

Alexander the Great in General Estoria I, II, IV, V and VI A discussion on his image

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Cary's *The Medieval Alexander* was the first attempt of a wide-ranging coordination of the different conceptions of the legends of Alexander the Great in the Middle Ages¹. It was an admirable enterprise which has given an impulse to various medievalists to deepen their investigations in the search for Alexander in their fields. It was the Groningen «Alexander groep» who as a whole has tried to bundle their insight into the image of Alexander as it emerged from certain texts of their different disciplines (ancient history, Byzantine Greek, medieval Latin, French, English, German, Dutch, Romanian, Spanish and history)².

To Cary in his effort to give a comprehensive survey of accessible sources in a wide field the multitude of inedited old-Spanish manuscripts that might contain mentions of Alexander has been an impediment to deeper study in that literature. He had to restrict himself to the editions then existing, but has not consulted them exhaustively as María Rosa Lida de Malkiel rightly remarked in her review of Cary's book³. In a later article she has supplied us with many other data⁴. As for the *General Estoria* (GE), however, she has limited herself to a short statement on the contents of the fourth part: «La estoria de Alexandre'... en efecto... aparece en la Parte IV (inédita) en versión muy detallada que incluye la traducción de la Historia de preliis, I₂» (p. 412).

Among the recent publications *La Historia Novelada de Alejandro Magno* edited by Tomás González Rolán and Pilar Saquero Suárez-Somonte is of importance, since it compares the Latin *Historia de Preliis* I₂ with the text of GE IV (ms. Vat. Urb. Lat. 539), with variants taken from the 4 other extant manuscripts⁵.

¹ George CARY, *The Medieval Alexander*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

² *Alexandre the Great in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. J. Aerts, J. M. M. Hermans and E. Visser, Nijmegen: Alfa, 1978.

³ María R. LIDA DE MALKIEL, *La Leyenda de Alejandro en la Literatura Medieval*, RPh, XV, pp. 311-318, 1962.

⁴ Lida DE MALKIEL, *Datos para la Leyenda de Alejandro en la Edad Media*, RPh, XV, pp. 412-423, 1962.

⁵ Univers. Complt., Madrid, 1982.

Now that parts I, II, IV and V are accessible through publication (I and II)⁶ and in microfiche (IV and V)⁷ the greater part of the whole extant GE of Alfonso el Sabio can be used for investigation of the accounts on Alexander as they are given there. The transcription of GE VI in which I am engaged at present allows me to trace eventual mentionings of Alexander. My prolonged confrontation with the Alfonsine texts and cooperation with the Madison Alfonsine Group in the transcription and computerization of GE IV and V (mss. Vat. Urb. Lat. 539, Esc. I.I.2 and R.I.10) enabled me to assemble the mentionings of Alexander in parts I and II as well as in IV and V⁸. Prof. Lloyd Kasten and Prof. John Nitti were so kind to provide me with the concordances taken from parts I, II and IV concerning Alexander. I decided to ask only for the name of Alexander. The Latin sources regularly give Alexander epithets such as Macedonius, Magnus Rex, Pellaeus, etc. They have often been taken over by medieval authors. Alfonso does not belong to them, at least not in GE. Indeed, in the fourth part particularly there are some epithets to be found. They appear to be based on the sources, but quoted together with the name of Alexander. In GE V Pellaeus and Macedonius are consequently translated as Alexandre. My experience is based on my work done on GE IV and V which meant more than 100.000 lines so that I may be justified of my decision. In my opinion Alfonso's consequent handling of the name of Alexander points to his aim to make his work accessible to his readers and listeners, written as it is «en nuestro language de Castilla». In the course of this paper I shall refer to Alfonso and his collaborators as the author(s). In search of Alexander's image eventual sources and translation technique will be discussed where necessary.

It appears that in GE I the name of Alexander is mentioned 40 times. That does not mean that it is the great king himself who is treated in all 40 places. When the GE quotes Gautier de Châtillon he uses to call the *Alexandreis* «el Alexandre» or «el libro de Alexandre». The computer duly reports Alexander! Such mentionings are of no interest in this study, except where there follows some information of Alexander taken from the *Alexandreis*. There remain 14 mentionings of which I like to discuss some which may give an insight into the image of Alexander.

On p. 80b the 4 world empires are treated: Babylonia, Macedonia, Carthage and the Roman Empire. Here the GE follows Orosius (*Adversum paganos* II, 1). It adds, however, writing on Macedonia: «E en la parte de septentrion el (regno) de Macedonia, que se començo enel grand Alexandre e se acabo enel maguer que regnaran y dantes el grand Hercules, e el rey Philippo... e aun dantes otros reyes». I failed to discover a source for this addition. A gloss in the consulted ms. of Orosius is a possibility. It becomes clear that Alfonso considered Alexander the prominent king of Macedonia. Again following Orosius (I, 4.4): «e cuenta Orosio que nunca otro lidiador nin guerrero entro a India fueras ende esta reyna (Semiramis) e el gran Alexandre (p. 102b). Here the authors point to Alexander's enormous campaign to India, however, without commentary.

On p. 119a we find a translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia* X, v. 272-275⁹. It is Caesar who asks the priest Acoreus about the sources of the Nile. Acoreus answers that

⁶ Ed. A. G. Solalinde, Madrid, 1930 and ed. A. G. Solalinde, L. A. Kasten and V. R. B. Oelschläger, Madrid, 1958 and 1961.

⁷ The Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, Madison, Wisconsin.

⁸ Prof. Lloyd Kasten informed me that by tentative inspection no special attention was found to be paid to Alexander in GE III.

⁹ Lucain, *La Guerre Civile*, ed. A. Boucary, Paris, 1947.

Alexander too had been in search for them. In the context it is not exactly Alexander about whom something has to be written, but also about the wish of other great men to find the sources. The GE translates the feelings and experience of Alexander. Since Lucan's poetry is very complex and often obscure, the Spanish translation gives several explanations. The same we notice in part V where Lucan's difficult poem is completely translated. The translation of the passus in GE I and V (fol. 164r) is the same.

Lucan: «*Summus Alexander regum, quem Memphis adorat,
inuidit Nilo misitque per ultima terrae
Aethiopum lectos; illos rubicunda perusti
zona poli tenuit: Nilum uidere calentem*».

GE: «Alexandre, que fue el muy alto de los reyes, a quien la prouincia Menphis de Egipto aora, ouo enuidia del Nilo de non poder el, qui era como sennor de todo el mundo, saber el su fecho del su nascimiento e el su acabamiento, e enuio dellos sabidores e escollechos escodrinadores de Ethiopia por los cabos dela tierra; e quando uinieron ala citara uermeia del ex del firmamiento ouieron a quedar alli, que non pudieron passar, e uieron alli el Nilo e fallaron le caliente». To the explanatory translation the author of the GE adds some words concerning Alexander's greatness: «de non poder, el qui era commo sennor de todo el mundo».

In GE I we find two *translationes potestatis* in which Alexander appears. P. 175a: «E diz Aben Abez..., un sabio arauigo, que ouo Esau en ella (Aha) treynta fijos uarones, e que deste linage fueron reyes en Roma, donde uino despues el grand Alexandre»... P. 200b: «Et del linage deste rey Juppiter uino otrosi el grand Alexandre... e del (Juppiter) uinieron todos los reyes de Troya, e los de Grecia... los cesares... e el primero don Frederico, que fue primero emperador delos romanos, et don Frederic, su nieto el segundo deste don Frederic, que fue este orossi emperador de Roma...».

On p. 175a the GE telling the story of Jacob and Esau gives a bit of genealogy. According to Alfonso he obtained information from Aben Abez whose identity I have not been able to establish¹⁰.

On p. 200b it is Alfonso's aim to show his descent in connection with his imperial aspirations, his mother being Frederic II's granddaughter, and he gives to understand that he descends from the most illustrious sovereigns of the world^{11,12}.

P. 305b: «E uencio Hercules al rey Antheo desta guisa, non le dando uagar de se apoderar mas en la tierra, nin de llegar e tomar mas yentes nin sacar fonsados, nin mayores poderes; e en las guerras et en las lides muy grand algo es la sabiduria e la maestria contra los enemigos, mas assi como cuenta la estoria que el grand Alexandre ensennaua a sus caualleros, muy grand algo es apresurar se ell amigo contral enemigo, ca diz Alexandre que por qual ell enemigo uee all enemigo que por tal le entiende luego yl faze; e esto fallamos e tenemos que quiere dezir el dicho daquella fazanna».

Although Alfonso refers here to Ovid in his reproduction of the story of Antaeus,

¹⁰ See ARNALD STEIGER, *Tradición y Fuentes Islámicas en la Obra de Alfonso el Sabio*. Rev. del Inst. Egipcio de Est. Islámicos, Madrid, III, p. 100, 1955.

¹¹ See: Jonxis-Henkemans in *Alexander the Great in the Middle Ages*, pp. 164-165.

¹² Francisco RICO, *Alfonso el Sabio y la General Estoria*, Ariel, Barcelona, pp. 113-115; pp. 203-205, 1984.

in his account of the fierce fight between Hercules and Antaeus and adds «de otros que cuentan sus fazannas», mentioning «Johan el ingles e el frayre»¹³, he dedicates here also some more words to Alexander. All through GE we find scattered didactic phrases, particularly in part IV where in the main story of Alexander they occur repeatedly, based as they are on the didactic *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios* which is of Arabic origin¹⁴. There too Alexander gives instructions on warfare: «Faz que ayan sabor de foyr tos enemigos de ti» (fol. 235v). The *Poridat de las Poridades*, another contemporary mirror of princes, contains many instructions in this field, so that we may conclude that the final phrases on the fight of Hercules and Antaeus may base on a didactic way of thought, probably of Arabic origin.

From p. 555-562 Alfonso follows parts of Plinius' *Naturalis Historia* VIII. The parts in which Alexander appears and which have been taken over in GE are of interest in our search for Alexander's image. The GE gives here a piece of biological knowledge in connection with the purification laws found in Leviticus. Alexander is introduced as follows: «Alexandre el Magno ouo grand cobdicia de saber las naturas delas animalias», a sentence literally taken over from Plinius VIII, 44. The trend of the tales in GE I is that of Plinius'. A very large dog, a present of the king of Albania, is killed by Alexander, because the dog does not want to degrade himself with bears, swines or zebras. Another dog is sent with the message from the king that that dog is only content with larger animals. First a lion is literally cracked, then an elephant thrown down with a great swing by the dog. The GE adds some other dramatic details and comments on Alexander: «Alexandre, quando esto uio, fue mucho alegre, e pesol mucho por que auie mandado matar ell otro» (p. 561b). We may wonder whether this tells something in favour or against Alexander's character.

The fourth part (fol. 219v-220r) gives a simpler account: no presents from the King, but presentation by the conquered Albanians of one dog which indeed attacks a lion and an elephant. This account corresponds with the *Historia de Preliis* I,¹⁵ (HdP), p. 143. Nothing is told there about Alexander's joy or regret. The pathetic additions in GE I seem to fit in the juicy narrative style used there. The style of HdP, almost literally taken over in GE IV, is very dry, which will be discussed below.

Following Plinius VIII, 154, in his discussion on horses, and particularly on Bucephalus, Alexander's famous horse, Plinius' sentence «neminem hic alium quam Alexandrum regio instratu ornatus recepit in sedem» is rendered: «Nunqua este cauallo se dexo caualgar si non a Alexandre, e aun a ell mismo non si non quandol ueye guisado como a rey» (thus: «ornatum»). This detail can be a question of different manuscripts, but it may also underline Alexander's royalty. It is difficult to tell whether the stories taken from Plinius consolidate the good image of Alexander or not.

In GE II there are four places where the name of Alexander appears: II, 1. 90b-91a; II, 1. 184a; II, 2. 164a; II, 2. 293b. The mention on II, 2. 164a can be ignored, since there «el Alexandre» means the *Alexandreis*.

On II, 1. 90b-91a the authors are anticipating the main story of Alexander writing about his encounter with the trees of the sun and moon (the latter not being

¹³ For their identification, see María R. LIDA DE MALKIEL, *La General Estoria: notas literarias y filológicas* (I), Rom. Phil. XII, 2, p. 115, 1958.

¹⁴ In: *Mittheilungen aus dem Eskorial* vom Hermann Kunst (Tübingen, 1879), *The Libro de los Buenos Proverbios*, ed. Harlan Sturm (Lexington, 1971).

¹⁵ *Die Altfranzösische Prosa-Alexanderroman*, ed. Alfons Hilka, Halle, 1920.

mentioned here) and the bird Phoenix. Alfonso mentions «la estoria de Alexandre» in which he will tell «complida mjentre» the tale. Moreover he mentions «los philosophos» who speak about the nature of the bird. In the GE «los philosophos» represent an unnamed bunch of authors. This passus does not provide us with more information on Alexander. II, 1. 184a renders the chapter that Plinius dedicates to the dolphins (IX, 8). In this context the story of a child is told who had played with a delphin and was later appointed high priest to Neptune by Alexander. The curiosity of this rendering lays in the christian addition: «este ninno... fue aquel a quien el grand Alexandre fizo, por mandado de Dios, adelantado de todos los sacerdotes... (de) Neptuno». For the rest the translation follows closely Plinius' text. A discussion on Corinth is found on II, 2. 292b. According to the authors «cuenta la estoria de Alexandre (que) alli açauan los reyes de Greçia». In the main story nothing is found about Corinth. Although in this discussion the GE quotes the «Libro de las Prouinçias» (identified by Solalinde as the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville¹⁶) no allusions of that kind are found there.

Thus far our harvest is meager. Mostly the Alexander material in GE I and II is taken from the sources without further comment. In some places we find some addition to stress Alexander's role: e.g. «el que era commo sennor de todo el mundo». Only the didactic words on p. 305b and the mentionings of Alexander in the *translationes potestatis* show the appreciation of the authors of GE of Alexander as a teacher on warfare and as a very important ancestor.

For Part IV the Madison concordance gives more than 1100 references on Alexander. This is understandable since this part contains the «official» story of Alexander. But besides that story there are various places where Alexander is introduced. Often it is only a short observation on him, e.g. in the computation of time or in a chronology. Such observations are repeatedly accompanied by the promise that the complete story of Alexander will be told in due time.

But there are places where more space is devoted to Alexander. We find them before as well as after the «official» story. Sometimes these digressions are based on one source, such as Petrus Comestor, Godfrey of Viterbo, Lucas Tudensis and the main source of chronology, Eusebius' *Chronici Canones*. But often the source is *unidentifiable* or there is the frequently applied mixture of sources. Part IV is a comprehensive oeuvre. The long prologue gives an extensive list of contents. It contains the adapted translation of various books of the Old Testament, the stories of the Persian and Egyptian kings and of Alexander the Great.

Because of the multitude of mentionings of Alexander a selection consisting of some notable events and observations had to be made.

Three accounts of the removal of Jeremiah's bones to Alexandria by Alexander are found. The tales on fols. 32v and 104r have the same source: Petrus Comestor, *Historia Scholastica* (P. L. 198, p. 1440). The GE renders Comestor's dry, rather businesslike, account in a narrative verbose way. It becomes a nice story. It shows first Jeremiah's goodness and God's help. But Alexander is not less valuable. He frees Alexandria from snakes and vipers (like Jeremiah once also did en Egypt) by burying Jeremiah's bones. We read that Alexander heard about God's help. The GE gives here a positive image of Alexander as did here Comestor whose judgement on Alexander is not always homogeneous. Fol. 104r contains a repetition of 32v. The passus is

¹⁶ RFE XXI 1934 and XXII 1936.

somewhat longer and shows some errors in the translation of Comestor's tale, perhaps due to a different collaborator. Alexander's image remains the same.

The «official» story (fol. 211r) gives a short dry account of this episode. It is the literal reproduction of its source, the *Historia de Preliis* I₂¹⁷. It ends: «et fue la cibdade dalixandria daquel dia adelant libre daquellas serpientes». As a *deus ex machina* Alexander may have been the saviour, but he does not get a feather in his cap. The objectivity of the HdP is found back in Alfonso's translation.

A second comparison of Alexander material treated at different places in GE IV can be made. It concerns the story of the enclosure of the Ten Tribes of Israel and that of Gog and Magog. The shorter and longer tales before and after the principal Alexander story are incidental. There are four tales in which Alexander encloses peoples with God's help within mountains. Before the main story there is a short tale of the enclosure of the Ten Tribes with the promise that the story will also be told in «la estoria de Alexandre» (fol. 197r). But when we come to the enclosure in the «official» story (fols. 219r-v) it is an impure and horrible people, no further determined. Is it a confusion with the story of Gog and Magog who, however, do not appear here, neither in the source (HdP, pp. 140-141)? The authors obediently follow their source and like HdP their tale is christianized.

On fols. 246v-27v the enclosure of the Ten Tribes and that of Gog and Magog are told separately with emphasis on the fact that they were distinct peoples. The sources are Godfrey of Viterbo¹⁸ and Petrus Comestor (p. 1498). When we compare the four accounts, it comes again to the fore that GE follows faithfully the sources. The attention paid to Alexander through these stories, which we also find in the Occidental Arabic Alexander story¹⁹ as well as in the Aljamiado text²⁰, shows a favorable image: Alexander is again the saviour.

Although now and then Alexander is mentioned, we are repeatedly told that we have to wait for complete information till «la estoria de Alexandre». On fols. 201r-201v it looks as if Alfonso strikes another note when following Orosius. He takes over Orosius' venomous judgement (III, 7.5) rendering it as follows: «dize Orosio que nascio estonces Alexandre que fue tod esto, esto es maiamiento del mundo et uengança de Dios segund Maestre Galter en el libro de Alexandre... Et aquello que ellos (las prophetas) dizien era como que prophetauan non del so nascimiento, mas de los sos fechos que se yuan ya llegando». No more is said. We may take that the *Alexandreis* does not give a negative image of Alexander; on the contrary, in spite of «ultio divina, proles Philippica Magnus», it is a glorification of his person (Cary, p. 202). Still following Orosius the GE adds: «Toda Grescia andaua buelta et se dauan mal dia fasta que llego el rey Alexandre el grand que ueno poco despues desto (the wars in Greece and Sicily) como aures adelant. Que lo appaziguo todo et lo acallanto esso et todas las mas guerras del mundo otrossi. Ca todos ouieron que ueer en lo suyo del como uos contaremos en la su estoria. Et començara lo dantes el rey Philippo so padre mas nol dio cabo» (fol. 202r).

¹⁷ Ed. Hilka, pp. 61-62.

¹⁸ Godefridus VITERBIENSIS, *Pantheon*, Script. Rer. Germ. collect. J. Pistorio Nidano, pars XI, pp. 165-166, 1726.

¹⁹ Emilio GARCÍA GÓMEZ, *Un texto Arabe Occidental de la Leyenda de Alejandro*, Madrid, 1929.

²⁰ A. R. NYKL, *El Rrekontamiento del Rrey Alisandere*, Rev. Hisp. LXXXVI, pp. 409-611, 1929.

It becomes clear that Philip and Alexander were calamities in Orosius' eyes, but the author of GE does not support this opinion. When Philip scolds Alexander for his liberality against his knights, it is from Godfrey of Viterbo that Alfonso borrows this tale. No personal opinion is found.

Suddenly all earlier sources and tales are brushed aside and the «official» story is announced (fol. 205v). Alexander's life story comes first now, the other pagan kings will be treated later. Only the 6 years of Darius' reign are included through the same source of the principal story: the *Historia de Preliis I*. For the Alexander story three sources are used, one after another: the HdP, the *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios* (LBP) and the *Alexandreis* of Gautier de Châtillon. We do not find the usual mixture of sources. Neither HdP nor LBP are mentioned by name, but they can be distinguished without doubt. The story covers fols. 206r-238v.

The first two sentences of HdP have apparently been misinterpreted. By wrong, yet conceivable, reading their source is attributed to a history written by Egyptian sages. The proof is found on fol. 233v at the end of the story: «ffasta aqui dixiemos la estoria del rey Alexandre el grand... segund dixieron los sabios de Egipto et lo dexaron en escrito». Earlier reading reveals more: fol. 198r: «la estoria de los Egipcianos que dize el nacimiento del rey Alexandre», and some lines lower: «aquella estoria de Egipto que cuenta todos los fechos de Alexandre el grand». The source of HdP I₂ is known to have been the Greek *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, written in Alexandria, a copy of which was translated into latin by order of Duke, John III of Campania in ± 950. Was it the «Egyptian» provenance that still had some resonance in Alfonso's circle?

González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte compared the HdP with the corresponding text in GE IV, giving thus an insight into the translation technique applied by the Spanish authors²¹. They point to the Christian elements which have crept into the Spanish text and to Alexander's ambition for the universal monarchy that corresponds with «una exaltación de la función imperial». Besides the above discussed passus on GE I, p. 200b we find another expression of Alfonso's imperial want on fols. 252-252r. In the Alexander story, however, this is concealed behind the dry style of HdP. Although here Alfonso might have found a welcome occasion to bring again his *translatio potestatis* to the fore, it seems as if he found the mere tale sufficient. There is a striking addition on fol. 223r which gives an insight into the Christian element in the Alexander story, although already in HdP various of such elements are found: «Mostráronse aquella noche al grand Alexandre... muchas de las marauillas que nuestro sennor Dios tenie encubiertas en los elementos del agua et de la tierra et del aer... por mostrar las sus marauillas al princep que el suffriera nascer por ordenamiento de estrellas. Et mostrol... todas las otras cosas peligrosas en que lid et muerte auie si non los omnes con quien auie ya Alexandre lidiado et uençudo muchas uezes. Don sepades que non ouo en este mundo cosa que pora lit fuesse con quien Alexandre non lidiasse et que todos los non uenciessse con quantos se tomaua. Et porende nuestro sennor Dios mostrol aquella noche alli aquellas marauillas por mostrar otrossi et prouar que quisiera el que en punto nasciesse Alexandre que uenciessse a todas las cosas del mundo con que se tomasse. Et que el so poder de Dios en todas cosas es egualmient tan muy poderoso que non ay mas mester». González and Saquero do not indicate a source for this passus.

I have not been able either to trace the source of this addition which may have

²¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 29-34.

been inserted to underline the Christian thought and to make later acception of Alexander's early and violent death possible. In the paraphrasis of some final verses of the *Alexandreis* (fol. 238r) this acception becomes clear when the lasting good, that is God, is stressed. The mingling of Christian and pagan traits has been taken over from the HdP (p. 132) where we also read that at Darius' death Alexander swears by the «dioses mas poderosos» (fol. 218r). The image is that of the dry, rigid HdP, the additions in GE being of explanatory or narrative character.

The two other sources for the Alexander story, the *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios* and some final verses from the *Alexandreis* X, 446-451²² concern Alexander's untimely death. In my earlier article I wrote in detail about Alexander's last days²³. The LBP is a mirror of princes from Arabic provenance. It becomes clear that the authors of GE had difficulties in reproducing the obscure gnomic reasoning of this source which disposes of a limited number of words and conceptions so that the reproduction sometimes results in some confused lines. The LBP is for the greater part a collection of sayings of Greek philosophers and of Alexander. We may attribute the taking over of most of the moralizations to Alfonso's great interest and involvement in Arabic literature and science. Style and vocabulary are closely followed, although the text of LBP has been shortened. Slight differences in wording are found which can change the original thought. They may be attributed to scribal errors. The tendency of Alexander's sayings is not different from those of the philosophers. The moving point is the reproduction of Alexander's letters to his mother Olympias and Olympias' mourning. Whereas the sayings show an abstract didactic character and have been abbreviated, the two letters to Olympias are taken over in full. When the mourners, and among them several philosophers, are gathered around Alexander's tomb, the words dedicated to him by those wise men are not always flattering and thus one might think that here the image is going down. This is not the case. Alfonso suddenly cuts them short and ends with the moving letter of mourning sent by Olympias to Aristotle. We find a moral completion of the Alexander story in which Alexander's image remains favorable.

Although all through the GE quotations or statements taken from the *Alexandreis* are fond, for unknown reason Gautier's work is not used for the complete Alexander story²⁴. Only some of the concluding verses are paraphrased. In «The last Days» I have given an analysis of the translation of these verses which are called «llanto» in GE, but which are in reality a moralization on death. The Spanish author does not use Gautier's mannered style, but uses his own medieval vocabulary, trying to translate into his own language. But also here Alfonso renders Gautier's opinion which is not negative.

The image in the official story is favorable. After that story Alfonso keeps to his program given in the prologue. Often the name of Alexander is mentioned, but no special deeds of him are told, except for the above discussed episodes of the 10 tribes and Gog and Magog. Some allusions to his greatness and his unaccomplished task are found: «le dize las estorias que fue sennor dell mundo; pero que non de todo. Ca fallamos que los Romanos nunqual obedescieron» (fol. 238v). The Roman legates do

²² M. PHILIPPUS GUALTHERUS, *Alexandreis*, ed. F. A. W. Müldener, Lipsiae, 1863.

²³ In: *Alexander the Great in the Middle Ages*, «The last days of Alexander in General Estoria IV», pp. 142-169.

²⁴ This is not a matter of avoiding the high-sounding poetic language; Lucan's *Pharsalia*, perhaps still more elaborate, are used in full in GE V.

not bring him the tributes in Babylon (fol. 239v). On fol. 240v we read: «con quantas noblezas otro cuerpo de omne aun non fue soterrado en este mundo». We notice an obscure statement on fol. 241r: «Todas las tierras andauan estonces en aluorossçamiento despues de la muerte del grand rey Alexandre so quien todos estauan callando». We may assume that the GE utilizes here I *Maccabees* 1, 3: «et siluit terra in conspectu eius». Is this a good or less favorable judgement? We may ask whether such statement was unwelcome to Alfonso with his imperial aspirations.

Which conclusions may we make concerning Alexander's image in GE IV? It is not one picture of a hero, a madman or a warrior. It is the image of the sources. The Spanish authors are convinced of Alexander's greatness, but certainly also of different appreciations. In GE IV there is a difference in Alfonso's handling of his material. In GE I and II he often takes distance from his sources, warning against «los auctores delos gentiles que... desuiaron de estorias» (GE I, 369a). Such disassociation is difficult to find in the principal story of Alexander. The images follow each other in the lines of the sources. The HdP dry as it is, is full of unbelievable happenings, but they are reproduced without comment. E. R. Smits points to the popularity of HdP₂ in medieval Europe and advances the opinion that the neutral uncolored image of Alexander might have made it possible to interpret it from one's own horizon²⁵.

The *LBP* and the *Alexandreis* function as an apotheosis of the Alexander story. This is not brought as a victorious ending. On the contrary, it is an elegant graveside speech. The frame, before and after the official story, provides us with some tales and statements taken without comment from their sources.

The biblical part of GE V (ms. Escorial I.I2, fols. 96r-165v) contains the translation of the books of the *Maccabees*. There is no prologue which explains the planning of this part. The author immediately starts with the introduction of I Mac. 1 which is not exactly favorable in its short exposition of Alexander's deeds. Rabanus Maurus is quoted to confirm the words of the Bible that Alexander was the first king of Macedonia in the right sense of royal authority. Again we find the translation of «siluit terra in conspectu eius» belonging here to the context of I Mac. 1. Flavius Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* are the main source besides the Bible. Moreover we read: «ouo eguada et afforada a Judea commo es dicho». Probably it is a reminiscence of Alexander' attitude towards the Jews in HdP, although Comestor writes in equal terms. We find some similar sentences somewhat lower on fol. 96r.

A confusion of sources takes places on fol. 110r and 124r. On 110r the bible is responsible for the mentioning of the marvellous treasures Alexander left in the temple of Nanea. On 124r GE corrects this tale, contributing it rightly to Rabanus²⁶. No more about Alexander is found in the biblical part. There is a kind of equilibrium in the Alfonsine appreciation of the great king: the bible unfavorable, Alexander's attitude towards the Jews appreciated, his power well estimated, his liberality mentioned, even with more glamour than Rabanu's statement. We do not read a verdict from the side of the compilers of GE.

The profane part of GE V (Esc. R.I.10) contains 11 mentions of Alexander. This part gives as close a translation as possible of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, followed by a part of the Roman history, mainly concerning Caesar and his successor till the end of the Old

²⁵ In: *Alexander the Great in the Middle Ages*, «Die Historia de Preliis Alexandri Magni, Rezension I₂ im Mittelalter: Rezeptionsgeschichtliche Probleme».

²⁶ PL 109, p. 1225.

Testament period («la quinta edad»). Lucan's metaphoric and difficult poem is often explained by the Spanish authors, but they sometimes make odd errors. It becomes obvious that use has been made of glosses and scholia upon the *Pharsalia*. Since GE reproduces faithfully this source, Alexander is mentioned there where Lucan mentions him. Plinius, Statius, Ovid, Lucas Tudensis and Godfrey of Viterbo are supplementary sources.

In the short introduction on fol. 1r the author divides the causes of war into four categories: «De quatro maneras departen los abtores et los sabios que son las batallas. Et la primera llaman de gloria o de prez. Esta es de un principe que andouo por el mundo conquiriendo et gano prez desy commo la fizo Hercoles et desy el Rey Alexandre el grande». The other reasons are: enmity between two parties, civil war and quarrel between brothers. In the opinion of GE Alexander belongs to the first category, that of the ambitious ones.

On fol. 112v we find an explanation of «Zeugma Pellaeum» (VIII, v. 237). It is clear that the author wants to inform his reader well: «Zeugma la çibdat de Peleo que fue Alexandre de quien dixeron Peleo dela çibdat de Peleo de Gresçia do nascio».

On fol. 124v there is another explanation: «tibi sacro Macedon seruetur in antro» (VIII, v. 694) is rendered as «tenjendo tu guardado en la cueua del sagrado conçejo el cuerpo del grant Alexandre».

On fol. 131v «Pellaeas arces (IX, v. 153) is translated as «las torres que el grant Alexandre... fizo». No further comment is found in these explanations.

In the beginning of the 10th book Lucan writes about Alexander's acts of violence. After a short introduction in which the Spanish author points to the Ptolemes as Alexander's successors in Egypt, he translates closely Lucan's far from appreciative verses. (The gloss on fol. 156v «Reprehension del actor contra la ambjcion et cobdicia del grand Alexandre» is interesting, but may be ignored, since it is of a later hand).

On fols. 164r and 169r Alexander is mentioned again. The first passus was discussed in the analysis of GE I, p. 119a. Both mentions heighten the image of Alexander. On fol. 169r where X, v.509 and v.511 are rendered, we find again an explanation of «Pellaeus» and some detailed information on «Insula quondam... nunc est Pellaeis proxima muris»: «yaze agora aquella çibdat de Faro çerca del çibdat de Pelleo que es Alexandria que fizo el rrey Alexandre et do yaze el su cuerpo»²⁷.

In the Roman history we find a description of the reception of Cleopatra on occasion of her visit to Rome²⁸. The homage to her is compared with the reception of Alexander in Babylon: «Et fue Cleopatra recebida... con tantas onrras et tantas noblezas et marauillas que nunca el rrey Alexandre el grande fue resçevido con mas nin mas marauillosas en la çibdat de Babilonja» (fol. 180v).

On fols. 184r-18v in «Del alabança de Ponpeo el magno otrossy», the GE follows Plinius VII, 95: «Onde diz (Plinio) que conujene nonbrar... todas las alabanças et las batallas del grant Alexandre». Twice there are mentions of Alexander in chronologies (fols. 188v and 217v).

²⁷ For a study on the translation of the *Pharsalia*, see V. Almazán, *Lucan in der «Primera Crónica General» und der «General Estoria» Alfons des Weisen*, Windsor Press, 1963.

²⁸ An important source of this part is the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, see Lloyd Kasten, *The utilization of the Historia Regum Brittaniae by Alfonso X*. *Hisp. Rev.* 38, núm. 5, pp. 97-114, 1970.

Other sources are Orosius, Eusebius/Jerome, Lucan, Plinius, Lucas Tud. «la Estoria Romana».

On fol. 206v an echo of Alexander's glory is heard: rendering Orosius VI, 21, 19 the GE writes: «Et tornaron en el Çesar el prez del grant Alexandre ca asy commo los mandaderos delos españoles et delos françeses fueron demandar en medio de oriente el grant Alexandre por demandar le pazes et le fallaron en Babilonja... asy venjeron a España los mandaderos delos orientales».

About GE V we can only say that mainly rulers are compared with Alexander in greatness. The tone is not hostile. I should like to call it distancial. In GE IV, next to the bible books treated there, Alexander is the most important subject. GE V that deals with the Maccabees, the books 12-16 of Flavius Josephus' *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, the *Pharsalia* and a part of the history of Rome roundabout the birth of Jesus Christ has few reasons to put Alexander in the forefront. The compilers of GE IV must surely have been more thrilled by the figure of the great king than those of GE V who had only to do with Alexander from a distance²⁹. The benevolent tone of Alfonso is obvious. But although he admires the great ruler, he renders less appreciative opinions of others, however *without comment*.

As for the unfinished part VI of GE neither in ms. Catedr. Toledo 43-20, nor in ms. Nacional 13036 mentions of Alexander are detectable.

The observations made in this survey fortify my opinion advanced in my earlier study (pp. 165-166) that we may assume that Alfonso considered the unaltered reproduction of his sources sufficient to build up Alexander's image of fame. This portrait was perhaps even exemplary to Alfonso's imperial ambition.

²⁹ Like Lucan, Alfonso's attitude towards Caesar in his adaptation of the *Pharsalia* is not favorable. There we find moralistic reflections about Caesar's warfare (see Almazán, pp. 81-84). A tone more similar to that of GE I and II is found again.