

## HISTORICAL DISTORTIONS AND SAGA PATTERNS IN THE PSEUDO-CALLISTHENES ROMANCE

In the course of modern exegesis „the life of Alexander“ has entailed a great number of interpretative controversies as to gestation as well as documentary, historical and aesthetic value. If we attempt an estimation of these interpretations we can find out, first of all, that it is the analyses aimed at an overall approach of the romance, from the establishment and criticism of the text down to aesthetic and stylistic considerations, that hold good even to this day, such as the exegetical studies made by Zacher, Ausfeld, Pfister, Merkelbach, etc.<sup>1</sup> In general, the modern approach on Pseudo-Callisthenes has progressively tended towards the circumscription of ponderable historical elements while the course of research has seen outstanding stages of successive contestation. An interpretation of the historical distortions so manifest in relation to the data of historiographic tradition, which could account for the literary and aesthetic resources of the romance, deserves all attention as nothing has been achieved in the line as yet. We believe that a reconsideration and eventually a transcendence of controversies, in the sense of acknowledgment of complementary theses, would contribute to the reasonable elucidation of the position of this romance in the world of ancient and medieval letters.

In the last century Zacher and Rohde considered the structure of the romance as an immanent *Volkssage*, continued and developed throughout centuries in accordance with the ever more syncretic representations worked out by the Greco-Oriental peoples regarding the figure of the Macedonian hero.<sup>2</sup> The approach initiated by C.

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<sup>1</sup> We enumerate those works that seem quite essential in the field: Zacher, *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, Halle, 1867; K. Müller, *Introductio to Pseudo-Callisthenes*, Paris, 1877; E. Rohde, *Der Griechische Roman*, Berlin, 1876; E. Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans*, Wien, 1890; A. Ausfeld, *Der Griechische Alexanderroman*, Leipzig, 1907; W. Kroll, Preface to *Historia Aelxandri Magni*, Berlin 1920; the article by the same writer *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, in R.E.A., vol X, col 1710 sq; A. Abel, *Le roman d'Alexandre*, Bruxelles, 1955; W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great, Sources and Studies*, Cambridge, 1948; R. Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des Griechischen Alexanderromans*, in „Zetemata,“ München, 1954.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Zacher, op. cit. p. 102; E. Rohde, op. cit. ed. 1960, p. 197. and more recently, Carraoii, *La legenda di Alessandro Magno in Classica et Mediaevalia*, XV, 1954, p. 60.

Müller and E. Nöldeke and then continued by A. Ausfeld and Pfister at the beginning of our century, while stating the predominantly boorish character of the romance, concluded upon the existence of multiple levels, concurring or interfering within the romance, ascribable to long gestation and many-sided and heterogenous sources. These sources would have crystallized into an *Ur-Romance* under the Ptolemies round the II<sup>d</sup> century B. C and reached some final version at the beginning of the III<sup>d</sup> century A. D. A model of Cleitarchic tradition, yet of very low documentary and literary value, was considered to form the basic source. The nucleus of the romance was estimated to be a local Alexandrine history to which were added rhetorical elaborations and digressions. What was also mentioned was the existence of some excerpts independent of historical tradition, interpolated in various moments, correspondent to the taste for the fabulous and the exotic of the anonymous authors of the romance. In more recent times, W. Kroll, W. W. Tarn and R. Merkelbach have been contesting such a spontaneous evolution of the romance. The last mentioned among these scholars, upon worth considering arguments, puts forward the existence of a unique mold of the romance. This would have drawn from one historical source allowing for interpolations, especially taken out of some presumptive *Briefroman* on the life of Alexander and usually misplaced.

Thus contemporary exegesis has reached the antipode in relation to the interpretation given by Zacher, minimizing in this way the significance of elements present within that folk saga on Alexander, formed as early as the lifetime of the hero and never questioned.<sup>3</sup> To this stream are generally ascribed the fantastic additions of the letters to Olympiad and to Aristotle as they stand incorporated into ch. 22—46 of Book II of Codex C. To this saga are also ascribed some incidental elements flagrantly opposed to historical tradition such as the episode of Alexander being poisoned.

In general, modern exegesis draws the conclusion that the romance represents a fictional distortion of some Cleitarchic model dealing with the history of Alexander, which can suffer in most cases fundamental alterations of data mentioned by literary and historical tradition. Consequently, two types of modifications are induced, characterized by a different degree of fantasizing. The first type is the misrepresentation, possibly the amplification of data contained within the sources, the Vulgate above all. This is represented by the mediate tradition of Plutarch and Diodorus, Justinus and Curtius Rufus as well as the infinitesimal fragments of direct tradition — Onesicritus and Callisthenes, Hegesias and Megasthenes — which is certainly to be put in contrast with the pragmatic history represented by

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<sup>3</sup> So Merkelbach speaks about that *lebendige Sage* circulated by the participants in the expedition of the hero, which could never develop autonomously and coherently as a literary entity because of the rationalism of the epoch: it was preserved only as fragments of an oral tradition. (op. it. p. 44).

Arrian and drawn from the more objective sources, i.e. Ptolemy and Aristobulus. The second type of modifications concerns, on the one hand the development of complex episodes starting from infinitesimal data of the Vulgate<sup>4</sup>, and, on the other hand, the imagination of episodes and situations worked out by inserting, borrowing and homologating some elements from other writings or traditions, Greek or Oriental, initially alien form the Alexander saga.<sup>5</sup>

The interpretation of such historical distortions fails to bring out reasons pertinent for the structure and literary intentionality of the romance. In most cases what is given is a negative appraisal, mention being made of the author's intellectual and aesthetic insufficiencies, of the reader's mediocrity as their degraded taste is reflected in the low literary level of the romance. At best it is stated that, taking into consideration the intentionality specific to the writings of the Vulgate tradition, the romance represents nothing else but some dilution of their substance in point of value, being their direct and exclusive tributary. It is especially the rhetorical and tragic stamp of the historiography on Alexander that is set forth as an aesthetic model: like historians of Peripatetic stamp, Pseudo-Callisthenes would take an interest in forging the situations capable of stirring up the feelings of pity and awe in the souls of readers confronted with events in which *tyhe* acquires a leading and fatal role.<sup>6</sup> The representation of the hero would be dominated by the spirit of that millenary controversy, carried on at all levels of post-Alexandrine literary culture, between *arete* and *tyhe*.

Such an aesthetic consideration of the fictional progress of the romance seems hardly satisfactory, since it accounts only unilaterally and questionably for the sense of epic developments in relation to presupposed models. On the other hand such a perspective cannot explain why the selection undertaken by the author left out numerous episodes quite adequate for the best illustration of the tragic destiny of the hero: the murder of Clitus, the assassination of Philotas and Parmenion, the burning down of Persepolis, the Dionysian processions, the so-called pomp of Carmania, so partially dealt with by the authors of the Vulgate. What could be the explanation of a no longer accidental but systematic omission? We think that the explanation is to be found in an aesthetic mutation in point of structure distinguishable in Pseudo-Callisthenes in relation to his models. *The romance*

<sup>4</sup> Such is the famous relation of the conquest of Rome by Alexander to be found in all codices, which might have as a starting point the false embassy to Alexander. Cf. Merkelbach, op. cit. p. 12 sq.

<sup>5</sup> Thus Ausfeld draws the comparison between the embassy of the Persians who come to the court of Philip in order to ask for the tribute and an analogous episode in Herodotus V, 17. The murder of Philip is compared with the episode of the Temenides in Herodotus, III, 78:5, while Kandaulus is drawn from the Herodotic anonymous character, etc. See also Merkelbach, *ibid.*, C. Müller, op. cit. XXVb, W. Kroll, R. E. A., vol. X, col. 1710.

<sup>6</sup> See R. Merkelbach, p. 23, 30; W. Kroll, *ibid.* col. 1717—1718.

does not involve a tragic pattern drawn from the model of Vulgate Alexandrography: it has a complex and autonomous motivation and finality in which are manifest structural and thematic invariants specific to the folk legend and the Märchen-type tale. These invariants are often formulated as terms of a rhetorical relation. Consequently, rhetorical formalism would relate the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance to the romance of love and adventure such as the *Aethiopics*, *Chaereas and Callirrhoe* or the *Romance of Ninus*, rather than to the fictionalized historiography of a Cleitarchic type. Such an interpretation can be founded, on the one hand, on the considerations as to the evolution of the Grecian protoromance and on the other hand, on the specific context of the adventure of the Macedonian hero whose existence generated a political mythology and at the same time a legendary projection into the popular consciousness of the epoch, more vivid and lasting than is commonly assumed. In the oral tradition of the epoch the elements contained within the Alexander gest assimilated a series of folk motifs of considerable oldness and circulation, sooner or later integrating them into an epic form of a folkloric type whose complex data are still to be established and investigated. What seems extremely obvious to us is the process of delineation of a well determined aesthetic model within the romance as attested by more ancient codices, a model which compelled recognition, superseding the modality of Peripatetic representation in Alexandrography.

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Of great evidence, yet insufficiently investigated, are the new dimensions acquired by the hero in the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance: his birth, his upbringing and first feats characterize the folk legend hero, finding antecedents in the mythologies of Hercules, Dionysus, Ninus, Gilgamesh or Bellerophon, etc. The gest of his growing to maturity exclusively contains noble and irreproachable elements, any shade of vice being carefully eliminated. His *kalonkagathon* is no longer classical and philosophic: it is the kind undergone by the folktale hero — the love for his mother, the never-failing sympathy and generosity for the weak and the defeated, the necessary punishment of the villains. Tragic causality, a functional element within the Hellenistic concept of *tyche* is rivalled and finally replaced by the human and palpable causality of evil. The divine or astrological providence appears comically degraded: Alexander is no longer the son of Ammon, but of a skilful magician who gains admittance to Olympiad in a way that obviously reminds of the weaver in the V<sup>th</sup> tale of *Panchatantra*, the usurper of the prerogatives of Vishnu.<sup>7</sup> There are several moments

<sup>7</sup> The oracle of „the moon and sun trees“ foresees the death of Alexander, yet the tragic of the situation is compromised in that the hero cannot immediately learn and punish his future murderers because the oracle would never have been fulfilled if he had done so. (See *Epistula ad Aristotelem*, 215). As in the case of the episode of Nektanebo, it is nota question of obtuseness on the part of the author incapable of understanding the essence of tradition, but of a different existential and aesthetic vision.

in the romance when traditional data seem to burst from the pressure of this aesthetic *voluntas* of a folk stamp. Thus the world is divided into two parties: the party of the good in which the hero is joined by the other outstanding characters of the romance — even Demosthenes, the notorious adversary of the hero, becomes his partisan — and the party of the evil in which are thrown all the real or assumed adversaries who invariably turn into villains. Into this category are included Parmenion, Bessus and Ariobarzanes as well as the presupposed murderers of the hero, Cassandrus and Iollas. All of them come to a well-deserved and in-good-time punishment. The exploration of the fabulous and peopled-by-monsters world and the attempt at acquiring the impossible can evidently be viewed as a consequence of the role ascribed to Alexander: that of a hero-benefactor as far as the world is concerned who, among other labours, separates *oikumene* from the impure peoples or tries to bring the life-giving water to people, as an alter Gilgamesh.

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In the lines to follow we are going to restrict the investigation to the romance episodes that can be made out in the sense above mentioned. The matter coming most readily under the line is the relation about the murder and avenging of the three romance characters who enjoyed a definite status in history: Philipp, Darius and Alexander. As far as their existences are concerned we can avail ourselves of detailed versions recorded by historical sources and therefore some consideration of distortions worked within tradition might be particularly elucidating. In fact, we can judge the way history is rewritten by Pseudo-Callisthenes from an ethico-aesthetic perspective of a folk type which might be synthetized according to the sapiential universal pattern „measure for measure“. The category of the tragic seems to have been displaced by a justiciary motivation drawn from a compensatory feeling specific to folk consciousness. This cannot be identified with, Classical Nemesis and neither with archaic talion which implies the reversibility of the relation. As in the folktale, in the Alexander romance is present the univocal confrontation of Good and Evil within which the Evil is necessarily defeated, while the Good is crowned in accordance with excellence. As will be seen, the pattern is carried out in spite of the very distortion *ad absurdum* of the referential event. In the structure of the three episodes we are revealed the evolution of the functions characteristic of folktale dramatic personae, the configuration of situations reducible to the same pattern. That consequently entails the elimination of data in the line of tradition, which are not pertinent to the intention of unifying and creating symmetries among the three moments, sequential and significantly adequate to the folk pattern.

With a view to analysing the process most clearly we have taken the liberty of proceeding to a formalization of the sequences of the three episodes in the light of the Propian classification (the functions

of *dramatis personae* in the *Morphology of the Folktale*).<sup>8</sup> Examining the relation on the three deaths of the romance protagonists, the functions considered by Propp to be pertinent to the very plot of the folktale are focused on each of these episodes. Thus we can detect three essential sequences, i.e. the adventures of the murder of the hero, of the vengeance and of the coronation of the avenger: the murder would correspond to the *function of villainy* (VIII A), the struggle and the revenge taken against evil-doers to functions XVII—L XVIII—V—XXX—Y *struggle, victory* and *punishment*, while the third moment, the coronation, would correspond to functions XXX U and XXXI W — the hero is married and ascends the throne.

I. In terms of the above mentioned symmetry, *the moment of villainy* the first in sequential order, is each and every time equivalent to the murder, that is to say, the death wound inflicted upon the hero.

*The murder of Philip* (Pseudo-Callisthenes, I, 24) includes the following circumstances: Olympiad is kidnapped by the rich Thessalian named Pausanias who stabs the king (functions VIII A, 1 and 14). The evil-doer's name is, in accordance with tradition, Pausanias, in codices A, B and Julius Valerius, while in codex C, he is named Anaxarchus and the name was taken over by vernacular versions. Philip is murdered through fraud and treachery (*dolophonia*) — which would correspond to the function VIII A, 14 — in the theatre of Olympia, just as handed down by historical tradition, that is a place which allowed for an emphatic connotation of the respective act. The murder is accomplished after the evil-doer had vainly attempted to persuade Olympiad into leaving Philip (function VI, 1 — *fraud*). This takes place while Alexander was away, carrying on wars (the function of *the absence of the hero* — I β). The detachment from the historical fact is quite significant. In Diodorus's relation (*Bibl. historica*, XVI, 93—94), Pausanias was Philip's lover and plotted the murderous attempt in order to take revenge against the king who had failed to punish the shameful outrage the former had suffered on the part of the potentate Attalus. Historical tradition had already assimilated the murder of Philip into the act performed by the tyrannicides, Harmodius and Aristogeiton: Pausanias had been counselled by a philosopher to become famous by killing the tyrant and in the assembly of the people Demosthenes had proposed that the tyrannicide should be crowned. All these elements could never be placed and nor could they be grasped in a popular re-elaboration, which had no longer anything in common with the ideology of the polis, whence the distortion adequate to the new spirit. So much the less could be preserved the version given by Plutarch (*Alexander*, 10) on the murder of Philip being urged by Alexander himself.

<sup>8</sup> See The Functions of the Dramatic Personae in V. I. Propp, *The Morphology of the Folktale*, Romanian translation by P. Nicolau, Unviers Publishing House, pp. 30—65 and English Translation by Laurence Scott, Indiana University, 1958, pp. 24—62.

*The murder of Darius* (Pseudo-Callisthenes, II, 20) is carried out by Bessus and Ariobarzanes, most obvious evil-doers φρηνοβλαβεῖς γνώμας those who „from slaves become masters of Darius.“ The murder is located in the very palace of the Caspian Gates and the perpetrators hope for some considerable reward on the part of Alexander. As early as this moment, Darius is manifestly outlined as the „donor“ of the hero, by virtue of his becoming the victim of the evil-doers. He announces the reward to be bestowed upon the hero and the way the evil-doers will be punished. Out of such an interpretation of the moment, we can deduce some satisfactory account of a previous episode, apparently wholly imagined by the author, that is Alexander's embassy to Darius, narrated in detail (Pseudo-Callisthenes, II, 13—16). The hero had been tested, on the one hand by the primordial donor, his father, Ammon, who urged him in his dream to go as an ambassador to the court of Darius, for he will be given help to cope with the situation: this would possibly correspond to function XII, D1; on the other hand, at court, the hero had been sounded by Darius as regards both his appearance and his mind and managed to escape from Darius's hands thanks to his cleverness<sup>9</sup> — possibly function D2. In the hypostasis of victim of evil-doers, Darius shows courage, nobleness and generosity, opposing great resistance against the murderers who seriously endanger their lives throughout the fight with the unarmed king.

The murder of Darius is an episode quite discordantly reported by literary and historical sources. Arrian relates in detail the stages in the chase of Darius, but scarcely mentions his arrest by the satrap of Bactria, Bessus, and by the commander of the cavalry, Nabarzanes, who were discontented with the incompetency of the king: the former was to become king. Plutarch in his turn, and especially Curtius Rufus, imagine a *pathetic ethopoeia* which outlines the literary model congenial to the folkloric distortion in Pseudo-Callisthenes. With the only manifest difference that the scene of treason on the part of satraps points out the almightiness of *tyhe*, bestowing upon Darius the tragic dimension of a *spoudaios*, in accordance with the Peripatetic model set forth by tragic historiography.<sup>10</sup> If there is a change in the sense of the Pseudo-Callisthenes episode, the rhetorical tone is still evident in the emphasis laid upon the situation described according to a sophistic pattern put forward by the technicians of the imperial

<sup>9</sup> It is worth mentioning that the glasses hidden by Alexander during the feast with the view to creating some diversion among the pursuers, later on are never employed as such in the ancient versions handed down to us, while appearing again in the wellknown vernacular versions, which might imply an omission in the manuscripts preserved.

<sup>10</sup> cf. N. Zegers, *Wesen und Ursprung der tragischen Geschichtsschreibung*, doctorate dissertation, 1959, p. 12—14, upon one of the Aristotelian basic principles in the writings of tragic historiography: the inducement of pity and terror through the relation of the murder of relatives and friends and benefactors.

epoch.<sup>11</sup> As is known rhetorical *ethopoeia* and *prosopopoeia* served as models to Hellenistic romancers: the Pseudo-Callisthenes author comes quite close to their technique. Thus the rhetorical mode is quite happily conjugated with folkloric fiction.

*The poisoning of Alexander* (Pseudo-Callisthenes, III, 31) corresponds in point of structure to some special situation, less representative of the Märchen, while necessarily present in the heroic saga. In the saga, the hero, who can in no way be defeated through close combat, is killed either through ignoble, yet effective fraud, or through black magic. Therefore, the poisoning of Alexander in the ancient romance would correspond to the murder of Siegfried, the poisoned tunic given by Nessus to Hercules, the murder of Cuchullain by the wizard brothers. As a matter of fact, in the morphology of the folktale, the function of the *fraud* (VI, 1, 2, 3) and especially the function of *villainy* (VIII, 14) satisfactorily cover this situation which is, however, specific to deuteragonists, such as, in the case under consideration, Philip and Darius. From an all-out perspective, the configuration of this moment, however, turns out to be similar to the folktale pattern. The villainy is preceded by the relation of some richly symbolic omen: a woman gives birth to a pluriform monster, part man and part variously-shaped beast. The human part of the fetus dies, while the beast part survives, which is interpreted by one sightseer as a prophecy that the hero, i.e. the man, will be killed by his beastminded intimates. The incident, exclusively reported by Pseudo-Callisthenes and by *Liber de Morte*, 94, is to be certainly ascribed to the folk saga: it is apparently drawn from some Persian mythologeme.<sup>12</sup> In such a representation we can identify the polarization characteristic of the folktale, Good/Evil, Man/Beast, actualized by the destiny of the folk saga hero.

The instigator of the crime is Antipater, for fear he should have to account for the ill deeds brought about upon Olympiad; yet in the poison plot take part all the courtiers, except the Diadochi. All of them are marked by the stigma of villainy, of usurpation and crime: ἐπεθύμουν οἱ παράνομοι τὸν θάνατον Ἀλεξάνδρου ἰδεῖν, ὥστε κατασχεῖν τῶν πραγμάτων αὐτοῦ (Ps. Cal. III, 31). As a tool of the murder, totally out of proportion as compared to the virtue of the hero, is Iollas, the cupbearer, an altogether ignoble character, who, because of having been quite deservedly beaten, takes revenge by killing his master. The murdering poison (pharmakon deleterion) turns out to be some spring water as a sort of death-giving water<sup>13</sup> put in contrast with the life-giving water discovered by the hero while trave-

<sup>11</sup> We can quote Nikolaus, *Progymnasmata*, 11 sq; Theon, *Progymn.* 235 Aphthonios, *Progymn* 101.

<sup>12</sup> The representation of the primordial god as both human and plurianimal. See R. Merkelbach, op. cit. p. 127, footnote 1.

<sup>13</sup> This reference to „death-giving water“ is not to be found in Pseudo-Callisthenes: it came down to us in a Plutarchian fragment which bears a manifest imprint of the folk legend (Plutarch, *Alexander*, 77) on the circumstances of the poisoning of Alexander.



ling through the teratological world. The circumstances of the discovery of life-giving water (in *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, II, 39) and of its loss remind, through their lability, of Gilgamesh put to the test of the life-giving grass. The poison acts upon the hero as a liver-piercing arrow: the motivation is homologous to other references as far back as treacheries performed against other folk saga heroes as are concerned. In contrast with the deaths of the other heroes-civilizers, the death of Alexander appears to a lesser extent to be an uncooperative fatality: it is rather the consequence of the human wickedness of his courtiers to be enacted after the hero has fulfilled his oecumenic mission.<sup>14</sup> The version of the poisoning is also present, besides Pseudo-Callisthenes, in the opusculum so-called *Liber de morte et testamento Alexandri*, which we can consider as conclusive, in the sense of our concern, as the romance itself.<sup>15</sup>

The version of the poisoning is taken over from the tradition of the Vulgate where it is formulated in terms similar to the romance.<sup>16</sup> Its origin seems to be of a political nature: a slanderous piece forged by the party of Perdikkas in 321 A.D. and later on used by the party of Olympiad, therefore in the fights for succession<sup>17</sup> and turned against Antipater and his son, Cassandrus. This document of political slander was certainly assimilated to the legendary matrix in a form reshaped and adapted to specific ethical requirements. That was because the *dolophonia* provided, even to the contemporaries of the hero, witnesses of his superhuman gest, a plausibly human explanation of the death of the otherwise indomitable and unvanquishable obe. Arrian mentions some reference, which could also be related to the same contemporaneity, as to the complicity of Aristotle in the preparation of the poison. In accordance with the same logic of popular fantasy, Aristotle becomes the malefic magus, just as the benefic magus, Nektanebo, appeared to be the father of the hero. In literary sources, obviously in *Liber de morte* as well, the circumstances of poisoning are given in greater detail, which points to the biasness of political testimonies: *Liber de morte* presents the diary of the last days in the life of the hero, manifestly polemizing with the *Ephemerides* of Ehippous

<sup>14</sup> Thus in *Epistula ad Aristotelem*, which shows the same features as Pseudo-Callisthenes, the oracle points out to the hero: „si mortis tuae tibi insidiatorem prodidero, sublato eo facile instantia fata mutabis . . . tu enim etsi breve superest tempus, dominus tamen orbis terrarum eris“ (p. 215).

<sup>15</sup> We estimate that *Liber de morte* can be considered as an intermediate link between the literary tradition consistent with the above mentioned aesthetic principles and the popular elaboration: the opusculum is thorough in the treatment of details and historical data; it is an enhanced version of elements present in a political pamphlet „pro Perdikkas“. Instead of being reproduced, the pamphlet was reshaped in the line of the augmentation of the folk hero. Thus could be solved the question of the significance of the opusculum, raised among others by Ausfeld and Merkelbach (op. cit., p. 124).

<sup>16</sup> See Curtius Rufus, X, 10; Diodorus, XVII, 117; Plutarch, *Alexander*, 77; Arrian, VII, 27; Justinus, XIII, 14.

<sup>17</sup> See R. Merkelbach, op. cit. p. 126.

of Corinth; the former, as the version of the party of Perdikkas, charges Antipater with murder, while the latter exonerates him, showing that the death of Alexander was exclusively caused by intoxication. As one might expect, in all the romance codices, the poisoning of the hero came down in the version most adequate to the typology of the folk legend hero. The same holds good for later translations, the version worked out by Julius Valerius and then the vernacular versions: the translations into Armenian, Syrian, Arabic, Ethiopian and the *Historia de preliis* as well as the East European versions — Byzantine and Serbian, Bulgarian and Romanian.

II. *The second moment, the avenging of the victim*, implies a complexity of the situation which points in the highest degree to that above-mentioned co-operation between folk motivation and the mechanism of rhetorical fiction. The moment is differently dealt with in the three episodes characterized either by syntheses or by inversions of the phases distinguished within the morphological framework of the folk-tale. An evident concordance between the legend pattern and the moment structure is to be accepted beyond any doubt. Thus the vengeance includes the spatial „translocation“ and the pursuit of the villain (function XV, G) and then his defeat: the latter also contains, in the episodes of the deaths of Darius and Alexander, the phase of punishment (function XXX U) — autonomous in the case of the former episode. Characteristic of the script of the three episodes is a delay of death which categorically runs counter to all historical and literary sources. On the deaths of Alexander and of Philip, the victim, before dying, lingers to watch the punishment of the villain: Philip kills him with his own hand. Besides, the moment of vengeance in all episodes is one with the moment of the rewarding of the hero avenger. Within each episode what is attempted through the artifice of *ethopoia*<sup>18</sup> is the continuity of moments — the victim is lamented over by the avenger who has most opportunely arrived to see him still alive, the villain is captured and punished in front of the victim, the avenger is rewarded and crowned in the place of the victim as some well-deserved amends. In such moments the author imagines ethopoetic discourses of a pathetic nature, which are congenial with both the speaker and the addressee.<sup>19</sup>

All these elements are ideally illustrated in the *episode of Philip's death*. In all codices appears the same version, a little more detailed in codex C, which takes, as usual, a greater liberty as to fictionalization. Alexander, as a hero deliverer, returns at the appropriate moment to chase Anaxarchus, seize his loot and lead him to punishment. In the codex C version the villain is pointed to him by one of his men,

<sup>18</sup> According to the exigency formulated by Nikolaus Sophistes (*Progymn.* 11) where the *mixed ethopoia* is illustrated by the scene of Achilles mourning for Patrocles and then immediately going away to avenge him; Achilles is „pathetic“ when he weeps over his friend and „praktikos“ when he avenges him.

<sup>19</sup> ἐπειδὴ δὲ προσωποποιεῖα καὶ τοῦ λεγόντος καὶ πρὸς ὃν λέγει. Nikolaus, op. cit.; Theon, *Progymn.* 235 sq.

which could be analogized to the function of guidance — XV, G 3 — in Propp: *the hero is led*.<sup>20</sup> What follows is the struggle with Anaxarchus, which, in codices A and B, entails an impediment specific to legendary motivation: Alexander would not throw his spear at Anaxarchus lest he should hit Olympiad who happens to be close to the villain. Then Anaxarchus is brought in front of Philip and the latter stabs him with the very sword given by the hero (function XXX U — punishment). The detail is present in all codices as well as in Julius Valerius. In this situation Philip acknowledges the fulfilment of the oracle of Ammon: „you shall have a son to avenge the death of his father“. Which brings an interesting confirmation of the function of vengeance in the economy of the romance, joining this episode to other apparently heterogenous narrative units.

There is no historical source in which Philip should live to see the murderer punished and so much the less to see him handed over by Alexander. Diodorus, who gives the most romantic relation of the event, maintains that Pausanias, incapable of flight, was killed on the spot by the guard.

In *the episode of the death of Darius*, the distortion is less flagrant, as there is an attested version of the presence of Alexander on the death of the Persian king. In fact we can trace a certain evolution within the Vulgate writings which visibly foreshadows the Pseudo-Callisthenes relation. Arrian categorically asserts that Alexander found Darius dead (III, 21), while Curtius Rufus mentions that Polystrat, the Macedonian, came upon Darius „semianimis“ (V:13); Plutarch turns this anonymous character into the messenger of the last wishes of the Persian,<sup>21</sup> while Diodorus states that Alexander found Darius alive, whom he pitied for his misfortunes, promising vengeance (XVII, 73:4). Such an invention, which could initially have political reasons as well (Alexander as the rightful successor of the Achaemenids), implies a genuine *mixed ethopoia*, which perfectly corresponds to the folk disposition. Consequently the modifications in Pseudo-Callisthenes are only differently laid stresses. Thus Alexander finds Darius dying in his palace and not abandoned in a dirty car by some water, as in the Vulgate versions. There the Macedonian hero is endowed with the investiture, promising the punishment of the murderers. Therefore the sequential order is modified; historical verosimilitude is taken to a greater extent into account than the desire for symmetrical levellings of situations, as in the case of the other deaths.<sup>22</sup> Still that does not

<sup>20</sup> „Take a look there in the middle of the phalanx and you shall see a man with a white coat and a golden crown, mounting a motley horse. It is Anaxarchus.“ (*Pseudo-Callisthenes*, I, 24) Above any demonstrable filiations there is a structural congeniality between the folk saga discourse and the rhetorical elaboration.

<sup>21</sup> Plutarch, *Alexander*, 43: „to Alexander, inspired by gods with mercy on my mother, on my wife and children, I hold out my hand.“

<sup>22</sup> Merkelbach noticed that in the economy of chapters XIX, XX, XXI of Book I, the murder of Darius, the investiture of Alexander, and the avenging of the former manifestly appear as phases of a unique act, yet, the intentionality of such a construction is far from being investigated.

hamper the incidence of some of the most interesting sequences. In order to find the evil-doers, Alexander announces that he is going to bestow fame and praise upon the murderers of Darius, which determines them to come and ask for the promised reward.<sup>23</sup> They are immediately captured, reprimanded for the infamy and crucified. In such a denouement of the vengeance we can acknowledge the congruity with the motifs of the unfounded claims as well as the exposure of the false hero (function XXVIII — *The false hero or villain is exposed*).

In historical sources the punishment of the murderers of Darius is differently related, in accordance with the other sequences of the episode. As a matter of fact different are the versions on the punishment of Bessus, who had taken the royal tiara after the murder of the king, while Nabarzanes, to a lesser extent guilty, is granted the pardon by Alexander. Plutarch says that the body of Bessus was tied between bent trees and their extension broke it in two separate parts. (*Alexander*, 43). According to Curtius Rufus (VII, 5) he was kept under watch in order to be tortured on the very spot he had committed the murder, which would come quite close to the spirit of the romance; this is also related in similar terms by Justinus (XI:15).

*The avenging of Alexander*, through its fantastic character, is farthest removed from any historical relation. The version is given exclusively by codex C (Book III, 32) and tells that the hero was avenged by Bucephalus *redivivus* as the horse, out of some inadvertence drawn from the historical source, had died in the Indian campaign. (III, 3) The denouement conforms, though, to the folk *forma mentis* which would not conceive that such a base crime (when once the idea of the murder of Alexander had been assimilated), concealed by some perjurious Diadochi and unknown to the king's loyal men, could be left unpunished. As such, the fantastic folktale motif is created, which becomes quite closely analogous to the „légende du chien de Montargis“<sup>24</sup>, and especially to that type of folktale where the hero is apparently killed by the villain and then revived through the magic of the „life-giving water.“ The avenger is the fairy horse who acts just as Bucephalus.<sup>25</sup> Bucephalus, initially conceived as a specimen of the „winged horse“, (the function F-XIV. 1) never warrants his wonderful qualities throughout the romance: historical sequences always keep him within an area of secondary interest. He gives the hero an altogether unexpected helping hand („I think you would help me if you could“) the moment the latter, on the point of dying, compares him, through some rhetorical antithesis, to the other winged horse of mytho-

<sup>23</sup> W. W. Tarn (op. cit., vol. II, p. 54), establishing the analogy with an episode in the conquest of India, told by Diodorus, estimates that the fiction might be ascribed to Cleitarchus; yet there are no other proofs to validate the demonstration.

<sup>24</sup> According to the XIVth century version which seems to be based on an older model, the dog of Aubry de Mondidier chases the murderer of his master until the king Charles V commands an ordeal between dog and man: the dog comes off victorious, while the evil-doer acknowledges his guilt and is put to death.

<sup>25</sup> We can refer to *Harap Alb*, the Romanian folk tale reelaborated by Ion Creanga, which faithfully preserves the structure of the folk mytheme.

logy, Pegasus of Bellerophon. On the arriavl of Iollas the cupbearer, who had come to see the effect of poison, Bucephalus senses the presence of the evildoer and, laying hold of him, breaks him into pieces — thus „avenging his master.“ At the sight of this deed Alexander can only give a faint smile and after that passes away at the same time with his faithful horse. The version of the avenging of Alexander is retained — and amplified by mediaeval Alexandrography which grants it all importance. The mediaeval tradition of the XII<sup>th</sup> century in France and Spain sees several extensions of the romance — the best known being that by Guy de Cambrai — focused on the vengeance fiction and conventionally entitled „Vengeance d'Alexandre.“ In the Romanian version Alexander utters some kind of dirge upon the murderer: „You shall drink, brother, from the same cup I drank.“ Through this denouement, significantly enlarged by posterity, the death of the hero enters most convincingly into the dimensions of the folktale, swerving from the well-known pattern of heroic legend. For its protagonists, even though they reach apotheosis as is the case with Hercules, never come to be avenged for the base *dolophonia* to which they have fallen victims. The explanation following upon the act performed by Bucephalus in the text of the romance „I believe it is through divine Providence that . . .“ in no way alters the spontaneity of the compensative action imagined by the justiciary popular spirit.

The only historical reference which could indirectly have influenced this fiction is to be found in Plutarch: he tells that Olympiad dug out the corpse of Iollas, eight years after the death of Alexander, and hanged it, as she suspected the king had been poisoned. (*Alexander*, 76).

III. The third phase recurrent in the three narratives as a consequence of the victory and punishment of villainy finds, as mentioned above, its morphological pattern in the function known as „*the hero is married and ascends the throne*“ — XXXI W. The three hypostases run as follows: Alexander in the place of Philip, the same Alexander in the place of Darius and the most dignified of the Diadochi in the place of Alexander. As in the case of vengeance sequences the scenario imagined is thoroughly pathetic. *On the ascension of Alexander to the throne*, Philip, as a paternal donor, foretells the future of the hero who should become a *kosmokrator* and always remember his father. The situation would correspond to function W XXXI, 3 — *ascension without marriage*.

Much richer in implications appears to us the investiture of Alexander by Darius as his successor and son-in-law. As was seen, an evolutive course can be recomposed within the literary and historical tradition, which foreshadows Pseudo-Callisthenes.<sup>26</sup> According to the romantic tradition of the Vulgate, in a letter posterior to the battle of Stranga (II, 17), Darius was promising the hero the hand of his daughter as well as half of his kingdom. This was the posture of

<sup>26</sup> See Curtius Rufus, IV, 5; Diodorus, XVII, 39; Justinus, XI, 12.

the donor forced to appeal to the generosity of the victor. In the pathetic outline of the moment an important part was certainly played by the type of the above mentioned rhetorical exercitations which worked out scenarios to correspond to the significance of the event. Thus Darius appears in all his nobility as teaching the hero a lesson of moderation and wisdom in the face of the vicissitudes of *fortuna labilis*. It is a *prosopopoeia* partly drawn from the Herodotic scene which depicts the meeting between Cresus and Solon and the pardoning of the former out of grounds consonant with the ones presented in the romance.<sup>27</sup> The pathetic flavour of the words uttered throughout this scene is augmented by the addition of moving details: Alexander brings the whole family of the Persian king along to his deathbed; Darius offers Alexander the hand of his daughter as well as the rule over his kingdom, delivering the sacramental formula of union between the two peoples and royal dynasties.

Such a representation is undoubtedly infused with echoes of a *de facto* situation placed in a context in which the heroic legend had become symbiotic with the political reality. We are referring to the famous nuptials in which Alexander actually married Roxana, the daughter of a satrap: in the ceremony 10,000 Macedonians followed the example set by their king.

The episode of the death of Alexander apparently fails to bring forward a situation symmetrical to the other deaths. However both, Pseudo-Callisthenes and *Liber de morte* mention the will of Alexander, otherwise denied by the Vulgate writings (Curtius Rufus, X, 10, 5). Therefore the *de facto* situation after the death of the hero is described as foreshadowed and established by his wisdom and generosity. The imagination of this fiction was certainly due to the political passions aroused by the fight among Diadochi. As the will becomes part of folk tradition, the hero in his turn acquires the donor status in relation to the Diadochi. Pseudo-Callisthenes mentions Philo, otherwise unknown in the historical tradition, as a successor to the throne of Macedonia, to whom the hero entrusts his mother and his wife, Roxana; thus are reenacted the bequest and the ascension which had marked the deaths of Philip and Darius. In *Liber de morte*, which is closer to the distorted political tradition, the successor turns out to be Perdicas. This version is also taken over by *Historia de preliis* in the Middle Ages.

In this attempt at an outline of narrative units formed throughout the romance, one could see the way the distortion of some historical data, well-known within the major literary tradition, was not brought about by lack of intelligence, ignorance or aesthetic insufficiency on the part of the presupposed author of the romance. Such distortion could be accounted for by some well-determined aesthetic *voluntas* ascribable to the conformity of the romance matter with

<sup>27</sup> Compare Herodotus, I, 86 with Pseudo-Callisthenes, II, 17, 21, where the destiny of Cresus is mentioned *ipsis verbis*. As in the other cases, codex C puts forth the most significant digressions.

ethical and aesthetic requirements characteristic of a different model of folk culture and art. Considering it is impossible to know this field in some direct way, as it happens in the modern epoch, this cultural model remains to a great extent indeterminate. The evidence of some analogies to products of the modern folk spirit encouraged us in turning to account the formalization undertaken by V. I. Propp in order to approach the death episodes of the three romance heroes as narrative units of sufficient aesthetic determination. We think it is possible to embark upon a further reconsideration of the overall contents of the romance in similar terms. We have been encouraged in this belief by the efficiency of those relations and those terms of reference which we could establish as valid for the whole romance. The major difficulty rests, however, linked to the impossibility of the morphemic determination of, we could put it like that, the matrix which generated such an artistic configuration of the romance. In the romance texture, elements of historical fictionization drawn from the Vulgate matter, as it was disseminated through all social levels, are blended with heroic saga elements which it is quite hard to distinguish from fantastic relation elements (travelling, human and social reference). Finally, rhetorical elements constitute the third ponderable in the deep structure of the romance. Generally speaking, rhetorical *topoi* are best assimilated by the folk matrix as they form authentic *universalia* as far back as the expressive molding of human contents is concerned. Therefore the Pseudo-Callisthenes romance is not an „Orientalization“ of the saga of the hero: it is a reduction to the same denominator of various historical, folkloric and rhetorical motifs circulated within the area of Eastern culture.

București.

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