he ordered Harpalus to send him some. (3) So Harpalus sent him the books of Philistus, a great many of the tragedies of Euripides, Sophocles, and Aeschylus, and the dithyrambic poems of Telestus and Philoxenus. Aristotle he admired at the first, and loved him, as he himself used to say, more than he did his father, for that the one had given him life, but the other had taught him a noble life; later, however, he held him in more or less of suspicion, not to the extent of doing him any harm, but his kindly attentions lacked their former ardour and affection towards him, and this was proof of estrangement. (4) However, that eager yearning for philosophy which was imbedded in his nature and which ever grew with his growth, did not subside from his soul, as is testified by the honour in which he held Anaxarchus, by his gift of fifty talents to Xenocrates, and by the attentions which he so lavishly bestowed upon Dandamis and Calanus (trans. B. PERRIN).

According to the picture offered by Plutarch, Alexander learned from Aristotle not only ethics and politics (ἠθικὸν καὶ πολιτικόν), but also philosophy and metaphysics, which the Macedonian was very fond of. Moreover, Aristotle taught him also the theory of medicine (φιλιатρεῖν) and, thanks to his master, Alexander could develop his natural passion for reading and learning (φιλόλογος καὶ φιλαναγνώστης), and also for the Homeric poems and in particular the *Iliad*³⁰.

30. Vid. also Plutarchus, *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute* 327f; *De exilio* 604d; Quintilianus, *Institutio oratoria* 1.1.23; Dio Chrysostomus, *Orationes* 49.4; Iustinus, *Epitome Historiarum Philippicarum Pompei Trogi* 12.16. For other sources concerning zoological investigations conducted by Aristotle and financially supported by Philip and Alexander, vid. DÜRING, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition*, op. cit.,

The author of the Greek *Alexander Romance* devotes a short passage on the education of Alexander by Aristotle and presents the future Macedonian leader with other pupils of the philosopher who were themselves sons of kings. This picture will inspire later sources where Alexander is depicted as one of the students of Aristotle's school. Moreover, the image of Alexander emerging from the Greek *Alexander Romance* is not the educated young boy fond of every branch of knowledge, but the man destined by fate to be the ruler of the world (κοσμοκράτωρ) and the greatest king (βασιλεὺς μέγιστος)³¹:

Alexander, meanwhile, now had only one teacher, Aristotle. There were a number of other children in his school, including several sons of kings. One day Aristotle said to one of them, 'When you inherit your father's kingdom, what favour will you show me?' The boy replied, 'You shall be my sole companion and authority, and I shall make you famous everywhere'. Then he asked a second boy, 'When you inherit your father's kingdom, how will you treat me your teacher?' The reply was, 'I shall make you a minister, and my personal adviser in all my

p. 288-294. Vid. also A.-H. CHROUST, «Was Aristotle Actually the Chief Preceptor of Alexander the Great?» in *Aristotle: New Light on Life and on Some of His Lost Works: Some Novel Interpretations of the Man and His Life*, ed. A.-H. CHROUST, 1 (Notre Dame, IN, University of Notre Dame Press, 1973), p. 125-132 (= *Classical Folia* 18, 1966, p. 26-33): according to this scholar, Aristotle did not serve as Alexander's «preceptor» or «chief tutor», but at most he «gave some occasional instructions to Alexander in one form or another». On this point, cf.: DÜRING, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition*, op. cit., p. 287-288, who asserts that «when Aristotle went to Mieza, he was not more famous in the Greek world than many other contemporary sophists and writers; the relations of his family with the Macedonian court were probably more decisive than his fame as philosopher». This view has not received great support among scholars: cf. MARTIN, BERTI, «Cani, lepri, barbari e Alessandro il Macedone. Nobiltà d'animo e d'azione nell'opera di Arriano», cit., p. 14 n. 35. On Aristotle's recension of the *Iliad*, vid. BERTI, COSTA, *La Biblioteca di Alessandria. Storia di un paradiso perduto*, cit., p. 57-58.

31. Pseudo-Callisthenes (*Historia Alexandri Magni*) 1.16. On the importance of this image for Islamic and medieval sources, vid. STONEMAN, GARGIULO, *Il romanzo di Alessandro*, op. cit., p. 503-504.

judgements'. Then he asked Alexander, 'And if you, child Alexander, inherit the kingdom from your father Philip, what will you do for me your teacher?' Alexander replied, 'Are you already asking me about things that will happen in the future, when you have no certainty about what will happen tomorrow?' I will give you a present when the time and the occasion arise'. Then Aristotle said, 'Hail, Alexander, ruler of the world: you will be the greatest king' (trans. R. STONEMAN).

The evidence of the above quoted sources allows a better understanding of the text of the *Libro de Alexandre* and reveals the multiple layers behind stanzas 32-35, where Aristotle meets Alexander in a very powerful medieval setting. In stanzas 32-33 Aristotle is forming syllogisms and he goes to visit his pupil around the Ninth Hour («the hour of None»), which was one of the canonical hours of prayer in the Roman Catholic Church:

*Maestre Aristótiles, que lo avié criado,
seyé en est'comedio en su casa çerrado.
Avié un silogismo de lógica formado;
essa noche nin es' dia nunca avié folgado.*

*Más era de medio día, nona podrié seer;
exió Aristótiles a su criado veer.
Quis quier' gelo podrié por vista coñocer
que veló al cresuelo do vinié de leer.*

The model depicted by the author of the poem is that of the philosopher who studies the whole day and night, sat up by an oil lamp³². According to this image, Alexander is represented as ashen faced with the same pale face of Aristotle. The philosopher is deeply upset (*mal sabor*) to see his pupil in this condition and Alexander, as soon as he sees his master, is greatly afraid (*grant pavor*) (ss. 34-35):

32. We find the same description in the *Alexandreis* (1.59). On the importance of the element of «learning» in the *Libro de Alexandre* and of Aristotle's tutorship, *vid.* MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

Los ojos tenié blancos e la color mudada,
los cabellos en tuerto, la maxilla delgada.
Nos' le tenié la çinta, yuso yazié colgada;
podrié caer en tierra de poca empuxada.

*Quando vio al diçiplo seer tan sin color,
sabet que el maestro ovo muy mal sabor.
Nunca pesar le vino quel' semejas' peor;
pero ovo el niño, quandol' vio, grant pavor.*

The great contrast emerging from this scene is not only with the image transmitted by classical authors, who describe Alexander as a beautiful young boy, but also with the passage quoted above from the Greek *Alexander Romance*, where Alexander is very confident in his abilities and gives a quick and wise reply to his master³³.

In stanzas 36-47 Alexander answers the questions of Aristotle about his sorrow and exposes the content of the teachings that he has received from his tutor. In doing so, he not only reveals the fundamentals of his learning (*clereçia*), but he also outlines «in a slightly modified form» the Seven Liberal Arts that formed the medieval *trivium* and *quadrivium*³⁴.

This outline starts with the most important disciplines for any educated person living in the 13th century, *i.e.* grammar, the art of composing verses and writing elegantly, and the knowledge of rhetorical figures and stylistic devices (s. 40):

33. Cf. Plutarchus, *Alexander* 4.1-7. On the great reverence showed by Alexander for Aristotle *vid.* also stanza 37.

34. *Vid.* SUCH, RABONE, *Book of Alexander* (Libro de Alexandre), *cit.* p. 61-63, who point out that the goal of the author of the *Libro de Alexandre* was to show through the figure of Alexander the importance of scholarship (*clereçia*) in the education of the medieval nobleman. *Vid.* also MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, *op. cit.*, p. 41-45.

*Entiendo bien gramática, sé bien toda natura;
bien dicto e versífico, coñosco bien figura;
de cor sé los actores, de libro non he cura;
mas todo lo olvido, tant' he fiera rencura*³⁵.

Alexander remembers how he learned «to form arguments from logic», syllogisms, and to acquire any tool for demonstrating logical propositions (s. 41):

*Bien sé los argumentos de lógica formar,
los dobles silogismos bien los sé yo falsar;
bien sé yo a la parada a mi contrario levar;
mas todo lo olvido, tanto he grant pesar*³⁶.

The same concept is repeated in the following stanza, where Alexander asserts to be a fine rhetorician, and to be able to speak and deal with his adversary (s. 42):

*Retórico so fino: sé feroso hablar;
colorar mis palabras, los omes bien pagar;
sobre mi adversario la mi culpa echar;
mas por esto lo he todo a olvidar.*

After that Alexander mentions also medicine and natural sciences (s. 43):

*Apris' toda la física, so mege natural;
coñosco bien los pulsos, bien judgo orinal;
non ha, fueras de ti, ome mejor nin tal;
mas todo non lo preçio quant' un dinero val'.*

The reference to medicine is peculiar because this discipline was not considered part of the *quadrivium*, even if its teaching became quite

35. Vid. SUCH, RABONE, *Book of Alexander* (Libro de Alexandre), *op. cit.*, p. 33-44.

36. On this point *cf.* also stanza 45.

important at the end of the 12th century. In the context of the poem medicine can be also considered a reminiscence of elements going back to the Greek portrait of the Macedonian, given that, as we have read above, Plutarch writes that Alexander's love for the art of healing was transmitted to him by Aristotle, whose father was a physician³⁷.

After that, Alexander mentions music and in the following stanza he resumes the fact that he has learned all the seven arts including also astronomy (ss. 44-45):

Sé por arte de música por natura cantar;
sé fer sabrosos puntos, las voces acordar,
los tonos cóm' empieçan e cóm' deven finir,
mas non me puede esto un punto confortar.

*Sé de las siete artes todo su argumento;
bien sé las qualidades de cada elemento;
de los signos del sol, siquier' del fundamento,
nos' me podrié çelar quanto val' un açento*³⁸.

Stanzas 46 and 47 are the last ones of the speech of Alexander: here the Macedonian recognizes the wisdom (*sapiência*) transmitted to him by Aristotle, but also complains about the Persian domination over Greece, expressing the worry for his responsibility to free the country

37. Plutarchus, *Alexander* 8.1. On Nicomachus, who was Aristotle's father and a physician, *vid. Suda*, s.v. Νικόμαχος [v 399]. For other sources *vid. DÜRING, Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition*, *op. cit.*, p. 265-267. *Vid. also* MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, *op. cit.*, p. 45; SUCH, RABONE, *Book of Alexander* (*Libro de Alexandre*), *op. cit.*, p. 682.

38. *Vid. MICHAEL, The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, *op. cit.*, p. 43. It's interesting to recall that in the Greek *Alexander Romance* Nectanebus, the alleged father of Alexander, was a magician. The fact that in the medieval sources Alexander is skilled in astronomy and astrology is also consistent with this tradition about his birth from the Egyptian pharaoh: *vid. LIBORIO, Alessandro nel medioevo occidentale*, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

from the oppression of Darius. This lament pervades the whole discourse of Alexander, especially when he expresses his sorrow and anger because he is not able to cultivate and remember all Aristotle's teachings due to his duties as king and commander (ss. 40-42). This image of Alexander has been considered an *unicum* in the tradition, as a sort of "bridge" between the classical portrait of the Macedonian hero and his medieval revision according to the stereotype of the philosopher who lives far from reality³⁹.

Stanzas 48-85 include Aristotle's response to the speech of Alexander and end the section of the poem devoted to the relationship between master and pupil before the departure for the great expedition to Asia. This part is a true guide of the virtues of the well-educated and perfect medieval prince: treat your vassals well (ss. 53 and 60), be wary of love for women (ss. 53-54), avoid base men (ss. 55-56), do not be a drunkard (s. 58), show mercy and judge well (ss. 57 and 59), lead the men bravely and justly (ss. 61-63, 66-69, 72-81), divide the booth fairly (s. 82), and look for fame (ss. 71-72)⁴⁰.

This long list of advices includes also the mention of Hector, Diomedes, and Achilles as models to follow in order to avoid cowardice and pursue bravery and fame (s. 70):

*Éctor e Diomedes, por su cavalleria,
ganaron prez que fablan d'ellos oy en día.
Non farián de Aquiles tan luenga ledanía
si sopiessen en él alguna covardía.*

39. Vid. MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, op. cit., p. 45: «The poet omits law and replaces arithmetic and geometry by medicine and natural philosophy. His view of what was a desirable education for kings was more like that of a university teacher and can have had little relation to the actual training of contemporary monarchs; it cannot have been more than an academic's pipe dream»; LIBORIO, *Alessandro nel medioevo occidentale*, op. cit., p. 170.

40. Vid. MICHAEL, *The Treatment of Classical Material in the Libro de Alexandre*, op. cit., p. 31 and 42.

Even if refashioned in a medieval frame, the image of the Homeric heroes condenses the message of the *Libro de Alexandre* and preserves the imperishable elements of the tradition about the Macedonian leader. Achilles is not only a model of Alexander both in classical and medieval sources, but he is also one of the personifications of the double image of the Macedonian leader across the centuries, being at the same time a mythical, historical, and literary reference point for Alexander and for every author who has attempted to reconstruct and readapt his extraordinary life⁴¹.

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41. For the presence of Achilles in other parts of the *Libro de Alexandre*, vid. *ibid.*, p. 56-57. For Alexander, as «the embodiment of the ideal of Arms and Letters», vid. SUCH, RABONE, *Book of Alexander (Libro de Alexandre)*, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

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Énoncés sapientiels et littérature exemplaire : une intertextualité complexe

Au IX^e siècle, la tradition arabe de l'adab parvient en Espagne en al-Andalus, plaque tournante où s'échangent les savoirs venus d'Orient. Ils passent aux royaumes chrétiens de la Péninsule, en partie, grâce au rôle de relais pour l'Occident que jouent, dès le XI^e siècle, les centres monacaux du nord de l'Espagne. L'adab rencontre en al-Andalus la tradition sapientielle juive de la littérature midrashique. Des recueils sont composés, des œuvres originales produites aux X^e et XI^e siècles et, à partir du XII^e siècle, les recueils d'exempla et de dits des philosophes sont traduits en hébreu (Provence), en latin, en langues romanes.

Cet héritage complexe se retrouve en bonne part dans la littérature espagnole des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles et dans les proverbières espagnols, judéo-espagnols et maghrébins contemporains.

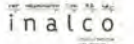
Si les grandes lignes de ces échanges sont connues, on ne sait rien de précis de la circulation effective de ces énoncés sapientiels brefs (notre unité de travail), des choix successifs faits par les traducteurs, des réinterprétations culturelles, ni du poids d'un emprunt par rapport à un autre. Les filiations des textes de sagesse et l'ordre des traductions sont sujets à caution, a fortiori celui des énoncés sapientiels brefs qu'ils contiennent. Ces énoncés sapientiels brefs n'ont pas fait l'objet d'une étude d'ensemble qui retrace leur circulation à travers les différentes langues (savantes et vernaculaires) de la Péninsule Ibérique, qui reconstruit les cheminements des textes et des traductions, les transformations des unités sapientielles qui en résultent, et qui rend compte, enfin, de leurs sources et de leur postérité.

Le projet ALIENTO entend répondre à ces questions : il vise donc à calculer les concordances partielles ou totales des textes, leurs connections proches et éloignées afin de réévaluer les relations intertextuelles, en confrontant une grande quantité d'unités et en croisant des textes écrits dans des langues différentes.

Le projet repose sur une collaboration interdisciplinaire étroite entre les chercheurs informaticiens (ATILF) et les spécialistes des textes et linguistes (Université Lorraine, MSH Lorraine, INALCO et leur réseau international de collaborateurs).

La collection ALIENTO met à la disposition des chercheurs les travaux effectués lors des rencontres annuelles et les tient au courant de l'avancée du projet à travers la publication régulière des résultats obtenus.

Nous avons dédié ce numéro à l'intertextualité entre les corpus que nous annotons dans cette phase 1 du projet et la littérature exemplaire circulant dans la Péninsule au Moyen Âge. Une attention particulière a été portée aux traductions de *Calila et Dimna* à des époques et des milieux culturels différents et dans les langues de culture de la péninsule ibérique (latin, hébreu, arabe, castillan, catalan). L'autre partie, plus brève, propose une réflexion sur les apports des nouvelles technologies dans nos domaines d'étude.



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