

It is good to learn about "interesting flowers" and the discovery by an amateur Greek botanist of "fifteen new species entirely new to science" (p. 10). The Greek motto is "Love the flowers" — so it seems a pity that no room has been made for a colour photograph of some hillside covered by asphodels in springtime.

A reference to pronunciation on p. 45 invites a brief word about the spelling of place-names. We find "Volos" on p. 30, but elsewhere Euboea, Lycabettos, and Epidaurus. A book which is so markedly centered on the author's own much-loved island surely ought to contain some such phonetic Anglicisation as Evya. Another somewhat strange name is that of "Herodius" on p. 22. It is odd to read on p. 27: "The oracle's advice was not always very clear . . . *she* told . . ." The maps (identical and inset at either cover) would be more attractive (and more Hellenic!) if the sea were coloured azure. And possibly the map-maker could somehow squeeze in a tiny impression of the Parthenon for Athens and of the Rotonda, or the White Tower, or Galerius' Arch for Thessaloniki.

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- A. Xyngopoulos, Αἱ μικρογραφίαι τοῦ μυθιστορήματος τοῦ Μεγάλου Ἀλεξάνδρου εἰς τὸν Κώδικα τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἰνστιτούτου Βενετίας (The Miniatures of the Alexanderromance from the Ms of the Hellenic Institute in Venice) (Athens-Venice, 1966). Pp. 1-159, illustrations colored 21 and black-white 250.

The Library of the Hellenic Institute in Venice after that first volume about the Byzantine and post-Byzantine icons of its collection has published now the second volume about the miniatures of the famous illustrated ms of the Alexanderromance also part of its collection. There is no doubt that Prof. Xyngopoulos was the most appropriate person to study this ms (which from now on will be called after U. von Lauenstein as ms D), because he has done a lot of work before on the general topic of Alexander the Great in Byzantine art and has produced a series of very remarkable articles listed and briefly also discussed just below:

1. Παραστάσεις ἐκ τοῦ μυθιστορήματος τοῦ Μ. Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐπὶ Βυζαντινῶν ἀγγείων (= Scenes from the Alexanderromance on Byzantine pots) in Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς (1937) 192-202.

2. Ὁ Μ. Ἀλέξανδρος ἐν τῇ Βυζαντινῇ ἀγγειογραφίᾳ (= Alexander

the Great in Byzantine Pottery) in 'Επετηρίς 'Εταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν 14 (1938) 267-76.

3. 'Ο Μ. 'Αλέξανδρος εἰς τὴν Βυζαντινὴν τέχνην (= Alexander the Great in Byzantine art) in Μακεδονικὸν 'Ημερολόγιον (1940).

From the above three publications the first two are of interest to the scholar, the third one being addressed mainly to the general reader. In the first two articles the writer examines fragments of Byzantine pots coming from Constantinople, Thessaloniki and Athens and presenting scenes from the Alexanderromance, i.e. Nectenabo's murder and the duel of Alexander with Poros. The conclusions from the study of these fragments are very revealing because Xyngopoulos proves that there is a dependence of the scenes presented on Byzantine pots upon the corresponding mss illustration. Speaking more specifically about the fragment coming from the excavations of the Roman agora of Athens and presenting Nectenabo's murder he writes that it copies at all probability a ms that is very close to the original Hellenistic illustration of the romance. But he also uses the same language when he examines the other fragment from Thessaloniki with the same scene on it whose craftsman is said to have used as pattern a ms, the illustration of which showed an adaptation of the Hellenistic model to the Byzantine conceptions and techniques. A third fragment with the same as the above mentioned presentation coming from Constantinople shows finally an influence of Moslem art. Therefore the picture one also gets from the study of Byzantine pottery is that the original illustration of the Alexanderromance took place in Alexandria, where it is admitted to have been written, and that it was of Hellenistic character.

This general conclusion has been strengthened also later by the work done in this direction by Prof. K. Weitzmann. The latter claims only that "a pictorial cycle of the Alexander story existed even before the text of Pseudo-Callisthenes" whose oldest version, that is version α , is dated round 300 A. D. (see K. Weitzmann, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art*, Princeton, 1951, p. 106, and *Ancient Book Illumination*, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, pp. 106-7). Such an approach is though, if nothing else, self contradicting. Weitzmann depends of course for his chronological data upon A. Ausfeld, who explicitly says that version α may be the oldest existing Greek version of the Alexanderromance but by no means it may be identified with the lost Hellenistic original (Urroman), which he dates about 205-181 B.C. (see A. Ausfeld, *Der griechische Alexanderroman*, Leipzig, 1907, pp. 237 ff.). This lost Hellenistic original has to be

considered if not earlier at least contemporary with its Hellenistic illustration. As it has been already noted the fragment of the Byzantine pot coming from Athens (XIth-XIIth century) still preserves this Hellenistic character of the illustration. This illustration though very early, that is sometime in the second half of the first millennium, underwent a twofold adaptation, one after oriental (cf. the Serbian ms at the National Library of Sofia) and another one after Byzantine patterns and techniques. Sometime now in the first half of the second millennium this latter adaptation returned to the Orient again and under the influence of the Moslem art acquired new elements which one finds apparent in the ms of Venice. In Byzantine pottery, therefore, one can trace the same development which is also found in the miniatures of the mss, that is, original Hellenistic character, adaptation to Byzantine models and finally Moslem influence.

Ms D gives a text of the version γ of Pseudo-Callisthenes and has been used by the new editors of this version (see U. von Lauenstein - H. Engelmann, *Der griechische Alexanderroman*, Rezension Γ , Books I-II, Meisenheim am Glan, 1962-3), though they have based their edition mainly upon ms R (codex Baroccianus 20 of the Bodleian Library). U. von Lauenstein, *ibid.*, p. X, and then D. J. A. Ross, *Alexander Historiatus. A Guide to the Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature* (London, 1963), p. 44, had described briefly and precisely ms D before. Now Xyngopoulos' book is a thorough and learned description and study of this important ms. He divides the first part of his book (pp. 11-159 including the French translation of the essay) — the second part being only the reproduction of the illustrations — into six chapters.

In the first chapter (pp. 11-18) he describes the ms, speaks about the gaps of the text and consequently of the illustration, and about the misplacement of certain folios giving at the end a table with their possible correct order. Without the restoration, of course, of the troubled order of the ms no description and no study could be possible. Whether now this restoration has been successful one cannot tell. But at this point I would like to insert some remarks which may explain indirectly how such a restoration seems not to be the work of the present.

It is admitted that ms D in spite of some slight modifications follows an older pattern. And here one can now raise the question. How old is this pattern? Xyngopoulos dates it XIIIth century but this date obviously refers to the last stages of a much longer development. I believe that we have enough evidence to-day to trace the origins of this pattern

at least as far back as the VIIIth century. But since it is also admitted that the original illustration of the Alexanderromance goes back to the Hellenistic period, one may also ask whether or not a restoration of this original illustration and then a study of its various stages of development and adaptation could be possible. I do realize that this is, if not impossible, extremely difficult, but perhaps following the development of the text of the Alexanderromance we may be able to throw some light upon the problem.

Version γ (that is ms D), when compared with the older versions of Pseudo-Callisthenes α and β , appears to be enriched with more details and with entirely new chapters. This of course implies that the romance is in constant evolution, otherwise the difference between older and later versions is not understood. An entire new chapter in version γ for instance is Alexander's second visit to Egypt. In versions α (ed. Kroll, pp. 20.10-37.20 and 37.21-38.14) and β (ed. Bergson, pp. 45.14-53.2 and 53.3-54.14) Alexander visits Egypt once, founds Alexandria, goes down to Memphis, where he recognizes his father in the statue of Nectenabo, and then he marches against Syria. In version γ Alexander visits Egypt twice. In book I (ed. von Lauenstein, pp. 106.8 - 116.5 and 116.6 - 117.21) the story is identical with that of versions α and β , but in book II (ed. Engelmann, pp. 220.1-230.3) it runs totally differently. Alexander arrives in Egypt and besieges the "castle" of Egypt, where Nectenabo's statue stands. The Egyptians cannot defend themselves from the vigorous attacks of the Macedonians, when they stop fighting and start calling Alexander son of their own king and imploring him to have mercy upon them. Alexander enters the castle of Egypt and Nectenabo's statue crowns him, so that the old prophecy has been fulfilled. Then Alexander builds a "θαυμασίαν πόλιν" and this passage undoubtedly constitutes an obscure and corrupted remembrance of the foundation of Alexandria, in spite of the opinion that Xyngopoulos seems to have at this point (p. 84). The reader sees at once that the story of this second visit is not only different but it is also very vague. There is no pretension for verisimilitude and everything is legendary and somewhat miraculous. In my opinion version γ (together with version ϵ , which is one of its main sources, see J. Trumpf, "Zur Überlieferung des mittelgriechischen Prosa Alexander" in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 60, 1967, 4) represents still a transitional stage in the development of the Alexanderromance. Later in the Byzantine prose versions the foundation of Alexandria (that is Alexander's first visit to Egypt) is hardly mentioned, whereas the second visit be-

comes one of the main features of the romance. Coming back now to ms D we find that it is ornated with miniatures referring to the first (nos. 53, 55 - 9) as well as to the second (nos. 112 - 6) visit of Alexander to Egypt.

In version γ one also reads about Alexander's visit to Jerusalem. Versions α and β know nothing of this visit, which according to F. Pfister must have originated in early Jewish writings (see F. Pfister, "Eine jüdische Gründungsgeschichte Alexandrias, mit einem Anhang über Alexanders Besuch in Jerusalem, in *Sitzungsberichte d. Heidelberger Akad. d. Wiss.*, philos.-histor. Kl. 1914, II Abhandlung) and which will increasingly become from now on one of the landmarks of the romance, hence its striking "hebraicized" character. Ms D has of course its illustration for this later interpolated chapter (nos. 110-11).

The presence of all those new chapters, accompanied by their appropriate miniatures, allows us to draw certain conclusions in regard always to the illustration of the romance and mainly the illustration of the hypothetical prototype of ms D. There is no doubt that there is an original illustrated Hellenistic Alexanderromance. But as this romance in some of its later existing versions (γ , ϵ , λ etc.) appears to be the result of various rehandlings (Umarbeitungen) and of major or minor interpolations, we are permitted to conclude the same for its illustration which seems to follow whatever development of the text.

Version ϵ is dated VIIth century (see J. Trumpf, "Alexanders kappadokisches Testament," in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 52, 1959, 253, fn. 1). This chronological datum obliges us to suppose that also the miniatures of the chapters about Alexander's visit to Jerusalem and to Egypt (second visit) constitute later additions to the illustrations of the romance. Thus we come finally to realize that there must be an original pictorial cycle which is constantly expanded and enriched. The ancestor of the hypothetical prototype of ms D may be dated, if not earlier, round the VIIth century.

In addition to all that I have said so far I would like to comment on what Xyngopoulos says about the illustration of the chapter that refers to Alexander's visit to Rome (nos. 41-3) and to Jerusalem (nos. 110 - 11). The writer notes that in the miniatures of both chapters the vestments of the Roman and the Jewish priests are identical. There may be some influence of Byzantine icon painting, as Xyngopoulos claims (p. 87), but I believe again that also here without consideration of the

development of the text no true understanding of the illustration is possible.

In the older versions α (ed. Kroll, pp. 26.15-27.3) and β (ed. Bergson, p. 43.4 - 12) Alexander's visit to Rome is very briefly mentioned. Indeed this visit does not really take place. Equally brief is the account of this visit in version γ (ed. von Lauenstein, p. 102.10-24). But in version γ (*ibid.*, p. 98.1-22) we hear also about a second visit of Alexander to Rome, where he is received with royal magnificence. That is within the same version together with the older, epigrammatic and congruent with the older versions story of Alexander's visit to Rome coexists a second later and longer one. Version γ represents again here a transitional stage from the older to the later versions of the romance. With the assistance then of the latter we can follow the development of this chapter too. Originally there is a very short mention of Alexander's visit to Italy, which it is quite possible, was missing from the "Urroman." Later in versions γ and ϵ we hear about Alexander's visit to Jerusalem. The description of this visit is long, detailed and pompous. Under the influence of this description gradually the chapter about Alexander's visit to Rome began to expand and to be enriched to such an extent that the two chapters sound almost identical. The illustration of the romance may have followed a similar development to the text, and miniatures originally made to illustrate Alexander's visit to Jerusalem were copied to illustrate his visit to Rome.

In the second chapter (pp. 19-66) the writer describes the miniatures giving also reference to the text of version γ , not to that of the new editions but to that of C. Müller (1865), "because, as far as the understanding of the miniatures is concerned, and that matters here, the new editions are not essentially different from that of Müller (p. 20)." I am not discussing whether or not this is correct from a mere point of methodology, but I feel that if the writer had made use of the new editions (and he occasionally does indeed) some minor questions would have been clarified. For example on p. 24 (nos. 16-7) it is said that Alexander goes to Rome to participate in the games. If it were about the Italian Rome this would have been really Alexander's third visit to Rome. But things seem to have been somewhat different this time. Versions α (ed. Kroll, p. 18.14), β (ed. Bergson, p. 25.10) and some of the mss of version γ (see von Lauenstein, p. 47) give $\Pi\sigma\alpha(\nu)$ as the game place, that is Olympia, whereas some others mention Rome. But the speech here is of course about New Rome (= Constantinople), cf. von Lauenstein who commenting here

on this passage says "νέα Ρώμη id est Βυζάντιον". She also adds further: "proximis in paginis certamen currule Byzantinum septimi saeculi describitur" (p. 47). Anyway in general the miniatures are described with accuracy and precision and only occasionally one could make some minor correction or addition.

In the third chapter (pp. 67-78) Xyngopoulos studies the special problems the illustration of ms D presents, e. g the dresses of the various persons, the architectural forms of the buildings etc. Then in the fourth chapter (pp. 79-84) he treats problems of composition and technique. In the fifth chapter (pp. 85-92) he distinguishes the pure Byzantine from the foreign elements of the illustration. The conclusions of this chapter are strikingly interesting. The basic character of the illustration is Byzantine (pp. 85, 93) and the presence of foreign elements is explained as influence of the environment. According to Xyngopoulos the foreign elements in the illustration of ms D are either Moslem (the cloak with openings cut in the middle of the sleeves, musical instruments, scribes writing from right to left, birds with woman-shaped head, turban etc.) or Frankish (armour of knit-chain, war standards with heraldic lions and lilies, the white cap of the rowers, the ogival arch in the buildings etc.). The Moslem elements (Persian or Syrian) do not imply copying of Moslem works of art but they are due to personal observation of the artist (p. 93), whereas the Frankish ones are to be understood on the basis of the constant contact of East and West after 1204 (p. 89). Chapter six (pp. 93 - 97) basically relies on the conclusions of the previous chapter. Here there is a twofold problem to be solved: first the origin and the date of the hypothetical prototype of ms D and secondly the origin and the date of ms D itself. The former is said to have come from the workshop of Syria or Palestine and is dated XIIIth century. The latter, which according to palaeographical indications was written in the XIVth century, must come either from the island of Cyprus or from Crete.

This new book by Professor Xyngopoulos is a very important contribution to the study of the illustration of the Alexanderromance, particularly when one takes into consideration that ms D is practically the only illustrated Greek ms of Pseudo-Callisthenes. Of course codex Baroccianus 17 of the Bodleian Library has also "a series of much flaked miniatures" which are "inferior in quality" (see K. Weitzmann, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art*, pp. 104, 187). It was thought that cod. Baroccianus 17 was perhaps important only for the mss tradition of the Byzantine Alexanderromance in prose. Xyngopoulos' remark (p. 95) that the

few miniatures of this codex present the same oriental character as ms D, makes the systematic study of its illustration a desideratum.

It should be noticed that even some of the mss of the post-Byzantine and modern Greek Alexanderromance must have had some sort of illustration. No illustrated ms has come so far down to us but one cannot explain the blank spaces left unwritten amidst the text of codex Ashburnensis 1444 of Biblioteca Laurentiana, unless we suppose that they were to be filled with illustrations later (see A. Gonzato, "Il codice Marciano greco 408 e la data del romanzo bizantino di Alessandro con una ipotesi sull' autore" in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 56, 1963, 248 ff.). I have the information from Mr. G. Veloudis that similar blank spaces appear also in the unique ms we have of the XVIth century versification entitled "Γέννησις, κατορθώματα καὶ θάνατος Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνοσ διὰ στίχου" which was published by D. Zenos in Venice in 1529.

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N. A. Bees, *Τὰ Χειρόγραφα τῶν Μετεώρων. Κατάλογος Περιγραφικὸς τῶν Χειρογράφων Κωδικῶν τῶν Ἀποκειμένων εἰς τὰς Μονὰς τῶν Μετεώρων* (= The Manuscripts of the Meteora. Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts preserved at the Monasteries of the Meteora), vol. I (Monastery of Transfiguration) (Athens, 1967) (Academy of Athens, Research Center of Medieval and Modern Hellenism). Pp. *1-74, 1-774, Plates colored 8 and black-white 72.

The fortune of certain books is very strange indeed. A concurrence of unsurmountable difficulties delays their publication, sometimes for many decades. When they appear, their writer is no more alive; he died without the satisfaction of seeing his labor in print. A typical case of such a misfortune is the present first volume (the second will follow soon) of a catalogue of the mss in the libraries of the Meteora prepared early this century by the late Prof. N. Bees and published only now by the Academy of Athens. What usually happens in similar cases is that papers left by some distinguished scholar are either scattered or entrusted to some institution, where they are finally forgotten and no one is interested in them any more. But if it is a rather rare misfortune for an important book not to be published, it is equally a rare good luck for the posthumous work of a scholar to be treated and published with