

2nd Trends in Classics – Historiography Conference: *All the King's Writers: Tradition and Renewal in the Ancient Histories of Alexander the Great*

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Research Center for the Greek and Latin Literature, Academy of Athens
Department of Philology, University of the Peloponnese
Department of Philology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
Department of Ancient History, University of Marburg

Organizing Committee:

Antonios Rengakos (Member of the Academy of Athens)
Ioannis M. Konstantakos (Professor of Ancient Greek Literature, NKUA)
Vasileios Liotsakis (Assistant Professor of Ancient Greek Literature, University of the Peloponnese)
Sabine Müller (Professor of Ancient History, University of Marburg)

ABSTRACTS

Agency in the Greco-Roman Alexander Narratives: Destiny, Decision, and Desire

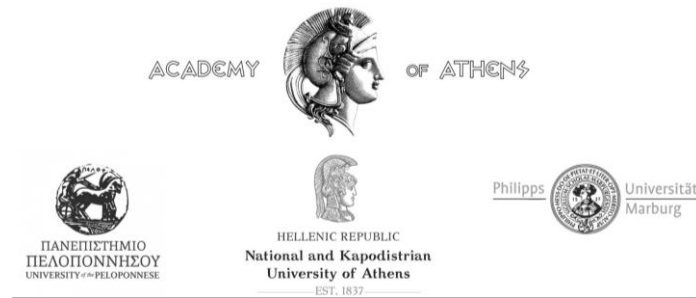
Elias Koulakiotis, University of Ioannina

A central theme in the Greco-Roman Alexander narratives is how and why a political, in this case monarchical, power is shaped and set in motion. Furthermore, in what way in a short period of time it manages to lead a politico-religious community (ethnic in the ancient meaning of the term), and to raise it to world domination. Ancient writers seem to articulate the driving forces of this meteoritical star around three major topics: Destiny, decision and desire, that is religious, cognitive and emotional layers of a complex key character. In this way they create a three-dimensional hero, relatable to different contexts, genres and addressees.

Callisthenes and Chares on Parmenion

Cinzia Bearzot, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart

The paper intends to re-examine the tradition on Parmenion in the sources chronologically closest to the events, Callisthenes and Chares, both of whom carry an unfavourable bias towards the general. The re-examination is now required in the light of P. Oxy. LXXI 4808, which contains a new catalogue of Hellenistic historians and reports the hostile orientation towards the general expressed by Chares, a previously unknown piece of information.



Navigating Truth: Nearchus between Strategic Leadership and Narrative Authority

Vasileios Liotsakis, University of the Peloponnese

This paper examines the literary strategies through which Nearchus, in his now-lost *Periplus*, sought to construct a dual image of himself as both an effective naval commander and a credible historical narrator. Preserved primarily through Arrian's *Indikē* and supplemented by other later sources, the extant fragments of Nearchus' account reveal a sustained effort to conflate practical leadership with narrative credibility. The narrative emphasizes the admiral's capacity to overcome the logistical and environmental challenges posed by the Indian Ocean voyage, while simultaneously portraying him as a rational observer capable of demystifying long-standing misconceptions about India found in earlier Greek literature. By integrating empirical detail with self-referential comments, Nearchus not only contributes to the encomiastic discourse surrounding Alexander the Great, but also positions himself as a trustworthy mediator of knowledge. This analysis argues that Nearchus' self-fashioning as both a loyal subject and an epistemically reliable witness serves to elevate the historical value of his testimony within the Alexandrian tradition.

The paper suggests that Nearchus' lasting reputation for reliability – both in antiquity and among modern scholars – owes not only to the intrinsic quality of his observations but also to his deliberate narrative strategies. In contrast to other participants in Alexander's campaign, whose accounts were early on dismissed as biased or fanciful, Nearchus' careful blending of military authority and descriptive restraint appears to have shaped a reception that favored his credibility across time.

Chares of Mytilene, the Commemoration of Alexander, and Artifice

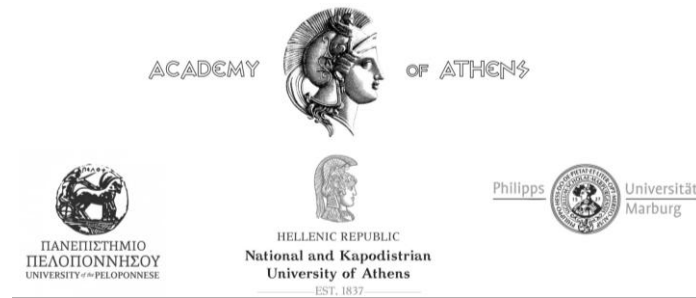
Sabine Müller, University of Marburg

The Greek Chares from the wealthy port Mytilene might have accompanied Alexander's Asian campaign from the beginning in 334 BC. He became his εἰσαγγελεύς, involved in the royal courtly ceremony, and one of the primary Alexander historiographers. The fragments of his work concern various aspects such as court, royal etiquette, battle, Persian "folklore", or etymology. His tendency to idealize Alexander is crucial to these fragments. This paper aims at showing that Chares' glorified image of Alexander as well as his stereotypical images of the Ancient Near East have effects on his reliability as an eye-witness. For example, his treatment of Kallisthenes is biased and he is reported to have also deliberately blackened the portrait of Parmenion and his circle (P. Oxy. LXXI 4808 col I). In addition, while Chares' attitude towards the conquered Persian Empire was ambiguous and apparently involved interest and fascination, he also preserved stereotypical tropes regarding "barbarian" aspects of the East and its inhabitants. Thus, he provides an example of the phenomenon of the 'inner sight' of Western travelers to the East influenced by the constructed images of the East in the collective memory.

Onesicritus' impact on the Alexander Narratives

Philip Bosman, Stellenbosch University

Recent scholarship on Onesicritus of Astypalaia, a contemporary of Alexander, has been significantly advanced by the publication of his fragments alongside the revised commentary in BNJ² by Parker and Whitby (2024). Despite references to Onesicritus in numerous ancient



sources, the fragmentary nature of the transmission complicates efforts to fully grasp its scope and impact. Nevertheless, a prevailing view is that Onesicritus influenced Alexander traditions more substantially than the surviving fragments and explicit references indicate. Two widely accepted elements of his work, *How Alexander Was Educated*, highlight his role in shaping early portrayals of Alexander's life: (i) his use of Xenophon's fiction-infused *Education of Cyrus* as a literary model provides a valuable angle on his selection and presentation of material; (ii) the claim that he was a pupil of Diogenes of Sinope and considered a Cynic remains relatively unexplored, since it is still unclear in what sense he adhered to Cynicism. Apart from the reported encounter with the Indian philosophers, notions of the Cynic life 'according to nature' and of Cynic cosmopolitanism should also be considered. This paper seeks to explore these aspects in greater detail, proposing how Onesicritus may have influenced subsequent Alexander narratives.

Kleitarchos in the Context of Alexandria: Foundations of the Alexander Tradition

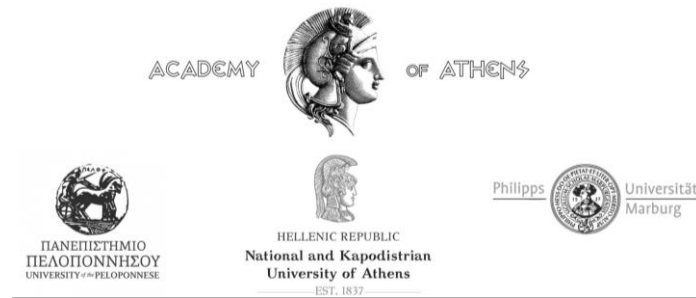
Lennart Gilhaus, Humboldt University of Berlin

Kleitarchos holds a unique position among the early historians of Alexander. Almost nothing is known about his person, and it is highly likely that he did not personally participate in Alexander's campaign. At the same time, his direct and indirect influence on the Alexander tradition is considered exceptionally significant. However, nearly every aspect of his work – its dating, style, structure, and depiction of Alexander – remains a matter of debate. Rather than directly addressing these issues, I propose taking a step back and attempting to examine the conditions under which Kleitarchos' work was created, as well as its literary context. This is less about his actual or presumed knowledge of other Alexander historians and more about the intersections with the Alexander traditions that found their way into the Alexander Romance and the rich anecdotal lore about Alexander. The aim of this paper is not only to highlight these points of contact but also to demonstrate that the emerging metropolis of Alexandria and its multiethnic population provided the fertile ground and audience both for Kleitarchos' history of Alexander and for early elements of the Alexander Romance.

Ptolemy as Apologist for Alexander

Frances Pownall, University of Alberta

The history of Ptolemy I, with its blatant self-promotion and rebranding of Alexander as a Ptolemaic predecessor in order to legitimize his own rule, seems to have been largely bypassed by the later Alexander historians in favor of more sensationalistic narratives. As the Roman Republic transformed into the Roman Empire, the figure of Alexander evolved into the tyrannical ruler of the so-called Vulgate tradition, corrupted by his new eastern subjects and his own grandiose ambition, a suitable object lesson in the dangers of imperial power. It is only when Arrian, writing at a time when a more idealizing portrayal of Alexander was emerging, famously rejected the by-now conventional Alexander tradition by returning to the eyewitness accounts of Ptolemy and Aristobulus, claiming that they offered more trustworthy accounts of Alexander's expedition. Naturally, one of Ptolemy's strategies in legitimizing his own position in Egypt was to insist upon the closeness of his association with Alexander (whether real or invented). But for this strategy to succeed, Alexander himself had to be blameless, and so a strong apologetic strand is apparent in the extant fragments from Ptolemy's history. This apologetic strand likely is based on the officially sanctioned version of events, endorsed by Alexander himself. Thus, if we look beyond Ptolemy's



own personal glorification and his creation of an Egyptian Alexander, it is possible to discern from his history glimpses of the ways in which Alexander justified to the wider world some of the more problematic aspects of his campaign.

Aristoboulos of Cassandreia: Engineering Alexander's Legacy?

Giustina Monti, University of Lincoln, UK

Was Aristoboulos of Cassandreia merely a chronicler of Alexander or a craftsman of his legacy? This paper reexamines Aristoboulos' fragments and reconsiders his role and historiographical agenda. While scholars such as Heckel (*Who's Who in the Age of Alexander the Great*, p. 46) argue that Aristoboulos was not a member of Alexander's military staff but rather a technician – possibly part of the “engineering corps” (Heckel), as suggested by his supervision of the restoration of Cyrus' tomb – his detailed and often privileged perspective on court life complicates this view. The nature of Aristoboulos' fragments – many of which recount key events from an insider's viewpoint – strongly suggests his presence at court, albeit not among those closest to the king, as Pownall rightly underlines (BNJ 139).

Aristoboulos' extant fragments cover a broad range of material, including major episodes such as the Gordian Knot, the visit to Siwah, the meeting with Darius' mother and sisters, the Pages' conspiracy, and the death of Cleitus. However, they also reveal a distinct interest in geography and engineering, particularly in his descriptions of India's terrain, flora, fauna, and infrastructural works like canal-building – details that might hint at his technical background.

One often overlooked but significant aspect is the date of Aristoboulos' writing: he composed his history in advanced age, decades after Alexander's death. This temporal distance raises important questions about his motivations. Might his account serve not only to commemorate Alexander but also to align with the political aims of Cassander, founder of Cassandreia (see, for example, F2 which deals with the episode of Timokleia during Alexander's destruction of Thebes)? This paper will explore how Aristoboulos' depiction of Alexander may reflect the ideological climate of Cassander's reign.

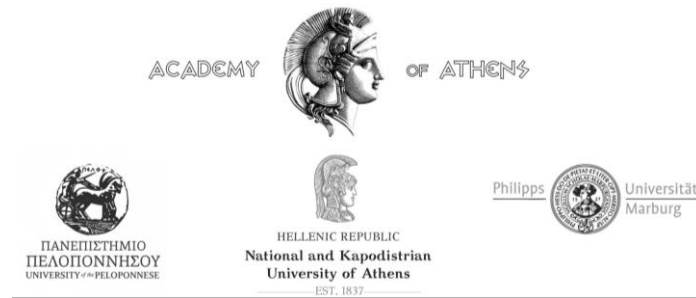
Additionally, the paper will examine the proposed relationship between Aristoboulos and Chares of Mytilene. Several scholars (e.g., Jacoby, Pearson, Hamilton, and Pédech) posit that Aristoboulos drew from Chares. However, a close comparison of their fragments reveals both similarities and substantial differences. The divergence in their fragmentary traditions – Aristoboulos mainly preserved by Arrian and Strabo, Chares by Plutarch and Athenaeus – further complicates the picture.

Through a re-examination of the fragments, this paper seeks to assess Aristoboulos' function at Alexander's court, uncover the possible agenda behind his historical writing, and reevaluate his connection with Chares in the broader context of Alexander historiography.

A Curious Triangulation: Polybius, Alexander, and Rome

Craige B. Champion, Syracuse University

Alexander the Great was firmly entrenched in imaginaries of Roman ruling elites, from Scipio Africanus to the Roman emperor Caracalla and beyond. This paper considers Polybius' representations of the Macedonian conqueror and their impact on Roman elites, who were just beginning to formulate their ideas about Alexander and his significance to the history of the imperium Romanum and of the world, as Polybius was writing his work. The historian's generally



positive assessment of Alexander, not without its ambiguities, is aligned with the generally positive Roman reconstruction of him, though again not without reservations. A proper understanding of Polybius' treatment of Alexander, however, turns on a more parochial perspective, highlighting Polybius' own political position vis-à-vis Macedonia, Polybian didacticism, and a large narrative trajectory of the *Histories*.

Alexander the Great in Justin's Epitome of Trogus' *Philippic History*

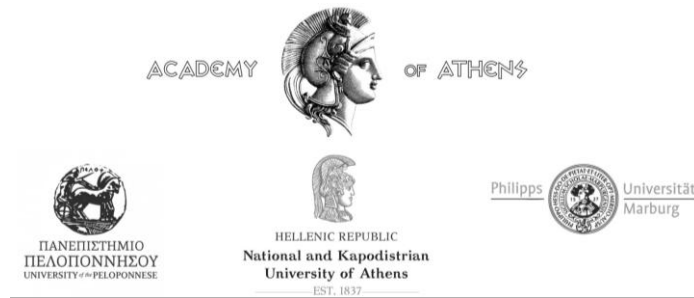
Franca Landucci, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart

Justin's *Epitome of Trogus' Philippic History* is a universal history, spanning from the Near Eastern empires to the fall of the Hellenistic kingdoms, with additional sections on the Parthian Kingdom and Rome. In this text, Alexander, the main character of books 11 and 12, is initially introduced at the end of book 9, when he confronts his father, Philip II. In the context of the sources on Alexander the Great, the *Epitome* is usually considered inferior to the dedicated monographs. In any case, the coherent portrayal of Alexander in Justin's *Epitome* strongly suggests that it accurately mirrors the content of Trogus' lost *Philippic Histories*: therefore, a comparison between Trogus' assessment of Alexander and Livy's well-known comments on him in Book 9 of his history of Rome looks interesting. Livy's evaluation of Alexander mirrors that of Trogus, as presented in Justin's *Epitome*. Both historians crafted their portrayal of Alexander to align with the values and concerns of the Augustan era. During Augustus' reign, Alexander's saga prompted reflections on how easily a king could devolve into a tyrant, especially if he became enmeshed in Eastern customs, as exemplified by Mark Antony's relationship with Cleopatra. Yet, Augustus was different, as he maintained a clear distance from the East and steadfastly adhered to the Roman *mos maiorum*. In my view, therefore, Trogus clearly aligned his depiction of Alexander with Augustan propaganda: he presents a formidable general yet a cruel and irascible figure, one feared rather than loved by his countrymen.

The Enemy Within: Alexander and His Opponents in Diodorus Book 17

Jennifer Finn, Loyola University Chicago

Particularly striking in a thorough reading of Book 17 of Diodorus' *Bibliothēke* are the consistently mirrored portraits of Alexander and his opponents. Scholars have (disparagingly) noticed this tendency, but in this paper, I argue that this presentation is achieved with careful use of terminology. This narrational symmetry is created through a variety of means; I will show that Diodorus uses the themes of courage, paradox, and fate as a lens throughout the entirety of Book 17 to extol not on the inevitability of victory or defeat, as other Alexander authors do, but to humanize all the actors (not just the Persians!) involved in Alexander's life and campaigns. It is important to note that the techniques Diodorus applies to his reading of Alexander are all intentional: the patterns are recognizable only because he employs specific, targeted, and consistent language that may have been reminiscent of – but likely not present in – his original source material; this tendency confirms the independence of Diodorus as a creative historiographer of Alexander's campaigns.



Pudor as a Guiding Force: On Curtius Rufus' Contribution to the History of Alexander the Great

Anja Bettenworth, University of Cologne

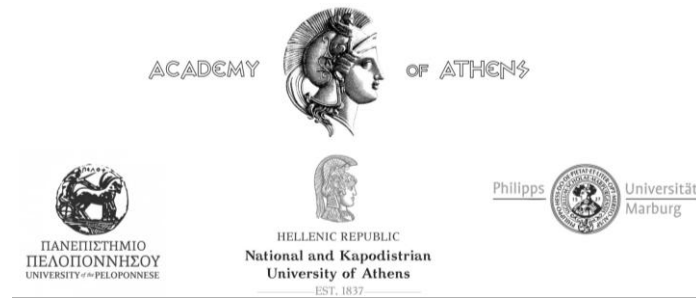
This paper looks at the unique contribution of Curtius Rufus to the history of Alexander by pointing out the importance Curtius attributes to the feelings and emotions of the people surrounding the king. A particularly instructive emotion is *pudor* (shame): Seen by psychologists as the most social of human emotions, it highlights an individual's relationship to social norms and expectations. As it turns out, Curtius makes ample use of this emotion to give a peculiar twist to key scenes of Alexander's life that is not found in other sources. The paper starts out from Curtius' description of the burning of Persepolis in which *pudor* plays a crucial role and continues to show how Curtius uses this emotion to link the destruction of Persepolis to other events throughout his work in a unique and unexpected way. It argues that the line of thought created by this technique helps us to understand Curtius' political views in a more nuanced way that is relevant also for his own time.

Plutarch and the Alexander Tradition

Christopher Pelling, University of Oxford

Plutarch is a very varied writer. Different *Lives* have different interests; even the grand programmatic statements, most famously *Alex. 1.2*, apply more fully to some *Lives* than others, and it is no coincidence that that one prefaces *Alex.* in particular. He can also think differently at different times and in different genres. The Alexander tradition offers an unusually rich field for examining this, not merely through the contrast between the *Life* and the two essays on *Alexander's Fortune or Virtue* but also through the unusually high number of references to Alexander scattered through other *Lives* and *Moralia*. A fair number of those stories and sayings recur in the *Life* but a fair number do not; the *Apophthegmata of Kings and Generals* – increasingly recognised as in some sense authentically Plutarchan, whether or not intended for 'publication'. and probably in some way reflecting some preliminary work for the *Lives* – are particularly interesting here, as a bigger proportion of those *Apophthegmata* do NOT figure in the *Life* than with any of Plutarch's other heroes. An oblique approach, starting from what Plutarch does not say and the different inflection he gives to the stories he does tell, offers one way in to examining his technique and his selective interests. An eye here must of course be kept on the paired *Life of Caesar* too, as well as to the ways that Alexander ties into the whole series of the *Parallel Lives*.

That variation also applies to his use of sources. He used different authorities in different ways: sometimes he probably had one source open before him and based his account directly on that; sometimes he would have read or reread material specifically for a *Life*; quite often he would be adding or adapting material from memory, more or less recent. Alexander is one of the *Lives* that cites authors most profusely; such citations, included for (once again) a variety of reasons, should not always be taken as a claim to first-hand knowledge, but we need not doubt that he has read unusually widely and draws on a broader reading than some of our other sources. He would have come across some of his stories and emphases in several different authors and they would have stocked his memory and mindset over many years: he would probably have been hard-pressed himself to say where he first encountered them. That need not wholly stultify the investigation into his sources for particular items, but it does complicate it, probably more so than with our other extant authorities. It also raises the question why he cites so often. In another case of an unusually citation-rich *Life*, the *Theseus*, it is a fair bet that it is precisely because the material is so uncertain ('making myth look like history', *Thes. 1*): might something similar be the case here?



Making Alexander Great Again: Arrian's Response to the Images of Alexander in His Time

Julian Degen, University of Innsbruck

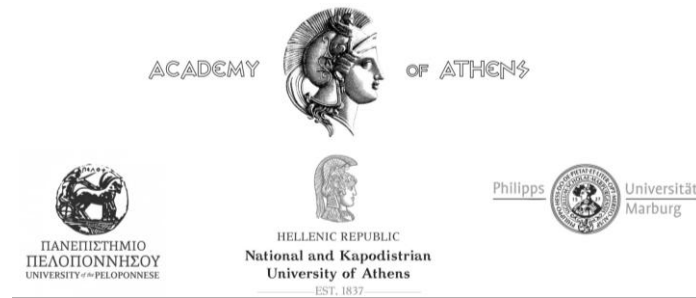
Arrian's *Anabasis* is generally considered the most reliable account of Alexander's life and reign. Still, he creates a rather euphemistic portrayal of Alexander, a fact that has divided scholars into opposing camps regarding their general assessment of his work's quality. Recent scholarship has begun to show greater awareness of the narrative world of Arrian's account, which brought to light the impact of his creative hands on his sources. Building on this stream of research, this paper is taking a narratological approach to Arrian's reoccurring list of Alexander's achievements, which, in his eyes, constitute great achievements of the conqueror, the τὰ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔργα. By comparing Arrian's description of these achievements with the prevailing portrayals of Alexander available in his time, it will be argued that Arrian intentionally departed from them to lend weight to his narrative. His intention was to create a new image of Alexander, contrasting with previous writers who had a different conception of 'greatness' from Arrian's

The World Is Not Enough: The *Alexander Romance* between Popularised History and Travel Tale

Ioannis M. Konstantakos

The Greek *Alexander Romance*, probably created in the late Hellenistic age but known from a long series of successive versions which reach well into Byzantine times, has been pieced together from materials of various earlier writings about Alexander, both historical and pseudo-historical or fictional ones. The final composite synthesis consists of two main components. The earlier part of the work follows Alexander's biography, from his childhood and accession to the throne to his early campaigns in mainland Greece, the expedition to Asia, and the conquest of the Achaemenid Empire. The main outline of these events has been drawn from a historical work, apparently a representative of the more sensational and rhetorically embellished trends of Hellenistic historiography, in the manner e.g. of Clitarchus or Phylarchus. However, the author of the romance mixes up historical incidents and figures, distorts chronology and geography, and enriches the plot with entirely imaginary episodes, to achieve effects of suspense, emotion, and pathos. In a way, he operates like a modern Hollywood scriptwriter, manipulating the stuff of history to produce an entertaining fiction dressed in period costumes.

On the other hand, in the latter half of the romance, the theme of extraordinary travel predominates. Alexander moves beyond the borders of the Persian Empire and wanders in exotic locations, encountering monsters, natural marvels, and utopian lands, in search of the limits of the world and the meaning of life. A few of these weird travel tales correspond to motifs of wonder presented by the historians of Alexander in their descriptions of India or Central Asia. Mostly, however, the travelogues of the romance belong to another, even more fabulous and extravagant tradition, possibly going back to oral reports of the veterans of Alexander's campaign, which were given a literary form in travel novels and utopian fictions of the Hellenistic age. The material of these narratives includes fictionalised versions of the soldiers' experiences, propelled into the realm of pure fantasy, but also popular folktales and legends of the Near East, which must have been picked up by veterans and transferred to Alexander's person. The ensuing image of the Macedonian king, halfway between conquistador and explorer, is at best a mythicised offshoot of the traditional historical portrait. Nevertheless, it exercised immense influence on the shaping of Alexander's figure in popular imagination and literary production, in East and West, through the Middle Ages and up to the eve of modernity.



Josephus on Alexander

Ory Amitay, University of Haifa

Josephus is not one of the usual Alexander historians. In fact, the historicity, or rather lack thereof, of his Alexander chapter has justly been the subject of critical scholarship for centuries. Following the communis opinio, this paper interprets Josephus' Alexander story as a political myth (or less favorably as a pseudo-history), which uses the historical figure of Alexander in order to comment on the reality of Josephus' own time.

Another question that has received intense attention is that of Josephus' sources. Here I offer a new answer, viz. that his two main sources were: (a) a hitherto unknown work from 190s BCE Judea, celebrating the new Seleucid rule through a literary work, which was modeled on an early Ptolemaic version of the *Alexander Romance*; (b) the story of Alexander and Simon the Just, as told in various rabbinic sources.

Finally, this paper addresses Josephus' original contribution and his value as both historian and historical source. As a historian, he put up a brave attempt to solve the insoluble chronological difficulties of Persian period Judean history. His Alexander story, pseudo-historical as it is, is nevertheless grounded in research, makes a number of highly logical assumptions, and asks important historical questions. As a source, my interpretation of Josephus' narrative presents him as a witness to a post-70 CE sentiment in Judean society to make peace with Rome and to rebuild the Jerusalem temple.

All this builds on and further elaborates my recently published book: Amitay, Ory. 2025. *Alexander in Jerusalem: Myth and History*. Oxford: OUP.

The Depiction of Alexander's Friendship with the East in the *Metz Epitome*

Matthew Watts, University of Otago

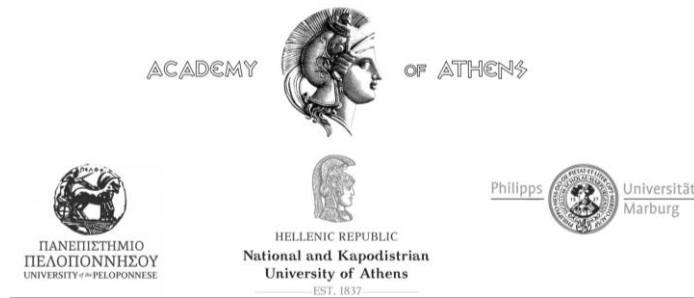
The *Metz Epitome* is a Latin text that details Alexander's campaigns from Hyrcania to the mouth of the River Indus. Its author is anonymous. It dates most likely to the 4th or 5th century AD, and the sole MS was destroyed by the Allied bombing of Metz in 1944. Scholarship surrounding the *Metz Epitome* has focused on the integrity of the Latin, the linguistic features of the text, or the source tradition behind it rather than focusing on depictions in the text.

In the narrative of the *Metz Epitome*, Alexander's friendship with Eastern figures plays a prominent role. The epitomator devotes significant space to detailing friendly interactions between Alexander and Eastern figures. This paper will examine the depictions of these friendships and compare them to previous Alexander histories. This paper will investigate how the epitomator uses (or does not use) *amicitia* to describe certain relationships in the *Metz Epitome*. Paying particular attention to the episodes of Alexander's interactions with Mophis/Taxiles (ME 49-54) and Porus (ME 55-64), this paper will examine how the epitomator changes the depiction of these interactions for his narrative in the context of the Alexander source tradition and the changing relationship between Rome and the East in which the *Metz Epitome* was produced.

Alexander in the Latin Sources, Over Time

Sulochana Asirvatham, Montclair State University

Those who wish to gauge Alexander's impact on the Latin sources have an invaluable resource in the form of Diana Spencer's *The Roman Alexander* (Exeter, 2002), which remains the fullest



treatment of the Latin texts and offers close readings of passages from Cicero, Velleius Paterculus, the two Senecas, Livy, Horace, Lucan, Curtius, Statius, Juvenal, Silius Italicus, and Curtius; Spencer treats Valerius Maximus elsewhere in a 2010 article). The general sense once gets from the book is that Alexander is a figure through which Latin writers can respond to new challenges in the political landscape – beginning with Caesar. Jaakkojuhani Peltonen offers a briefer treatment of Latin writers on Alexander in *Alexander the Great in the Roman Empire, 150 BC to AD 600* (Routledge, 2019) but also suggests a critical use of Alexander, arguing that that writers like Livy, Velleius, and Tacitus, favorably contrast the Roman empire (under, respectively, Augustus, Tiberius and Trajan) with Alexander’s less impressive one in order to express their Roman patriotism.

Both Spencer and Peltonen, quite reasonably, relate Latin writers’ use of Alexander to the political contexts in which they wrote. Therefore, the fact that most of those writers appear in the late Republic and early empire – the time of Caesar, Pompey, Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius – prompts me to wonder if we can speak of a temporal shift in Roman intellectuals’ interest in Alexander over time. Tacitus wrote in the age of Domitian and Trajan, so he is relatively “late,” but not all writers consider Tacitus’s depiction of Germanicus to be infused with Alexander-ness (see, e.g., C. Kelly, “Tacitus, Germanicus and the Kings of Egypt (Tac. Ann. 2.59-61)”, CQ 60:1, 2010, 221-237). In any case, even if Tacitus is covertly referencing Alexander (negatively) in his depictions of Germanicus, his lack of directness in comparing Alexander with Romans (except for a moment during Germanicus’s funeral), coupled with Alexander’s general absence in later Latin, suggests that Alexander may outgrow his utility for Roman writers over time. This may parallel the fact that, despite constant refrains in the scholarly literature about the popularity of *imitatio Alexandri* among Roman emperors, there does not seem to be much evidence for this outside of local Eastern contexts (see Sulochana Asirvatham, “Alexander and the Roman Emperors”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Alexander the Great*, ed. D. Ogden, Cambridge 2024, 438-451). Exceptions are Caracalla, whose *imitatio* is roundly mocked by both Greek and Latin authors: Cassius Dio, Herodian, and the anonymous author of the *Historia Augusta*, and Trajan. But again, even in the latter case, the overall stereotype of Trajan as mad-for-Alexander may require some nuance. Two texts that are contemporary with Tacitus’s *Annals*, Pliny the Younger’s *Panegyricus* and the Greek sophist/philosopher Dio Chrysostom’s *Oration 1*, offer some interesting additional context. Both speeches were addressed to Trajan – although we can only be sure Pliny’s was delivered before the emperor – and that have so much in common that some scholars have posited a common source. It seems more likely, however, that they are both responding to certain aspects of Trajanic propaganda. What is important to observe here is that, whereas Dio uses Alexander to “speak to” the emperor, Pliny does not. This suggests that Alexander’s positive utility for Greek intellectuals in the era of Trajan (when Plutarch, even more famous for his Alexander-writings, also wrote) is stronger than for Latin writers. (And even that seems to fade Arrian, who wrote during Hadrian’s reign – but that’s a topic that requires its own study.)

Sophists for Alexander: Greek Alexandrology in the second century AD

Christian Thruue Djurslev, Aarhus University

It is well-known that many of our principal sources for the history of Alexander, including Plutarch and Arrian, stem from the Romano-Greek literature of the second century AD. We still only know relatively little, however, about their less historiographical colleagues, the many sophists, rhetorician, grammarians and teachers of the period, such as Maximus of Tyre, Tatian of Assyria and Ptolemy Chennus “the Quail”. These authors, Christian and non-Christian, are important not least because of what they said about Alexander, but also how they did it; they can be shown to have participated in the same or very similar discourse about the Macedonian king, or



“Alexandrology”. In fact, looking at the discourse holistically allows us to identify some fundamental trends in the use of Alexander for contemporary purpose. This paper will track the trends through a study of especially Maximus of Tyre and end with a general reflection on how we can best integrate the second-century sophists with the well-studied historians.