MASCULINE IDEALS AND ALEXANDER THE GREAT

AN EXEMPLARY MAN IN THE ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL WORLD

Jaakkojuhani Peltonen

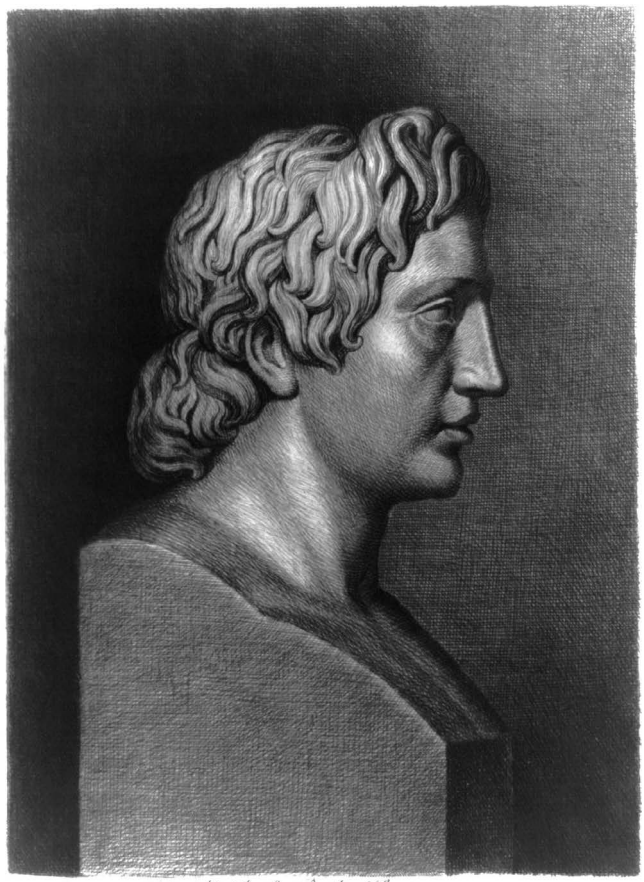
Masculine Ideals and Alexander the Great

From premodern societies onward, humans have constructed and produced images of ideal masculinity to define the roles available for boys to grow into and images for adult men to imitate. The figure of Alexander the Great has fascinated people both within and outside academia. As a historical character, military commander, cultural figure and representative of the male gender, Alexander's popularity is beyond dispute. Almost from the moment of his death, Alexander's deeds have had a paradigmatic aspect: for over 2300 years, he has been represented as a paragon of manhood – an example to be followed by other men – and through his myth, people have negotiated assumptions about masculinity.

This work breaks new ground by considering the ancient and medieval reception of Alexander the Great from a gender studies perspective. It explores the masculine ideals of the Greco-Roman and medieval pasts through the figure of Alexander the Great, analysing the gendered views of masculinities in those periods and relating them to the ways in which Alexander's masculinity was presented. It does this by investigating Alexander's appearance and its relation to definitions of masculinity, the way his childhood and adulthood are presented, his martial performance and skill, proper and improper sexual behaviour, and finally through his emotions and mental attributes.

Masculine Ideals and Alexander the Great will appeal to students and scholars alike, as well as to those more generally interested in the portrayal of masculinity and gender, particularly in relation to Alexander the Great and his image throughout history.

Jaakkojuhani Peltonen is a postdoctoral researcher at Tampere University. A significant part of the research work for the present book was done while a visiting researcher at King's College, London (2018–2020). His expertise includes the use of history, Alexander the Great, ideas of masculinity and the ideology of war in ancient Rome. His previous book in English, *Alexander the Great in the Roman Empire. 150 BC to AD 600*, was published by Routledge in 2019. He is an author and editor of several publications on Alexander the Great, the legitimisation of war and the use of history from a long-term perspective.



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To my brother

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Preface

This monograph is my third book on the reception of Alexander the Great and the last chapter of the "trilogy", so to speak. The first one, titled *Alexander the Great in the Roman Empire, 150 BC to AD 600,* published by Routledge in 2019, approached the literary tradition on Alexander from the perspective of uses of the past. In this study, which was a revised and expanded version of my doctoral thesis, my aim was to trace the rhetorical and ideological motivations behind different writings concerning the Macedonian king. The second book, *Aleksanteri Suuri: sankari ja myytti* ("Alexander the Great: Hero and Myth"), published by Gaudeamus in 2021 and unfortunately (currently) only available in Finnish, offered an overview of the reception of Alexander in literature and visual art from antiquity to the modern era. Neither of these studies approached the story of Alexander from the perspective I take in this work, that of gender and masculinity. The representation of gender has been an aspect of Alexander's reception in all periods of history, and his lasting fame has meant that he has been and still is a central figure in this respect. With this study, I hope to fill a scholarly vacuum.

During this research project, I had the privilege to work as a visiting fellow at King's College London in 2018–2020. I want to express my gratitude to Professor Hugh Bowden for this opportunity and his willingness to help me in my scholarly career. In London, I had access to the excellent collection of The Combined Library of the Institute of Classical Studies and the Hellenic and Roman Societies at Senate House. In addition, the excellent seminars and public lectures at King's College or the University of London enabled me to meet many scholars whose supportive reactions motivated me to continue with my topic. I owe much to this unique community of scholars.

In addition, I am grateful to those who created such a good research environment at Tampere University, particularly the multidisciplinary research centre Trivium – the Tampere Centre for Classical, Medieval, and Early Modern Studies – where I have been able to do my research both as an undergraduate and as a Postdoc. Trivium focuses on the longue durée, studying various phenomena from Antiquity to the Middle Ages and the early modern era. An important scholarly forum for me has been

the inspiring *Passages from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* international conferences, held in Tampere, which have brought ancient and medieval historians together to examine themes such as ageing, childhood, sacred travel/pilgrimage and friendship. This approach strongly encouraged me to challenge the traditional and somewhat artificial borders between periods and include and compare Classical, Post-Classical and Medieval usages of Alexander. Without Trivium and its commitment to open-minded and innovative research, the writing of the present book would not have been possible.

I owe special thanks to Ville Vuolanto and Ollimatti Peltonen, who read part of the manuscript and gave several valuable comments and suggestions. Doctor Philip Line not only checked the language of the book but also gave several excellent comments and suggestions. His vast expertise and knowledge of both classical and medieval history are amazing and enabled me to remove many errors in the text.

I want to express my gratitude to my supervisors and friends, Docent Ville Vuolanto, Docent Katariina Mustakallio and Professor Christian Krötzl. In addition, I owe a debt to Jussi Rantala, Sari Katajala-Peltomaa, Chiara Di Serio, Jasmin Lukkari, Haila Manteghi, Jenni Lares, Christina Maranci, Christian Djurslev, Kenneth Moore, Borja Antela Bernárdez, Outi Sihvonen, Antti Oikarinen, James Ryan, Pia Mustonen, Raisa-Maria Toivo, Christian Laes, Jarkko Sivula and Yucca Lampila. I am also grateful to the external reviewers of this manuscript and the comments I received from them.

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1 Introduction

> Your simplicity long ended, when you took Persian mistresses and children, and you thickened your holdings with plunder and jewels… Because you have fallen in love with all the things in life that *destroy men*
> – Oliver Stone, film *Alexander* (2004)

It goes without saying that masculinity – or any other gender-based convention – is not an unchangeable universal concept. Even today we are surrounded by divergent ideals, expectations and categorisations of masculinity presented in social media, films and video games, affecting current ideas of manliness. This is not a characteristic only of the modern world. From premodern societies onward, humans have constructed and produced images of ideal masculinity to define the roles available for boys to grow into and images for adult men to imitate. Usually, these roles are not based on biology or genetics, nor can they be justified as God-given, so to speak although they have been presented (justified) as such in the past. The ideal or "normal" behaviour patterns connected to masculinity, like femininity, are social constructions, products of historical processes. These social constructions are produced and enhanced by using the myths and histories of illustrious men of the past. Many configurations of gender can be traced to the remote past and premodern cultures that existed thousands of years ago. These representations of manliness were used, and are still used, to create hierarchies, ideals and norms for the construction of masculine identities.

This book is not about the historical Alexander, but about how Alexander has been used to represent ideals of masculinity in different historical periods. The overarching research questions of this book are as follows: what masculine ideals did the stories of Alexander the Great promote in the premodern world, and how were these gender ideals reproduced to strengthen or critique the predominant expectations of men. in a way, the story of Alexander the Great can be read as a case study of western masculine ideals. It has never been just a historical story of a young monarch who conquered lands and empires. Already during his lifetime Alexander became a mythologised figure, and after he died at the age of 32 years, like a modern-day rock star at

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the peak of his success, he has continued as an object of the utmost fascination as well a subject of strong critique. From Classical antiquity even to the modern world, the stories around this male figure's alleged deeds and sayings have had a paradigmatic aspect: for over 2300 years, he has been a paragon of manhood, symbolising the exemplary man, and through his myth people have negotiated assumptions about masculinity.

This book explores the masculine ideals of the Greco-Roman and medieval past. It explores ideas of exemplary manhood and manliness through the figure of Alexander the Great. This study analyses the different aspects of desired and contested manhood created and maintained by the male elite authors and artists in their texts and visual portraits of Alexander. It pays attention to the gendered views of masculinities in the Greco-Roman and Medieval world and compares them to the ways Alexander's masculinity is presented. Many of the ideas appearing in the source material can still be recognised in the modern world and our contemporary gendered views on male ideals.

The above citation is from Oliver Stone's Hollywood film *Alexander* (2004). In that scene, Alexander is giving an emotionally loaded speech in front of his troops (see Figure 1.1). Alexander's character can be seen as representing the last guardian of manliness. Before the scene takes place, the film had depicted Alexander's and his Macedonian troops' victory over the Persian army at the Battle of Gaugamela, then holding a triumph at Babylon, crossing the snowy mountains of the Hindu-Kush and traversing deserts and jungle. Now, after years of warfare, the Macedonian soldiers, suffering from monsoon rains and the bites of poisonous snakes, have lost their motivation to proceed further: they wish to return to their homes. In the famous speech at the Hyphasis river, Alexander is trying to motivate his men to continue the campaign.[1] As the representative of hypermasculinity, the king accuses his men of sacrificing their manhood in favour of easy pursuits. He implies that his soldiers have been emasculated by material wealth, love of women and yearning for family life. These secondary concerns were preventing them from achieving the idealised version of masculinity. In contrast, according to Alexander, a true man should be devoted to testing his physical and mental limits. Stone's film can be seen as a story of an idealised and exceptional man seeking everlasting fame by achieving something extraordinary, thus emulating his illustrious predecessors, Achilles and Heracles. To such a man establishing a family and raising children is a secondary task by comparison with conquering distant lands and "civilising" their habitants.[2]

The scene-setting in Stone's *Alexander* is a classic example among modern motion pictures of how becoming a man is pictured as a performative process. Certain acts need to be performed to enable a man to gain a desirable status before his male peers. At the same time, there are practices and preferences threatening to prevent men from achieving the standards the male community has set for them. In Stone's *Alexander*, this process is presented in the realm of the male military world, where Alexander as a warrior-king

Figure 1.1 In this scene of Oliver Stone's *Alexander*, the Macedonian warrior-monarch, acted by Colin Farrell, addresses the troops who are unwilling to continue the campaign beyond the Hyphasis river. The discontented Alexander, portrayed with long hair and leonine mane, "roars" at his soldiers and commanders: "It will always be remembered, you left your king in Asia!" His hypermasculine fervour no longer moves his soldiers, presented as "average" men. They respond to the king by exclaiming: "We want to go home. We are tired of glory." Alamy Stock Photograph.

performs his manliness by personal prowess in battle as well as by leading his troops. However, the scene portrayed in the above quotation implies that there exist different opinions on how masculinity should be performed. Undoubtedly, Alexander's dispute with his men about manliness at the Hyphasis river challenges and reveals the modern viewers' divergent views of ideal masculinity. Certainly, plenty of viewers were fascinated with the ancient warrior ethos and martial masculinity that Alexander's hypermasculine figure represented and as shown on the big screen. For those, the potential for violence and warlike behaviour is not a problematic or morally questionable part of being a man. However, for others, Alexander's speech and endless fervour for martial masculinity might appear as a manifestation of disturbing megalomania and toxic masculinity. For them, true manhood is incapsulated in the very concept Alexander despised: raising children and taking care of one's family, rather than martial adventures and imperialism that produce merely havoc and suffering for the inhabitants of the Earth.[3] These divergent views of what "true" men are, or what they should be, reflect the way modern humans as social creatures perceive the reality they live in. The above citation is from Oliver Stone's Hollywood film Alexander (2004).

One could argue that people have a tendency or an inner need to define themselves and their identities in terms of categorical definitions and dichotomies. We look for attributes that either separate us from or connect us with others. Particularly conceptions of sex and gender play a major role in the identity building process. It is not only a question of defining oneself as a boy/man or a girl/woman, as concepts such as unmanly and manly or unfeminine and feminine come into the picture. In contrast, in modern western culture the binary gender classification is being replaced by a more genderfluid system where there are multiple sexes and genders and gender identities. One must also remember that besides femininity childhood and bestiality have also functioned as opposites to manhood, ways to define masculinity and how it should be performed.[4] It almost goes without saying that these concepts have been defined differently in different historical eras or cultural contexts. These categorising perceptions, on the other hand, form the backbone for conventions and rules of social interaction in human societies. Yet, behind these conventions and rules, which are often considered natural and biological, lie historical power structures. The question is: who has the power to define the norms and create the hierarchies for social conduct, in this case, for different sexes? When studying ideals of masculinity that are considered normative or hegemonic, we may distinguish historical continuity and change in these power structures.

In the twentieth century, interest in exploring the power structures behind gender roles has increased. An important discovery was to understand that sex and gender are not just something genetically inherited but something you learn through social interaction. Gender is something that is performed. The relation between the biological sex and the socially (re)constructed gender is something that changes in different periods according to the values and expectations of the surrounding society. One is taught to be a man or a woman and learn to live according to those expectations. Social class, religion and economic status as well as health and age influence the way one sees oneself and the way in which other members of the community regard one's position in relation to others. These factors are also connected to the question of sex and gender.

Gender as a cultural concept is created in exemplary stories and myths of old. Visualised narratives have always played a role in shaping ideas of normative behaviour patterns. For this very reason, a historian might choose to start the opening chapter of his book discussing the history of masculinity with a quotation from a Hollywood film narrative, for instance, Oliver Stone's *Alexander*. Films, because of their visual and narrative effectiveness, provide a unique forum to display ideals of masculinity. One can argue as to whether they merely reflect the existing values and expectations or aim to engender a discussion that might alter them. However, with their potential to reach a worldwide audience, one should not underestimate their importance when analysing the continuity and change of masculine ideas. Interestingly, instead of inventing "new" or different ideals of masculinity, these films often

simply recycle Classical ideals, such as embodied masculinities deriving from Classical art.[5] Stone's approach to the legend of Alexander was just such a classic example of the long historical tradition of recording histories of famous and illustrious men and their deeds and sayings. This tradition was a common feature of ancient cultures where these heroic stories set a standard for acceptable and honourable masculinity. In the Classical world, literature was a central medium for discussing and defining manliness.

Traditionally, epic poetry was male-centred composition: works such as Homer's *Iliad* were tales of exemplary men and their famous, or infamous, deeds. The stories were recited and studied at schools and other public settings. Later, historiography followed the same approach recording lives of kings, commanders and statesmen. These records, either explicitly or implicitly, defined the acceptable, as well as the unacceptable, modes of being a man; proclaiming whether the characters in question were "true men," worthy of being imitated. Thus, understanding the parallel thematic and ideology between modern films and premodern literature, and the way they both operate with concepts of masculinity and femininity, helps us to recognise the long tradition of culturally produced gender ideals.

Males or females who did something exceptional on behalf of their community are memorised and immortalised in cultural memory. Their accomplishments receive recognition because their deeds are believed to have exceeded those of ordinary people. They established new religions and philosophies or produced art that surpassed previous art. These embraced figures or their deeds were not always historical but might be fictional. Stories of gods and superheroes contain paradigmatic aspects, and they clearly stand for certain gender roles and values. Tales of godlike and heroic figures, admired and imitated, were effective in transmitting ideas of masculinity. The hegemonic codes of manhood served to strengthen the power and security of the governing class. These illustrious exemplary male figures thus often crystallised and represented the values of the society that told their tales and its dominant male groups.

Reproducing and promoting stories of exemplary mythical figures for male members of society was a prevalent way to define ideal masculinity in Classical antiquity and the Middle Ages. Besides Alexander, there was a stock of heroic and outstanding male characters whose stories authors, writers, sculptors, painters and playwriters could use to discuss, analyse, or underline certain aspects of desirable or undesirable masculinity. Among the statesmen and warlords whose careers were regarded as exemplary were Pericles, Scipio Africanus, Hannibal, Pompey, Julius Caesar, Augustus, Trajan and Constantine. Great thinkers like Socrates, Aristotle and Diogenes symbolised an exceptional and imitable intellect known to everyone who preferred thinking and a philosophical lifestyle. These intellects were often used as one option to challenge and contradict the common definitions of manly conduct. It should be noted that Greco-Roman culture embraced fictional male figures as if they were historical

characters: whether fictional or historical, these tales had a similar function in strengthening the social order. Semidivine figures like Achilles, Perseus, Aeneas, Romulus and above else, Heracles, epitomised extreme masculinity. Their characteristics and heroic deeds formed a model for those reading about their lives in epic literature or seeing dramatisations of their lives in theatre plays. In addition, Greek and Roman gods could be approached from the perspective of sex and gender. For example, Zeus – the head of the Olympian gods, always portrayed with muscular body – may be seen as a symbol of hegemonic masculinity justifying and reflecting aggressive masculine behaviour.[6]

In the Middle Ages, the number of exemplary males only increased. Among the group of ancient heroes were the Biblical chiefs and kings such as Joshua, Saul, David, Solomon and Judas Maccabeus all taken from the Hebrew Bible. Naturally, Jesus was admired and imitated not only as a divine figure but as the single most influential and important male character. Also, new heroes like King Arthur and Roland, Sigurd/Siegfried and Tristan were introduced to the list of male heroes whose alleged deeds and accomplishments often resemble each other. Just as Greco-Roman tradition had its philosophical figures, in the Middle Ages rival masculinities were represented in the shape of Hebrew Bible prophets like Elijah, Jeremiah and Daniel, as well as in the ever-growing number of saints. In addition, there were also those figures which were used as a warning, symbolising negative forms of masculinity. They included tyrants like the Persian monarch Xerxes and morally bad emperors such as Caligula and Nero, not to mention treacherous figures like Brutus and Judas, whom Dante placed in the lowest level of Hell. The presentations of these figures seem to represent certain masculine traits, models of how to behave or not to behave. Sometimes the same figure could be used to highlight both positive and negative behaviour.[7]

Why should a historical study on the origins of the Western concept of masculinity give such a predominant role to Alexander the Great? Simply put, Alexander has been one of the most influential and predominant historical figures used by authors – whether philosophers, kings and politicians, writers, or artists – to promote and justify cultural conceptions. Thus, the way Alexander has been used to build, or to reflect, masculine and other ideas from Antiquity to the early modern era, functions as a mirror for all similar cases. He was much venerated and imitated, and his life and deeds came to symbolise shared ideals in antiquity and medieval world. Many of the illustrious men of antiquity and later periods of history were presented (or presented themselves) as imitators of Alexander. The *imitatio Alexandri* is a pivotal motif in Classical and medieval literature. For the Hellenistic monarchs and Roman emperors, Alexander was the man they chose as their behavioural model and model for their self-portrait.[8] Also, *comparatio Alexandri* – where the writers compare Alexander, as the greatest king and conqueror to leading Roman figures and medieval rulers – appear often in the literature.[9] This practice of using Alexander as a model and reference point

should be taken into account when we approach most of the literary data: the authors are convinced of Alexander's exemplarity both in good and bad ways.

Particularly, the Roman Greeks of the early Empire chose the Macedonian monarch as the greatest man in the past and present.[10] In his so-called second preface to the *Anabasis*, Arrian stated that "no other man (*anḗr*) performed such remarkable deeds, whether in number or magnitude, among either Greeks or barbarians."[11] Plutarch went even further in his essay on Alexander, calling him the "greatest man who ever lived."[12] Diodorus, another Greek writer from Alexandria, wrote his *Library of History* during the reign of Augustus. His portrait of Alexander is typical of the Greco-Roman treatments of the king in the Imperial Era: "He accomplished greater deeds than any, not only of the kings who had lived before him but also of those who were to come later down to our time."[13] Even though Latin Romans are more moderate with their views, authors like Livy stress that Alexander as an individual was a remarkable monarch despite being a non-Roman. The Greek *Alexander Romance* begins by praising Alexander as "the best and the most noble of men."[14] These statements clearly stress the status of Alexander in the premodern world as an exemplary man whose deeds are at some level worthy of admiration and imitation. Even the early Christian author Jerome, who produced what would become the standard translation of the Bible known as the Latin Vulgate, admitted being an admirer of Alexander's deeds.[15] In the Middle Ages, authors continued to eulogise Alexander. Walter of Châtillon in his *Alexandreis,* composed in twelfth-century France, writes: "and if one should faithfully consider Alexander's mighty undertakings against the conquerors of the world in the tender bloom of youth with so few choice men, and how quickly the entire world fell at his knees, then, in comparison with this prince, the whole series of other leaders will be mere commoners."[16] In Walter's presentation Alexander is a man so exceptional that his accomplishments surpass those of all other warrior-monarchs.

What then was the masculine ideal Alexander stood for? My study negotiates Roman and medieval ideas of masculinity through the character of Alexander, analysing the representations and stories told of him (see Appendix 2: Timeline of Alexander's life). In this book, I shall show how the many images of Alexander can be considered predecessors to many masculine stereotypes referred to in either popular or more marginalised cultures today. As will be shown, a hegemonic masculinity of domination and power was essential for the use of Alexander as a masculine ideal to be popular. Evidently, the stories of Alexander were retold in relation to the previous stories and commonly shared values popular in the Mediterranean and Near East. Therefore, my study will also take into account the other existing ideals of masculinity in the premodern world. The way Alexander's story was used by the authors reveals, often implicitly, something about the dialogue between different, alternative ideas of gendered behaviour. By analysing the representations of Alexander from a gender aspect, we can reveal the possible

contradicting ideals that were regarded as unmanly, and thus, threatening to the hegemonic ideas of masculinity in the ancient world and in later periods of history.

In my book, I am not discussing masculinity using the historical representations of Alexander the Great's person only. I attempt to contextualise the Alexander-related stories, myths and representations. That is, I will examine the way Alexander's contemporaries were presented from a gender perspective. For example, there were several philosophers who accompanied Alexander, or whom the king encountered at some point in his life. Among these, the most prominent was the king's famous tutor Aristotle. Then there are also Alexander's generals like Parmenion, Cleitus and Hephaestion, men fighting alongside the king. On the other side, there were his opponents, Darius, the Great King of Persia, the Indian king Porus and the usurper Bessus or foreign members of his court like the eunuch Bagoas. These represent the barbarians as "the other." Sometimes these figures are used as rhetorical tools to construct Alexander's heroic masculinity. For example, the image of Parmenion as the cautious old general enables the authors to construct and underline the image of Alexander as a powerful, brave and dynamic young ruler. At times, the minor figures in the story represent alternative masculinities of effeminate males.

Alexander's reception reflects a Greco-Roman and Medieval culture where man was the standard by which others were judged. Post-Aristotle, especially in Neo-Platonism and Christianity, the cosmos was believed to be permeated by hierarchy (the scala naturae), and this applied to human society as much as to nature in general. Man was at the top of the ladder of living material beings on Earth. The sources of this study contain a minimal number of portrayals of women. Women are presented as outsiders in a playground dominated by men. When they come into the picture they are usually treated in relation to men, reflecting the masculine ideal. The most notable female figures in the Alexander tradition are his mother Olympias and Darius' mother Sisygambis. Alexander's wife Roxanne receives some attention. Other female figures are the Amazon queen Thalestris and Candace, mentioned in the *Alexander Romance*. The stories around them are chiefly discussed in the fifth chapter of this book.

Methodological approach and sources

The key research questions addressed in this study are the following: What was the nature of the masculine ideal figure/s of Alexander the Great and the stories around him that were promoted from Roman antiquity to the Middle Ages, and how are the minor male and female figures used in narratives to construct presentations of ideal masculinity? Since masculinity is learned and performed, we should ask what kind of model of masculine behaviour Alexander offered for the ancient Greeks and Romans as well as the Medieval aristocracy. How are age and social status connected with masculine ideals? What is an ideal man in the premodern societies I discuss and what place

does the figure of Alexander have in constructing and negotiating masculinity in ancient and medieval world? What masculine ideals existed in the premodern classical and medieval European world and what did it mean to be a man in ancient Rome and the Middle Ages? This study also reveals one important aspect of Alexander's legacy in history and why he has been so popular figure in literature and art.

All the sources that concern Alexander, from the last centuries of the Roman Republic, the early Roman Empire, Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages up to 600, and which represent various literary genres, have been included in this study. Surviving works that concern Alexander dramatically increased in the Middle Ages after 600, as he became one of the most popular figures from Antiquity. The amount of material is so great that I have not been able to include all of it in my analysis and I have focused on medieval Western Europe.[17]

In this book, I approach the Classical and Medieval texts as a medium for gender constructions, and especially as configurations of masculinity. I explore how the stories depict Alexander's masculinity and how these texts are related to views of gender in contemporary society. The "historical facts" or truths of the narrative are of no concern here, since my task is to locate representations of masculinity which are always present whether the stories are historically true or not. I trace perceptions of manhood and ideas about manhood – what is expected of men. Written works inform us of elite contemporary ideologies of masculinity. In my analysis, I focus on the passages where reference to gender is made explicitly. In such passages, authors use words with gendered connotations like "man/woman," "male/female," "manliness/unmanliness," "feminine," "effeminate" etc.

It is important to identify the gendered terminology and masculine language. In Classical Greek, the essential term was *anḗr* ("man") which was the opposite to the word *gynē* ("woman"). Furthermore, from the word "man" derived gendered concepts like *andreíā*, *aretḗ* and *andragathía*, which could be translated as manliness, manly virtue, or manly courage. In Latin, the word for man was *vir* ("man"), which was etymologically linked to *virtus,* meaning manliness, manly conduct, courage and virtue, as well as adjectives such as *virilis* ("being manly"). In Greek and Latin, there were also expressions like *ánthrōpos* and *homo* which referred more to humans in general. In addition, *vir* referred to a man of higher status, or an ideal man, whereas *homo* was commonly used in hostile contexts. In the vocabulary there were also words referring to unmanly, effeminate and "soft" men, or to unmanly and womanish conduct (In Greek *malakos*, *ánandros*, *gynaikeîos*, Latin words *muliebris*, *effeminatus* and *mollis*). By using these expressions the authors could construct and maintain the views of ideal and desired expressions of masculinity as well as exclude some practices and behaviour that violated socially accepted gender norms.[18] Still, it must be remembered that the etymologically masculine trait *virtus* could on some occasions refer to women who had displayed courage. This tells us of the flexibility of gender: women

could display traits that were normally attributed to men. In these cases, we can use term female masculinity.[19] Sometimes the reference to gender is implicit and is present in the text even though the authors do not explicitly use gendered concepts.

All the literary works examined in this study were composed by male authors writing about other men. Even though there are some female figures, notable is usually the absence of women, although there are some who contribute to events. The audience and readership were male members of the society, usually belonging to the upper class. Since manuscripts were expensive, these texts were kept in libraries and read only on certain occasions. The function of the texts representing different literary genres was simultaneously to educate their readership and entertain them. The warrior monarch was used to highlight certain paradigms of manliness.

For the audience of these Classical and Medieval texts, Alexander represented a monarch (*basilêos*, *rex*) who lived in the distant past. At the same time, Alexander represented an illustrious man (*anḗr*, *vir*) whom the literary audience were already familiar with. Even though his social status as a king surpassed the majority of those who read these texts, his figure served to emphasise what being a man could mean in different social and cultural contexts and define desirable expressions of masculinity. As will be shown in Chapter 3, expressions denoting "young man" (such as *néos*, *meirákion*, *iuvenis*, etc.) were repeatedly used when referring to Alexander in the source material.

My principal sources include Diodorus of Sicily's *Library of History* (*Bibliotheke*), Curtius' *Historiae Alexandri*, Plutarch's *Life of Alexander*, Arrian's *Anabasis* and Justin's account of Alexander's reign. These five texts are the longest Classical works dealing with Alexander's life. Diodorus, Plutarch and Arrian wrote their works in Greek, while Curtius and Justin wrote in Latin. All these works were composed at a time when the Roman Empire dominated the Mediterranean world politically and militarily. Diodorus' work was composed in the late first century BCE, possible during the Augustan era, while Curtius' *Historiae* was probably composed either during Claudius' or Vespasian's reign. Plutarch and Arrian wrote their works in the second century CE, and Justin wrote his epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Philippic Histories* most likely before 226, in the late second century or early third century CE.[20]

Our knowledge of the lives of these five writers varies. Of Diodorus, we merely know that he was born in Agyrium (modern Agira) in Sicily and spent time in Rome and Egypt.[21] Since the first two books of Curtius' *Historiae* are lost we know hardly anything of Curtius' life or why he wrote his work. Undoubtedly, his target audience was the senatorial class and those who shared its values. It has been suggested that Curtius also shared some Stoic views that can be traced from his work.[22] Pompeius Trogus was a Romanized Gaul who wrote his major work *Philippic History* in the Augustan era, a history of the known world down to the first century BCE. An important question is whether Justin added material of his own in his Epitome of Trogus' original

work or merely mirrored what Trogus wrote.[23] Either way, Justin's *Epitome of Trogus,* like the works of Diodorus and Curtius, negotiates masculine ideals in its presentation of Alexander as well as other minor figures in the story.

We know much more of the political and literary careers of Plutarch and Arrian. The former was a Greek born in the small town of Chaeronea who studied literature and philosophy in Athens. He served as a priest of the Delphic temple, a magistrate at Chaeronea, and as epimeletes of the Amphictyonic League. Plutarch visited Rome at least twice and received Roman citizenship, and he addressed his writings to the members of Roman upper class. His *Life of Alexander* is one of a series of biographies of illustrious Greeks and Romans, known as *Parallel Lives,* which is arranged in pairs to illuminate their common or contrasting moral virtues and vices. Plutarch was a Platonist who was well acquainted with literature and philosophy and believed in the superiority of Greek *paideia*.[24]

Arrian was born in Nicomedia, the provincial capital of Bithynia, and he was a Roman citizen. In his early years Arrian attended lectures of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus and wrote notes on his teachings, the *Discourses of Epictetus*. As a friend of Hadrian, he was appointed consul and either in 131 or 132 he was made governor of Cappadocia. When the Alans invaded the province, it was Arrian who led the Roman legions to ward off the attack. Later in his life Arrian went to Athens, where he was archon probably in 145 or 146.[25] Arrian was a Roman magistrate, soldier and commander who was acquainted with Stoic philosophy. Like Plutarch he was a Romanized Greek who knew the ruling emperor personally.[26]

In my analysis these five accounts, composed by Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian and Justin, form the basis for my research, since their narratives are related to all themes discussed in the main chapters. In addition, my source material contains minor Greek and Latin passages on Alexander when they are related to some aspects of manhood. Other authors who wrote about Alexander in the early Roman Empire were Cicero, Livy, Valerius Maximus, Seneca and Apuleius, to mention but a few. From late antiquity we have *Alexander's Itinerary* (*Itinerarium Alexandri*), which is an account of Alexander's Persian campaign addressed to Emperor Constantius II. Early Christian authors like Basil, Palladius, Orosius and Fulgentius are also taken into account in the analysis. The majority of the works were composed by the Roman upper class, who shared a similar cultural background, allowing for social and religious change that occurred during a period of almost 500 years.

I have also included in my source material the *Alexander Romance* tradition. The first version of the Romance was written in Greek, but it was later translated and adapted into Latin, as well as into many vernaculars. It can be regarded as one of the most widely spread opuses in world literature and for centuries it was the most well-known and influential account of Alexander's reign. The *Alexander Romance* may be described as a fusion of historical biography, fiction-based tales and apocryphal letters. The author, or the editor,

of the original work is unknown, referred to as Pseudo-Callisthenes in many of the oldest manuscripts. The earliest manuscript of the Greek *Alexander Romance*, referred to as the Alpha (α) recension, dates from the third century, while the other three manuscripts are called the Beta (β), Gamma (γ) and Delta recensions. When the first version of the *Alexander Romance* was written is disputed; some scholars regard it as a work composed in Ptolemaic Egypt during the third century BCE, while others think it was written by a compiler who lived in the Roman Empire during the third century CE. The Egyptian elements in the *Alexander Romance* (hereafter *AR*) that do not appear in the five Alexander histories likely result from the key narrative that makes Alexander the son of Pharaoh Nectanebus.[27]

Since the *AR* was translated and adapted into 35 languages, I felt it impossible to include all the existing versions in my study. Some of these versions do not belong to the period under consideration. In addition to the Greek *AR* and its recensions, the versions I have included in my source material are in Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Old-French, Hebrew and Old Swedish. I have used available translations and, when needed, I have had assistance from experts who know these languages well. Sometimes anonymous authors of the *AR* added new definitions of masculinity and gendered meanings to the fabulous story of the world-conqueror Alexander by their amendments and omissions.[28]

The first Latin translation of the Greek *AR,* composed by Julius Valerius Alexander Polemius and titled *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis,* comes from the fourth century while the Armenian version was composed in the fifth century and the Syriac version in the sixth century. All these three versions include some new stories, adaptions, additions, or statements that we do not find in the previous Greek version. There was also another Latin version of the *AR* by Leo the Archpriest composed in the tenth century. This version has not survived but its J1 recension from the eleventh century, called *Historia de preliis,* has survived. I have included it in my source material. Several medieval French versions of the *AR* appeared in the twelfth century and the version known as the *Roman de toute chevalerie* (*Romance of All Chivalry*) by Thomas de Kent will be part of this study. The Hebrew version of the *AR* (titled *Sefer Toledot Alexandras ha-Makdoni*, "The Book of the Gests of Alexander of Macedon") was written in the thirteenth century, and it contains some interpolations taken from the OT. As an example of how the ideas of masculinity impacted on Medieval Northern Europe, I have also included *Konung Alexander* from the end of the fourteenth century, composed in Old Swedish, which was translated from some recension of the *Historia de preliis*. In the various versions of the *AR* Alexander is clearly an exemplary hero with fewer vices than the Macedonian king of the other sources.[29]

Versions of the *AR* formed an essential backbone for the Medieval reception of Alexander. Moreover, there were medieval works whose authors used it as their primary source material. Some of these works belong to my source

material as well. The most popular work in the Medieval Western Europe that derived from the *AR* tradition was *Epistula ad Aristotelem* (*Alexander's epistle to Aristotle*) which was translated not only from Greek to Latin (most likely in the seventh century) but also into Old English.[30] An important epic opus is also Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis,* composed in Latin at the end of the twelfth century.[31] The *Libro de Alexandre,* written in Spanish by anonymous Castilian cleric at the beginning of the thirteenth century, is another very important work representing Alexander's legend in medieval Central Europe. As his source material the author used both *AR* as well as Châtillon's *Alexandreis*.[32] These two works of epic underline how the Classical tradition and the Romance material and its concepts of masculinity were interpreted in Medieval Europe. Both works were written in the crusading era and the contemporary Crusading ideology evidently made an impact on the way Alexander's legend was used.[33] In addition, Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (*The Persian Book of Kings*) composed in the tenth century will be included as source material in this study. This Persian work includes tales of Iranian mythical heroes but also the story of Sekandar (Alexander) as a half-brother of Dara (Darius).[34] Because both Classical and Medieval sources used in this book were written by upper-class males, the views represent the social class of the wealthy and educated, thus offering their perception of elite masculinity. Conversely, lower-class views of manliness cannot be detected from the present source material.

I use visual sources whenever they are relevant to the themes and issues of the main chapters. Especially in the first main chapter they receive a lot of attention because they are directly related to ideas of Alexander's physical appearance. In the rest of the chapters, they are used more as supplementary material. Some of the ancient visual sources are Alexander's Lysippan portraits and his portraits on the coinage. In addition, works like the Alexander mosaic and the Alexander sarcophagus are presentations of Alexander's appearance and martial masculinity in antiquity. Regarding medieval sculptures and mosaics, a particularly popular motif was the king's ascension to heaven.[35]

It must be remembered that the term "masculinity" is a modern term referring to qualities, attributes, or roles regarded as characteristic of men. It should also be remembered that it is a heuristic category and device that the researcher uses when examining the gendered cultures of the past.[36] Even though in the premodern world "masculinity" was not used in this way, there were plenty of words and expressions that denoted men and manly behaviour, as shown above. In my research, I write about masculinities in plural to underline that there was no single, monolithic conception of masculinity in the premodern world, whereas there were competing models and categories of masculinity. The use of the plural stresses that masculinity was understood and defined differently by different people and in different contexts. However, pluralising masculinity has its weaknesses since people in different periods of history were not aware of the

complexity of masculinity. It is likely that in the past upper-class males had a conception of masculinity that was much simpler than that of modern studies.[37]

The theory of hegemonic masculinity is essential for any research on masculinity. According to the theory, first formulated by the sociologists Tim Carrigan, Raewyn Connell and John Lee (1985) and later popularised by Connell (1987, 1995), there is always a type of masculinity that is dominant while there are also subordinate, marginalised and complicit masculinities.[38] Again, the definition of what is desired/hegemonic masculinity and undesired/subordinate form of masculinity in certain contexts are related to power and ideology. These power relationships between genders and within genders are particularly constructed by dominance of men over women and subordinate masculinities. One importance of Connell's research was stressing the idea of plural masculinities as well. The theory has been criticised as too oversimplifying and binary, arguing that the hegemonic version of masculinity merely tends to suppress and subjugate harshly the marginalised masculinities. In his critique of Connell, Demetriou (2001) suggested that different forms of masculinity are in constant interaction and that the hegemonic masculinity can sometimes authorise some elements of marginalised masculinities. According to him hegemonic masculinity should be regarded as hybrid bloc that unites various and diverse practices reproducing patriarchy.[39]

In this study, hegemonic masculinity means masculine ideas or masculinities that were popular among the upper-class males of the specified time. However, it must always be kept in mind that in different periods of history there have been multiple ways to be man and various forms of masculinity. One should also recognise the challenge in attempting to verify whether there has been merely one form of hegemonic masculinity in any given time/era. Furthermore, it must be remembered that views of ideal masculinity have always been linked to social status and age. Thus, they are to be considered as intersectional. The masculine ideals and expectations addressed to kings and soldiers differed from those addressed towards philosophers and priests. Also, a man's age radically influenced masculine ideals. The gendered expectations directed towards young males and old males were different. This does not mean that there were no common masculine ideals that all males were aware of and which could be applied to men of divergent social status and age.

Even though the theory of hegemonic masculinity is "correct" in postulating various masculinities and that some masculine ideals seem to be dominant, we cannot assume that varied masculine ideals were inevitably in conflict, since males belonging to different social classes were aware that there were different expectations towards different classes. I should emphasise here that demonstration of whether or not a given version of "hegemonic" masculinity was aimed to suppress other forms of masculinity or women is not the purpose of my study.

In this study, the figure of Alexander represents the cultural masculine ideal of what is right and proper for a man to do and be for free male

members of the society. Another line of approach to gender comes from Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990), which underlined the performance of gender. Butler's acclaimed study focused on the idea that gender is something we do, not necessarily what we are.[40] In this book, I show that ancient and medieval texts offer portraits of how males were expected to perform and behave, or expected not to perform and behave. Since masculinity is learned and performed, we may ask what kind of model of masculine behaviour Alexander offered for ancient Greeks and Romans and the medieval warrior class?

One further useful concept for my approach is hypermasculinity. In this study, hypermasculinity refers to a form of hegemonic masculinity which is so overwhelming that it causes doubts as to whether such an expression of masculinity is too extreme and therefore suspect.[41] The hypermasculine action is something that no longer functions as an expression of an ideal masculinity, or at least leaves open the question as to whether other males should imitate this kind of behaviour. In my study, the concept is used when analysing the narratives on Alexander's recklessness in war or his endless fervor for new conquests, which surpasses that of all his soldiers. By the expression "true" or "real" man, used in this book, I refer to a man whose conduct is that which ancient and/or medieval writers would consider ideal or optimal masculine behaviour.

Greco-Roman and Medieval societies were male-centred. On his study of Greek myths and masculinity Van Nortwick (2008) writes on the misogynistic way the universe was seen in Greek culture: "That intelligence, in turn, was understood to be a natural endowment of men, who were the agents of civilisation. Women, on the other hand, were closer by their biological makeup to the forces of nature and so had to be controlled by men in order for human civilisation to function smoothly."[42] The assertion of male superiority over women – based on the belief in women's lack of rationality and inclination to harmful passions – was repeated by many Greek intellectuals like Aristotle, Philo and Galen, all of whom supported the idea that women were defective males and belonged to the inferior sex.[43] Medieval intellectuals inherited and adapted classical philosophy to their theology and adopted this view of women wholesale. In the Judeo-Christian world, God created man first out of the dust of the ground while woman was created later from Adam's rib. In the Bible itself God appears as manlike and its exegetes such as Origen, Tertullian, Lactantius, Augustine, and their medieval successors emphasised this, reinforcing the patriarchal order.[44] This male-centred worldview had specific consequences in the given societies. However, exploring hegemonic masculinity does not mean supporting it but rather revealing its mechanism/s and how its expressions are constructed. For this study, it is important to explore the paradigms of masculinity and the historical process in creating them in Classical antiquity and in the medieval world. This enables us to better understand and, if needed, question the generally agreed expressions of masculinity and expectations to men.

The traditional binary view of sex and gender has been strongly questioned by many modern scholars and intellectuals. It has been noted that also in the premodern world having a male or female body did not necessarily make one a man or a woman. Most likely, in Antiquity and Middle Ages there were those who had a female body but did not consider themselves as women in that they abandoned way of life and tasks generally expected of women in the period. Additionally, there were persons who did not fit within existing gender definitions, or who deliberately challenged them. This aspect should be remembered when examining the constructions of masculinities in upper-class premodern societies.[45]

Previous research and outline of this study

There has been little study of Alexander the Great as a gendered subject in scholarship, although Alexander has been studied a lot. Research on the historical Alexander that has touched upon gender has concentrated on his sexuality and relationship with women. Daniel Ogden (2011) and Elizabeth Carney have studied these matters. In addition, Ada Cohen (2010) has paid attention to the gender perspectives that can be read from the visual sources produced in the third and fourth centuries BCE. Scholarly interest in Alexander's reception in different historical contexts, literary genres and visual art has been examined in various articles and monographs. In most cases, the perspective is from literary or intellectual history. However, gender has had a low profile in studies of reception of Alexander the Great.[46]

The number of historians studying masculinity has grown during recent years, while in classical scholarship the concepts of gender and identity have received a lot of attention.[47] At first scholars studying sex and gender focused only on women. This focus reflected the general trends in scholarship where gender studies meant in practice solely women's studies. However, when males also came into focus in gender studies classicists and historians realised that exploring masculinities was also vital and intriguing. In 2003 Helen Lovatt wrote in her review that: "Masculinity is not the undifferentiated norm from which women, slaves and others diverge, but rather that too is a social construct, open to renegotiation and redefinition."[48] During the last thirty years, classical scholars have started to pay attention more and more to the historical construction of masculinity, following the two important collected volumes of Foxhall and Salmon (1998) and Rosen and Sluiter (2003).

At first classical scholars examining masculinity focused particularly on sexuality. For example, Williams (1999) concentrates on the sexual norms and expectations that defined manliness.[49] Kuefler (2001) examines the new masculine ideal that was introduced to the Roman world by the cultural and demographic success of Christianity. He particularly focused on eunuchs and the gender ambiguity of the Christian ideology of Late Antiquity and the renunciation of masculinity. In his study, it was suggested that in Late Antiquity a new Christian male ideal came into existence because of the

military crisis of the period. Stewart (2016a, 2016b), who has studied the military masculinity of the Byzantine era, questioned Kuefler's idea that barbarian enemies who threatened the Empire and had become better soldiers and forced the Romans to redefine their views of ideal masculinity. Instead, Stewart argues that the old martial ideal of masculinity continued to exist in late antique Roman society.[50] Apart from Stewart's research it seems that the gendered ideology of war and martial masculinity in Greco-Roman culture has hardly been studied at all, perhaps taken as granted.[51]

Van Nortwick (2008) explores the Greek myths and the masculine ideals their tales represent. Goldberg (2021) examines the political participation of the *vir bonus* as the bedrock of Roman masculinity. His research recognises the ways in which Roman aristocratic men adapted the old Republican cultural vocabulary to the new social conditions of the Principate. One important finding was the continuity in the way Roman men fashioned themselves to serve the public good. In previous research scholars have often studied masculine ideals from the perspective of a certain genre of literature or a certain author. For example, Roisman (2005) focuses on the Attic orators while Nathan (2015) examines the ideal male that can be distinguished in Claudian's image of Flavius Stilicho, while Stewart (2020) explores the ways Procopius constructs images of martial masculinity. Meriel (2012) focuses on the genre of romance and the views of masculinity it constructs, but it does not include *AR* in its source material. The masculinities in the New Testament and Jesus have been well-studied by Conway (2008), Wilson (2015) and Asikainen (2018). Since the reception of Jesus and early Christian masculinity belonged to the same ancient world, these studies offer important parallel material for my own study. Studies on female masculinity in the Classical world should be mentioned here, even though this aspect of the premodern gender system is a side-issue in my present research.[52]

Examination of masculinity in the Middle Ages has grown during the last two decades. One of the key studies was Karras (2003), which uses the numerous texts addressed to a lay audience and focuses on the three masculine ideals of knight, university scholar and craftsman. In the research into medieval masculinities, an important finding was the idea of clerical masculinity. Some scholars have suggested that there existed a third gender in the Middle Ages referring to "those living in celibacy".[53] The gendered expectations laid upon clergy and the division between secular and sacred masculinities in medieval societies have been examined in the research of Cullum and Lewis (2004) and Cullum and Lewis (2013). In the clerical and monastic discourse valuation of chastity was regarded as more masculine than sexual activity.

Stone (2011) explores on ideas of masculinity in the Carolingian Empire while Lewis (2013) examines the dynamic between kingship and masculinity in fifteenth-century England. Fletcher (2010) concentrates on the figure of Richard II and ideas of masculinity. The collected volume edited by Hodgson, Lewis, and Mesley (2019) investigates crusading and masculinities, while the volume edited by Rasmussen (2019) provides an example of

how the traditional binary view of sex and gender can be replaced by a more gender-fluid approach. In the preface of the work as well as in its articles, it is underlined that medieval masculinities should be treated in plural and always seen as intersectional and non-normative.[54]

Classical Antiquity, Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages are rarely studied in the same volume. Even though scrutinising a long historical time span in one monograph creates difficulties in contextualising the material, I see new possibilities for fruitful research here. As I study here a large variety of material from Classical times to Middle Ages, I have an excellent opportunity to explore historical continuity and change in masculine ideals. When it comes to studying the reception of a famous figure, King (1987) shows that scrutinising both Classical and Medieval texts concerning Achilles in the same study opens new insights and is itself a rewarding approach.[55] Taking a *longue durèe* approach requires that a researcher understands that Antiquity and the Middle Ages are, in themselves, not monolithic or culturally unified periods, nor did they constitute static, separate societies. The religious and political systems of the polytheistic Greeks and Romans differed greatly from those of Medieval Christian Europe, although there was considerable variation within both periods. However, there are several social and cultural factors that bring the Ancient and Medieval worlds together. In introduction to a volume of collected papers that contained articles on religious participation in ancient and medieval societies Katajala-Peltomaa and Vuolanto (2013) write on these factors as follows:

> Both the Ancient and Medieval worlds were pre-modern societies based on subsistence agricultural production and a household economy, with high birth rates combined with heavy childhood mortality. Strict hierarchies, understood as natural, were basic elements in all societies of this era, while the social status and gender of the individuals defined their space for action within the community. Moreover, the cultural base of the later Middle Ages was formed both by the remnants of Classical civilization and the ecclesiastical authors of (Late) Antiquity; the ideals of the good life, the definition of miracles and the elements of sainthood were all constructed during this earlier period.[56]

Although Katajala-Peltomaa and Vuolanto here write in the context of a volume concerning ancient and medieval religious practices, this holds true even more with the issue of gender roles and the construction of masculinities and femininities, which were less self-conscious and reflected underlying cultural structure. Therefore, it is necessary to explore this phenomenon of the construction of masculinity in a truly longue term perspective: in this case how the ideals of masculinity changed or remained the same in the literary tradition of Alexander.

Even though historical contexts and literary genres were various, observations about the nature of the change in masculine ideals can be made. In other

words, I will ask how the texts produce views of ideal or proper masculinities and expressions of gender. The question of how much Classical reception of Alexander's masculinity impacted on the views of Alexander in the Western Medieval world is obviously related to what literary works were available and known to Medieval intellectuals. Plutarch and Arrian were unknown in Western Europe, whereas the Latin History of Alexander written by Curtius was known and used as a source text from the mid-twelfth century. Also, Justin's and Orosius' works were known in the Middle Ages. In the fifteenth century, translations of Curtius into Italian, Spanish and French were produced and Arrian was translated into Latin.[57] As this book is not focusing on literary history, I will not be examining in detail precisely which sources a certain writer used or how they arranged their material.

I have divided my research into five chapters. In Chapter 2, I will analyse Alexander's appearance and conceptions of ideal masculinity. For example, how definitions of masculinity can be distinguished in the passages concerning Alexander's appearance, alleged beauty and body. In this chapter, I also consider the visual portraits of the Macedonian world-conqueror and the way they were interpreted. In Chapter 3, I look at the reception of Alexander as a boy and young male and how these are related to masculine ideals. In Chapter 4, I study Alexander's martial performance as a masculine ideal. I examine these concepts of masculinity in the context of contemporary martial role expectations for men. In Chapter 5, I examine ideal masculinity in relation to male sexuality. I focus on the ways the tales of Alexander's sexual continence, or his inability to master his desires, were highlighting proper and improper sexual behaviour. The theme of Chapter 6 is definitions of masculinity when displaying emotions. It deals with emotions and conduct, such as showing grief, anger and deadly pride. The last chapter presents an overview of the masculine ideals that are promoted in the sources. It handles the question of whether there is continuity or change in the masculine ideal negotiated through Alexander.

Notes

1 This speech can be found from the ancient sources and Stone's scene partly derives from the works of the Roman historians. In Chapter 6, pages 203–204, I deal with the speech in the ancient sources and the masculine ideals it promotes.
2 In Stone's film, Alexander's imperialism is not a bloodthirsty and brutal colonialism but idealised multiculturalism aimed to unite mankind under a peaceful, beneficent ruler. Cf. Paul (2010, 21) and Harrison (2010, 223).
3 Cartledge and Greenland (2010) does not deal with the question of the kind of constructions of masculinity the Stone's film constructs. Yet in the volume, Carney (2010) accuses Stone of the sexual stereotyping of women in general and presenting Olympias in the wrong light. According to Carney, the film presents women as stock figures serving a male fantasy and reinforcing a view of the passivity of women. For the director's reply to Carney's critique, see Stone (2010, 339).
4 Cf. Karras (2003, 153).
5 For a study on the Herculean bodies and representations of masculinities in modern cinema, see O'Brien (2014). Cf. Mosse (1996, 170–174).

6 For a discussion of Roman Emperors or statesmen as good and bad examples of virtue and manliness, see Conway (2008, 23–25); Stewart (2016a, 35; 2016b, 61–71). For a discussion on Scipio as an exemplary man, see Goldberg (2021, 47–50). On the ways, Octavian Augustus created his public image to correspond to the Roman masculine ideals, see Conway (2008, 39–49). For male philosophers whose life and deeds were often seen as exemplary, see Trapp (2007, 88). Diogenes of Sinope was regarded as the representative of Cynicism, and emissary or messenger of God whose path his followers imitated, see Navia (1998, 59, 146–147). For Plato and Xenophon as well as many other authors Socrates was regarded as the prime exemplar of virtue and the philosophical life. As the wisest sage who had ever lived, this philosopher provided an example of being aware of the fact that none possess the knowledge of the most important things. Also, his search for wisdom was an example to those studying philosophy. Cf. Brouwer (2014, 136).

7 For David in the Hebrew Bible as an ideal man, see Clines (1995, 212–244). For Jesus as a masculine ideal, see Gleason (2003); Conway (2008); Asikainen (2018). For more on the heroes of the Middle Ages, see Gerritsen and Melle (1998). Taylor (2013, 10–11). In the fourteenth century, a list of heroes, the nine worthies; was also recognised. In this list were included Hector, Alexander, Julius Caesar, Joshua, David, Judas Maccabeus, Arthur, Charlemagne and Godfrey de Bouillon. In the context of Alexander's reception, see Pérez-Simon (2022, 160–162).

8 For Alexander's important status in world culture, see Moore (2018); Stoneman (2022). For *imitatio Alexandri* in the Roman world, see Weippert (1972); Kühnen (2008); Spencer (2002, 15–31); Nabel (2018, 208–209); Wallace (2018); Peltonen (2019a, 21–22, 220–221).

9 The authors of the early empire and late antiquity used the *comparatio Alexander* when they made their claims in the present and constructed cultural identities. Peltonen (2019a, 30–38, 48–51, 56, 135–141, 144–150, 196–197). For comparing Alexander to Byzantine and medieval rulers, see Jouanno (2018a, 457–460); Stone (2013, 96, 117, 134).

10 Peltonen (2019a, 46–57).

11 Trans. P.E Brunt. Ar. *an*. 1.12.4: "ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις ἄλλος εἷς ἀνὴρ τοσαῦτα ἢ τηλικαῦτα ἔργα κατὰ πλῆθος ἢ μέγεθος ἐν Ἕλλησιν ἢ βαρβάροις ἀπεδείξατο."

12 Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 335f.

13 Trans. C. Bradford Welles. Diod. Sic. 17.117.5: "πράξεις δὲ μεγίστας κατεργασάμενος οὐ μόνον τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ βασιλευσάντων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ὕστερον ἐσομένων μέχρι τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς βίου." Also, in the first lines of his treatment of Alexander, Diodorus offers similar words of praise in Diod. Sic.17.1.3–4.

14 *AR*. 1.1.

15 Jer. *C. Ruf*. 3.40. Alexander's figure did not merely represent ultimate greatness and superiority over other males but also extremes. This appears clearly in the way Justin in his Epitome of the Philippic history of Pompeius Trogus compares Philip of Macedon with Alexander. He states that "Philip was succeeded by his son Alexander, who surpassed his father in both good qualities and bad (*virtute et vitiis patre maior*)" Just. Epit. 9.8.11. Trans. J. C. Yardley. For Justin Alexander's virtues and vices were exceptional.

16 Trans. Telfryn Pritchard. Chât. *Alex*. 5.500–504: *Si fide recolas quam raro milite contra / Victores mundi tenero sub flore iuventae / Quanta sit aggressus Macedo, quam tempore parvo / Totus Alexandri genibus se fuderit orbis, Tota ducum series* (Pritchard 1986, 137).

17 Cf. Gerritsen and van Melle (1998, 15–24). For an introduction to the vast amount of Alexander in the Middle Ages, see Cary (1956): Zuwiyya (2011a). The periodisation I use in this study is the one appearing usually in Anglo-American and German historiography: the Early Middle Ages is 400/450–1000, the High

Middle Ages 1000–1300 and the Late Middle Ages 1300–1500, which overlaps with the early Renaissance.

18 For masculine language and gendered terminology in the ancient sources, see Stewart (2016b, 16–18). For an essential study on gendered language in Latin, see L'Hoir (1992). For the difference between *vir* and *homo*. See Alston (1998, 206–207). Balmaceda (2017) distinguishes the two meanings of virtus as *virilis-virtus*, denoting roughly "manly courage," and *humana-virtus*, referring more to our moral virtue, which includes traits like clemency and justice.

19 For the infrequent attributing of *virtus* to women in the Latin of the late Republic, see McDonnel (2006, 162–164). McDonnel suggests that the authors preferred to use the word *fortitudo* (instead of *virtus*) when they characterised manly courage displayed by women.

20 For a discussion on dating of Diodorus' *Bibliotheke*, see Munz (2017, 217–221). For the Claudian dating of Curtius' *Historiae* see Atkinson (1980, 19–57; 2009, 3–9); Heckel (1984, 1–4). For the dating of Curtius to Vespasian's reign, see Baynham (1998, 213–219). Hamilton (1969, xxxvi–xxxviii) suggested that Plutarch's *Alexander* was composed somewhere between 110 and 115. As regards Arrian's *Anabasis*, Bosworth (1980, 8–10) suggested that Arrian wrote it in 120-130 during the reign of Hadrian, while Stadter (1980, 184–185) proposed that it was composed during his stay in Athens in 145–146. For the dating of Justin, see Santi-Amantini (1981, 9–11); Yardley (1997, 8–13).

21 For the limited information we have on Diodorus' life, see Munz (2017, 3–13). Cf. Diod. Sic. 1.4.4.

22 McQueen (1967, 32–33). Cf. Baynham (1998, 111–112). For Curtius' literary background, see Baynham (1998 15–56).

23 Yardley (1997, 1–6, 8–13).

24 For Plutarch's life, see Beck (2014, 2–6). For Plutarch as a Platonist, see Boys-Stones (1997, 41).

25 Bosworth (1980, 1–7). For a life of Arrian and his works, see Stadter (1980). For Arrian's Stoic thinking, see Burliga (2013, 80–104); Brunt (1977, 47–48); Liotsakis (2019, 236) (see note 13) seems to be sceptical on whether Arrian's text and views should be approached from the Stoic perspective.

26 Cf. Stadter (1980, 9, 49).

27 Nawotka (2017, 3–5, 30–33). Cf. Stoneman (2018, viii). For a detailed study of the Greek *AR* and its recensions, see Merkelbach and Trumpf (1977).

28 There are several modern translations of the *AR*:s the translations of the Greek *AR* by Dowden (1989), and Stoneman (1991), the English translation of the Armenian *AR* by Albert Wolohojian (1969), and the Syriac *AR* is translated by Budge (1889). The Latin *AR* attributed to Julius Valerius has been translated into French by Foubert (2014). Two of the three books of the Greek and Latin *AR* have been translated into Italian by Gargiuolo (2007, 2012) and have been published in two volumes. Some of the medieval versions of the *AR* have been translated as well. There is an English translation of the Hebrew *AR* by Kazis (1962). For the dating of the Hebrew *AR*, see Kazis (1962, 38–39). *Historia de preliis* has been translated by Pritchard (1992), while *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* was translated into French by Gaullier-Bougassas and Harf-Lancner (2003).

29 For the different versions of the *AR* see Ross (1988, 5–67); Stoneman (1991, 28–32; 2008, 231–245); Nawotka (2017, 271–273). For the Latin *AR* of Julius Valerius, see Foubert (2014, 4–15, 17–20). It is likely that it was composed somewhere after 270 but before year 330. Lane Fox (1997, 242); Stoneman (2004, 177–183). Foubert (2014, 3–13). For the Syriac version, see Monferrer-Sala (2011, 44, 53). For the *Historia de preliis*, see Pritchard (1992, 7–12). In my study, I use as my source material the J1 recension of the *Historia de preliis*. For the *Roman de toute chevalerie*, see Stone (2019, 50–77), and for a discussion of

the medieval Hebrew *AR*, see Kazis (1962, 40–59). For *Konung Alexander*, see Magoun (1948); Ashurst (2011, 324–327). For the Arabic versions of the *AR* which I have not included in this study, see Zuwiyya (2011b, 76–83).

30 Gunderson (1980, 34–36); Stoneman (1994a, xxii–xxiii); Bridges (1996, 45–61); Di Serio (2022). The Latin version of the *Epistula* was the basis for the vernacular translations like that into Old English which has some differences from the Latin original. There are several modern translations of the work. Gunderson (1980, 140–156) is based on the Latin version of the eighth century, while Stoneman (1994a, 3–20) is translated from the tenth century Latin text. Orchard (2003, 225–254) has a translation of the Old English version of *Epistula*. On the differences between the Latin and Old English versions of the letter (The Orosian tones), see Orchard (2003, 116–139).

31 Walter was French, and he had studied at the University of Paris and addressed his work to his patron. On the life of Châtillon, see Pritchard (1986, 1–5); Lafferty (2009, 2–15). On his possible motives to write *Alexandreis*, see Lafferty (2011, 180–181). *Alexandreis* has been translated in prose by Pritchard (1992) and in verse by Townsend (2007). Unless otherwise stated, the references to Châtillon's original Latin are taken from the edition of Marvin L. Colker (1978), *Galteri De Castellione Alexandreis*. I also give some references from Pritchard's translation, and where I have done so I cite them as such.

32 Such and Rabone (2009, 1–75); Zuwiyya (2011c, 235–236); Rabone (2022). For the sources of *Libro de Alexandre*, see Michael (1970, 17–25); Such and Rabone (2009, 23–33). In this study, I have used the translation Such and Rabone (2009) and any original Spanish text I quote in this book is taken from their volume.

33 For the crusading ideology and the reception of Alexander, see Cruse (2022). In his richly informed article, the reference to *Alexandreis* is short while *Libro* has not been included in the discussion. Cf. Cruse (2022), 176. For crusading ideology and above-mentioned *Roman de toute chevalerie*, see Cruse (2022, 174–175).

34 Manteghi (2018, 46–70).

35 Pérez-Simon (2022, 143–146). For illustrations of Alexander in medieval manuscripts – which are not included as a subject of this study – see Ross (1971); Ross, Pérez-Simon and Stones (2019).

36 Bederman (2011, 14–16).

37 Seidler (2011, 437) makes this remark.

38 Carrigan, Connell and Lee (1985). For Raewyn Connell's studies, particularly works *Gender and Power* (1987) and *Masculinities* (1995) are important.

39 Connell's theory is derived from feminist thought. According to Connell, hegemonic masculinity is a strategy for the subordination of women. Demetriou (2001, 344–349) suggests that more relevant is internal hegemony, where hegemonic masculinity tends to lead the other versions of masculinity rather than subordination of women. In addition, according to him it does not totally subordinate or eliminate the other marginalised versions of masculinity. For an addressed critique of the theory, see Yang (2020, 320). According to Yang (2020, 321, 327–329), hegemonic masculinity is not bound to legitimate patriarchy, or to serve heteronormative patriarchy, but it can also be directed towards masculinities that are peace-making as opposed to war-making. Cf. Connell (2012, 15).

40 Cf. Butler (1990, 24–25).

41 Asikainen (2018, 14–15) defines it in her research as an overemphasis of the aspects of power and control that are important for the contemporary hegemonic masculinity.

42 Van Nortwick (2008, 155).

43 Lee (2015, 35–37); Conway (2008, 16–20).

44 Blumenfeld-Kosinski (2007, 569–570). For the misogynistic views of famous western thinkers of antiquity and the Middle Ages, see Clack (1999 13–95).
45 As an example of a recent volume that pays attention to this aspect in the premodern world, see Rasmussen (2019). For example, in this volume, Wolfthal (2019) argues that male servants were not perceived as men even though they may have male bodies.
46 For the reception of Alexander in Rome, see Spencer (2002), Peltonen (2019a) and Finn (2022). The rich tradition of *AR* and other legends have been studied by Stoneman (2008). The early Christian tradition on Alexander has been studied by Djurslev (2020) while Amitay (2010) explores the Jewish reception of Alexander. Cary (1956), Stone (2013/2014) and Bridges (2018) focus on the medieval reception of Alexander the Great. Manteghi (2018) examines Alexander in medieval Persian literature and Barleta (2010) concentrates on the medieval Iberian texts. On the eighteenth and nineteenth century reception of Alexander, an important work is Briant (2012). A particularly important edited volume on Alexander's Reception is Moore (2018).
47 For a discussion of sex and gender in antiquity, see Nelson (2007), Masterson et al. (2015) and Foxhall (2013).
48 Lovatt (2003) 12.19: Bryn Mawr Classical Review of Ralph M. Rosen, Ineke Sluiter, *Andreia: Studies in Manliness and Courage in Classical Antiquity*.
49 For other studies on sexuality and masculinity in the Greco-Roman world, see Williamson (1998) and Hubbard (2011).
50 Stewart (2016a, 35–36, 39–40, 2016b).
51 Cf. Beston (2000, 316–317). As an exception, there is a Reeder (2018) on the gendered language of war and peace in the gospel of Luke.
52 Berg (2011) and Rubarth (2014) offer papers on the masculine ideals of ancient Athens, Penrose (2016) on the female masculinity of amazons in ancient Greece and India. Eastlake (2018) focuses on the reception of the classical past and the construction of Victorian masculinity.
53 Murray (2008, 43–51); Karras (2008, 52–67).
54 For an overview of the studies of medieval masculinity, see Lees (2019). As an article that encouraged medievalists to pay more attention to men's histories and views of masculinity in medieval society, see Frantzen (1993).
55 There are more examples of the longue durèe approach in collected volumes than in monographs. For example, Arnold and Brady (2011) and Fletcher and Brady (2018) look at masculinity from antiquity to twentieth-century Europe.
56 Katajala-Peltomaa and Vuolanto (2013, 23).
57 Bridges (2018, 32–62); Kaldellis (2022, 216–218) makes the important point that Byzantines had better access to the ancient Greek texts on Alexander than other post-classical writers.

2 The Visage and Stature of an Idealised Young Male

> Do you not recognize Alexander's face? You cannot mistake him.[1]
>
> – *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis*

When we think about Alexander the Great's physical appearance, we are most likely inclined to think of a beardless young man with long hair. You may think of a man with flawless visage, his somewhat melancholic and dreamy eyes gazing into the distance – an image of a man with vision. This common image of Alexander is spread through schoolbooks and films. Some of us have even visited the modern museums to see a bust of the world-conqueror (see Figure 2.1).

This near-universal image of Alexander has deep roots. The rather uniform approach to his physical appearance is based on the surviving portraitures in statues, coins and mosaics produced in the fourth century BCE or in the Hellenistic and Roman era. Classical antiquity's interpretation of this idealised world-conqueror has been reproduced in Modern Greece and North Macedonia by the public sculptures situated in visible public places in Athens, Thessaloniki and Skopje. These modern equestrian statues of Alexander follow a pattern devised in Alexander's own time by the artists Lysippus and Apelles, who idealised the king's visage and appearance.[2]

In antiquity, we rarely encounter Alexander depicted as an unmanly or un-heroic figure; instead, we see in Alexander a paradigm of desired masculinity.[3] The quotation above is taken from the *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis*, the Latin version of *AR* composed in the fourth century CE. In the imaginative story, appearing in the earlier Greek and later in the Armenian and Syriac versions of the *AR* as well, queen Candace gives an order to a talented Greek artist to paint secretly an accurate picture/portrait of Alexander and deliver it to her. Then, Alexander arrives to meet the queen disguised as his messenger, Antigonus. However, when the king meets the queen, she recognises Alexander as the man in the painting. When disguised Alexander disputes Candace's observation, and tries to convince her of his false identity, but the queen proves her claim by showing him the picture. Candace recognises "the well-known Alexander (*Alexandri illius*)" and explains that

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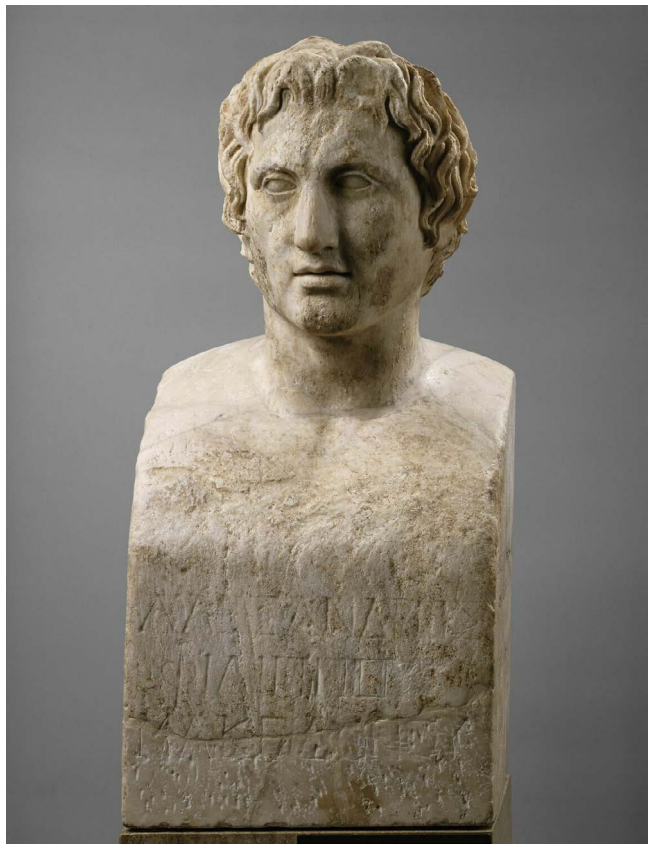

Figure 2.1 The so-called Azara Herm bust of Alexander the Great was found in Tivoli, Italy, and dated to the first or second centuries CE. Most likely it is a copy of Lysippus' portrait of the king, with Alexander distinguished by his clean-shaven looks and long hair. This Hermes-type bust is the only ancient portrait of Alexander with an inscription, which assists scholars in identifying other extant portraits of him. The short text engraved on the pillar says ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ ΜΑΚΕΔΩΝ ("Alexander the Macedonian son of Philip"). © RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre)/ Hervé Lewandowski.

everyone is familiar with Alexander's distinctive features. The story emphasises that ancient Greeks and Romans knew Alexander's ideal outlooks and physical appearance from the many and widespread portrayals of him.[4]

As this fabulous story highlights, it was difficult for Greeks and Romans to ignore the visible artefacts of Alexander in public places; for instance, they might have seen the bust of Alexander in the agora, or his statue in front of a temple, or his face portrayed on a coin. Those who visited the city of Alexandria might even see his embalmed body, preserved in a sarcophagus in a mausoleum until the fourth century. The statues of Lysippus and

its copies were commonly believed to convey Alexander's looks accurately. Emperor Octavian Augustus used a signet ring, which had a portrait (*imago*) of Alexander engraved on it. Thus, when someone received an official or a private letter from the Roman Emperor, he did not see the visage of the emperor but that of the Macedonian monarch. According to John Chrysostom, theologian and bishop, there was a custom to use coins with Alexander's face as talismans. People used them as coin necklaces, believing these portraits had magical powers. Whether this is true or not, however, we know for sure that Chrysostom and his contemporaries had a clear picture of Alexander's looks as portrayed in the coinage. Andrew Stewart writes aptly: "Alexander's face…thanks to his myriad portraits did become the best-known visage of the Greco-Roman world."[5]

Alexander's alleged looks and mannerisms were not famous only in the ancient world. They were openly imitated by illustrious Greeks and Romans. The desire to look like Alexander existed among illustrious Greek and Roman generals and rulers as an aspect of the *imitatio Alexandri*.[6] Thus, for the male members of the society who represented the highest social class Alexander offered a suitable-looking male model. Imitating Alexander's alleged looks or manners was a hint that the person resembled the Macedonian king of the past, not only in appearance but also in his pursuits and deeds. Pyrrhus, Mithridates VI, Pompey and Caracalla are among the famous figures who had the desire to emulate Alexander both in actions and in manners and looks. Lucian of Samosata writes that the Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, wanted to look like Alexander, but according to an anecdote one old woman stated that he resembled a certain cook. Mithridates imitated Alexander hairstyle. Pompey was said to have imitated Alexander's hairstyle and the way Alexander is depicted as lean his neck forward. In the coinage, Pompey is portrayed as a big-eyed, long-haired and beardless hero-figure. Emperor Caracalla was another notable Roman who publicly imitated Alexander in his looks, not only distributing statues and paintings of his hero but placing Alexander's and his own portraits side by side in public spaces. According to Aurelius Victor, Caracalla, convinced that he was very much like Alexander, tried to imitate Alexander's facial expressions, his fierce look and the head turned towards the left shoulder. Frequently, Classical authors mention the habit of notable Romans attempting to look like Alexander, even though they did not really resemble the Macedonian king.[7]

The tendency to imitate Alexander in looks and manners underlined the status of Alexander as masculine ideal among Roman upper-class males. Hölscher (2020) writes that Alexander offered a unique and unreachable role-model for the Greeks and Romans, especially equally ambitious persons claiming him as their model.[8] It says much of the long-lasting influence of Alexander appearance when even in the twentieth century the American rock star and icon Jim Morrison is said to have handed his hair stylist Jay Sebring a photo of a Lysippan statue of Alexander. In the famous photo shoot of 1967, Morrison's "Alexander look" is evident in his long lionlike hair and

his head tilted towards the left shoulder. Morrison, like his hero, was clean-shaven in an era when most rock stars chose to have beards.[9] Morrison, like his hero, was clean-shaven in an era when most rock stars chose to have beards (see Figure 2.2).

The encounter with the portrait of the enigmatic Macedonian world-conqueror has evidently fascinated viewers both in antiquity and in modern times and shaped their views of desirable expressions of manhood. The portrait was essential in creating the myth. The myth did not just consist of what Alexander did but also how he looked. His looks symbolised the masculine ideal: the heroic face was that of Alexander. The following chapters of this book analyse in more depth the masculine ideal and manly image that

Figure 2.2 Legendary photo of Jim Morrison (1943–1971), the lead singer and lyricist of the American rock band The Doors. His deliberate Alexander-looks can be recognised from the most iconic portraits of 1967 taken by his photographer Joel Brodsky in New York City. Before the famous photo session, Morrison had advised his hair stylist Jay Sebring to ensure that his facial appearance would mirror that of the Macedonian king. Like his hero, Morrison lived recklessly and died young, aged only 27. Pictorial Press ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Alexander's looks transmitted. But first I will scrutinise the importance of looks and how Alexander is depicted in the visual and textual evidence and how his alleged appearance was related to a certain version of manhood.

Appearance as a sign of masculinity

Looks do matter, as the human is an aesthetical creature who values beautiful objects. Looks may be a determining factor not only because they please our senses but also because of the status they bring, not to mention the exploitation of aesthetic beauty in propaganda and advertising. Physical appeal and appearance are seen as an essential biological factor influencing the mechanisms of reproduction. From a purely biological point of view, it's all about reproduction: we consider certain characteristics of the opposite sex appealing because these characteristics stimulate our instincts and signal mate quality. Explaining the significance of looks in all human behaviour from a purely biological point of view would be rather straightforward: since the biological mechanism of reproduction is universal, certain physical masculine aspects should be universally appealing, desired and admired. In sociobiological studies certain characteristics like mediocrity, symmetry and sexual characteristics are recognised as increasing facial attractiveness, thus signalling health.[10] However, there are historical and cultural factors involved as well. Views and concepts of male and female appearance vary in different contexts and historical periods and are constructed in social interaction.

Starting from the earliest civilisations people have embellished their appearance artificially using cosmetics and items of personal adornment such as jewellery. Besides clothing and adornment, males and females have controlled their own facial features and looks by shaving and trimming their head and facial hair, thus transmitting certain messages.[11] The choices concerning one's appearance are related to norms and trends typical for the given historical period and culture. Looks are also a gendered matter since appearance is a way to construct one's masculinity or femininity. Appearance expected from men and women has varied and the differences between a person's appearance are related to his or her social status. Upper-class men and women were clothed differently than those belonging to the lower classes. However, the norms of masculine, feminine or fashionable appearance have changed radically during different periods of history.

The idea of performing manliness/masculinity with respect to outward appearance and bodily gestures evidently existed in the premodern world. In addition, man's status and position in the community was determined by how others viewed and judged him, based not only on his qualities but on his outward appearance. In Greco-Roman antiquity appearance was one way to demonstrate masculine traits. In the ancient world, there were physiognomic theories and beliefs about the body and looks. According to these theories, a person's physical features (body) revealed something of their inner character (soul). Thus gestures, facial expressions, hair, skin, voice and

physique were examined because they were believed to reveal the person's true character.

The earliest physiognomic handbooks to survive to our day were the *Physiognomonica*, attributed to Aristotle but possibly belonging to the third century BCE, and *De Physiognomonia* composed by Polemon of Laodicea in the second century CE. Physiognomy was often ethnically labelled and filled with stereotypes of the minoritised inhabitants of the empire. In addition, physiognomic writings were also gendered, frequently mentioning what was regarded as a manly and proper appearance and what a womanish/effeminate and unproper appearance for upper-class males. The physiognomic handbooks encouraged people to observe and look for traits of unmasculinity and effeminacy in a male based on his gestures and looks. The effeminate appearance, feminine gestures and the way of walking were believed to correlate with feminine traits and effeminate behaviour like the tendency to play the passive role in sexual relations. According to some writers a shifty gaze and hasty movements of the feet were regarded as hint that a man was a feminine (*androgýnis*) and/or *cinaedus* who allowed other men to sexually penetrate him. In addition, a male who groomed himself elaborately would arouse suspicion concerning his manliness. It is difficult to say how much people physiognomised others in every-day life, but physiognomic views can be found also in the works of the historians, suggesting that it was popular. Foreign ethnic groups as well as those persons at the top of social hierarchy such as kings or emperors were undoubtedly labelled based on their bodily presence and gestures.[12]

In the Physiognomical textbooks, intellectuals also searched for similarities between the appearance of men and animals. Particularly, the lion was regarded as the ultimate symbol of courage and desirable masculinity. For example, in Pseudo-Aristotle's *Physiognomonica*, a lion and lionlike posture represented the perfect male type, while the panther with its wily ways represented the feminine type. Portraying a man as lionlike was a positive characterisation impression. In contrast, swine had small foreheads and were regarded as stupid animals, so it followed that men who had small foreheads were stupid as well. Unsurprisingly, as will be demonstrated below, lionlike features were frequently related to Alexander's outward appearance, but not those of swine.[13]

In the cultural imaginary, a male's countenance relates to his alleged deeds and accomplishments: especially male portraits placed in a public space include carefully depicted symbols of masculinity, thus making them representations of idealised male virtues. Man's qualities and accomplishments are revealed in the way he is described in the statue, fresco, or oil canvas painting. These attributes or abilities were predominantly seen as black-and-white: good or bad, desirable, or detestable. In the Classical world, beauty was regarded as a gift of the gods.[14] Physical appearance and beauty were recognised as one desired quality in a marriage partner as well. When choosing a husband or wife, external appearance denoted the level of health and

strength, even though personal qualities mattered as well and even more.[15] In Classical tradition, there appeared also the idea that those who rule must be handsome in their looks and good looks was a criteria of leadership.[16] This was not just a classical phenomenon – physical defects generally ruled out someone as a candidate for rule, hence the practice of blinding rivals for rule in Byzantium and as far north as medieval Norway, and the reason, right at the end of the Middle Ages, that Henry VII of England (falsely) portrayed the king he had deposed, Richard III, as a hunchback.[17]

Since beauty and looks were recognised as one desirable trait in visual portraits of rulers, artists, philosophers, or religious leaders, these depictions may not have been intended merely as accurate images of the persons. The visible expressions of their alleged virtues or vices as revealed in their appearance undoubtedly mattered more than what the person's actual appearance in real life. The visual images were meant to idealise and immortalise the person and foster his status. For example, the surviving portraits and statues of Emperor Augustus are never of an elderly man but invariably a youthful, handsome man. Even though literary sources tell us that his body was not athletic or muscular, in the famous Prima Porta statue Augustus has a handsome appearance and a well-built body belonging to the ideal male and divine figure. In a similar way, full-body statues of the emperors who ruled after him were always idealised portraits of muscular and divine male figures.[18] In the Middle Ages, there were depictions of the king sitting in majesty, often with links to heaven, as the highest representative of God on earth. The association of kings and nobility in the late Middle Ages (twelfth century on) with fierce and powerful animals was largely made through heraldry (see below). At the end of the Middle Ages several Italian condottieri had statues of themselves put up in which they were made to look lionlike: the physiognomic lion as warrior and leader tradition was alive and well. One good example of lionlike portrayal situated in public place is Donatello's statue of Erasmo Stefano of Narni (1370–1443), better known as Gattamelata, in Padua.[19] The practice of "lionlike" representation continued into the modern era with, for example, portrayals of Elizabeth I, Jacques-Louis David's painting of Napoleon on horseback and even carefully posed photos of Geronimo or Che Guevara. These portraits reflect the contemporary view of idealised power, status, beauty, or intelligence.

It can be argued that visual portraits of Alexander, if they are at all accurate, are not just representations of his physical appearance. Naturally, they represent the Classical interpretation of idealised visages and bodies of Greece and Rome. We are familiar with the image of *The Discobolus* of Myron, "a discus thrower," a sculpture of a young Greek athlete symbolising an ideal muscular body. The representation of Alexander is in line with this artistic style and approach. However, portraits of Alexander are not just stereotypical repetitions of idealised classical masculinity. He was not sculpted or painted as a bearded man with a short haircut like his father. Alexander's represented appearance differed markedly from that of the many

heroes sculpted in the Classical era, as will be demonstrated below. Accordingly, these distinctive features of him would single him out from the rest. His admired and distinctive characteristics were sculpted in stone with facial and bodily features that would play a crucial role in "selling" the Alexander myth to generations to come.

Below, I will deal with the ancient visual portraits of Alexander and the written passages commenting on the distinctive features of Alexander's visage. First, I will explore how Alexander's ruler cult was the result of a carefully planned policy of using visual arts to present himself as an invincible and divine monarch; the public image of Alexander was planned to create a new kind of idealised ruler in his own class, surpassing others before and after him. Then, I will focus in detail on Alexander's beardless appearance, his eyes, the poise of his neck and the long hair and leonine mane. How were these distinctive features related to ideas of masculinity and manly power existing before and after Alexander's reign? Later, in the second subchapter, I examine the Classical and medieval literary texts portraying Alexander as a man of surprisingly small stature and consider the kind of portraiture of manhood these stories of the world conqueror create and what contemporary values they convey.

Beardless, long-haired, lionlike Alexander

The majority of the earliest visual portraits of kings were intended to create and maintain a ruler-cult around his persona. These royal portraits were used as a tool to make his subjects accept his regime and at the same time venerate and adore his persona. Alexander III of Macedon was not the first monarch whose reign and power was manifested through visual art. He belonged to the Macedonian Argead royal line, whose male rulers had already minted coins with their portraits. Particularly Alexander's father Philip II of Macedonia knew how to exploit art and visual presentation in his royal propaganda.[20] Before the Argead dynasty, in the Near East and Egypt monarchs and pharaohs used visual art to strengthen the idea of a divine kingship. The dynasties were either sanctified by the gods or represented the ruler himself as a god. For example, Neo-Assyrian rulers were represented standing with religious symbols and gods. In addition, they were portrayed as physically muscular and virile. It is arguable that these portraits were denoting masculine dominance and power, which supported the idea of divine kingship.[21] In the Greek world, Alexander was the first monarch to combine this Near-Eastern iconography of power with Hellenistic traditions and understand its significance in establishing a unique and long-lasting ruler-cult.

The historical Alexander was recorded as aware of the image he wanted to promote of himself and of the value of religion and religious propaganda. During his Persian campaign, he visited sacred sites and oracles as to demonstrate that several deities were on his side. These visits were noted by the public. In the official visual portraits, Alexander presented himself as the

favourite of the gods, particularly of Zeus, the head of the Olympian gods. Strikingly, Alexander promoted himself as the son of Zeus. The references to Zeus become evident in the coinage and medallions minted either during Alexander's lifetime or that of his Antipatrid and Antigonid, Ptolemaic and Seleucid successors. In these portraits, for example, the so-called Elephant medallions, the king is depicted with divine attributes like the crown of Nike, the eagle and the thunderbolts of Zeus. Also, in the famous painting of Apelles, Alexander holds a thunderbolt which assimilated the king with Zeus, who used lightning bolts as his weapon. These divine attributes made him look superior to ordinary men, even to those of royal descent. With this carefully planned iconography, Alexander wanted to transmit a clear and undisputed message to viewers: of the king who sat on his throne by the approval not only of Zeus but of the other powerful gods as well.[22]

Macedonian Argead monarchs saw themselves as the descendants of Heracles (the Heraclidae) from the line of Temenos. Alexander exploited this tradition, publicly identifying himself as a Heraclidae: there are various references to Heracles in visual sources as well as in literary source material.[23] In the coinage, he either depicted himself as Heracles, the first and foremost of the demigods, wearing the Nemean lion pelt or with the personal features popularly known as those of Heracles.[24] Heracles was the symbol of manly power and virility in the ancient world. With his club, Heracles killed monstrous beasts and humans and eventually received a place among the undying gods. He was depicted in Classical art as muscular and athletic, with exceptionally strong legs. Heracles was himself the son of Zeus, and his mother was the mortal Alcmene. Thus, being descendant of Heracles meant that the king was also a descendant of Zeus. Among the Greek heroes, Heracles was the most illustrious and powerful, whose deeds surpassed those of all mortals. His strength and courage were extraordinary. In accomplishing his twelve labours, he used not only his strength but his wit when required. Heracles was also a protector of his friends, guardian of their honour, and if necessary their avenger. In a similar way, Alexander, avenger of the Persian attack on Greece and the burning of Athens, identified with Heracles, would defeat his enemies and make any resistance to him futile.[25]

From a gender perspective the imagery related to Zeus and Heracles embraced masculine dominance over other male and female gods as well as mortals. Portraying someone as an equal to superhuman forces, gods and semi-gods, was a political endeavour that aimed to create a gulf between the king and all other mortals: a man whom all lesser folk should venerate and fear. By associating himself with Zeus, the first and foremost of the eternal gods, Alexander constructed a hyper-masculine self-portrait. Zeus, the king of the gods, had overthrown Cronus and defeated the Titans in a cataclysmic battle. Zeus, like all Olympian gods and goddesses, was depicted in man's form. The gods may have been immortals, but they were depicted in human bodies. In this way, the muscular gods were in fact the primus motors in creating the paradigm of ideal masculinity: in other words, they reflected

the ideals that existed in the society that honoured them. The image of Zeus was a representation of a hyper-masculine man who governs others with his power, an image that matched well with the impression Alexander wanted to give to both his subjects and his enemies.

After Alexander's death, rulers associated themselves with the illustrious Macedonian king, and it became a common convention for rulers in the Greek and Roman world to exploit religious attributes in their coinage and sculptures to legitimate their regimes. Hellenistic kings and Roman emperors followed Alexander's pattern in their self-portraits, using references to Zeus/Jupiter and Heracles/Hercules. By using the well-known features of Alexander's appearance and iconography many "new Alexanders" built their own images of invincible manhood. These images conveyed not only the message that these rulers were favoured by Zeus/Jupiter or Heracles/Hercules, but also that they shared their charisma and authority.[26]

The contemporary images of Alexander were remarkably coherent and consistent. Alexander's court sculptor was Lysippus. Alexander allowed Lysippus to make busts of him and Lysippan portraits were viewed already in the Classical world as the most influential portraits of the king. Plutarch regarded the Lysippan portraits as the most accurate images of Alexander, revealing his true nature. We know also that the sculptors Leochares and Euphanor, the painter Apelles and the gem-cutter Pyrgoteles made contemporary portraits of the king.[27] Several Hellenistic and Roman busts of Alexander, some believed to be copies of Lysippus' works, can be found in the collections of the British Museum, the Louvre, the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, Athens and Istanbul (to mention just a few locations). The Azara herm, belonging to the Louvres collection, is often regarded as a Roman copy of a bust made by Lysippus himself.

There are certain features of Alexander's appearance we encounter consistently in the visual sources and in the comments the ancient authors made about these works: (1) his beardless face, (2) his gaze, (3) the poise of his neck and (4) his long hair and leonine mane.[28] These distinctive features of Alexander didn't appear by chance. Some of the four features, like the clean-shaven chin and the long-haired style, may have been designed originally by Lysippus, or perhaps they derived from the actual looks and mannerisms of the historical Alexander.[29] Among the written sources, particularly Plutarch and *AR* pay attention to the distinctive features of Alexander's appearance. Plutarch's passages on the king's outlook are connected especially with Lysippan portraits, while the *AR* tradition mythologises Alexander's appearance and makes it more divine: in *AR* Alexander is not an ordinary man, nor does he look like one (see below).[30]

The image of Alexander as a beardless monarch (1) is his dominant feature, a "trademark," if you will. Admittedly, the majority of the ancient texts concerning Alexander, the works of Diodorus, Curtius and Arrian, as well as *AR*, do not specifically mention this feature of his appearance, but he appears as shaved in all the existing Hellenistic and Roman visual

portraits of him. In the coinage, Alexander does not have facial hair: the coin types present him either styled as Heracles or depicting Heracles clean-shaven like Alexander. The same is true of his presentation in mosaics and the Lysippan sculptures. It is only on the Apulian vases that the mounted Alexander has a beard.[31] The image of a beardless ruler was something quite innovative in the ancient world. Adult males usually had facial hair in ancient societies. Ancient Assyrian kings and Egyptian pharaohs had facial hair in royal art.[32] In the Greek world, beards were a common feature of an adult male member citizen of the Polis. Facial hair cemented a man's social status as an adult, a full citizen. In Greek art, young men (*néoi*, *koúroi*) like warriors and athletes were often portrayed without beards, whereas adult men in art representing statesmen and family fathers had beards.[33] Before Alexander, all the great statesmen like Pericles, the Spartan kings and Alexander's father Philip had beards. The philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were portrayed as bearded men. Also, the most illustrious demigod of all time, Heracles and the most powerful god Zeus had uncut beards.

Before Alexander, the only illustrious statesman famous for shaving his facial hair was Alcibiades.[34] Yet victorious athletes were depicted without beards. It is said that Alexander I (reigned 498–454 BCE) was the first Macedonian Argead king who participated in the Olympian games and therefore he was regarded as Greek. The link between beardless athletes in visual art and the portrait of the monarch might derive from this tradition. Also, the sun god Apollo was clean-shaven. It is thus possible that Alexander and his artists picked up the idea to promote him as barefaced either from the ideal of athletic youthful beauty, or from the way Apollo was depicted in visual art (or both). However, whether Alexander had a full beard at any stage of his life must remain a mystery. Either way, Alexander's beardless style – which might have been an invention of his staff – created a distinctive feature in his appearance for the future and stressed the alleged masculine exceptionality in his persona. It was one more way in which he could stand out among the gods and semi-gods, not as a replica of Zeus and Heracles, but as himself, as Alexander. It was undoubtedly planned, either by him or his propagandists and iconographers, as a distinctive feature of his masculine power.

Alexander's clean-shaven looks can be regarded as a major impulse to adopt a new male fashion in the Greco-Roman world. His appearance was not only noticed but imitated. As the Greek Athenaeus wrote around the turn of the third century: "The practice of shaving one's beard became fashionable in Alexander's time; previously people did not do this."[35] After Alexander, his many Hellenistic successors adopted the beardless style. In the royal iconography of the Diadochi, the Ptolemaic, Antigonid and Seleucid rulers are usually depicted without beards.[36] This new innovative style and its popularity have been explained by the rulers' endeavour to distinguish themselves from the ordinary Greeks and Persians, the common people whom they governed, just as Alexander had. Among the Roman aristocracy, the beardless style

also became popular. The Roman statesmen Scipio Aemilianus, Pompey and Julius Caesar, and the emperors Octavian Augustus, Tiberius, Vespasian, Trajan and Constantine the Great are portrayed as clean-shaven.[37] Since many of these Romans regarded Alexander as a paragon, their recorded *Imitatio Alexandri* may be one factor behind their beardless portraitures. We know from the anecdotes that in Rome Julius Caesar ordered that his head replace Alexander's head in Lysippus' portrait of Alexander, while Claudius allowed Augustus' head to substitute the head of the Macedonian king. Even though this decision might be taken as showing disrespect, it also reveals the desire of the great to identify themselves with Alexander and the masculine and divine symbols his portraits represented.[38]

As stated above, depicting a man without a beard highlighted his youth. Once the facial hair appeared, a young man had embarked on adulthood. Characteristics of a boy were used to denote a sexually receptive (*erṓmenos*) role. A clean-shaved style could have been identified as effeminate. Some four hundred years after Alexander, Hadrian's male lover Antinous was portrayed in the visual portraits as a beardless *erṓmenos*. In antiquity, some authors like Musonius Rufus, Dio Chrysostom and Clement of Alexandria wrote against male grooming. They regarded a beard as a natural symbol of a male and a shaven head or body as an indication of effeminacy, eagerness to play the woman's role in sexual intercourse and passive same-sex desire.[39] It is difficult to say whether Greco-Roman upper-class men would have associated Alexander's beardless look with effeminacy and sexual availability. At least, this connection between Alexander and lack of facial hair and desire for the passive role in sexual relations is not made in the literature. Instead, there are passages where the beardless look of the Macedonian king is associated with martial masculinity.

According to one tradition, Alexander ordered his men to shave off their beards before battle so that their enemies could not grasp their beards during combat. The story is given by Plutarch, and it appears also in the *Encomium of Baldness* by Synesius of Cyrene. It has been suggested that by this command, Alexander encouraged his soldiers to look like him and fight like him in the battle.[40] The approach is a very practical one. In the visual sources, Alexander's beardless look was combined with aggressive martial masculinity. This is evident, for example, in the *Alexander mosaic* and in the so-called *Alexander sarcophagus,* which both depict the beardless and youthful king fighting fiercely against the Persians. In addition, a less well-known Roman bronze statuette from Herculaneum portrays a clean-shaved Alexander on horseback, sword in hand ready to strike at his enemy.[41]

In these portraitures, Alexander's clean-shaved look stresses his youthful energy and decisiveness in battle rather than symbolising a sexually effeminate and passive male figure. The beardless look represents a youthful and virile monarch. In a similar way, in the coinage presenting Alexander as Heracles (or Heracles with features of Alexander), the king does not have facial hair, which contrasts with the Classical depiction of Heracles with full beard.

Again, the young, beardless Alexander is shown with Herculean martial masculinity.[42] The tradition that Alexander ordered his men to fight beardless clearly has nothing to do with effeminacy and sexual receptivity/passivity; rather, the images were all about showing exemplary masculinity on the battlefield. In addition, the beardless fashion of the Macedonian king denoted to his youth and positive features of young masculinity and ageless image.

Another distinctive feature of Alexander's imagery is his large eyes and distinctive gaze (2), which we encounter in the Alexander mosaic as well as in the coins issued by Lysimachus and in the Lysippan portraits. In the physiognomic texts, a shifty gaze belonged to the feminine mannerisms that "true" masculine men should avoid so that they would not be labelled "soft" men.[43] However, in the source material there is no hint that Alexander's gaze was shifty, but rather that it was determined, fixed on his objective. As we know, in the mosaic, Alexander on the left is gazing intently at Darius who cannot withstand the intense look of the Macedonian king, which denotes his irresistible martial courage. Darius's countenance conveys fear and despair. Alexander is also wearing armour with the face of Medusa on it, whose deadly gaze was well-known to ancient people as fatal. The mosaic is intended to remind the viewer of Alexander's powerful presence, his superiority over Darius, as well as how intimidating it would be to be the enemy objective of the invincible and manly Alexander. The artist's intention is to create an atmosphere where the image watches the viewer. The tendency to portray Alexander's eyes as very large can be recognised from the coins and from the Seleucid and Ptolemaic issues, evidently intended to follow the pattern of Alexander's portrait with big eyes.[44] It is reminiscent of later Byzantine art in which Christ and the saints are depicted with enormous eyes, gazing on the viewer. Pseudo-Aristotle and Polemon of Laodicea in their physiognomic handbooks both associate bright and gleaming eyes with courage and lionlike character. Plutarch, Polemon and Adamantius state that Alexander had melting and liquid eyes. In Plutarch, this quality is one of the lionlike features of the king. It has been suggested that the reference to liquid eyes derives from Aristotle's theory that eyes were made of water and melting and liquid eyes denoted good health and youth, while old or failing eyes were dry.[45] The king's gaze represented decisiveness and invincibility. It reminds the viewer who is in charge and indicates far-sightedness, in the sense of one who has a vision of greater things beyond the vision of other men.

The idea of Alexander's exceptional gaze is magnified in the *AR* tradition. It portrays the young Alexander's glance and gaze as asymmetrical. This peculiar feature is presented differently in different versions of the *AR*. The Greek *AR* says the prince's right eye was slanting downward and the left one straight. It does not say they were of different colour as does the later versions of the Romance. In modern science, this phenomenon is called *Heterochromia iridum,* different colouration of the iris. Aristotle had already written about this phenomenon and called it as *heteroglaucos*.[46] The Latin *AR* of

Julius Valerius, from the fourth century CE, says that the young prince's right pupil was as dark as night, and the left was as blue as the sky. The Armenian version of the *AR* says that the right eye was lidded and black in colour, while the left one was blue. In the Syriac *AR,* the eyes were white and black.[47] The Byzantine chronicler John Malalas (c. 491–578 CE) gives a short description of Alexander's reign in his *Chronographia*. Most likely, Malalas used *AR* as his source, or at least he writes that the king had one eye black and one grey. Later in the narrative Malalas also remarks that Emperor Anastasius I (c. 431–518) not only shaved his beard frequently but was *heteroglaucos* too, as he had one eye black and one grey. Even though he does not state it explicitly, the reference to Alexander's appearance is implicit.[48] When we come to medieval Europe, *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* version of *AR,* an Anglo-Norman text composed in old French by Thomas de Kent, states that Alexander's right eye was white while the left was black like the eye of a lion. In the Hebrew *AR* from the fourteenth century CE, his eyes were black and red. It also adds that these eyes were large and bright. The peculiar aspect of Alexander's look gives an interesting twist to his alleged appearance. The young prince, depicted as exceptional in skills and intellectual abilities, is also made to look very different than others. Being a great man implies exceptionality and in the pagan era godlike. Alexander's gaze was known through the visual portraits but in the *AR* tradition these features become superhuman.[49]

The third (3) feature is the poise of the neck, which became so famous that it is said that later it was imitated by those who made Alexander their role model. Among the writers, it is Plutarch who writes about the king's tilt of the neck as a prominent feature of Alexander's appearance.[50] This tilt is presented in many of the sculptures and makes Alexander gaze heavenwards just as Christ and his saints do in later Byzantine and medieval art. His eyes are fixed on the divine. There are different theories behind Alexander's tilt of the neck or head twist to the left. Some scholars have argued that the pose was due to a spinal disease, while other scholars suggest it was a deliberate mannerism.[51]

The physiognomic literature is ambivalent on whether the tilt of the neck was a feminine or unmanly mannerism that a man should avoid, or an indication of lionlike desirable masculinity. According to some writers a trembling or listing neck was an indication that such a man was effeminate or soft and lacked spirit. However, in the definitions of a lionlike, brave and magnanimous man the slight incline of the neck is also mentioned. For example, the brave and magnanimous masculine man walking like a lion moved his shoulders in a calm and controlled way as well inclining the neck slightly.[52] It is therefore possible that Greek and Roman members of the upper class connected Alexander's alleged tilted neck to his other lionlike features discussed below. It became a sign of charismatic power, which some of his contemporaries and wannabe-Alexanders imitated. Alexander turns to avoid visual communication with the viewer. It creates the impression of mystery. These portraitures construct the idea of his exceptional nature. He is a distant

object of admiration that men can only try to understand. Viewers can never be like Alexander but only imitate his greatness.

As an example of how Romans viewed Alexander's masculinity and his distinctive outlook through the visual portraits, we have a Latin passage written by Apuleius. In his *Florida*, composed in the second century CE, Apuleius wrote:

> Alexander alone of mankind was always like his portraits, and every statue, painting, or bronze revealed the same fierce martial vigour, the same great and glorious genius, the same fresh and youthful beauty, the same fair forehead with its back-streaming hair.[53]

Here, Apuleius states that the visual portraitures of Alexander managed to capture the king's true appearance and reflect his qualities. Apuleius was originally from North Africa, but he had travelled in Italy, Egypt and Asia Minor. He gives the impression that he has seen several artistic portrayals of Alexander, or at least that he knows they all look similar, and for him they symbolise beauty, a positive feature of a young man discussed below. Apuleius uses the expression "fresh and youthful beauty"; the word *viridis* could be translated as fresh, blooming and lively, while *forma* can denote beauty, appearance or shape. Yet he saw in these portraits Alexander's martial masculinity, since he writes that at the same time the portraits revealed the king's warlike nature (*vigor acerrimi bellatoris*). Therefore, for Apuleius Alexander symbolises both a young man and a male full of enthusiasm for battle. Undoubtedly, the beardless portraits of Alexander in visual art strengthened the impression of the king as a universal figure representing youth and its features. As a distinctive feature Apuleius pinpoints Alexander's long hair streaming back from the head.

In the ancient world, long hair was often considered to indicate manly strength and martial valour. The Spartans had long hair, the Assyrian and Babylonian kings are portrayed with long hair, and the Israelite Samson's strength was in his long hair.[54] We distinguish long hair (4) as a prominent feature in Alexander's appearance in several visual portraits in the coinage, in the Alexander mosaic, and in several busts of Alexander. Sheila Dillon (2006) argues that in Classical sculptures the shorter the beard and hair the younger the man; conversely, the longer the hair and beard the older the subject.[55] It could be added that Alexander's longish hair could be an indication of ageing. His beardless face makes him look younger, while the long hair makes him appear older. If we accept this view, Alexander's long-haired but beardless portraiture probably signified an intermediate age.

Alexander's long hair is explicitly presented as a lionlike mane. Plutarch writes that Lysippan portraits preserved Alexander's manly (*arrenopós*) and leonine (*leontōdēs*) quality.[56] These qualities are apparent in the portraiture now displayed in British Museum, suggesting that the sculptor deliberately

depicted Alexander with long and lionlike hair. This impression is reinforced when we compare the portrait with the Classical sculptures of lions and their manes. On the other hand, the *Alexander sarcophagus* presents the king wearing as a lion's head helmet or lionskin over a helmet. There are also depictions of Alexander hunting lions, like the mosaic found in the House of Dionysus at Pella.[57] We know from the texts that Alexander participated in such lion hunts.[58] These presentations convey the idea that the brave man is a lionlike hunter of animals such as lions as well as men.

As an animal the lion has been considered as a symbol of courage and martial valour from ancient Mesopotamia to the Middle Ages. At the same time hunting and killing a lion, the "king of the beasts" meant power over all beasts as well as humans. Lions were regarded as symbols of hypermasculinity in the royal Neo-Assyrian culture and images of Assyrian kings on lion hunts appear in both reliefs and texts.[59] In Classical literature, lion likeness appears as a feature of the valiant warrior. Achilles, the most illustrious warrior in the Trojan War, had the attributes of a lion. In the *Iliad* he has a "lion's heart" and in the thick of battle shows no mercy, acting like a rampaging lion.[60] Heracles' attribute in Classical art is the pelt of the Nemean lion, the defeat of this sinister beast symbolising his exceptional might. Alexander is said to have admired and imitated these two famous men. In Aristotle's writings, the lion is a noble animal, symbolising courage. In the *Physiognomics* written by Pseudo-Aristotle there is a discussion of the likeness of the lion in a human as a mark of courage.[61] Portraying Alexander with a lion's mane connected him with masculine tropes linked to lion, in other words, martial courage and valour.

Plutarch makes the connection between the lion and Alexander's qualities clear in his *Lives*. At the beginning of his work, Plutarch writes that Philip dreamt that he pressed a seal on his wife's womb and the emblem on the seal was lionlike. Afterwards, the seer Aristander explained that his wife would be pregnant, and the child would be impatient and lionlike.[62] Later in the narrative, when portraying what took place after the destruction of Thebes, Alexander showed kindness to Theban refugees after sacking the city and selling its citizens as slaves. Plutarch writes that this was possibly because his anger was sated like a lion's.[63] Lions attack quickly and without mercy against those who oppose them.

In the *AR* tradition, the king's lionlike appearance is presented as extraordinary, as is his gaze. In the passage summarising the looks of the young Alexander, the anonymous author of the Greek *AR* writes that the young prince had hair and sharp teeth like those of a lion. The author adds that not only his appearance but also his qualities, his swift and violent movements, resembled those of a lion. In Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, kings were presented as acting like lions. For instance, King Sennacherib (c. 745– 681 BCE) was said to become enraged and restless like a lion when he prepared his troops for war.[64] In addition, in ancient Egypt, where the first versions of the Greek *AR* were possibly produced, there was a long tradition of presenting pharaohs as roaring

lions fighting their foes, especially when Egypt was in war. For example, the Great Karnak Inscription states that Pharaoh Merenptah (reigned 1213–1203 BCE), raged like lion after hearing that the Sea Peoples had attacked. It is most likely that the motif of lionlike pharaohs was somehow related to the Egyptian deities represented by feline predators, the so-called Felidae gods. Particularly the goddess Sekhmet, the protector of the pharaohs who led them in warfare, was portrayed as lionlike.[65] On other words, the anonymous writer of the Greek *AR* follows the ancient Mesopotamian and Egyptian traditions in using the monarch-as-lion metaphor. The similarities between the young Alexander and a male lion are expressed also in the later versions of the *AR*. The Latin *AR* of Julius Valerius says that Alexander's long hair was like a lion mane, and he had the fire of a lion in him. It also adds that the colour of the mane was blonde. This remark on the hair colour is not paralleled in the other versions of the *AR*. In the Syriac, Armenian and Hebrew versions of the *AR* it is stated that not only was the king's hair like a lion's mane, but his razor-sharp teeth were like those of a lion. In the Armenian version of the *AR,* the king's lionlike appearance and lionlike qualities are compared explicitly when the author states that Alexander looked upon a defensive attack the same as a lion would. Also, Persian ambassadors inform Darius that Alexander imitates the behaviour of a lion, always being victorious and never procrastinating.[66] Alexander's lionlike mane and gaze were known from the visual portraits, but in the *AR* tradition, these features raise him to the level of a superhuman.

Alexander's long-haired and lionlike appearance derives from the masculine ideals that existed both in ancient Mesopotamia and in Egypt as well as in Greek thought. Mighty heroes and warrior-kings before Alexander were presented as looking and acting like lions as well as slaying lions. The association with lions and "true" men in philosophical writings underlines the importance of this idea in the premodern male imagination. Comparing Alexander to lions – considered the lords of the animals – was about making the claim over masculine dominance. A man presented and regarded as lionlike was worthy to rule and lead his armies to victory. Alexander had the face of someone who seems to be in charge.

In the passage of Apuleius above it was mentioned that Alexander's appearance was also one of beauty. The idea of male beauty belonged to the masculine ideal in the premodern world and is found in the literary tradition concerning Alexander as well. The ancient Greek intellectuals as well as their Roman successors were aware of the philosophical ideal that a good and virtuous male aristocrat or male citizen was also physically beautiful. A person who was *kalos kai agathos*, literally "fine and good," was also handsome. In other words, his virtues, wisdom and social standing were visible in his appearance.[67] This view was undoubtedly related to physiognomic thinking (see above), according to which a person's looks demonstrated his or her behaviour. In the Classical world there were also beauty contests for men where beauty related to martial prowess and bodily strength.[68] Classical art represented male physical beauty as desirable as well.[69]

The handsome and aesthetically beautiful Alexander was clearly an aspect of the idealised Lysippan portraits. On some occasions Alexander beautiful looks – also presented as a proof of his virtues – is made explicitly in the texts, but more commonly it was assumed, regarded as something so obvious that the authors did not need to mention it. Appian's (95–165) *Romaika* says that both Alexander and Julius Caesar had manly bodies and were handsome (*kaloi*). In the same way, Aelian in his *Varia Historia* lists Alcibiades as the most handsome among the Greeks and Scipio among the Romans. But he adds that Alexander had also natural beauty (*hōraîos*). Alexander's curly and golden hair is mentioned, besides the king's (*phoberós*) appearance, denoting impressive, awe-inspiring, or something which causes fear. Among the Alexander historians Arrian is the one who explicitly refers to Alexander's good looks. Arrian's list of his hero's virtues does not lack superlatives: "He excelled in physical beauty," (*sôma kállistos*). Here Arrian means that Alexander's body looked beautiful.[70] Alexander's alleged appearance and his features came to symbolise male beauty in the Greco-Roman world and strengthened the assumption that physical beauty is a part of being an exemplary man.

The Latin *AR*, composed in the fourth century CE and attributed to Julius Valerius, is the most explicit and lengthy in its portrayal of Alexander's appearance as beautiful. It is striking that Alexander's peculiar looks are described as most handsome/beautiful (*pulcherrimus*). The author's is the only one among the *AR* versions which states that the prince's eyes were extremely beautiful (*egrerii decoris*).[71] The Latin *AR* thus emphasises that the young prince's appearance was not just extraordinary but also physically attractive. The *Panegyric of Constantine*, composed by an anonymous writer, is another fourth-century work that sets up Alexander as a paradigm of physical male beauty is. The panegyric, probably delivered at Trier in 310, compares Emperor Constantine to "the great/famous Macedonian king" (*Macetum illum regem*), referring to Alexander. The comparison takes place after the author has exalted Constantine's appearance and beauty, which, according to him, inspire respect from the emperor's contemporaries. The author mentions the emperor's flashing eyes, which invite his subjects' gaze. Alexander and Achilles are mentioned as men whose supreme courage (*summa virtus*) and beauty (*pulcritudini*) are celebrated.[72] In his courage and physical beauty, we are told, Constantine resembles them. As a genre imperial panegyrics were related to imperial propaganda and the eulogising speeches were normally delivered at the court before the emperor. Interestingly, for the anonymous court rhetorician "the great/famous Macedonian king" symbolised male beauty suitable for his contemporaries.

The idea that a notable and virtuous man must be physically beautiful existed in both Classical and Judeo-Christian literature. Most of the men regarded as exemplary and representatives of the masculine ideal are characterised as handsome. In Homer's *Iliad* Achilles is the most beautiful warrior among the Achaians as well as the bravest. By contrast, Thersites is presented as the ugliest of the Greek warriors whose inglorious deeds match

his unattractive appearance.[73] The famous warrior-king David in the Hebrew Bible is characterised as a handsome man who had beautiful eyes, even though the Hebrew Bible emphasises that God sees a man's heart and does not judge him by what the eye sees.[74] Again, Moses – the most prominent leader, lawgiver and prophet of the Israelites – is depicted as beautiful by Philo of Alexandria as well as by Luke.[75] It is true that excessive concern for one's appearance was regarded as smacking of effeminacy and a hint that a man enjoyed playing woman's role in sexual relations. For example, the emperor Otho (32–69 CE) was labelled as effeminate by his adversaries since he was spending too much time before a mirror and used poultices to soften his facial skin.[76] This kind of suspicion is certainly not related to Alexander, since when the authors references to his alleged appearance are not reproving or critical. Instead, they denote to the king's alleged natural good looks and lionlike appearance, which belonged to the ideal of true masculine man. Furthermore, Alexander's beauty symbolised his excellence and differentiated him from average men positioned below him in the social hierarchy.

The question of how much (if any) of Alexander's alleged Lysippan appearance and visage impacted on the fashion and self-presentations of the nobles in the Middle Ages is challenging to answer. The Alexander mosaic and Alexander sarcophagus disappeared at some time well before the Middle Ages, but they were discovered by nineteenth-century archaeologists. In western European Latin literature, the works of Orosius and Curtius were known, but the Greek texts were mostly unavailable, while reading knowledge of Greek was rare until the end of the Middle Ages. The Lysippan portraits of Alexander were mostly unknown in Medieval Latin Europe. However, in the Byzantine empire Greek works of Plutarch were known among the elite.[77] The Byzantine authors knew of Lysippus' portraits of Alexander from the works of Plutarch. For example, the Byzantine poet John Tzetzes (c. 1110–1180) mentioned not only the different coloured eyes of Alexander – knowledge most likely acquired from the *AR* – and the tilted neck as a feature of Alexander's true appearance, but also wrote in his letter addressed to John Kostomos that it was Lysippus who managed to portray Alexander correctly.[78] Nevertheless, in medieval Europe, both "Latin" and Byzantine Greek, ideas of Alexander's appearance were largely based on what they had read from the *AR*.

Walter of Châtillon in his *Alexandreis* and the anonymous author of *Libro de Alexandre* used *AR* as one their main sources of material. The idea of Alexander's different coloured eyes is omitted from Châtillon's *Alexandreis*, but it can be found in *Libro de Alexandre*, and it may be that the passage is modified/adapted from the passage of the *AR*.[79] It can be assumed that the references to Alexander's lionlike appearance, or lionlike behaviour, included in these two works derive from the *AR*.[80] Walter of Châtillon mentions that Alexander as a boy had lion on his standard (*vexillum*) and when describing young princes' eagerness for battle, Walter refers to Alexander's lofty lion heart (*alto corde leonem*).[81] In *Libro de Alexandre* young Alexander is referred to as a lion cub grinding his teeth. He has hair like a lion's mane, a voice like thunder

and a raging heart. In the campaign, the king uses a shield decorated with a lion holding Babylon beneath its claws. At the beginning of the campaign, Alexander kills a lioness.[82] Even though there were no lions in Europe the animal symbolised royal courage and justice. Heraldic arms began to become popular in battle in the twelfth century, and from being the emblems of knights they became emblems of their families and were widely used in displays of martial prowess like tournaments. They appeared on clothes, and as ornaments on helmets as well as on shields and standards.[83] However, lions were not the only heraldic emblems, nor even the only heraldic animals, as other predators or fierce animals were popular (panthers, bears, eagles, dragons, gryphons, boar, stags, etc., and a few odd ones like other birds or even, in one case, a weasel). But lions were the most popular to represent royalty. Richard the Lionheart ("Coeur de lion") was a case of naming a king for precisely the lionlike qualities discussed with Alexander (bravery, leadership, etc.).[84]

Also, in the Medieval Persian tradition, we find references to lionlike nature. Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* describes Sekandar (Alexander) as a lionhearted warrior reaching towards Persia, eager as lion. Sekandar, when writing a letter to the Andalusian queen Qaydafeh, describes himself as the "slayer of the lions."[85] Naturally, the image of a hero slaying dangerous beasts such as dragons was popular in medieval Latin, Byzantine and Persian tradition and the image of Alexander as the killer of lions fitted into this tradition well, as did his lionlike appearance. (The topic of Alexander as beast slayer will be discussed in Chapter 4.) Alexander's lionlike appearance and qualities are connected in the medieval literature, which supports the idea that a man's virtues can be identified in his looks. It is not impossible that the popularity of lions as symbols of courage and in medieval heraldry, especially in royal arms, was reinforced by the literary tradition of Alexander.

Walter of Châtillon mentions Alexander's eyes and glowing face as features that helped everyone to recognise a true king. Alexander was easily recognised as an active king even though he did not wear royal adornments like a golden circlet and gems. Walter writes that the king's eyes reflected his inner thoughts and his whole face glowed. The true king can be recognised by his glowing face but not from kingly adornments. Alexander's appearance resembled that of holy biblical figures like Moses and Aaron as well as of saints and Christ, who were depicted with angelic shining faces.[86] Walter of Châtillon himself belonged to the clergy and might have made this addition to his source material because of the Christian ideas of holy masculinity. Even though views of proper knightly style varied in the Middle Ages, there was also demand for absolute simplicity among Christian warriors like the Knights Templar.[87] The presentation of Alexander without royal adornments could also derive from the ideal of the knight-brethren of Christ.

In the codex illustrations, Alexander is depicted as a medieval monarch with the appropriate dress and equipment. Sometimes in the illustrated manuscripts there are references to a specific royal house in the way Alexander is presented.[88] Besides codex illustrations containing images of the various

episodes portrayed in the *AR* tradition, the most popular motif appearing in the medieval visual portraits of Alexander is the king's ascension to heaven. It is an episode that appears in many versions of the *AR*. According to the tale, Alexander subdues gryphons or big birds and flies to the sky with their help. This episode appears in church reliefs, mosaics, pillar capitals, illustrations of the codex and plates of the thirteenth and fourteenth century CE. It is suggested that for medieval people the story represented either *superbia* or was a reference to Christ's ascension to heaven.[89] The relief on the north side of St. Mark's Basilica, in Venice, was originally produced in the eleventh-century CE Constantinople but was brought to Venice after the fourth crusade. Alexander is depicted in the dress of Byzantine emperor, and he is clean-shaven. He has a similar appearance in the mosaic in Otranto Cathedral, made in the reign of William I the Bad during the years 1163–1166 (see Figure 2.3).

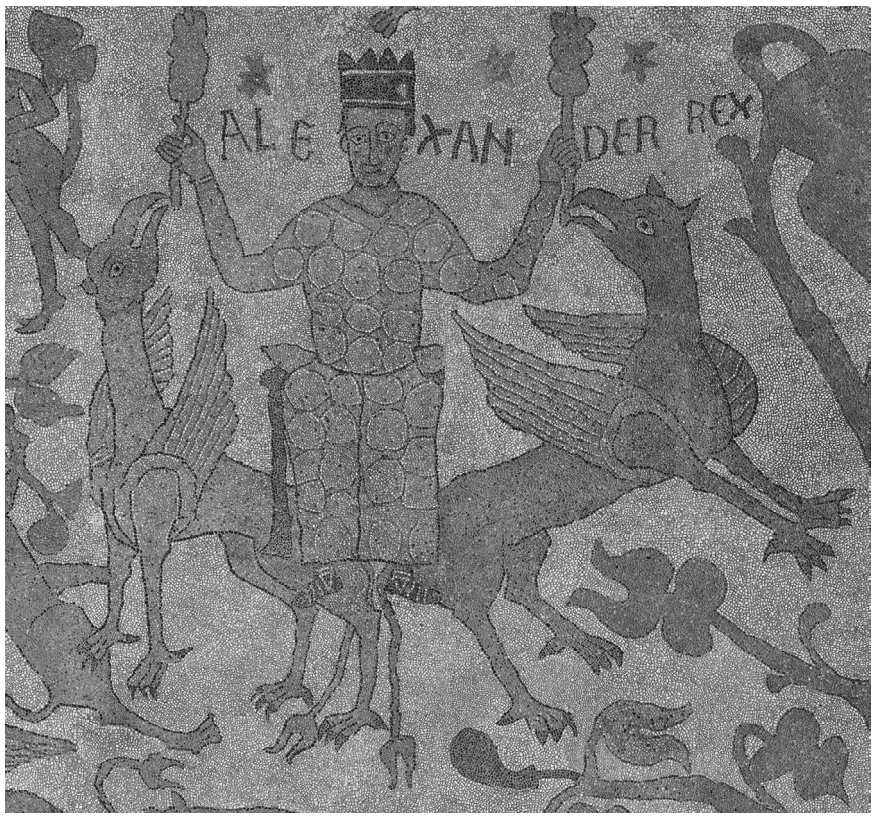

Figure 2.3 The twelfth-century CE mosaic floor of Otranto Cathedral, southern Italy, includes an image of Alexander's ascension to heaven. The king wears a crown and is seated on a stool being lifted up to heaven by two griffins. The clean-shaven Alexander bears an expression of amazement. Su gentile concessione dell'Arcidiocesi di Otranto, Aut. N.

The mosaic has the Latin inscription *Rex Alexander* ("Alexander the king" or "King Alexander"), and it also depicts the king beardless. As a man Alexander represents an earthly power alongside that of the Church and the heavenly power. Views on beards as men's fashion varied during the Middle Ages; it was the clergy that were known as beardless and the literary Alexander does not appear to have had any significant impact on fashions for facial hair.[90] We can safely say this because Alexander's clean shaved look is rarely mentioned in the medieval literature, whereas his supposed deeds and sayings had much greater importance.

It has been suggested that Christian ascetism and related beliefs had already undermined the importance of bodily beauty and handsome external appearance, having instead stressed the importance of internal "spiritual beauty," which could be experienced by suffering and the physically plain appearance of a saint or monk. In Christian thinking it was important to look beyond external appearance and find so-called "hidden" holy realities. In Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages more valuable than earthly, vainglorious and transient beauty, in which might be included the Classical culture that embraced male beauty and muscular bodies, was to experience the presence of God.[91] However, it must be remembered that even though this Christian ascetic ideal existed, the extent to which it influenced people beyond ecclesiastical and monastic circles is another question. Among the laity the higher clergy were often criticised for luxury in clothes and lifestyle, and the repeated criticism from many churchmen of secular fashions, "gluttony" and the like indicates that many secular folk did not adopt ascetic ideals. Additionally, medieval romances like Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan* and others do emphasise male beauty.[92] Thus, it would be overstatement to state that the veneration of male beauty disappeared in the medieval world. Nevertheless, the relative lack of importance attached to Alexander's appearance in the Middle Ages may be derived from the cultural change in esthetical valuation and the tendency to emphasise internal "spiritual beauty" promoted by the Church, especially when we bear in mind that the authors of romances were often clerics. The relative lack of importance attached to Alexander's appearance in the Middle Ages may be derived from this cultural change in esthetical valuation. At the same time, it must be remembered that beside what was written in the various versions of the *AR* there was no uniform idea of what Alexander looked like and the classical ideal of his manly appearance seemingly had a very limited impact on medieval concepts of it.

Does size matter? Alexander's stature and definitions of manliness

When I discuss my research outside academia, I have noticed that people are often interested in two specific aspects of Alexander: Firstly, his sexual orientation, and secondly, his physical appearance, namely, whether he really was a short man. As I have faced these questions again and again, it made

me think about our deeply rooted subconscious expectations: Is a "great" warrior, statesman and strategist expected to be tall? In other words, were tall and muscular bodies regarded as an ideal for males in the Classical and Medieval worlds? One could suppose that the alpha male must be tall, symbolising and justifying his position within the community and particularly his dominance over other males. If a man is expected to lead other males in war successfully, his subjects and enemies expect to encounter a man of bodily stature, especially in premodern societies where fighting in war meant involved hand-to-hand combat.[93] Against this background, it is interesting that height and stature is a matter that both ancient and modern authors pay attention to.

Associations about height and masculinity were discussed in the story of Alexander in both the classical and medieval eras. Height is a visible feature. In the tradition concerning Alexander, we find that the king's size is an object of speculation and astonishment. And as mentioned, not only in modern popular "folklore" but also in ancient and medieval sources Alexander's physical size surprises those who have heard about his great achievements and are eager to see him in the flesh. It is difficult to say whether the historical Alexander was above average in height, or did he just look short by comparison with exceptionally tall men of his age.[94] Oddly Alexander's is nevertheless an aspect of his masculinity which is not emphasised, or at least not as superior to others.

Classical historians and several versions of *AR* portray Alexander as a rather short man, not as a tall conqueror. Often, the observation of Alexander's short stature is made by barbarians who expected to encounter a man impressive in appearance when they met the Macedonian king. In the most famous anecdote, Darius' mother Sisygambis assumes that the king is the tallest of all, and mistakenly addresses Alexander's lifelong and dearest friend Hephaestion as the king. Valerius Maximus wrote that Hephaestion surpassed Alexander in size and bodily shape (*statura et forma*) and Curtius wrote that Hephaestion excelled Alexander in bodily stature (*corporis habitu praestabat*). The Greek authors Diodorus and Arrian add that the king and his beloved friend were dressed alike, but they too admit that another reason for the queen's mistake was that Hephaestion was taller (*mégethos*). Moreover, Diodorus writes that Hephaestion was more handsome (*kállos*).[95] On another occasion, a weeping eunuch realised that Darius' stool was too big for Alexander when the new monarch tried to sit on the throne at Susa.[96]

Among the Alexander historians, Curtius is the only one who explains in a more detailed way why barbarians were amazed when they found that Alexander was not impressive in bodily stature. Curtius is also the only Classical author who addresses the question of Alexander's bodily stature with the anecdote concerning the legendary encounter between Alexander and the Amazon queen Thalestris.[97] In the story, the queen comes to see the king because she has heard of Alexander's great deeds and wants to have children by

the king. However, the amazon queen is surprised since the great conqueror does not come up to her expectations of a great man:

> Thalestris looked at the king, no sign of fear on her face. Her eyes surveyed a physique that in no way matched his illustrious record – for all barbarians have respect for physical presence, believing that only those on whom nature has thought fit to confer extraordinary appearance are capable of great achievements.[98]

Lack of height and a fine body creates a threat to Alexander's masculinity in these passages. Curtius explicitly explains that not just the queen, but "all" barbarians venerate those who have bodies that exude power (*in corporum maiestate veneratio est*) and think that those who have exceptional appearance (*eximia specie*) must be capable of great deeds. In a similar way, Curtius explains why some Scythian ambassadors were amazed when they saw Alexander:

> Being admitted to the tent and invited to be seated, they [the Scythian ambassadors] had fixed their eyes on the king's face, because I suppose, to those who estimated spirit by bodily stature his moderate size seemed by no means equal to his reputation.[99]

He writes that the Scythian ambassadors thought that a person's reputation (*fama*) would be paralleled by a body of stature (*magnitude corporis*): they expected a famous warrior monarch to be extraordinary by his physical presence. But Curtius writes that the king was only of medium or "moderate" (*modicus habitus*) stature. It should be noted that Alexander was not described as being strikingly small: the problem was that he was not outstandingly tall, that is, he did not correspond to the barbarians' stereotype of an extraordinarily sized muscular hero: in the Classical literary tradition, it is the Persian queen mother Sisygambis, Darius' eunuch, the Scythian ambassador and the amazon queen Thalestris who note Alexander's shortness. However, the authors tend to resist the conclusion that Alexander's smallish stature implies lack of masculinity. "Barbarian" thinking is implicitly proven wrong, or at least restricted. Alexander shows his masculinity by his actions. For example, in the encounter with Darius' mother Sisygambis, Alexander shows mercy towards the queen mother and, by his chivalrous action, he proves that kingly nature does not depend on stature. Again, in the case of Thalestris, Alexander shows he is not impotent, but impregnates the amazon queen who returns contented to her country.

Alexander's famous opponents like Darius and Porus are depicted as tall by Plutarch, Curtius, Arrian and in the *AR*. Darius is portrayed as the tallest man in Asia. However, Darius' height does not correlate with successful leadership or courage on the battlefield. His unmanliness in the battle and

inability to protect his family underline his lost manly dignity and honour. For example, in the battle narratives of Issus, Alexander shows his martial masculinity by risking his life and being wounded, whereas Darius flees, leaving the battlefield in cowardly fashion. In Porus' case, however, his enormous height correlates with his prowess on the battlefield. The Indian monarch fights valiantly at the Battle of the Hydaspes.[100] In these descriptions, ancient historians seem to support the idea that bodily stature does not necessarily correlate with skill, courage and masculinity, whereas inner charisma and military ability do.

The representations of Darius and Porus as exceptionally tall fit with the image of barbarian peoples in Classical literature. Ancient Greeks and Romans often portrayed Germanic and Gallic tribes and Indians as taller and stronger than themselves. In his *Gallic Wars,* Julius Caesar wrote that Gauls despise as a rule, "our short stature" (*brevitas nostra*) since they all had huge physique.[101] Tacitus in his *Germania,* and later Ammianus Marcellinus, wrote about tall Germans and Gauls.[102] It seems that the Romans were aware that they were neither the tallest nor physically the most impressive nation, but their military tactics and discipline made them superior to barbarians, or at least, they maintained the idea of Roman soldiers as smaller in physique but better trained and organised than their opponents. This self-perception can be read in Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris,* composed in the late fourth century CE. At the beginning of the work, Vegetius explains that Roman drill, camp discipline and military expertise have made Roman armies victorious. He writes: "How else could small Roman forces have availed against hordes of Gauls? How could small stature have ventured to confront Germanic tallness?"[103] In a later passage, he advises that when recruiting men to the legions, one should not worry overmuch about tall stature: it is more useful for a soldier to have stamina and to be strong than big.[104]

Therefore, in Roman eyes, the image of Alexander as a man of average height made him look more Roman, hence a fitting exemplary figure for Roman upper-class males. Alexander's *Itinerary* (*Itinerarium Alexandri*), a brief history of Alexander's campaign against Persia, says that the young Alexander was medium in height (*statura mediocris*), but he had fervor for physical exercise and when his muscles grew, he developed marvellous physical strength.[105] At the time when *Alexander's Itinerary* was written, the Romans were fighting against the Sassanid Persian Empire and the work was addressed to Emperor Constantius II. The Roman concept that hard training can compensate for their alleged bodily limitations can be identified in the presentation of Alexander's body. Alexander's medium-sized but strong body could be used as an allegory for Roman manliness. From the glorious days of the Republic to the reigns of Constantine and his sons, the reception of Alexander's stature in Roman literature suited the Roman self-view of strong, disciplined, but moderately built legionaries, who, like Alexander, could fight and crush taller and more numerous barbarians. Having said this, it should be noted that for the Alexander historians Alexander's size was a minor issue,

a matter of importance only insofar as it reveals the erroneous barbarian view that physical features equated to a man's virtues. This also conforms to the way Roman biographers like Suetonius wrote about the size of the emperors, without making any clear link between a man's skills, virtues and bodily stature.[106]

The alleged medium stature of Alexander could also be regarded as a one rhetorical technique to construct ideal man. When Quintilian in his *Orator's education* handles panegyrical disposition, he reminds his audience that an individual's known lack of resources could be turned to glorify his deeds. As an example, he gives the Achaian warrior Tydeus, whose small stature added to his fame in Homer's *Iliad*.[107] Regarding the story of Alexander as a great conqueror and mighty warrior, seen in this light, his alleged lack of bodily stature served to emphasise his virtues, which he possessed both by nature and through hard training. In addition, Alexander's allegedly medium-sized body corresponded to the Classical theories of the perfect body as a result of balance (*symmetria*) and harmony (*harmonia*), while imbalance would be out of step with nature.[108]

Even though in the *AR*, the historical but idealised world conqueror is little by little transformed into a superhuman being, he is still medium or shortish in stature. Thus, the several versions of the *AR* do not hide Alexander's by-now-famous short stature, but it is part of the storyline and can be seen in the Quintilian sense as a rhetorical way to magnify the hero's virtues and underline the ideal body that was in harmony with nature. In the Greek *AR,* his body is presented as of small stature (*sṓmatos smikrótiṭa*). Alexander's small stature appears particularly in two episodes: when Alexander passes through the enemy lines disguised as a messenger to enter the court of Darius and when Alexander encounters the Indian king Porus in an epic duel. The Persian ambassadors, Darius and Porus are amazed and despise Alexander because of his shortness.[109] In the Latin, Syriac, Armenian versions of the *AR*, the Persian nobles and Darius are presented as arrogant men who deserve to be defeated and humiliated. In the *AR,* the idea that only a tall man can be great is a mark of barbarian and uncivilised thought.

In the *AR* tale of the Alexander-Porus duel, the exceptionally tall Indian Porus disdains the Macedonian king and believes he will easily kill Alexander because of the size disparity. In the Greek *AR*, Porus is eight feet tall and Alexander less than five, while the Latin, Armenian and Syriac versions of the *AR* and the *Historia de preliis* present Porus as five cubits tall. In the *AR* of Julius Valerius, the author adds that Porus' thinking reflected the way barbarians (*barbari*) generally think about the relationship between size and valour.[110] Since he is the only author of the *AR* adding this to the story, it might be that he had picked up this detail from Curtius' passage on Thalestris and the Scythian ambassadors.

In all the versions of the *AR,* the size of a man does not matter the end, since Alexander defeats Porus and kills him. In the actual fight Porus turns to observe the noise that comes from his own army and at this very moment

Alexander plunges his sword into Porus' bowels. The reader gets the impression that the tall Porus is clumsy, having a body that is in imbalance with nature, and his enormous size weakens his sharpness of thought. The fall of the giant Porus resembles the defeat of the cyclops at the hands of Odysseus. Porus' failure to "use his brains" is shown by his incompetence in being distracted by the noise of battle and taking his eyes off his adversary when in mortal combat. His humiliating end demonstrates that despising a man because of his size is unwise and can be fatal; men should not put their trust entirely in physical strength, as more importantly is the way they use their brains.

In the Persian medieval literature, Sekandar/Alexander is not a short hero. This is evident in Ferdowsi's (940–1020) *Shahnameh*. A striking feature in *Shahnameh* is that it portrays Alexander/Sekandar and Darius/Dara as half-brothers who share the same father. In other words, it makes Alexander/Sekandar a Persian monarch instead of a foreign intruder. In addition, Darius/Dara is not the arrogant monarch we encounter in the various versions of *AR* but just a king, one who before his death nominates Sekandar as his successor.[111] In the passage where Sekandar decides to act secretly as his own ambassador Darius/Dara's nobles are amazed at Sekandar's young and handsome looks. Ferdowsi used some version of *AR* as his source material since he retells many of the tales appearing in the *AR* tradition. However, most likely Ferdowsi or his sources modified the tradition and omitted the references to Alexander's short size. In Ferdowsi Dara himself notices that Sekandar, disguised as ambassador, resembles him. He starts to suspect that this ambassador must be Sekandar, since with that stature and eloquence the person seems to be born to sit on a throne. After Sekandar returns safely to his Greek nobles, they praise him as superior in manliness, stature and glory. Again, even though the duel between Sekandar and Porus/Foor is included in Ferdowsi's epic work, the reference to Sekandar's small stature as a reason for Foor's contempt and the comparisons between their size are omitted. Foor saw that Sekandar was thin as a reed, wore light amour and rode an exhausted mount.[112]

Persian kings had a reputation of being tall and physically superior during the Achaemenid period.[113] In *Shahnameh* Alexander/Sekandar corresponds to the expectations of Persian kings, who always surpassed their subjects by their extraordinary beauty and stature. In the Persian tradition, Sekandar could not have defeated Dara if he had been of moderate size. As in Curtius' work, Persians regarded royalty as something that can be seen from a man's physical features and the Persianized Alexander is defined according to their alleged expectations for a masculine man worthy to rule. In other words, the Persian author did not want to adopt the idea of a short warrior-monarch who turned out to be successful in war.[114] Possibly one reason behind this adaptation was that there was no motive to portray Dara as an arrogant emperor, but rather as a just king, so the reference to Sekandar's small size was useless.

In medieval Europe, Alexander's small stature is related to biblical themes as well as crusading ideology. The average-sized Macedonian warrior-king fighting against fantastic barbarian enemies is presented as a fitting example for Christian knights fighting against the Muslims in Palestine and the Iberian peninsula. Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* and the anonymous author of *Libro de Alexandre* inform us about Alexander's marvellous duel with Geon that takes place during the Battle of Gaugamela. We do not find this duel in many medieval versions of the *AR* so it may be addition made by Châtillon. The *Libro de Alexandre* includes the most vivid presentation of the epic battle:

> On Darius side there was philistine (Geon) son of black father and a giant mother: he measured a full thirty cubits, foot to throat, He carried a club inset with copper nails… he came, the Devil's force in him… as he was arrogant man he began to insult him [Alexander] with many base words… Alexander understood that his words were folly, that his voice cried of vanity, not chivalry (*cavalleria*); he said in his heart, "Creator, be my guide; these arrogant words must weigh on you…[…]…He [Alexander] hurled a spear… it hit that brazen chatterbox full in the mouth; neither Moor nor Christian ever swallowed a worse bone.[115]

Here, the duel between Alexander and Geon is a struggle between a servant of Almighty God and a servant of Satan. In this scene, it is not about Alexander's small stature but about Geon's gigantic size, 14 meters (30 cubits)! The enormous beast Geon is helped by the Devil, which relates to the origin of his parents: his father a Philistine and his mother a giant. The Philistines were notorious enemies of Israel in the Hebrew Bible and giants were regarded as offspring of the fallen angels or Cain.[116] Geon's weapon, a club studded with copper nails, represents his vile intentions. On the other side, Alexander turns to God in prayer and asks for wisdom in the battle. Alexander, fighting on the "right" side, recognises that his opponent does not follow the principles of true knights since he does not show respect towards his enemies. Clearly, the author of the *Libro de Alexandre* had in his mind one of the greatest kings of the Hebrew Bible, David. The battle description has clear connotations of the legendary Biblical duel between the Israelite hero David and the Philistine giant Goliath. The biblical duel between David and Goliath was a well-known and popular episode in Christendom. In the account of the Book of Samuel David is portrayed as shorter than King Saul and when he encounters Goliath this difference in stature is highlighted even more. Like Geon, Goliath insults the Israelites and their God, while David prays to God to give him victory. As in the case of Alexander, who hurls his spear into Geon's mouth, David directs his slingshot straight at Goliath's unprotected head.[117]

By depicting Geon as a son of a *black* father the author may have referred to the ongoing contest between the Christian crusaders and Muslims, who

allegedly had darker skin than their Castilian and Norman opponents. The anonymous author's explicit reference to Christians and Moors in the passage makes the allusion likely. The crusaders used the Biblical past, Joshua's conquest of the "promised land," and the wars of king David against the Philistines, as forerunners of their own campaigns to the Holy Land.[118] Alexander's story was used in a similar way in the context of the crusades. Interestingly, the battle between the masculine hero and his gigantic bestial opponent is presented as an allegory for success. It defines true manliness not as dependent on a man's size but on his inner self and the rightness of his cause. Essential to success was his reliance on God almighty and his obedience to the chivalric code of behaviour. Even if the crusaders were inferior in numbers and smaller in stature they would be victorious as long as they were true to their holy cause and place trust in help from heaven.

The Old Swedish *Konung Alexander* (c. 1380), offers a divergent image of Alexander's stature. In contrast to the Classical and Medieval passages below, this Old Swedish version of the *AR* makes the king not only short but also slim and even ugly. When describing the great amount of the Alexander's army, the king is called as "a small and skinny" (*litin ok thunder*) and when the Persians see the king at the palace of Darius, they stare at him since Alexander was "small and ugly" (*han war badhe litin ok ledher*). Furthermore, when the anonymous author portrays the duel between Porus Alexander, the stress over the king's striking features is laid. Porus is tall and quick, while Alexander is a slim and not beautiful (*mio ok engte fagher*), whose body was three cubits tall and totally meager.[119]

Konung Alexander was composed as a part of the Bridgettine literature by the monks of the Vadstena Abbey. The work was ordered by high Swedish nobleman Bo Jonsson Grip in the end of the fourteenth century CE.[120] Descriptions of Alexander's slim and ugly appearance in *Konung Alexander* remind features connected with Jesus Christ – the holiest Martyr of the Catholic belief. In the Christian worldview, there existed view that God venerated man's inward appearance, the hidden man, which was his heart. Thus, a man of imperfect and flawed outward appearance could still be chosen by God instead of men representing bodily perfection.[121] In the north-European medieval Church art Christ was depicted as a meagre and ugly suffering on the cross. Again, the features of meagre and ugly hero in the flesh of Christ derive from the way Christians interpreted Isaiah's messianic prophecy appearing in the Hebrew Bible (Book of Isaiah 53:). According to the Christian interpretation, Jews and unbelievers did not recognise the Christ because of his stature and lack of bodily stature. However, this fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy proclaiming that the Messiah would have ugly looks and his own people would not welcome him. On a similar way in *Konung Alexander* Alexander's opponents despise him because of his ugly look. Yet their belittling view of Alexander turns to be wrong, and they are humiliated when Alexander defeats Darius and his Persian army. *Konung Alexander* peculiarly attaches image of a Christ or ugly male saint with the image of male warrior.

For the Roman and medieval authors, the message seems to be that size does not matter. What man looks like is side issue compared to one's virtues that cannot be perceived merely by eyes. All men are on the same line and capable to do progress in the path to greatness. For the Romans, the presentation of Alexander as an average-sized conqueror might be related to their self-view as men typically smaller than their barbarian neighbours considered as taller. Yet it supported the idea that the superiority of Roman martial masculinity does not depend on bodily stature of an individual warrior but on martial valour and discipline. Again, Alexander's small bodily stature is also literary motif that enables to tell a story that have a surprise ending, which was important for the anonymous authors of the *AR*. There can be recognised divergent ideals for male appearance. According to Classical tradition great man even short or average in stature had to be nevertheless beautiful cause physical beauty denoted also to moral beauty. Yet in the medieval Swedish version the hero of the story could be both short, slim and ugly. The alternative model of religious manhood or vulnerable holy masculinity was evidently behind this presentation where suffering and pain itself were desirable virtues and proved that man was close to God. Alexander's small stature functioned also as a powerful allegory for premodern upper-class males. Even they would lack troops, natural abilities and deadly weapons, they could still turn to be victorious by their true manliness displayed in faith, courage and wit.

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One reason behind Alexander's position as an exemplary man in the premodern world was his propaganda machine. The images of Alexander portrayed as a true male superhero became known in Classical antiquity and boosted his reputation as an invincible man. Portraitures of him as a son of Zeus and descendant of Heracles made him look even greater than his mere accomplishments. It is also possible that Lysippus and Alexander were aware what Aristotle had taught about lionlike looks as representative of perfect male-type and thus they shaped the visual portraits of the king to suit with this ideal.[122] The brand of beardless, long-haired, bright-eyed young warrior-monarch exceptional Alexander was deliberately created. Again, in Alexander's visual portraits and texts portraying his appearance support the idea of exceptionality as a desirable object for all alpha-males seeking for dominance. In the medieval Europe and Near-east, the references to Zeus/Jupiter and Heracles lost their relevance in the world dominated by Catholic and Muslim thinking. The image of Alexander as a perfect knight and a monarch ruling under the mandate of God, became yet popular and those holding power found ways to promote the illusion of their supremacy and omnipotence.

Alexander has been one of the most famous clean-shaved male figures in the world history. The decision to portray him beardless made an impact to male fashion and on the way illustrious men were later heroised. Even

Alexander's lasting fascination could not prevent beards to become later a trend, his clean-shaved chin still impacts to idea of heroic young males as beardless. The shaved look denoted his youthful and energetic masculinity and positive features of young men as well as divine figures like Apollo and virile athletics. The poise of the neck made impression of mysterious and exceptional man.

Alexander's figure and the idealised image of him embrace male beauty and faultlessly as something desirable for all men gaining for greatness. Alexander's alleged beautiful looks belonged to masculine ideal since handsome looks was expected to correlate to one's noble character and vice versa. For the Greek and Roman writers, the idea of physically ugly exemplary man was incompatible since in the premodern world illustrious and virtuous men were believed to have also looked good. However, in the Middle Ages the images of suffering and unattractive Christ or holy saints offered exception to this norm. This most likely influenced to the divergent portrait of *Konung Alexander* which portrays the king as ugly and unattractive.

The references to Alexander's extraordinary physical appearance indicated that the Macedonian king as a man differed from average males not only in his qualities but also in his appearance. The ideal of dominance as a masculine trait will be demonstrated in the following chapters but interestingly it can be found from the portraits of king's appearance. The features of Alexander's appearance like his gaze, leonine mane and long hair suggested control and dominion. His aggression and valour in the battlefield resembled lion and his gaze symbolised his decisiveness; there was no one who could prevent his plans. The ideal of lionlike man was recognised as a masculine ideal and interestingly it is particularly a lion which is explicitly connected with Alexander's outward appearance.

Since Alexander's visage and outward appearance became extremely popular, and it was presented as an exemplary it influenced on the masculine ideal of male appearance. His appearance symbolised a man who was taking control and using power over others. Thus, it represented expression of hegemonic masculinity of the dominant groups instead of marginalised. Particularly, those males belonging to elite and were able to govern others could find Alexander's appearance as worthy of imitation.

We do not know for sure whether it was Alexander's actual size that created the tradition of short or medium-sized world conqueror. At least it was the perception done by some of his contemporaries who were amazed of his moderate size. Alexander's small or average size stressed his exceptional qualities. After all, according to the grand story, limitations in his physical features did not prevent his goals and journey to greatness. Being a true man is to be comfortable with your body and use wisely your skills. Being skilled fighter is a more important than just raw power or bodily stature. Gain power through own hard work and intellectual. Even though masculine superiority is threatened by his height (or lack of it), masculine man still manages to show off his virtues and prove his doubters wrong. On the other hand, enormous size and

man's appearance does not guarantee being fit to rule and being valiant in the battlefield. The short or moderate size of the king also supports the ideal of masculine competition where victory and success can be achieved with the combination of your natural talents and qualities earned by hard work. Even though Alexander is presented as small or average in stature there is still idea that he has muscular and hardened physique, which most of the Classical and Medieval sources present as the ideal masculine body.

Despite of limitations Alexander manages to become victorious and therefore he represents a type of self-made man. Even though Alexander's handsome and lionlike appearance is significant element in the masculine ideal it is not far by any means the most essential factor. In the ancient and medieval texts what Alexander looked like is side issue to what he said or did. This is feature of the way synoptic gospels on Jesus' work: they do not concentrate on Christ's appearance. For a man important after all is not about what you look like but what deeds you perform.

Notes

1 Jul. Val. 3.22, 880 (Foubert 2014, 150): *Agnoscisne, ait, Alexandri llius, quem mentiri non potes, faciem.*
2 Alexander's visual portraits have been studied a lot. Stewart (1993); Mihalopoulos (2009); Trofimova (2012); Palagia (2022). From discussion on the modern public sculptures on Alexander, see Cohen (2018a, 765–791).
3 Cf. Cohen (2018a, 754–755).
4 In Greek *AR* Candace just asks Alexander: "Do you recognize your own features." *AR* 3.22. Cf. Arm. *AR* 240 (Wolohojian 1969, 137).
5 Stewart (2003, 31). On Alexander's tomb as a site for sacred travel for Roman statesmen and emperors see, Peltonen (2019b, 82–85). On Augustus' signet ring, see Plin. *HN* 37.10; Suet. *Aug*. 50. On Caracalla as collector of portraits of Alexander, see Cass. Dio. 78.7.4-78.8.4; Hdn. 4.8.1. The Roman Macriani family is said always to have had images of Alexander on their rings and bracelets. *Hist. Aug. Tyr. Trig*. 14.2–6. John Chrysostom criticized the way people used images of Alexander on coins as talismans, which he saw as an expression of idolatry. Cf. John Chrys. *Ad. Illum* 2.5.
6 On *imitatio Alexandri*, see previous note 8.
7 From Pyrrhus Plut. *Vit. Pyrrh*. 8.1; Lucian. *Ind*. 21.5–10. From the *imitatio Alexandri* of Mithridates' portrait Toynbee (1978, 115–116); Muccioli (2018, 281–282). On Pompey and Alexander see, Toynbee (1978, 24), Plin. *HN*. 7.26, 95; Plut. *Vit. Pomp*. 2.1, 13.3–6. For Pompey wearing a cloak believed to have belonged to Alexander, see App. *Mith*. 117. On Caracalla imitating the tilt of the neck towards the left shoulder. Aur. Vict. 21.4. Cf. Cass. Dio 78.7. See also Themistius, *Logoi politikoi* 13.175b, which mentions that Satraps imitated Alexander's tilt of the neck and haircut.
8 Hölscher (2020, 23).
9 Hopkins and Sugerman (1980, 14, 124–125, 134); Riordan, James and Prochnicky (1991, 54–55).
10 Little, Jones and De Bruine (2011, 1639–1642). According to Mazur (1994) dominant looking boys in facial appearance are more likely to report coital opportunity than the submissive ones in facial appearance.
11 For a study on beards and masculinity, see Oldstone-Moore (2016).

12 For physiognomical theories in the Classical world, see Evans (1969); Gleason (1990, 394–396); Gleason (1995, 29–30); Sassi (2001, 36–39, 42–43); Swain (2007); Sassi (2021). For the study of physiognomy and ethnically filled stereotypes, see Lampinen (2022). In addition to physiognomic handbooks, Lampinen also pays attention to the ways physiognomic thinking can be recognized in the works of historians such as Ammianus Marcellinus. The physical appearance of Christian ascetics was a subject of interest for the pilgrims in Late Antiquity, who searched for holiness in the faces and bodies of the ascetics. For a discussion of the early Christian physiognomy, see Frank (2000, 134–170). For the importance of physiognomy in the definitions of masculinity in eighteenth-century culture, see Mosse (1996, 24–31).
13 For lion as a perfect male type, see Arist. [*Phgn.*] 809b-810a. Cf. Frank (2000, 148). Kiilerich (1988, 63–64) suggests that Aristotle's or Pseudo-Aristotelian work influenced the iconography of Alexander.
14 Hawley (1998, 40) reminds us that depending on the context beauty could also be a source of danger, especially female beauty.
15 Treggiari (1991, 86–87, 100–101).
16 Hawley (1998, 39, 51).
17 For the practice of blinding one's rival to gain or maintain power on the throne in Byzantium Empire, see Raffensperger (2012, 26–27). For the image of Richard III as ugly hunchback and evil character, see Herman (2011, 49); Olson (2013, 87–88).
18 For example, in the Vatican Museums, statues of Emperor Claudius portrayed as Jupiter.
19 See, for the physiognomics and lionlike portraits in the Late Medieval Italy, see Melier (1963, 53–69). It is probably no coincidence that a similar physiognomic representation to that of some of the antique statues reappeared in the Renaissance when the humanist movement involved a conscious effort to revive classical sculpture and culture.
20 Philip built the *Philippeion* to celebrate his victory over the Greeks at Chaironeia in 338 BCE. The Philippeion was a circular memorial consisting of an external colonnade of 18 Ionian columns, and an inner façade. It was built in limestone and marble and had portraits of the royal family situated at the holy city of Olympia.
21 Karlsson (2016, 236–237). For a study on masculinity and portraits of Neo-Assyrian kings see, N'Shea (2018).
22 Anson (2021, 18–24). Baynham (2021, 5–7). For the elephant medallions, see Holt (2003, 122–124); Wheatley and Dunn (2021, 170–172). For the painting of Apelles where Alexander holds thunderbolt Stewart (1993, 363–364). Cf. Hölscher (2020, 24) who reminds that before Alexander we know that some famous individuals had dressed like Zeus and Heracles.
23 Heckel (2015) suggests that to Alexander, the imitation of Heracles was more important than the imitation of Achilles, whose descendant the king was from his mother's side. According to Heckel Alexander genuinely admired Heracles, whom he regarded as his alleged ancestor. Cf. Anson (2021, 16–18). Djurslev (2021, 444–445) suggests more skeptical approach to the many passages that the scholars have considered as Alexander's genuine emulation of Heracles.
24 Dahmen (2007, 18, 39–41, 108–109, 121, 124, 138, 145, 154). Trofimova (2012, 65–67).
25 For a discussion of Heracles' labors and reception, see Ogden's collected volume (2021).
26 Meeus (2020, 297–301, 306, 316–317). For the importance of Zeus in the coinage of the Seleucids, see Erickson (2018, 17–19, 31–32, 36–39, 45–46, 166–174, 181–183). For Jupiter in the self-portraits of Roman Emperors, see Fears (1981); Ferguson (1985, 40–43). For Heracles/Hercules as paragon of many Roman emperors see, Loar (2021). For allusions to Alexander in the iconography of Octavian Augustus, see Pollini (2012, 166–190).

27 Plin. *HN* 7.125; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 4.1.
28 These features have been distinguished in studies on Alexandrian visual portraits. See for example Spivey (1997, 196–203). Trofimova (2012).
29 Hölscher (2020, 31), thinks it probable that the portraits corresponded to Alexander's real appearance.
30 In the *AR* tradition Alexander's divine origin is highlighted in the story of the pharaoh Nectanebo II, who, disguised as a wandering magician seduced Olympias and fathered Alexander, a story which can be found in different versions of the *AR*. It is stressed that Philip disliked the young Alexander's appearance because he did not resemble him. However, in the *AR* it is mentioned that Alexander did not resemble Philip, an Olympian or even the magician/pharaoh Nectanebo. Cf. *AR* 1.13.
31 Stewart (1993, 152–53) states that the artist who made the Apulian vases did not know Alexander's appearance and, in his ignorance, portraited the king bearded, while Troncoso (2010, 15) argues that the artist knew that Philip had a beard and thus assumed that also his son would have a beard too.
32 Oldstone-Moore (2016, 26–31, 34–36). In ancient Egypt pharaoh was only permitted the distinction of beards. Egyptians were famous for shaving their heads and faces, including facial hair, while amongst other people male family members did have beards. Herodotus informs us that it was Egyptian custom to shave their heads and beards. Hdt. 2.36.
33 Hölscher (2018, 171–174).
34 Alcibiades had been one of the first to shave and wore his hair in long locks. Pl. *Prt*. 309ab; Ath. 12.534c.
35 Trans. S. Douglas Olson. Ath. 13.565a: τὸ ξύρεσθαι τὸν πώγωνα κατ' Ἀλέξανδρον προῆκται, τῶν προτέρων οὐ χρωμένων αὐτῷ. In the passage Athenaeus quotes Chrysippus.
36 The first bearded portraits appear on Seleucid coinages. On some Seleucid coins we recognize campaign beards that are curly, long and full. They could be regarded outwards signs of vows undertaken to ensure the success of particular campaigns. Lorber and Panagiotis (2009, 91–94). Troncoso (2010, 21) suggests that Alexander's companions like Ptolemy and Seleucus wanted to please Alexander by shaving their beards while the older generations of commanders like Antipater and Parmenion had beards like Philip.
37 Augustus had himself depicted as clean-shaven, unlike the defeated Antony (Zanker 1990: 33–77), and the emperor's style endured amongst his successors. Hadrian became the princeps and decided to retain his earlier beard as a sort of cultural message; his new hairstyle was immediately adopted as the norm throughout the empire by men young and old. Amongst the famous Romans who had a beard are Nero, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus and Julian. The Roman god Mars and the founder of the city Romulus were both portrayed with beards. In the case of Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius and Julian, the decision to grow a beard is related to their desire to present themselves as philosopher-emperors. Cf. Oldstone-Moore (2016, 48–62).
38 Stat. *Silv*. I.1.84–87. Plin. *HN*. 35.93–4. Palagia (2022, 54).
39 Gleason (1995, 68–69). Cf. Ath. 13.565a–d. Cassius Dio also strongly criticized Emperor Elagabalus because of his feminine nature, which included feminine outfit and shaved chin bearing in mind that he was portrayed as an exceptionally deranged character in every way. Cf. Rantala (2020, 121–122).
40 Plut. *Mor. Reg. et Imp. Apophth*. 180a–b. Syn. *Enc. Calv.* §§ 15–16; Polyn. *Strat*. 4.3.2. Oldstone-Moore (2016, 39–40). For a discussion on the anecdotes of Alexander and his men fighting without beards see, Djurslev (2018).
41 For the bronze statuette of Alexander found from Herculaneum, see Stewart (1993, 127).

42 For the importance of Heracles in Alexander's iconography, see above.
43 Gleason (1990, 395); Gleason (1995, 38 (note 94), 64).
44 Plantzos (1999, 78–79).
45 Plantzos (1999, 70–71). Kiilerich (1988, 59–60). Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 4.1. Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 335b.
46 Arist. *Gen. an*. 5.1.
47 *AR* α 1.13. Jul. Val. 1.13.315–320 (Foubert 2014, 43); Arm. *AR* 28 (Wolohojian 1969, 33); Syr. *AR* 1.13 (Budge 1889, 13).
48 Jo. Mal. *Chron*. 8.3.[195]; 16.1 [392]. For Malalas using *AR* as his source material, see Nawotka (2017, 39–40); Jouanno (2018a, 463–465; 2018b, 225–227). There are also clear differences between the portraits of Alexander and Anastasius I: in Malalas the former was short (see below) while the latter was tall.
49 Heb. *AR* 11 (Kazis 1962, 65); *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.20.449–450 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 42–43). *Roman d'Alexandre* composed by Alexander of Paris omits the description of different eyes-color prince.
50 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 4.1. Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 335a–b.
51 Plantzos (1999, 65–67); Ashrafian (2004, 138–139); Cohen (2018b, 120–122). Cf. Kiilerich (2017, 8–11). There are one or two known cases of famous people who had tilted necks as a result of battle injury as well; e.g. Jarl Erling (Ormsson) Skakke (skakke = wryneck) in the Norse king's sagas. He was struck in the neck during a battle to capture a Saracen ship during an expedition to the Holy Land in 1147.
52 Gleason (1990, 395–396, 399); Gleason (1995, 36, 61–64).
53 Trans. H.E. Butler. Apul. *Flo*.7: *solus Alexander ut ubique imaginum sim<illim>us esset, utique omnibus statuis et tabulis et toreumatis idem uigor acerrimi bellatoris, idem ingenium maximi honoris, eadem forma uiridis iuventae, eadem gratia relicinae frontis cerneretur*.
54 For example, Israelite hero Samson, see *Judges* 16:17–19, and for the Spartans, see Plut. *Mor. Apophth. Lac*. 228f.
55 Dillon (2006, 67).
56 Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 335b.
57 Cohen (2018b, 92–97, 112–114); Palagia (2022, 48–49).
58 Curt. 8.1.1–16; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 40.4. Cf. Roy (1998, 113).
59 For the leonine metaphor and its use as a masculine trope in Neo-Assyrian royal propaganda, see Strawn (2005, 161–174, 178–180); N'Shea (2018, 156–195). Amongst the Neo-Assyrian kings, Assurbanipal as hunter of lions underlined his alleged martial prowess, which he did not demonstrate on the battlefield. N'Shea (2018, 247–248).
60 Hom. *Il*. 7.228. 20, 164; 24, 42. King (1987, 20–26); Graziosi & Haubold (2003, 65) reminds us that in the *Iliad* the lion is critical as a simile of Achilles, as he shows no pity or shame when attacking Aeneas.
61 Arist. [*Phgn*.] 809a-814b. Arist. *Hist. an*. 1,1.488b. Arist. *An. pr*. 2, 27, 70b, 6–39.
62 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 2.3.
63 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 13.1–3.
64 N'Shea (2018, 191). Cf. footnote 102.
65 For a discussion of lionlike pharaohs and gods in ancient Egypt, see Strawn (2005, 174–178, 200–206). Egyptian deities associated with lions include Sekhmet, Bast, Mafdet, Menhit, Pakhet and Tefnut.
66 Jul. Val. 1.8.185–205; 1.13.317–322 (Foubert 2014, 38–39, 43); Syr. *AR* 1.7–8, 13 (Budge 1889, 8–9, 13); Arm. *AR* 16–17, 28, 152 (Wolohojian 1969, 29–30, 33, 85–86); Heb. *AR* 5, 11, 36, 80 (Kazis 1962, 63, 65, 85, 119).
67 Dover (1974, 41–45). For the different meanings of *kalos kai agathos* and its nuances in the Classical Greek literature, see Bourriot (1995).
68 Hawley (1998, 38–39).
69 For example, this masculine ideal appears in the Archaic *kouroi* statues Lee (2015, 40).

70 App. *B. Civ*. 2.151; Ael. *VH*. 12.14; Arr. *an*.7.28.1.
71 Jul. Val. 1.13.317–318 (Foubert 2014, 43). Amongst the later versions of the *AR*, *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* from the twelfth-century CE follows Julius Valerius text stating that the young Alexander was beautiful as well as blonde. *Rom. de toute chevalerie* 1.20 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003).
72 *Pan. Lat*. VI.17.1–2. The speech was most likely delivered after Constantine had proclaimed his father's troops at York. Mynors and Nixon (1994, 212).
73 King (1987, 3–4). Cf. Vlahogiannis (1998, 22).
74 1.Sam. 16:12, 18. Clines (1995, 221–222).
75 Philo. *Mos*. 1.9, 15, 18. Acts 7:20. Moses has good looks also in Justin's Epitome of Trogus, see Just. *Epit*. 36.2.11. Cf. Conway (2008, 53–54).
76 Williams (1999, 129–131), Goldberg (2021, 99–100).
77 See note 57.
78 Tzetzes, *Epistulae* 76. See also Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 11.368. Cf. Jouanno (2018a, 456); Kaldellis (2022, 218–220).
79 Lib. Alex. 150.
80 Lib. Alex. 150, 151.
81 Chât. *Alex*. 1.3–38, 58.
82 Lib. Alex. 28–29, 97; 151; 305. There is a reference to Alexander's skin color. He was white (*blanco*) but became (*negro*), when he was angry. Lib. Alex. 23.
83 Nicholson (2004, 108, 110).
84 For Richard's bravery in battle, see McGlynn (2014, 156–157).
85 Davis (2007a, 458, 476, 491).
86 Chât. Alex. 1.231–238 (Pritchard 1986, 42–43). For the discussion of the glowing faces and portraits of holy persons and biblical figures in the late antiquity, see Frank (2000, 160–165).
87 Bennett (2015, 80).
88 For example, in the fifteenth-century illustration of *Roman d'Alexandre* Alexander holds red rose which refers to Henry VI who belonged to the house of Lancaster Pérez-Simon (2022, 148–149, 155).
89 Stoneman (2008, 114–120); Noll (2016, 247); Pérez-Simon (2022, 143–146). For the episode portraited in the literature see *AR* 2.41; *Hist. de prel*. 3.115 (Pritchard 1992, 114–115); Lib. Alex. 2496–2514.
90 In the Medieval Western Europe, it became mandate to all churchmen to shave as a mark of holy hairlessness and a way for the monks and clergy to be distinguished from the laymen, see Oldstone-Moore (2016, 84–94).
91 Frank (2000, 153, 167–168).
92 For praise of male beauty, in medieval Romances, where men receive feminine features, see Green (2009, 52–55). Cf. Marwick (2004, 35–36).
93 In their handbook of leadership Stogdill and Bass (1981, 77) state that height and weight above the average for the peer group is certainly not a disadvantage in achieving leadership status.
94 On discussion on the size of historical Alexander, see Nawotka (2017, 173) suggest that Alexander was 1.55 m to fit while Stewart (1993, 72–73) suggest that 1.70. Grant (2019, 168).
95 Diod. Sic. 17.37.5. Arr. *an*. 2.12.6. Val. Max. 4.7.ext. 2. Cf. Curt. 3.12.16.
96 Diod. Sic. 17.66.3. Curt. 5.2.13–15.
97 For the passages where the story of Alexander's encounter with the Amazon queen Thalestris is included, see Curt. 6.5.24–32. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 46.1–2. Diod. Sic. 17.77.1–3. Just. *Epit*. 12.3.5–7. Strab. 11.5.4.
98 Trans. J, Yardley. Curt. 6.5.29: *Interrito vultu regem Thalestris intuebatur, habitum eius haudquaquam rerum famae parem oculis perlustrans: quippe omnibus barbaris in corporum maiestate veneratio est magnorumque operum non alios capaces putant, quam quos eximia specie donare natura dignata est*.

99 Trans. J, Yardley. Curt. 7.8.9: *Admissi in tabernaculum iussique considere in vultu regis defixerant oculos: credo, quis magnitudine corporis animum aestim-antibus modicus habitus haudquaquam famae par videbatur*.
100 For Darius as tall and beautiful (*mégas*, *kălos*) man, see Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 21.6. 33.5. Curt. 3.11.11-12. For Porus as a tall man see, Arr. *an*. 5.19.1. Diod. Sic. 17.88.4; On Indians as the tallest race, Arr. *an*. 5.4.4; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 60.6.
101 "Because of the excessive size of their bodies our shortness has usually been a subject of contempt for all the Gauls." (*plerumque omnibus Gallispraemagni-tudine corporum suorum brevitas nostra contempmi est*) Caes. *B. Gall*. 2.30.4: 4.1.9, 1.39.
102 Tac. *Germ*. 4; Ammian. Marc. 15.12.1.
103 Trans. N.P Milner. Veg. *Mil*. 1.1: *Quid enim adversus Gallorum multitudinem paucitas Romana valuisset? Quid adversus Germanorum proceritatem brevitas potuisset audere?*
104 Veg. *Mil*. 1.6. Cf. Ammian. Marc. 16.12.47.
105 *Itin. Alex*. 13.
106 Suet. *Aug*. 79. Octavian is presented as "short in stature" (*statura brevis*) while Caligula was tall: Suet. *Calig*. 50. Both of these two emperors were connected with *imitatio Alexandri* but in the literary tradition Augustus was the "good" emperor while Caligula "bad" as we very well know. For a discussion of Severus' manliness and his appearance, see *Hist. Aug. Sev*. 4.4–5.
107 Quint. *Inst*. 3.7.12–14. Hom. *Il*. 5.801.
108 Cf. Vlahogiannis (1998, 21–23).
109 The anonymous writer of the Greek *AR* states: "The Persians looked in amaze-ment at Alexander because of his small stature, but they did not know that the glory of a celestial destiny was hidden in that little vessel." Trans. Richard Stone-man (AR 2.15.1.) For example, in the Latin version of the AR, *Historia de preliis* it is stated: "As they sat at the table, the Persians despised Alexander's small size, not knowing what wisdom, valor and daring existed in such a small body." Trans. Pritchard, Telfryn. *Hist. de prel*. 2.62.
110 *AR* 3.4; Jul. Val. 3.4.165–194 (Foubert 2014, 128); Arm. *AR* 219 (Wolohojian 1969, 120); Syr. *AR* 3.4 (Budge 1889, 91). *Hist. de prel*. 3.89 (Pritchard 1992, 83–84); *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.502.7430 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 594–595). On Alexander's small size, see also *Hist. de prel*. 3.130 (Pritchard 1992, 123).
111 For Ferdowsi's sources and the stories related to Alexander appearing in his work, see Manteghi (2012, 2018, 46–70); Stoneman (2008, 29–32).
112 Davis (2007a, 458–461, 487).
113 Briant (2002, 225–228), classical sources portray Persian kings often with notes on the exceptional physical prowess.
114 Cf. Briant (2015, 404–405).
115 Trans. Peter Such & Richard Rabone. Lib. Alex. 1364–1372.
116 Friedman (2000, 84, 98–99).
117 1. Sam. 17:4–11, 32–51.
118 Tamminen (2019, 45–74).
119 *Kon. Alex*. 1924, 2263, 5323–5336, (65, 76, 174–175). The references to *Ko-nung* are based on the J. A Ahlstrand's edition *Konung Alexander: En Medeltids Dikt Från Latinet Vänd I Svenska Rim Omkring År 1380*, 1862 (Stockholm). The first given page numbers refer to the lines of the edition while the latter within brackets refers to the pages of the edition.
120 Ashurst (2011, 324).
121 Cf. Wilson (2015, 56–58).
122 Cf. Kiilerich (1988, 63–64).

3 A Mature Boy, Heroic Youngster and an Unbalanced Young Man

> This was also the time of the exploits of Alexander the Great […] who was destined to be cut off in his youth by sickness in another part of the world, though in war he had proved invincible.[1]
>
> – Livy, *Ab urbe condita*

> And after Alexander died in Babylon by poison, the name of the day [upon which he died] was called 'The slayer of young men', for Alexander was a young man[2]
>
> – Syriac *AR*

Age makes the difference. In all human communities, both modern and premodern, age is used to categorise individuals into different groups. Age is one of the essential factors in determining or building an individual's identity and social status within a society, in a similar manner to gender, wealth, lineage and ethnic background. Attitudes and expectations towards divergent gendered age groups differ and change according to time and place. Among the gendered age groups, young men have historically had a prominent position in human societies and cultures. They are surrounded by various institutionalised expectations in their society. Their strength and power have been the living resource for human societies to exploit when there has been a need to wage wars or build monumental buildings. Interestingly, as an ongoing historical topos, it has been customary for the older male age group to express its worry about juveniles and launch its criticism against youth. Also, as determined by biological factors, breeding is mostly a task of the youth. The health and prosperity of young people can be considered crucial for the future and continuation of a social or political community. In contemporary societies, concern has been expressed over men dying young because of reckless driving, use of drugs and alcohol, or involvement in gang-related violence. Behind these high mortality rates may lie certain models of masculinity that can be seen as toxic and dangerous. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, age is one the factors that matter in the reception of Alexander and his status as both an exemplary and a paradigmatic young man.

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From every period of history, there are young males whose life and deeds have aroused considerable posthumous interest. Those considered as exceptional young males have been raised on a pedestal in the cultural memory. Their early and tragic death merely served to increase their status in the eyes of posterity. One reason for lamenting the early death of many artists, writers, composers and scientists is that people think they would have achieved much more had they lived. Often these young men were mystified, glorified, or vilified. Their "sins" are often pardoned or seen as understandable or even characteristic for their era. Because of his influence on world history, in this long list of achievers who have died young, the most predominant and influential figure is undoubtedly Alexander the Great. He became the king of Macedonia when he was only 20 years after his father Philip was assassinated. Within 10 years he became the sole ruler of an enormous empire. However, as he approached 33 years of age, the world conqueror died. His epic story is that of a young man whose sudden departure left his contemporaries a lot to think about. This perspective on Alexander's reign is attested in the quotation above taken from Livy's *History of Rome*. For the Roman historian Alexander's death occurred when the king was still *iuvenis*, a young male, and this introduced a tragic element into his tale: he may have been the invincible world conqueror, but he was powerless when faced with death.[3] The sense of tragedy is also clear in the quotation from the Syriac *AR*. The sudden and unexpected death, (allegedly) by poison, removed an illustrious young man who was expected to live much longer. Posterity explained his reign from the perspective of his age. All his famous deeds, both good and bad, praised and condemned, were deeds of a young male.

In the Greco-Roman and medieval literature Alexander's story is about young masculinity. Alexander's myth could be used by authors to handle issues of youth and masculinity in their own societies. It was not only in words that Alexander's young age and masculinity was emphasised, but as we have seen in the previous chapter, in the Lysippan portraits of a beardless and beautiful monarch. The question of Alexander's early childhood also became a matter of interest, attested especially by the anecdote of Alexander taming the wild stallion Bucephalus when he was a young boy. The image of Alexander as young man is evident in the Roman literary tradition. Classical literature often presents gods and men with epithets, and among the historical figures of antiquity Alexander III king of Macedon has several. From antiquity to this day he has been known as "the Great," and sometimes he is called a "Alexander of Macedon" or simply "great king."[4] But often when the author is not mentioning his name, Alexander is referred to as a young man.

The term youth is difficult to define and naturally it has changed during different periods of history. The beginning of youth involves both biological (the onset of puberty) and social responsibilities. In a similar way, the

end of youth is not an easy thing to define, especially when considering societies of the distant past.[5] The same is true when we approach the concept of childhood. Whether one was regarded as a child was not dependent entirely on chronological age, but also in relation to the parents.[6] In antiquity, childhood/boyhood/girlhood (*paidiá*, *pueritia*) normally denoted a person between 0 and 15 years old.[7] The Greek and Latin terminology denoting youth is even more vague.[8] The Greek terms *meirákion*, *néos*, *neotes*, *neaniskos*, *kóros* and the Latin words *adulescens* and *iuvenis* refer to a young male who was expected to possess qualities typical for men of his age. However, in all cases the terms refer to the period between childhood and manhood.

When discussing Alexander, Seneca in his *On Benefits* (*De beneficiis*) and Arnobius in his *Against the Pagans* (*Adversus nationes*) use the term *adulescens*, while Juvenal and Silius Italicus employ the term *iuvenis;* both mean "young man" when they write about Alexander without using his forename.[9] When the author calls Alexander a young man without mentioning his name, he not only follows a literary topos but shows that he and his alleged audience regarded Alexander as a symbol of young masculinity. In other words, the attributes believed to be characterised by youth seem to be linked with Alexander's persona in cultural memory.

As a cultural metaphor "young" is the antithesis of "old," so when classical writers describe how young males usually act, they imply something contrary to the behaviour of old males (*senex*).[10] Classical and post-classical authors were usually older men, at least in their forties when they composed their works. Youth and age have been much studied in classical scholarship. The research has concentrated on exploring whether youths in classical times were like modern youths, or even whether youths existed in the classical period.[11] For this study, it is not so much what young boys and young males were in the classical world that is in question but how they were perceived in the passages where Alexander's youth or boyhood is mentioned. Spencer (2002) notes that Alexander's early death made an impact on his fame and the building of his myth in the Roman cultural memory.[12] However, previous research on Alexander's legacy has not explored the aspect of age in the literary presentations of Alexander, although it seems that it has been crucial in assessing Alexander's persona from antiquity to the present day.

In this chapter, I examine passages concerning Alexander's childhood and literary portraits of him as a young male. The object is to ascertain how these characterisations of childhood and youth are related to masculine ideals. In the first subchapter, I examine the reception of Alexander as a boy and his childhood. Next, I investigate how the authors write about the king as an exceptional young male whose accomplishments are magnified given his young age. The third subchapter examines the critical approach to Alexander's age and the image of an immature and unbalanced young man.

Puer senex and first-class pupil

The childhood of the famous and exemplary monarch interested Alexander's contemporaries. Pliny in his *Naturalis historia* mentions that Lysippus made a series of statues beginning with one of Alexander in his boyhood (*pueritia*), but it seems that there were few portraits of the boy Alexander, whereas there were many of him as an adult.[13] These now lost pieces of art may even have been even part of an attempt by Alexander to idealise his childhood before his contemporaries. We know that the Cynic philosopher Onesicritus of Astypalae, who took part in the Persian campaign, wrote a work titled "How Alexander was educated." This now lost work possibly gave a flattering image of Alexander's childhood, explaining his later success by his boyhood education. The works of the Alexander historians focus on the events after Alexander's ascension to the throne at the age of twenty. Diodorus, Curtius, Arrian and Justin virtually ignore the king's childhood. Plutarch's *Alexander* is the exception, and he based his account of the king's childhood on many earlier sources.[14] The *AR* tradition also gives a lot attention to the prince's early years, including several stories from Alexander's boyhood. Another portrait of the boy Alexander comes from Dio Chrysostom's *Second Oration*. In Greek and Latin, a distinction between early childhood and late childhood was made: the Greek term for a baby/infant under 7 years old would be a *bréphos*, *nḗpios* the Latin *infans,* while a child of over 7 years would be *paîs* or *puer*.[15] The literary tradition of Alexander's childhood concerns this latter phase of childhood.

In most of the passages, Alexander is portrayed as a *puer senex*, that is, a precocious child who shows positive qualities expected of older people instead of acting like children normally did. [16] In the passages on the king's childhood, we encounter an image of an exceptionally talented boy whose "greatness" and later qualities as a grown male were already in evidence during his childhood. These passages reflect traditional attitudes towards childhood and ideals related to childhood in Classical and medieval societies.[17] In addition, by giving a portrait of Alexander as *puer senex* the authors could describe masculine traits that would be expected of the adult males the upper-class boys were supposed to become.

Plutarch's portrait of Alexander's childhood is eulogistic. He states at the beginning of his description of the prince's early years that already as a *paîs* Alexander could show self-control (*sōphrosynē*) regarding bodily appetites and had a desire for recognition (*philotimía*). Plutarch tells us that Persian delegates visiting Philip's court were impressed by Alexander's eagerness for high endeavour since Alexander posed questions to them that were neither childish (*paidikón*) nor trivial.[18] He was not a typical child with childish qualities but instead acted like a grown man. Whether *sōphrosynē* was a natural ability or a learned one was debated in Greek literature. The virtue of self-control (*sōphrosynē*) was the cardinal virtue believed to belong to upper-class males who had been educated by Greek *paideia,* while barbarian

men were believed to lack that virtue.[19] In his *Republic,* Plato writes that for the state's military class it is important to connect the virtues of *andreíā* and *sōphrosynē,* which takes place through education in poetry, music and gymnastics.[20] Even though teaching *sōphrosynē* was part of the education of Greek upper-class males,[21] Plutarch, before dealing with the education of the prince (see below), states that Alexander had an innate quality that many grown males allegedly lacked or had to learn through education.

Again, Alexander as a child did not fantasise about wealth and luxury but wars and opportunities for distinction. According to Plutarch, Alexander did not seek recognition of any sort like Philip; for instance, he refused to compete in the Olympic games because other competitors were not kings, even though he was a fast runner.[22] This anecdote is not intended as negative but underlines the competitive spirit of the prince and his desire for recognition. In Plutarch and the *AR*, already as a boy the king showed positive qualities that conformed to the ideal of martial masculinity and dominance: the ability to demonstrate self-control and show competitive spirit.

The story of Alexander taming Bucephalus when a boy is a key incident in the idealised presentation of the prince's childhood and ideal masculinity (see Figure 3.1). It appears in Plutarch as well as in the several versions of the *AR*.[23] In Plutarch's narrative, Philip had made the decision to take the horse away because it was so wild and uncontrollable. However, Alexander publicly protests at his father's decision. Since Alexander kept interrupting his father Philip became very irritated and snapped: "Who are you to criticise your elders?" In the Greco-Roman world, the most prominent virtue for children was to be obedient to their parents.[24] Thus young Alexander is acting improperly towards his father. However, Alexander's behaviour is justified when he gets his chance to prove himself right and show intelligence surpassing that of all the adult males who had failed to tame the large and wild colt. According to the story the prince understood that the horse was alarmed at its own shadow and turned it away from it. Later, Philip recognises that his son is special and publicly praises Alexander. The story of Alexander taming Bucephalus is magnified and exaggerated in the *AR,* so that in some versions the stallion is a man-eater locked inside an iron cage. The courageous and intelligent boy succeeds in pacifying and riding the ferocious horse, which had killed several men.[25]

The anecdote causes readers to admire Alexander's success, which is written in the stars: the boy Alexander was destined from birth to become a worthy king and illustrious man. Firstly, the passage promotes the ideal of masculine dominance: already as a young boy could rule over men and animals. Being a ruler and a masculine man is to know those you rule, use their weaknesses and make them obey you, not just by sheer power but also by wit and intelligence. Secondly, the anecdote highlights the development of a fierce competitive spirit in Alexander, who even as a boy was willing to compete against adults and surpass them. Later in the narratives this competitive nature reappears when as an adult Alexander has a strong desire to emulate

Figure 3.1 John Steel's sculpture *Alexander and Bucephalus* in the courtyard of Edinburgh's City Chambers was erected in 1884. It portrays Alexander's taming of the famous stallion. Plutarch and versions of the *AR* say Alexander was a boy at the time, but here he is presented as a youthful man. His muscular body hints at power and dominance as well as male beauty. Photo Stefan Schäfer. Wikimedia Commons.

and surpass divine heroes of old like Achilles, Heracles and Dionysius.[26] Thus the anecdote of the boy Alexander as the tamer of Bucephalus reflects the ideals of masculine dominance and competitive spirit, both of which belonged to hegemonic masculinity in the Greco-Roman world.

In the Greek *AR*, Alexander is also introduced as a *puer senex* who succeeds in solving his parents' marital problems. When Philip and his wife start to quarrel, Alexander encourages his mother to resolve the dispute and says: "It is right that a woman should be ruled by her husband."[27] Alexander is the mediator who teaches proper gender roles and tries to restore patriarchal order in the royal family. In a good family, a man should control his wife while a good wife should be obedient to her husband. As a boy the prince has understood this "natural" order of things and follows it. Even though the Alexander tradition pays very little, if any, attention to Alexander as the head of his household, in this anecdote the core elements of paternal masculinity are crystallised.

Whereas in Plutarch Alexander refused to compete in Olympic games because the other competitors would not be princes like him, in the *AR* there is a story of Alexander as a boy competing successfully in chariot races of Olympia/Pisa and encountering Nicolaus, the king of Arcania. It appears in

the Greek, Latin, Armenian and Syriac versions of the *AR*.[28] This story reiterates the ideals of boyhood and Alexander's relationship with his father as well as his pursuit of recognition and fame.[29] According to the story, Alexander begs his father to allow him to go to the games. This demonstrates that the exceptional boy who tamed Bucephalus is still obedient to his father and does not act without his permission. The father offers suitable horses from his stables, but the boy replies that he would prefer horses he has raised himself. When Alexander arrives in Pisa, he encounters Nicolaus, described as a boastful young man who speaks arrogantly to the prince. The boy prince, however, demonstrates his maturity when Nicolaus begins to boil with rage and spits at Alexander. The anonymous author of the Greek *AR* states that Alexander, for whom it was natural to control his feelings, wiped away the insulting spittle. In the Latin *AR,* it was Alexander's education (*disciplina*) that had taught him the virtue of self-mastery (*continentia*). Again, in the Armenian *AR* the reason why Alexander could restrain himself despite the insult was because he was well counselled and disciplined. The Greek *AR* says that Alexander had a natural ability to control his feelings, while the Latin and Armenian versions give credit to his education. Since Alexander acts like an experienced and grown man – in contrast to average/normal children who had yet to learn how to behave rationally and consider their options before taking action – it makes him once again a *puer senex*.

In the race, Alexander drives a chariot against the more experienced and older competitors. Since Alexander is an exceptional boy, against all odds he proves his worth. In the Greek, Latin, Armenian and Syriac versions of the *AR,* Nicolaus attempts to kill Alexander during the chariot race but the intelligent boy notices this and manage to overturn the chariot of Nicolaus. After the race Alexander is crowned as victor and the prophet of Zeus states that the boy shall defeat his enemies in a war just as he defeated Nicolaus and his other opponents in the race.

The narrative of Alexander's victorious chariot race emphasises the ideal of competition as well as masculine dominance. The boy Alexander does not want simply to observe the Olympic contest but takes part in it.[30] In the ancient Olympic games no prizes were given for second or third place; this was a world where "winner takes all" and utmost excellence was encouraged within the education of young boys. We know that aristocratic boys were raised in a competitive environment where everyone aimed to achieve first place. Athletics formed an essential part of the early education in ancient Greece and Rome. But chariot racers were normally adults.[31] Since Alexander proves to be victorious – even though young and inexperienced – it proves he can excel in the world of masculine competition. The story of Alexander as charioteer underlines also the idea of self-controlled masculinity: he controls his passions when Nicolaus provokes him. As a boy Alexander manage to fulfil the ideals of hegemonic masculinity as well as constructing a new ideal where young boys can mirror qualities that grown males are expected to show.

The belief that a person's central qualities and skills become evident as a child was common in Classical and medieval thinking. If a person was regarded as bad and morally wretched as an adult, these bad qualities must have been manifested in childhood. On the other hand, if the person became a valiant warrior-king, he was believed to have shown qualities suitable for a courageous fighter as a boy. We encounter this tradition in Greco-Roman historiography as well in the canonical and apocryphal gospels.

Herodotus writes on the childhood of Cyrus the Elder that when the 10-year-old boys were playing a game in the village Cyrus was elected as king by the other boys from the village because he seemed to them the most suitable for this role. According to Herodotus this event occurred when Cyrus was ten and a boy (*paîs*), and it revealed his true identity. The same motif can be read from Suetonius' *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* and *Historia Augusta,* where the prominent qualities of the emperors were apparent in their childhoods. According to Suetonius, already as a young boy Caligula was cruel and vicious and there were bad omens when Nero's birth took place, while even as an infant and young boy Claudius suffered various illnesses whose effects manifested during his mature years. On the other hand, Titus, who receives favourable treatment, is portrayed as having possessed exceptional bodily and mental gifts as a boy. When *Historia Augusta* writes about the childhood (*pueritia*) of the emperor Septimius Severus it states that as a child the future emperor did not engage in games with the other children except when playing judge, and then other children would obey his orders eagerly.[32]

We can recognise the same pattern of thinking in Luke's gospel as well as from the apocryphal infancy gospels of James and Thomas. For example, in Luke's gospel Joseph and Mary found the 12-year-old Jesus in the temple of Jerusalem sitting in the midst of the teachers, who are amazed at the young boy's understanding and the answers he gives. This seems to explain the qualities of Jesus, who as an adult is portrayed in Luke's gospel as a great teacher whose teaching surpasses that of the Pharisees and Sadducees. In medieval hagiography, the saints, like Jesus, were already marked for greatness and often showed adult abilities when boys. Many saints in their boyhood, such as Cuthbert and Guthlac, as a sign of their holiness were said to have tamed wild animals through patience and understanding or defeated dangerous ones by this method or by command.[33] With the saints this implied some higher understanding of God's nature – and we can assert that the writers of the European *AR* implied the same with the story of Alexander taming Bucephalus. The theme of the exceptional boy, *puer senex,* who controlled the world around them was clearly important. As in the reception of Alexander's childhood, a person's exceptional qualities were apparent already in his boyhood. Plutarch and his sources as well as the anonymous authors of the *AR* belong to the same historiographical and biographical tradition, one where an illustrious and exemplary individual's boyhood had to be exceptional.[34]

Even though a person's character was often depicted as born into them or developing very early in life, ancient and medieval authors nonetheless

underlined the importance of education in a child's upbringing. From the gender perspective proper education was a fundamental way to make boys into men. The importance of education also appears in the reception of Alexander's childhood. Plutarch, Dio Chrysostom and *AR* describe the education of the Macedonian prince as a great success. In these works, Alexander's personality, and potential to fulfil the masculine standards as a young boy take place not only due to his natural abilities but because of his education and willingness to learn. In addition, the content and quality of the prince's education was important.

During their education children were expected to learn from adults all the skills needed to act appropriately within the community as male and female adults themselves. In the Classical world, the concept *paideia* ("education") referred both to the formal education for the elite and to a wider culture shared by Greek local elites.[35] Even though the young Alexander is described as exceptionally mature in many respects, Plutarch still portrays him as a boy who needed a formal type of education and who had to acquire the social status that *paideia* brought.[36] For the contemporary audience of the early Roman Empire, Alexander's *paideia* referred to Greek education and literature rather than the court of Pella and the regal education of the Argead princes of the fourth century BCE. According to Plutarch, Philip realised that even though his son was stubborn, Alexander had a rational mindset. Plutarch states that Philip recognised that the young boy needed persuasion by intellectual reasoning (*logos*) rather than instruction by command. Philip did not want ordinary tutors that would teach Alexander poetry and formal studies, so he hired the best philosopher of his time, Aristotle. Then the young Alexander learned everything so well from Aristotle that he could teach his fellow students.[37] The *AR* tells us that the education of the young prince was rich and inclusive.[38] The Greek *AR* names more of the prince's tutors than Plutarch, listing the teachers of music, geometry, rhetoric and philosophy.[39] The *AR* makes clear that the education of the prince was taken seriously, and Aristotle continues to play a role in the king's more mature years as he writes letters to his former master during his campaign against Persia.

In the Greco-Roman world, the father was ideally in charge of the upbringing and disciplining of children, especially of boys. Fathers also used slaves and other educators to discipline their children.[40] In the classical tradition, Philip acted like a wise father, choosing the best tutor for his son and so ensuring his later greatness. As Aristotle's pupil, the prince belonged to the elite among the educated: a lover of learning, who learned everything so well that he could teach his fellow students. According to Plutarch, as a boy Alexander studied Homer and other Greek literature, drama and philosophy, and he maintained this interest and passion for *paideia* throughout his life. In addition, he continued to value the erudition of Aristotle.

Dio Chrysostom's *Second Oration on kingship,* composed in the early second century CE, also gives an idealised image of Alexander as a boy and praises of prince's education. In the *Oration,* there is a dialogue between the

young Alexander and his father Philip on education and kingship, in which the boy reasons to his father on the profits of the traditional Greek culture, especially Homer. Alexander is called a *meirákion* "lad" (someone between 15 and 18 years old) who discusses on manliness and manly virtues that can be read from Homer.[41] He is presented as a boy filled with passion for becoming a "true" man which enables him to prove his worth. Alexander tells his father that he reads solely poems of Homer because it is noble and lofty for a "real man" who expects to rule all the inhabitants of the earth. The Oration indicates that true manliness is not an automatic trait, but something that one must learn. In addition, a man must learn the standards belonging to his social status. To become a king and reach towards the ideal of masculine dominance you must learn from the lives of previous kings. This can take place if a boy has a passion for learning and has the best possible education, namely the Greek *paideia*.[42]

The Greek intellectuals Plutarch and Dio presented themselves as advocates of Greek culture, literature and philosophy in the Roman world. The image of Alexander's successful upbringing was used to emphasise the value of Greek literature and philosophy in Imperial Rome of the second century. If the Greek *AR* was composed in the Roman world of the third century CE, as some scholars have suggested, it would promote Greek *paideia* before the Romans by referring to Alexander's education.[43] By portraying the boy Alexander as rationally oriented Plutarch, Dio and the anonymous author of the *AR* stressed the exceptional nature of the prince, verifying rational thinking as a masculine standard as well as the importance of Greek *paideia*. In the Greco-Roman world, children were usually thought to be led by their passions and requiring physical discipline. Thus, children could not participate in the rational discourse of adults. The Greek thinkers also thought that adult male citizens had the potential for reason (*logos*) while females (to some extent), those considered natural slaves and barbarians did not.[44] Males were expected to demonstrate their manliness by logical thinking, whereas women, slaves and barbarians could not. The indication that the boy prince was obedient to reason made it clear that he was ready to be moulded into a real man at an exceptionally young age. The idealised presentation of Alexander as the product of Greek education was to promote the value of Greek philosophy and literature in the Mediterranean world governed by the Romans. The core elements of true manliness could be learned under the supervision of Greek teachers.

The medieval reception of Alexander's childhood has the same themes that can be identified in the Classical tradition. The medieval Alexander was an exceptional boy taught by the best possible teachers of the time. Since Plutarch's *Alexander* was unknown in western Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages, the king as *puer senex* became known from the *AR* and its medieval adaptions. Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* and the *Libro de Alexandre* portray the prince as a *puer senex* whose childhood already revealed his later character as an adult. In *Alexandreis,* the poet describes at

length the ambivalent reality in the mind of a boy whose beard had not yet started to grow. The young Alexander is frustrated by the inactivity of childhood (*quies pueris*) and longs to take up arms to fight the Persians who were oppressing the Greeks, although he does not have the physical strength of a grown man.[45] Thus, in Walter's work childhood is a phase of life that the young Alexander desperately wants to end, and participating in warfare is a masculine duty that the single-minded boy wants to fulfil. In *Libro de Alexandre,* it is stated that even as a child (*el infant*) Alexander began to show he would later do great deeds. The author adds that the boy was already feared by others although he had just learned to speak. In other words, the boy was filled with qualities that belonged to the ideal of masculine dominance as well as traits that were expected from a king.[46]

Medieval works also include the idealised image of Alexander as the pupil of Aristotle, a king whose greatness was partly due to his life-long relationship with his master.[47] Even though *Alexander's Letter to Aristotle about India*, composed in the early Middle Ages, concentrates on the fantastic marvels of the east, it mentioned Alexander as pupil of Aristotle as well. The texts composed in the High Middle Ages give a more detailed image of Aristotle than the Greco-Roman works cited above. The medieval versions of the *AR,* Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* and the *Libro de Alexandre* all eulogise Aristotle as the aged and experienced man. *Le Roman de toute chevalerie,* introduces Aristotle as the tutor of young Alexander with the accolade that e with the exception of the celestial Christ there has never been a wiser man on Earth.[48]

The medieval authors make clear that old men such as their archetypal Aristotle should be honoured in society. In *Alexandreis,* the poet juxtaposes the boy Alexander filled with martial fervour and his lean and pale teacher. Châtillon therefore presents two different masculine ideals: one the old sage and man of letters, who would bring to the medieval mind clerics and university scholars, the other the energetic aristocratic boy yearning to win his spurs, represented by Alexander, who would appeal to the secular aristocratic youth. Aristotle's old and skinny appearance underlines his devotion to the "inner man" (*interior homo*) and would bring to the medieval mind holy ascetics like St Anthony and contemporary hermits or monks who followed the monastic ideal. Aristotle may be a sage, but the portrait of him does not lack martial imagery and symbolism. The poet states that the teacher came from "sharpening the weapons of logic" (*perfecto logyces pugiles armarat elencos*) to see his pupil. The experienced Aristotle represents the learned mind who fights his battles with words and arguments.[49] Evidently both Châtillon and the author of *Libro de Alexandre* used *AR* as their source material, but both included a lengthy scene where Aristotle gives guidance to the young and passionate boy Alexander. The scene is not in Curtius' work either.[50] Both medieval works praise Alexander's skills as a pupil and mention that the prince's education was arranged with all possible care. In *Alexandreis*, Aristotle encourages the Macedonian boy (*puer*) to assume the mantle of a man in his

mind (*Indue mente virum*), since he has all the potential for valour/manly valour (*virtus*).[51] By this exhortation the tutor recommends an ideal that the aristocratic boy should endeavour first to become a mature man mentally, before his physical strength increases.

Medieval works (see Figure 3.2) emphasise that as a boy Alexander venerated his master Aristotle and did what he said. However, the emphasis on the image of the king as the product of Greek *paideia* appearing in Plutarch and Dio disappears in the medieval epic. Instead, the young Alexander is taught subjects that medieval aristocrats and clergy would have studied. In *Libro de Alexandre,* the boy Alexander attends all lessons every day and takes part in disputations, and his wit is so sharp that it surpasses that of his masters. The stress is laid on the importance of memory and perception: as a boy the prince forgot nothing and remembered everything he saw. He learned all the things that were taught. In *Libro de Alexandre,* the prince says to Aristotle that he knows all about the seven arts (*las siete artes*). Thus, Alexander's education follows the medieval ideal of the "seven liberal arts" belonging to the *trivium* and *quadrivium*. The prince is also thankful for the teachings he receives from his master and venerates him deeply. Young Alexander proclaims to Aristotle that he understands grammar and logic and can compose and write verse. He is also a fine rhetorician, who knows about medicine and how to sing and make melodies.[52]

The *Roman d'Alexandre* (*Romance of Alexander*) composed by the cleric Alexander of Paris (also known as Alexander of Bernay), in the late twelfth century, has Aristotle teaching Alexander Greek, Hebrew, Chaldean and Latin. It also makes clear that those taking care of the prince's education belonged to the upper class: no wet nurses belonging to the lower classes were allowed to look after the prince. The prince absorbed everything quickly and learned how to use reason (*raison*). The Old Swedish *Konung Alexander* gives less credit to teachers since it does not name Aristotle or others but simply states that the prince was put to study (*sattis han til book*). Again, the author mentions that the prince became even wiser than his teacher. In fact, Alexander learnt more than many others until he did not need to learn any more.[53]

The backbone of life in the Roman Empire as well as in medieval societies – whether centralised kingdoms or city-states – was that boys and girls learned the needed skills and proper values that made them responsible adults and members of the community. In modern terms, this process is called socialisation.[54] The social status of the family influenced significantly what skills and knowledge their children needed to learn. A monarch was at the top level of society. A future king had to be taught all the skills needed to manage the kingdom and the army. The nature of a person's upbringing and socialisation differed considerably according to gender. The ideals of masculinity were taught to upper-class boys destined to become men who would serve the community and ensure its continuity. Their education was designed to mould real men and enable them to maintain that status.

Figure 3.2 King Philip (recognisable by his crown), introduces Alexander to his master Aristotle. Here the prince is clearly depicted as a boy, contrasted with the adult men. A group of boys including young Alexander all wear tunicas. From a *Roman d'Alexandre* dated to 1290–1300 CE. © British Library Board Harley MS 4979, f13v.

The passages on Alexander as a boy seem to propagate the importance of boys for the community, favouring them over girls. Boyhood in the Alexander tradition is presented as a period when the expectations due to his class are laid upon a child, in Alexander's case weighty expectations. The idealised early years are presented as a guarantee that great deeds would ensue in youth and mature age.

In the works discussed above, Alexander achieves and maintains the masculine status successfully. He succeeds in fulfilling the expectations placed on him and even surpassing them by becoming an exceptional and exemplary boy. His masculinity originates from his natural abilities that are already apparent in his boyhood. A boy of Alexander's talent demonstrated qualities expected from grown-up males even without any guidance. At the same time the Classical and the High Medieval texts emphasise that the parameters of true masculinity are taught by an experienced and skillful teacher. So even Alexander needed proper education, and to respect his old and experienced teacher to become a true man. Evidently, most of the writers underlining the importance of education of the prince belonged to the social class of men of letters who themselves hoped to be the "teachers" of the sons of aristocrats expected to accomplish great deeds in the future. According to them, aristocratic families needed to hire good teachers if they wished to produce new Alexanders. The sons of the upper class nobles should act like

Alexander and show the utmost respect for their experienced teachers, following their directions concerning warfare, material wealth, sexual passion and giving gifts. The passages about the king's education reinforced the position of the educated men working as tutors and teachers. In the premodern world, successful initiation of a boy into full manhood depended largely on two factors – the young pupil's ability to learn, and the quality of the guidance given by men of letters.

The idea of power and dominance as a masculine ideal – which are discussed in all chapters of this book – can be recognised in the way Plutarch, Dio Chrysostom and particularly the different versions of *AR* portray Alexander's childhood. The boy Alexander behaves in these texts as aristocratic males were expected to when they would be able to exercise power. He is rational-minded, determined and steadfast, inventive, self-reliant and courageous. In addition, self-controlled masculinity and competitive spirit as ideals are also visible in the presentation of Alexander's childhood. As a boy the prince is willing to compete with others even if they are much older than he is. He is not governed by his emotions but manages to control his actions perfectly as would a rational mature man.

The source material must not lead us to assume that ancient Romans or medieval people did not want their children to be real children. There were fears that growing up too soon would mean an early death.[55] Rather, the idealistic portraits of mighty individuals underlined the goals that upper-class boys and juveniles were to aim for. In the story of Alexander, the worry that a boy who matured too early would die young turned out to be true. However, since Alexander died at the age of 32 and achieved his famous deeds after his ascension to the throne at the age of 20, he was frequently remembered not as a boy but as a young male. The allegedly super-talented child became a grown man whose career was approached from the perspective of his young age.

The exceptional young man and eulogy of youth

In Classical culture, "youth" was regarded as a distinct period of life and it was believed that young males behaved differently from their senior counterparts. Aristotle, Ptolemy and Cicero all wrote on youth and the qualities regarded as typical for juveniles. The Greek and Roman intellectual elite characterised youth as a mixture of positive and negative features. The image of youths in literature was not only a reflection of widely shared views but also a stereotypical construction by older men in Greco-Roman society. Their views and valuations enabled elderly males to strengthen their position in the community and emphasise the alleged differences between youth and maturity. However, Greek and Roman writers did not confine themselves to critique of youth, but sometimes wrote negatively about older age and the supposed features of older men as well. As noted, terminology in Greek and Latin on meaning young males were used loosely so that the terminology for the period between childhood and adulthood was somewhat vague.[56]

The first Greek historian to write about Alexander whose work has survived, Polybius, mentioned Alexander's age when he wrote about the kingdom of Philip and his son Alexander and the aid they received from their comrades and commanders. He remarks: "While we should perhaps give Alexander, as commander-in-chief, the credit for much, notwithstanding his extreme youth, we should assign no less to his co-operators and friends."[57] Polybius states that what was remarkable about the achievements of Alexander was that he was successful even though he was so young (*néos*). He did not write much about Alexander in his *Histories,* but shows here that the histories of the early Hellenistic period frequently magnified the deeds of Alexander because he had achieved them at such a young age.[58] Even Polybius, who perhaps gave a more nuanced and balanced judgement of Alexander than the previous Alexander historians and did not glorify his reign so much, mentioned military success achieved at Alexander's age as remarkable.[59]

Like Polybius, the Romans who lived in the first century BCE also referred to Alexander's successes at such a young age as notable. In the *Philippics*, Cicero uses a positive reference to Alexander's young age as political rhetoric when trying to persuade his audience to think positively about Octavian Caesar. Cicero reminds them that Macedonian Alexander began to perform mighty deeds from his earliest youth (*ab ineunte aetate*) and died before he was 33 years old.[60] This was ten years after a man became eligible to hold a consulship in Rome. Alexander's deeds demonstrated that progress in virtue is sometimes swifter than advancement in age. In Cicero's rhetoric, Octavian Caesar had shown such eminent and unparalleled virtue that in there was no need to wait for him to become older. Magnification of Alexander's accomplishments was employed to support the idea that a young man can be qualified and competent as a statesman and general even though he has not reached the age that would usually be necessary to be elected. According to Cicero, Caesar was suitable for election as consul. In the cultural memory Alexander was an exceptional young man and in Cicero's argumentation similar exceptionality ought to allow deviance from normal practice. Here the orator has picked up on the well-known representation of Alexander to support his political stance.

In the extant Roman Alexander histories – composed after Polybius and Cicero's *Philippics* – the Macedonian king is depicted as an exceptional young man whose greatness is linked to his age. There are passages where the tone is that *even though* Alexander was a young man, he managed not only to cope with the expectations placed on him but to surpass them. When Curtius describes the respect the king enjoyed in the eyes of the Macedonian soldiers, he remarks: "His [Alexander's] age gave added lustre to all his achievements for, though hardly old enough for undertakings of such magnitude, he was well up to them."[61] According to Curtius, the greatness of the king was due to his ability to cope with the demands that commanding and being sole king required from him, despite his age. In other words, Curtius says that usually young men were *not* suitable to rule as kings and command the army, but

Alexander was an exception. Thus, the king's young age (*aetas*) made his deeds even greater. In the same way, Arrian in his *Anabasis* raises Alexander above other men of his age when he praises the king's decision not to rape Oxyartes' virgin daughter of marriageable age, the Bactrian princes Roxanne, as might normally be done to a captive woman before marrying her. In the Roman world, young men were generally assumed to have stronger sexual desires than older males.[62] Alexander's greatness was shown by his decision not to act like impetuous young men were expected to. In his narrative, Arrian also reminds his audience of the king's chivalrous treatment of Darius' wife:

> Somehow in the case of Darius' wife, who was said to be the most beautiful woman in Asia, either Alexander felt no desire, or he restrained himself, though he was a young man at the very peak of his success, when men are apt to run wild.[63]

Even though Alexander was "a young man" (*néos*) he did not rape Darius' wife (cf. page 151 of this book). In the passages of Curtius and Arrian above, Alexander is capable of acting differently than the average youth, which makes him greater than average males of his age and an exceptional model of young masculinity.

The theme of older and mature men despising young males appears in the literary tradition on Alexander. In the historiographical tradition, several parties were portrayed as despising Alexander because of his young age. If we believe Plutarch, the Athenian orator and politician Demosthenes was one of the firsts who made critical judgements on Alexander on this basis. Plutarch writes that when Demosthenes incited the Athenians to fight against the Macedonians, he called Alexander a "boy" (*paîs*) and "margites" (silly madman).[64] Although the basic meaning of *paîs* is a child over 7 years old, it could denote seventeen- or eighteen-year-olds with the implication of immaturity.[65] Diodorus states that when Alexander gained the throne, he was *néos* ("young"), and therefore he was not uniformly respected, but he managed to establish his authority over the Macedonians quickly.[66] Diodorus also writes that King Darius was relieved when he heard that King Philip had died since he despised Alexander as a youth (*neótēs*). However, after Alexander had fought successfully against those who rebelled against his rule and showed his virtue, Darius changed his mind. The Persian monarch saw these deeds as an indicator of the young man's (*neānískos*) manliness (*aretḗ*).[67] Justin states that although Alexander demonstrated great promise when he was 20 years old, his restraint made it clear that he had still more in reserve than was then apparent.[68] Later in the narrative, Justin claims that the reaction of the Athenians to Alexander turned from opposition to admiration. Having initially had contempt for Alexander's boyhood (*pueritia*) they began to extoll him as superior to the heroes of old.[69] These passages may reflect genuine reactions

when the 20-year old Alexander ascended to the throne after the assassination of Philip. In addition, they also reveal a culture which did not expect youth to succeed in carrying out heavy responsibilities as well as mature men would. What made Alexander's story remarkable was that, according to the literary tradition appearing in the Roman Alexander histories, the young king demonstrated that the suspicion about such a young man's ability to manage his troops and his kingdom was groundless.

In the Roman Alexander histories, the king is not merely eulogised because he acted differently than normal young men but because he possessed the virtues of youth and displayed positive youthful features. Even though for the most part the image of youth in Classical literature composed between 50 BCE and 500 CE is negative and pessimistic (see below), some positive qualities were attributed to youth as well. One positive feature is their courage. In his *Rhetoric,* Aristotle mentions that the youth are full of hope, more courageous than others, and they love their friends of the same age.[70] Some other positive features linked to youth in Classical literature are beauty, charm, sincerity and idealism.[71] Recklessness and insatiable love for glory, which might be positive or negative traits, were also often regarded as youthful features. In addition, the youth did not have certain physical shortcomings acknowledged as negative features of old men. By contrast, senior men were believed to have fewer passions and therefore a greater ability to show moderation. Aristotle argued that older men often had weaknesses like being overly pessimistic, distrustful, suspicious, cowardly and cautious.[72] Among the attributes of youth, love of glory, courage, hope, trust in one's abilities and idealism are clearly recognisable in Alexander's alleged deeds and sayings in the Roman histories of him.

The narratives of Arrian, Curtius and Plutarch include a series of anecdotes where Alexander discusses with his experienced and old commander Parmenion before making an important decision. This tradition – existing also in the versions of *AR* – represents the triumph of positive youthful attributes over those attributed to mature men, as Alexander is a young king and Parmenion an old general. These conversations between Alexander and Parmenion take place, for example, before the battles of Granicus and Gaugamela and when the king makes the decision on whether to accept the bribes that the Persian king Darius offers. On every occasion Alexander's impulsive and more risky decision turns out to be successful.[73] Some scholars have seen this tradition as deriving from the court historian Callisthenes, whose propagandistic work was addressed to the Greeks to give them a flattering image of the Macedonian king and his Persian expedition, but Carney (2000) suggests that this series of anecdotes was created by several authors who wrote about Alexander, in other words, it became a *topos* of his literary tradition.[74]

For the purposes of this study, the most important aspect of these anecdotes is the contrast they represent between youthful masculinity and the deliberative masculinity of the older man: the caution of the ageing Parmenion

is proved to be less productive than the risk-taking of Alexander. Alexander is not coolly calculating, but by being impulsive and showing youthful energy he is victorious. In this series of anecdotes, the king is portrayed as the one in charge who knows everything and has the power to do everything. In other words, he seizes the moment and does not allow himself to be dominated by the older and experienced Parmenion. In the passages depicting Alexander as wiser than Parmenion, the attributes typical of youth, usually seen as injurious, turn out to be a positive force and the key to success. On these occasions the reader of these histories gets the impression that *because* Alexander acted like a young man, he was successful. Thus, the tradition seems to suggest that youthful energy may be a superior force to the prudence and caution belonging to senior men, represented by Parmenion. Interestingly, in Curtius there is a passage where Parmenion, characterised as *clarus vir,* is eulogised because he had the physical capacity of someone much younger; although 70 years old, he could lead his troops like a young man (*iuvenis*) and even handle the duties belonging to ordinary soldiers.[75] Hence, in the literary tradition it was possible for senior men to demonstrate youthful virtues and as men who overcame the natural limitations of age and who could perform tasks befitting a young masculine male, they receive praise.

The literary tradition praises the virtues of young men particularly in the context of warfare (see the following chapter for a detailed discussion of Alexander's martial masculinity). Alexander actions in his battles and the way he achieves his military successes are depicted as a result of fighting passionately and daringly like a young male. There are several anecdotes that underscore the king's confidence in the success of his Persian expedition. For example, before the expedition it is said that the young king went to Delphi to hear what Apollo would say about the forthcoming campaign, but it was a day when the oracle did not traditionally give divine answers. Therefore, the juvenile king started to drag the Pythia to the temple by force, which made the prophetess state: "You are irresistible, my son." According to the tradition, this was enough for king, referred to as *paîs*, denoting young age as well as hot temper.

Occasionally, Alexander historians do not mention his age explicitly in the battle narratives, but the positively presented features of young age are implicit in the king's excellence in deeds of war. As stated above, in the Roman literature courage, recklessness and insatiable love for glory were regarded as qualities typical for young men.[76] These qualities are regularly portrayed as essential factors in Alexander's military success. During the campaign the impetuous Alexander does not hesitate but attacks swiftly against his opponents and is always victorious even though his older commanders try to restrain him. In the very first battle at the River Granicus, Alexander as the risk-taking young commander does not hesitate to attack immediately, even though his generals and soldiers think it better to wait. He dismisses all the possible objections with witty remarks and gives the signal to attack. In the fierce battle, he is almost killed but eventually leads his army to a great

victory.[77] This pattern is repeated in the following narratives. Many ancient and modern war theorists have seen Alexander's actions as those of a commander with a clear strategy and vision which may well be true.[78] Yet, for the Greco-Roman audience Alexander's impulsive deeds and sayings were actions typical of the young.

Apart from the Alexander historians of the early Empire, Dio Chrysostmos in his *Second Oration on kingship* composed in the early second century CE states that in warfare young males (*neótēs*) and their passions (*epithymía*) often spoil the game like dogs barking too early. However, Dio reminds us that Alexander's personal influence and the way he took risks at the Battle of Chaeronea (fought in 338 BCE) brought victory to the Macedonian side. We know that when the battle took place Alexander was 18 years and, in the *Oration* Dio is not only giving the impression that the Macedonian prince was an exceptional young man but telling us that in this case those youthful traits did not "spoil the game" but brought success.[79] *Alexander's Itinerary,* composed in the fourth century CE presents Alexander's youthful strength as praiseworthy in his performance in war. In the passage where the anonymous author portrays Alexander's appearance, the positive attributes of young age are an integral component of his skills in war. The author writes: "He [Alexander] thought it shameful to be outdone by anyone in some valiant piece of work, as he energetically demanded of his body the due contribution of its youthful strength."[80]

It is arguable that Alexander's "world conquest" not only gained more attention in the ancient world because of his young age, but because he achieved it with qualities regarded as typical of that age. According to the "grand" story told about Alexander, his victories on the battlefield were made possible because the king not only commanded his troops but fought like a young man. Thus, the favourable presentation of Alexander as an impulsive but miraculously successful commander idealised this capacity of young men in general. By extolling this capacity as a virtue, writers like Arrian, Curtius and Plutarch raised young men, at least in some circumstances, above their elders.[81]

In the Roman principate, Alexander's ability to defend his crown and defeat those who challenged his authority promoted the abilities of young men to govern successfully as the rulers of the vast empire. In Republican Rome, advanced age was traditionally seen as the guarantee of ideal masculinity and those ruling the Republic were men above forty years of age. During the Principate, when many of the emperors were themselves young, the need for a positive approach to young age and young masculinity became acute. Octavian succeeded in making his way into public life and claiming his rights as the adoptive son of Julius Caesar at the age of 18. Later, Octavian as the first emperor Augustus promoted the virtues of youth during his reign, and this is evident in contemporary literature and portrayals of him as a youthful and beautiful young man: there are no surviving statues or portraits of him as an elderly man. Also, both Caligula and Nero ascended the throne at a young

age and promoted the virtues of youth. It is perhaps not surprising that these three emperors – as well as Caracalla who became emperor at the age of 23 – also made references to Alexander as a predecessor and left evidence of their *imitatio Alexandri*. One reason for this may have been Alexander's age: as a young man the Macedonian warrior-king had managed to create the biggest world-empire known in the western world before the Romans, so that stories told of his reign would reflect on their reigns as well. His success achieved at a young age could be used against those upper class males who saw it as problematic that the ruling emperor was not a mature man but a youth, perhaps with all the possible vices that this age group was assumed to have.[82]

In the *AR* tradition, there is a relationship between Alexander's accomplishments achieved at a young age and obtaining immortal fame. In the Greek *AR,* during his stay in Egypt Alexander sees in a vision the god Amon disguised as an old man, who makes the following promise and declaration: "If you [Alexander] wish to bloom forever in incorruptible youth, found the city rich in fame opposite the isle of Proteus."[83] The passage refers to the city of Alexandria, which later became a metropolis forever associated with Alexander. Here the god Ammon promises that by founding the city the king will gain immortal fame, a possible indication that the author of the Greek *AR* was from Alexandria.[84] The Greek verb used, *neazein,* can be translated as "to be young," "acting like a youth" or "to be full of youthful spirit." Here, "staying forever young" means gaining everlasting memory by founding the city of Alexandria, Alexander's city, which would be named after the king and simultaneously proclaim his deeds to future generations. The king's young age is a part of the prophetic feature of his reign and by arriving in Egypt as a young man Alexander fulfils a prophecy written on the holy statue of black stone located in Memphis: Nectanebo will return not as an old man but a young one.[85] In the Syriac *AR,* Alexander also calls himself a young man when he speaks to the Egyptians.[86] Inscriptions in Egyptian demotic text have been found that foretell the arrival of a young falcon, referring to Horus as pharaoh. In the Egyptian context, the prophecy appearing in the Greek *AR* might derive from this religious context as well, if we consider it to be composed in Ptolemaic Egypt.[87]

In the *AR* tradition, Alexander's status as the representative of eternal youth and the great glory promised by the Egyptian god Amon is related to his sudden early death.[88] In many versions of the *AR,* it is an oracular tree in India that prophesies to the young man that he will soon die.[89] In the above-cited remark on the death of the young king, found also in the Syriac *AR,* his demise is a tragic outcome as well as guarantee of his eternal fame. Since Alexander is sent to an early grave, he is placed into the group of young men who by dying young give up long life for great glory. Undoubtedly, before Alexander, Achilles was the most famous example of a man who famously chose a short and glorious life including heroic death rather than a long life, with the purpose of gaining everlasting fame.[90] After Alexander, Germanicus (15 BCE–19 CE), although he never achieved the fame of Alexander, was

presented by Tacitus as one who achieved heroic deeds but died young. In the Middle Ages, there were men who suffered a relatively early death such as the Scottish hero and icon of resistance William Wallace (c. 1270–1305), who died aged c. 35, but he is not mentioned in medieval sources as having chosen an early death in exchange for glory. This theme may have been present in pagan societies of the early Middle Ages, such as that of the Vikings, and achieving fame with posterity is still a theme in the later Norse sagas, but the concept of seeking glory for its own sake was not in keeping with medieval Christian ideals of humility, and seeking death would be seen as casting away a gift of God (life). However, someone could achieve "heavenly glory" and hence fame in posterity through martyrdom, which included dying while fighting the enemies of God.

In the modern era, however, achieving fame and dying young has again become a route to becoming a hero. In the Wild West, the life of Billy the Kid (1859–1881), outlaw and gunfighter, who was shot at the age of 21, became legend. To the list of young men running wild and dying young could be added various twentieth- and twenty-first-century rock stars and actors who left this world due to leading a reckless life filled with alcohol and/or drugs and being overwhelmed by celebrity. Few modern-day writers have suggested that these people actually chose death in return for glory, but they did choose to live heedless of the risk of death. In reality, Alexander cannot have "chosen" a short life instead of a long one – only suicide or an action certain to result in death would be evidence of a choice to die – but he may well have chosen to disregard the risk of death in many of his actions.

In the *AR* tradition and works deriving from it there can be recognised the theme of the king's search for immortality.[91] As we know, the epic of Gilgamesh made an impact on the *AR* and the tales of Alexander searching for the secret of immortality is one of the clearest similarities.[92] In the Gilgamesh epic, the Babylonian hero searches for everlasting life because he has lost his dear friend Endiku. In the Greek *AR,* Alexander wants to know where the known world ends and finally arrives at the ends of the Earth and the land of the blessed. During his travels the king searches for the water of life and discusses the possibility of immortality with Indian Brahmans.[93] It is tempting to argue that not only Alexander's (in)famous travels in the east but also his young age made it easier to attribute to him the earlier tales of Gilgamesh's quest for immortality. The references to Alexander's mythical quest for eternal life and sudden early death are linked with the importance of memory and commemoration. If someone dies young after exceptional achievements he is also remembered as a young man instead of an old man, and thus remains as a symbol of eternal youth in the eyes of posterity.

The literary portrait of Alexander as an irresistible young man highlighted the ideal of masculine dominance. Traces of masculine dominance can be seen in his energetic and bold tactics that against all odds turn out to be effective. The ancient historians like Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch and Arrian, as well as the authors and compilers of the AR, praise Alexander for controlling his

generals and displaying self-restraint and decisiveness. By doing so he surpasses the natural limitations expected of someone so young, who would normally lack the experience that would enable the performance of such great deeds. The glory of his achievements is magnified because of his age.[94] The positive traits exhibited by the youthful Alexander are those listed in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, where it is emphasised that young men are more courageous because they are full of passion and hope; they are ambitious, literally "friends of honour" (*philotimoi*) and of victory (*philonikoi*).[95] Alexander is filled with competitive spirit and yearning for personal honour and military renown. Thus the positive assessments of Alexander's youthful virtues made him exceptional, a compelling model of masculinity, particularly for young males.

Age and faults: Alexander as a young man

As I have demonstrated in this chapter, young males were an important age group for the community and its continuance in the Greco-Roman world. Nevertheless, in the Classical culture (as well as in later periods of history) young males were regarded as especially prone to some vices. A common critical view of youth appearing in Greek and Latin literature is that it was a group inclined to having strong desires and impulsiveness.[96] Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* describes youth in this way: "They are passionate, hot-tempered, and carried away by impulse, and unable to control their passion."[97] Aristotle mentions that besides taking risks easily they are fond of laughter.[98] Roman intellectuals agreed Aristotle's statements. In his *On Old Age,* Cicero writes that impetuosity is typical for young men (*ferocitas iuvenem*), while Horace similarly states that youth are *cupidus*, meaning they are eager to follow their desires.[99] Classical and post-Classical authors who composed works about Alexander knew what intellectuals had written about young males and their works reflected these general cultural assumptions. Even though Alexander is often characterised as an exceptional young man, this picture is not consistent, as on some occasions the same writers might also present the king as a typical young man prone to the errors of his age group.

In some passages in the Alexander historiography, the king's adolescence is given as the explanation for his faults or incorrect behaviour: they are something to be expected of a young man. In the final assessments of Alexander given by Curtius and Arrian, they both comment on his faults but use an apologetic tone.[100] Both mention the king's age as something their audience should consider when making their judgement about Alexander. On occasion in Curtius' *Historiae* young age and vices are clearly connected. For example, when writing about Alexander's harsh treatment of the Persian commander Betis at Gaza, which he condemns, Curtius refers to Alexander's young age as the explanation for his moody character.[101] In his final assessment of Alexander, Curtius states that the king's virtues (*bona, bonus*) were attributed to his nature (*natura*) and his weaknesses (*vitia*) to his fortune (*fortuna*) and age (*aetas*).[102] He mentions that continuous disregard for death and lust for

glory and fame should be pardoned in view of his youth and great achievements.[103] Curtius reiterates that the age of the king was an important factor in his misdeeds, mentioning his inclination to anger (*iracundia*) and love for alcohol (*cupiditatem vini*) as faults of the young (*iuventa*). He indicates that these vices would have diminished had Alexander lived longer, as age, we are led to believe, brings more control over harmful inclinations: "As for his [Alexander's] hot temper and his love of wine, just as these were intensified by youth, greater age might have moderated them."[104]

Arrian's final words of Alexander in his *Anabasis* has similarities with Curtius' assessment. Arrian writes that if Alexander was guilty of hot temper, drunkenness and exposure to the injurious impact of flatterers, this occurred because of his young age (*neótēs*) and uninterrupted career of good fortune.[105] The listed negative features of Alexander, his irascibility and excessive use of alcohol, were often cited in the classical literature and Curtius' and Arrian's final assessments were designed to counter this well-known criticism of Alexander.[106] These historians found young age a suitable explanation for the less attractive elements in the king's personality and his moral failures. In other words, the king's faults should be understood in the context of his youth, and severe criticism was not justified. It could be argued that Curtius and Arrian lean on the standard view of negative features regarded as common for young men. The authors reminded their audience that even though Alexander was an exceptional monarch and young man, this did not undo the natural restrictions of youth.

In the historiography of Alexander in late antiquity, the king is still presented as a young male in both positive and negative contexts. The two-sided image of youth, for instance, is identifiable in *Alexander's Itinerary*. In this work, Alexander's youthful energy, which is the source of his martial strength when his career as king begins (see above), turns out eventually to be injurious. According to the anonymous author the cause of Alexander's early death in Babylon was his own failings, which creates an impression of a great tragedy:

> There followed banquets and the more pleasant civilities and it was through these that Alexander caused his own death…At once Medius offered him a 'goblet of Hercules' from which to take wine. Far from scorning this honour which involved invoking the god by name, he filled the goblet right up and drank it off at a draught; and this was what caused the death of this hero with all his great virtues – with the result that he whom honourable wounds, sustained in so many a battle, had failed to overcome was, through the jealousy of fate**, taken off by a mere act of juvenile bravado** on his own part.[107]

The anonymous author sees immoderate drinking, the tendency to enjoy risk-taking and impulsiveness as the reason for Alexander's early death. He brings it upon himself by his youthful confidence. Participation in banquets

and the king's tendency to drink enormous amounts of wine in one sitting were fatal. The anonymous author mentions *iuvenilis confidentia,* which refers to the restlessness, extravagance and irresponsible behaviour characteristic of young age. The risks Alexander took in his life were due to his youthful energy. This brought him many victories but finally caused his downfall. In these passages, the king's inability to control his passions and desires derive from his young age, and this young masculinity sometimes surpasses its own limits, in Alexander's case with fatal results.

In the works of some Roman intellectuals and Christian theologians, the image of a young, unbalanced Alexander receives far less sympathetic treatment. The king's youth is not used to explain his misdeeds but portrayed as an allegory of immaturity. For Seneca the Younger, Alexander was a young man who was unable to control his passions, an immature juvenile suffering an identity crisis and engaged in an endless search for his destiny.[108] The king's irresponsible and rebellious behaviour causes havoc to the entire universe. Seneca's *On Benefits* (*De beneficiis*) represents the application of Stoic conduct on the proper way to give and receive a reward.[109] Alexander is presented as a negative *exemplum* both in the case of giving and receiving a gift.[110] Seneca calls Alexander a *vesanus adulescens*. which means a young man of unsound mind, or an insane young man.[111] First, Seneca takes the anecdote in which the Corinthians send an embassy and grant Alexander citizenship. According to the story, Alexander smiled and one of the ambassadors said as a response that only Hercules had previously received the privilege. In another *exemplum,* Alexander offered a man a whole city, which was an act criticised by Seneca.[112] Seneca is suggesting that the unbalanced actions of a young immature person reflect erroneous thoughts about the self and the cosmos. Alexander as a young man thus functions as an allegory for a human that has not understood his proper place in the universe. The critical view of Alexander as an unbalanced juvenile does not mean that Seneca saw all young males and youth in a negative light. In some other contexts, Seneca praises youth as the best age of man, since in that age person can learn new things and has noble purposes in his mind.[113] Rather the critical presentation of Alexander as a young man was a rhetorical construction promoting the importance of philosophical guidance and masculine virtues attributed to men of advanced age. Seneca was aware of Alexander's status as the first and foremost icon of youth and picked up on the critical portrait of Alexander as *vesanus adulescens* to underline his points.[114]

The image of Alexander as a typical young man and his tragic early death are also related to each other in Silius Italicus' epic *Punica,* from the first century, and Juvenal's *Satire* composed in the early second century. Silius Italicus presents an imaginative scene where Scipio (Africanus) visits Hades where the priestess shows him a *iuvenis* ("a young man") who conquered every corner of the world. This ghost of Alexander, described as that of a young man, advises Scipio to show audacity in war and make haste to do

great deeds since death comes swiftly. Here Alexander is a spokesman for youthful energy and haste. It encourages Scipio to act like an impassioned young male whose great desires must be satisfied immediately. The reasoning of Alexander's ghost can be regarded as logical insofar as life is indeed short and may end quickly, so great deeds must be done at a young age long before senescence or death occurs. In Juvenal, Alexander is called *Unus Pellaeo Iuveni infelix* ("a miserable youth from the city of Pella") for whom one city is not enough so he desires go to the limits of the world. Calling the king "a youth" in this way could be interpreted as presenting him as an example of an ordinary juvenile (Juvenal's tone might have the implication "just another of those miserable youths"), while the king's inability to master his desire is in line with the negative traits of youth presented in Classical literature (see above). Juvenal writes that despite the king's desire for new conquests, just a sarcophagus suffices for him in the end.[115] The impulsive life of the young man ends dramatically in the hour of his early death, which underlines the limitations of the youthful traits.

When we turn to late antiquity, the unbalanced and restless young Alexander is again exploited in the works of early Christian authors. Arnobius in his *Against the Pagans* (*Adversus nationes*), composed in the early fourth century, calls the king *unus adolescens,* a term that, like Juvenal's expression, denies him distinction.[116] The image of the young Alexander fighting without reason against every nation – appearing previously in Seneca the Younger – is part of Christian apologetic argumentation. Arnobius wants to say that Christians were not be blamed for the destruction that Alexander's conquests caused to the inhabited world, as it was a result of the unbalanced actions of an unbalanced juvenile who commanded the Macedonian armies.

In the epideictic court rhetoric of the Late Empire, the negative portrait of Alexander as an impetuous youth could be exploited when the public image of Emperor Constantine was constructed.[117] In *Vita Constantini,* Eusebius makes an unfavourable comparison between the young Alexander and Constantine. Eusebius composed the work after the death of Constantine and its aim was to eulogise his reign and present it as an aspect of the providence of God.[118] After remarking that Alexander is praised among Greeks, Eusebius gives arguments why this fame is controversial:

> The sons of Greece sing praise about how Alexander subdued countless tribes from different peoples, but before he [Alexander] **reached full manhood he died an early death**, carried off by revelry and drunken orgies. He reached two years past thirty, and of this the period of his reign measured one-third; he waded through blood, a man like a thunderbolt, mercilessly enslaving entire nations and cities, young and old alike**. But while his youth had barely blossomed, and he still mourned his lost childhood, fate fell deadly upon him, and childless, rootless, homeless**, in a foreign and hostile land, that he might harm the human race no more, removed him.[119]

Eusebius states that Alexander did not reach maturity as a man (*syntelesai eis ándras*). In other words, Alexander never became *anḗr* ("a man") in its real sense. In his short life, the Macedonian king acted like a typical young man, as he lacked foresight and was incapable of seeing that his actions might lead him to an early grave. Instead, his irresponsible and immature actions caused his own death through revelry and drunken orgies. This statement reminds us of the passages from *Alexander's Itinerary* (*Itinerarium Alexandri*) above and it seems that Eusebius presents use of alcohol as the cause of the king's early death.[120] In Roman literature, there was a critical view of bands of young thugs infamous for partying, being intoxicated with alcohol, roaming the streets at night and beating up innocent passers-by.[121] Eusebius may have had in mind an image of such youths in Roman society when he portrayed Alexander as a young irresponsible troublemaker.[122]

According to Eusebius, Alexander missed things that belong to children (*pentheō paidika*), which is to say that he was not mature enough to reign responsibly.[123] The king's immaturity was evident in the way he focused on arranging banquets and killing many people in wars. Alexander is presented as an antithesis of Constantine, whose virtues were measured according to his mature age. "Our emperor," as Eusebius calls Constantine, "doubled in time the length of his life" which is to say that the emperor performed his great deeds as a grown-up man and also that he had not done stupid things likely to shorten his life.[124] In the Roman world, the mature man was expected to generate children and raise them properly, and according to Eusebius Alexander did not have children. We know that Alexander in fact had two children (Heracles with Barsine and Alexander IV with Roxanne): either Eusebius did not know that, or in his eyes these descendants of the king were not old enough to be taken into account before they were killed.[125] In contrast to Alexander, Constantine had several sons and even produced an heir. Eusebius' passage emasculates Alexander and hints that the short-sighted Macedonian king failed to achieve traditional markers of manhood/masculinity that included having legitimate offspring. For Eusebius the image of Alexander as an irresponsible youngster was a rhetorical tool when he intended to eulogise Constantine as an outstanding emperor and exemplary man, although this doesn't rule out the possibility that he did indeed think of Alexander as a negative example of manhood, and/or that he chose Alexander precisely because these views already existed in literature.

The ancient historians, poets and philosophers who criticised Alexander were following general negative assumptions about the character of youth popular among Greco-Roman intellectuals when they wrote about him. Their passages reflect the conception of young people as a distinct group who had the same problems no matter what their social rank. Alexander's vices were explained by his age. From this perspective he was regarded as acting as any normal young man would. Stoic philosophers such as Seneca and early Christian writers like Eusebius asked why a young male who

acted like an unbalanced juvenile should be admired and eulogised. According to them, immature features, those typical for youth, dominated Alexander's thinking and deeds right up to his death. Performance of unbalanced actions like losing one's temper and drinking too much alcohol were things young males were inclined to do. For the stoic writers and Christian theologians, the state of youth was a kind of limbo that one must escape. The authors were saying that the young man should first reach maturity and thereafter make decisions that have an influence on others. In the passages analysed in this subchapter, the masculine objective was to reach the desirable state of maturity, not to display youthful virtues and vices.

In the *AR* as well as the medieval epics, the critical view of youth is expressed largely through the mouths of the opponents of the young Alexander. They seem to follow the literary tradition we find from Plutarch, Diodorus and Justin. In the Greek *AR,* the orator Demades encourages Athenians to fight against the young king because hot-headed youth is untrustworthy: such a person can fight bravely but not reason soundly.[126] In the *Alexandreis* composed by Walter of Châtillon, the Thebans have the audacity to scorn the king because of his age, which according to the author justified Alexander's bloody siege. Also, Darius expresses disdain for someone so young.[127] In his speech, the Persian king calls Alexander a "bastard boy" (*spurius puer*) who is driven by the fervour of youth (*fervore iuventae Ducitur*).[128] The Persian king adds that this "unconquered youth" (*iuvenis invictus*) will not flee from battle but wants to achieve a glorious death.[129] Again, in *Libro de Alexandre,* after Darius has heard that Alexander's appearance and skills are praised he declares that young men are always arrogant and proud and forever irresponsible.[130] The battle between Darius and Alexander is a battle between mature man and young man. In these accounts, since victory goes to the latter, we are left with the implication that youth is favoured.

In the *AR* tradition, we find a story of the young king preferring older soldiers when recruiting his army before the Persian expedition. We do not find this episode from the apparently historical accounts of Curtius, Diodorus, Arrian, Plutarch and Arrian. However, it appears in the Greek, Latin, Armenian, Syriac, Hebrew versions of the *AR* as well as in the Latin *Historia de Preliis*.[131] Unusually for a young man, Alexander recognises the frailty of youth and gives full credit to older men. When the older men who had served Philip suggest that they could resign from the army, the king says he wants them to stay. He reminds them that a young man trusts in his youth and therefore is easily killed in battle, whereas an older man does everything with forethought. Through the good counsel of older men the youth are freed from danger. Older men encourage the youth to fight bravely, for encouragement benefits both parties. In the Syriac *AR,* Alexander states that the knowledge of the more mature men must compliment the strength of the young. The point is to use the good qualities of both groups. With the knowledge, experience and understanding of the

old men to assist, the young men will become victorious. The cooperation between young and old is the key to success. Alexander, who represents the young male, is constructed to summarise the stereotypical views of youth and verify them, but at the same time his ability to understand these truths about the different age groups make him an exceptional young man. In the Armenian *AR,* Aristotle writes to Philip on Alexander: "He is able to judge and choose not as a youth but as an experienced man."[132] The greatness of Alexander is grounded in his ability, even as a young male, to act like a mature man. In this case, he understands the importance and superiority of older males over young males.

The passage where the young king appeals to older soldiers could be read as a statement of how society should operate. The prosperity of every society and community rests on cooperation between young and old males. In the story, Alexander provides a model of how young and strong men should approach older men. Older men should teach the young and the youth should learn from them. Young men are an important group in society since they have the will and strength to accomplish great things, but their youthful energy must be directed to beneficial causes. That is where the older and experienced members of society come into the picture. One reason why this story was included in almost all versions of the *AR* must be that it was regarded as instructive. The story of a young monarch understanding the value of cooperation between different age groups was a model for all upper-class males who had received a notable position in the state. As an exemplary figure the young Alexander is aware of the weaknesses he may have due to his age, so he leans on the expertise that elderly males can offer in the army.

When we analyse the literary references to Alexander's age and position as a young man, we can recognise certain prominent themes. (1) Alexander is an idealised young male and the advocate of youthful masculinity, whose deeds and accomplishments are magnified because they were carried out early in life. It is mentioned that Alexander does not behave as other young men normally do and therefore he surpasses all expectations and proves himself an exception among his peers. Thus, his deeds and accomplishments highlight the capacity of youth and idealise young masculinity. (2) In some other passages dealt with in this subchapter, Alexander is presented as a typical young man with the faults associated with that age group. When this approach is taken, his shortcomings are explained by his age. For some older Roman intellectuals, however, admiration of Alexander's recklessness and passionate lifestyle was considered entirely unwarranted. (3) In their works, Alexander is a mentally unbalanced young man whose short reign and pursuit of world conquest symbolise the antithesis of the maturity ideally expected of a ruler or commander. In their view, the reckless actions of an immature and unstable young man in his twenties had catastrophic consequences for all his contemporaries. According to them there was nothing admirable when the state was ruled by a young man who could not control his passions, was prone to

taking ill-considered and irresponsible actions and was not interested in the public good. A situation such as this represented a threat to the social order dominated by the "grown-up" male adults.

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In the modern world, Alexander is presented as a young man in positive and negative senses. When we read blurb designed to sell books on him, we come across characterisations of Alexander such as that at the age of *only* twenty the king ruled large nations, in other words, his achievements appear in a positive light partly because he was young. This was the case when Oliver Stone's *Alexander* was promoted in trailers and posters.[133] However, a critical approach to Alexander as a young man has also been taken. Some years ago, Mary Beard, a famous Classical scholar, called Alexander a "drunken juvenile thug" whom it is difficult imagine that modern countries choose as their national symbols.[134] Here Beard is criticising the tendency to heroise the aggressive masculine culture popular among young men. In her critique, it is the equivalent of praising leaders of violent gangs who operate today. As we have seen in this chapter, these two divergent presentations of Alexander as a young man, good or bad, did not begin in the modern era, as they existed already in Classical antiquity.

Alexander's story offered powerful images of young masculinity in a society where most of the leading men were over 40 years old. Because of his early death Alexander never became a mature man in the cultural memory and therefore he could become both an icon as a promising child and a symbol of a famous young man. The reception of Alexander's early childhood was related to the valuation of boy children in premodern societies. Particularly in the states ruled by monarchs and emperors the birth of a mentally and physically healthy boy meant continuity in the state and one of the main tasks of the ruler was to provide a worthy male heir. Even in families of somewhat lower status the physical and mental condition of a boy child was an important matter as well as the arrangement of an education for him. Boys had to become "true" men, which was not an automatic outcome of ageing.

Alexander's boyhood and education defined how elite families can be successful in bringing up their male offspring and raise them as virtuous men. According to the Roman and medieval intellectuals even a talented boy needed proper education from first-class men of letters. In the literary tradition, Alexander not only achieves but surpasses the normative definition of boyhood that precedes manhood. His image as an exceptional boy in the literary tradition promotes masculine ideals of dominance, competition and self-control. Already as a boy the prince demonstrated these fundamental ways to be a man. It can be argued that the definitions of Alexander's idealised childhood were definitions on how society should successfully produce new great men who will serve their community with their exceptional qualities and memorialised deeds.

The positive and eulogising portraits of Alexander as a young man embrace youthful virtues and youth masculinity. Youth was regarded as a period in life when a man has courage, strength and physical beauty but also recklessness and impatience. In Alexander's story, these characteristics are positive factors behind his personal bravery and military success. He is praised above his experienced generals like Parmenion reinforcing the idea that youth can be both the best fighters and the commanders of their army. The young male can fill the boots of the seniors. The story of a king who managed to be successful *even though* acting like a typical young man promoted the idea that by the expression of youthful masculinity – which also had negative connotations – a person can gain everlasting fame and glory in the eyes of posterity.

Some authors analysed in this chapter deliberately underlined the status of Alexander as an exceptional young man. The victorious and idealised Alexander differed from an ordinary youth since he was capable of succeeding in duties normally belonging to older men and avoiding vices normally appearing among youth. For example, his ability to abstain from sex was presented as an expression of masculine self-control and a trait that made him different to the average young male. In other words, Alexander's deeds and sayings did not change the way young men were believed normally to act. The works concerning the king as an exceptional young man propagated the idea that great accomplishments gained at his age should be eulogised. However, according to writers like Seneca the Younger and Eusebius Alexander was just an ordinary young man, but one that caused exceptional destruction. In their works, there was no hint that Alexander was an exceptional juvenile, nor that he was capable of behaving like mature men.

The mature age of the Classical and post-classical authors may explain some of the critical and pessimistic statements about youth in their literature as well as the negative notions of Alexander as a young man.[135] The critical portrait of an unbalanced young Alexander should be considered part of the discourse in which men of letters reminded their audience of the superiority of the virtues that allegedly belonged to mature and aged males but not to youth. Youthful masculinity did not bring order and continuity in society as did the foresight of older and experienced men. Older males were believed to have learnt to control themselves better and thus to have grown out of risk-taking and the other vices associated with youth; this justified their position at the top of society. They could contribute to the community in a way that volatile and tempestuous youths could not. The authors were reminding their audience that youthful masculinity should be a passing phase in a man's life on his route to maturity, not an end in itself. The most important aspects of the ideal of manliness – like self-control and a rational and deliberative mindset – could be reached only with maturity. The idealistic image of the passionate and reckless youth that the short-lived Alexander represented and which we find in Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian, Justin and the various versions of the *AR* was contrary to the ideal that the experienced, mature and rational male should govern society. However, the references to Alexander

acting like a mature man seem to have combined these two ideals. The presentations of Alexander as boy and young male also mapped the course of a man's life, from birth to death, and marked off stages in that process. In the case of Alexander, he never achieved full maturity and his idealised life did not represent the whole life course. The premodern writers maintained the stereotype that adolescence was a mutable and incomplete phase of life, although Plutarch and some versions of the *AR* did suggest that he was marked for greatness already as a boy, implying an immutable destiny.

The works that describe Alexander embrace the ideal of male dominance. From childhood to young man Alexander succeeded in showing his power over his enemies as well as his Macedonian subordinate commanders. As soon as he ascended to the kingship he managed to secure his political power. He turned down many of the suggestions made by his counsellors and showed that his reckless style was the optimal route to a successful outcome. In some passages, king's ability to demonstrate male dominance was questioned in that the young man from Pella was described as failing to control the most important thing – himself. Both the positive and critical presentation of Alexander as *néos* or *iuvenis* underlined the importance of self-controlled masculinity – a feature that passionate youth normally lacked. The rhetoric of exceptional masculinity is frequently related to the king's young age which made him an ideal and an object of imitation. As an exemplary young man Alexander competed with his contemporaries successfully by ensuring that he was pre-eminent in the masculine competition for eternal fame and recognition. The writings that are more critical of Alexander question this aspect and suggested that hypermasculine pursuit of glory was harmful and reprehensible since it did not serve the common good.

In many passages analysed in this chapter, the images of Alexander as a boy or young male were exploited as a rhetorical tool. Authors intended to defend certain philosophical or religious concepts or praise the currently reigning emperor when they presented the Macedonian king as a young man in a good or bad light. Therefore, the presentations of Alexander do not necessarily represent accurately the authors' views of the Macedonian king himself. They constructed images and opinions of youth and young masculinity that shaped the views of those who read their works. For young Roman aristocratic men hoping to become renowned commanders and advance in political/public office Alexander was a powerful source of inspiration. In a similar way, in the High Middle Ages, knights or young men with expectations of being knighted would have considered Alexander one of their role models. When we compare the different views of Alexander as a young man, the positive approach to the king's young masculinity seems to have won out over the more negative and critical views of his allegedly youthful traits. Thus, today the Macedonian king is very rarely remembered as an example of "wasted youth," a bad role model or a representative of toxic masculinity (cf. the view proposed by Beard above) but instead he is situated among the group of inspiring young men as the first and foremost icon of youth and young masculinity.

Notes

1 Trans. Betty Radice. Liv. 8.3.3: *Eadem aetas rerum magni Alexandri est, quem sorore huius ortum in alio tractu orbis, invictum bellis, iuvenem fortuna morbo exstinxit*.
2 Trans. Ernest Budge. Syr. *AR* 3.24 (Budge 1889, 143).
3 Liv. 8.3.3. When Livy compares Alexander to the Romans, he also reminds his audience of the king's age. According to Alexander achievements were achievements of one man – and those of a young man (*iuvenis*) too. Liv. 9.18.9.
4 He is presented sometimes anonymously as a "great king," or "great man." Cf. Philo. *Op*. 4.17. Symm. *Ep*. 1.20. Lucan calls Alexander "the mad son of Macedonian Philip" (*proles vesana*) and "fortunate freebooter" (*felix praedo*). Luc. 10.25. In Homer's *Iliad* Athena, Zeus, Odysseus and Achilles have all nicknames portraying their character and abilities. Most of these names such as "swift-footed Achilles" aided the former oral reciters to remember them.
5 Laes (2014, 21).
6 Cf. Vuolanto (2016, 38).
7 Laes (2011, 87); Laes (2014, 26).
8 For the discussion of the terminology, see Laes (2014, 28–29, 41–42).
9 Sen. *Ben*. 1.13.3; Arn. *Adv. nat*. 1.5.5; Juv. 10.168–170; Sil. *Pun*. 13.762–776. Juvenal calls Alexander as a "Young man from city of Pella" (*unus Pellaeo iuveni*).
10 Cf. Arist. *Rh*. 2.13.1 (1389b) where Aristotle explicitly states that older men have often qualities opposite to those of the youth.
11 Laes and Vuolanto 2023, with further literature.
12 Spencer (2002, 162–163).
13 Plin. *HN*. 34.63. Cf. Stewart (1993, 105).
14 Onesicritus' work might have been one of the first accounts dealing with the education of the young Alexander, even though Onesicritus is not cited by any other extant work for any incident in the king's youth or education. It is possible that Plutarch based his account of the king's childhood partly on Onesicritus' work; Plutarch does at least mention his work. Pearson (1960, 87–88). Cf. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 46.1; 65.1-2. Diog. Laert. 6.84. Marsyas, who was allegedly a former schoolmaster, may have written about Alexander's early years as well. Cf. Pearson (1960, 253–254). On this meagre basis, we cannot be certain who amongst the lost writers gave any detailed information about Alexander's childhood and which of these works were Plutarch's sources. Cf. Djurslev (2022, 236–239). For critical remarks on Onesicritus and Marsias as Plutarch's sources on Alexander's education, see Djurslev (2022, 236) (notes 9, 10). The first two books of Curtius' *Historiae* are lost, and there may have been something about Alexander's early years and childhood in them. Baynham (1998, 39) however, thinks it unlikely that Curtius wrote a narrative of Alexander's boyhood. For the childhood of the historical Alexander, see Nawotka (2010, 36–42).
15 Laes (2011, 96–97) reminds us that even though the distinction between early childhood and late childhood existed, the different words denoting different periods of childhood were used interchangeably.
16 For the concept of *puer senex* see, Gnilka, (1972), Carp, (1980, 736–739), Aasgaard (2009, 89–91).
17 The references to divine signs related to the prince's birth in Plutarch and *AR* reflect the premodern belief that the hour of one's birth determined one's future. On Alexander's divine birth in the panegyrics of the late antiquity see, Peltonen (2019c, 139–140). For a discussion on how views of childhood are present in the presentation of Alexander as a boy, see Peltonen (2022a).
18 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 4.4–5; 5.1–3.

19 For a detailed discussion of *sōphrosynē* in the context of male sexuality and emotional display, see Chapter 5, pages 150–151, and Chapter 6, pages, 203–204. For the view of barbarians and their lack of *sōphrosynē*, see Bonfante (2011, 17).
20 Rademaker (2005, 317–318). Plato also states that it is a matter of character, that for some persons *sōphrosynē* is easier to learn.
21 For *sōphrosynē* as part of the Greek education, see North (1966, 208, 234–235). For its importance in Plutarch, North (1966, 248–249).
22 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 4.5–6
23 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 6. For Classical literature portraying Alexander's relationship with his stallion as unique, see Gel. *NA*. 5.2.1–5. Arr. *an*. 5.19.5–6, Plin. *HN*. 8.154. Anderson (1930, 1–21); Baynham (1995, 5–9).
24 For example, obedience appears in the Latin inscriptions as a virtue belonging to children, see Laes (2004, 56–57).
25 For the taming of Bucephalus in different versions of the Romance, see *AR* 1.15, 17; Jul. Val. 1.17.492–515 (Foubert 2014, 49–50). Arm. *AR* 47–48 (Wolohojian 1969, 38–39); Syr. *AR* 1.16–17 (Budge 1889, 17–19). Nawotka (2017, 74) argues that the image of Bucephalus as "man-eater" is related to the myth of Heracles. According to the story Heracles captured the man-eating mares of Diomedes.
26 Cf. Chapter **4**, pages 103–104, 134.
27 Trans. R. Stoneman. *AR* 1.22.5: "πρέπον γάρ ἐστι τὴν γυναῖκα τῷ ἀνδρὶ ὑποτάσσεσθαι." The same sentence is included in the Latin *AR*, see Jul. Val. 1.22.640–645 (Foubert 2014, 54). In the Armenian *AR*, Alexander tells his mother that a wife should obey her husband. Cf. Arm. *AR* 61 (Wolohojian 1969, 43).
28 *AR* 1.18–19 (Stoneman 1991, 49–52); Jul. Val. 1.18.516–1.19.592 (Foubert 2014, 50–52); Arm. *AR* 50–56 (Wolohojian 1969, 39–41); Syr. *AR* 1.18–19 (Budge 1889, 21–28).
29 Nawotka (2017, 78–80).
30 In Arm. *AR* 49 (Wolohojian 1969, 39) this remark is carried explicitly.
31 Golden (2004, 34) mentions that also young charioteers were known in Roman antiquity.
32 For Herodotus' comments on Cyrus's childhood, see Hdt. 1.114–115. For Suetonius' comments on the childhood of the emperors, see Suet. *Calig*. 11. Suet. *Ner*. 1.2; 6.1-2; Suet. *Claud*. 2.1; Suet. *Tit*. 3.1–2. On Septimius Severus, see *Hist. Aug. Sev.* 1.4. Cf. Wiedeman (1989, 49–84), Laes (2011, 98–99). For these passages as role-playing and a social ritual that were used to raise children to become adults, see Horn (2005, 112–114).
33 As an example from this kind of *puer senex* theme in medieval hagiography, see Anglo-Saxon vita of St Guthlac 12.
34 For Jesus as an exceptional boy in the gospels, see Luke 2:40–52. For the infancy gospels' presentation of Jesus as a child, see Aasgaard (2009, 88–90).
35 Preston (2001, 89–90); White (2015, 53–59).
36 For the complexity of the literary tradition on Alexander's upbringing and further discussion on the matter, see Djurslev (2022).
37 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 7.1–2. On Plutarch's views on early childhood and education in the *Lives*, see Duff (2008) who shows that Plutarch uses education both to reveal a person's character and to explain his later life.
38 *AR* 1.13: Jul. Val. 1.13.324–328 (Foubert 2014, 43); Arm. *AR* 29 (Wolohojian 1969, 33); Syr. *AR* 1.13 (Budge 1889, 13). From the Hebrew *AR* the list of the teachers is omitted.
39 Nawotka (2017, 71); Djurslev (2022, 245) reminds us that Favorinus of Arles is mentioned in the Latin and Armenian *AR* as source material for the catalogues of Alexander's teachers.

40 Vuolanto (2016, 41–42).
41 Dio Chrys. *Or*. 2.1–2.
42 Dio Chrys. *Or*. 2.1–79.
43 Cf. Nawotka (2017, 3–5).
44 Wiedeman (1989, 21–22). The concept of "slave" was controversial and obviously all who became slaves were not without reason. Aristotle says "natural slaves" had no capacity for autonomous rationality, see (Arist. *Pol*. 1.5, 1254b 20-23). He was obviously not thinking of an educated Greek who was captured and became a slave, who would as a result suddenly lose his capacity for reason. Therefore, obviously all who became slaves were not thought to be without reason.
45 Chât. *Alex*. 1.33–58 (Pritchard 1986, 36–37).
46 Lib. Alex. 7, 12.
47 For Aristotle's role as the educator of Alexander in the medieval French literature, see Gaullier-Bougassas (2002).
48 *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.20.455–456 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 43).
49 Chât. *Alex*. 1.59–71 (Pritchard 1986, 37).
50 Chât. *Alex*. 1.100–216 (Pritchard 1986, 38–42); *Lib. Alex*. 32–86.
51 Chât. *Alex*. 1.82–83 (Pritchard 1986, 38–39).
52 *Lib. Alex*. 16–18; 37–38, 39–45.
53 *Lib. Alex*. 45 (Cf. Michael 1970, 41–45); Alex. Paris. 1.13, 15 (Harf-Lancner 1994, 87, 93). *Kon. Alex*. 445–556 (17). For more discussion on Aristotle's role in Alexander's education in the medieval *AR* tradition and literature, see Gaullier (2002, 60–62); Kelly (2002, 39–44); Bridges (2018, 66–67).
54 For discussion of the concept of socialisation, see Brezinka (1994). For socialisation in the Greco-Roman world with the emphasis on processes outside education, see McWilliam (2013).
55 Eyben (1993, 10–11).
56 Laes (2014, 41–42). On Roman views of youth, see Eyben (1993, 5–40). On positive and negative Roman views of old age, see Parkin (1998, 22–34). The Latin terms *adulescens* and *iuvenis* are challenging to interpret. They can refer to the period between fifteen and twenty/five and people in their thirties. The terminology for old men and definitions of old men were also used loosely, and did not refer to any specific age group. Cf. Parkin (1998, 21). On views of childhood and youth in the Middle Ages, see James (2004, 11–23).
57 Trans. William Roger Paton. Polyb. 8.10: "μεγάλην γὰρ ἴσως μερίδα θετέον τῷ προεστῶτι τῶν ὅλων Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, καίπερ ὄντι νέῳ παντελῶς, οὐκ ἐλάττω μέντοι γε τοῖς συνεργοῖς καὶ φίλοις,"
58 For a survey of Polybius' passages concerning Alexander, see Billows (2000).
59 Billows (2000, 296).
60 Cic. *Phil*. 5.48.10.
61 Trans. John Yardley. Curt. 3.6.19: "*Aetas quoque vix tantis matura rebus sed abunde sufficiens omnia eius opera honestabat,*"
62 Cf. Laes (2014, 140–141).
63 Trans. Pamela Mensch. Ar. *an*. 4.19.6: "καίτοι τῆς γε Δαρείου γυναικός, ἣ καλλίστη δὴ ἐλέγετο τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ γυναικῶν, ἣ οὐκ ἦλθεν ἐς ἐπιθυμίαν ἢ καρτερὸς αὐτὸς αὑτοῦ ἐγένετο, νέος τε ὢν καὶ τὰ μάλιστα ἐν ἀκμῇ τῆς εὐτυχίας, ὁπότε ὑβρίζουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι."
64 Plut. *Vit. Dem*. 23.2. For a discussion on Demosthenes' view of Alexander and the term *Margites*, see Koulakiotis (2018, 51–53).
65 Laes (2014, 41).
66 Diod. Sic. 17.2.2.
67 Diod. Sic. 17.7.1.

68 Just. *Epit*. 11.1.9.
69 Just. *Epit*. 11.3.4.
70 Arist. *Rh*. 1389a–b. Eyben (1993, 38–40).
71 Laes (2014, 46). Tac. *Ann*. 3.8.4. Sen. *Ep*. 108.12, 27. Cic. *Top*. 7.32.
72 Cf. Parkin (1998, 31). In the Classical literature there exists both positive and eulogising portraits of old age as well as critical. Cicero's *De senectute* represents the positive portraits while Juvenal's writings offer the opposite view where age brings merely wretched qualities.
73 For the conversation taking place before the battle of Granicus, see Arr. *an*. 1.13.2; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 16.3, and before the battle of Gaugamela, see Arr. *an*. 3.10.1–2; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 31.11–12; Curt. 4.13.4, 8–9. For Parmenion advising Alexander to accept Darius offer, see Arr. *an*. 2.25.1–2. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 29.4. Diod. Sic. 17.54.1-3. Curt. 4.11.1–15.
74 Nawotka (2010, 121). For a detailed discussion on the historicity of the series of anecdotes about the advice Parmenio gives to Alexander, see Carney (2000, 264–273), who reminds us that Parmenion's advice is not always represented as bad.
75 Curt. 7.2.33. *LXX natus annos ut iuvenis ducis et saepe etiam gregarii militis munia explevit*.
76 Cf. Eyben (1993, 37) who refers to writings of Horace and Plutarch.
77 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 14.4: 16.1–3. Arr. *an*. 1.13.2.
78 As examples of scholars and war-theorists who have seen in Alexander as a masterful strategist and commander whose campaigns offer excellent lessons for modern warfare, see Fuller (1958); Lonsdale (2007).
79 Dio Chrys. *Or*. 2.2. Plutarch states that Alexander is said to have led the charge against the Theban Sacred Band. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 9.
80 Trans. Lolo Davies. *Itin. Alex*. 6.15. (*iuventae munus e corpore alacriter*).
81 In contrast, Platonic philosopher Onasander in his treaty on generalship, composed in the first-century CE, writes that an ideal commander should not be too young neither too old, see Onas. *Strat*. 1.9–10.
82 Eyben (1993, 65–68); Goldberg (2021, 149, 153). We know there exist also passages of the Late Antiquity where the Roman historians expressed negative views of young emperors ruling the Empire, who were believed to be inclined to rashness, cruelty and excess. For the *imitatio Alexandri*, see the note 8 of Chapter 1 and the note 7 of Chapter 2.
83 Trans. Richard Stoneman. *AR* 1.30: "εἴ γε θέλεις αἰῶσιν ἀγηράτοισι νεάζειν, κτίζε πόλιν περίφημον ὑπὲρ Πρωτηίδα νῆσον," The vision is repeated in *AR* 1.33.
84 Nawotka (2017, 96).
85 *AR* 1.34. The prophecy is also included in the Latin and Armenian versions of the *AR*, see Jul. Val. 1.34, 1110–1115 (Foubert 2014, 69): Arm. *AR* 95–96 (Wolohojian 1969, 55–56).
86 Syr. *AR* 1.34 (Budge 1889, 43–44).
87 Cf. Thompson (2022, 21–22).
88 *AR* 1.30; 3.35.
89 *AR* γ 2.44; 3.17 (Stoneman 1991, 125, 135); Jul. Val. 3.17.565–585 (Foubert 2014, 140); Arm. *AR* 224 (Wolohojian 1969, 129–131); Syr. *AR* 3.7 (Budge 1889, 105–106).
90 King (1987, 4–7). For the theme of Achilles' early death and his immortal fame in *Iliad*, see Hom. *Il*. 9.410–16.
91 Stoneman (2008, 150–169).
92 As early as 1894, Bruno Meissner in his *Alexander und Gilgamos* wrote about the connection between the stories of Gilgamesh and *AR*. Stoneman (2008, 152–154), mentions Alexander's search for the secret of immortality as one tale that has clear a clear similarity to an element of the Epic of Gilgamesh. For the impact of Gilgamesh on the stories of the *AR*, see Tesei (2010); Ryan (2017).

93 *AR* 2.39–41 (Stoneman 1991, 119–123). In the Greek *AR* Alexander notices that certain fishes have regained immortality after drinking the spring of life. In the same *AR* some Brahmans ask Alexander to give them immortality but the king is forced to admit that he is only mortal, see *AR* 3.7–16 (Dowden 1989, 718).
94 The same view is expressed in Philostr. *V A*. 1.13.3, where Apollonius is praised because he could master his anger even when young.
95 Arist. *Rh*. 2.12.5–6 (1389a).
96 Eyben (1993, 36–38).
97 Trans. John Henry Freese. Arist. *Rh*. 2.12.9–10 (1389a).
98 Aristotle. *Rh*. 2.12.10. I. 1389b.
99 Cic. *Sen*. 10.33. Hor. *Ars. P*. 165. Cf. Harlow and Laurence (2002, 69–71).
100 For a discussion about the assessment in Curtius, see Atkinson (2009, 155–172). For a discussion about the final assessment in Arrian, see Bosworth (1988, 135–156).
101 Curt. 4.6.26. Curtius reminds his audience that usually Alexander admired valour in the enemy, but on this occasion, he acted differently and was guilty of insolent joy since he was young (*insolenti gaudio iuvenis*). Rolfe's translation gives "young as he was" while Yardley's translation gives "young Alexander."
102 Curt. 10.5.26. Baynham (1998, 39).
103 Curt. 10.5.29.
104 Trans. John C Rolfe. Curt. 10.5.34: *Nam iracundiam et cupidinem vini sicuti iuventa inritaverat, ita senectus mitigare potuisset*. See Baynham (1998, 103) for more discussion on this passage.
105 Ar. *an*. 7.29.1. Cf. Bosworth (1988, 145).
106 For Alexander's anger see, Cic. *Tusc*. 4.37.79. Liv. 9.18.4–5. Vel. Pat. 2.41.1. Sen. *Ira*. 3.17.1–2: Sen. *Clem*. 1.1.2–4. For more detailed discussion about Alexander's anger, see chapter 6 of this study. For Alexander's tendency to drink too much, see Just. *Epit*. 9.8.15. Sen. *Ep*. 83.18–23.
107 Trans. Lolo Davies. *Itin. Alex*. 53.118: *Post id conviviis et voluptatibus comioribus causam morti hinc dedit. Morem sibi proceres exercitus fecerant, uti mutuo sese conviviis acciperent. Enim cum forte apud Medium convivarent, comesatione sese illis convivam Alexander facit. Statim denique Herculis Medius scyphum offert ad vina, neque is honorem dei nomine aspernatus poculum complet stringitque continuum; eaque tantarum virtutum viro causa ad mortem fuit, ut, quem tot bellis adversa vulnera non vicerant, sub fati invidia iuvenilis confidentia solueret.*
108 Cf. Sen. *Ep*. 91.17; 94.62; 113.29–30. (91.17. *infelix*)
109 The Oxford Latin Dictionary translates *beneficium* as "an act tending to the benefit of another, service or kindness."
110 Sen. *Ben*. 1.13.1–3; 2. 16.1–2.
111 Sen. *Ben*. 1.13.3.
112 Sen. *Ben*. 2.16.1–2.
113 Eyben (1993, 39). Cf. Sen. *Ep*. 108. 12, 23, 27.
114 *Vesanus* as an adjective for Alexander, see Sen. *Ben*. 2.16.1. Sen. *Ep*. 91.17. Luc. 10.20.42.
115 Juv. 10. 169–170.
116 Arn. *Adv. nat*. 1.5.5.
117 The positive portrait of Alexander as a young male could also be used when the author constructed his image of the young emperor Constantine. This becomes evident in the *Panegyric of Constantine Pan. Lat*. VI.17.1–2. For the discussion of the passage, see page 41 of this study as well as Peltonen (2019a, 67).
118 Cf. Cameron (1999, 1–3, 9–11, 43–44).
119 Trans. Averil Cameron. Euseb. *Vit. Const*. 7.1–2: "θᾶττον δ' ἢ συντελέσαι εἰς ἄνδρας ὠκύμορον ἀποβῆναι, κώμοις ἀποληφθέντα καὶ μέθαις. δύο μὲν οὗτος πρὸς τοῖς τριάκοντα {τὴν πᾶσαν ζωὴν} ἐνιαυτοῖς ἐπλήρου, τούτων δὲ τὴν τρίτην

{αὖ πλέον} ὁ τῆς βασιλείας περιώριζε χρόνος, ἐχώρει δὲ δι' αἱμάτων **ἀνὴρ** σκηπτοῦ δίκην, ἀφειδῶς ἔθνη καὶ πόλεις ὅλας ἡβηδὸν ἐξανδραποδιζόμενος. ἄρτι δὲ μικρὸν ἀνθούσης αὐτῷ τῆς ὥρας καὶ τὰ παιδικὰ πενθοῦντι δεινῶς τὸ χρεὼν ἐπιστὰν ἄτεκνον ἄρριζον ἀνέστιον ἐπ' ἀλλοδαπῆς καὶ πολεμίας αὐτόν, ὡς ἂν μὴ εἰς μακρὸν λυμαίνοιτο τὸ θνητὸν γένος, ἠφάνιζεν."

120 Djurslev (2020, 186).
121 Eyben (1993, 98–112); Laes (2014, 137–139).
122 For more discussion on this Eusebius passage, see Peltonen (2019a, 196–197); Djurslev (2020, 183–189).
123 The passage could also be translated "lamenting the loss of his favourite" as Djurslev (2020, 187) suggests. Reading it this way it would refer to the death of Hephaestion.
124 Euseb. *Vit. Const*. 8.1.
125 For Classical writers on Heracles see esp. Curt. 10.6.11, 13; Paus. 9.7.2; Diod. Sic. 20.20.1. For Alexander IV, see Paus. 9.7.2; Diod 19.105.2; Just. *Epit*. 15.2.5.
126 *AR* 2.2; Arm. *AR* 141 (Wolohojian 1969, 78–79). For Darius despising Alexander since his young age, and therefore sending him a ball and whip, see also *AR* 1.36, 39; Arm. *AR* 103 (Wolohojian 1969, 58–59).
127 Chât. *Alex*. 1.293–294 (Pritchard 1986, 44).
128 Chât. *Alex*. 2.333–335 (Pritchard 1986, 67).
129 Chât. *Alex*. 2.381–387 (Pritchard 1986, 69).
130 *Lib. Alex*. 155.
131 *AR* 1.25; Jul.Val. 1.25.740–760; Arm. *AR* 71–72 (Wolohojian 1969, 46); Syr. *AR* 1.25 (Budge 1889, 34–35); Heb. *AR* 21 (Kazis 1962, 73–74); *Hist. de prel*. 1.21. In *Alexandreis* it is stated that Alexander's army included men of all ages, not just young men. Chât. *Alex*. 1.247–249.
132 Arm. *AR* 41 (Wolohojian 1969, 37).
133 In the trailer of *Alexander Revisited – Directors cut* (2004), the voice spoken by actor Anthony Hopkins says: "By the age of 25, he [Alexander] had conquered the known world and changed the course of mankind forever."
134 In her review "Alexander: How Great?" (2011) Beard wrote this about Alexander: see the *New York Review of Books*, October 27, 2011, 35–37. Published also in *Confronting the Classics: Traditions, Adventures, and Innovations* 2013, 47.
135 Cf. Eyben (1993, 38).

4 Manliness in Warfare

> He [Alexander] immediately led his forces through the pass of Thermopylae, declaring that since Demosthenes had called him a boy while he was among the Illyrians and Triballians, and a stripling when he had reached Thessaly, he wished to show him that before the walls of Athens he was a man.[1]

> If all they [Macedonian army] did was cause havoc in Asia and then leave, the enemy would regard them as no better than women.[2]
>
> Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*

> Brave men should fight on the open plain: only women shut themselves in for fear of what is to come[3]
>
> *Alexander Romance*

When we approach Alexander's figure from the gender perspective, we cannot ignore martial masculinity. The story of Alexander is a story of glorifying war and the central quality associated with Alexander is undoubtedly military valour and his success as military commander. As an example of a great commander and a victorious male warrior-king, he has been an uppermost paragon of military virtue for Hellenistic kings, Roman army leaders and emperors, medieval rulers and knights and the European monarchs of early modern Europe. Famous Romans such as Scipio Africanus (236–183 BCE), Pompey (106–48 BCE), Julius Caesar (100–44 BCE), Augustus (63 BCE–14), Germanicus (15/16 BCE–19), Caligula (12–41), Trajan (53–117) and Caracalla (186/188–217) admired Alexander's accomplishments in war.[4] Alexander's martial masculinity is also put on the pedestal in the visual portraits of the king from antiquity to the twenty-first century. Both the Alexander Sarcophagus (see Figure 4.1) and the Alexander Mosaic (see Figure 4.2) portray an invincible Alexander fighting in the front line, spear in hand and killing his hapless enemies. In the oil canvas paintings by Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669) and Charles le Brun (1619–1690), the mounted Alexander fights valiantly against his opponents. The influence of Alexander's alleged martial virtue can also be seen in the modern equestrian sculptures in modern Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia.

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Figure 4.1 The Alexander Sarcophagus depicts Alexander fighting on horseback and killing his Persian opponent with a spear, possibly at the Battle of Issus. In this idealistic presentation the king is clean-shaved and wearing either a lion's head helmet or a lionskin over a helmet. The Sarcophagus was found in modern Lebanon in 1887. It probably belonged to Abdalonymus, who was appointed king of Sidon after Alexander conquered Phoenicia. The relief may have been on display while Abdalonymus lived as propagandistic self-promotion. Photo Ronald Slabke. Wikimedia Commons Istanbul Archaeological Museums

Figure 4.2 The Alexander Mosaic from the House of the Faun in Pompeii probably depicts the Battle of Issus. The kings fighting in the heat of battle and making eye contact form the central feature of the image. In this competition of martial valour the mounted Alexander – in the process of killing the bodyguard of Darius – achieves victory. This massive floor mosaic was in the exedra of the villa, a space where the wealthy householder might enjoy aperitives only with his closest friends and eminent guests. Alamy Stock Photograph

When ancient military experts studied Alexander's campaigns, their perspective was to learn from these campaigns the art of warfare and leadership.[5] At the same time, the Classical and medieval narratives of Alexander's wars offered an image of an exemplary man who was dedicated to warfare and conquest. By his figure, members of the upper class negotiated the assumptions about gendered ideals and masculine expectations for males.

In the two citations above, taken from Plutarch's *Life of Alexander,* definitions of gender and military ethos are interlinked. In the first passage, Alexander declares that by his military manoeuvres and determined action he has publicly demonstrated that he is no longer a boy (*paîs*) nor a lad (*meirákion*) but a man (*anḗr*). It was a response to the critique the Athenian politician and public speaker Demosthenes had directed against the son of Philip of Macedon.[6] The passage supports the idea that the potential to display male aggression is an indication of manliness. In the text, the grown-up man proves or shows his masculine charisma to all his doubters and enemies by his speedy and well-timed military actions. In the second passage, Alexander tries to persuade his unwilling Macedonian soldiers to continue the campaign. The bellicose king states that their barbarian enemies would regard them not as men but as women if they returned to their homes. In other words, their enemies would regard them as weak and incapable of fighting. The statement itself is gendered since courageous soldiers are seen as manly while cowardly soldiers are regarded as feminine. In the other quotation, taken from the Greek *AR,* the king uses another gendered expression when he addresses Thebans unwilling to face him in pitched battle. It is merely women and womanish/effeminate men who fear so much that they are not willing to encounter their enemy in combat.

The passages of Plutarch and *AR* reflect the Greco-Roman ideology of war, where the most important way for a man to prove himself a true man, or to become a true man, is by constantly displaying martial qualities. In addition, the desired expression of martial masculinity is the counter to femininity. According to this extreme view, those males failing to live up to expectations of appropriate military values and behaviour are no better, and often worse, than the enemy, and inferior to women. In the passages above, a man's manliness and his position in the community is defined by the alleged recognition received from other men. In these quotations, the fear of being labelled effeminate or "womanish" promotes martial machismo as an expression of hegemonic masculinity. In the Roman culture, males are something that females are not. Feminine men were believed to be sexually passive and "soft" as well as sluggish, cowardly and inglorious in battle. If somebody flees from battle or proves himself cowardly, he is effeminate and womanish. It is no option for true men.[7] The reader gets the feeling that there is no other choice for men than living according to the martial expectations laid upon them. This construction attempts to justify the hegemonic and aggressive version of masculinity as well as the patriarchal hierarchy: since men are allegedly physically stronger and better fighters, their power

over females and dominant position in society is justified and can be taken for granted.

It is extremely difficult to identify any human culture in history that has not extolled fighting ability as a form of masculinity as something desirable and even compulsory for male members of society. With the concepts "military masculinity" or "martial masculinity" my purpose is to convey the idea that participating in war and (for the elite) mastering the art of war belongs to the sphere of manhood and is considered an essential aspect of being a man.[8] Literary or visual portraits of elite soldiers or social structures idealising military masculinity can be recognised among the ancient Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Native Americans, Vikings and the British Empire in the nineteenth century, to mention just a few examples. The relationship between gender and war is still evident in the modern world. The American anthropologist R. Brian Ferguson writes that "Masculinity is a malleable category but always connected to war—when war is present."[9]

Throughout the ages, we have been told that a masculine man should be ready to defend aggressively his family, and to kill if needs be. While pacifists have existed, only rarely do individuals think a real man must *always* search for a peaceful solution. Evolutional biology explains this by the need of human species to protect their offspring and genes in a world where the strongest (and those they protect) have a much better chance of survival. Biological explanations for male aggression and the culture of war have been offered. One such explanation is that men have higher testosterone levels than women. Violent action among men can also be explained by the social structures of human societies. A community where bellicose values and martial masculinity are propagated and venerated instead of commercial, scientific or aesthetic values manifests a society where the alternative more pacifistic masculinities are absent or suppressed.

Martial virtues and military masculinity were undoubtedly part of the "hegemonic masculinity" within Greco-Roman and medieval societies. As far as we know there was a total absence of women combatants in Classical warfare, which makes it clear that warfare was an occupation of men. In the *Iliad,* the Trojan hero Hector encourages his wife to focus merely on the tasks of women and states: "Let war be the care of men."[10] In the mainstream thinking, males were expected to show valour on the battlefield by using extreme violence against their enemies. The view that fighting was against women's nature is attested also by the Alexander historians. When Diodorus writes about the exceptional incident where Indian women took up the weapons of their fallen men to fight, he states that it was against their nature (*phúsis*).[11] The etymology in Greek and Latin endorses this view: the words aretḗ and *andreíā* and *virtus,* meaning martial courage, derive from words *anḗr* and *vir* that refer to men in general. Even though the words *aretḗ* and *virtus* came to signify several different virtues, originally they denoted "being courageous in war." Thus, being a man meant the potential to demonstrate male aggression.[12]

The relationship between warfare and military masculinity can be recognised from the existing ancient source material. Among the visual sources are various portraits of idealised mounted male warriors, hoplites and legionaries which praise martial virility. In the literature, martial virtues and courage are vital themes from Homeric epic to Greco-Roman historiography. Homer's *Iliad* is a portrait of warriors and warrior codes. The most courageous soldiers acquire everlasting glory and fame, which is the greatest goal that a warrior sets for himself and his community has set for him.[13] In the *Iliad,* the leaders of the warriors proclaim repeatedly that men may become "true" men merely by being valiant on the battlefield.[14] In the Classical era, authors praised the ideal of the hoplite soldier fighting on behalf of his community – a city-state. In the Roman world, military virtues were praised and often epitomised in the image of legionary, soldiers who in the late republic and early imperial era changed from "volunteers" to paid professionals. Greek and Latin histories, epics, elegies and drama offer us several texts which promote the rather narrow concept that willingness to show aggression and practice violence in warfare are essential qualities of a man.[15]

In the Middle Ages, martial virtues and military masculinity were pivotal values in society. The cultures of non-Christian Migration period Germanic peoples and Vikings openly embraced martial warrior ideals. The Christianization of Europe did not change this ideal even though the worship of Thor and Odin was replaced by worship of Christ. Also, warfare was found in the Bible: in the Old Testament, God showed his wrath in assisting the Israelities to destroy their foes, and in the Book of Revelation, Christ is described as a leader of heavenly armies. There was no total rejection of violence in the Middle Ages, even within the Church.[16] There were esteemed biblical warrior-rulers like King David and Judas Maccabeus, mythical-historical military leaders like King Arthur, and several venerated military saints. (in the later Middle Ages, the crusade era, even previously peaceful saints were often portrayed as armed knights). Clerical and religious ideas of masculinity formed a rival and pacific alternative to a military career. For the monks and priests, the uppermost heroes were Christ, the prophets of the Old Testament and saints who waged an allegorical war against Satan and his demons. However, the Knights Templar, Knights Hospitaller and other military orders managed to unite the religious model of manhood with the option for holy war so that they represented a kind of hybrid masculine identity.[17] Knights were the most respected group of warriors in most of Latin Europe and their status was heroised.

In this chapter, I shall focus on the ways Alexander's story was used to promote martial/militarised masculinity and military/martial virtues in Classical and medieval societies. I analyse the masculine ideals and the gendered messages the presentation of Alexander as an invincible warrior-monarch. The importance of first-class military performance and masculine warfare dominates most of the narratives concerning Alexander from antiquity to the Middle Ages. The classical and medieval texts concerning Alexander are full

of violent scenes portraying open-field battles, sieges and single combats both valourising war and reminding the audience of the horrors of war. Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian and Justin/Trogus concentrate particularly on the Battles of Granicus, Issus, Gaugamela and Hydaspes and the sieges of Tyre, Gaza and Malli. *AR* includes fewer battle narratives than the five surviving Alexander histories. In the various versions of the *AR* the martial valour of the king is taken for granted. Walter of Châtillon in his *Alexandreis* and the anonymous author of *Libro de Alexandre* both eulogise Alexander's martial performance as a perfect knight on the battlefield.

The first subchapter explores the image of the Persian campaign as a masculine war of aggression. It focuses particularly on the inspirational battle speeches appearing in the source material. The second subchapter deals with the hand-to-hand fighting, duels, physical excellence and honour. The third subchapter examines the critique of recklessness and imperialism, which can be distinguished in the works of some Roman intellectuals and early Christians. The fourth subchapter concentrates on the texts where Alexander is portrayed as a masculine beast-slayer. As will be shown in this chapter, the majority of the ancient and medieval authors were fascinated by Alexander's martial masculinity, thus promoting an idealistic image of the king's wars, while some Stoic and early Christian authors opposed the glorification of his career, which was dominated by violent conquest, as well as his status as the paradigm of manliness.

Becoming a true man: War as a masculine playground

In the grand story – depicted in Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian and Justin/Trogus – a rather small Macedonian army led by its heroic king defeats the bigger Persian armies and continues its expedition towards the ends of the earth. In these narratives, Alexander uses a rhetoric of justified revenge when launching his war of aggression against Darius III and represents himself as a liberator bringing freedom from the Persian yoke to all the Greek city-states in Asia Minor. The Panhellenic arguments of revenge for the Persian invasion of Greece and liberation of Greeks in Asia Minor can be regarded as propaganda addressed to the Greek city-states. Whether Alexander himself believed in this (or convinced himself of it) is something we will never know.[18] This motivation, besides providing justification for the campaign, creates the impression that all Macedonian and Greek males should participate in this war of aggression. After defeating Darius' armies, the expedition heads for the ends of earth, and here the invasion of unknown areas functions as a way to achieve eternal glory and lasting recognition. Lands where previously only Dionysius, Heracles and Semiramis had travelled are a playground for Alexander's ambition and hyper-masculinity. Alexander's tireless pursuit of eternal renown by a war of conquest and display of personal courage in war never ends. Only the king's sudden death in Babylon puts an end to his plans for new conquests. As it is demonstrated elsewhere in this book,

competitive masculinity is an important aspect of the ideal that Alexander's figure represents.

The ancient source material emphasises Alexander's personal motives for war. The story of Alexander is told from the Macedonian perspective as an epic enterprise in which the male hero monarch fights in a Panhellenic crusade, imitating the heroes of the Trojan and Persian wars. For the Macedonian warrior-king, the massive military campaign is an immense opportunity to achieve glory on the battlefield, showing extreme courage and daring by fighting against barbarian hordes (see below). In this respect, the story follows the masculine ethos of the *Iliad* where the heroes demonstrate their valour by fighting heroically and gain recognition in the eyes of posterity. Heracles and Achilles were regarded as hypermasculine paradigms and Alexander selects them as his role models during the campaign. This idea, that men aspiring to greatness must choose great male paragons, would later be adopted by the Roman audience. To become a true man is to compete with the heroes of old and even surpass them.[19]

The battle narratives are not merely eulogies of Alexander's military virtue; the figure of the king is used as a spokesman of military masculinity. As shown below, the ancient authors use expressions that promote gendered ideology of war. This is stressed particularly in the inspirational battle speeches appearing in the narratives of Arrian, Diodorus, Plutarch, Curtius and Justin.[20] The ways in which the authors write about manly virtues like *aretḗ* and *andragathía*, *virtus* and *fortitudo* as well as concepts *ándres agathoi* and *viri fortes* are used to emphasise that courage and endurance on the battlefield are essential elements in becoming a man.

Especially Arrian's *Anabasis* eulogises Alexander's martial masculinity and promotes war as a manly pursuit. Arrian repeatedly uses the expression *anḗr agathós*, meaning a good man, man of excellence or brave man when he idealises the pursuit of war. In Arrian's account Alexander encourages his mounted soldiers at the Battle of Granicus in 334 BCE – the first major encounter between the Macedonians and the Persians – in the following way: "Then Alexander, leaping onto his horse and urging those nearby to follow him and show themselves true men, ordered the Scouts…"[21] The formula *ándras agathoús gígnesthai* ("becoming a good man" or "showing oneself to be a brave man") was a topos in Classical and Hellenistic Greek. It was used of those men who had died in combat or participated in battle with honour. It appears in the Greek funeral orations denoting death in battle, which was presented as a sacrifice of the citizen on behalf of the city state. Greek boys were educated to become good men as adults by being brave in battle. In Thucydides Pericles states that dying bravely in battle makes one a "good man," while in another passage the Spartan commander Brasidas encourages Clearidas to prove himself as brave man (*anḗr agathós gígnou*) by displaying courage in battle. In Lysias' *Funeral Oration,* it is stated that the Greeks proved to be brave men at the Battle of Marathon, and later Persian king Xerxes, was unacquainted with the *ándres agathói* who had previously

defeated the Persians. This pro-Greek statement promotes the view that among the ranks of the Persian army there were far fewer brave men than among the Athenians.[22]

Arrian uses the formula to convey the importance of martial prowess as a desirable form of masculinity when he writes (1) about Alexander' martial courage, (2) on the deaths of Macedonian soldiers in the battle and (3) about the king's treatment of his "barbarian" opponents. Arrian's Alexander is an exceptional warrior-king, an *anḗr agathós*, a manly and courageous man who fights in the forefront where the battle is fiercest and encounters the bravest Persians satraps, so that he almost lost his life at the Battle of Granicus. At the end of the battle the Persian army, led by courageous satraps, is defeated and the first chapter in Alexander's glorious campaign has been written. As a spokesman of martial valour, the king also encourages his soldiers and commanders by his words and deeds to become men by participating in the expedition and fighting courageously until death. Before the Battle of Issus in 333 BCE, Alexander exhorts his men again to become brave men (*ándras agathoús gígnesthai*).[23] When Arrian mentions Macedonian officers and soldiers who showed exceptional courage and died valiantly in a certain battle or siege, he writes that by their glorious death they became true men. Arrian uses this expression when describing the death of the Macedonian officer Admetus, who was killed in action as the first man to mount the wall at the siege of Tyre, and of the death of the harpist Aristonikos, who, according to Arrian, showed himself braver than any mere musician, and of Ptolemaus son of Seleucus.[24] In the passage on Aristonikos' death, he makes it clear that it is not being remembered as a mere musician but by displaying courage and dying in battle that Aristonikos has shown his true worth and expressed his masculinity. Furthermore, Alexander venerates those barbarian enemies who showed that they were *ándres agathói* by fighting valiantly. Thus, the king gladly spares the Indian fighters at the siege of Massaka, and Porus who had proved he was an *anḗr agathós* at the Battle of the River Hydaspes.[25] Contrary to the opinion of Lysias, Arrian's *Anabasis* supports the view that barbarians can become *ándres agathói*. No man is *anḗr agathós* automatically, but he must become one. The formula underlines the performative side of military masculinity.

According to Diodorus, the Battle of the Granicus River was won by Alexander's own *andragathía*.[26] The etymology of the word derives from *anḗr* and is thus a gendered concept. As a term, *andragathía* is close to *aretḗ*, denoting manliness, bravery and manly virtue. In the fifth century, Athenian men who had proved themselves *agathós* by their deeds and thus earned praise and reward from the polis were credited with *andragathía*.[27] In Diodorus, Alexander was the prime example of *andragathía*, someone his men could imitate. In addition, the king also arranged lavish funerals for those of his men and his Persian enemies who had displayed this virtue.[28] The idealised and perhaps exaggerated statement of Alexander's personal impact on the result of the Battle of Granicus reduces the impact of superior tactics

or the efforts of the Macedonian army as a whole. Alexander is the living spokesman for warfare and the battlefield is a space where a man such as him can prove himself a true man worthy of veneration by other males.[29]

Even though Plutarch is famous for his image of Alexander as a philosopher-king, the hypermasculine warrior-monarch also appears in his writings. Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* venerates the ideology of war and war as a field for masculine competition.[30] Similarly, like Arrian and Diodorus, Plutarch has Alexander exhort other Macedonians and Greeks to display *aretḗ* and *andragathía* and reward any who display it.[31] When Plutarch lists the dangerous situations the king faced during the campaigns, including being severely wounded, running short of supplies and facing severe weather, he characterises the motto that motivated Alexander to continue fighting and command superbly his troops.

According to Plutarch Alexander wanted to overcome *tykhē* (fortune) by *tólma* (daring/boldness) and defeat *dúnamis* (forces/strength) by *aretḗ* (manliness). In addition, he was convinced that for the courageous, those of good courage, nothing is unattainable, while for cowards, those who lack daring there was nothing secure.[32] Regardless the obstacles a man may face, anything could be overcome by a continuous display of manliness. According to Plutarch, Alexander had a binary worldview where a man is either courageous or a coward, and for a true man being a coward is not an option. "Fortune favours the bold" was a famous saying, which Plutarch's Roman audience knew as denoting the idea that a courageous warrior is favoured by Tyche/Fortuna, the goddess of fortune: by showing courage, the person can be blessed by her or by others among the gods.[33] Plutarch's *Essays On the fortune or the virtue of Alexander* concentrates on the argument that it was Alexander's manliness that was behind his glorious triumphs rather than fortune. For Plutarch, the central proof of this was that without wounds, sweat, blood and labour Alexander would not have acquired his greatness.[34]

When we come to the Latin texts of the early Empire, a similar ethos of martial masculinity is visible. Curtius' *Historiae* and Justin's Latin *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus* both consider *virtus* ("manliness, manly courage") as a desirable trait that is demonstrated by displaying courage in battle. In Curtius, before the Battle of Gaugamela Alexander addresses his soldiers and says they should not be troubled even though some of their opponents like Scythians and Cadusians were unknown. For Alexander the fact that their opponents were unknown shows they are cowards, since *viri fortes* ("brave men") are never unknown. In the speech, the king juxtaposes brave men *viri fortes* and *imbellis*. The latter can be translated as unwarlike, unfit for war, peaceful, cowardly, fond of peace, or non-combatant. In the presentation, the social status and fame a man has gained correlates to the level of manliness he has displayed and will display in the battlefield. According to Curtius, Alexander's Macedonians are known throughout the inhabited world because of their *virtus*. Thus, they have been rewarded by obtaining

the status of *viri fortes*. Curtius states that Alexander addressed his speech to his Macedonian troops, who were *viri fortes*.[35]

In the Curtian passage, war offers a theatre where a man can become a true man. The course of battle reveals those among the men engaged who will be venerated as "brave men" (*viri fortes*). We do not know whether Curtius had served in the Roman army. Probably he did, but either way his Alexander is a spokesman of martial valour. Curtius sets Alexander up as an example for any Roman general or emperor.[36] According to the historian the king did not demand bravery in the Battle of Gaugamela without giving them an example of valour (*fortitudinis exemplum*) by his actions. Alexander's many scars were ornaments to his body, highlighting his status as a living model for his men to imitate.[37] By his wording, Curtius connects muscular bodies and military performance to the suffering and hardships soldiers and their commanders encountered in their wars. In battle Alexander kills his enemies and encourages his fleeing Macedonian soldiers to rally and charge the enemy. At the end of the day Alexander and his men are portrayed as having proved themselves as brave men. Among the generals of Alexander, Hephaestion was struck in the arm by a spear, while Perdiccas, Coenus and Menidas were wounded by arrows. According to Curtius, Alexander's officers showed they were *viri fortes* as their wounds were proofs of their *virtus,* denoting their valour and manliness.[38] When summarising the aftermath of the Battle of Gaugamela Curtius states that Alexander showed he was the most worthy and fitting man to be the king (*rex dignissimus*). Thus, the ideal of masculine dominance and power that relates to the king's position is validated by his personal courage and the example of bravery he offers to his generals and soldiers.[39]

Justin's Latin *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus* narrative on the Battle of Gaugamela eulogises military performance and defines war from the gender perspective as well. On the eve of battle, the king reminds his soldiers that Darius might have an army of greater size, but Alexander has more real men. Justin juxtaposes Persian *homines* and Macedonian *viri*. Darius had a horde of soldiers/humans (*homines*) while Alexander had *viri*. In Latin, *homines* was often used to refer to lower-class males, including both slaves and freedmen, while *viri* could refer to upper-class males. It has also been stated that in Classical Latin *vir* is always a positive term while *homo* is sometimes negative.[40] The gendered expression underlines the idea that the number of true men who were fierce fighters makes the difference to the outcome of the battle: having a large number of soldiers who could not fight like real men was no use.[41]

In Justin's narrative, Alexander encourages his men to despise the showy equipment of the Persians, their gleaming gold and silver arms, and reminds them that victory is achieved not by ostentation but by *virtus*. The outcome of the battle was determined by courageous men, the Macedonian troops, while the Persians with their 'effeminate' armour failed in courage and went down to defeat.[42]

The link between the luxurious armour and effeminate clothing of the Persians and their womanish nature and lack of *virtus* is made also in Curtius' *Historiae*. In the Roman literature, certain fabrics, colours and style of sleeves in a person's dress could indicate effeminacy. Curtius' description of the clothes the Persian army and King Darius wore before the Battle of Issus follows the Roman gendered views of dress. According to Curtius, the Persian Immortals used long-sleeved tunics while another unit of 15,000 men was dressed luxuriously, almost like women (*muliebriter*). The dress of Darius is a purple tunic and gold-embroidered cloak. Curtius states that Darius wore his gilded belt in which he had hung his *acinaces* (sword) "in a womanly manner" (*muliebriter*).[43] The Romans regarded long-sleeved tunics and coloured dress particularly as a sign of effeminacy and a visible demonstration that its bearers were feminine and allegedly incapable of bravery in battle. Also, the belt referred to the ability to wear a weapon and the reference to Darius' feminine way of hanging his weapon underlined his inability to fight courageously in the actual battle.[44] As a stark contrast to the luxurious clothing of the Persians, Curtius introduces Macedonian troops that did not wear gleaming gold but steel and bronze. The reference to rough-looking Roman soldiers dressed in iron instead of gold and silver appears also in Livy's patriotic presentations of the legionaries fighting against the opulently dressed Samnites.[45] These passages verify the idea that desirable militarised masculinity is displayed by an unimposing but practical outfit, which is an indication that its wearers are willing and able to endure pain and suffer wounds in battle. For the Roman audience, it must have been clear that the Persians' womanish outfits not only make them effeminate but reveal their effeminate and cowardly nature. Thus, becoming a man is about acting and looking like a masculine warrior whose external presence reflects masculine dominance.

Being a "good man" is showing fearlessness in the face of danger and ability to fight bravely in battle. Arrian, Diodorus, Plutarch, Curtius and Justin express open admiration for any soldier willing to fight courageously in battle and sacrifice his life in war. Honourable death in war is itself a decent outcome for the life of a true man, earning him the posthumous respect of his comrades. In the narratives, it is Alexander who tries to encourage his soldiers to become true men. For such men, an honourable death in action is a fate whose possibility should be accepted, even though it would not be sought. Although Alexander does not die in combat, he still accepts this fate as a possible outcome of battle. By acknowledging this he becomes a true man (*vir fortis*, *anḗr agathós*). Through their eulogy of bravery and virtue in war, the authors promoted the ideals of hegemonic masculinity: that a responsible and true man must serve in the army and fight courageously against the enemies of Rome.

Even though the various versions of *AR* pay less attention to martial masculinity and battles than the Greek and Latin accounts above, the image of Alexander as a spokesman of praiseworthy warfare and martial masculinity still appears in them. This occurs, for instance, in the scene where Alexander

encourages his men before the fictitious decisive battle against the Persians on the Stranga.[46] In the Gamma recension (γ) of the Greek *AR,* Alexander addresses his soldiers as *ándres systratiotai* ("men and fellow-soldiers"). The king asserts that barbarian hordes are no match for real men, who, under their king, express not only bravery but also *phrónēsis,* denoting practical wisdom and prudence in the thick of battle. In the Latin *AR* translated by Julius Valerius, the king states that the victory over the larger Persian army will be achieved by *virtus noster* ("our manly courage"). According to Alexander, the Persian troops are merely a swarm of flies compared to the smaller but stronger army of Macedonian wasps that will drive the flies away.[47]

Passages with battle exhortations where commanders spur on their soldiers to be brave in battle with gendered expressions appear also in other Greek literature, like Homer's *Iliad*. Such formulas may have been conventional, but this does not change the fact that they constructed desirable images of military masculinity and promoted them before the Greco-Roman upper class.

The positive approach to Alexander's war of conquest as a manly enterprise is also apparent in the medieval epics. In the High Medieval works, Alexander is explicitly called a *chevalier*, *caballero*, a knight or the equivalent (Latin *eques*) so that he represents the chivalric ideal. His position as a perfect knight is emphasised by the causes he fights for: Alexander fights only justified wars. In *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* the expedition to Persia is just because of the Persian yoke that oppresses the Greeks. From his boyhood, Alexander impatiently awaits the moment when he can end the injustice of Persian rule and exact revenge. Already as a boy Alexander complains with tears in his eyes because his aged father is oppressed by Darius and because his fatherland is feeble. In *Alexandreis* Darius is portrayed as an oppressive tyrant mistreating Philip's kingdom and Alexander's campaign is vindicated because it is launched to put an end to the Persian tyranny. In *Libro de Alexandre* this motif is expanded.[48] The view that exemplary men fight only justified wars is also included in the medieval versions of the *AR*. For example, the author of the Old Swedish *Konung Alexander* asserts that young Alexander learnt the art of war for just reasons, not with of evil intentions to plunder others.[49]

Alexander's campaign against Persia is just because of its biblical and religious motivation. The king is presented as a pious knight who prays to almighty God and fights valiantly against infidels and terrible monsters. This scenario strengthens the idea that the true masculine man fights only wars that are approved by God and his earthly representatives. In the Syriac *AR*, there are statements that the power of the gods was with Alexander, who fought mounted on the horse Bucephalus as an accomplishment of the Delphic oracle.[50] In the medieval versions of the *AR* as well as in the medieval epics this motif is expanded and clearly Christianised: Alexander is fighting under the mandate of the Christian God. The reference to Josephus' tale of Alexander's visit in Jerusalem and his alleged role in the prophecies of Daniel

are present in *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre*. The author of the *Libro* explains that a divine angel appeared to Alexander before the Persian expedition, promising him world rule, and the whole conquest is carried out under divine guidance as the king, as the leopard and he-goat spoken of by Daniel, fulfils what was foretold in the Bible.[51] Being a true man is being part of God's divine plan and submitting to his will. In contrast to Alexander and his knights their Persian enemies are given negative qualities reflecting medieval Christian theology. For example, Darius' forefathers are of the "ungodly line of the Giant race." The evil Old Testament figure Nimrud is also mentioned as the ancestor of the Persian kings.[52] This alleged evilness of Alexander's opponents stresses both the need for and the justice of male aggression. The true man, here equivalent to the chivalric knight, opposes evil forces and defends the weak.

For the medieval audience of *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* oblique references to the ongoing Crusades against Muslims in Palestine and Iberian Peninsula would have been clear. For example, in *Libro de Alexandre* the author anachronistically mentions that Alexander would make peace with neither Jew nor Moor.[53] Alexander and his men are medievalised; not only do they fight with medieval arms like crossbows and two-handed axes but also because they have the stereotypical attitudes and prejudices of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Europe. The image of Alexander as a model of martial manhood is constructed according to the contemporary expectations that Christians shared and how knights were expected to view their enemies. Medieval adaptions and imaginations of Alexander's wars thus offered a model for the Christian knights and princes fighting against the Muslims.[54]

The battle speeches included in Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* also present gendered assessments of war. In *Alexandreis,* when Alexander addresses his troops before the Battle of Issus, he makes it clear that their Persian opponents are not true men by calling them womanlike (*muliebris*) and soft (*molles*). The latter adjective not only denotes idleness but also has negative sexual overtones, suggesting that the Persian appearance was that of sexually passive men or male prostitutes. In *Libro de Alexandre* Alexander states that the Persians look like women (*mugeres*) in their gilded and silver armour, instead of wearing the equipment of valiant knights.[55]

Since Walter of Châtillon and the author of *Libro de Alexandre* used Curtius as their source material they would have rephrased the stereotypical and gendered view of the effect of effeminate dress on its wearer. Persian armour and dress emasculate their wearers and accentuate their unmanly traits. For the contemporary male audience, it is all too clear which of the two sides is worthy of imitation: Roman legions and European knights as successors of Alexander shall be victorious when they fight as true men like he does against their effeminate enemies. In *Historia de preliis* the distinction between effeminate and true men in the context of displaying bravery on the

battlefield is also recognised in the Indian Porus' probably apocryphal words to Alexander: "Hitherto you have fought with soft men who, possessing no valour, deserved to endure hardship."[56]

In the narratives, the willingness of the Macedonian soldiers to sacrifice their lives on behalf of their king and to gain victory is an object of praise. Ancient and medieval texts on Alexander's campaign against Persia support the idea that man's desire to participate in justified war, pursuit of glory and courage serves the community. According to the gendered message in these texts those cowardly males who do not fight in the massive war against the Persians are effeminate and "womanish."

Of the ancient and medieval writers mentioned here, only Arrian is known to have served in the army and experienced battle himself. In contrast, Plutarch was a Greek intellectual and philosopher, while Walter of Châtillon was in the service of the archbishop of Rheims as *notarius*, and probably the author of the *Libro* belonged to the medieval clergy.[57] Still, although there are very few records of medieval clerics in combat and they only occasionally commanded armies, they were brought up as aristocracy alongside those who did become soldiers, so they had similar attitudes. Medieval clergy often accompanied armies, even if they rarely fought. Thus, it is not unsurprising that they composed material that presented potential for male aggression as an essential part of becoming a man. Since all these authors were willing to eulogise lavishly the warrior ethos of Alexander, it demonstrates that martial masculinity was regarded as a desirable and hegemonic expression of masculinity throughout the upper classes. The battle speeches are filled with gendered language that promotes dominance as a masculine ideal. For Alexander, as the main spokesman of martial masculinity, there is no room for cowardly men who flee from battle. Instead, for him and his soldiers war is the only opportunity to become a true man. The performative side of manhood is therefore central as a concept of martial masculinity. The king not only inspires his men in war with his words but also by his deeds, which will be discussed in the next subchapter.

Hand-to-hand combat, duels, physical excellence and honour

In the Hollywood film *Troy* (2004), Brad Pitt as Achilles publicly mocks Agamemnon, the Spartan king, because Agamemnon does not himself dare to fight with a Thessalian champion but calls on Achilles to do it. The most hyper-masculine figure of the film, Achilles states: "Imagine a king who fights his own battles. Wouldn't that be a sight?" Many male rulers have not personally fought their wars nevertheless, but used their soldiers to do so (although, in the ancient and medieval periods avoidance of war when it occurred was dangerous for a ruler, as all were expected to lead their armies in battle). However, one of the striking features of Alexander's figure in the literary imagination is his strong passion for personally fighting against the enemy troops and risking his life in action like an ordinary soldier. By his

character authors construct an expression of a hypermasculine ideal that focuses on dominance and power over others.

Aggression (1), martial courage (2), strength (3), endurance (4) and honour (5) are all concepts we encounter in the imagined narratives of Alexander's fighting in war. Alexander's aggression and courage (1, 2) are emphasised by the image of him frequently fighting in the front line of battle. In the detailed battle narratives Alexander is frequently depicted as killing his enemies with a sword or a spear. Plutarch explicitly states that Alexander was a highly trained swordsman who usually used a sword in the battles.[58] The sword (*makhaira, kopís*) was a melee weapon and success in killing many enemies with it meant that Alexander was very skilled. Already in Homer the Greeks considered use of missile weapons like bows as unmanly and cowardly compared to attacking face-to-face with spear and sword.[59] Roman historians like Ammianus Marcellus also saw Roman legionaries as the best fighters, when fighting in close combat, while their Persian opponents, considered good horse archers, he regarded rather as crafty than courageous, to be feared only at long range.[60] There seems to be a long literary tradition where using swords instead of missile weapons demonstrated greater manliness and courage.

Unsurprisingly, in the battle narratives, Alexander never uses javelin or sling. Diodorus and Curtius, for example, write that during the assault at the siege of Tyre, the king himself scaled the wall and participated in the fierce hand-to-hand fighting. According to Diodorus, Alexander insisted that his men follow his own example of *andragathía* (bravery/manliness) by fighting fearlessly against the Tyrians. He writes: "Any of the enemy who came within his reach he [Alexander] either killed with his spear or sword, or he knocked them over with the rim of his shield."[61] This violent scene praises Alexander's martial valour and skills as a fighter, as he kills every enemy that he comes across and thus emasculates the enemy forces. Even though Arrian tells fewer detailed stories of the king's melee performance his readers get the impression that Alexander fights in the forefront. Often Arrian mentions the positive model Alexander gave to his soldiers and he claims that Alexander was the first man to cross the river before the Battle of Hydaspes.[62] The king's courage in fighting in the vanguard or leading his men to the attack emphasises that Alexander does not ask his men to do something he cannot himself do.[63]

The Classical literature not only presents Alexander as fighting in the front rank but also as seeking duels (*monomakhia, monomachia*) against the most prominent enemies. Alexander is not the first man to fight duels in the Classical tradition. In Homer's epic there is a combination of massed fighting and individual one-on-one combats between champions (*prómakhoi*). Whether or not this reflects reality in Homer's day or even the late Mycenaean period, it became an ideal for later generations. In the *Iliad* Greek and Trojan heroes fight a series of duels, the most famous being that between Achilles and Hector. Also, there were tales of single combat that occurred in the republican

period when the opposing armies were represented by a few brave fighters.[64] Even though during Alexander's era as well as in the Roman era warfare was largely about fighting in formation, the narratives of Alexander's battles often follow the Homeric tradition of portraying a series of duels. Already in antiquity there were writers who did not consider the flattering image of Alexander seeking duels in battles as trustworthy, but the Alexander historians are fascinated with this Homeric image of the king.[65] Their depiction of Alexander's willingness to fight single combats is intended to support his image as the "greatest" and "most valiant" fighter of all time and allow him to demonstrate his masculinity. In Plutarch, Arrian and Diodorus, and most likely in the now lost second book of Curtius' *Historiae,* Alexander encounters Persian satraps in duels at the Battle of Granicus. In the detailed portrait of violent melee satraps portrayed as courageous mounted fighters are killed by Alexander and Cleitus.[66]

At the Battle of Issus, Alexander seeks to encounter Darius on the battlefield and kill him in a royal duel.[67] As noted, to the ancient authors, these two kings represent two divergent definitions of masculinity. Diodorus states that by this Alexander intended to "win the victory with his own hands" while Curtius writes that the king was fighting more like a soldier (*miles*) than a commander (*dux*), seeking the trophy of killing Darius.[68] The contrast between Darius and Alexander in the fight is clearly presented in the accounts of Diodorus, Curtius and Arrian. Darius fails in the contest of martial courage by succumbing to fear and deciding to flee from the battlefield.[69] Particularly Arrian presents Darius as a coward who was among the first to leave the battlefield. Arrian states that the fleeing Darius left his cloak, bow and shield on his chariot.[70] In ancient thinking leaving one's shield was regarded as shameful and unmanly conduct. The shield was of great importance in combat, but was a slightly cumbersome piece of equipment to carry and a hindrance in flight: abandoning it signalled that the soldier would no longer face the enemy. Such men were despised and ridiculed as effeminate cowards who had lost their manly honour.[71] The scene is repeated in the Battle of Gaugamela, where Alexander is eager to encounter Darius but the Persian monarch runs from the battle.[72] The narratives of the Battles of Issus and Gaugamela give the impression that the outcome of a battle was determined by personal courage or the lack of it. In the contest, Darius turns out to be a lesser man than his Macedonian opponent and therefore he loses his kingship. In addition, behind Darius' decision to flee is his lack of self-control: he is unable to overcome his fears and therefore he loses the masculinity competition.[73]

The construction of martial manhood through fighting in the front rank or duelling is also apparent in the visual sources. The *Alexander mosaic* depicts a man-to-man fight between the mounted Alexander and Darius on his chariot, at either Issus or at Gaugamela. It immortalises the moment when the bareheaded Alexander kills a Persian mounted soldier with his spear. The fleeing Persians, including Darius, are depicted as effeminate males. The *Elephant*

medallion, minted during Alexander's own lifetime, portrays the encounter of the Macedonian king on horseback and Porus riding his elephant. The idea behind these idealised visual portraits is that the rulers of the state are seeking each other on the battlefield and thereby demonstrating their masculine courage. In the aftermath of the duel the best man wins the trophy and proves himself worthy to rule. True men like Alexander never flee the fight.[74]

Alexander's Macedonian generals and some of the barbarians against whom the Macedonians fight also pass the test of military masculinity. In the narratives, those generals and soldiers imitating their brave warrior monarch achieve the desirable state of manhood as well. For example, the older Macedonian commander Erigyius is praised because he slew the Persian general Satibarzanes in an arranged duel. In Curtius' account, Erigyius takes off his helmet before the battle and proclaims that he will show the quality of Alexander's friends and soldiers by victory or by the "most honourable death" (*mors honestissima*).[75] The readers are led to admire this type of military masculinity and will to sacrifice one's life on behalf of your king and fellow soldiers. Admiration acquired before your army and stature in the eyes of posterity is more valuable than preserving your life at all costs. Ethnic background does not determine someone's manliness even though Persian soldiers as a group are presented as soft and weakened by their luxury (cf. above).[76]

In the various versions of the *AR*, the king's personal courage is stressed in episodes where the king is disguised as his own messenger. This occurs twice, when Alexander goes to the courts of Darius and Porus like a modern-day spy. In the Greek *AR* Alexander later states to his fellow-soldiers: "Was I not in the forefront of the army with my sword. Did I not go as my own emissary of the army with my sword?"[77] The *AR* adds new duels we do not find in the works of Diodorus, Curtius, Arrian and Plutarch. In the *AR,* Alexander defeats the tall and arrogant Porus in a duel. The scenario is that during the battle between the armies of Alexander and Porus Alexander's men are losing, but at that moment Alexander sends a message to Porus and suggests that instead of the destruction of both armies they should arrange a one-on-one combat (*monomakhia*) between the kings, where the outcome of the battle would be measured by their noble birth/high spirit. In the following duel Alexander wins due to his wit and because Porus underestimates him, despising his small stature (Cf. Chapter 2, pages 49–50). In the Latin *AR* of Julius Valerius, it is stated that in other forms of war *fortuna* plays a key part, whereas in a duel it is *virtus* ("manliness/manly courage") and the *gloria ducis* ("glory of the commanders") which decide the result of the battle. The author states that Alexander saw that the glory of the rulers did not match the perils that ordinary soldiers had to face. Thus, the king thought it would be suitable for the generals to obtain the experience of the soldiers and expose themselves to the extreme dangers of a duel. In the Latin *AR* Alexander gives credit to the soldier's life and is willing to share their dangers. Since Porus dies in the battle, Alexander's personal bravery and willingness to expose himself to danger saves his men and brings success. In this scenario, it is a masculine trait to

protect men of lower status. The ideal of the soldier's life is explicit in the Latin version of the *AR*.[78]

In the medieval epic, the occurrence of duels is stressed, and the audience clearly gets the impression that the king himself enjoys fighting in the forefront of the action. The elements we encounter in the Roman texts analysed above are also visible in the High Medieval reception of Alexander's martial masculinity. In *Alexandreis* Alexander knowingly sets his men an example to imitate. Before the battle he addresses his soldiers: "Have Alexander as a model of valour and an example for fighting…[…]…Whoever rules, let him inspire the brave by his example, and let him exhibit proofs of his valour."[79] In the alleged statement, the Macedonian warrior declares that every monarch should be a first-class fighter and share all the hardships of war with his soldiers. A king must himself give a first-class demonstration of *virtus*. The battle narratives present scenes where Alexander – called the "bravest of kings" (*rex fortissimus*) – gives his men the worthy example he has promised by spurring them on to take part in the series of bloody battles.[80]

Alexandreis and *Libro de Alexandre* include an epic series of duels involving Alexander and his generals, encountering some fierce fighters among their Persian opponents, often depicted as Saracens. There is also an opponent we do not encounter in the Classical tradition or in the various versions of the *AR*: the Philistine and terrible giant Geon whom Alexander kills at the Battle of Gaugamela.[81] The language in the battle narratives idealises acts of war, imitating the style of Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. In *Alexandreis* the king fights in the front line of the battle: "Alexander, with spear outstretched, was the first to turn his horse against the opposing Persians, swifter than the rock hurled with the whirling force of a catapult."[82] He seeks a leader worthy to receive the first wound and finds Arethas, the satrap. The king is the first to kill an enemy and the Greek army celebrates it with a loud shout. In the idealised narratives, Alexander's companions start to fight valiantly after they see their king's display of valour. The most common form of duel in the Middle Ages was the judicial duel arranged to prove innocence or guilt and claims, and to preserve honour. We do not find this type of single combat in the medieval Alexander sources. However, in the medieval imagination the concept of the valiant duel between two first-class knights during battle was popular and occurred in the *chansons de geste*, chronicles and biographies, and it is this type of duel that appears in the medieval tales of Alexander. Undoubtedly narratives like this encouraged upper-class males to display violence in that manner.[83]

Both the Roman Alexander histories and the High Medieval epics convey the message that a masculine man knows how to use his weapons, usually described as either sword or lance (in addition to lance and sword, also daggers, axes and maces do occur in medieval works). And killing enemies in pitched battle, sieges or duels is a noble action and something that can be expected from an exemplary man and monarch, defining one's status related to other males. A manly man proves his superiority by exposing himself to dangers

on the battlefield and killing his enemies, usually depicted as inferior and deserving to be killed, in the thick of bloody battle. These texts also make the claim that being effeminate in battle means death and disgrace. The graphic depictions of combat measure the ways male fighters can show their worth by fearlessly participating in fierce battles and not giving way to fear.

In Republican Rome consuls were present on the battlefield and their behaviour had a direct effect on the soldiers near them. The commander was expected to participate in battle when the situation was critical. Yet a consul being killed or being severely wounded was a threat to morale. During the Roman principate emperors were not expected to fight in the forefront of the army but to command their troops from the rear, but they might still have to intervene at critical points.[84] In this sense the Macedonian king represents an extreme version of martial masculinity for Roman emperors and commanders. Even though in the Late Antiquity there were some emperors after Arcadius (reigned 395–408) who did not lead the army into battle, most emperors had previously served as soldiers. According to Stewart (2016a) the existence of non-combatant emperors in the Byzantine era does not mean that the ideal of soldier had been substituted as marginal masculine ideal in the Byzantine era.[85]

In the Middle Ages, we know monarchs fought in the front rank. For example, in the year 1066 two kings were slain in two battles fought in England. At the Battle of Stamford Bridge Harald Sigurdsson king of Norway was killed and the Anglo-Saxon king of England Harold Godwinson was killed at the battle of Hastings. Both kings fought with their armies. Medieval kings like Louis VI of France (1081–1137), King Stephen of England (1092 or 1096–1154), Richard I of England (1157–1199), Philip Augustus of France (1165–1223), the Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV (1175–1218) and Charles of Anjou (1226/1227–1285) are all depicted as fighting in the forefront of battle.[86] Unlike the emperors of the early Roman Empire, the medieval rulers sometimes fought side by side with their soldiers. In the medieval reception of Alexander, the Macedonian king acts like a true monarch and knight should.

When ancient historians write about Alexander, they construct an image of a man who is at the peak of physical fitness. Alexander's alleged strength and endurance (3, 4) are underlined in the narratives where the warrior-monarch is willing to share all the hardships his fellow-soldier encounter. Alexander is portrayed as a man who is able to face all the adverse conditions that the army had to face during the campaign, including lack of water and food, searing heat in the desert and numbing cold in the snow. When writing about Alexander's campaign against Bessus, Arrian states that the king advanced even through deep snow and when suffering from lack of supplies.[87] Curtius writes about the hardships the Macedonian army encountered in the desert areas of Sogdiana in a following way: "He [Alexander] stood at the point where the troops were arriving, still wearing his cuirass and without having taken any food or drink, and he did not leave to take refreshments until the entire column had passed him."[88] Alexander helps those in need in extreme

circumstances and takes care of his men.[89] He puts his men's hunger and thirst above his own bodily needs. While Alexander's ordinary soldiers are presented as suffering from cold, heat, fatigue and despair the king is above these hardships inflicted by nature. In many passages, Alexander is presented as a fatherly figure taking care of his troops, as well as giving them the best possible example of strength and endurance. According to the most popular anecdote the king even refused to drink the water that his men offered while they were passing through a waterless desert region. Arrian stated that the incident demonstrated Alexander's *kartería* ("endurance") while Plutarch says that it showed the king's *enkráteia* ("self-control") and *megalopsykhía* ("noble principles"). The true man can master his bodily needs and display endurance in suffering when the situation demands it.[90]

The power to master bodily needs was an important quality that was needed for soldiers who traversed remote places where rations were restricted. These passages also seem to connect the ideal of fathers as protectors and caretakers of their families relocated into the context of an army. In warfare the commander ought to be bonded with his men and devoted to their care. In addition, the passages mentioned above highlighted the importance of submitting oneself to discipline: even warrior-monarchs should accept discipline and show they can endure the frugal soldier's life. In the narrative of Curtius, Arrian and Plutarch Alexander receives great praise because he is willing to live the soldier's life and share their hardships. In Arrian's account the king addressed his men at Opis with the following words: "I eat the same food as you do, I sleep as you do, except that my food is not, I think, as luxurious as some of you consume, and that I know that on your behalf I am wakeful, so that you may be able to slumber soundly."[91] Hannibal and Emperor Julian were eulogised since they were willing to share all the hardships of their soldiers and eat frugal food as well, which underlines that it was a topos.[92]

The ancient authors give the impression that Alexander also trained himself from his youth to use all weapons and to be physically fit. Plutarch writes that the king used his spare time in training to use a bow, riding and hunting.[93] *Alexander's Itinerary* (*Itinerarium Alexandri*), composed in the fourth century, includes a eulogising description of Alexander's appearance, body and skill in using different weapons. The king is described as a tireless runner, a vigorous attacker, a skilled spear thrower, bold in hand-to-hand fighting and unrelenting in combat. The passage underlines the idea that by thorough hard training Alexander prepared himself for a military life.[94] Therefore, to become a masculine man, you must work hard and set goals for yourself. The standards of martial masculinity demand a desire to develop your physique and a willingness to acquire skills to use different weapons, so that you can fight not only bravely but effectively.

A very important aspect of Alexander's martial masculinity is his confidence: the king does not hesitate. In the Roman and medieval battle narratives, he is always convinced that under his command the Macedonian army

will be victorious.[95] However, victory by any means is not part of Alexander's persona, and victory must be achieved in a fair and honourable fight. The theme of a warrior-monarch seeking fair fights and royal duels can be read particularly from the anecdote where the older and experienced general Parmenion on the eve of Battle of Gaugamela insists that the king should attack by night. In Arrian's account, Alexander says it would be dishonourable "to steal the victory" and therefore he had to win his victory in an open fight and not using stratagems. In Curtius Alexander refers to his "glory" (*gloria*) as a reason why he decides to face Darius in daytime in an open battle. According to Alexander attacking by night is the way of robbers and thieves.[96] In the Classical world, robbers and thieves were despicable and even though they might succeed in their operations they were not regarded as "true" men. From the gender perspective bandits were unmasculine figures following their own perverse desires by challenging the monopoly of the state to war. Their allegedly luxurious and licentious living was not related to the ideal of the soldier and warrior.[97] From Greek plays and Classical historiography there are references to the idea that true warriors seek only fair fights while stealth and deceit are not regarded as honourable.[98] Nevertheless, in Classical warfare commanders did use surprise attacks, and Alexander himself uses them on other occasions.[99] However, it seems that for the authors the fight between Alexander and Darius had to be presented as a "fair fight" to make it clear that Alexander's motives were a contrast to those of unmasculine bandits. By the anecdote the authors constructed an exaggerated image of an exceptional warrior-monarch for whom personal glory and following known virtuous principles means even more than the result of a battle.

In *Alexandreis,* Alexander is aware that victory over his enemies may be achieved by using trickery but that does not fit with the honour codes he espouses. According to Châtillon, Alexander declares that he does not fight with guile but gloriously in daylight. He states that they will have either an honourable victory or no victory at all. At the same time, he expresses his worry that posterity would read that he achieved his success by guile.[100] Thus, the king acts according to the most noble principles of chivalry. For a long time, researchers into medieval warfare assumed that it was impossible for medieval knights to fight using surprise or attack by stealth, but more recently it has been demonstrated that guerrilla campaigns and raids were an important part of the repertoire to defeat the enemy.[101] However, alongside the reality of war there existed codes of chivalry expressed in romantic literature that promoted fair fights. In these accounts, for true knights killing somebody by stealth or in an underhand manner was not how wars should be fought.

The stories of Alexander's military aggression, courage, strength and endurance confirmed the idea of military masculinity as an expression of hegemonic masculinity. The portraitures of Alexander fighting in the forefront of the action and seeking duels affirmed the idea of competitive masculinity. In warfare males compete for the status of brave warrior. According to the

masculine ideal Alexander's figure represents, the exemplary man is always ready to encounter his enemies: he does not fear the contest or refuse an opportunity to show his martial virtues. It is, however, interesting that the difference between aristocratic courage and the courage of ordinary soldiers seems to be absent in the Alexander tradition. In his case, these two are alike in attitude which makes the king an exceptional masculine example. The idealised accounts of the king's physical capacity and the military training he had completed reminded the male upper-class audience of the importance to maintain their physical strength and fitness. As was shown in Chapter 2, Alexander was depicted as a long-haired lionlike king, which denoted his martial courage. The stories of his fighting style showed that his martial valour matched this leonine appearance. Even though his demonstration of martial valour resembled the actions of epic heroes more than Roman emperors, the emperors continued to promote the ideal of warrior-emperor as an important aspect of their public image. During the Roman principate emperors did not normally fight in the forefront of the action, but they still accompanied their armies and presented themselves in the visual art as idealised commanders of the army. By contrast, for the medieval upper-class the image of the warrior-king was often one closely related to a reality in which kings often fought alongside their knights.

The contested martial masculinity

Not every ancient passage concerning Alexander's martial fervour is merely eulogistic. On some occasions writers leave open the question as to whether the king's lust for war goes too far, particularly when the Roman authors wrote about Alexander's recklessness on the battlefield and his fame as a reckless commander. The authors might pose the question: "Is dying on the battlefield due to reckless aggression a mark of manliness, when this would risk the future of the whole army?" In the passages examined in this subchapter, Alexander's masculinity is contested hypermasculinity.

In ancient warfare assaults on the walls during sieges were dangerous and those courageous soldiers who participated in them were often killed. It is striking that Alexander, although a monarch, is presented as having participated personally in hazardous siege assaults and almost being killed as a result. In these passages the king is taking a greater risk than being in the forefront of open battle (see above). The king's recklessness is particularly stressed in connection with the siege of Malli citadel at Multan in 326 BCE. This incident appears in the works of all five major Alexander historians, Curtius, Diodorus, Plutarch, Arrian and Justin.[102]

According to the traditional storyline, Alexander becomes impatient with the prolonged siege, so he seizes a ladder and climbs up to the top of the wall. Then he climbs over the parapet and jumps down. In the narratives, Alexander is determined to achieve an honourable death and in the following hand-to-hand fight he receives a near-fatal wound. In the aftermath,

Macedonian soldiers are in panic as they fear they have lost their warrior-king. This possible setback gives them the needed motivation to capture the city and slaughter its inhabitants as revenge.[103]

Although Curtius and Arrian praise Alexander's courage fulsomely, even their narratives also have a critical tone. In Curtius, Alexander's decision to grab the ladder surprised everybody; it was an *inaudita* ("unheard of," "strange") deed. According to Curtius it added to the king's *fama temeritatis* ("reputation for being reckless and rash"), rather than contributing to his *gloria*.[104] In another passage of his work, Curtius writes that Alexander's opponents were aware of the king's reckless behaviour in commanding his troops. In Curtius' version of Darius' speech addressed to the Persian troops before the Battle of Gaugamela, the Persian king states that Alexander's style of fighting does not derive from manliness/valour (*virtus*) but from rashness (*temeritas*).[105]

Arrian, along the same lines as Curtius, emphasises that Alexander's fellow-soldiers were terrified and surprised by their king's decision to scale the wall and leap into the city. Even though Arrian's account has a heroic tone, and possibly stylistic loans from Homer, the account includes a critical element.[106] Arrian writes that the Macedonian soldiers feared their king "should come to harm by his thoughtless daring."[107] Arrian's interpretation reflects his firm belief in Roman military thinking. In the Roman army, discipline (*disciplina*) was the most important virtue, and every manoeuvre was expected to be controlled. The Roman attitude to warfare becomes even clearer in Arrian's next passage:

> Nearchus tells us that he was pained by some of his friends who blamed him for running a personal risk in advance of his army; this, they said, was a soldier's part, not a commander's. My own idea is that Alexander was irritated with these remarks because he knew that they were true and that he had laid himself open to this censure. And yet his rage in battle and passion for glory made him like men overcome by any other form of pleasure, and he was not strong-minded enough to keep out of dangers.[108]

Lacking discipline and fighting as an ordinary soldier instead of a commander endangers the whole army, and this was not the Roman way. In this passage, even Alexander's subjects are reminding him of this principle: it is the ordinary soldiers who participate in the assaults during sieges, not their commanders. In assaults in sieges, the man who pushed his way onto the ladder first may have been the bravest but was also likely to be the first to get killed. Roman generals and emperors did not lead siege assaults as Alexander is said to have done in Tyre, Gaza and the Mallian fortress (one may suspect that Alexander is unlikely to have done this in reality, even if he was somewhat reckless!).[109] In the Roman system, the general or emperor usually observed as his soldiers risked their lives, but in Alexander's case his

soldiers watch while he risks his life, urging them on by example.[110] In this sense, Alexander is an exception, acting against the common rules of war; he presents his own form of masculinity – hypermasculinity.

The passage also has implications for Alexander's masculine self-control: according to Arrian, he could master himself in relation to food, sex and material wealth but could not control his passion for war. In Arrian, it seems that lust for war is a less unmanly trait than those other pleasures that are common among males, so it does need to be controlled in the same way. However, according to him, even on the battlefield one must show considerable self-control and not fight too enthusiastically. In the passage above, Arrian manages to maintain his view of Alexander as an ideal commander and an ideal man. Arrian writes that Alexander was annoyed by his soldiers' remarks since he recognised that these remarks were true and that he had deserved his friends' criticism. Even though Alexander acted foolishly and failed to maintain the ideal of masculine self-control in this occasion, in Arrian the king's willingness to admit his errors redresses any doubts that he is an exemplary man. As an ideal commander and ideal man, Alexander understood that he had not acted wisely and was eager to learn from his mistakes.[111]

The theme of Alexander's *temeritas* (recklessness or foolhardiness) as a negative unmasculine feature appears in the works of Livy and Tacitus. These two authors compare the king's alleged military capacity to Roman concepts of martial courage and military sense. In Livy's narrative, Alexander not only exposed himself to many dangers (*pericula*) but actively sought them. However, Livy reminds us that Roman generals would not endanger the state (*publicus*) by seeking personal glory in battle in a foolhardy manner but instead consider the common good. When describing the character of Germanicus, Tacitus in his *Annale*s refers to well-known aspects of Alexander's reckless behavior. Tacitus states that Germanicus was as good a fighter and warrior in the hand-to-hand fight as Alexander, but he was not prone to foolhardiness (*temeritas*). Here, Alexander's military virtue – his reckless courage – is presented as unnecessarily risky and potentially detrimental. Tacitus suggests that the ideal of self-controlled masculinity must be upheld in the thick of battle as in all other spheres of life.[112]

How does the critical view of Alexander's *temeritas* as hypermasculinity correlate with the ideology of war in the Roman world? Exposing oneself to dangers and even sacrificing your life during a battle and dying for one's fatherland (*patria*) was desirable for Roman upper-class males. Among the venerated heroes of the republic there was Publius Horatius Cocles, an officer in the army of the early Roman Republic, who supposedly defended the Pons Sublicius against the invading army of the Etruscan King Lars Porsena. Also, commanders like Claudius Marcellus, Cossus and Romulus, not to mention Scipio Aemilianus and the young Antony, were said to have led assaults on fortifications. As noted above, at the same time the Roman military system underlined military discipline (*disciplina*) and the individual's duty as part of

the collective; the glory of Rome came before pursuit of personal glory. In the Roman literary tradition, there are republican commanders whose rashness is strongly criticised. For instance, Livy criticises Marcus Camillus and L. Furius (in 381 BCE), Claudius Marcellus Fabius Verrucosus and Minucius (in 217 BCE), who by their recklessness and pursuit of personal glory caused losses to the Roman army. According to the Roman historians, *temeritas* could negate *virtus* among the ranks of both the Romans and their Gallic opponents.[113] The Roman sources suggest that Alexander's hypermasculine fervour for war and martial glory, which generated recklessness, challenged the basic concepts of Roman warfare and the role of the commander in a battle. In the big picture even in war man had to display self-control over his emotions and fight on a way that benefitted his companions the most. The Romans thus had a mixed view of Alexander's martial valour: even though they widely admired Alexander for his exceptional bravery on the battlefield and fighting skills, his extreme fervour for war and gaining personal glory was sometimes considered too extreme.

As presented in the previous subchapters, Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian, Justin and the authors of the *AR* portray Alexander as an ideal warrior-monarch inspiring men to greatness. Even though some of these writers could include critical remarks on the king's reckless fighting style or Macedonian violence against unarmed civilians, their image of Macedonian imperialism is generally highly positive.[114] However, an opposite and critical image of Alexander as a military figure can be found in the writings of some Stoic and early Christian authors, as will be shown below.[115]

Seneca the Younger presents Alexander's military deeds in a critical light and as the antithesis of how an ideal man would act. In his *Epistles* (94th), Seneca writes about Alexander, Pompey, Julius Caesar and Marius – famous military men – as negative examples of lust for glory (*ambitio*). Alexander is listed among many men who, after defeating their enemies were themselves conquered by their passions (*cupido*). According to Seneca, the king, driven by desire for honour and cruelty, was not sound in mind (*sanus*). In other words, the victorious campaigns he undertook and the martial courage he displayed are not demonstrations of masculine dominance but lack of self-control. Regarding controlling one's anger, for Seneca the Macedonian king offers one of the worst examples for the Roman upper class and those intending to follow the Stoic path.[116] In Seneca's writings the exemplary man is not a military leader but a *sapiens* ("wise sage") who has reached the desired ideal condition of self and attitude to secondary strivings. This sage follows the path of illustrious philosophers of the past, not illustrious warlords. Yet, interestingly, Seneca could still use militarised metaphors when he wrote about the internal "battles" that a philosophically oriented man should fight. For example, in one his *Epistles* (51st) he proclaims that "true men" must serve as soldiers in the ongoing battle against harmful passions.[117] Even though Seneca admires life of a soldier and uses it as suitable metaphor, for him Alexander's extreme and endless fervour for war was nonetheless hazardous.

Seneca's nephew Lucan also wrote critically on Alexander's imperialism and the king's position as a desired model of martial masculinity. Lucan's epic *On the civil war* handles the king's expedition from the standpoint of mankind and the Earth. Lucan describes Alexander as a "pestilence on the Earth" (*terrarum fatale malum*) who polluted the distant rivers of the Euphrates and the Ganges with Persian and Indian blood. For him, Alexander's wars symbolise destruction and suffering. Alexander's actions are presented as a dangerous model for any Roman wannabe-Alexanders who might fantasize about military conquests. Like Seneca, Lucan indicates that Alexander was conquered by his own injurious passions. The king's endless desire for military conquest proves that Alexander failed to master his lust for glory and recognition (*gloria*).[118] The idea that Roman upper-class men should serve the state and its glory was commonplace, while passion, or strong desire for personal glory by military deeds, did not belong to the Roman masculine ideal that Seneca and Lucan represented.[119]

The literary tradition of Alexander's encounter with Diogenes the Cynic and the Indian wise men appears in the works of both Alexander historians and philosophical treatises. In Plutarch and Arrian the king's willingness to discuss with these philosophers and sages stressed Alexander's education and noble nature; the ideal of the platonic philosopher-king. However, in the philosophical treatises the comparisons drawn between Alexander and the philosophers pinpointed two divergent masculine ideals and lifestyles. Diogenes and the Indian sages concentrated on perfection and progress, while Alexander's lifestyle – as a prototype king – focused on pursuing material wealth and worldly power.[120] Seneca in his *On Benefits* compares Alexander and Diogenes and states that the latter was beyond all passions (*cupiditas*) and was much richer than the Macedonian king for all the latter's possession of ultimate power.[121]

On the races of India and the Brahmans, usually thought to be composed by Palladius, bishop of Helenopolis (363–431), talks about the dialogue between Alexander and the Indian Brahmans/gymnosophists who live a naked ascetic lifestyle outside cities and without the material pursuits of the ordinary men.[122] In this work, the idealised Brahmans challenge Alexander's lifestyle as devoted to military conquest and try to teach him the principles of true manliness. When it comes to warfare their leader Dandamis addresses Alexander as follows:

> There is no manliness [*andreíā*] in killing men; it is the action of a bandit. True manliness [*andreíā*] consists in fighting the changes of climate with the naked body, removing the lusts of the belly, and conquering the warfare within, rather than being overcome by desire and the search for glory, wealth, and pleasure. These, Alexander, are what you must first conquer, these you must kill.[123]

The author of the work uses Dandamis as his spokesman on manifestations of philosophical masculinity. The work not only takes a critical view of the martial masculinity that Alexander's figure represented but promotes

a philosophical version of ideal manhood as well. The used word *andreíā* is close to *aretḗ,* often meaning displaying manly courage in battle and success in individual combat. Dandamis attacks Alexander's alleged views on what it is to be a real man and what the basic principles of manliness are. While it is true that in the Greek philosophical texts *andreíā* could be displayed not only on the battlefield but also in words and in moderation as well as endurance, philosophical texts do not generally undermine or question the traditional way of demonstrating *andreíā* in warfare, as is done in the passage above.[124]

By describing Alexander and his military pursuit as the work of a bandit the author impugns the validity of Alexander's alleged *andreíā* and the means to demonstrate one's manliness in warfare.[125] As stated above, bandits were regarded as unmasculine figures who were prone to many vices and harmful desires, so the reference to them emasculates the king as hero. Dandamis insists on redefining the concept of displaying *andreíā* and becoming a true man. Conquering foes and fighting battles is nothing compared to the battle that man must wage against his desires and vain pursuits. Here, the author uses military metaphors but makes clear that normal warfare is nothing compared to the internal battle that wise men wage daily. Dandamis mentions searching for *dóksa* as something that the true man should reject. The term can be translated as good repute, honour and glory in the eyes of contemporaries or posterity. This statement is contrary to the value system appearing in Arrian, Diodorus, Plutarch, Curtius and Justin, where becoming "a good man" and acquiring *dóksa* denotes displaying valour on the battlefield. *On the races of India and the Brahmans* presents the true manly man in the guise of a philosopher/ascetic who devotes his life to rejecting his passions and strivings. For the sage becoming "a good man" is submission to the ascetic and philosophical lifestyle.[126]

The work may reflect Christian thinking more than simple cynicism or even Indian philosophy. The presentation of the Brahmans and Dandamis as their spokesman corresponds to an alternative ideal of masculinity that was popular among the desert fathers, Christian ascetics, who eventually formed communities that became the models for the later monasteries.[127] It was part of the literary tradition where the philosopher sage encounters the king and teaches him the truths and proper way of life as well.[128] The pacifist passage questioned the masculine ideal belonging to hegemonic masculinity, which supported the view that men who were good at killing their enemies in war were the most venerated "men of distinction" in society. In contrast, it extolled the philosophical, or monastic lifestyle as significant as the existing ideal of the soldier's life.

Among the early Christians, the most central masculine ideal appeared in the life of Christ as it was represented in the synoptic gospels. Compared to Alexander, Jesus was clearly an anti-war male figure, as emphasised when he reproaches Peter, who defends him with a sword and cuts off the right ear of the high priest's servant, saying: "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with

the sword."[129] This marginalised pacifist version of masculinity undoubtedly influenced the early Christian view of warfare, which can be identified in Palladius' work as well. However, in the New Testament texts the language of war and aggressive masculinity still appeared as metaphor and references to heavenly armies of angels reminded the audience of the divine punishment for those opposing God's will. According to the Apostle Paul, believers characterised as soldiers fighting with weapons and armour is a metaphorical usage denoting the battle against the evil spirits that attack them.[130] In addition, the authors of the early saints' lives and ecclesiastical historians often presented martyrs and bishops as God's manly warriors. These men and women were willing to face persecution and violent death and endure pain just as courageous soldiers might, albeit passively.[131]

Even though early Christians used martial metaphors in their definitions of Christian masculinity, many of them portray Alexander's martial valour critically, just as their Stoic predecessors had. For example, St. Augustine in the fourth book of *The City of God* famously calls Alexander's reign a typical example of a kingdom based on "bands of robbers" (*latrocinia*). That is to say that according to St. Augustine Alexander's imperialism was not a noble enterprise as warlords work with the same principles as inglorious pirates. Orosius' world history entitled *History against the pagans* offered another grim and extremely negative portraiture of Alexander's campaigns. It presented the Macedonian king as a beastlike tyrant and warlord whose thirst for blood and desire for fresh gore never diminished. In Orosius' account, there is no room for idealising presentation of the Macedonian king fighting valiantly in the front ranks against barbarian hordes: Alexander's battles at Issus, Gaugamela and the Hydaspes river are portrayed as a series of violent scenes demonstrating the horrible destruction that pagan regimes produced. Orosius' work is ideologically loaded, as the aim of the author is to prove that Christianization after the succession of Constantine had profited the Empire and show that during pagan times things were much worse.[132]

In Fulgentius' *On the Ages of the World* Alexander is filled with insatiable greed not content with what he already possesses he is ready to launch a massive military campaign against all the nations of the inhabited world. But the whole campaign has merely brought destruction to all and profit to no one. In the end, Alexander's sudden death reveals the futility of his never-ending imperialistic dreams and the fragility of all man-made projects.[133] The passages of St. Augustine, Orosius and Fulgentius do not recognise Alexander as an exemplary man but instead question his position in the Roman world. Power and dominance displayed by world conquest are not regarded as desirable ambitions for men, whereas it is important for everyone to understand one's limits. The early Christians seem to have attacked the expression of martial masculinity that the Alexander type represented in the cultural memory.

Though the authors attacked the status of Alexander as an exemplary man, this does not mean that they aimed to replace entirely or challenge the

existing ideas of martial masculinity. The authors referred to above obviously saw it as important that Roman legions protected the borders of the Empire and that physically strong and battle-hardened soldiers served in the army. When Christianity became the *vera religio* in the fourth century, it became clear that Christian males had to be soldiers and warriors to defend Christendom. Stewart (2016 a, b) has demonstrated that in Late Antiquity the ideal of martial masculinity and the soldier's life did not disappear but still represented an expression of hegemonic masculinity.[134] Roman emperors – who were now Christians – fighting against the Sassanid Empire could regard Alexander, who campaigned against the Achaemenid Empire, as their precursor, just as their pagan predecessors had regarded him in the wars with both Parthians and Sassanids. In the imperial panegyrics of the Late Empire the Macedonian king was frequently compared with the reigning Emperor as a desirable example of martial masculinity.[135] Rather than replacing the ideal of martial masculinity by presenting Alexander as the extremist representative of military conquest, Stoic and Christian writers like Seneca, Lucan, Palladius and St. Augustine, Orosius or Fulgentius wanted to question the hypermasculine version of militarized masculinity.

The critical interpretation of Alexander's often idealised wars of conquest evidently derived from the rival concepts of manhood that the authors themselves represented. Seneca was a Stoic philosopher and a man of letters, not a military figure. According to his view, or rather the masculine ideal he promoted in his writings, the correct and primary goal for males were philosophical pursuits and self-exploration. In the Roman Empire, there were surely other freeborn upper-class males like him pursuing a philosophical lifestyle. Instead of setting the goal of acquiring a great name for posterity, according to the Stoics a person's primary task was to understand his rightful place in the universe and achieve the desired state of peace of mind/virtue. For philosophers, in the list of exemplary men of the past, the military figures were secondary to great philosophers such as Socrates and Diogenes.

For the desert fathers and bishops of Late Antiquity man's first duty in life was to understand Christian doctrine and receive God's grace. St. Augustine's life after his conversion to Christianity was centered around his duties as bishop and theologian and war was a cosmic battle between God and Satan, while his personal battle was an internal one against sinful thoughts. Even though St. Augustine argued that wars are acceptable if they have a just cause, like punishing the wicked or recovering stolen property, hypermasculine wars of conquest derived from wrong thinking and false value systems were not just.[136] From the perspective of Seneca and Augustine, the eulogising stories of Alexander's wars were a harmful and dangerous masculine phantasy. According to them Alexander's campaign did not serve the common good but derived from selfish and individualistic ambition. In their critical presentations Alexander lacked self-control and therefore the masculine ideal he represented was unmanly and effeminate.

In the Middle Ages, the critical approach to Alexander's wars and martial masculinity was known from 1 Maccabees and Orosius' work and their vernacular translations.[137] Nevertheless, in the versions of the *AR* and medieval epics this critique is not highlighted, sometimes not even mentioned.[138] Instead, the majority of the works glorify Alexander's martial valour and manliness in war. In the Middle Ages, reckless behaviour in warfare was sometimes regarded as dangerous and deriving from the wrong kind of pride.[139] However, the authors of *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* did not include any critique of Alexander's reckless fighting style during sieges or duels.[140]

A critical medieval presentation of Alexander's martial masculinity does however appear in the famous *Divine Comedy* (*Divina Commedia*) composed in the early fourteenth century by the Italian poet, Dante Alighieri. He places Alexander in Circle VII of Hell, where the souls of those who committed sins of violence are tormented. The great centaur explains: "They are tyrants who gave their hands to blood and plunder; here they lament their ruthless crimes. Here is Alexander and cruel Dionysius."[141] In Dante's passage, the pagan monarch Alexander is a tyrant from whose wars all positive connotations have been stripped. The wars of the Macedonian king are merely acts of pillage and unnecessary spilling of blood. Therefore, in the afterlife, Alexander is condemned by God Almighty, as are Dionysius of Syracuse, Attila the Hun and Pyrrhus king of Epirus. Dante used Orosius as his source material and the Orosian view of Alexander's wars has obviously made an impact on the way Dante memorialises Alexander's legacy. Even though in his other works Dante writes positively about the Macedonian world conqueror, the critical treatment of Alexander in *Divina Commedia* represents a view where hypermasculine military fervour is not regarded as desirable but regrettable.[142]

A slayer of beasts provides protection and claims dominance

> I encouraged my soldiers to be brave and not to give up in adversity like women.[143]
>
> –Epistula Alexandri Aristotelem

Alexander's Indian campaign, directed to the ends of the known earth, provided the possibility to add imaginative tales of the people, flora and fauna of India.[144] These tales were particularly exaggerated in the *AR* tradition and in *Epistula Alexandri Aristotelem* ("Alexander's Letter to Aristotle about India," hereafter *Epistula*). What we find from these works is an image of Alexander as an exceptional explorer and seeker of marvels who, with his men, traverses remote lands and unknown places where no one had been before. During this trip into the unknown the Macedonian king and his soldiers encounter terrible beasts, monsters, poisonous serpents and even fire-breathing dragons, and become beast-slayers. As is demonstrated below, these tales were not merely about amusement, as they also construct a certain form of ideal masculinity.[145]

The campaign in unknown lands calls for mental and physical endurance and stamina from the king and his Macedonian troops in various versions of the *AR* and in the *Epistula*. In these texts, Alexander tells of the wonders of India – its strange people and animals, miraculous phenomena and terrible beasts – in the first-person to his former tutor Aristotle. In this imaginative description, Alexander is the central hero of the story, whose masculine strength becomes more and more evident during the journey. As a mentally tough leader and paragon of relentless courage, Alexander cares for the safety of his men and is willing to share their hardships, like severe thirst in the waterless desert. For example, in the Latin version of the *Epistula*, possibly composed in the seventh century, the king states: "I was extremely distressed, and more concerned about my people than about myself."[146] All his thirsty soldiers were astonished that they had to travel fully armed when there was no enemy sight. But Alexander knew the region was full of beasts and serpents. He is acting like a fatherly figure to his troops.[147]

When various beasts encounter Alexander's expedition by accident, they attack them and a fierce primal struggle between humans and monsters takes place.[148] One of the beasts Alexander and his men encounter in the *AR* tradition and in the *Epistula* is a three-horned beast bigger than an elephant with the head of a horse. This beast is called an *Odontotyrannus* ("tooth-tyrant") and it kills 36 soldiers and injures 52.[149] The gendered definition of martial masculinity and courage is given by Alexander after they had managed to kill it. In the quotation above taken from the Latin version of the *Epistula*, Alexander states to Aristotle that he encouraged his soldiers to be brave and not to give up in adversity like women (*ut feminae*). Once again, martial courage is defined as a quality appearing solely among true males, thus excluding women and effeminate males from the masculine group. The fear of being regarded as womanlike (*muliebris*) is presented as an incitement to conquer their fears and take up the fight. Fleeing and not living according to masculine expectations laid upon the male is the worst that can happen. Thus, the passage enforces hegemonic masculinity by marginalising unmartial men.

Different versions of the *AR* and *Epistula* all portray the epic scene where huge snakes and serpents of different colour and shape come in the night seeking water and attack Alexander's expedition. The bigger and more terrible the monsters, the more valiant the male hero. Alexander and his men travelling in India represent "us" in contrast to the strange and inferior oriental world depicted as "the Other." The ugliness and deformation of the beasts and monsters symbolise chaos, while the male hero represents the beauty and order of civilisation.[150]

The narrative of the fight against the variously coloured and shaped snakes is particularly detailed in the *Historia de Preliis* (J1). When serpents and snakes of amazing size advance the Macedonian army is terror-struck, thinking they are going to die. But in contrast to his troops, Alexander is above all fear and encourages his men by saying: "Do not allow your hearts to be troubled but do exactly what you see me do."[151] The exemplary leader comforts

his men and despite the danger offers a model of courage for his companions. In *Historia de Preliis,* Alexander seizes his spear and shield and starts to fight the serpents and snakes. When the troops see their king in action, they are greatly comforted and begin to fight as courageously as their king. In the ensuing struggle, the serpents are killed with spears and fire. In this dreadful moment, the true quality of a man is revealed. True men are fearless and ready to fight as a collective group against the terrible enemy instead of fleeing. The fight of Alexander and his men against the different beasts was also often illustrated in the medieval codices as it is shown in Figure 4.3.

Along with tales of *Odontotyrannus* and snakes with horns on their heads, in the Syriac *AR*, Alexander has to face a terrible god in the form of a dragon who dwells deep in the mountains of Indian Prasiake. According to the tale, the dragon terrifies the local people and forces them to bring two oxen every day, sometimes killing the local inhabitants too. Alexander and his men manage to kill the dragon by a plot: the king offers the beast two skinned oxen filled with gypsum and pitch. After swallowing them the dragon falls and Alexander orders a smith's bellows and balls of brass to be thrown into the dragon's mouth. The dragon is killed and the inhabitants of the mountain

Figure 4.3 Alexander fighting and his men battling assorted beasts is a popular theme in the medieval illustrated codices of *AR*. This one is from *Le livre et la vraye hystoire du bon roy Alixandre*, a parchment codex composed in Old French and dated to 1420–1425. In the manuscript illustration Alexander, recognisable from his crown and decorated armour, fights in the front rank with his men. The king is thrusting his spear into the neck of the three-horned beast while the soldiers watch him in action. Alexander's fearlessness even when facing the most formidable beast emphasises his martial valour and manly quality. © British Library Board Royal MS 20 B f.49v

are liberated from its terrible reign. Even though we do not find this beast-slaying tale in other versions of the *AR*, this tale of the dragon is included in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh,* where Sekandar and his men must have to encounter the fire-breathing dragon if they want to travel the mountainside path. According to the storyline, by exposing himself to dangers and overcoming all his fears, the masculine man becomes the worshipped and venerated hero.[152]

In these tales mentioned above, the exemplary man is never helpless but always finds a way to solve whatever problem or obstacle is put in his path. Anyone or anything threatening the existing order must be wiped out. As a mighty male hero Alexander may have feelings of fear but he is not helpless as the locals are, instead being ready to devise some method of destroying the terrorizers of humans. Instead of raw power Alexander successfully uses his wits. Alexander's ability to organise his men to fight against sudden threats also receives favourable treatment. The leader of the group of warriors must be the bravest as well as the smartest. All these tales of Alexander and his soldiers as beast-slayers promote an image of a squad of male warriors working together successfully as a group. They underline the importance of discipline which is an important element of training for warfare. In battle, men must cooperate and follow the orders of their commander.

According to one legend, Alexander prevented the advance of the horrible and disgusting Unclean nations of Magog and Gog by building an iron gate or wall close to the Caspian Sea. As far as we know, Syriac Christians of the seventh century combined Alexander's legend with the Apocalyptic vision of the Unclean Nations.[153] The most detailed version of the apocalyptic vision can be found from *The Apocalypse* attributed to Pseudo-Methodius and *The Syriac Alexander Poem* of Jacob of Sarug. In *The Apocalypse,* composed in the late seventh century, Alexander arrives in the country of the Sun, where he sees unclean and ugly nations cooped up in the extremities of the north. These monstrous races eat snakes, dogs, mice, cats, flies, corpses of animals and humans and human embryos – all the taboo flesh-foods for contemporary Europeans. When Alexander sees their unclean habits, it disgusts him. In the eyes of Alexander what these unclean nations do is hateful and lawless. He fears they would pollute the whole earth and reach the Holy Land. He prays to God and with his help prepares brass gates covered with asyncite, which would burn everyone hoping to pass through them.[154]

As in the other beast-slayer tales above, Alexander is the male hero protecting the human community from the terrible menace created by the monstrous and disgusting Unclean Nations. The literary tradition defines the man's role as the defender of the home/domestic sphere and civilisation. What is new, however are the explicit connotations of Christian ideology: the true male hero seeks God's favour and carries out his will. It is manly to perform God's plan and defend the values and norms of the community. The Islamized version of the story is the *Quran*'s 18th Sura, describing the deeds of *Dhul-Qarnayn*. As a protector and tool of God Alexander preserves the world from these monstrous races.

In the *Le Roman de toute chevalerie,* composed by Thomas of Kent in the twelfth century, the Christian influence on his account of the epic battle between the king and different monsters and monstrous races is explicit.[155] Compared to other versions of the *AR,* when describing the battle against two-headed snakes Thomas adds that Alexander fought side by side with his men with the aid of God, and when the battle finally ends victoriously he thanks God.[156] In *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* there are also lengthy passages where Alexander and his valiant knights fight against the terrible and disgusting unclean nations/monstrous races of Magog and Gog with the mandate of God as the protectors of the civilised world. Here, the crusade ideology is clearly identifiable as these nations are presented as descendants of Nimrud and identified as Turks.[157] Alexander encourages his men not to fear and to kill mercilessly these man-flesh eating monstrous races, described as infidels, specks of dirt and the scum of the human race, menacing the existence of the whole of humanity. In the Middle Ages, it was disputed whether some of the monstrous races were humans (that is, descended from Adam) or monsters. The medieval concept of monsters implied wonder, something contrary to nature, which was there for a purpose. From Thomas' passage it is difficult to determine whether Thomas considers the races of Magog and Gog as disgusting humans or as monsters, or whether he is not sure or not concerned which they were. Relevant for this study is that Alexander discusses with his men the total destruction of the races, a scheme portrayed as a pre-emptive strike to secure the well-being of the inhabited world in the future. In the aftermath of his victory, Alexander gives credit to the Christian God, so emphasising that the struggle against the monstrous races is a holy war. The community has defined what is proper and the task of the masculine man is to ruthlessly eliminate evil creatures. The fear that the impurity represented by these monstruous races will somehow spread and pollute the civilised community is apparent.[158]

The stories of Alexander as a slayer of monsters of different size and his enclosure of the peoples of Gog and Magog have forebears in the myths of the ancient Near East and the Classical world. From ancient Mesopotamia to the Middle Ages, the illustrious masculine hero-warrior is presented as a slayer of beasts. Male heroes like Gilgamesh, Heracles, Odysseus, Perseus, Lugh (Irish), Beowulf, St George and Arthur and his knights, all encounter and kill monsters and powerful wild beasts. The hero-figure Gilgamesh slays the monstrous Humbaba with the help of Shamash, as related in tablet V of the Epic of *Gilgamesh*. Since Humbaba lives in the Forest of Cedar, Gilgamesh must travel far with his friend Enkidu to encounter this terrible monster, who guards the forest. Similarly, in the *AR* tradition and the *Epistula* the monsters dwell beyond the boundaries of the civilised world. The imaginative accounts of Alexander and his troops invading the mysterious east construct an image of a male hero resembling Odysseus, who also helped his men when they underwent various trials as they faced monsters and witches.[159]

With the Christianization of Europe the old stories of dragon and beast slayers were often linked to the epic apocalyptic battle between God and Satan. In the apocalyptic imagery of the Book of Revelation (12:7–9, 20:1–2), the Devil is presented as the fierce dragon, overcome by Archangel Michael. St. George, patron saint of knights, kills a dragon and saves the villagers from the horrible beast. Christians adapted the "pagan" stories of beast-slayers as reflectors of the epic struggle between cosmic order and chaos to reflect their own cosmic struggle between good and evil.[160] In the tales of the beast-slayer King Alexander resembles previous heroes of old – Gilgamesh, Odysseus and Heracles – protecting the community and showing his worth. In the Christian imaginary the image of Alexander as a victorious beast-slayer could function as a foretaste of what was to come – the apocalyptic victory of God over the forces of evil. He is presented as a "purifier" of the earth who wipes out those beings who threaten the Christian community and undermine the order that God requires among humans.

In the beast-slayer stories, Alexander exerts control over himself and over the monsters he kills. He does not panic but handles every dangerous situation and claims dominance within the community. These narratives fit well with the masculine ideal of dominance by creating a requirement that the best and most valiant male warrior must defend the civilised world of men and use his exceptional skills for the profit of the (in this case, Christian) community. The idealised male-hero defends his own people and organises resistance against any external threat to them. He does not flee from battle, but he is willing to risk his life for the sake of the community so that it can continue its normal life. An important function of the medieval tales of the "superhero" Alexander, as with the superheroes of today's media, was obviously to entertain the audience and function as a diversion from mundane reality, but they also reflected contemporary morality and religiosity, and not least attitudes to masculinity and the requirement for it in a true man and leader. In the cases when the writers were clerics, we can safely assume that there was a didactic element in the tales.

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When approaching warfare from the gender perspective, wars and conquest in the ancient and medieval societies had the prominent function that they provided men with an opportunity to perform their masculinity by competing with other men and gaining public recognition from the male warrior community. How you fight on the battlefield or face the other rigours of campaigning defines your status as a man. In the military discourse, the scenario for males was imperative: either you demonstrate your manliness by fighting and not succumbing to fear in the thick of battle, or you are emasculated. The status of Alexander as the foremost warrior-monarch did not appear from nowhere. The historical Alexander evidently loved war and is likely to have showed remarkable martial courage

during the campaign. But we cannot be sure which of the stories of his martial valour were exaggerated or even invented by the Hellenistic and Roman authors. However, we are left in no doubt that for these authors Alexander – as a literary construction – symbolised the supreme paradigm of the warrior-monarch.

The Greco-Roman and medieval narratives concerning Alexander are often odes to war and martial performance. In the grand story, Alexander becomes a man through his invincibility in war, not just by taking part in battle but by excelling on the battlefield. His example demonstrates that the position of king must be reinforced by displaying martial valour. In the narratives, Alexander demonstrates his masculine virility by fighting in the forefront of battles and taking part in duels. He not only fulfils but even surpasses the social expectations of the warrior. By imitating his example, the common Macedonian soldiers too can become real men.

Most of the passages analysed in this chapter reflect the idea that man's involvement in wars serves the community and common good. Conversely, according to the premodern view of hegemonic masculinity, refusal to serve in the army and fight in wars would emasculate a man. In the gendered rhetoric of martial masculinity there is a fear of losing one's position as a man, excluding oneself from the male fraternity of one's society and ending up as an effeminate "betrayer" of the community. Alexander was larger than life in his legend and it idealised warfare as something desirable for society; for a man it was not a threat, but an opportunity. For many ancient and medieval upper-class men, his story represented an entertaining martial manly fantasy. But the stories of his battles and sieges were also a manual of warfare. By the way, Alexander commanded his troops and showed his personal courage on the battlefield authors thought they could teach their audience the basics of warfare, and most of all how to behave in war.

This chapter on martial masculinity crystallises essential expressions of hegemonic masculinity in the Greco-Roman and Medieval societies. The narratives of Alexander as the ultimate war hero and first-class warrior promoted the idea of dominance as a masculine ideal. In the battle-narratives power and leading one's troops in itself is masculine and using violence and aggression is usually presented as a desirable expression of that dominance. It is desirable and masculine to demonstrate your power by using extreme violence against all enemies you have to face.

Narratives of Alexander's wars also promote an ideal of self-controlled masculinity. Men are courageous on the battlefield if they can control their fears and endure pain or other hardships that campaigning might bring. The famous Alexander mosaic conveys this message: true men such as Alexander fight valiantly, while unmanly cowards such as Darius flee. The stories of Alexander and his men as beast-slayers represent the same masculine ideal: even in the farthest corners of the known world where one encounters terrible beasts, true men do not let fear overcome them. That the king is willing to suffer thirst and hunger with his men demonstrates

that particularly the ruler of men must display self-mastery and be willing to live the life of a soldier. Likewise, the narratives above reflect the importance of masculine competition as a spur for men to achieve fame and recognition. The desire to rival Achilles, Heracles and Perseus motives Alexander to become an exemplary man. In the texts analysed above, Alexander clearly exceeds average males in war because he aims to surpass his own paragons.

The histories composed by Diodorus, Curtius, Arrian and Plutarch, as well as the various versions of *AR* and medieval epics, mostly marginalise unmartial men. The archetype of the courageous warrior-monarch becomes the standard while males like Darius as well as all soldiers fleeing from the battlefield are emasculated. However, Stoics like Seneca the Younger and early Christian authors like St. Augustine and Orosius questioned the idea of becoming a true man by focusing on aggression in war. Their critical view of Alexander's fervour for war offered a way to question the parameters of Roman martial masculinity and its valuation as the hegemonic and desired version of masculinity. Writers like Seneca or Augustine were aware of the structure of their society: if barbarian hordes attacked Roman armies had to defend the Empire and the army needed soldiers who showed martial virtues. Also, they embraced martial masculinity by using martial language and war metaphors in their works. However, male violence was not *de facto* desirable or valuable to society, and martial virtues should not dominate as goals in life but remain secondary to personal improvement. According to Seneca and Augustine, Alexander's imperialism and his figure as a warmonger did not symbolise the highest expression of manliness but instead a certain failure of manhood set against the ideal of self-controlled masculinity. In their view, following either Stoic doctrines or imitating Christ would achieve and perform true manliness.

Notes

1 Trans. Bernadotte Perrin. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 11.3: εὐθὺς ἦγε διὰ Πυλῶν τὴν δύναμιν, εἰπὼν ὅτι Δημοσθένει παῖδα μὲν αὐτόν, ἕως ἦν ἐν Ἰλλυριοῖς καὶ Τριβαλλοῖς, ἀποκαλοῦντι, μειράκιον δὲ περὶ Θετταλίαν γενόμενον, βούλεται πρὸς τοῖς Ἀθηναίων τείχεσιν ἀνὴρ φανῆναι.

2 Trans. Robin Waterfield. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 47.1: προσέβαλε, λέγων ὡς νῦν μὲν αὐτοὺς ἐνύπνιον τῶν βαρβάρων ὁρώντων, ἂν δὲ μόνον ταράξαντες τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀπίωσιν, ἐπιθησομένων εὐθὺς ὥσπερ γυναιξίν.

3 Trans. Richard Stoneman. *AR* 1.46. 79: ἀρίστων γάρ ἐστιν ἀνδρῶν ἐν ἐλευθέρῳ πεδίῳ μάχεσθαι, γυναικῶν δὲ ἔργον κατακλείεσθαι δίνας τοὺς μέλλοντας.

4 For overviews on the *aemulatio* and *imitatio Alexandri* of Roman generals and emperors, see Hannestad (1993); Isager (1993); Spencer (2002, 15–31). Kühnen (2008); Spencer (2009, 253–267). Hengst (2009, 68–84). For Julius Caesar and his relationship with Alexander, see Green (1978) and on Caligula's imitation of Alexander, see Malloch (2001); on Caracalla's imitation of Alexander, Baharal (1994). For the myth of Alexander and its evolution in the policy of the Hellenistic kings especially, see Goukowsky (1978/1981).

5 Diodorus writes that Agathocles, king of the Syracusans, copied Alexander's strategy (*στρᾰτηγία*) by dismissing his fleet. Diod. Sic. 17.23.1–3. Cf. Ammian. Marc. 21.8.3. Also, modern military experts have studied Alexander's battles and his generalship as part of their training, see Fuller (1958, 306). Cf. Fuller (1958, 281–305); Lonsdale (2007, 1–4, 79, 145).
6 Cf. Plut. *Vit. Dem.* 23. See the note 64 of Chapter 3.
7 Cf. L'Hoir (1992, 80–81) definition of *muliebris* ("womanish") as opposite to *virtus* denoting to lack of courage and cowardliness.
8 I use the terms "war," "warfare" and "military" because I discuss the states of ancient and medieval Europe, which all practiced organised warfare. Yet, we must remember that "military" and "war" implies warfare involving forces organised and trained for fighting as groups; however in premodern societies there was a great deal of violent conflict that doesn't come into this category.
9 Ferguson (2021, 121). The relationship between gender and war in the modern societies is demonstrated in the study of Goldstein (2001). For a presentation of martial masculinity in Assyrian royal imaginary, see Karlsson (2016, 233–240).
10 Hom. *Il.* 6.490–492.
11 Diod. Sic. 17. 84.5. Cf. Hdt. 7.99.1.
12 Cicero, for example, argues that men should be virtuous, since "it is from the word for 'man' (*vir*) that the word virtue (*virtus*) is derived." Cic. *Tusc.* 2.43. In republican Latin *virtus* is rarely attributed to women, undoubtedly because of its etymological affinities to *vir*. McDonnell (2006, 2–3, 6, 161).
13 Van Nortwick (2008, 74–93).
14 Hom. *Il.* 5.529–530; 6.111–112; 8.173–174.
15 For some discussion on militarised masculinity in the Greco-Roman world, see Reeder (2018, 32); Alston (1998); Stewart (2016b, 43–46). Kuefler (2001, 37–44). So far, perhaps the best contribution to the ideology of war in the Classical world has been by Vijgen (2020). His massive monograph gathered evidence on Archaic Greece to Roman Late Antiquity and thus offers a textbook for many relevant passages. However, it gives hardly any attention to gender in the discourse of war. Rubarth (2014, 24–27) reminds us that in the Classical world there were also differences in the level of commitment to martial courage as a masculine ideal within the city-states: in Sparta the commitment was extreme while in Athens the shame of cowardice was a lesser offence.
16 Nicholson (2004, 22).
17 For crusaders combining the virtues of the cleric and knight, see Holt (2010). For involvement of medieval European clergy in warfare and military activities, see Kotecki, Maciejewski and Ott (2018).
18 Cf. Diod. Sic. 17. 24.1; Just. *Epit.* 11.5.6. On the Panhellenistic war rhetoric of Alexander's campaign there are many studies: Flower (2000); Faraguna (2003); Squillace (2010); Kremmydas (2013).
19 For Heracles and Achilles as Alexander's objects of imitation, see pages 32–34, 56 (note 23) of this study. Alexander's fervour for glory is, for example, underlined in the Classical and medieval texts by the anecdote of Alexander visiting the tomb of Achilles and yearning for a poet like Homer to record his deeds. For the uses of the anecdote, see Peltonen (2019a, 150–155). On Homer's work as a model for Arrian, see Liotsakis (2019, 161–224).
20 For battle speeches in history, see Miller (2008).
21 Trans. Pamela Mench. Arr. *an.* 1.14.6: Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ἀναπηδήσας ἐπὶ τὸν ἵππον καὶ τοῖς ἀμφ' αὑτὸν ἐγκελευσάμενος ἔπεσθαί τε καὶ ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς γίγνεσθαι.
22 Thuc. 5.9.9; Lys. 2.25, 27. Dover (1974, 164–165); Loraux (1986, 98–101); Golden (2015, 55).
23 Arr. *an.* 2.10.1–2.

24 Arr. *an*. 2.24.4 (Admetus); 2.10.7 (Seleucus); 4.16.7 (Aristonikos).
25 Arr. *an*. 4.27.3; 5.18.6–5; 5.19.3. Cf. Diod. Sic. 17.89.3. As an exception there is the tradition of the commander of Gaza, who fights valiantly and is captured. According to Curtius in this occasion, exceptionally, Alexander did not respect the *virtus* displayed by his enemy but killed him brutally. Cf. Curt. 4.6.26.
26 Diod. Sic. 17.18.1. 17.21.4.
27 For discussion on whether *ἀρετή* and *ἀνδραγαθία* are synonyms in fifth-century Athens, see Whitehead (1993, 57–61).
28 On Alexander arranging lavish funerals those Macedonians, and Persians that had shown *ἀνδραγαθία* after the Battle of Issus and the Siege of Tyre, see Diod. Sic. 17.40.1; 17.46.6. Diodorus of Sicily lays stress on Alexander's personal valour and he presents the Battle of Granicus as a one-man show.
29 Cf. Diod. Sic. 17.46.2, 6.
30 Also, Plutarch's narrative of the Battle of Granicus is a public display of Alexander's fervour for war and daring before his Persian enemies. Even though Alexander's generals (particularly Parmenion) were against the idea to cross the river immediately and start the assault, the king's daring is rewarded by a great victory. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 16.1–7.
31 Cf. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 58.3. He exhorted other Macedonians to display *ἀνδραγαθία*. When Plutarch characterises the king's desire to reward Greek cities whose habitants had somehow participated in the Persian Wars, he states that the king was a friend and guardian of every form of *ἀρετή* (manliness) and noble deeds. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 34.2.
32 Trans. Robin Waterfield. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 58.3.1: "αὐτὸς δὲ τόλμῃ τὴν τύχην ὑπερβαλέσθαι καὶ τὴν δύναμιν ἀρετῇ φιλοτιμούμενος, οὐδὲν ᾤετο τοῖς θαρροῦσιν ἀνάλωτον οὐδ' ὀχυρὸν εἶναι τοῖς ἀτόλμοις."
33 Turnus, the king of Rutuli, encourages his men by the saying *audentis Fortuna iuvat*. Verg. *Aen*. 10.284. The saying appears also in Ter. *Phorm*. 203.
34 On the list of wounds, see Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 327a-e; 340e-341c. Cf. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 45. 3–4 lists Alexander's wounds. In this essay Plutarch twice lists all the wounds the king received in the battles and sieges. The battle wounds and difficult terrain the king traversed are presented as a demonstration of the king's valour. The question of whether Alexander's success was due to virtue/manliness in war, or due to fortune was a known literary theme. Cf. Billows (2000, 297–298); Peltonen (2019a, 50–52). In Plutarch's *Life* Alexander's greatness was due not the provisions given by *τύχη*, but the way the king exploited the ongoing conditions in a manly way.
35 Curt. 4.14.3–4, 7. In Livy's account Hannibal also incites his soldiers to be *fortes viri* before the Battle of Ticinus, and either to return victorious or not at all. Liv. 21.44.8. Similarly, Emperor Julian exhorts his men during his Persian campaign, see Ammian. Marc. 24.3.4. This is one of the many examples of this "topos." In 1942, during the New Guinea campaign, the Australian general Blamey's exhortation to his subordinates, "Take Buna or don't come back alive!"
36 In the epilogue of the work, Curtius praises Alexander's martial virtues by saying that his *fortitudo* surpassed that of all other kings, see Curt. 10.5.27, 29.
37 Curt. 4.14.6.
38 Curt. 4.16. 31–33.
39 Curt. 4.15.18–19, 31; 4.16.23.
40 L'Hoir (1992, 1–2, 9–10, 13–15, 22–23, 67–69).
41 Cf. Diod. Sic. 15.93.2.
42 Just. *Epit*. 11.13.10.
43 Curt. 3.3.13–14, 17–18, 26–27. Cf. Arr. *an*. 2.7.3–5; Vijgen (2020, 229–230).
44 Cf. Olson (2017, 140–144).
45 Liv. 9.40.1–7. Cf. Plut. *Vit. Arist*. 16.4; Amm. Marc. 22.4.7–8.

46 Nawotka (2017, 175) suggest that in the *AR* Battle of Gaugamela has been split into two encounters: the battle by the Tigris and the battle on the Stranga. For a detailed discussion on the description of Battle of Gaugamela in *AR*, see Nawotka (2018).
47 *AR* 2.16; Jul. Val. 2.16.788–800 (Foubert 2014, 110–111). In the Syriac *AR* Alexander states that one brave Macedonian soldier is better than a hundred Persians. Cf. Syr. *AR* 2.8 (Budge 1889, 75).
48 Chât. *Alex*.1.72–81 (Pritchard 1986, 37–38); *Lib. Alex*. 85.
49 *Kon. Alex*. 450–554 (17).
50 Cf. Syr. *AR* 2.8 (Budge 1889, 75–76).
51 *Lib. Alex*. 55–57, 64, 1339–1340, 1800–1802, 2100. In *Alexandreis* Alexander reads the Book of Daniel and writes an epitaph on it. Chât. *Alex*. 7.421–424 (Pritchard 1986, 173). Cf. Chât. *Alex*. 6.1–5 (Pritchard 1986, 142). For the role of Alexander in the Book of Daniel and his visit to Jerusalem and honourable treatment of the Jewish high priest, see Peltonen (2019a, 181–195); Djurslev (2020, 95–119, 128–140); Amitay (2022, 109–112, 120–122).
52 Chât. *Alex*. 2.498–502 (Pritchard 1986, 73).
53 *Lib. Alex*. 87.
54 This tendency to present Alexander as prefiguring the crusade appears also in the medieval versions of the *AR*, see Keen (1984, 108–109); Cruse (2022).
55 Chât. *Alex*. 2.457–461 (Pritchard 1986, 71–72). *Lib. Alex*. 968.
56 Trans. Pritchard, Telfryn, (Pritchard 1992, 73) *Hist. de prel.* 3.78.
57 Lafferty (2011, 178). For the possibility that the author of the *Libro* belonged to the clergy, perhaps of low standing, see Such and Rabone (2009, 7–10).
58 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 32.6. See also the anecdote of Alexander abandons his horse and continues foot with few men and kills with his dagger two Arabs during the siege of Tyre. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 24.8.
59 Vijgen (2020, 83–84, 172).
60 Cf. Amm. Marc. 23.6.80; 25.1.18. Cf. Peltonen and Rantala (2022, 147–148).
61 Trans. Robin Waterfield. Diod. Sic. 17.46.2: τῆς ἰδίας ἀνδραγαθίας τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις Μακεδόσιν ἀκολουθεῖν προσέταξεν, αὐτὸς δὲ καθηγούμενος τῶν εἰς χεῖρας βιαζομένων τοὺς μὲν τῷ δόρατι, τοὺς δὲ τῇ μαχαίρᾳ τύπτων ἀπέκτεινεν, ἐνίους δ' αὐτῇ τῇ περιφερείᾳ τῆς ἀσπίδος ἀνατρέπων. For the Curtius eulogising account of Alexander's ability to fight in the forefront against the Tyrians, see Curt. 4.4.10–11.
62 Arr. *an*. 5.13.2–4.
63 Cf. Diod. Sic. 17.19.6; 17.21.4 where Alexander leads his troops in the front. For the king's *ἀνδραγαθία*, see Diod. Sic. 17.24.3–4; 26.4 (Halicarnassus) Cf. Curt. 7.6.20–23; 7.7.5–8. Even wounds do not prevent him from continuing to fight and leading his troops until he loses consciousness.
64 Van Nortwick (2008, 74–75); Vijgen (2020, 68–69, 395). On single combats in Republican Rome, see Oakley (1985). In republican Rome one of the highest military honors, *spolia opima*, was offered by a commander who had killed the enemy leader in combat. Cf. Plut. *Vit. Marc*. 7. In his study of duels in Plutarch's works, Zaccarini (2019) has identified Homeric models.
65 Cf. Polyb. 12.22.2: Lucian. *Hist. Conscr*. 12; Lucian. *Nav*. 37.
66 Plutarch and Arrian name the two satraps as Mithridates and Rhoesaces, while Diodorus mentions Spithrobates and Rhosaces. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 16.4–5; Arr. *an*. 1.15.3–8; Diod. Sic. 17.20.1–7.
67 The theme of the royal duel between Alexander and Darius most likely already existed in the contemporary histories of Callisthenes, see Polyb. 12.22.2. Cf. Plutarch's comments that one of his sources, Chares, wrote that Alexander and Darius did actually fight hand – to hand. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 20.5. For a discussion of the royal duel between Darius and Alexander, see Briant (2015, 258–261).

68 Diod. Sic. 17.33.5; Curt. 3.11.7; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 20.5. Plutarch also gives the impression that at the Battle of Gaugamela Alexander sought Darius on the battlefield. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 33.3–5. In a general sense (that is, Alexander and his companion cavalry aiming for the Persian king's position) this is possible, as launching the main attack towards the position of the enemy commander was a well-known method of seeking victory. Possibly this was exaggerated into Alexander himself seeking Darius personally.
69 Diod. Sic. 17.34.6; Curt. 3.11.11 (Issus). Curt. 4.15.30–32 Plut. Vit. Alex. 33.5–6 (Gaugamela).
70 Arr. *an*. 2.11.5–6.
71 Vijgen (2020, 160–161). Cf. Rubarth (2014, 25–26).
72 According to Arrian, Darius saw terrors all around him and was the first to flee the battlefield. In the war narratives of Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch and Justin Darius does not symbolise the abject coward, as he is fighting with his army and flees only after all hope is lost. Nevertheless, he is no match for Alexander's martial manliness. Arr. *an*. 3.14.3; Just. *Epit*. 11.14.3–6. 11.9.9.
73 For the tendency to portray Darius as a coward who fled the battlefield, see Briant (2015, 80–86).
74 Holt (2003, 59, 84) suggests that Aristobulus took the idea of a royal duel between Alexander and Porus that took place at the Hydaspes river from the medallions. Cf. Lucian. *Hist. Conscr*. 12.
75 Curt. 7.4.33–38. Shorter account of the episode can be found from Arr. *an*. 3.28.3. Diod. Sic. 17.83.4–6.
76 Porus fighting valiantly and receives wounds at the Battle of Hydaspes, and as such is a prime example of the brave barbarian. Diod. Sic. 17.88.4–6. Amongst the extremely unmanly figures in the barbarian ranks is Bessus, whose treacherous nature is demonstrated by his decision to betray Darius. He symbolises the failure of self-control as well lack of honour. See the note 11 of Chapter 7. In addition, the Sogdian chieftain Sisimithres is called the most cowardly of all men. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 58.2.
77 Trans. Richard Stoneman (Stoneman 1991, 127). AR. 3.1.
78 *AR* 3.4; Jul. Val. 3.4.156–165 (Foubert 2014, 127–128). In the Armenian and Syriac versions of *AR* Alexander's soldiers were preparing to surrender, as a reaction to this Alexander suggested Porus a duel. Arm. *AR* 217–220 (Wolohojian 1969, 120); Syr. *AR* 3.3–4 (Budge 1889, 91). In the Hebrew *AR* the duel between Alexander and Porus is omitted.
79 Trans. R. Telfryn Pritchard. Chât. *Alex*. 4.579–593 (Pritchard 1986, 117). *Exemplar uirtutis habe formamque gerendi Martis Alexandrum… Exemplo moueat fortes, documenta uigoris Exhibeat quicunque regit*.
80 Chât. *Alex*. 4.11 (Pritchard 1986, 99).
81 Chât. *Alex*. 5.38–75 (Pritchard 1986, 123). For, the fight between Alexander and Geon in *Libro de Alexandre*, see Chapter 2, pages 51–52.
82 Trans. Telfryn Pritchard. Chât. *Alex*. 3.4–6 (Pritchard 1986, 78): *Primus in oppositos pretenta cuspide Persas, Ocius emisso tormenti turbine saxo*.
83 Taylor (2013, 74, 101, 125–126).
84 Leviathan (2013, 35–36).
85 Stewart (2016a, 19–20). For the changing patterns of involvement of the emperors in warfare in late antiquity, see Lee (2007, 21–41). It has been suggested that the death of Julian and Valens in battle influenced the tendency for emperors to avoid combats. Cf. Lee (2007, 35).
86 France (1999, 139–148). For example, Richard I took a lot of risks by sometimes being in the forefront of battle, and in the end was unnecessarily killed in a minor siege because he was allegedly too close to the enemy fortification.

87 Arr. *an*. 3.28.9.
88 Trans. John Yardley. Curt. 7.5.16: *At ille thoracem adhuc indutus nec aut cibo refectus aut potu, qua veniebat exercitus, constitit nec ante curandum corpus recessit*.
89 Curt. 7.3.12–14, 17. According to Diodorus, Alexander exercised boldness (*τόλμη*) and endurance (*καρτερία*) typical of the Macedonians. Diod. Sic. 17.82.6–7.
90 For Alexander historians, the episode is included with comments of praise, Arrian states that the king even though himself badly afflicted by thirst poured it out in the sight of all. Arr. *an*. 6.26.1–3; Curt. 7.5.12; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 42.4–6; Sozom. *Hist. eccl*. pref. 1.13–15. Arrian states that his sources gave different versions of the place where it occurred.
91 Trans. P. A. Brunt. Arr. *an*. 7.9.9. Curtius states that in the beginning of the campaign the great admiration amongst the Macedonian soldiers towards their king was based on the fact that he wore similar dress to his soldiers and that the king had the energy of a soldier, see Curt. 3.6.19. Also, Hannibal is praised because he wore similar dress to his soldiers, see Liv. 21.4.
92 Liv. 21.4: Ammian. Marc. 17.1.2; 25.4.4. Cf. Tacitus' characterisation of Vespasian, see Tac. *Hist*. 2.5.
93 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 23.1–2.
94 *Itin. Alex*. 6.13–15.
95 Cf. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 56.3–4. He sleeps long at the eve of Gaugamela since he is so sure for the victory. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 14.6–7. Diod. Sic. 17.93.4.
96 Arr. *an*. 3.10.1–4. Curt. 4.13.8–9.
97 Cf. Hopwood (1998, 195–196).
98 Vijgen (2020, 84).
99 Arrian for example writes how Alexander led his troops to kill Illyrians and Mallian who did not had time to arm or take cover by surprise attack, see Arr. *an*. 1.6.9–11; 6.6.1–3. Cf. Plut. Vit. Alex. 59.4; Curt. 7.5.28–35.
100 Chât. *Alex*. 4.353–366 (Pritchard 1986, 110); *Lib. Alex*. 1268–1291 omits the discussion on the honourable fight.
101 Whetham (2009, 1–29).
102 Alexander's reckless fighting style becomes apparent at the Battle of Granicus when he decides to attack with a full cavalry charge even when the enemy has a better position than the Macedonian army. In the following fierce fighting the king almost loses his life. Cf. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 14.4: 16.1–3. Arr. *an*. 1.13.2. Also, during the siege of Gaza the king despises the advice of his seer Aristander of Telmessus and decides to participate in the siege assault and is wounded by an arrow. In his narrative Curtius writes that the king advanced "too incautiously". Curt. 4.6.14, 23–24.
103 Curtius gives the longest and most vivid account of the siege and its aftermath. Curt. 9.5.1–9.6.25; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 63; Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 327b, 341c, 343d-e, 344c-d; Arr. *an*. 6.9.1–6.11.8; Diod. Sic. 17.98–99. Cf. Oros. 3.19.6–10.
104 Curt 9.5.1.
105 Curt. 4.14.18–19. Curtius also discusses *temeritas* and moderation when he writes about two young Macedonian noblemen, Hegesimachus and Nicanor, at the Battle of Hydaspes. Both were known for displaying *audacia* and *temeritas*. According to Curtius showing moderation is difficult if one has previously been successful in war. Curt 8.13.13–15.
106 Muckensturm-Poulle, (2010, 378–380); Liotsakis (2019, 196–197).
107 Arr. *an*. 6.10.2.
108 Trans. P. A. Brunt. Arr. *an*. 6.13.4–5: Νέαρχος δὲ λέγει, ὅτι χαλεποὶ αὐτῷ τῶν φίλων ἐγένοντο ὅσοι ἐκάκιζον, ὅτι αὐτὸς πρὸς τῆς στρατιᾶς κινδυνεύοι· οὐ γὰρ στρατηγοῦ ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ στρατιώτου εἶναι. καί μοι δοκεῖ ἄχθεσθαι Ἀλέξανδρος

τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις, ὅτι ἀληθεῖς τε ὄντας ἐγίγνωσκε καὶ αὐτὸν ὑπαίτιον τῇ ἐπιτιμήσει. καὶ ὅμως ὑπὸ μένους τε τοῦ ἐν ταῖς μάχαις καὶ τοῦ ἔρωτος τῆς δόξης, καθάπερ οἱ ἄλλης τινὸς ἡδονῆς ἐξηττώμενοι, οὐ καρτερὸς ἦν ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν κινδύνων.

109 For Alexander's reckless fighting style during the siege of Gaza, see Curt. 4.6.14, 23–24. For the king fighting in the forefront during the siege of Tyre, see Diod. Sic. 17.46.2.

110 Levithan (2013, 35–36).

111 Arrian also praises the king's ability to admit his errors as a desirable trait in other passages. For example, his display of remorse after he had killed Cleitus is eulogised. Cf. Arr. *an*. 4.9.2, 6.

112 Liv. 9.18.18–19; Tac. *Ann*. 2.73.

113 For Horatius Cocles and other exemplary commanders presented as true Romans, see, Hölkeskamp (2006, 488–489); Roller (2018, 32–63). For the recklessness (*temeritas*) as a negative trait in the Roman historiography, see Carawan (1984/85). McDonnel (2006, 303–305). Cf. Liv. 6.22.6–27; 22.34.2–50.3; 32.5.13. Also, Crassus' death in Carrhae was result of wrong kind of motives.

114 Killing unarmed civilians and felling down your agreement/pact in certain episodes receive critical remarks in Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 59.4; Curt. 7.5.28–35. For the other citations, see the note 23 of Chapter 6. It is matter of question whether the possible critique of Alexander never-ending plans in the mouth of Scythian ambassadors who criticise the king's quest for conquest should be regarded as the author's way to somehow question the Macedonian imperialism. If so, this critique is not done in explicitly. For the words of Scythian ambassadors on Alexander's conquest, see Curt. 7.8.12, 16, 19–20.

115 In Chapter 6, I explore Alexander's self-view and *superbia* in detail, but here the focus is on the critique of imperialism and Alexander's martial masculinity.

116 Cf. Chapter 6 of this book. For other instances of critical estimations of Alexander done by Seneca, see the note 21 of Chapter 6; Celotto (2018, 325–328).

117 Sen. *Ep*. 51.6, 10, 12.

118 Sen. *Ep*. 94.61–68, 71. For a discussion on Lucan's passages concerning Alexander, see Celotto (2018, 329–349). In some Roman Latin literature composed in the Late Republic and Imperial era, Roman intellectuals criticised the motives for building empire like greed and lust for wealth. This cultural milieu can be traced in Seneca's and Lucan's critical passages on Alexander's world conquest. Cf. Vijgen (2020, 325–326, 472–489).

119 Cf. Balmaceda (2017, 22–42).

120 Cf. Peltonen (2019a, 99–107).

121 Sen. *Ben*. 5.4.3–4.

122 The encounter between Alexander and the Brahmans appears also in Plutarch, Arrian and *AR*. Arr. *an*. 7.1.5-7.2.4. These works use the meeting to show that the king was interested in philosophy and that Alexander was a philosopher-king. Arrian states that Alexander commended brahmans and admired their endurance (*καρτερία*). Even though the king loved glory he was not ignorant of philosophical matters. The critical remarks of the brahmans on Alexander's imperialism include promotion of philosophical truths on the limits of men and description of the ascetic lifestyle. However, Arrian and Plutarch seems not to use the brahmans to question Alexander's heroic position. The encounter between Alexander and the gymnosophists appears also in Clem. Al. *Strom*. 6.4.38. For the Brahmans and their meeting with Alexander in the literary tradition, see Stoneman (2008, 91–107). Di Serio (2021).

123 Trans. Richard Stoneman (Stoneman 1994a, 40). Pallad. *De gentibus Indiae* 2.6: πλὴν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνδρεία τὸ φονεύειν ἄνδρας, λῃστοῦ γὰρ ἔργον ἐστίν. ἀνδρεία δέ ἐστι πρὸς τροπὰς ἀέρων μάχεσθαι γυμνῷ τῷ σώματι καὶ γαστρὸς ἐπιθυμίαν

ἀναιρεῖν καὶ τοὺς ἔνδον πολέμους μᾶλλον νικῆσαι καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας μὴ καταγωνίζεσθαι πρὸς τὸ ὀρέγεσθαι δόξης καὶ πλούτου καὶ ἡδονῆς. τούτους νίκησον πρῶτον, Ἀλέξανδρε, τούτους ἀπόκτεινον·

124 For the traditional reference to *ἀνδρεία* as courage in battle in Homer and Greek tragedies, see Bassi (2003, 32–49). For *ἀνδρεία* in the philosophical or political context, see Bassi (2003, 50–54).

125 Describing Alexander and his military pursuit as the work of a bandit appears both in Seneca and in Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in a critical and negative light. Sen. *Q.Nat*. 2. pref. 5. 5.18.10, 6.23.2–4; Sen. *Ben*. 1.13.3. August. *De civ. D*. 4.4. Cf. Curt. 7.8.19 where the Scythian ambassador calls Alexander as bandit.

126 Dandamis encourages Alexander to imitate them and abandon the life of a king, see Pallad. *De gentibus Indiae* 2.57 (Stoneman 1994a, 55–56).

127 Di Serio (2021, 686–689).

128 Peltonen (2019a, 100).

129 The saying appears in this form only in Matt. 25:26, in other gospels Jesus cures the ear of the servant. Cf. Luk. 22:49–51, which emphasises Jesus' capability to repair the damage that male violence and aggression brings to the community.

130 Conway (2008, 9, 82, 160). Conway (2008) and Asikainen (2018) do not approach the masculine ideal of Jesus from the context of martial/military masculinity. By contrast, Reeder (2018) gives attention to the gendered language of war and peace in Luke.

131 Stewart (2016b, 136–140). Cf. Eusebius' criticism towards veneration of martial heroes, see Euseb. *Hist. Eccl*. 5. pref.

132 August. *De civ. D*. 4.4. Oros. 3.16.1–3.20.13.

133 Fulg. *De aet. mund. et hom*. 10.37–40. For a more detailed analysis of the passages of Augustine, Orosius and Fulgentius, see Peltonen (2019a, 198–203). For Orosius' work, see also Djurslev (2020, 154–161).

134 Stewart (2016a, 2016b).

135 Cf. Peltonen (2019a, 64–74).

136 For principles of just war in Augustine, see Atkins (2018, 182–184).

137 The critical treatment of Alexander in the book of Maccabees is dealt in Chapter 6. Orchard (2003, 120–125) shows that the old English translation of Orosius portrays grimmer image of Alexander in many passages compared to the Latin original.

138 Cf. Chapter 6 and its last subchapter.

139 Bennett (2015, 86).

140 For example, their narratives of Alexander's participation in siege warfare does not receive critical remarks, but eulogising comments. However, interestingly in *Lib. Alex*. 2012–2013 the requirement to avoid recklessness in battle is recognised, but such behaviour is not referred to as a trait of Alexander, but of his soldiers.

141 Trans. John D. Sinclair. Dante *Inferno*, 12.103; 14.31–36: *E' son tiranni che dier nel sangue e ne l'aver di piglio. Quivi si piangon li spietati danni; quivi è Alessandro, e Dïonisio fero*.

142 Ruud (2008, 380). Toynbee (1968, 22–24) discusses why it seems obvious that Dante means Alexander the Great not Alexander Pherae in *Divina Commedia*.

143 Trans. Richard Stoneman (1994a, 9): *Habita deinde contione, ut fortes milites essent neve adversis ut feminae casibus deficerent* (*Epist*. K 202, § 23 [63v]).

144 Before the campaign Greeks already had a concept of India as a land of wonders. Macedonian troops undoubtedly saw animals they did not encounter in Greece or nearby regions during the campaign and when the Macedonian troops returned to their homes, they could tell fantastic stories of the people, flora and fauna of India. For example, Diodorus states that in India there were exceptionally long snakes. Cf. Diod. Sic. 17.90.1–3. For the Greek views of India, see Stoneman (2019).

145 For studying gender through the portraits of monsters and monstrous races in the premodern world, see Cohen (1999); Oswald (2010).

146 Trans. Richard Stoneman (1994a, 7): *Quae res me dupliciter torsit. Primo de statu exercitus magis quam de proprio meo sollicitus fui periculo*. [*Epist.* K. 196, or § 14 [58v]

147 In this sense *Epistula* follows the tradition that can be read from Diodorus, Arrian, Curtius and Plutarch.

148 For the reference to Alexander and his men's epic battles against various beasts and monsters in the *AR* tradition, see *AR* α 2.32–34, 36, 3.7–16; Arm. *AR* 224 (Wolohojian 1969, 124, 126–127); Syr. *AR* 3.7 (Budge 1889, 95–99); *Hist. de prel.* 3.86–88, 92–94 (Pritchard 1992, 81–83, 86–87); *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.285–300, 478–479, 485–487 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 390–403, 568–571, 576–579); *Kon. Alex.* 5006–5276 (164–173). For the struggle of Alexander and his men against different beasts in the *Epistula,* see Stoneman (1994a, 8–9) [Latin version]; Orchard (2003, 237–239) [Old English]; Hist. de prel. 3.86–88 (Pritchard 1992, 80–83); Heb. *AR* 87–88 (Kazis 1962, 125–127). In the Latin work *Liber monstrorum* ("The book of monsters") – composed in the late 7th or early eighth century – Alexander is said to have waged war (*bellum*) against the huge snakes dwelling in India (Orchard 2003, 309).

149 In the Armenian *AR* the *Odontotyrannus* is called a unicorn larger than any elephant. Arm. *AR* 224 (Wolohojian 1969, 126).

150 It is not necessary to list here all the different monsters and their variants that Alexander with his men encounter in the *AR* tradition and in versions of *Epistula*. In its Old English version, the *Epistula* adds that there were snakes of fantastic size with two or even three heads. In the list of the monsters killed by the Macedonians *Historia de Preliis* and the Hebrew *AR* include wild men and their wives, each of them possessing six hands. In *Konung Alexander* the king kills women with six hands. *Kon. Alex.* 5136–5142 (168–169). In the same work it is stated that the king fought against *scorpions*, *trul* (referring either to troll, witch, or monster), *draka* (snakes, or dragons) and *orma* (serpents). *Kon. Alex.* 5159, 5162). *Roman d'Alexandre* lists dragons, flying snakes and grimacing demons in the group of beasts wishing to attack Alexander. Cf. Bridges (2018, 121).

151 Trans. Pritchard, Telfryn. *Hist. de prel.* 3.87 (Pritchard 1992, 81).

152 Syr. *AR* 3.7 (Budge 1889, 107–108). Davis (2007a, 507–508). Ogden (2012, 281–285) recognises earlier Greek dragon-slaying narratives such as *Bel and the Dragon* and story of Alcathous slaying the Cithaeronian lion as predecessors of the tale of Alexander killing the dragon. Manteghi (2018, 63–65; 2022, 282–283).

153 The tradition derives from the OT apocalyptic vision of Hezekiah (38:1–4) and Book of Revelation (20:7–9), which do not mention Alexander but instead connect the attack of nations of Magog and Gog with the end of days and God's judgement. For discussion of this tradition, see Anderson (1932); Djurslev (2018).

154 For these texts and the way they retell the story of the Unclean nations, see van Donzel and Schmidt (2010, 15–32, 50–53; Stoneman 1991, 186–187). It appears in the γ recension of the Greek *AR*, see Stoneman (1991, 185–187). Apoc. Ps. Meth. 8.1–10.

155 In the Middle Ages it was disputed whether monstrous races were humans (that is, descended from Adam) or monsters. The medieval concept of monsters implied wonder, something contrary to nature, which was there for a purpose (to teach something to humans, like everything else in Creation. Friedman (2000, 1–3, 183–189).

156 *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.289.5060–5070, 300.5150 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 395, 403).
157 *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.371.5980–5985, 375.6011–6019 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 465, 469).
158 *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.386–394, 401–411 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 483–494, 501–513). For the speech that Alexander gives to his men 393–394. The setting of Alexander resisting something disgusting and ugly appears also in the Old English work *The Wonders of the East* where Alexander encounters thirteen feet tall monstrous women who have camel's feet and boar's teeth. The author explains that Alexander killed them because of their uncleanness and because of their offensive and disgusting bodies. Cf. *Wonders of the East*, 27 (Orchard 2003, 201).
159 For monsters and their slayers in premodern imagination, see Ogden (2013); Friedman (2000).
160 For example, a Christian overlay was added to the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf,* which tells the tale of the hero Beowulf killing the monster Grendel and his mother, and a dragon.

5 Proper Male Sexuality

Sexuality is a crucial factor in human communities, assuring the very existence of the human species. However, sex and sexuality are not merely biological phenomena but strongly imbued with power, gender and social expectations. Hence, the understanding of sexuality has varied according to era social environment and era. For example, the recently much criticised heterosexual-homosexual binary comes from the nineteenth century and was not identified as such in the Classical or Medieval world. In medieval Europe, people did not recognise homosexuality as a sexual orientation and same-sex desires and relations were one category among several types of sexual behaviour that were considered contrary to nature as God had designed it, alongside, for instance, bestiality and other sexual acts not intended for procreation. Regarding views of proper male sexuality in Greco-Roman antiquity and the Middle Ages, there is both continuity and change. In both periods, the masculine ideal embodied sexual dominance over women, as well as sexual self-control. As a rule, in premodern cultures continual sexual excess was believed to make a man weak and unable to maintain his dominance. The previous chapter discussed Alexander's relationship with war and related conceptions of martial masculinity. This one will consider his relationship with sex. How was the reception of Alexander's love-life and its mastery related to the premodern views of male sexuality?

We may begin our analysis by considering a Roman painting from the first-century CE frescoes of Pompeii, which touches the issue of Alexander's sexuality (see Figure 5.1). On the left of the painting is a man, mostly likely Alexander, and on the right there is a woman in Greek dress. Alexander can be distinguished by his features (compare that of the Alexander mosaic), the Macedonian helmet and a Persian bodyguard on the left. The woman is more challenging to identify, but scholars have suggested Alexander's wives, Roxanne or Stateira, or the goddess Aphrodite. A very popular interpretation is that the painting displays the marriage of Alexander and Roxanne. We know from Lucian that the Hellenistic artist Aetion produced a painting of their marriage. Lucian helps us to identify this Pompeian fresco even though it was probably not a copy of the Hellenistic work but an independent venture.[1]

Between Alexander and the female figure is Eros, who holds up Alexander's shield, thus removing the king's defensive equipment in front of the viewers.

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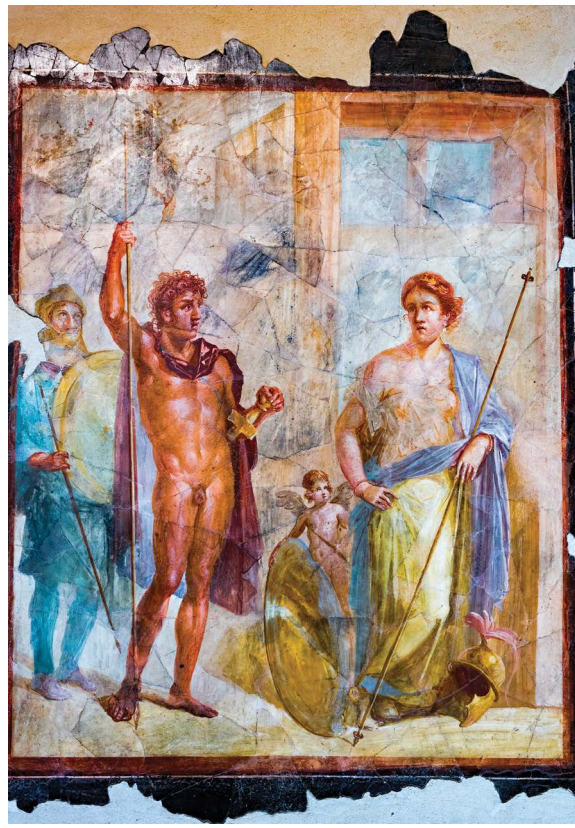

Figure 5.1 The wedding of Alexander and Roxanne, or Stateira, dated to the first century CE, is in the lower level triclinium of the House of the Golden Bracelet at Pompeii. Alexander can be recognised as the same person displayed in the Alexander mosaic. The king observes his wife, who guards his shield and helmet with a cupid. Su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – Parco Archeologico di Pompei. Photo ArchaiOptix Wikimedia Commons.

On the utmost right we can see the Alexander's Macedonian helmet. In the fresco, Alexander is still holding his spear and sword. His naked and muscular body reflects both his martial masculinity and sexual virility. The question that this Roman painting poses is, how will Alexander reply to the challenge that Eros has set him? Is the king, presented as divine and naked, able to resist Aphrodite's temptation? This piece of art leaves us guessing as to whether the shield and helmet were discarded even before Eros and Aphrodite appeared or whether even the great warrior has become helpless when Eros showed his might and rendered his victim defenceless.

In the ancient world, Alexander's alleged sexual abstinence as well as his virile sex life became legendary commonplaces. Certain events and anecdotes related to Alexander's sexuality were popular and often cited in the literary tradition. After the Battle of Issus in 333 BCE Alexander, for example, treated Darius' mother, wife and daughters with exceptional honour and did not rape any of them but treated them with the greatest possible dignity. Another famous episode was Alexander's marriage to the Bactrian princess Roxanne in 327 BCE. Her father Oxyartes – either a Sogdian or a Bactrian warlord, was evidently happy that her daughter had managed to "conquer" the great Macedonian conqueror by the power of Eros. Before he met Roxanne Alexander had kept the Rhodian Barsine as his mistress. After Roxanne he married Stateira, the daughter of Darius, and Parysatis, daughter of Ochus, at the Susa weddings in 324 BCE. Additionally, there were rumours that the king had had one or more children with the Indian Cleophis. There were also far-fetched tales of an encounter with the Ethiopian queen Candace and even with the legendary amazon queen Thalestris. According to Classical tradition Alexander also had a sexual relationship with the Persian eunuch Bagoas. There has been much discussion about the possibility that Alexander had a sexual relationship with Hephaestion, which cannot be explored within the limits of this present study. Scholars have been most interested in the sexuality of the historical Alexander and discussed the role of women in the story of Alexander.[2] However, approaching the source material from the perspective of the ideals of male sexualities it promotes or illuminates offers us an insight into ancient and medieval thought. When analysing the reception of Alexander's sexuality, we are studying what was regarded as correct and incorrect sexual behaviour for males. When ancient and medieval authors wrote about Alexander's sex-life they defined the boundaries of masculinity. The authors' remarks or omissions related to the king's sexuality defined the boundaries between manly and unmanly expressions of sexuality. In these passages, the sex act is something that a male decides to do or not to do, either to other males or females, not something that two people do consensually.[3] Besides sex and gender the social status of the actors in the stories must be taken into consideration. For the Greeks and Romans whether or not a person was a slave was a key factor in determining their freedom to initiate sexual relations, thus, alongside gender, determining who was dominant.

Ideals of sexual behaviour and gender norms are interlinked.[4] Therefore, male sexual practices may be acceptable, praised or condemned according to ideologies of masculine sexual behaviour. In the Greco-Roman world, active sexuality was not only acceptable for males but also desired. In antiquity, erotic love had a central place in religion, and it was featured in many cults.[5] Greco-Roman societies endorsed premarital sex for males, but free-born females were expected to remain virgins until they were married. Elite males were expected to have sexual experiences with prostitutes or slave boys before they would marry and have children. However, this does not mean there were no sexual norms or restrictions on expressing male sexuality.

Some expressions of male or female sexuality were considered a threat to the community and its social order. Thus, communities created sanctions on those violating the shared norms of male and female sexuality. For example, in fifth-century Athens a free-born man prostituting himself might lose his rights as a citizen, while in Rome during the reign of Emperor Augustus, according to Lex Julia (18 BCE), adulterous wives and daughters could either be executed with impunity or banished to islands.[6]

Being the penetrator in sexual relationship was a demonstration of a man's (*anḗr*, *vir*) domination of others. It was important whether a man was penetrator/active or penetrated/passive in sexual intercourse. Free men were expected to be the penetrators while females, prostitutes and slaves should be penetrated/passive actors. Certain sexual practices were believed to make a man effeminate and womanish. Those males who enjoyed being penetrated were regarded as unmasculine *cinaedus* and acquiring a reputation for being *cinaedus* was something to be feared. It was important that a free-born man could manage to maintain the public image of playing the active role in sexual encounters, even if he played the passive role behind closed doors. It was no problem for a masculine man to have sexual encounters with his female and male slaves or prostitutes in the role of penetrator, but having sex with the wives of others or virgins of free status was condemned. This conduct was against the norms of the community and confronted the values that were regarded as upholding society.[7]

Even though the masculine man was expected always to be the penetrator, this did not mean that "true" men should be hyperactive in sexual acts or actively seeking multiple sex partners. In the Greco-Roman world, the masculine man had to control his emotions and his sexual desires. Strong sexual desires were linked to women and womanish behaviour since females were believed to have a stronger sex drive than men and less ability to control it.[8] Men considered as slaves of their sexual passions were easily labelled as effeminate, or "womanish." A lifestyle that focused on pleasures like luxury and indulgence of sexual desires was believed to make men effeminate and demonstrate that a man had lost the ability to control his body and his desires.[9] In addition, free males of all statuses were expected to legally marry with the purpose of producing legitimate offspring. By this means the family property could pass down from father to son.[10] This evidently had a radical impact on male sexual behaviour and created pressure not only to take a wife but also to acquire children with her. In the Classical and medieval worlds, the line between reproductive and non-reproductive sex was clearly understood and this distinction mattered more than that between same-sex and opposite-sex relations.[11] Sexual relationships with same-sex partners were obviously not reproductive, but anyone embarking on a relationship with a member of the opposite sex, that is, one that might be reproductive, had to be careful that it was socially acceptable.

Christianity brought different and more restrictive views of male sexuality. In Late Antiquity, the Christian ascetic movement publicly challenged the

social norm that marrying and having children was the correct route for free citizens.[12] Christian doctrines banned extramarital affairs and all same-sex relations, embraced the idea that sex was merely for procreation, and suggested that Christian marriage was the only licit path to sexual intercourse.[13] In the later Roman Empire, married men became subject to restrictions similar to those placed on married women and there were laws that demanded similar marital sexual behaviour from both males and females. A contrast to the pagan Classical world was that a man was effeminate regardless of whether or not he was the active male partner/penetrator if he indulged in a sexual act with another man. It went against sexual male dominance to make another man the object of penetration.[14]

The concept of sin in matters of sexual behaviour was a "new" feature that arrived with Christianity. Even though people had codes of sexual conduct and misconduct before Christianity became the state religion, and held that certain practices made a man effeminate, Christianity suggested that acts considered "unnatural" were offensive to God and might deny the soul of the perpetrator a passage to eternal bliss when his body died if he or she repeatedly committed such sins without repentance. According to the apologists and theologians of Late Antiquity, sexual misconduct by both men and women was implanted by the Devil himself.[15] Total sexual abstinence was encouraged and sometimes demanded from males and females. In the Middle Ages, members of the clergy had to take vows to remain celibate. It has been argued that Christianity created a form of "third gender," namely "those living in celibacy." In the clerical and monastic discourse, the valuation of chastity was regarded as more masculine than sexual activity.[16]

The restrictive views of male sexuality in Late Antiquity and medieval Europe do not mean that "forbidden" expressions of sexuality did not occur or that they were rare among males.[17] Concerning extramarital relations there was a double standard relating to sexual misconduct: for women it was clearly wrong and disreputable, but fornication and adultery did less damage to the reputation of males.[18] Accordingly, the critical attitude towards sexuality – which many modern people would consider repressive – was evidently not the only attitude towards it that existed in the Middle Ages, as there was also a playful and lustful approach to sexuality.[19] Scholars have debated how much Christian doctrine changed actual sexual behaviour. However, the source material handled here is more concerned with sexual ideals and gendered patterns of thought – what the members of the upper class felt was important and constituted suitable sexual male behaviour – than what actually took place within the communities. By studying the ancient and medieval literary material on Alexander's sexuality, we have an opportunity to observe continuity and change in premodern gender ideals.

In the first subchapter, I examine the early imperial Roman and late antique literary tradition that eulogised Alexander's sexual abstinence and self-mastery. In the second subchapter, I scrutinise works that criticised Alexander's sexual behaviour, which appeared in Roman literature that

presented the Macedonian king's behaviour as a warning about unmasculine conduct. The third subchapter focuses on the medieval reception of Alexander's sexuality, in which I analyse the divergent presentations of ideal male sexuality that can be found in the medieval imaginations of the king.

In praise of male sexual continence

Even though in Greco-Roman culture the masculine man was ready to demonstrate his dominance over others by sexual penetration, this aspect of sexuality is largely absent from the tradition of Alexander in the Classical tradition.[20] While in warfare Alexander actively shows his masculine dominance by killing his enemies as well as superbly commanding his troops, it is the king's abstinence from sex that makes him a "true" and ideal man in the literary tradition. In sexual matters the authors are interested in Alexander's ability to control himself. Alexander's sexual continence as a desirable trait appears in several works composed in the early Empire and Late Antiquity in which his control over his desires was severely tested when he encountered the most beautiful women of Asia. As a victorious king he had the power to sexually penetrate these noble women, but surprisingly he decided to control his sexual desires and reject these opportunities. As will be shown in this chapter, Alexander was not the only exemplary male figure whose position in the male hierarchy is demonstrated by his ability to display self-control in sexual conduct.

Particularly Plutarch focuses on Alexander's sexual self-control. He presents it as a vital aspect of the king's masculine dominance. In his biographies, Plutarch introduces both imitable and cautionary male models of self-control. His examples of failures to display self-mastery are the lives of Demetrius and Mark Anthony, whereas his life of Alexander offers us the purest version of desirable self-mastery.[21] After defeating the Persians at the Battle of Issus in 333 BCE Darius' mother, wife, sisters and other royal women became Alexander's property. In his *Life of Alexander* Plutarch, as well as informing us that Darius himself was the most handsome and tallest of men, writes that Darius' wife surpassed all other queens on earth in loveliness and their daughters resembled them in beauty. By giving this detail, the author highlights the sexual temptation the captive women brought to Alexander. According to Plutarch, Alexander's decision to treat the Persian royal women with dignity and restraint revealed his remarkable quality, his masculine dominance and his manliness:

> Alexander, however considered the ability to conquer his enemies less important for a king than the ability to control himself, so he did not lay a finger on them… [….] …He [Alexander] used to match their physical beauty with a beautiful demonstration of self-control and restraint, and pass them [Persian royal women] by as though they were no more than lifeless statues.[22]

Plutarch emphasises that even the most beautiful women cannot remove Alexander's mastery over sexual desires, using both the terms *sōphrosynē* and *enkráteia*. These two concepts are close in meaning, but *sōphrosynē* is a more philosophical concept: a trait that enables a person to avoid all extreme conduct and harmful passions. North and Rademaker have argued that sometimes *sōphrosynē* denotes virtuous self-control in general while *enkráteia* refers to more specific control over appetites.[23] By exercising *enkráteia* constantly a person can be *sṓphrōn*.[24]

In the Greek world, *sōphrosynē* was one of the most important virtues that helped male men to control their passions and enabled them to take care of their duties as citizens of the polis. Rademaker makes the case that being *sṓphrōn* was a broader concept when applied to males than to women. In Greek literature, the concept meant chastity for unmarried women and being faithful and loyal to the husband for married women, while for men it meant controlling all their desires and actions.[25] In his writings Plutarch gives the impression that *sōphrosynē* is something that a man learns through the education and training he receives in his youth.[26] However, Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* argues that already as a boy Alexander showed *sōphrosynē* and the pleasures of the body had little hold on him.[27] In other words, this control was in Alexander's nature and became apparent when he grew older. However, since Plutarch emphasises the prince's exceptional education (as noted in Chapter 3), it gives the impression that education is an important adjunct to natural traits in learning *sōphrosynē*. Alexander's lack of interest in sexual intercourse is a masculine trait and something that derives from his nature and education.[28]

In the passage quoted above the king had made self-control a prime objective in life.[29] For Plutarch Alexander's conduct differed from that of his generals and officials, who represent average men who failed to show self-control after the victory over the Persians at the Battle of Issus. Plutarch's Alexander is both model and instructor in giving an example to his friends in self-control regarding eating, drinking and sexual relations. According to Plutarch, it was regrettable that the king's friends and companions failed to achieve the level of self-control that Alexander had. In his letter to Parmenion, where the king ordered harsh punishment for two Macedonian soldiers who had seduced the wives of mercenaries, Alexander reminded Parmenion of his high standards of self-mastery, so high that he does not even let others speak about the beauty of Darius' wife.[30] Alexander's attitude to self-control in Plutarch resembles the portrait of Socrates in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, composed after 371 BCE. Socrates encourages Xenophon to flee whenever he encountered anyone beautiful because getting to know someone makes it harder to control one's passions. In this work, Socrates incites total resistance to all appetites.[31] Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* wrote that the person who was *sṓphrōn* enjoys pleasure in moderation and avoids the wrong pleasures.[32] One gets this impression of Plutarch's Alexander, who happily and willingly decides to display sexual self-control. The eulogistic portrait

of Alexander's overall self-control appears in several of Plutarch's works besides the *Life of Alexander*, namely his essays *On the fortune or the virtue of Alexander the Great*, *On being a busybody* and *On Chance*.[33] According to Plutarch Alexander had a clear anti-sexual philosophy: sleep and sexual intercourse reminded him that he was mortal. Alexander saw that sexual desire and fatigue arose from the same limitation on human nature.[34] For Plutarch Alexander's sexual abstinence offers a flawless male model for his Roman and Greek male elite audience. In his presentation self-mastery is the most important goal for this male elite and this need for self-mastery extends to sexual self-control.

Compared to Plutarch's writings, Arrian's *Anabasis* gives less attention to Alexander's sexual abstinence and self-mastery. However, when Arrian writes about it he uses superlatives and makes it clear that Alexander rose above all other males in this sphere of life. Like Plutarch, Arrian pinpoints Alexander's chivalrous treatment of Darius' wife and his daughters after the Battle of Issus and puts into the mouth of Darius' eunuch the reference to the Greek concept of *sōphrosynē*. According to the anecdote, the eunuch in charge of Darius' wife succeeded in escaping after the battle and returning to his master. Darius asked the eunuch whether his wife had remained faithful to him and whether Alexander had forced her to have sex with him. In his reply, the eunuch swore that nothing like that had occurred and declared that Alexander was "the noblest and most self-controlled of men (*andrôn áristos te kai estí sṓphronestatos*)."[35]

Arrian also sees Alexander's sexual continence in the way Alexander treated the Bactrian Roxane, the most beautiful woman in Asia apart from Darius' wife. According to Arrian, Alexander fell in love with Roxanne, Oxyartes' virgin daughter of marriageable age (*parthénos*), and felt passion for her, thus suggesting that the king was not what we would now call asexual, as he did feel sexual desires towards females. However, Arrian stresses that the king did not rape Roxanne like a captive but decided to marry her. He writes that even though Alexander was young and at the peak of his success, he was able to act differently than young men usually did.[36] In the epilogue of *Anabasis* – where he gives his appraisal of Alexander' career – Arrian does not spare the superlatives when discussing the king's ability to display *enkráteia* in bodily pleasures (*hēdonōn de tôn mén toû sṓmatos*). Arrian uses the term that can refer to opposite- and same-sex relations as well as appetite for food and drink.[37] The way the king expressed his sexuality builds his status as an exceptional man and defines the masculine ideal that Arrian regarded as optimal.

In Curtius' *Historiae* male and female sexual behaviour receives attention, and there are passages where the author discusses proper and improper ways to express one's sexuality.[38] Curtius does not idealise Alexander's control over sexual desire to the extent that Plutarch and Arrian do. At the beginning of *Historiae* the king is presented as an exceptional exemplary monarch in this respect but as the expedition goes further east Alexander fails to control

his sexual appetites (see below).[39] When writing about the honourable treatment of the extremely beautiful Persian captive women and Darius' wife Curtius heaps praise upon Alexander for his self-control (*continentia animi*): at that moment, Curtius informs us, Alexander surpassed all former kings in *continentia* and *clementia*. The former term referred to restraining of one's passions and desires, abstemiousness, continence, temperance and moderation, and it is close to the Greek term *enkráteia*.[40] By using this word, Curtius gives the impression that if the king had sexual desire towards Darius' wife, described as the most beautiful woman in Asia, he suppressed his impulses. The word *clementia* is Roman concept that does not have a Greek equivalent, often used in a military context referring to forgiveness and manifestation of self-control.[41]

In the ancient world, after a battle or siege all the property of the losing side taken in a camp or town became the property of the winner. After the Battle of Issus Darius' mother, wife and daughters became Alexander's property as spoils of war. This status meant that Darius' family had lost their right to demand sexual inviolability. According to the laws of war Alexander had the right to humiliate and emasculate Darius – who had failed to protect his wife and daughters at the battle – by raping his wife.[42] Yet Alexander did not do this and ensured that no other man would do it either. For a Roman audience Alexander's attitude to the royal captives combined sexual self-control (*continentia*) and mercy (*clementia*). An ideal monarch who represented the top of the male social and political hierarchy demonstrated his right to rule by his clemency, which precluded his sexual urges.[43]

According to Curtius, Alexander treated royal virgins of surpassing beauty (*virgines reginas excellentis formae*) as if they were his sisters. As stated above, in the Roman world young men were expected to have sexual intercourse with females before marriage but the virginity of young elite women was guarded so that they would be virgins before wedlock. Besides the father (*pater familia*) brothers were expected to protect and guard their sisters from having their maidenhood stolen. For the members of the Roman upper class the concept *pudicitia*, translated as sexual virtue, was an important virtue and protecting the *pudicitia* of women and children was essential.[44] Curtius uses the phrase *sancte habuit* literally meaning "considering something sacred," which here denotes the Roman gender system where *pudicitia* of free-born females had to be protected.[45] In the episode after Issus Alexander acted in the role of brother to those he had conquered and who belonged to the group of defeated barbarians. Alexander's willingness to take care that no-one violated the royal Persian women is presented as an exceptional expression of his self-controlled masculinity. When later in the narrative Curtius writes about the death of Darius' wife and the way Alexander mourned her death, the king's self-control receives great praise. Alexander was inspired by her exceptional beauty, but any temptation inspired by lust (*libido*) was overcome by the urge to glorious conduct.[46]

Similarly, as in the portraits of Plutarch and Arrian, Curtius constructs a clear juxtaposition between the behaviour of the king and that of the Macedonian soldiers and other commanders. When he writes about ordinary Macedonian soldiers plundering and raping the Persian women after the Battle of Issus and during the sack of Persepolis, Curtius describes the suffering and lamentation among the robbed and raped Persian women at the hands of rapacious Macedonian troops. He does not say the victorious Macedonian soldiers were doing something they did not have permission to do according to the laws of war, or that their behaviour made them effeminate. After all, these women were spoils of war that the victors in the war could claim for themselves.[47] Alexander's virtue, however, is placed on a higher plane than that of his soldiers when it is stated that eventually the king ordered his men to keep their hands off the Persian women during the sack of Persepolis.[48]

In his *Historiae,* Curtius lists Macedonians who sexually assaulted married Persian aristocratic women and their virgin daughters. Among them the commander Cleander is characterised as "lust-crazed" (*furor*) who, placed in charge of the administration of Ecbatana, had raped a virgin of noble birth and treated her like a slave.[49] In this passage, Cleander's uncontrollable sexual passion is an unmasculine trait underlining his failings as a man. Curtius is propagating a certain sexual moral where virgin girls and married women belonging to the upper class were not to be touched even though they were subjugated Persians. Power and dominance belonged to the sphere of masculinity, but demonstrations of power of this nature that indicated loss of self-mastery were not worthy of praise. In Curtius' presentation, the anonymous mass of Macedonian soldiery and individuals such as Cleander were representing average men, while Alexander represented an exemplary male and the ideal of self-mastery.

The primary audience of Plutarch, Arrian and Curtius included male members of the Roman elite. It is difficult to say whether these authors intended to imply that achieving and maintaining Alexander's level of self-control was possible for ordinary men. They give the impression that ordinary males were sexually active and governed by their appetites. Either way, Alexander's example defined what exemplary masculinity could be in its purest form. The idea of manliness demonstrated by sexual continence appears in Greco-Roman philosophical and medical beliefs where the sexual act intended for procreation was presented as the only virtuous form of sex. According to these views, affected by Stoic philosophy, the exemplary man would not pursue sexual pleasure, but only familial and demographic continuance.[50] In addition, in Plato and Isocrates we find the idea that particularly kings, who have the ultimate power to do what they like, need to display self-control towards sexual practices as well as in the way they present themselves related to their subjects (treated in Chapter 6).[51] Plutarch was a Platonist and studied Stoic philosophy while Arrian was himself a pupil of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus.[52] Their presentation of Alexander perhaps reflects both philosophical and medical texts as well as the thoughts expressed in Greek literature

on ideal kingship. The demand for sexual self-control undoubtedly derived also from the idea that the "true" man should subordinate his interests and personal desires to the public good of the *polis* or the republic.[53] Yet it should be remembered that Alexander was neither the first nor the last exemplary male figure whose male dominance was stressed by his ability to exercise sexual self-control.

Composed a few decades years before Alexander's birth, the *Cyropaideia* of Xenophon praises Cyrus the Elder (c. 600–530 BCE) for his honourable treatment of Panthea, wife of King Abradatas who became Cyrus' captive. According to Xenophon, Cyrus did not treat her as a slave or as a freewoman under a dishonourable name but treated her as one would a brother's wife.[54] In other words, Cyrus had the power to have sex with this woman but decided *not* to humiliate her in this way. A similar anecdote was told about the Roman general and statesman Scipio. According to Livy an exceptionally beautiful captive woman betrothed to a Celtiberian noble was brought to Scipio. The Roman general returned the girl unharmed to his bridegroom, since touching the maiden might have distracted his attention from the affairs of the state (*res publica*).[55] Some 200 years later Aulus Gellius (c. 125–after 180 CE) juxtaposed Alexander and Scipio in terms of noble treatment of royal captive women. Gellius leaves his audience to decide which of the two showed greater restrain (*continentia*).[56]

In Late Antiquity, the sexual self-control of rulers and their decisions not to demonstrate their domination by sexual penetration is eulogised even more. The writer of *Historia Augusta* stated in an admiring tone that Pescennius Niger (c. 135–194) had sex only for the purpose of begetting children. Ammianus Marcellinus (c. 325/330–c. 391/400) in his *Res Gestae* writes that Emperor Julian refused to touch or even to look upon the beautiful Persian captive women, following the example of Alexander and Scipio. Ammianus also praises Julian for abstaining from sex after his wife died because he wanted to escape the slavery of love. Bishop Ambrosius praises Valentinian II (371–392) for refusing to have sexual intercourse with any woman other than his wife. The Byzantine historian Procopius (c. 500– after 565) eulogises the general Belisarius' remarkable *sōphrosynē*. Belisarius decided to have sexual intercourse only with his wife and avoided contact with the beautiful Vandal and Goth captive women.[57] On the basis of this evidence, the model for self-controlled masculinity in sexual self-mastery remained strong in the historiographical tradition and was undoubtedly known among the members of the Roman elite who were familiar with the lives of illustrious men. The idea that a man in power should protect unprotected captive women and control his passions appears in Classical historiography so frequently that it clearly belonged to the masculine ideal of upper-class manhood. As Christianity emerged to become the dominant religion, the old ideal of sexual continence appearing in Greek and Latin literature received new meanings which connected male chastity to the person's religious piety towards God. But the idea that

the exemplary man seeks to demonstrate his manliness by abstinence from sexual pleasures remained.

Self-control existed as an ideal for the Greeks and Romans. They thought of sexual desire as they thought of other appetites: for food, for drinking, for sleep. The state of self-control over one's own body and bodily desires was analogous to the way a man controlled his household, women and above else political matters. In the stories above, beautiful captive women test male self-control. The image of women as a cause of dangerous lust in men was a *topos* in Classical literature, and the mention of their remarkable beauty was designed to make the king's actions look even more of an exception from the behaviour of the average male.[58]

These passages seem to maintain an ideal of an army commander or ruler of the state who is expected to give a good example to his subjects by displaying masculinity and controlling his passions in all spheres of life when exercising power. At the same time, in these stories, we have an image of females who would be vulnerable to abuse without powerful men as protectors in a world dominated by males. This gendered status of men as protectors of women – which many modern feminist and gender studies argue is a social construct designed to reinforce patriarchy – may have been more visible in the medieval codes of chivalry, but it also existed in the Greco-Roman world.[59]

The ideal of masculine dominance could also be emphasised by the exercise of power in unpredictable or unexpected ways. Becoming a "true" man sometimes meant acting against what was regarded as typical behaviour for men. Alexander's decision not to touch the Persian women and his self-mastery fitted with the Christian view of ideal male sexuality. In Christian thought extra-marital relationships were condemned and sexual intercourse was supposed to be restricted to sexual relationships between married persons. In Basil of Caesarea's *Address to young men on the right use of Greek literature,* composed in the fourth century CE, Alexander's conduct is referred to as exemplary and in line with Christ's teachings. Basil stresses that Alexander did not merely refuse to touch the Persian women but even felt it unfitting to look upon them. He adds that Alexander's conduct proved right the "the precept of ours," referring to Jesus' saying, "But I say to you, that whosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart." In the tale of the Persian women, Alexander was acting as Christ would and purging his body and mind of sexual desire. As we know, in Late Antiquity, there emerged a new masculinity propagated by the Church, which took a very negative attitude not only to sexual acts but also to sexual passions. Basil's address underlines the stricter view of ideal male sexuality where "true" men not only abstain from extramarital affairs but also monitor and prevent the desires from occurring. The anecdote of Alexander's display of sexual continency as well as the stories of Cyrus and Agesilaus appear in the fifth-century letters written by Isidore of Pelusium, but also the later Byzantine histories of George the Monk (ninth century) and

George Kedrenos (eleventh century), which emphasise the long-lasting ideal of masculine self-control in sexual behaviour and the influence of historical anecdotes in supporting this ideal.[60]

Curiously, even though the Greek *AR* is full of marvellous stories of Alexander's adventures, stories of his love-life are not among them. In the *AR,* sex is not the main theme of the work.[61] There is no hint that Alexander had strong sexual passions or any difficulties in controlling them, but omission cannot be taken as a statement that there was none. One could call *AR* hetero-normative since we do not encounter any references to the sexual relations between Alexander or his generals and slave boys or eunuchs. Instead, in the Greek *AR,* we encounter Alexander as the protector of women and their dignity. He defends his mother's honour and that of Darius' mother and daughters. He takes Roxanne, presented as Darius' daughter, in a decent marriage. In addition, Alexander accepts Darius' wish not only to marry her but also to start a line of descendants that will preserve the line and memory of the Persian king as well as his own. Thus, the king is willing to fulfil the masculine ideal of producing offspring and impregnate a woman in a legitimate way as a demonstration of dominance (see below). In some versions of the *AR* Alexander even insists that he must win Roxanne's love before marrying her. Women respect Alexander because he does not disgrace them.[62]

Some versions of the *AR* include discussion of Alexander's decision not to rape the exceptionally beautiful mother and daughters of Darius. In the β-recension of the Greek *AR* Parmenion suggests to Alexander that he should sleep with Darius' mother and his children and then give them back. Alexander, however, turns down his general's proposal, saying: "It is shameful and more than shameful that a man who has defeated men through his manliness should be defeated by women."[63] For Alexander, it is a matter of self-control. In his thinking, it is about losing continence and he specifies what true men are made of. The manly man does not let women determine his feelings, which would amount to controlling him. Parmenion's view represents the attitude of an ordinary man who merely sees an opportunity to demonstrate his power and dominance by sexual penetration. In contrast, the refusal of the king demonstrates that absolute masculine autonomy requires abstention from sex and the refusal to penetrate. Interestingly, the discussions of sexual matters borrow martial language: the masculine man attains a state of masculine dominance both by defeating his enemies on the battlefield, abusing captured women, or even more so, as in Alexander's case, by suppressing the sexual desire that would lead to abuse.

Nectanebos, who seduces Philip's wife Olympias and fathers Alexander in the *AR* tradition, represents an alternative masculinity. In the Greek *AR,* Alexander is said to be the son of Pharaoh Nectanebus, who, disguised as a wandering magician, makes Olympias pregnant as if it were the god Ammon fathering her. It does not explicitly criticise Olympias' decision to become pregnant in this way, nor the moral implications of Nectanebos' role in the divine insemination.[64] By contrast, in the Armenian and Syriac versions of the

AR Nectanebos is presented as driven by lust and a critical tone is adopted when describing the acts of the magician and Alexander's mother. In the Armenian *AR,* Nectanebos is called "pleasure-mad for women" and he preys on Olympias while her husband is away at war. According to the anonymous writer of this *AR* the sorcerer, with his "ebony staff" looked sharply at Olympias because he was smitten with lustful desire. In the Armenian *AR* Nectanebos tricks Olympias by giving her the false impression that she is mating with the god Ammon. The Syriac *AR*, on the other hand, describes Nectanebos as inexperienced with women: having seen the beauty of the queen he falls passionately in love with her. In this narrative, the queen wonders why the Egyptian looks at her lustfully.[65] The Syriac *AR* also portrays Alexander's mother as immoral. When describing her pregnancy the narrator states that the queen was "beguiled by Nectanebos and played the harlot with a man."[66] One could even argue that in the Armenian *AR* Nectanebos' figure is a caricature whose sexual passion for the queen is laughable. In contrast, the Syriac *AR* adopts a more severe tone, suggesting that Nectanebos is exploiting a married royal woman and treating her like a prostitute. In both works, Nectanebos' eagerness to get into the queen's bed makes him an unmasculine figure and in this respect the antithesis of Alexander.

As stated, in the Greco-Roman gender system a free-born man had the right to penetrate his female and male slaves even though married women or virgins of free status were not appropriate objects of sexual penetration. In the source material, self-control in sexuality was promoted as a greater form of masculinity and male dominance than penetration in sexual relations, even though the free man had the "right" to do this. In the Christian culture of Late Antiquity the demands of sexual chastity and fears related to sexual penetration were more highlighted. Male dominance over effeminate males and females was demonstrated by the ability to master one's sexual passions. Alexander's sexual control as a masculine trait surpasses what was regarded as normal so that his strength of character and masculinity excels that of the average man. By using this figure, the writers could exhort men to rise above their physical natures and bodily desires, and motivate members of male upper-class to display greater sexual self-control. If a man can control his sexual desires, it enables him to rule others successfully and maintain his commanding status.

The deceptive power of *cupido*

Oliver Stone's *Alexander* (2004) includes a scene where the Bactrian Roxanne – played by Rosario Dawson – dances with her maidens seductively before Alexander at banquets. The scene is filled with the standard oriental trappings, such as her dress and the music. The king demonstrates sexual interest in the dancing Roxanne. The Persian satrap sitting next to him notices this and states: "In the ways of my country those who love too much lose everything and those who love with irony last." The viewers get the clue that

Alexander has an erotic desire for Roxanne following a scene in which the king against all odds decides to marry the Bactrian princess. This banquet episode in Stone's film makes reference to the potentially destructive side of sexual desire, as it threatens the king's authority with his Macedonian commanders and expectations of how he should behave. The film does not condemn Alexander for following his emotions and sexual instincts, even though it makes it clear that it does not please all of his Macedonian staff. Instead, the king's passionate and bold decision is presented as part of his mythical charisma and visionary greatness. Stone's *Alexander* provides a completely different image of Alexander's sexuality than the narratives of Curtius and some other Roman historians. As shown below, according to the Roman representation of the Macedonian world-conqueror, neither he nor any other man should *ever* let sexual urges lead him to abandon the ways of his people and the obligations that statesmen have - he should not "love too much."[67]

The idealised image of Alexander's sexual self-control discussed in the previous subchapter was not held by every author. Though Alexander was presented as the perfect model of self-restraint in the works of Plutarch, Arrian and Basil, there was a critical tradition in which Alexander was sometimes depicted as an effeminate slave of injurious sexual passions whose behaviour created a threat to the existing social order and gender roles, particularly when the Persian campaign turned out to be successful.[68]

The king's failure to resist female and male seducers – to "love with irony" – is emphasised in the Curtian narrative of the eunuch Bagoas, who has an emasculating influence on Alexander. Plutarch and Athenaeus refer to Bagoas briefly in one anecdote (see below), while Diodorus, Arrian, Trogus/Justin and the authors of the various versions of the *AR* do not mention him at all.[69] Medieval writers such as Châtillon, who used Curtius' work as source material, omitted Bagoas from their storyline as well. Undoubtedly, the figure of Bagoas represented a threat for the medieval authors in that for them Alexander's sexuality had to conform to the accepted norm in their society. They had no wish to present Alexander as a man who could not control his same-sex or pederastic desires. For example, in Vasco de Lucena's French translation of Curtius' *Historiae,* composed in the fifteenth century, Bagoas is transformed into a beautiful woman called Bagoe (see Figure 5.2).[70]

After the Macedonian army arrives in the palace of Darius in Hyrcania, Bagoas, the former courtier and eunuch of Darius, becomes Alexander's property. According to Curtius, Darius had previously had a sexual relationship (Latin *assuere*, *assuo*) with the eunuch and now Alexander was also sexually intimate with Bagoas. Curtius makes it clear that by doing this Alexander aped the Persian king, whose image is mostly effeminate in the narrative. Having sexual intercourse with a eunuch seems to have been one aspect of Achaemenid royal practice, and it is possible that the historical Alexander adopted this Persian protocol.[71] However, for Curtius, who wrote at least 350 hundred years after the Achaemenid Empire had collapsed, this practice was peculiar and difficult to understand. Curtius writes that the eunuch was

Figure 5.2 Bagoas Pleads on behalf of Nabarzanes, an illuminated parchment by the Master of the Jardin de vertueuse consolation, 1470–1475. In Vasco da Lucena's French translation of Curtius' *Historiae* the eunuch Bagoas is transformed into the beautiful woman Bagoe. In the illustration Bagoe is a blonde-haired maiden dressed in a green court dress and wearing a head-dress known as the Hennin. Obviously, the same-sex desire of the Latin original was considered unsuitable by the translator, who replaced it with heterosexual appeal. Ms. Ludwig XV 8 (83.MR.178), fol. 133v. Digital image courtesy of Getty's Open Content Program.

of remarkable beauty and in the very flower of boyhood (*specie singulari spado atque in ipso flore pueritiae*).[72] In the story, Alexander falls in love with Bagoas and his powerful sexual lust leads him to surrender to the eunuch's charms. In the Curtius narrative, the "correct" social order is turned upside down as Alexander abandons his masculine dominance and becomes the "servant" of his eunuch slave. This subservience is highlighted by the way the king treats the Persian satrap Orsines – a man of supreme distinction and the most noble of the Persians. According to Curtius, Orsines decided to present all Alexander's friends (*amici*) with gifts except Bagoas. When some asked the reason for this Orsines replied that he would honour the king's friends, but not his harlots (*scorta*), and added that it was Persian custom to regard those "making themselves feminine/effeminate" (from the Latin verb *effemino*) as of no worth.[73] Curtius' expression here has the clear connotation of letting oneself be sexually penetrated and playing the woman's role in sexual intercourse. Curtius probably puts words into the mouth of Orsines

to express his views of eunuchs as slaves who allow themselves to be sexually penetrated. Thus, Curtius' presentation of Bagoas reflects the disparaging attitudes common in Roman culture towards "soft" males that play the receptive role in penetrative acts.[74]

It is not only Bagoas' sexual availability that makes Curtius despise him. The way in which the eunuch uses his sexual charm to manipulate the king also makes him a distasteful figure. According to the story, Bagoas overhears Orsines' cutting comment and secretly plots vengeance on him. While the eunuch – called by Curtius as *importunissimum scortum* ("shameless harlot") – arouses the king's passion (*amor*), he simultaneously accuses Orsines with the aim of manipulating the king. In the narrative the whole regrettable incident is a result of Alexander's surrender of masculine dominance and power when he succumbs to his sexual passion for the eunuch, who thus achieves influence (power) over him. Bagoas' plot against Orsines succeeds and Alexander puts him to death. According to Curtius, an innocent man was sentenced to death and the wretched and revengeful eunuch succeeded in getting the revenge he desired.

Curtius' narrative reflects and propagates the Roman perception of male sexuality.[75] In the Roman world, the impenetrability of the male body belonged to the masculine standard and the fear of being penetrated by other men and thus becoming effeminate was widely recognised. In the narrative the Persian Orsines is the real man, who opposes the power of the "castrated" (regarded as inferior to a free-born male), while Alexander is presented as a weak and effeminate king.[76] Because of Alexander's unmanly fondness for the eunuch (*Bagoam Alexandro cordi esse*), the king did not care or understand what was going on behind the scenes. Alexander could have used Bagoas as his sexual toy – love with irony – but having emotions or strong passions for him was despicable. Again, because the king was blinded by his sexual lust, he allowed a man inferior to him in social status to influence him, which according to Curtius had terrible outcome. From the Roman perspective the king failed to follow the Roman norms and expectations placed upon upper-class males. The king's behaviour was radically in conflict with the masculine ideal of dominance. In Curtius' work, Bagoas is a despicable figure, both because he lets other males penetrate him and because he plots against Orsines and manipulates Alexander.[77]

Curtius takes a critical view not only towards eunuchs but towards prostitution and courtesanship as well. Prostitution was regarded as a normal part of Roman society; it was regarded as work performed mostly by female slaves.[78] It was mostly viewed by the elite as a shameful profession like that of gladiator or actor.[79] According to Curtius, it was harmful that the Macedonian army, including Alexander and his companions, spent time in banquets where prostitutes were involved. In Persepolis, the king attended day-time drinking parties at which women were present. Curtius says that these women were courtesans who lived disreputable lives with the soldiers, not women it was a crime to violate. In the aftermath of one of these banquets an

Athenian courtesan, Thais – called "a drunken whore (*ebrium scortum*)" – suggested that the king should burn down the royal palace. He, under the influence of alcohol, accepted this proposal and the splendid palace was burnt to the ground. Once again, Alexander has allowed a person of inferior rank, in this case, a woman, to bend his judgement in serious matters, and for this he is heavily criticised by Curtius. The king loses his masculine dominance, as demonstrated in the narrative by the lack of self-control in sex and drinking as well as his willingness to ape the customs of the conquered. As head of the state and commander of his army Alexander was responsible for taking care of his troops physical and mental wellbeing. Instead, Alexander let his soldiers engage in self-indulgence and excess, submitting to the degenerating influence of Babylonian and Persian banquets and systematic prostitution.[80]

The marriage between Alexander and Roxanne, the subject of the fresco discussed at the beginning of this chapter, was also prominent in the histories. Diodorus, Plutarch and Arrian do not criticise Alexander's marriage with Roxanne but romanticise it. In their works, Roxanne's beauty is praised and the authors state that in this time Alexander really fell in love with Roxanne.[81] They give the impression that besides the motive to unite Macedonians and barbarians the decision to marry the Bactrian princess arose from genuine feelings. In addition, they present opposite-sex relations as desirable for males and romantic emotions as an acceptable motivation for the choice of regal spouse. Instead of being a dangerous seducer, the Bactrian princess is portrayed by Diodorus, Plutarch and Arrian as a desirable object of male passion. However, Curtius' account contests these political and romantic motives. In Curtius, the description of the marriage with Roxanne has similarities to the way he writes about the emasculating influence of Bagoas and Thais.[82]

Curtius does not criticise Roxanne as he does Bagoas or present her in a bad light. Roxanne is one of the Bactrian royal maidens (*nobiles virgines*), introduced to Alexander and his generals during banquets of oriental magnificence. She is described as a beautiful woman who had exceptional dignity among the barbarians. Roxanne was not a prostitute but a virgin maiden (*virgo*), as a legal wife should be, and this is probably why Curtius emphasises her positive qualities. Nevertheless, in his opinion she was not a woman the Macedonian king should have fallen passionately in love with and married. Curtius points out that the marriage took place because the king could not master his passions (*cupiditates*). The same king who managed to control his feelings when confronted with Darius' wife and daughters chose now to marry a young girl of "humble pedigree in comparison with royalty." The decision to wed her is presented as spontaneous, following the king's *cupiditatis ardor*. This expression refers to burning heat for love and uncontrollable lust. Additionally, Curtius remarks that the king's decision was made "amid wine and banquets" (*super vinum et epulas*): in other words, it was not a considered decision but one made under the influence of alcohol. Alexander, however, explains it away to those who marvel at it by saying that such

intermarriage will consolidate his empire as the conquered will lose their shame and the conquerors their pride.

Curtius criticises the king for allowing personal passions to influence matters that affected the whole kingdom: "In this way the king of Asia and of Europe took to himself in wedlock a woman who had been brought in among the entertainments of a banquet, intending to beget from a captive a son who should rule over victors."[83] Alexander did not choose his legal wife from among the Macedonian elite. The idea that Alexander's half-Bactrian offspring would one day rule obviously seemed peculiar to Curtius as something that would not have worked in the Roman world, and it was almost certainly subversive already in the fourth century BCE.

In the Roman senatorial gender system, a man ought to marry a Roman freewoman of a similar social status. From the reign of Octavian Augustus good emperors married women from respected lineages (*genus*). As an example, Augustus' wife Livia Drusilla belonged to the gens Livia. Having a sexual relationship and marrying an aristocratic woman from the barbarian peoples, even if she was from their aristocracy, was a real threat and insult to Roman ways. Mark Anthony's decision to divorce his fourth wife Octavia the Younger, Octavian's sister, because of his liaison with Queen Cleopatra VII received strong criticism from the Roman aristocracy. Displacing a Roman aristocratic woman so that one could produce offspring with a barbarian woman was not common among the Roman high class during the principate. We may assume that Curtius' disapproval of Alexander's decision to marry Roxanne was rooted in this attitude. Given this social pressure, the public face of a male's sex life had to be combined with the expectations of the surrounding community. As in the case of Bagoas, Alexander went too far when he was blinded by *libido* and failed to follow the cultural expectations. From the gender perspective, the king lost his masculine dominance. According to Curtius, Alexander should have pondered this decision and thought about how it would suit his Macedonian subjects instead of following his sexual passions.

The presentation of correct male sexual behaviour is part of defining a man's greatness and cultural identity. Tacitus (c. 55–120) most likely wrote his work *Annals* (*Annales*) after Curtius' *Historiae*. In *Annals,* Tacitus compares Alexander to the Roman general Germanicus, who symbolises ideal Roman masculinity, also in contrast to Romans like Tiberius. Interestingly, Tacitus sets aside Alexander's and Germanicus' love life. According to Tacitus, Germanicus was "moderate in his pleasures, content with a single wife and the children of lawful wedlock (*modicum voluptatum, uno matrimonio, certis liberis egisse*)," unlike Alexander.[84] Tacitus refers to the ideal of moderation and self-controlled masculinity which Germanicus followed but Alexander did not. The elite practised polygamy in ancient Macedonia. However, Tacitus does not discuss this conduct as a cultural distinction but instead pinpoints the Macedonian practice as inferior to that of the Romans, who practised monogamy. Having several wives and concubines and producing

many and rival offspring is presented as an expression of kingly excess when it comes to sexual conduct.[85]

Tacitus also reminds us that all Germanicus' offspring were from a lawful marriage. The implicit reference to Alexander's illegitimate children could denote the stories of Queens Cleophis and Thalestris, which Tacitus might have read from the works of Pompeius Trogus, Curtius or some other account of Alexander's campaign. In Curtius' *Historiae* and Justin's *Epitome of Trogus* the Indian queen Cleophis of the Assacenians is said to have successfully used her sexual attractiveness to gain control over the king. Her sexual charisma enabled her to exert influence over the king and to remain as a queen although her people had fought against the Macedonians in Massaga. Her story also includes a reference to the king's illegitimate children. Justin stresses the queen's sexual power over Alexander: "[Cleophis] regained her throne, which she ransomed by sleeping with him, attaining by sexual favors what she could not by force of arms. The child fathered by the king she named Alexander, and he later rose to sovereignty over the Indians. Because she had thus degraded herself Queen Cleophis was called the 'royal whore' by the Indians."[86] It has been suggested that the Latin authors' mention of Cleophis was designed to bring to memory Cleopatra, whose relationships with Caesar and Antony were notorious in the Roman world and who was also called "the whore-queen."[87] The members of the Roman upper class intended to make clear that "true" men and "true" Romans would not interbreed with inferior peoples as Alexander had been willing to do. Again, in Tacitus' world true upper-class men do not produce children outside their marriage, only legitimate children within marriage.

Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistai,* composed in the early third century CE, has some remarks on male sexuality and its passages concerning Alexander's figure contain references to the king's banquets, involving use of alcohol as well as sex-life. When Athenaeus deals with the male habit of having pederastic relationships with young boys he takes Alexander's fondness for the eunuch Bagoas as a warning example. Besides Alexander he mentions also Rhadamanthys, Heracles, Agamemnon and Sophocles as males who had sexual relations with boys. The anecdote he gives we know also from Plutarch. According to the story, Alexander kissed Bagoas in sight of a theatre full of people, and when the spectators responded by clapping and cheering, he did what they wanted, and leaned back and kissed him again. On the basis of this anecdote, Athenaeus writes that Alexander was "crazy about boys" (*φιλόπαις δ' ἦν ἐκμανῶς καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ βασιλεύς*). The passage does not clearly inform us whether Alexander let slave boys penetrate him. Williams (1999) has argued that the Romans did not condemn same-sex behaviour per se, but it was specifically the Greek practice of pederasty, engaging in sexual relationships with free-born adolescent males, that was disgraceful and illicit behaviour (*stuprum*).[88] Despite being a king, Alexander was performing sexual activities (the kiss) in public and giving the impression to the crowd that he was

under the control of the eunuch. His act was unmanly, governed by his passion for a servant boy. However, in the same passage, Athenaeus gives credit to Alexander for his ability to control his feelings and passion for sex. Even though the king was interested in sex (*ἦν ἐρωτικὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς*), he could sometimes control his appetities. He refused when Charon ordered a good-looking slave-boy to kiss him.[89]

Even though same-sex relations were accepted with some restrictions in the classical world, as noted earlier, males were expected to marry and produce offspring. Their thinking was what we might call heteronormative. It was especially important for ruling males to acquire a wife and make her pregnant. Athenaeus mentions that there was some concern about whether the young Alexander was sexually interested in females at all. Athenaeus also states that Hieronymus, in his *Letters,* says that Theophrastus claimed Alexander was impotent. As far as we know, no other ancient authors even hinted at this. Again according to Athenaeus, it was believed that Alexander's fondness for drinking killed his sex-drive (*afrodisía*). Alexander's parents Olympias and Philip were worried that he was a "pansy" (*gýnnis*). For this reason, Olympias arranged for an extremely beautiful Thessalian courtesan, Callixeina, to lie with young Alexander. The queen frequently begged Alexander to have sex with the girl. In the Greco-Roman world, it was common that upper-class juveniles were introduced to sexual relationships with women with the help of a prostitute. But Athenaeus does not reveal the outcome so we have no idea whether Alexander eventually had sex with the courtesan or not.[90] In the Greco-Roman worldview, here represented by Athenaeus, true males were supposed to be competent in opposite-sex relations and the ideal man could not be impotent. Male virility was important in life, but it was something that was not taken as granted.

The presentation of an Alexander emasculated because of his abnormal sexuality in the works of Curtius, Tacitus and Athenaeus was a tool that enabled them to define proper male sexual behaviour and demonstrate how Roman upper-class males should express their sexuality. In Curtius Alexander becomes unmanly when (1) the king lets Bagoas control him and possibly even penetrate him, (2) he lets the prostitute Thais use her charms to influence him and (3) he chooses his legal wife from among the ranks of the conquered barbarians instead of selecting an upper-class Macedonian woman. To the Roman authors, for a man to allow his passions to affect his political decisions was unacceptable, the more so if he was the head of state. In the eyes of Curtius, Alexander becomes effeminate by failing to display self-mastery and turning down female and male seducers. The result of ill-considered decisions influenced by people for whom Alexander had allowed himself to develop passions was the execution of the honourable noble Orsines, the destruction of the royal palace in Persepolis, and the choosing of a barbarian girl as his legitimate wife. ***Érōs, cupiditas***, *libido* should not control a true man and affect his decisions in a such a way that he no longer acts correctly. The king is presented as a warning example of

what happens if the social responsibilities and sexual roles that formed the backbone of Roman society are neglected. If Curtius wrote his work during the reign of Claudius, the memory of Caligula's reign may have been in his mind.[91] In Curtius' presentation exemplary upper-class males could control their sexual desires so that they were *not* influenced by or even dependent on eunuchs or lower-class females.

In addition to Alexander, in Roman cultural memory there were several other notorious male figures who failed to express their masculine dominance and remain "true" men because of their libido. Lucius Quinctius Flamininus, who was consul in 192 BCE, was willing to please his male prostitute and kill an innocent man and neglect his duties as a Roman magistrate.[92] Pompey was mocked and regarded as having lost his manly self-control when he let his young wife lead him to neglect his duties as a statesman.[93] Mark Antony was infamous for his excessive desires and obsessions, and particularly for his obsession with Cleopatra and immoderate desire to please her. Because of his lust for Cleopatra, he was willing to start a war against his *patria* and even flee from the Battle of Actium at the prompting of a woman.[94] Emperors like Tiberius, Caligula, Hadrian, Commodus and Elagabalus were presented as unmasculine and effeminate figures because they let their sexual passions influence the ways they carried out their duties to the state.[95] The episodes involving Alexander mentioned above and similar episodes involving other (in) famous men were used to show that even though sexual activity and being the penetrator belonged to the sphere of male dominance, there were clear restrictions on when and how men should express their sexuality. It was part of performing one's manliness to carry out the social responsibilities belonging to your status correctly, to carefully choose the objects of one's desire, and to manage relations with them.

The critique and praise of the erotic love of the medieval Alexander

The medieval approach to male sexuality varied depending on the time and place. When a member of the medieval upper class listened to homilies or sermons, he or she could hear dire warnings about the way the Devil might seduce or trick men and women into performing different forms of sodomy.[96] The ideal man in this context would always avoid adultery, fornication or same-sex intercourse. Yet, in other circumstances, a nobleman would read or listen to someone else reading medieval romances in which the themes of marital love and courtly love were present. From these romances one could get a totally different approach to sexual practices where valiant knights had affairs with maidens with whom they were not married, or even tried to approach others' wives. As will be shown in this subchapter, we can recognise this ambivalence also in the two-sided medieval reception of Alexander's sexuality. The medieval texts concerning Alexander eulogise sexual abstinence and moderation, but on some occasions the authors apparently praise male virility and illicit heterosexual relations. Women are presented as both

deceiving testers of manly heroes and desirable objects of male passion. These two levels of meaning appear particularly in passages concerning Alexander's encounters with Queen Candace and the amazon queen Thalestris.

Medieval Christian authors seem to express their worries about whether a male can resist the power of erotic love. The conventional exhortation included in the texts is that every male should be cautious with *amor* if he wants to avoid severe consequences. Part of the medieval sexual discourse appearing in many literary genres was also the misogynistic view of women as treacherous "female seducers" who encouraged males to participate in sinful affairs. Women were said (by male writers) to be more lustful than men. These popular misogynistic views of women undoubtedly derived from the male desire to control and subjugate females. Additionally, the stories of seductive women underlined the importance of male self-control over sexual desires.[97]

The warning about the dangerous power of erotic love and seductive women appears in the medieval tales of Alexander. The warning could be made by the author himself in a digression, which was a commonplace in this type of literature. Thomas of Kent in his *Le Roman de toute Chevalerie*, composed in the twelfth century offers a lengthy digression on the force of *amor* where he expresses views that would nowadays be considered misogynistic. In the passage dealing with Queen Candace's feelings towards and plans over Alexander, Thomas writes figuratively that romantic/erotic love (*amur*) is as gentle as a dove, cunning as a serpent, burning as a dragon, sly as a fox, cruel as a lion and tricky as the devil. Knights, pages, nobles and priests all encounter this danger. Thomas states that it was Eve who misled Adam into being judged by God. Thomas lists the graceful Joseph, the strong Samson, King David, the wise Solomon and the city of Troy as examples of those who suffered because of treacherous women. Then the author refers to Delilah, Tamar and Bathsheba as notorious archetypes of biblical women whose sexual influence on males had a sad outcome, while the virgin Mary is the only positive exemplary female figure. Thomas states that now Alexander himself fell into the trap when he encountered Candace.[98]

On some occasions, the warning about the deceptive power of erotic love is put into the mouth of Alexander's teacher Aristotle. The work *Secretum secretorum* warns about it and the seductive influence of females. It was translated from Arabic into Latin several times in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the earliest extant Arabic version claims to be a translation of a Syriac version, itself supposedly a translation of a letter from Aristotle to Alexander in Greek. Its probable origin is Arabic from the ninth or tenth century. In the work, Aristotle gives council to Alexander on a variety of matters, among them how to rule and how to protect himself from a poison-girl. According to the story, the Queen of the North sends to Alexander a girl whose touch is deadly dangerous. Aristotle helps Alexander to avoid this girl. Touching a girl in a sexual sense was something that a man had to be careful of, and this tale is clearly one in which the girl represents a tempting but

dangerous young woman. Aristotle was highly respected in the late Middle Ages, so works attributed to him or professing to report what he said, such as *Secretum Secretorum,* also gained high status. After some initial resistance to Aristotle's reception when many of his "lost" works were translated he was held in such high esteem that he was referred to simply as "the Philosopher."[99] But according to one tale, even he was endangered by the wiles of women. In this story, the great teacher warns his pupil Alexander about a foreign lady, often called Phyllis. However, she manages to twist the old teacher himself around her finger. Aristotle even lets Phyllis ride on his back and thereby becomes a laughing-stock. This story illustrates that mature men were not regarded as impervious to the spell of women but in constant danger of being manipulated or seduced by them and made to look fools.[100]

In Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* part of the process of becoming a man is a being aware of the dangerous side of erotic love. In these two works, Aristotle exhorts his young pupil to be alert to the potentially harmful impact of *amor*. Châtillon's Aristotle calls love a disease of the mind (*mentis morbus amor*) that should not break young Alexander's stout heart. If Alexander were to devote time to Venus, his freedom of mind would be senselessly destroyed.[101] In *Libro de Alexandre* Aristotle's warning has a more misogynistic tone Aristotle reminds young Alexander above all to be beware of love for women (*de amor de mugeres*). There is no mention of male lovers at all, which stresses the heterosexual norm. In the presentation females symbolise temptations. They are testers of real men and the task of a man is not to fall into their trap. There are many examples of how Alexander's story is medievalised in *Libro,* including the weaponry, geography, manners and religious beliefs, including Christian views of sexuality.[102] The anonymous author gives the following caution about the possible deadly consequences of erotic love: "He may lose his soul and be hated by God."[103] In this passage, Aristotle is a spokesman for Christian morality, reminding Alexander of the man's position before Almighty God. There is a clear allusion to the sin of fornication. "Losing his soul" raises the possibility that succumbing to the dangers might cause Alexander to end up in hell in the afterlife.

The highlighted passages of *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* represent the circumspect clerical attitude to erotic love and male sexuality in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Both authors belonged to the clergy and had evidently taken a pledge of celibacy. We do not find in the Classical material any episode where Aristotle gives detailed advice on sexual abstinence to young Alexander, so it is a medieval amendment to the literary tradition. A concept lacking in the Roman texts is that of sin and the idea that male extramarital relations and an active sex life offends God. The medieval view reflects the medieval monastic discourse on male chastity, which was directed as much against the behaviour of married or sexually active laymen as it was against the temptations of lustful women. Monks and priests were supposed to be celibate: males were expected to suppress their desires to the point that

they were eliminated. Unlike laymen, members of the clergy were unable to perform their masculinity by producing children or fighting in war, but they could demonstrate their masculine dominance by absolute abstinence from sex. In the passages considered above the true man would do everything he could to avoid angering God and remain by his faultless conduct in God's favour.[104]

In the age of the crusades, the Church also demanded purity of the crusaders and knights who went to fight against the Muslims in Palestine and Iberia or against the pagans in the Baltic region. The sermons and literature that were addressed to these crusaders presented male sexual self-mastery as virtues that had to be found in true servants of God. How well the knights could control their desires during and after the Crusade campaigns was a key to acquiring the favour of God. Conversely, it was thought that sexual immorality would bring God's disfavour on the enterprise. Penitential vows of chastity and sexual renunciation were made before the crusade, while immorality among the crusaders was believed to cause military failure. Undoubtedly, this contemporary background influenced the way Aristotle is presented as the spokesman of male sexual abstinence, given that Alexander was represented in the romances as a form of crusader.[105]

In *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* the critical tone when expressing male sexuality does not remain throughout the narrative, as in some parts of the text the beautiful royal females are presented as desirable objects for virile males. Both *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* include the encounter between Alexander and the amazon queen Thalestris, which derives from Curtius' *Historiae*. Particularly in the *Libro* there are even some eroticising additions to Curtius.[106] The beauty and the body of the amazon queen are described in detail, while the king's role as a man willing to have sexual intercourse with the queen is portrayed as a manly duty. After the detailed description of the amazon queen, her fine body, beautiful eyes and revealing dress, the author humorously states: "Of her great beauty I wish to tell you no more, for I fear I may make someone sin in their desire."[107]

In the storyline, Alexander promises he will fulfil all the queen's wishes and the amazon queen tells him she wants a child with Alexander. The sexual connotations are clear in Alexander's reply and in what follows: "The King said, "'I am delighted, I will willingly do it.' He leapt into the forest and gave the game good chase. The queen carried out her business in very good measure, and joyful and satisfied, returned to her kingdom."[108] The pursuit of women represented as a hunt was a common theme in medieval literature.[109] It can be found in the passage above, and this literary convention is a clear reflection of male dominance in the context of sexuality. It could be argued that in the passage the "chase" in the forest is depicted as foreplay prior to sexual intercourse. In a way the queen, depicted as extremely beautiful, is presented as a sex symbol and a dream come true, the fulfilment of male sexual fantasies. Simultaneously the passage can be regarded as an ode to male virility. Alexander as a virile conqueror of women does not avoid the situation when

his sexual potency is tested. The amazon queen gets her sexual satisfaction too and she is given her child. The exemplary manly man is capable of copulation and procreation. Interestingly, the anonymous author does not suggest that the king's sexual behaviour might be unmasculine in this occasion, although Thalestris was not his spouse. He could have presented the affair as adultery, since at this point of the narrative Alexander had already married Roxanne, but instead the king's virile behaviour receives positive treatment.

In the Hebrew *AR,* also composed in the thirteenth century, the approach is different. The level of sexual self-mastery is measured by the male's sexual capability when Alexander presents himself as a virile man in contrast to sexually impotent males whose abstinence is seen as the wrong kind of rejection of reproduction. The Indian Brahmans are presented as representatives of sexual abstinence, although their self-control is also one of the traits connected with their otherness as Indians.[110] In the β-recension of the Greek *AR,* Alexander reproaches the Brahmans for not reproducing, so that the king seems to represent the traditional view that manly and exemplary men must produce offspring.[111] However, in the Hebrew *AR* this idea is given added emphasis as an ode to manly virility in Alexander's letter replying to the Indian Brahmans. The king states that he knows the real reason why Brahmans do not commit adultery or incest and do not chase after women or seek indulgence.[112] Alexander concurs that self-control is good for all men, but claims the Indian Brahmans abstain from sex because they are physically incapable of indulging themselves with women. In Alexander's supposed letter the old Brahman wise men are humiliated and emasculated as impotent and their abstinence from sex has nothing to do with virtuous conduct. At the same time, in the letter Alexander presents himself as a sexually virile male who still knows how to master his sexual desires if needed. The passage seems to imply that mature men have weaker sexual desires than young males (or none) and thus self-mastery is less demanding or even unnecessary among them.

Le Roman de toute chevalerie and the Hebrew *AR* differ from the Greek, Armenian, Syriac and Latin versions since they depict Alexander as having sexual intercourse with the queen Candace.[113] In both works, Candace takes the initiative and seduces Alexander into bedding her. In *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* the detailed description of the queen's appearance includes erotising tones even though the author has earlier asserted that passionate love is dangerous and women are testers of men's integrity.[114] The anonymous author of the Hebrew *AR* introduces a lot of material from the Hebrew Bible into the text when the narrative suggests a parallel situation.[115] The story of Queen Candace filled with desire and passionate love for Alexander allows a biblical allusion to the encounter between Joseph and the adulterous wife of Potiphar. Taking the initiative, Candace calls Alexander to her chamber and says to him: "Lie with me."[116] These words are taken verbatim from the wife of Potiphar as reported in Genesis (39:7,12). In the Hebrew Bible, Joseph refuses to have sex with the wife of Potiphar, but Candace gets what

she wants. After embracing and kissing Alexander, she locks the door behind her and lies with him. In the aftermath, depicted in both *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* and the Hebrew *AR,* Candace speaks passionately to Alexander tries to persuade him to stay with her. But the king decides to leave and continue his campaign. This scene is a commonplace in epic poetry, where a male hero leaves his female lover because he must carry out his duties and proceed on his path to fame and glory. For example, in the Classical epics that were known in the Middle Ages, Odysseus leaves Circe and Calypso behind, and Aeneas turns down Queen Dido because he must fulfil his destiny and found the city of Rome. In the tales of Alexander's relationships with the amazon queen Thalestris and Queen Candace, the exemplary man may demonstrate his sexual virility but when required he has the willpower to leave his lover whose enticement to stay is threatening to deny him his destiny. In other words, the love affair does not prevent him from fulfilling his duties to the community.

Of the Alexander epics Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* offers probably the most easy-going approach to male sexuality. It has been noted that Ferdowsi's work presents female desire entirely neutrally and takes an understanding tone without the critical aspects appearing in the literature composed in medieval Europe.[117] The male desire for women is not a serious issue in the passages concerning Sekandar/Alexander. After Sekandar has married Roshanak/Roxanne, the daughter of Dara, the poet makes clear that the king had many beautiful women to sleep with. Ferdowsi writes that Sekandar started to stay awake at night because his mind was filled with the desire for women and he sought out soft and enticing places to be with them. His Indian physician, however, notices signs of weakness in the king's urine and realises that he has not slept properly for three nights. The physician reminds Sekander that a young man grows old quickly by sleeping with women. In the narrative the remedy for this insomnia is that the king starts to sleep alone without his beautiful women.[118] Even though the king prioritises a good night's sleep over spending his nights with pretty women, the narrative neither condemns sexual relations with several women nor presents it as somehow unmasculine conduct. In addition, beautiful womenfolk are not considered dangerous testers of male domination but one of the courtly privileges that were available to upper-class males. The plural "beautiful women" here undoubtedly refers to harem practices that were common in the Islamic world.[119] It reflects a world where polygamy and having multiple concubines were publicly acceptable practices, unlike in High and Late Medieval Europe. Ferdowsi's passage makes clear that the divergent views and ideals of sexuality and masculinity had an impact on the way the male hero was presented.

The medieval writings concerning Alexander's sexuality – analysed as expressions of ideal male sexuality – were multilayered. "True" males are willing and able to penetrate their wives and sometimes other females if needed and thereby assure sexual reproduction. Also, the sense of mastery of one's own body in terms of sexuality formed an important part of the masculine

ideal, as in the Greco-Roman antiquity. However, Christianity brought a stricter view of male sexuality where male desire towards women was monitored and labelled also from the religious perspective. If a male sex drive was too strong it could lead to sin, which would not only cause social disorder but eventually God's wrath and eternal punishment in Hell.

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It is not easy to identify Roman or medieval upper-class perceptions of male sexuality and the cultural expectations towards sexual behaviour from the source material. In his study of modern male sexuality, Horrocks states that the traditional parameters of sexuality where men are afraid to feel feminine or gentle could be regarded as a prison for men.[120] When it comes to the Classical and medieval world, we cannot say whether many upper-class men felt the rejection of allegedly "effeminate" or "passive" expressions of sexuality as somehow oppressive. Evidently, there were men who did not identify with the norms of hegemonic masculinity in terms of male sexuality. The existence of the masculine ideal of "penetrative" male sexuality and the impenetrability of the male body and its promotion may even have been a reaction to the marginalised versions of male sexuality.

The Roman and medieval texts reflect a world which put a premium on male dominance: it is the reactions of the male that matter and form the main object of interest for the authors, whereas women, depending on the literary context, are introduced as testers of male self-control or praised as objects of male sexual desire. Thus, these texts represent a patriarchal view of female sexuality.

The central ideal promoted in all the sources used here was that of self-controlled masculinity and masculine dominance. Since self-control was a trait that would lead to the state of masculine dominance and since effeminate males and women were regarded as unable to control their desires and passions, self-mastery was regarded as a sign of a "true" man. Both classical and medieval authors embraced self-mastery over sexual passions for upper-class males. Alexander rarely expresses his dominion over others by means of sexual penetration, but more often by sexual continency. By describing Alexander's sexual abstinence authors promoted a form of desired masculinity that involved controlling one's sexuality. On the other hand, by telling of Alexander's inability to master his passions and its negative consequences authors could present the same ideal of self-control.

In the sources analysed in this chapter male sexual practices were approached as expressions of domination. The author's eulogy of abstinence from sex derived from the idea that a true man can claim dominance not just over other males and females but also over his passions. In the premodern view of masculinity real men are not dominated by lust and physical desire - they overcome it. They are not dominated by beautiful women but manage to resist them as challenges to their integrity. At the same time, "true"

men can display their manly virility by sexually penetrating their spouses as demonstrations of their masculine dominance. This male virility is a desirable quality expected of an ideal man: a masculine male could not be impotent. By criticising and disdaining alleged effeminate males like Bagoas and Nectanebos some authors also promoted the ideal of male dominance as an expression of hegemonic masculinity. The fear of emasculation was directed towards all free-born males who would allow either their own passions or other males to control them.

The stories of Alexander's sexuality reminded the audience that the members of the Roman and medieval upper class should stay faithful to the shared gender roles which formed the backbone of society. The authors presented themselves as the supporters of the Roman or Christian sexual morals and the guardians of decent norms. The stories of Alexander's love-life enabled them to define the manifestations of condemnable male sexuality and sexually loose conduct in the Roman Empire and medieval Europe. At the same time, these texts praise heterosexual relations between royal males and females. According to the social mores they espouse, women of the same social status were impregnated by assertive males. The aim to acquire legitimate offspring obligated all males to do this no matter what their social status. Particularly in monarchies it was imperative that the male was a successful breeder securing the line of succession. Athenaeus' anecdote of Alexander's parents being worried about their son's virility underlines this aspect of desired manliness. The skill and ability to sexually dominate and when appropriate impregnate a woman had to be taught to a boy with the help of beautiful courtesans if there were reasons to doubt his virility.

In the medieval reception of Alexander' sexuality, we find both continuity and change. Christian writers and thinkers did not craft a new masculine ideal but shared and adapted the previous "pagan" conceptions of manliness and unmanliness when they wrote about male sexuality. Like their classical predecessors, medieval writers eulogised Alexander's self-mastery over sexual passions, whereas they removed the accounts of sexual misconduct by Alexander we encounter in Curtius.[121] All references to same-sexual relations were omitted. The discourse on active and passive roles in the sexual discourse seems to become a side-issue, or at least cannot be recognised from the textual level. Instead, Alexander's sex life is medievalised and made to correspond with contemporary views of ideal male sexuality where Christian morals demanded stricter sexual self-control. It can also be argued that the minor attention given to the king's sexuality in the earliest versions of the *AR* suited the medieval reception of Alexander's sexuality well.

In the modern western world, sexuality is easily regarded as a private sphere of life. However, premodern authors clearly give public meaning to privately carried-out sexual acts. This is of course partly related to the fact that Alexander is not an ordinary man but a king, a public figure occupying the highest position in the male hierarchy. Particularly in the Classical

texts the sexuality of Alexander is treated from the perspective of how it influenced others in the empire and whether it gave a positive or negative example within the community. In the case of the king, his sexual practices easily turned into public issues underlining the importance of self-mastery in sexual matters. In Curtius, the king's expressions of sexuality – his effeminate traits – are condemned above else because they were public issues and allegedly impacted the social order and the state of morality. On the other hand, in Plutarch the king's ability to abstain from sexual activity is a public feature of masculine dominance that served the cohesion of the Empire and gave a good example to all upper-class males. Maintaining the public image of a man as an active partner or penetrator was best assured by total avoidance of effeminate traits. If a man were to lose control over one aspect of his life, he was in danger of being considered effeminate and would be suspected of having effeminate traits also in other spheres of life. By contrast to the Classical world, in late Antiquity and the medieval world Christian teaching ensured that sexuality was related to one's status before God. Therefore, even if a man's questionable male sexual behaviour stayed behind closed doors it could still have a negative influence on his life (and afterlife). Thus, extramarital affairs – whether with a same- or opposite-sex partner – considered as sins committed against God, were something that could trouble the minds of medieval males even if carried on secretly.

In Alexander, the authors created an image of an exemplary man who completely mastered his sexual passions. How far the ideal propagated was realised as actual conduct among upper-class males is another question. Regardless of this, the fact that Alexander's abstinence was much admired proves the ideal itself existed and it was promoted. The Greek and Roman authors give the impression that normally males such as ordinary soldiers were sexually active and willing to use the services of prostitutes after successful campaigns. However, by their moralising remarks the authors of the Alexander histories and epics say that greatness comes by being an exceptional male and the greatness of Alexander relies on the fact that he differed from average males.

Notes

1 Lucian. *Her*. 4–6. For a discussion of Aetion's painting and the fresco in Pompeii, see Stewart (1993, 181–190).

2 Ogden (2011) offers the most detailed study on Alexander's sexuality. See also, Ogden (2009); Carney (2019); Chugg (2012). For a discussion on women in the story of the historical Alexander, see Carney (2003), (2006). For a detailed discussion on the nature of Alexander's and Hephaestion's relationship and whether they were lovers, see Reames-Zimmerman (1999); Müller (2018). Müller (2008) explores the medieval reception of Alexander by examining the king's relationship with women. Skinner (2010) considers the image of Alexander's sexuality in Oliver Stone's *Alexander* from the perspective of how sexuality was understood in the Greek world. On eunuch Bagoas in the ancient sources and his modern reception, see Baynham and Ryan (2018); Chugg (2022). On the reception of

Alexander's sexual relationship with Hephaestion in English-language novels, see Reames (2022). According to Reames the positive presentation of Alexander and Hephaestion as lovers has been emerged as a source of pride for the queer community. In addition, Llewellyn-Jones and Tougher (2022) have analysed how presentations of Alexander as "gay" have been used to make claims within modern gay communities.

3 Cf. Karras (2017, 4–5) who points out that in medieval society sex was something that someone does to someone else. This seems to be the case also in the Greco-Roman world.
4 Masterson and Rabinowitz (2015, 7).
5 Davidson (2009, 360–362).
6 Ormand (2009, 16–17, 75–90); Davidson (2009, 357).
7 Parker (1997, 48–50, 54–55); Williams (1999, 17–19).
8 Cf. Carson (1990, 137–145).
9 Williams (1999, 138–140, 157, 239–240).
10 Treggiari (1991, 1–13).
11 Karras (2017, 9) points out this in relation to medieval sexuality, but evidently also ancient Greeks and Romans were aware of this division.
12 Vuolanto (2015, 1, 179–192).
13 Southon (2017, 110–111).
14 Kuefler (2001, 77–96).
15 Kuefler (2001, 162, 166). For medieval descriptions of the sodomite's hell, see Burgwinkle (2004, 49, 125–127, 131).
16 Murray (2008, 43–51); Karras (2008, 52–67).
17 Cf. Karras (2003, 81–82).
18 Murray (1996, 129–139).
19 Karras (2017), in her study on medieval sexuality, presents the different approaches to medieval sexuality. She recognises three attitudes towards it: (1) negative and repressive; (2) lustful and playful; (3) violent. Cf. Karras (2017, 1–2).
20 Goldberg (2021, 13, 16).
21 Cf. Smith (2003, 85–87).
22 Trans. R. Waterfield. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 21.4–5: ἀλλ' Ἀλέξανδρος, ὡς ἔοικε, τοῦ νικᾶν τοὺς πολεμίους τὸ κρατεῖν ἑαυτοῦ βασιλικώτερον ἡγούμενος,…[…]… ἀντεπιδεικνύμενος δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἰδέαν τὴν ἐκείνων τὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐγκρατείας καὶ σωφροσύνης κάλλος, ὥσπερ ἀψύχους εἰκόνας ἀγαλμάτων παρέπεμψεν.
23 Beneker (2012, 16–17, 196–199); Smith (2003, 80–81). North (1966, 203) states that Aristotle is the first Greek writer doing this kind of separation between *σωφροσύνη* and *ἐγκράτεια*. For an example of author who treated *ἐγκράτεια* and *σωφροσύνη* as synonyms is Clement of Alexandria from the second century. North 1966, 334 (note 44).
24 For a detailed study on the uses of *σωφροσύνη* in Greek literature until Plato, see North (1966); Rademaker (2005). North (1966, 258–312) gives attention also to *σωφροσύνη* in Rome. In Plato the term denotes self-control or control of desires, and sometimes sensible or rational order of the soul. Plato links *σωφροσύνη* and *andreia* closely.
25 Rademaker (2005, 13–14, 257–262). Examples *σωφροσύνη* referring to male sexual self-control in the private sphere of life appear in the classical plays of Euripides. In the texts of the Attic orators being a *σώφρων* (*sofron*) citizen means having sexual self-control. Cf. Rademaker (2005, 151–152, 166, 234–238).
26 Beneker (2012, 128–129). Beneker argues that even though in his *On Moral Virtue* Plutarch makes the distinction between *σωφροσύνη* and *ἐγκράτεια,* in the *Life of Alexander* there appears to be no distinction between these concepts. Beneker also suggests that in Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* there is a reference that *σωφροσύνη* was absent later in Alexander's life when he kissed Bagoas. Plut. *Vit.*

Alex. 67.4. However, I see no clear hint that Plutarch intends the anecdote to appear in a negative light, and there is no suggestion that the king failed to display *σωφροσύνη* afterwards. Cf. Beneker (2012, 196–198).

27 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 4.4.

28 Beneker (2014, 507) suggests that Alexander offered a model of rational self-control, but not as an example of how a more ordinary man might attain that virtue.

29 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 21.4–5. In the same passage Plutarch writes that Barsine was the only woman Alexander slept with before marriage. In the following passage Plutarch praises both Barsine's beauty and her noble character. In addition, he states that she had received a Greek education (*παιδείαν Ἑλληνικήν*) and that the affair between Alexander and her followed Parmenion's suggestion. It is therefore possible that here Plutarch is suggesting that the king's relationship with Barsine was moderate and partly political in purpose.

30 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 22.1–4. Cf. Plutarch's aim to underline the king's self-control becomes evident also in the passage where Darius' eunuch eulogises Alexander's qualities, stating that Alexander displays *σωφροσύνη* towards Darius' womenfolk to an even greater extent than he displays *andreia* against the Persians in battle. Plut Alex. 30.5–7.

31 Xen. *Mem*. 1.3.8, 12–15; 4.5.9. Here I follow the findings of Beneker (2012, 199–204). Xenophon also praises King Agesilaus of Sparta for his sexual self-control. Xen. *Ages*. 5.2–3. In other passages of *Memorabilia*, it is stated that a man chosen as a leader should be a slave of neither his belly nor his lust, and that *ἐγκράτεια* should be demanded from all men no matter what their status. Xen. *Mem*. 1.5.1–5.

32 North (1966, 201).

33 Plut. *Mor. De cur*. 522a–b; Plut. *Mor. De fort*. 97d–e; Plut. *Mor. Reg. et Imp. Apophth*. 179e. When writing about Alexander's exemplary self-control towards food and sex, Plutarch also mentions Alexander's self-mastery Evidently, the king's self-mastery and ability to perform *σωφροσύνη* is related to the fact that he calls Alexander as "the greatest man who ever lived" and one of the reasons why he labels himself as "greatest admirers of Alexander." Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 335f; Plut. *Mor. De sera*. 557B.

34 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 22.3. In his essay *On the fortune or the virtue of Alexander the Great* Plutarch writes that that the king did not display *σωφροσύνη* and *ἐγκράτεια* due to fortune. Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 339a–b.

35 Arr. *an*. 4.20.1–3.

36 Ibid. 4.19.1–6.

37 Ibid. 7.28.2: ἡδονῶν δὲ τῶν μὲν τοῦ σώματος ἐγκρατέστατος.

38 On Curtius' critical views on female prostitution, see Peltonen (2021).

39 Cf. Curt. 10.1.42.

40 North (1966, 265) states that sometimes Latin *continentia* denotes Greek *ἐγκράτεια* and *temperantia* denotes to *σωφροσύνη*, while on some occasions *continentia* and *temperantia* are used as synonyms.

41 Braund (2012, 85–89). Julius Caesar established it as a personal benefaction rather than benefaction of the state on foreigners and Roman citizens. He was the first to use it as a political tool by displaying mercy towards those who fought against him.

42 In premodern warfare during the sack of a city soldiers were given freedom to rape and pillage the citizens as a reward for the hardships of the siege. Cf. Gilliver (2007, 153); Souza (2007, 246–247); Roth (2007, 397); Harris (1979, 50–3, 263–4).

43 Diodorus calls the king's noble treatment of Darius' wife and family the greatest good deed done by Alexander. In this passage Diodorus stresses the pity (*ἔλεος*)

towards those being conquered rather than the sexual aspects of the treatment. According to Diodorus, Alexander's action was due to wisdom. In contrast to Curtius, Plutarch and Arrian, Diodorus does not refer to sexual self-control but to the king's ability to show mercy and clemency towards those being defeated. Diod. Sic. 17.38.3–7.

44 Langlands (2006, 21–24, 39–41, 99–103, 107–108, 119–120).
45 Curt. 3.12.1–18.
46 Curt. 4.10.24.
47 Curt. 3.11.21–23. 5.6.3–7.
48 Curt. 5.6.8.
49 Curt. 10.1.1–5.
50 Cf. Kuefler (2001, 80–81).
51 As an example, see Isoc. *Ad. Nic.* 3.33–38. 1.21. Rademaker (2005, 241–242). Tyrants who had absolute power gave way to their harmful passions. Cf. Pl. *Resp.* 571a–575a; Arist. *Pol.* 1314b.28–36.
52 See notes 24 and 25 of the first Chapter.
53 Cf. Goldberg (2021, 29, 49, 124).
54 Xen. *Cyr.* 6.4.7.
55 Liv. 26.50.1–8; Polyb. 10.19.3. On Scipio's sexual self-control, see Goldberg (2021, 47–49). Also, Cato is presented as a man who managed to display self-control over all passions, see Liv. 39.40.10. Moore (2019) suggests that the story of Alexander treating kindly Persian captive women derives from Callisthenes, and Polybius "borrowed" it in shaping his virtuous image of Scipio.
56 Gell. *N.A.*7.8.1–5.
57 *Hist. Aug. Pes. Nig.* 6.6; Amm. Marc. 24.4.27; 25.4.2–3; Ambros. *De ob. Valent.* 74; Procop. *Goth.* 7.1.11–12. Cf. Kuefler 78–80, 170–171.
58 Cf. Hdt. 5.18. Procop. *Goth.* 8.10.6.
59 Johnson (2014, 136–137). Cf. Taylor (2013, 158–159). For the discussion on the status of men as protectors of women and girls and its connection with patriarchal order, see Tuana (2018, 133); Wood (2006, 384–386).
60 Basil. *Ad adolesc.* 7.9. Cf. Matt. 5:28. For a further discussion on the anecdote in the Byzantine sources above, see Neville (2022, 379–385).
61 In the *AR* the king comes across as almost asexual because his sexual conduct of any type is omitted. Cf. Nawotka (2017, 28); Stoneman (1994b, 123).
62 *AR* 2.20, 22 (Stoneman 1991, 110, 113, 114); Arm. *AR* 197, 204 (Wolohojian 1969, 104–105, 109–119); Syr. *AR* 2.12, 14 (Budge 1889, 81, 85–86); Jul. Val. 2.20, 22. 1025–1030, 1135–1155 (Foubert 2014, 118, 121). Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* gives a detailed description of the first encounter and marriage feast of Sekandar (Alexander) and Roshanak (Roxanne), see Davis (2007a, 468–469, 474–475). As an example of the romanticised tone of their wedding Ferdowsi writes: "*Then lovely as the moon, the princess dazed Sekandar's wondering sight – he stared amazed at her as though she were compounded of intelligence and beauty mixed with love.*" (Trans. Dick Davis)
63 *AR*, (β) 2.17 (Stoneman 1991, 107): πλὴν αἰσχρὸν ἡμᾶς ἐστι τοὺς ἄνδρας νικήσαντας ὑπὸ γυναικῶν ἡττηθῆναι.
64 Cf. *AR* 1.4–1.14 (Stoneman 1991, 37–46). In some medieval versions of the *AR*, as in the *Roman d'Alexandre* of Alexander of Paris, the affair between Nectanebos and Olympias is entirely omitted. The *Roman d'Alexandre* presents Nectanebos as one of the teachers of Alexander. There is no liaison with Olympias and he is not Alexander's father, see Alex. Paris. 1.16 (Harf-Lancner 1994, 95). The reason for this omission is probably the immoral aspect of the adulterous relationship between Olympias and Nectanebos, which would make Alexander an illegitimate son and, following the rules that were increasingly being followed in Europe at the time when the work was written, ineligible to be Philip's heir. In Fulgentius'

On the ages of the world and man the tale of Dictanabus (Nectanebos) was an attempt to conceal the adulterous affairs of Olympias, see Fulg. *De aet. mund. et hom.* 10.37.19–20. Cf. Oros. 3.16.12.

65 Arm. *AR* 6 (Wolohojian 1969, 25); Syr. *AR* 1.4 (Budge 1889, 4). In the Greek *AR* (*AR* 1.4) it is stated that Nectanebos "began to lust after her beauty."

66 Syr. *AR* 1.7 (Budge 1889, 8).

67 for a critique of Roxanne's female figure in Stone's film as stereotypical see, Carney (2010, 154–157).

68 This downfall is related to the king's success which has gone to his head and corrupted his self-view, handled in Chapter 6.

69 Curt. 6.5.23; 10.1.25–29, 36–37. Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 67.7. Ath. 13.603a-b. Cf. Ael. *VH.* 3.23. Tarn (1948, 319–322) regarded Bagoas as an invented figure and the stories related to him as a way of attacking Alexander by the peripatetic school. Cf. Badian (1958); Ogden (2009, 213–217); Ogden (2011, 167–170) does not explicitly deny the historicity of Bagoas. Chugg (2012, 152–164) sees Bagoas as a historical figure who was also entrusted with governmental and diplomatic duties. Nor do Baynham and Ryan (2018, 616–618) regard Bagoas as an invented figure. Baynham and Ryan (2018, 625) remind us that Plutarch calls Bagoas *ἐρώμενος* (*erṓmenos*), not *κίναιδος* (*kínaidos*), which could indicate that Plutarch wanted to include "a degree of respectability."

70 Rudolf von Ems'*Alexanderroman,* composed in Middle High German, was based on Curtius' *Historiae*, but like Châtillon, Rudolf does not mention Bagoas. However, it must be added that this work ends with the decision of Bessus' followers to hand him over to Alexander, roughly corresponding to Curtius' Book 7. For Vasco da Lucena's translation of Curtius and his decision to transform the eunuch Bagoas into the beautiful maiden Bagoe, see Collins and Keene (2019, 180).

71 Llewellyn-Jones (2002, 35). According to Chugg (2022, 180, 194) Alexander's positive attitudes towards eunuch institution was due to Xenophon's *Cyropaideia* and his imitation of Cyrus the Elder.

72 Curt. 6.5.22–23.

73 Curt. 10.1.26: *mares ducere, qui stupro effeminarentur*.

74 Cf. Williams (1999, 142–143).

75 Chugg (2022, 185–186, 193–194, 198) argues that Curtius' source on this passage about Bagoas was most likely *History* of Cleitarchus of Alexandria, and that his critical attitude towards Bagoas derives from Cleitarchus' work. As an important reason for the critical treatment of Bagoas, Chugg sees the link between eunuch's influence on the King and the notorious Persianiasing phase of Alexander's reign.

76 In Curtius Orsines, who is sentenced to death, exclaims to Bagoas: "I had heard that women once reigned in Asia; this however is something new, for a eunuch to reign!" Trans. John Yardley. *Audieram," inquit, "in Asia olim regnasse feminas; hoc vero novum est, regnare castratum*. Curt. 10.1.37.

77 Baynham and Ryan (2018, 618) (note 19) refer to Briant (2002, 272) and remind that eunuchs in the ancient Persia were also valued because of their alleged trustworthiness and freedom from nepotism. Thus, the Roman critical and attacking image of eunuchs was not the only one that existed in the ancient world.

78 For general studies of Roman prostitution, see Stumpp (1998); Mcginn (2004); Strong (2016). On Curtius' views on prostitution and his digression on the Babylonian prostitution, see Peltonen (2021).

79 Cf. Edwards' study (1997) on why professions of prostitutes, male actors and gladiators were regarded as antithesis of honour, *infames*.

80 Curt. 5.7.1–12. Cf. Hdt. 5.18. The passage can be related to the Roman literary topos where women are considered as a threat to martial virtues. Cf Mustakallio

(1999, 56, 59–61). The military discipline of the Macedonian army suffered because it stayed too long in the city and became affected by the harmful practices of the locals.

81 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 47.4. Arr. *an*. 4.19.5. Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 332E. Usually scholars do not deny the possibility that Alexander loved the Bactrian princess. Cf. Holt (2006, 90).

82 Curt. 8.4.21–29.

83 Trans. J. C. Rolfe. Curt. 8.4.29: *Hoc modo rex Asiae et Europae introductam inter convivales ludos matrimonio sibi adiunxit, e captiva geniturus, qui victoribus imperaret*.

84 Tac. *Ann*. 2.73.

85 Alexander kept the Rhodian Barsine as his concubine and married first the Bactrian princess Roxanne and then Stateira, the daughter of Darius and Parysatis, daughter of Ochus. His conduct was against the set ideals for male sexuality in Roman society.

86 Trans. J. C. Yardley. Just. *Epit*. 12.7.9–11: *Quae cum se dedidisset ei, concubitu redemptum regnum ab Alexandro recepit, inlecebris consecuta, quod armis non poterat*; *filiumque ab eo genitum Alexandrum nominavit, qui postea regno Indorum potitus est. Cleophis regina propter prostratam pudicitiam scortum regium ab Indis exinde appellata est*. Orosius, whose account often follows Justin, similarly states: "The queen bought her kingdom back by sleeping with him [Alexander]". Oros. 3.19.1. (Trans. A. T. Fears)

87 Cf. Ogden (2011, 150–151). Propertius and Pliny the Elder refer to Cleopatra as the "prostitute queen" (*regina meretrix*). Prop. 3.11.39–41; Plin. *HN*. 9.119. Peltonen (2022b, 359–360).

88 Williams (1999, 16–17, 62–63).

89 Ath. 13.603, a–b.

90 Ath. 10.435.

91 Peltonen (2019a, 41, 44–45).

92 Liv. 39.42–43.

93 Plut. *Vit. Pomp*. 48.5–7.

94 On Antony's, see Peltonen (2022b, 364–367).

95 Goldberg (2021, 43–44). On Tiberius, see Suet. *Tib*. 43–45. On Commodus, see *Hist. Aug. Com*. 1.7; 5.4–11. On Caligula, see Suet. *Calig*. 24, 36, 41. Cf. Adams (2007, 208–209). Kuefler (2001, 28–29, 89). On Elagabalus, see Rantala (2020, 121–126).

96 In the medieval societies sodomy was a vague and troubling term which referred to same-sex acts or attractions as well as all kinds of other sinful activity. Those practicing sodomy, including a variety of non-reproductive bodily acts, were called "sodomites." For the definitions of sodomy and its uses, see Burgwinkle (2004, 1–6, 22–23).

97 For the idea of women as seducers of men and the misogynistic views that existed in the Middle Ages, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski (2007, 569–572).

98 *Rom. de toute chevalerie* 513.7610–7645 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 607–609). Also, in the dialogue between Alexander and Candace the references to biblical figures are made. Candace also warns Alexander that world is full examples of cunning females. *Rom. de toute chevalerie* 519.7720–7730 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 615–617).

99 One reason that the previously unknown (in Latin Europe before the twelfth century) works of Aristotle were suspect in the eyes of the Church was that almost all translations were made from Arabic, having earlier been translated by Muslim scholars from Greek. In the Latin West knowledge of Greek and Greek-language works was rare before the Renaissance, hence also the prominence of Latin-language works on Alexander (such as Curtius) as sources for the Latin *AR*.

100 Sarton (1930, 8–13). For a detailed discussion of the exemplary story, see Smith (1995, 66–103). Smith calls it as the most popular single example of the power of women in the late Middle Ages. Henri d'Andeli's *Lai d"Aristote* from the early thirteenth century offers another version of the story.
101 Chât. Alex. 1.164–174 (Pritchard 1986, 40–41). Cf. Müller (2008, 270).
102 For the examples of medievalisation in *Libro*, see Michael (1970, 28–84, 176–247); Rabone (2022, 246–249).
103 Trans. Peter Such & Richard Rabone. Lib. Alex., 53–54: *puede perder su alma e Dios lo aborrez*. Cf. *Lib. Alex*. 1706.
104 For a discussion on monastic and clerical views of male sexuality and masculinity, see Murray (2004, 25–37). For the medieval gender system and sexuality, see Mcnamara (1999).
105 Holt (2010, 193–197); Brundage (1985); Jones (2019, 240) states that the demand for sexual renunciation was one difference between Christian crusaders and the Muslims who participated in the jihad.
106 Chât. *Alex*. 8.1–48; *Lib. Alex*. 1868–1888. Cf. Curt. 6.5.24–32. For the amazon queen Thalestris in the Roman and medieval imagination, see DiMarco (1996); Peltonen (2022c).
107 Trans. Peter Such & Richard Rabone. *Lib. Alex*. 1879: *De la su fermosura, non quiero mas contar, temo fer alguno de voluntad pecar*.
108 Trans. Peter Such & Richard Rabone. *Lib. Alex*. 1888: *Dixo el rey: "plaz me, esto fare de grado." Dio salto en la selva, corrio bien el venado. Recabdo la reina rica ment' su mandado, pero traye el miedo al pescueco colgado.*
109 Most likely it can be found from all sorts of societies, going back to hunter-gatherer ones. For a discussion of comparing the hunt to the chase, or pursuit of woman in medieval literature, see Thiébaux (2014, 144–166). Thiébaux makes the remark that on some occasions the male narrator could present himself as an object of a desperate chase made by woman. Thus, sometimes men could also be presented as the quarry.
110 For Brahman sexual abstinence as exemplary trait in literary tradition a literary topos, see Di Serio (2020, 62–65).
111 *AR* (β) 3.6 (Stoneman 1991, 133). Cf. Pallad. *De gentibus Indiae* 1.13 (Stoneman 1994a, 37–38).
112 Heb. *AR* 100 (Kazis 1962, 142).
113 Similarly, in the late thirteenth-century metrical *Kyng Alisaunder* composed in Middle English, Alexander sleeps with Candace. For the Candace episode in *Kyng Alisaunder*, see Chism (2007, 29–35).
114 *Rom. de toute chevalerie* 522.7750–7760 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 619–620). The queen is said to have dressed in a tight and tiny silky dress and they went to bed to speak politely of love.
115 Kazis (1962, 49–50).
116 Heb. *AR* 109 (Kazis 1962, 145).
117 Davis (2007b, 73).
118 Davis (2007a, 481–482).
119 Campo (2009, 291–293).
120 Horrocks (1997, 164).
121 Cf. Müller (2008, 270–273).

6 Masculine Emotion Display and State of Mind

> With soldiers neither their indignation nor their joy is restrained; we are carried away with violence to all emotions. We blame, we praise, we pity, we show anger, just as the present emotion affects us.[1]
>
> – Curtius, *Historiae*

> Man whose achievements are seemingly so great, should at the same time possess the power to govern his passions.[2]
>
> – Arrian, *Anabasis*

Emotions have had a significant influence on events in world history. Displays of emotion are typically viewed as gendered expressions, regulated by expectations and norms shared within the community. The different views on proper masculine and feminine emotions and the proper way of mastering them are studied in this chapter. In the Classical and medieval reception of Alexander, he is presented as an emotional man expressing his desires, pride, anger and grief. Considering his status as an exemplary man, both imitated and admired; it is interesting to explore how emotions are presented in the literary portraits of the Macedonian world conqueror. There are also other male figures in the narratives reflecting views of emotion display and self-control.

The quotation above, taken from Curtius' *Historiae,* is part of Amyntas' plea addressed to the Macedonian assembly. The Macedonian commander Amyntas, who had served with distinction in Alexander's army, was accused of taking part in Philotas' plot against Alexander.[3] In the plea, Amyntas states that soldiers are inclined to be impulsive and influenced by all kind of emotions. Curtius uses the word *affectus,* which can refer to condition, state (of body/mind), feeling, mood and emotion. According to Amyntas' argument, the average soldier does not have the capacity to control his reactions, regardless of whether the impetus is anger or joy. Instead, ordinary soldiers are easily carried away by the moment, so to speak. They react to what they see and hear around them, and simply cannot do anything but follow their instincts. Amyntas' alleged words are conventional and reflect Roman views of emotions. The portrait of soldiers as impulsive and easily affected by many emotions appears also

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in Tacitus.[4] The histories of Alexander are full of narratives which give the impression that display of emotions was the norm not only among Macedonian soldiers but also among upper-class males. Besides Alexander, Macedonian generals, as well as their Persian enemies, were inclined to display their emotions to an extent that might surprise the modern reader.

Concerning the reception of Alexander the Great, there appears to be a clear and striking collision between practice and ideal: emotions and passions are accepted as part of the force that exists among males generally, while at the same time authors want to highlight the importance of monitoring and mastering them. Some emotions should be suppressed while others are accepted, and even praised if expressed with moderation and at the right moment. The critical approach to emotions depicted as harmful and unmasculine is apparent in the second quoted passage above. In that passage Arrian explicitly states that men of distinction must govern their passions and not behave like the soldiers Amyntas mentions in Curtius' script. As I show below, Alexander is portrayed as a man who both succeeded and failed to monitor his emotions. However, essential to ancient and medieval authors writing about Alexander's emotional displays was their own views on emotions and what they regarded as masculine or feminine emotions in the contemporary world.

The history of emotions has recently become a topic of close inquiry (cf. Boddice 2019). Also, classical scholars have started to examine the way emotions were understood in the ancient and medieval worlds and how emotions can be detected in the textual evidence (cf. Cairns 2008, Chaniotis 2012, 2013). Scholars have studied emotions like anger (Braund & Most 2003; Harris 2001) and openly shedding tears (Fögen 2009; Vekselius 2018) in the Classical world. Medievalists have also given attention to emotions and how they appear in different sources (Rosenwein 2018; Spencer 2019). Nevertheless, a gender approach to emotions still offers fresh insight into the function of emotions in premodern societies.

This chapter examines how ancient and medieval authors understood ideal manliness in displays of emotion and maintenance of the correct state of mind. It seems there is a correct or an incorrect way to express one's emotions and control oneself. How should a manly man react to surrounding circumstances and the circumstances he faces? What is his reaction at moments of success, loss, happiness, or despair, and how does he react to mistakes? The first subchapter below focuses on anger, the second on displaying grief. The last subchapter concentrates on the proper state of mind and emotions like *cupido* (desire) and *superbia* (pride) that related to the self-view.[5]

From anger condemned to justified wrath

Homer's *Iliad* famously begins with a reference to the wrath (*mênis*) of Achilles towards Agamemnon. Whether the poet condemns this anger or not is open to dispute. Some scholars have argued that in Homer Achilles' wrath is justified since its divine.[6] Anger is a central quality of Alexander's personality:

like his hero Achilles, he was prone to it. Yet – as will be shown below – often in Classical sources this feature of Alexander is *not* presented as justified divine wrath but strongly condemned as a threat to the community. Usually in the Greek and Roman world, strong anger was regarded as a harmful emotion that males were expected to avoid. In our sources, the hegemonic masculine ideal of dominance encountered the requirement of self-control.

Besides love and hate, anger was one of those emotions that not only aroused interest as a popular theme of epic but was also a subject of speculation among Greek and Roman intellectuals. Even though the gods of Mount Olympus showed anger sometimes with good reason, most often men were *not* expected to express strong-anger emotions. Many philosophers, historians and dramatists of the Classical period encouraged their audiences to control their anger and presented strong-anger emotions as an unmasculine trait that true men should avoid. Male citizens of the Greek polis were expected to control themselves, in contrast to uncivilised "barbarians" whose kings were usually presented as angry despots.[7]

Philosophers had different views on whether anger was a desirable emotion or not. According to Aristotle, there were proper ways to be angry (*orgḗ*). In his opinion, one should not avoid anger as such, but be angry with the right people for the right reasons. However, in the Hellenistic period, the Stoic school took the view that all *orgḗ* should be avoided. Thus, rage or losing one's temper was not considered a sign of manliness, but according to the Stoic worldview a feature that made a man effeminate and weak. Roman intellectuals who followed Stoic doctrines depicted anger as an avoidable and unmanly quality belonging to uncivilised barbarians and not appropriate for the Roman upper class. Authors like Seneca the Younger, Plutarch and Ammianus Marcellinus branded anger as a womanish vice. In the Roman literature, anger was regarded as an emotion that appeared more frequently in women than in men, and more in young men than old men. In his *On the control of anger* Plutarch admitted that there were those who viewed anger as a positive trait that produced activity, boldness and fighting against evil. However, in Greco-Roman literature, the critical approach to strong anger was prevalent.[8]

Cicero, Livy, Velleius, Valerius Maximus, Seneca, Curtius, Tacitus, Arrian and Justin all mention Alexander's inclination to anger (*ira*, *iracundia, orgḗ*). Unsurprisingly, this trait is not presented in a positive context or as a masculine feature of the king; on the contrary, it leads him to demonstrate his masculine dominance in wrong and condemned ways. According to Valerius Maximus, Alexander's anger (*Alexandrum iracundia*) made the king murder three of his friends, Lysimachus, Cleitus and Callisthenes, almost destroying his posthumous reputation and divine status.[9] In Curtius' *Historiae* anger is presented as the most injurious and prominent vice of the Macedonian king. When someone opposes the king's plans or when things are not going as Alexander wishes them to, he becomes extremely angry and cannot control himself. However, it is also a characteristic that Curtius connects with the

king's young age, as shown in Chapter 3. This does not alter the impression that in Curtius display of anger is presented as unmasculine behaviour and a negative trait. When the Tyrian envoys prevent Alexander from coming to sacrifice to Hercules in their main town Alexander loses his temper, and Curtius remarks: "Alexander could not restrain his anger (*ira*), which as a rule he was unable to control."[10] According to Curtius, this was not the only time when the king lost his temper. He refers to the ideal of self-control, which Alexander failed to exert. In the narrative, the result is that Alexander decides to show to the Tyrians that resisting him is a great mistake, and when the city is finally taken, he punishes them in a way that Curtius regards an as "awful spectacle," by crucifying 2000 male citizens. The grim result of the king's rage was uncontrollable cruelty.[11]

The narratives of Alexander's murder of his general and companion Cleitus during a drunken quarrel remember it as proof of the destructive force of anger.[12] In the versions of Curtius, Justin and Arrian the quarrel and its aftermath are not presented as desirable expressions of male dominance but as an unmasculine failure in self-control. During the banquet Cleitus provokes Alexander by disparaging the king's achievements, which makes the king furious. Curtius emphasises the role rage played in the episode by mentioning three times that Alexander let his anger towards Cleitus grow and as a result the king eventually killed his companion.[13] Curtius adds that after the anger had left Alexander's mind and the effects of intoxication had faded, the king clearly perceived the enormity of the crime. Curtius mentions that it belongs to human nature (*natura hominis*) to consider matters after and not before they occur. Thus, Alexander's action is presented as an example of something typical of people.[14] Curtius makes it clear that Cleitus did not control his tongue either, but under the influence of wine started to disparage Alexander's achievements. So Cleitus felt anger towards Alexander as well.[15] Therefore, both parties were guilty of not controlling their emotions. Curtius thinks that the manly man should control his emotions and avoid extreme reactions, even if his comrades were to provoke him.

Justin's lengthy account of Alexander's anger and the murder of Cleitus, also composed in Latin, resembles that of Curtius. It states that after the king's anger (*ira*) dissipated, Alexander could reflect on (*aestimatio*) what he had done. Because the king understood that he had killed his friend under the influence of anger (*iracunde*) his feelings of remorse appeared as strong as his wrath. Justin writes: "As violently shaken by remorse as he was earlier by anger, he decided to die."[16] In Justin's presentation Alexander acted impulsively, much like the ordinary soldiers in Curtius' passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

Arrian's *Anabasis* is full of passages presenting Alexander as the ideal man and monarch. Yet when it comes to self-mastery and displaying his anger, even he finds reason for criticism. In one digression Arrian states that happiness comes to a person if he governs his passions.[17] We know that Arrian was a pupil of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus and clearly he shared Stoic views of

self-mastery. When Arrian writes about the murder of Cleitus, he mentions that in this case of anger (*orgḗ*) and drunken behaviour (*paroinía*) Alexander failed to control himself.[18] In this narrative of the quarrel neither Alexander nor Cleitus show self-mastery, and the end result is that the king decides to kill his companion. Arrian states that "a man of sense" (*anḗr sṓphronōn*) should never let these two vices control him. A man of sound of mind is temperate and moderate and exerts self-control. According to Arrian the true man uses his reason to master his impulses.

Plutarch, who associated anger with women, does not present Alexander as an angry monarch in his essay *On the control of anger*, but mentions the ways in which the king managed to control himself even though he was provoked. The image of Alexander as an angry tyrant did not fit with Plutarch's idea of Alexander as a sophisticated philosopher-king and exemplary man. Probably for this reason, he does not hint at the king's alleged tendency to anger. In Plutarch's *Life of Alexander,* the murder of Cleitus was not Alexander's fault even though the king lost his temper, but it was a consequence of divine punishment and bad timing.[19]

In the works of Seneca the Younger Alexander is used as an example of a monarch who had a propensity to harmful anger and rage. Seneca was Nero's tutor and evidently the question of whether a ruler could control his anger and avoid rage was important to him. Seneca's critique of Alexander's anger is related to his critical approach to Aristotle's views of anger. In Seneca's work *On Anger* Alexander is a person liable to anger (*obnoxius irae*). In this context, Alexander is presented as the pupil of Aristotle, and one reason for Alexander's inclination to anger was his teacher, who taught that it was possible to show anger correctly. Thus, the critical view of Alexander as the slave of anger was directed against Aristotelian views of anger and promoted Stoic thinking that rejected outright any conception of anger as acceptable.[20] Again, in Seneca's *On Clemency* anger is unmanly and womanish feature which makes a man beastlike. In this work, Seneca offers a portrait of Alexander turning into a wild beast with lion's teeth and maw, demonstrating that besides femininity there were also other categories contrary to masculinity such as bestiality. Alexander's uncontrollable *ira* made him as cruel (*crudelitas*) as a wild beast. It is interesting that this passage also gives the king lionlike features, but they are not positive as in some contexts, instead being negative traits belonging to the tyrant and the man who has entirely failed to control his emotions and given way to anger, and who thus cannot show clemency and mercy. The manly man should endure insults and by doing so succeed in living according to the divine Nature (*lógos*, *ratio*), acting differently from Alexander, who killed his companions like Cleitus under the influence of anger.[21]

Narratives of Alexander's ire emasculate the king and emphasise those moments when the king fails to behave in a manly fashion and display moderation. However, the idea that anger was a natural and desirable emotion that could be displayed on the battlefield can be detected in some of the passages.

For example, in Justin's account of the Cleitus episode, the shocking outcome of which the king himself understood, was that the king had started to act similarly in banquets as he would fighting fully armed in battle. In battle, he terrified his enemies – a positive feature – whereas now he had begun to terrify his friends and kinsmen.[22] This passage indicates that in war it was desirable and justified to display anger towards one's armed enemies, but when dealing with one's fellow-citizens the context was radically different. Unbalanced cruelty and groundless revenge and violence against unarmed civilians in the context of warfare were criticised in the narratives as well.[23] In the literature, these kinds of acts of anger and rage in military operations are not desirable aspects of hegemonic masculinity and the masculine ideal of dominance. According to the authors, true men can control their emotions and base their actions on reason even when dealing with their enemies. What mattered was why and against whom one displayed anger and used violence. If anger in revenge was groundless and became too extreme, then it had to be heavily criticised and set against the demand for self-controlled masculinity. Whereas Aristotle had argued that anger might be useful, there were also views, like those of the Stoics, that anger in all forms and all contexts was wrong and unmanly behaviour.

Although displaying anger towards Cleitus receives criticism, the feelings of remorse the king allegedly expressed are presented as masculine behaviour in Arrian and Plutarch. According to Arrian, in the aftermath of the Cleitus episode Alexander genuinely repented. Arrian explicitly commends the king since he did not defend his conduct but genuinely repented. Arrian writes that "most men," when they recognise they have made mistake, defend it in the hope of concealing it. In the epilogue of *Anabasis* Arrian returns to this theme and states that Alexander was the only king whose nobility moved him to feel remorse for his misdeeds. For Arrian feeling remorse is desirable for a man, although men can very rarely express it. According to him, the only remedy for a misdeed is to acknowledge one's error and show clearly that one repents it. In Plutarch's *Moralia* Alexander's grief over Cleitus is compared with what Plato felt when Socrates died. From the modern perspective this sounds exaggerated and merely reveals how Plutarch tries to defend Alexander's display of emotions. In his *Life of Alexander* Plutarch also praises the king's ability to show remorse, which showed that he had the capacity for self-improvement.[24]

Alexander's inclination to anger may be historical and the result of an imitation of his "ancestor" Achilles, whom he knew from *Iliad*. It is also possible that some of the early Hellenistic authors did not stress or even present Alexander's anger as a negative trait but considered it justified wrath towards injustices. The contemporary court historian Callisthenes may have written about Alexander as a new epic hero who felt justified anger towards the Persians and Darius and who was destined to lead the Hellenes into a new Trojan War.[25] Since uncontrollable anger was a mark of a tyrant already in Herodotus – who claims that Cambyses and

Xerxes acted in this way – it would be unlikely that the first accounts of Alexander's reign would have included a critical image of the king as prone to harmful anger. However, in the surviving Roman texts analysed above there is hardly any reference to Alexander's justified anger or to wrath that served the common good. In these texts, males must control their anger and avoid open display of it since that was likely to make them carry out deeds that they would later regret. Even though the masculine man fights aggressively in war and kills enemies he should not let anger determine his actions when the battle ends. The passages concerning Alexander's excessive anger were also related to a commonplace in Classical literature, appearing from Herodotus to Ammianus Marcellinus, which underlined that rulers in particular should restrain their rage. Even though power and dominance belonged to the sphere of hegemonic masculinity, uncontrollable anger was not part of that masculine ideal among the Roman upper-class.

Anger is a prominent part of Alexander's personality in the medieval texts. In them we can even recognise an increased number of references to the king's anger. However, unlike in the Roman world, Alexander is not criticised for showing anger. Instead, his anger is justified and serves a purpose. On some occasions, the medieval authors omitted the critique towards anger that had appeared in their Classical source material and presented it as a positive quality protecting the king's honour and defending his comrades.

In the medieval Scandinavian sagas and poems we sometimes come across manly warriors, *berserkers*, who fought in a fury and were therefore first-class fighters. This idea was related to the way Viking warriors were expected to fight fiercely on the battlefield.[26] In Europe, there seems to have existed a warrior culture where wrath and strong-anger emotional displays were considered a manly trait before the arrival of Christianity. Even though the Old and New Testament and the writings of Church Fathers contain lot of passages where wrath or anger are criticised and considered a sin against God (wrath was categorised also as one of the seven deadly sins), there exists also the idea of divine anger, which has positive connotations in Judeo-Christian theology.[27]

For the medieval views of justified anger important concepts are the wrath of God (*ira Dei*) and the anger of the king (*ira regis*). According to medieval thought – deriving particularly from the Old Testament and from the Revelation of John – God was expected to express justified anger by punishing sinners and bad people who opposed him. Again, in the synoptic gospels Jesus displays anger in a manly way when driving away the money changer from the temple. This fury of God and his son was released to bring justice and therefore thinking about it prevented people from committing sins or rebelling against their earthly representatives such as kings or bishops. Even though the medieval elite recognised the injurious side of anger and the ideal of self-restraint, mortal men could act as a manifestation of God's justified wrath. Particularly monarchs who operated with divine mandate represented

divine anger when they were punishing criminals and waging wars. This *ira regis* was directed towards anyone who failed to live according to the laws of God and man. In this context anger was a sign of masculinity and its display was righteous. Yet, it must be remembered that medieval chroniclers referred to a king's anger often and usually without criticism, but most likely they did not mean uncontrollable anger; they regarded it as normal that a king should make a display of anger as a demonstration of his divinely sanctioned power or displeasure at someone's actions. In a similar way, wrath of God was not uncontrollable anger but it was justified reaction. These two forms of justified anger, *ira Dei* and *ira regis,* can be linked with the positive reception of Alexander's anger in the medieval sources discussed below.[28]

As a rule, the medieval Alexander becomes angry because he sees injustice and wants to correct the wrongs. The king's fury is a justifiable reaction to the wrongs he perceives as taking place around him. In Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* the reason that the young Alexander longs for war is anger at Darius and fury because he oppresses the Greeks.[29] We do not encounter this motive in Curtius' *Historiae* or the earliest versions of the *AR*. Châtillon writes that there was a fiery redness, a sign of the "great anger" (*igneus ira*) that had boiled up within young Alexander. Before Aristotle the prince complained tearfully that he grieved for his aged father's oppression by Darius. Châtillon states: "He wept and by his tears he magnified his anger (*Conqueritur lacrimans lacrimisque exaggerat iras*)." The wise Aristotle does not rebuke Alexander for his emotional reaction but encourages him to take the fight to Darius.[30] The narrative therefore justifies young Alexander's anger as an emotion that leads to good and eventually brings justice.

Also, in *Libro de Alexandre,* the 13-year-old Alexander is filled with justified anger when he understands the suffering his elders underwent as vassals of the king of Babylon. His parents had to give Darius the accustomed payment, which makes the prince's face blacken gradually and causes him to be speechless for three days. In his great anger the young Alexander asks Aristotle when can he fight back against this arrogance and make Darius his vassal.[31] In another passage, young Alexander describes the extent of his anger to Aristotle, explains all that he has learned and expresses his wish to free Greece from the oppression of Darius.[32] As a reply, Aristotle advises that Alexander should not show anger towards his vassals and promises that the young prince shall defeat Darius and free Greece from his tyranny, saying that his glory will last forever.[33] In these passages, Alexander's anger makes him fight against evil and defend his parents as well as his own honour. The whole expedition is therefore motivated by righteous and masculine anger, justified because of the wrongs of the Persians and punishment for their oppression.

Walter has omitted Curtius' tale of Alexander's uncontrolled rage and cruel punishment of Betis/Batis in Gaza.[34] However, he does include a scene in which an Arab hides and tries to kill the king during the siege of Gaza. When the attempt fails, Alexander orders the hand of the Arab to be cut off with the same sword that he had wielded badly. Châtillon writes: "His [Alexander]

martial fury, which had previously been dulled, was now awakened by this fresh act of treachery, and deep within his fiery heart anger rose afresh."[35] Again, the idea of justified anger is attributed to Alexander. Since his opponents are inglorious it is a just act for the monarch to display his anger at them. Alexander also raged against the barbarians who were spreading the story that he was a quaking fugitive.[36] Anger and rage is a justifiable reaction to unjust actions of his enemies. The reference to the Judeo-Christian concept of justified anger and the idea of *ira regis* are explicit in when Châtillon describes Alexander as blazing with "the wrath of God" (*Ira Dei*) as he pursues the fugitive Porus.[37] In the aftermath of Porus' defeat Walter writes that Alexander curbed his anger and softened his heart against the expectation of his principal officers.[38] In contrast to Curtius and other Roman writers, Châtillon does not portray the king's anger as a negative quality or something Alexander should control or cannot control.[39] Instead, Walter models the actions of the king on God's wrath, which may be unpredictable but is always justified.

Anger is a manly and kingly attribute which the authors connect with a person's social status. The author of *Libro de Alexandre* states that after Alexander was crowned as king any man who saw him angry was struck with fear.[40] The status of the king demands displays of anger, which is portrayed as a force maintaining justice and order in the kingdom. By having the emotion of anger, the king could warn his subjects and make them fear him as they should, which would prevent them rising against their king. Thus, his angry appearance and facial gestures protected his subjects from the punishment that would ensue for those who dared to resist his authority.

Alexandreis and especially *Libro de Alexandre* portray the sack of Thebes as justified revenge on traitors, as its male and female citizens were accused of evil deeds and treachery, which sent Alexander into a great fury. This portrayal clearly differs from the way the sack of Thebes is depicted in the Roman sources and the *AR,* which do not state that the citizens deserved to be punished severely or present Alexander's anger as justified.[41] Walter writes that the Thebans "deservedly suffered" since they scorned their king. In addition, he calls Alexander's decision to destroy the city with fire, made in rage, as "a suitable punishment."[42] Similarly, the author of the *Libro de Alexandre,* when writing about the sack of Thebes, states that disloyal men should always meet such an end: the destruction of the city and death as a penalty for the Thebans was justified. A minstrel (*juglar*) said that the king resembled the gods and that the whole world was afraid of incurring Alexander's wrath as the king's gaze is cruel when he gets angry. He suggests sparing the city, but Alexander rejects this. However, the fear Alexander inspired by his wrathful treatment of Thebes unites Greece and puts an end to all the war and dissent. Thus, the king's anger and revenge are presented as benefitting all.[43]

As well as the portrayal of Alexander's anger as a demonstration of justified *ira regis*, we can recognise elements that belong to Crusading ideology.

The military expeditions to the holy land were grounded on the idea of revenge and justified war, and the concept of righteous anger was also applied in the literature. The crusaders were expected to act motivated by *ira per zelum*, a combination of anger and zeal. It was a desire to eliminate actively a wrong and promote what was good on God's behalf.[44] As demonstrated in Chapter 4, *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* include references to crusading ideology. It is possible that the authors of these two works were affected by the Crusading ideology on *ira per zelum* when they wrote about Alexander's righteous anger.

The portrait of anger as a neutral or even a positive trait emerges in some medieval adaptions of *AR* as well. While the earliest Greek, Latin, Armenian and Syriac *AR* present Alexander as a man controlling his temper, in the Old Swedish *Konung Alexander* inclination to anger appears as one of his main traits, and it is not even presented in a bad light. Instead, the king's *wredher* ("anger") appears as a desirable quality verifying the king's masculinity. When Alexander goes to visit Darius, he is portrayed as "never benevolent but always angry" (*aldre bliidher utan al tiidh wredher*). In another passage the queen Cleophis enquiries as to why the king is angry and whether Alexander has become angry with himself. The king answers in a moody tone that he is angry because although he has achieved a lot he does not even carry a sword. The sword is a symbol of manliness that denotes a person's status and virility, and these words reflect the king's fervour for masculine dominance. In another passage, Alexander realises that the Mardi people have killed many of his Macedonian soldiers and therefore becomes angry. Once again, this is a justifiable reaction to unjust incidents.[45]

In the Hebrew *AR,* we are reminded that displays of anger should not be extreme. This reminder appears in a passage where Aristotle advises Alexander in a letter that it is important to be a king who acts like a father rather than a tyrant: "It is fitting for a man to know the measure of his anger. One's anger should not be intense or of long duration nor slight or of short duration. The former trait is characteristic of the wolves of the forest while the latter belongs to boys."[46] We do not find this detail in other versions of the *AR*. It refers to the pursuit of moderation, where all extremes should be avoided. However, this passage does indicate that anger is a suitable emotion for an upper-class man when it is displayed to the right extent.

The medieval authors clearly differ from the Roman intellectuals who portrayed Alexander's anger as a destructive and emasculating force. For Roman writers like Seneca, Curtius and Arrian, especially kings and emperors should avoid anger and control it. Upper-class males in Roman society were aware of the idea that anger was a harmful emotion. Nonetheless, the context in which it was displayed still mattered. We cannot be sure whether Alexander's life in these sources functioned as a cautionary example that somehow made an impact on the behaviour of the Roman elite. But at the very least the authors could maintain the discourse in which display of anger was regarded as problematic, and risky behaviour in social relations. As an indication that

Roman authors who discussed anger were not writing mere theoretical speculation but educational material for upper-class males to make progress, we have the introductory passage of Plutarch's *On the Control of Anger*. In the foreword, Plutarch commends his friend Sextius Sulla for changing from a violent, angry and ill-tempered man to a gentler person who is submissive to reason.[47]

In contrast to the Roman writers, Châtillon and the author of *Libro Alexandre* portrayed Alexander's anger as a force that ultimately restores things to the way they ought to be. Since they both used Curtius' work as their source material they must have known the tale of Alexander's murder of Cleitus in a fit of anger, but they both decided to omit Curtius' criticisms of Alexander's inclination to anger and replace them with positive references to it. This change shows clearly the way in which contemporary masculine ideals, in this case medieval, might transform the image of Alexander. The overall image of Alexander was still one of masculinity, but in different eras anger might contribute to or diminish his masculinity.

In the medieval sources, Alexander's anger is presented as masculine behaviour and how a monarch is expected to behave. For the true man, there was no need for total abstention from anger. Anger display is acceptable if a man has good cause for his emotional state and it enables him to avenge injury done to him or his companions. Otherwise, anger could be regarded as a vice more typical of the behaviour of women.[48] The idea of justified anger and the king's inclination to anger is related to Alexander's status as a monarch who can hand out punishment to those acting against the laws of God and man. It demonstrates desired masculine dominance. To avenge an injury that had been done to the man himself or his nearest is regarded as manly conduct. By displaying righteous anger evildoers are punished. According to the medieval imagination the anger of virtuous king serves the common good and brings order, as does the anger of God.

The weeping Alexander: Displaying grief and compassion

The saying "boys don't cry" means that if they are to live according to the masculine expectations, male humans must not openly display emotional distress. In many cultures, boys are taught that crying is a mark of weakness and feminine behaviour. At the very least shedding tears publicly should be avoided. However, Alexander's image in the Classical and medieval imaginary embodies a very different masculine ideal. "Boys don't cry" doesn't hold true when we encounter the weeping Alexander and the cultural expectations they seem to reflect: this weeping Alexander is not rare in the Roman and medieval reception of the king. Ancient and medieval authors emphasise that boys shed tears on certain occasions, and it is the context that determines whether displaying grief by weeping was desirable manly or womanish behaviour. The source material promotes a reserved approach to crying as masculinity.

In the Classical world, there is a twofold view of grief and weeping. On some occasions and in some contexts, weeping belongs to the conduct of a masculine man, while sometimes it is presented as a harmful and unmanly way to express emotions. Wees (1998) shows that in Archaic Greece weeping was a feminine feature and there were norms regulating when men and women were supposed to express or suppress grief. However, for Homeric heroes expressing grief was acceptable. From a modern perspective it may sound strange that a grown man and one of the greatest warriors of all time weeps frequently, but this is what occurs in the literary tradition. Achilles, Alexander's alleged ancestor and hero, cries and moans heavily in the *Iliad*.[49] As we come closer to the Classical era in Greece there were also views that it was womanish and barbarian to mourn and weep like Achilles.[50]

In the Roman world, it was a common view that male members of society were obligated to control their emotions, not only their anger and desires but also grief. Cicero, Seneca, Philo of Alexandria and Plutarch all write that it is unmanly to be weakened by grief, whereas it is typical for a woman to mourn and express sorrow openly and loudly. For example, Cicero in *Tusculan disputations* states that weeping belongs to a "women's nature." Especially grief in public was something to be avoided by men. For example, in the Roman historiographical tradition, when Brutus' sons try to get the Tarquin kings back and they are being punished, Brutus does not shed tears and is praised for this. Again, when Cicero loses his daughter, it is important *not* to show grief publicly. Interestingly, Plutarch in his *A Consolation to his Wife* also commends his wife for not expressing sorrow forcefully and for not acting like a typical woman after their two-year child has died. Plutarch's statement demonstrates that upper-class men did not think that it was impossible for women to demonstrate moderation in mourning.[51]

In the grand story, Alexander has the capacity to cry openly and, on some occasions, even the battle-hardened Macedonian soldiers burst into tears. Sometimes Alexander's grief surpasses all expectations and turns out to be so deep that it devastates his companions too. The most powerful expressions of male emotion are found in reactions to personal loss. In the accounts of Curtius, Arrian and Plutarch, Alexander mourns deeply after he has killed his companion Cleitus, and particularly when his beloved companion Hephaestion dies from illness (see below). Even though these two episodes are missing from the *AR* tradition, it depicts the deaths of Nectanebos and King Darius as emotional incidents where Alexander expresses his sorrow by weeping.[52] The overwhelming male and female grief that followed Alexander's death is a theme of the Roman histories, the *AR* and medieval literature too.[53] On some occasions, expressing grief and sorrow is eulogised while in other instances it is suspect.

The reasons for weeping and grief vary from compassion to sorrow, despair and disappointment, but there are two principal causes of grief and sorrow that appear in the literary tradition concerning Alexander. One is showing compassion towards those who have suffered and another is

grief and mourning at the moment of loss.[54] The art of showing compassion towards those who have suffered, including your former enemies, by shedding tears receives attention particularly in the emotional scene of the *AR* where King Darius dies in the arms of Alexander. In contrast to the *AR* tradition, in the accounts of Diodorus, Arrian and Plutarch, Darius dies of his wounds shortly before Alexander reaches the Persian camp.[55] Plutarch states that Alexander took off his own cloak and used it to cover and wrap the body "without attempting to disguise his grief." Plutarch adds that Alexander wept.[56] The highly romanticised versions of the *AR* magnify the scene and the amount of tears Alexander sheds. For example, when Alexander finds Darius' wounded body the author of the Greek *AR* states: "Alexander cried out and began to shed tears, lamenting as he deserved." In the following dialogue the wounded Darius urges Alexander to marry his daughter and take care of his relatives. Alexander also promises to avenge Darius' death. When the king dies the author adds: "Alexander raised up a great cry and wept for Darius." Later in the narrative, Alexander is carrying the bier with the other satraps. The anonymous author adds that all wept and mourned not so much for Darius but for Alexander shouldering the bier.[57]

In the different versions of *AR*, the degree of weeping and expression of sorrow vary. Compared to the Greek version the Syriac *AR* minimises the references to Alexander's grief before Darius body while the Armenian *AR* expands it (see Figure 6.1). In the Armenian version it is stated that Alexander made fitting lamentations of sorrow when he grievously lamented Darius' misfortunes. According to this version, tears were streaming from Alexander's eyes as if from fountains, while he beat his breast in sorrow. In the Hebrew *AR* the bitterly weeping Alexander kisses and embraces the dying Darius. There is no hint in the different versions of the *AR* that the king should have somehow suppressed his grief, or that the grief emasculates him.[58]

In the death episode the image of Darius changes from an arrogant despot to a noble old man who has been wretchedly betrayed by his own commander Bessus. The fact that Alexander displays sorrow and grief over his former enemy underlines his exceptional kingly nature. His expressions of sorrow demonstrate Alexander's compassion and masculine dominance. Even in the hour of victory a great man is not only capable of sympathy and shedding his tears but also of fulfilling Darius' wish that he marry his daughter. Also, Alexander's arranging for Darius to be buried in the Persian manner receives praise.[59] Above all else, since Alexander in the next scene avenges the death of Darius by capturing and killing Bessus, the authors seem to underline that genuine and pure sorrow is masculine behaviour, a force leading to compassion and proper action. True and exemplary grief makes a man correct wrongs and carry out the will of a dead man.[60]

The scene of Alexander mourning and weeping over Darius' death had its predecessors on the way emotions of illustrious males are portrayed in Greek and Latin literature. It belongs to the theme of displaying sympathy even for

Figure 6.1 Alexander showing his compassion for the dying Darius. A folio of an extensively illustrated manuscript of the Armenian version of the AR from the sixteenth century. There are 121 coloured miniatures by the eminent scribe and artist, Zakʿariay, bishop of Gnuneacʿ. Above this particular miniature is the text in old Armenian: Ալեքսանդր առեալ զդարեհ ի գիրկս և յուսադրէ՝ "Alexandre took Darius in his arms and encourages him (lit. gives him hope)" (Trans. Christina Maranci). Copyright of the University of Manchester

living or fallen foes. Achilles shows sympathy for Priam, the father of Hector whom he had just killed and whose body he had defiled.[61] In Herodotus, even the Persian king Xerxes can shed generous tears when he realises the human sufferings of his enemies. In the literary tradition, Julius Caesar weeps after he sees Pompey's severed head and his ring. The literary topos of the weeping victor underlines the magnanimity of the exemplary man.[62]

The *AR* tradition of Alexander's grief over Darius underscores the noble person's sympathy for the enemy. In that scene, Darius' tragic fate reminds everyone that situations may change rapidly, and yesterday's king can be tomorrow's fallen king, reduced to an inferior status. This explanation is also given explicitly in Alexander's letter to his mother Olympias – included in the Greek *AR* – where the king writes that the uncertainty of fortune moved him

when he lamented for the dying Darius.[63] In the masculine ideal of power and dominance, there is room for sympathy towards defeated enemies. Plutarch in his *Life of Alexander* includes a scene where, after Alexander has read the epitaph of Cyrus, the king is moved profoundly (*empathḗ sphódra*). According to Plutarch, the epitaph was a reminder of uncertainty and instability. Emotions are proof that the king is a thoughtful man and aware of the unpredictable nature of life.[64]

The capacity to cry and express one's compassion is presented as a manly quality also in an episode where Alexander meets a group of mutilated Greeks on the road to Persepolis. The episode is recounted by Curtius and Diodorus as well as in a shorter version of the *AR*.[65] All these narratives stress the compassion the king showed towards the enslaved Greeks whom the Persians had mutilated, some lacking hands, feet, noses and ears. Curtius writes that seeing them aroused among the Macedonians more tears than the mutilated had shed. Alexander is said to have cried after seeing them and after he had dried his tears, the king told them to take heart.[66] In Curtius' account, Alexander lamented (*miseritus*) their misfortunes (*fortuna*) and the emotional pain they had experienced (*paenitentia*).[67] Diodorus writes that all the Macedonian soldiers pitied these Greeks, *but most of all* Alexander was affected (*sympathḗ genésthai*) by them and was unable to restrain his tears.[68] The king's reaction is presented as exceptional and proper. According to Diodorus the king's distress demonstrated his magnanimity (*megalopsykhía*) and his natural kindness (*euergesíā*), since he mitigated the lot of these unfortunate males. The pity drives Alexander to action, as he gives the mutilated Greeks the opportunity to return to Greece, giving them land, cattle and exemption from all taxes. The story emphasises the importance of showing empathy towards those who have suffered and are weak. True sympathy makes a man react and transform a lamentable situation to one of fortune. Shedding tears of compassion publicly belongs within the parameters of ideal masculinity.

Even though weeping appears as normal and even desired masculine behaviour when showing compassion, ancient authors question extreme expressions of grief at moments of loss. Curtius concentrates on the extreme ways Alexander expressed his sorrow after realising he had murdered his companion Cleitus in a drunken rage. As a demonstration of Alexander's repentance (*paenitentia*), Curtius mentions Alexander's loud pitiful weeping and wailing and writes that the king tore his face with his nails and begged men around him not to let him survive such dishonour. Alexander also ordered the dead body of Cleitus to be placed before him in his tent and spoke to it with eyes filled with tears. After the king did not cease his tears and laments (*lacrimis querellisque not fieret*), his companions decided to remove the body from the tent.[69] In the accounts of Plutarch and Arrian there is less detailed description of Alexander's grief after killing Cleitus, but both give the impression that the king's grief was deep and open. Tear-filled self-pity and weeping self-accusation appear in some passages of ancient historiography, such as the *historiae* of Ammianus. However, the description of Alexander's extreme

grief over Cleitus' death seems exceptional and something that the writer sees as improper behaviour for a Roman upper-class man.[70]

Alexander's mourning at the loss of his dear companion Hephaestion receives equal attention and reserved criticism from Plutarch and Arrian.[71] The former writes that Alexander went out of his mind with grief. He comments critically that Alexander's emotional reaction (*páthos*) was in no way reasonable.[72] Plutarch uses the word *logismós*, which derives from the word *lógos* denoting reason. As we know, the rational mind was a trait belonging to the free upper-class man. In his other writings, Plutarch states that a man should avoid extravagant grief as it makes him effeminate.[73] In the *Life of Alexander* Plutarch clearly gives the idea that the king's reaction to Hephaestion's death was contrary to the ideal of masculine self-control – it was uncontrollable grief. Arrian rejects most of the stories of Alexander's sorrow over his dear companion Hephaestion as fabricated by the authors who wanted to put the king and his beloved friend in bad light.[74] However, Arrian accepts the story of Alexander imitating Achilles' mourning of his beloved Patroclus, which makes the grief behaviour related to the king's desire to imitate his hero rather than an expression of reprehensible emotional display and effeminacy.[75] One reason for rejecting other stories of Alexander's extreme expressions of grief over Hephaestion as unhistorical was that they did not fit with the masculine ideal Arrian promoted by Alexander's figure. Arrian as the advocate of Stoic self-control does not want to present indications of extreme grief and its display as a masculine model.[76]

In Roman society, it was important that rituals of mourning were conducted properly when an important person died. Excessive expressions of sorrow displayed in public were condemned and could make a man effeminate. Sometimes gendered language appears when the authors depict undesirable expressions of sorrow. In his *Life and Death of Julius Agricola* Tacitus writes that Agricola did not take the loss of his son with bravado like most strong men (*fortes viri*), nor mourn and lament like a woman (*muliebriter*). Instead of focusing on expressing sorrow, Agricola concentrated on his duties as a commander. According to Tacitus, it is clear that many "true men" had expressed their sorrow, yet this differed from unbalanced and excessive sorrow displayed by women. As we know, Emperor Hadrian's relationship with his favourite and lover Antinous/Antinoos was notorious. The anonymous author of *Historia Augusta* states that when Antinous died Emperor Hadrian "wept like a woman" (*muliebriter flevit*).[77] It has been suggested that Hadrian's expressions of sorrow indicates somehow *imitatio Alexandri* or that Arrian's account of Alexander's sorrow over Hephaestion somehow relate to the reaction of Hadrian to the death of Antinous.[78] But it is interesting that the writer of *Historia Augusta* categorises Hadrian's sorrow as womanish while Alexander's sorrow over Cleitus and Hephaestion is not explicitly presented as effeminate in the source material.

The writers seem to promote the view that in a time of loss, grief should be expressed in moderation. They do not hold the view that all tears are

unmasculine when one's companions die, but excessive expressions of mourning are: weeping is deemed inappropriate when people indulge in it for too long. Since Alexander fails to display sorrow in a moderate way when Hephaestion and Cleitus die, it is a reminder that the exemplary man may face moments of emotional vulnerability and failures of self-control. Of course, the portraits of Alexander's extreme sorrow also construct an image of the king as a Homeric hero whose behaviour resembled that of Achilles, but this does not change the fact that Curtius, Plutarch and Arrian expect self-control from "true" men when they display sorrow at a time of loss.

Sometimes weeping is not appropriate for the situation and is not included in manly behaviour. When Alexander received a near-fatal wound from an arrow during the siege of Malli the arrow had to be removed, but he does not weep. In the Curtian narrative, Alexander notices that Critobulos, the doctor, whose duty it was to remove the arrow, was weeping and fearful. By contrast, Alexander does not show his pain or shed tears and even encourages the doctor to remove the arrow. Curtius writes that Alexander controlled his body and submitted it to the knife without flinching until he lost consciousness.[79] This Curtian passage suits the Roman masculine ideal that bearing pain bravely was desirable while exhibiting tears in pain was regarded as unmasculine.[80] When it was about showing sympathy towards your former enemy or towards those who had suffered unjustly, it was fitting to display sorrow and shed tears, but not when you were severely wounded in battle.

The image of the weeping Alexander was not removed from the medieval literary tradition. The various versions of the *AR* include such images. Châtillon's *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* both include scenes where Alexander sheds tears, first when Darius's wife dies and later when Darius himself dies. As in the Classical texts, the medieval texts emphasise Alexander's ability to show compassion towards his opponents. Châtillon stresses that the great king (*rex fortissimus*) gave way to grief when he heard that Darius' wife had died.[81] Also in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, the exemplary king expresses openly his empathy for his former opponent Dara, who is also his half-brother: "When he [Sekandar] saw Dara's wounds, a few tears dropped from Sekandar's eyes…[…]…Sekandar's pity made his face turn pale, and he wept for the wounded king."[82] However, strikingly, in Ferdowsi the dying Dara foretells that his daughter will give Sekandar a son, Esfandyar, who will enable his dynasty to continue for generations to come.

As in the various versions of AR, in Shahnameh his sorrow for Dara's (Darius') fate motivates him to fulfil his opponent's plea that he would marry his daughter Roshanak, and look after his family, as well as sentence to death those who had killed Dara (see Figure 6.2).[83]

However, *Libro de Alexandre* is the only work that takes account of the change in the king's emotions and attitudes towards Darius: "He was filled

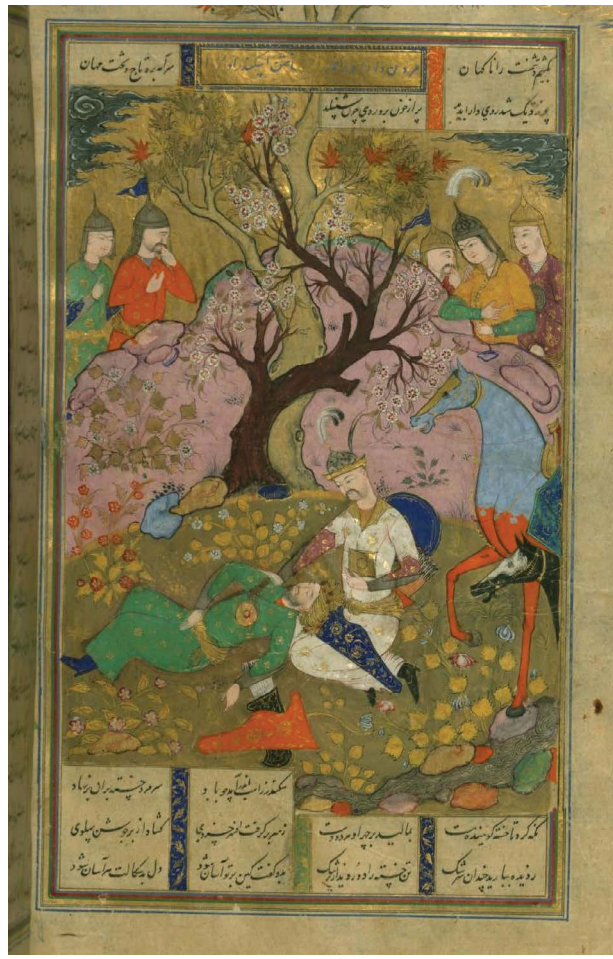

Figure 6.2 Alexander/Sekandar mourns the dying Darius. This folio is from the Walters manuscript (W.602) of Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, composed in 1618-1619 during the rule of the Safavid dynasty. The manuscript was likely produced in Herat, Afghanistan. In the miniature Sekandar/Alexander and his men are wearing armour and helmets that were used during the Safavid period, a reminder that the story of Alexander is set in the Persian tradition. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

with compassion and forgot his anger. It would not have been right for him to act otherwise. In his grief, he could not keep his back his tears and repeatedly wiped them away with his cloak."[84] The author confirms that Alexander's emotional reaction was correct. It was compassion that made him shed tears. There were no traces of feigned tears. In the scene, Alexander curses Bessus the traitor and laments deeply. In the next scene, he avenges Darius' death, so the grief has brought about the correct action.

In the Middle Ages, images of crying knights existed but the way crying was presented varied. For example, in some crusader narratives tears are portrayed as appropriate and on some occasions as ridiculous. When we compare crusading narratives to the passages in which Alexander cries the motifs of crying to express sorrow for a dead king and crying when knights hear that Jerusalem has fallen to the infidels are the most closely comparable. Also, in the crusading sources the crusaders fight driven by sorrow for their slain brothers and wanted to avenge their deaths. Particularly the idea that an emotional reaction provoked the knights to travel to liberate the holy city resembles the setting where tears and mourning before the corpse of Darius motivated the king to punish the unmasculine traitor Bessus. True and proper sorrow thus makes a man act like a man. Like justified anger, correct sorrow motivates a man to correct the wrongs he sees around him.[85]

Even though the medieval Alexander can shed tears, there is a passage in *Libro de Alexandre* where the king suppresses his grief and encourages his soldiers not to shed tears. In this case, the negative approach to displaying emotions is related to a context where tears are not welcomed. This appears in an expanded scene we do not find in other Alexander literature. According to the author when Alexander's ships were leaving Greek soil, the Greeks' hearts began to sink.[86] The author writes that many had tears in their eyes and the army wept in the ships, as did the women in the harbour. The king reproached his men saying: "We must not show such weakness as this." In the passage weeping is presented as unmanly and something avoidable; the king reminds his men that he is also leaving his good mother and two good sisters when he pursues noble deeds and knightly exploits. To his men who are weeping, Alexander says: "Be strong my friends in your hearts and wills! How close am I to saying that you behave like women!"[87] The statement is intended to construct and maintain certain gender order and roles. Only females and effeminate males display their personal emotions when they should put their duties first. True men do not let their emotions block their sense of duty, which here obliges them to leave their homes and relatives and participate in the Persian expedition. The author adds that the further the army travelled the deeper their grief and they could not hold back their tears. In the same passage, the anonymous author praises Alexander because no other man was like him: when it comes to his emotions, he never turned his head or abandoned his convictions. The army was amazed when they watched their king. The author distinguishes feeling grief from showing it by shedding tears. An exemplary man may feel certain emotions, yet he can control them and avoid displaying them. According to the Iberian author, because of Alexander's example his soldiers eventually managed to avoid weeping even though they grieved. The ideal of self-controlled masculinity appears once again in these passages, as well as the idea of Alexander as an exceptional man. The passage does not condemn shedding tears entirely but rather defines times and contexts in which shedding tears may be acceptable or harmful. Emotions are an obstacle if they prevent a man from carrying out his duty.

It is possible that the historical Alexander imitated Achilles' expression of grief and that some of the Hellenistic authors were modelling the conduct of Alexander on that of Homeric heroes. The Roman and medieval authors adapted these stories and wrote about Alexander's grief from their cultural perspective. In the source material tears are never sketched in a disparaging way. The sincerity of tearful behaviour is hardly ever questioned.[88] Alexander and his Macedonian soldiers do not feign tears. Tears and displaying of emotions must be genuine. Weeping and crying are rarely explicitly gendered. Only in the scene of *Libro de Alexandre* is displaying emotions by shedding tears presented as a feminine feature.

The question of whether displaying grief and crying is correct or not depends on the context. There are moments when expressing grief is expected but others, like times when pain is suffered or when soldiers leave their homes, when open display of sorrow is regarded as reprehensible. Displaying compassion by shedding tears towards those who have faced misfortunes is desirable. Tears also emphasise a change in the way a person sees the situation and views others who have suffered. The king's ability to show empathy towards his weeping men and to venerate his former enemy receive praise. Above all else, true masculine expression of sorrow motivates the man to proper action as well as to be of sound state of mind.

Interestingly, Alexander's ability to display sorrow makes him closer to the exemplary figure of Jesus in the synoptic gospels. Luke and John portray Jesus not merely as emotional but also willing and able to weep over Jerusalem, as well as to shed over tears when he realises his friend Lazarus is dead.[89] However, the gospels do not present Jesus as crying while the Romans are nailing him to the cross, which gives the impression that he can endure pain like a true man would in the Greco-Roman gendered thinking. If we follow the views of many Roman writers, like Cicero and Seneca, Alexander's tendency to display sorrow would make him effeminate. Yet, since explicit critique of the king's ability to express sorrow and compassion is mostly absent, we can assert that the Greco-Roman and medieval views of expressing sorrow were not absolute.

The king's downfall, deadly pride and desire for recognition

As we have seen, Alexander's figure often represented two divergent extremes. His military career at a young age was an unexpectedly great success story. His Macedonian armies had succeeded in defeating Darius' armies three times and seizing the lands and wealth of Persia. However, according to some Classical authors the successful conquest brought about a negative change in the king's character and self-view. The previously good king acquired bad attitudes and habits. We are informed that conspiracies and mutinies took place because some of the Macedonians were displeased with the king's decision to establish a ruler cult and imitate Persian court protocols. Macedonian generals felt that their king was

turning into an oriental despot and therefore wanted to replace him. The result was that some Macedonians were condemned for treason, the trust Alexander's men had in him was undermined and he in turn could no longer trust in them.[90] At the Hyphasis, his army refused to go further into the unknown and the warrior-monarch had to turn back. Not long afterwards Alexander died in Babylon, although according to some of our sources he had made several plans for new campaigns into the western Mediterranean. The king's early death was probably seen by some of the contemporaries as vengeance that the gods had taken on a man who had acted and believed that the norms that bind all men no longer applied to him. According to this interpretation, his several setbacks and downfalls resulted from *hubris* or *superbia*.

In premodern societies, all males were expected to follow the shared social norms of their community. These obligations applied in family life, military service, religious observance and observance of the laws of the polity. Everyone had to know their position in the social and political hierarchy. Particularly, those exercising power and representing the elite had to follow the expectations of the surrounding society and be aware that there were limits that they should not exceed. The Greek concept *hubris* referred to outrageous actions that violated the natural order or which shamed and humiliated the victim. It included both extreme or foolish pride or dangerous overconfidence. In the Classical literature *hubris* was a literary topos, a reminder that all males should retain a correct view of the individual's position before the gods and the community. Greek plays handled the danger of *hubris* which meant acting and thinking beyond norms. Latin authors who were familiar with and influenced by Greek literature used its equivalent *superbia*.[91] Especially monarchs who had absolute power were believed to be easily seduced into *hubris*/*superbia* and the vices it brought.[92] It was believed that success increased the possibility that a person would lose his normal state of mind and thus act outrageously in a way that violated the prerogatives of the gods and the very community that had ensured the triumph.

Since all the Hellenistic works on Alexander have been lost, we do not know which work first added the theme of Alexander's success followed by downfall and the motif of a radical change in his self-view. As the earliest extant accounts of the Macedonian king – written by the Jews – already include the critical interpretation of king's career it seems likely that this interpretation of Alexander's downfall was included in earlier works more nearly contemporary to him. In the Book of Daniel, often dated to the second century BCE, Alexander is depicted as the he-goat who "did what he wanted" and who was "puffed-up" (Dan. 8:8). Even though the work does not use Alexander's name it is evident that the he-goat was depicting him.[93] The authors of the Hebrew Bible wrote from the perspective of how men should behave in relation to God. In the Book of Daniel, it is the success of the he-goat – his overwhelming victory over the two-horned ram, that is, Persia – that causes the change in the self-view. The *First Book of Maccabees*, first written in Hebrew and

then translated into Greek, is about the revolt of the Maccabees: it starts with a summary of Alexander's career as a prelude to the creation of the Seleucid Empire. It includes this reference to the king's downfall:

> He [Alexander] advanced to the ends of the earth, gathering plunder from many nations; the earth fell silent before him, and his heart became proud and arrogant.[94]

In the quotation, "heart" refers to the person's inner emotions and self-view. Pride and arrogance denote a state of mind where Alexander forgot the limits that should bind all mortals.[95] The king's desire to conquer and subdue the entire inhabited earth is presented as an indication of his proud and arrogant behaviour, while his death signified the outcome of being puffed-up. The passage of 1 Maccabees is not exceptional for the Hebrew Scriptures. In biblical theological history the topic of men being puffed up and turning their backs on God despite his warnings recurs frequently. Such outrageous behaviour generates God's punishment. This theme appears not only in the expulsion from paradise of Genesis but repeatedly in the stories of both Israelite and non-Israelite monarchs.

According to the tale the man with ultimate power and success becomes conceited and arrogant and either ceases to follow God's commandments or publicly opposes the Creator by persecuting his people. Among the Israelite monarchs this causes the downfall of the kings Saul, Solomon and Uzziah, and among the non-Israelite kings are the notorious Egyptian pharoah of Exodus, the Babylonian kings Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, and the Assyrian king Sennacherib.[96] In the grand story, Almighty God demonstrates to these illustrious men their inferior position before him by humiliating them. The way the reign of Alexander is depicted in the Book of Daniel and 1 Maccabees follows this literary pattern. After Alexander, Jewish literature represents Antiochus IV Epiphanes as a proud tyrant whose hubris led to his persecution of the Jews. The idea is that a victorious and praised warrior-king easily comes to lack humility and becomes unable to cope with the impact of the success he has had. He becomes arrogant and starts to act in a way that causes harm to others as well as himself. In the biblical setting, masculine dominance has to be moderated by acknowledgement of God's ultimate dominance: true men understand their natural restrictions and therefore do not challenge God's power and authority, which surpasses that of mortal men, even if they obtain success. Only stupid men contest the power of God by attempting to raise themselves to his level, since this can only lead to eventual humiliation. Either a man humbles himself or he is humbled.

The early Christian writers of the Late Antiquity were aware of the view of Alexander's downfall and arrogance from 1 Maccabees and Daniel. Even though Alexander's conquest was prophesied, particularly by Daniel as the

agent of God, the king was remembered often as a pagan monarch whose life was the antithesis of humility. In Late Antique culture there was a rhetoric of humility among the early Christian writers, in which lowliness and humility were presented as manly virtues. In this discourse, bishops underlined their humility (*humilitas*) as a masculine trait that showed their social superiority and suitability for offices in the Church.[97] This kind of thinking is recognisable in the highly critical presentations of Alexander's conquest appearing in Orosius and Fulgentius as well. Even though these authors do not explicitly mention self-control they do write that Alexander was not content with the possessions he had as the king of Macedonia and wanted to conquer even the remotest places of the inhabited earth. The campaign showed that the king did not possess moderation but was filled with reprehensible pride even at its start. Orosius depicts Alexander as an inhuman and unmasculine beast, always thirsting for fresh gore, not only of his enemies but even of his friends. The king died by poison in Babylon, still thirsting for blood. In Fulgentius Alexander is presented as "reckless in his passions." He mentions Alexander's "greed for empire" and that he could not be satisfied even with acquiring the whole world. [98] The fall of empires, like that of Alexander's kingdom, was presented as proof that everyone who glorifies himself shall be humbled, while those who remained humble would be glorified by God himself.[99]

In the Classical world, it was manly and desirable for the upper-class male to pursue recognition and great fame. Yet he had to remember his status as a mortal and always display mastery over harmful passions and vices as well as a balanced state of mind. Thinking too highly of oneself due to success threatened one's masculinity. The way to resist this dangerous state of mind was to exercise self-control. Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian and Justin differed on whether Alexander managed to demonstrate self-mastery after defeating the armies of Darius in three great battles.

According to Plutarch, even though Alexander was a favourite of fortune (*tykhē*) it was the king's manliness (*aretḗ*) that was behind the king's success and which prevented him from becoming puffed up. In the *Life of Alexander,* the king chides his favourites in a gentle and reasonable fashion and tries to encourage them to reject the luxurious lifestyle and control their appetites after they have seized Persian possessions.[100] By his own example, Alexander exhorts his men towards manliness (*aretḗ*). However, his Macedonian companions fail to demonstrate similar self-mastery. In Plutarch, there is no clear downfall in Alexander's career from a moral perspective, merely the king's tendency to *deisidaimonía* ("superstition") being mentioned as a negative trait that grew in Alexander before he died.[101]

In Arrian's *Anabasis*, Alexander's undertakings and conquests are especially a result of the emotion *póthos*, which could be translated as desire, yearning, longing or perhaps overwhelming urge. Alexander was seized by *póthos* when the king (1) crossed the Danube to conquer the Getae, (2) opened the Gordian knot and fulfilled the prophecy, (3) visited the oracle

of Zeus/Ammon at Siwah and rivalled Perseus and Heracles, (4) decided to establish the city of Alexandria in Egypt, (5) won over Aornos as a rival to Heracles, (6) wanted to see the relics of Dionysius at Nysa and (7) sailed down the Persian Gulf. *Póthos* is presented as the emotional state that made Alexander do something unexpected and memorable.[102] As an emotion or force it supports the ideal of masculine competition since it makes Alexander compete with the heroes of old and surpass the boundaries that the average male cannot exceed. At the same time *póthos* verifies his dominance and power over other men. In Arrian's *Anabasis* success brings some negative consequences in the king's personality, such as a tendency to anger, excessive use of wine and wearing Persian costume, which denote a lack of *sōphrosynē*. However, Arrian does not present *póthos* in negative light or suggest that Alexander should have suppressed it.

Arrian uses *póthos* usually when he depicts the actions of the Macedonian king. However, in the speech of Alexander's commander Coenus at the Hyphasis this concept is used to express the longing the Macedonian soldiers had for home after they had travelled to the ends of earth. Arrian states that Alexander's soldiers had *póthos,* yearning for their parents, wives, children and homeland. This theme of soldiers longing for home after many years of war had appeared in Homer's *Iliad*.[103] Coenus, as the representative of the Macedonian soldiers, tries to persuade the king that he should return to Macedonia at this point and perhaps start a new campaign against the Indian peoples later. At the end of the speech Coenus states that nothing is so honourable as self-restraint in the midst of good fortune (*en tô eûtykhein sōphrosynē*). He is arguing that after such marvellous success it is now time to recognise the limits set for all men. Coenus also mentions that even the gods might oppose them if the army goes further into India.[104]

In Arrian's setting, *póthos* is an emotion, an irresistible urge that can guide different males in different directions. In his description of the events at the Hyphasis, Arrian negotiates different masculine expectations. For Macedonian soldiers thinking of fathers, husbands and sons, *póthos* is a longing to see their fatherland and family again. Arrian does not say that their desire was somehow unreasonable, or made them effeminate. In his narrative, Coenus makes it clear that the Macedonian soldiers had already proved themselves "true" men by following Alexander to the ends of the earth, but now it was reasonable for them to ask to return to their homes and fulfil their domestic duties. But the exceptional martial masculinity and thirst for recognition that Alexander represents is also reported by Arrian: the king responds to Coenus' plea by exclaiming: "What limit should a man of noble nature put to his labours? I, for one, do not think there is any, so long as those labours lead to noble accomplishments."[105] Since Alexander's motives are true, and he pursues eternal glory, there is no reason to stop the campaign.

Arrian takes no position on which of the two ways to be a man is better than the other. He seems to leave it open whether the army should have gone farther and whether it was unreasonable for Alexander to expect his men to follow

him further. However, Arrian does make it clear that Alexander's hypermasculine fervour for military glory and fame surpassed that of average men.[106]

Curtius' *Historiae* provides a eulogy of self-control, including the idea that a man should be careful not to be spoiled by success. As in the *Book of Daniel* and *1 Maccabees* discussed above, it is clear that a downfall takes place in the end of the king's reign. In addition, Curtius stresses that due to his exceptional success Alexander forgot his position as a mortal man, in addition to neglecting his duties as a Macedonian king. The former failure became evident after the king's visit to the oracle of Siwah, when he demanded that he be called a son of Jupiter, and it surfaces again when he shows his excessive desire to go to the ends of the inhabited earth. The failure to act as a Macedonian monarch became evident when the king emulated Persian monarchs both with his dress and by adopting the court protocols of the Achaemenid kings.[107] According to Curtius, the negative development occurred because the king did not continue to display self-control and moderation (*continentia*, *moderatio*). Even though Alexander's masculine dominance is indisputable and exemplary in Curtius' portrait, his fervour becomes too extreme and changes the king's self-view.

The importance of controlling one's emotions and desires appears clearly in the Curtian handling of *cupido*. In Curtius' work, *cupido* is usually presented as a negative emotional state that man should control. For example, *regnis cupiditate* is the desire that Bessus had for Darius throne which made him betray his king. In addition, the city of Babylon had a bad impact on the Macedonian army because it was full of *immodicae cupiditates*, and *cupido* was the negative force that made the king marry the Bactrian Roxanne, chosen from among the subjugated barbarians.[108] Curtius uses the phrase *ingens cupido* in a similar way to Arrian's *póthos*, as an emotional explanation for king's exploits and the desire to proceed ever further with his campaign.[109] However, more so than Arrian, Curtius included some criticism when he evaluated Alexander's actions motivated by *cupido*.[110]

Alexander's speech at the Hyphasis and his reasoning for continuing for the campaign are questioned in Curtius' narrative. It was Alexander's *avaritia gloriae* and *insatiabilis cupido,* which could be translated as "extreme thirst for glory" and "insatiable longing," which drove the king to plan new expeditions. However, according to Curtius this pursuit was senseless. He comments that the king's actions showed that "ambition had prevailed over reason (*vicit ergo cupido rationem*)."[111] Curtius' remark correlates with his earlier statements that after his successes the king was unable to control himself and maintain a correct self-view, which had led him to adopt the Persian ruler-cult and court practices.[112] In the speech at the Hyphasis, Alexander tells his soldiers that because of *gloria* they have obtained, they have risen above the level of mortals (*humanum fastigium*). Alexander's hypermasculine pursuit of further glory under the influence of *cupido* was against *ratio* and the masculine ideal of self-control.

Even though the idea of degeneration appears in Curtius, he is not consistent in his portrait of Alexander. In his epilogue, he has laudatory list of Alexander's virtues. One of the mentioned virtues is control over bodily needs. After all, Curtius himself is convinced that Alexander's life offers a powerful

masculine model for Roman upper-class men. However, it must be remembered that in the *Historiae* Curtius does not claim that Alexander's figure represents the perfect masculine ideal and he includes a word of warning. According to Curtius, masculine fervour for glory and recognition may become too extreme and cause problems. A story of an illustrious man whose virtues were manifested clearly but who was blind to his own failings in maintaining proper self-view, was a powerful reminder for the Roman upper class.

Richard Stoneman has stated that in the stories deriving from the *AR* the king becomes "a metaphor for the dreams of everyman." He is no longer necessarily the warrior king but a sage who wants to discover the truth of where the world ends.[113] The Greek, Latin, Armenian and Syriac versions of the *AR* do not suggest that Alexander's willingness to continue his campaign into India and to the remote places of the earth indicated lack of self-control, or that his intentions ought to be condemned. In the *AR* tradition, Alexander is motivated by his desire for knowledge rather than greed for material wealth and power. In the Greek *AR* it is an oracular tree that first informs the king that he will die in Babylon by the hand of his companion and fail to return home to Macedonia.[114] The question of whether his death as foretold by the gods/God occurred due to *hubris* and was destined as an outcome of divine punishment is left open. Even though there are some prodigies indicating that Alexander's death will soon take place, the king's death is not explicitly presented as a consequence of arrogance or vanity.[115] Instead, the death of the king demonstrates the unpredictable nature of life.[116] In the different versions of AR, the death of Alexander is due to the work of the traitor Antipater, who poisons his king. The reason for the murder is that Antipater feared that Alexander would imprison him since he had mistreated Alexander's mother Olympias. The king's death is mourned throughout the kingdom, and the anonymous writers of the AR end their works with positive appraisals of the king's reign. So Alexander was not presented as a hated tyrant but as a beloved heroic king in the AR tradition.[117] The king's death is mourned throughout the kingdom, and the anonymous writers of the *AR* end their works with positive appraisals of the king's reign.[118] So, Alexander was not presented as a hated tyrant but as a beloved heroic king in the *AR* tradition. From the perspective of the masculine ideal the image of a relentless explorer pushing to the ends of earth obviously differed from the ideal of the father and master of the household who was expected to stay at home with his family. However, it fits well with the ideal of a courageous man who is willing to face all adversities for the greater cause. In the *AR,* the king wants to acquire new information so that the knowledge of distant lands will be augmented for all human communities, which becomes a sacrifice of his own well-being for the benefit of others.

Though Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis* and the *Libro de Alexandre* offer a laudatory view of Alexander as the heroic knight and king, at the end of these works he is represented as a cautionary example of pride and lack of

humility. Lafferty and Rabone have pointed out that in the beginning of the romances Alexander's conquest of Persia was part of God's providence, a divine plan, but his later decision to extend his empire to the ends of the earth is not included in his providential role, and thus leaves him vulnerable to greed and pride.[119] Therefore, the negative change in Alexander's character is related to his discontent at what God had designated as the lands to conquer. In the *Libro* Alexander notices that pride (*soberbia*) exists on earth as well as within the sea. The narrator states that first pride was born among the angels. Although Alexander realises that the vice of pride governs all men and even animals, this does not prevent him from succumbing to that vice himself.[120] In the narrative, Nature as well as Satan and the Creator are all concerned about the king's state of mind. Satan states that Alexander has lost his mind and does not feel any shame or fear, while God is angry because the king shows no restraint. In *Alexandreis* and *Libro de Alexandre* Nature is upset because the king thinks the world too small for him and wishes to gain an understanding of secret matters that no living man has ever managed to learn before. Therefore, Nature travels to Hell and asks for the help of Satan himself to prevent Alexander's plans. In this imaginative tale the seven deadly sins are presented as sisters who dwell in Hell. These superhuman forces have observed that Alexander's extraordinary deeds are a threat to their existence and with the guidance of Satan they decide to arrange that the king will be killed by poison.[121]

Even though the king's fervour for hidden knowledge receives critical treatment, these two authors still manage to make Alexander the tragic hero of the story. In the imaginative discussion Satan, "the ancient serpent," ponders whether Alexander is that man (*quadam homo*) who, as foretold by the Scriptures, will be born on earth by unusual birth and who shall be master of hell. Therefore, he wrongly guesses that Alexander might be Christ, hence the determination to kill Alexander by poison. He mandates Alexander's friend Antipater to act treacherously against his king by paying him handsomely. In this way, Alexander's fate is made to resemble the gospel account of the death of Christ, who was betrayed by Judas whom Satan manipulated.[122] By referring to Alexander as "hapless and unaware of the future" (*miser ignarusque future*) Châtillon constructs a sense of tragedy in the death of the king.[123] Alexander does not recognise the deterioration in his state of mind and self-view and has become blind to his failings. The unsuspecting king fails to realise that he has crossed the boundaries mortals should not cross. In the end, the great king is deceived by the servant of Satan, Antipater, and suffers an early death. Although the *Libro* portrays Alexander's death as an outcome of God's will, this does not negate the king's positive and exemplary qualities; the death is "a misfortune for the world."[124] In contrast, Walter gives no eulogy of Alexander at the end of his poem.

That the famous and virtuous monarch in the remote past, Alexander, became puffed up by pride at the end of his life reminded readers of the dangerous nature of sin. Châtillon states that Alexander could have avoided the premature death by poison if he had shown himself humble in prosperity (*humilem*

inter prospera).[125] In *Libro de Alexandre* the theme of the seven deadly sins appearing in *Alexandreis* is elaborated. The author states that the Devil tries to seduce nobles especially into vainglory. For good men like priests, Satan uses the praise of people to make them proud.[126] The formerly virtuous and flawless Alexander eventually succumbs to the seduction of the Devil.

For the Christian medieval upper class, the Devil himself was the most notorious example of the wrong kind of pride and arrogance. As the angel who was once obedient to God but turned against him, Satan was the archetype of a being who failed to retain the correct state of mind and avoid deadly pride. All people, no matter what their social rank, were expected to remember their position before God and resist pride. In addition, the seven deadly sins or cardinal sins, that is, pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony and sloth, were probably known to all Christians in the Middle Ages. These vices were believed to be the ways in which the Devil seduced men into sin. The way to oppose the Devil's schemes was to resort to God's power and ask for his salvation and to have a *contemptus mundi* attitude. This approach to everyday life as a battle against Satan and his vices belonged to the discourse maintained by the clergy. Both nobility and laymen were aware of these sins as they were a common topic in homilies and sermons and the framework of Christian conduct.[127]

Alexander's premature death reminded the readers of the unpredictable nature of life in the spirit of *memento mori*. Death might come unexpectedly and therefore both nobles and commoners should not focus on worldly, transient and empty things. Humans, especially those who had power and wealth, should constantly recall their place in God's Creation. "True" men recognise their natural limits and understand that they are mortal and should accept their dependency on God and Church. The last parts of *Alexandreis* and *Libro* are not necessarily exploring what it means to be a man, but rather what it means to be a mortal. In the medieval thought promoted by the clergy, the foremost thing was whether a man had achieved favour in the eyes of God, not worldly fame, which was perishable. God's inestimable power and authority far surpasses that of men and sets boundaries to masculine dominance among mortal men.

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Emotions are a fundamental part of human experience, and they are important motivators in the literary tradition concerning Alexander. In the Classical world, there were two widespread views on displaying emotions among the philosophical schools. The Stoics wrote that all harmful emotions should be eliminated, while Aristotle and Plutarch suggested that expressing emotions was acceptable if a man showed moderation in doing so.[128] The majority of the writers analysed in this chapter seem to represent the latter view. Thus, the exemplary man must live with his emotions, but also control his feelings properly. The emotional Alexander appearing in Roman and medieval

literature differs significantly from the "cardboard cut-out male heroes" very popular in many action films of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The archetype of emotionless hero figure appears in Sergio Leone's Dollars Trilogy (1964–1966), in which Clint Eastwood acts the ruthless bounty hunter "the man with no name," the Dirty Harry (1971) films in which he is a similar police inspector, the Rambo films (II-IV) with Sylvester Stallone, and violent action films such as *Conan the Barbarian* (1982) and *Predator* (1987) starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. The trend has continued in recent films with further versions of this unrelenting emotionless archetype, for example, the former hitman played by Keanu Reeves in *John Wick* (2014) and the fearless bounty hunter played by Pedro Pascal in *The Mandalorian* TV series (2019). The preference for male heroes who suppress their emotions can be recognised in the way Brad Pitt's Achilles in *Troy* makes no emotional displays of grief, a stark contrast with the warrior's image in Homer's *Iliad*.[129] In this type of action film the hero figures are presented as human, but often they do not have the ability to show empathy or even anger; only the extreme desire for vengeance moves them. In contrast to this hero figure archetype, in the Classical and Medieval reception Alexander is an emotional man expressing feelings such as anger and grief. He shows his feelings by violent outbursts and weeping.

On some occasions, Alexander is presented as susceptible to anger, uncontrollable grief, or deadly pride, while sometimes he proves to be successful in controlling his emotions or displays emotions correctly. Mostly Alexander either does not try to control his ambition, anger and grief, or he finds it very difficult to control these emotions. Alexander's anger and grief are praiseworthy when they restore things to the way they are supposed to be, but if these emotions make him act harmfully they appear in a bad light. Being pitiless is unmanly and inhuman. Whether acting for good or bad the Macedonian world-conqueror seems to represent a person of extremes, which makes him not only an exceptional literary character but also a useful example for writers to make points about correct behaviour or manliness.

When the authors wrote about emotions, they emphasised the ideal of self-controlled masculinity. Even though the display of sorrow by exemplary males is welcomed in suitable contexts, emotions like anger, grief and fear must be controlled. Regarding anger the Roman and medieval writers seem to differ. The Classical texts indicate that display of emotion could be very harmful to the person himself as well as those around him. In contrast, medieval sources suggest that Alexander's emotional reactions served the community and restored things to the way they were supposed to be. The ideal of masculine dominance can also be recognised from the passages above. Before demonstrating his power over others, the upper-class man had to prove that he was able to show power over himself by mastering his emotions or displays of anger and grief.

Thinking too highly of oneself after achieving success did not belong to the masculine ideal. True men were expected to know their limits before the gods/God and men. Alexander's path to proving his manliness turned out to

be injurious according to some authors. His alleged downfall was a strong reminder that even the most illustrious man could eventually lose control over himself, which would result in harmful and/or effeminate behaviour.

The emotional reactions of Alexander, his emotional vulnerability and failures of self-control made him a male hero with whom it was easy to identify. The stories of Alexander suffering enormously when he lost his beloved friend made him more accessible to those of his male followers in Rome and medieval Europe who were pursuing "greatness" and renown. The story of a great king erring because of outbursts of anger and later repenting his deeds showed what might happen in the lives of the Roman and medieval male elite. After all, Alexander was neither the first or the last man who would fail to master his feelings and perform an action he would later regret. For emperors and kings – who wielded great power in society – such a man could be regarded as a welcome male model. On the other hand, a story of a monarch who had the ability to control his anger and show pity and compassion towards those who had suffered was important for those learned men who did *not* hold much power. For them, it was important that an admired exemplary man promoted the importance of mercy and justice and displayed emotions like compassion in practice.

The image of Alexander as prone to different emotions must have derived at least in part from the literary portraits of epic heroes. In literary genres like epic poetry, heroes were depicted as emotional figures and the image of Alexander undoubtedly followed this literary pattern. But, constructed image or not, the king with strong emotions who sometimes acted on them existed for the Roman and medieval elite and affected their views of masculinity and masculine ideals.

Notes

1 Trans. John Yardley. Curt. 7.1.24: *Militantium nec indignatio nec laetitia moderata est; ad omnes affectus impetu rapimur. Vituperamus, laudamus, miseremur, irascimur, utcumque praesens movit adfectio*:
2 Trans. Pamela Mensch. Arr. *an*. 4.7.5: εἰ μὴ σωφρονεῖν ἐν ταὐτῷ ὑπάρχοι τούτῳ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τῷ τὰ μεγάλα, ὡς δοκεῖ, πράγματα πράξαντι.
3 According to Curtius, Amyntas was accused because he was one of Philotas' closest friends and because of the accusation expressed in the letters of Alexander's mother Olympias, see Curt. 7.1.10–13.
4 For a similar statement on the emotional mutability of soldiers, see Tac. *Hist*. 1.69: "the men were now equally prone to pity as they had been exorbitant in their rage." Cf. Liv. 25.37.10–11.
5 If we consider courage as an emotion, then the question of proper self-mastery becomes evident in Chapter 4, where the theme of recklessness as harmful and an extreme expression of manly courage was discussed. Also, the importance of rejecting fear was discussed in the context of warfare. As handled in Chapter 5, the importance of self-control becomes evident in the way ancient authors wrote about Alexander's sexual abstinence and his (in)ability to control sexual appetites. As will be shown in this chapter, the importance of self-control is related to all vices as well as displaying emotions like anger and grief.

6 Boddice (2019, 21–29). In contrast, Harris (2001, 141–144) thinks that Homer is highly critical of the unrelenting anger of Achilles. Adkins (1982) suggests that the *Iliad* has a neutral view of all emotions.
7 For studies on anger in the Classical world see, Harris (2001); Braund and Most (2003). For example, in Herodotus Persian kings could often be presented as contrasts to the leaders of the civilised Greeks.
8 Harris (2001 264–282); Kuefler (2001, 27–28, 101). Conway (2008, 26–27, 28). Ammian. Marc. 27.7.4. M. Aur. *Med*. 11.18. Sen. *Ira*. 1.20.3; Sen. *Clem*. 1.5.5; Plut. *Mor. Cohib. ira*. 457a.
9 Val. Max. 9.3.ext.1. Valerius calls anger (*ira*) and hatred (*odium*) as vices that upper-class men should avoid.
10 Trans. John C. Rolfe. Curt. 4.2.5: *non tenuit iram, cuius alioqui potens non erat*.
11 Curt. 4.4.17. For more discussion see Peltonen (2019a, 107–112). Liv. 9.18.5; Tac. *Ann*. 2.73. Ael. *VH* 12.54. Velleius Paterculus wrote that Caesar was *sobrius* and not *iracundus* like Alexander. Vel. Pat. 2.41.1–2.
12 Historians Curtius, Plutarch, Arrian, Justin, Orosius and Seneca all write about this murder and stress the harmful effect of anger and wine consumption. Oros. 3.18.8–9 stresses Alexander's cruelty. For a discussion of the murder of Cleitus from the historical perspective, see Carney (1981).
13 Curt. 8.1.31–32, 43, 48–49.
14 Curt. 8.2.1.
15 Ibid. 8.1.22–23, 31–32, 41. Curtius states that the king's companions Ptolemy and Perdiccas begged him not to persist with such hasty anger but to allow himself time to consider. However, Alexander as a deaf with anger, his ears took nothing.
16 Trans. J. C. Yardley. Just. *Epit*. 12.6.1–18: *Eodem igitur furore in paenitentiam quo pridem in iram versus mori voluit*.
17 Arr. *an*. 4.7.5.
18 Ibid. 4.9.1. Cf. 4.8.7–9.
19 Plut. *Mor. De cohib. ira*. 458b. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 50.1–51.6. Cf. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 13.1–2;16.7.
20 Cf. Peltonen (2019a, 110).
21 Sen. *Ira* 2.23.3, 3.17.1–4. 3.23.1–2. Sen. *Clem*. 1.25.1.
22 Just. *Epit*. 12.6.13.
23 The destruction of Thebes and the revenge on its Greek habitants in the hands of Macedonian army in 335 BCE receive some critical remarks from Plutarch and Arrian even though the outcome is explained by divine wrath and signs that the gods had given to the Thebans before the final outcome of the siege. Cf. Arr. *an*. 1.9.1–8. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 13.1–3. Again, the burning of the palace of Persepolis is presented in Arrian as a deliberate act of panhellenistic revenge because the Persians had burned the sacred sites of Athens in 480 BCE. However, Arrian writes that it in this case Alexander did not act with good sense since there could not be any punishment for Persians who had long ago died. Arr. an. 3.18.12. Curtius expresses similar view when he comments on the massacre of the Branchidae. According to this story, which only Curtius tells, Alexander with his men met the Branchidae, a people who had emigrated from their city Miletus to please Xerxes. Alexander, together with the Milesians amongst his troops, avenged brutally their alleged treachery by killing the unarmed Branchidae. According to Curtius this might have been "fair revenge" rather than "brutality" if they had killed those of their ancestors who supported Xerxes, but since they killed their descendants, it was outrageous work; see Curt. 7.5.30–31. A passage where anger and revenge are presented as a positive force (even justified) is that concerning the importance of punishing Bessus. Curt. 6.3.18. Cf. Curt. 9.5.20.

24 Arr. *an*. 4.9.2–4, 6. 7.29.1–4. Cf. Arr. *an*. 6.30.1. Plut. *Mor. De virt. mor.* 449e. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 13.1–3; 52.1. For a discussion on the Cleitus episode from the perspective of remorse, see Fulkerson (2013, 97–113). Fulkerson (2013, 112) argues that in the passages of Arrian and Plutarch above Alexander's repentance was genuine and brought benefit while Curtius and Justin leave it open whether the remorse really had any great significance.
25 Cf. Squillace (2010, 76–80).
26 Line (2015, 256–264, 266–267).
27 For the critical views of anger, encouragement to suppress human anger, and its ambiguous nature in the New Testament and the writings of the early Christian writers, see Harris (2001, 391–399). For appearance of anger as a positive trait in the New Testament see, Conway (2008, 146–147, 163–164, 169). Cf. for a general discussion on the views of anger in Christian and medieval literature, see Rosenwein (2018, 96–130). Barton (2005) writes about the competing discourses on anger in the Middle Ages, emphasising that *furor* was filled with negative connotations like madness and irrationality while *ira* was value-neutral and positive concept, see Barton (2005, 387).
28 Cf. Althoff (1998); Orning (2009); Lamberg (2014, 72). For examples of displaying anger (*ira*) as a masculine trait in the Middle Ages, see Barton (2005, 387–391). Orning (2009, 39) writes on the relationships between harmful/condemned and legitimate anger: "If it [anger] signalled inequity and involved uncontrolled behaviour it was a vice, but if it was released in order to bring justice it was certainly a good thing."
29 Chât. *Alex*. 1.30–34 (Pritchard 1986, 36).
30 Trans. Pritchard. Chât. *Alex*. 1.72–84 (Pritchard 1986, 37–38).
31 *Lib. Alex*.1.22.
32 *Lib. Alex*. 36–47.
33 *Lib. Alex*. 60, 85.
34 Cf. Curt. 4.6.26–29.
35 Chât. *Alex*. 3.362–363 (Pritchard 1986, 89): *Quique prius sopitus erat iam fraude recenti / Martius euigilat furor, et sub corde calenti / Ira recrudescit, dumque instat turbidus hosti*. In Curtius' account the attack of the arab warrior has been included, however it lacks the reference to king's anger. Cf. Curt. 4.6.15–16.
36 Chât. *Alex*. 2.405–407 (Pritchard 1986, 70).
37 Ibid. 9.263–264: *profugo par fulminis instat Ira Dei Macedo* (Pritchard 1986, 205).
38 Ibid. 9.317–321 (Pritchard 1986, 207).
39 As one exception to this, in Châtillon there is a scene where Alexander hears that his men wanted to return to their homes. Walter writes that fury loosened the reins of reason for a moment, but Alexander managed to control his anger. It could be added that even on this occasion the poet does not say the king had no justified reason to express anger towards his soldiers. Ibid. 7.448–454 (Pritchard 1986, 174).
40 *Lib. Alex*. 197–198.
41 Cf. Arr. *an*. 1.9.1–8. Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 13.1–3. In the Greek *AR* there is a lengthy account of the sack of Thebes, and also king's willingness to cause destruction in for the city. The Greek *AR* does not present Alexander's decision to sack and destroy the city as entirely justified, but instead as rather extreme. Cf. *AR* 1.46–47 (Stoneman 1991, 79–86).
42 *Lib. Alex*. 293–294, 344–351.
43 *Lib. Alex*. 216, 218, 220–224, 231–233, 244. Cf. Chât. *Alex*. 1.72–81 (Pritchard 1986, 37–38).
44 Throop (2011, 158–162).
45 *Kon. Alex*. 6969–6970, 8327–8330, 8870 (227, 270, 287).
46 Heb. *AR* 123 (Kazis 1962, 149).
47 Plut. *Mor. De cohib. ira*. 453b.
48 Cf. Lamberg (2014, 86, 89–90).

49 van Wees (1998, 14). On Achilles weeping excessively over the dead Patroclus, see Hom. *Il*. 23.141, 152.
50 Zoilos of Amphipolis attacks Achilles because his excessive grief is effeminate. Also, Plato was critical of emulating Homeric heroes and actors in tragedies in displaying emotions, see van Wees (1998, 46).
51 Cf. Asikainen (2018, 136–138); Vekselius (2018, 42–45). On views that displaying grief and mourning is womanish, see Cic. *Tusc*. 2.21.50; 2.58; Sen. *Ep*. 99.17. As important source material for public display of grief by the Roman upper class, there is the letter of consolation written by Sulpicius Rufus to Cicero as well as Cicero's reply. Cic. *Fam*. 4, 5 & 4.6.
52 All the above-mentioned deaths causing grief and sorrow are depicted as somehow tragic and sudden deaths. Both Philip and Darius were killed by traitors (Pausanias and Bessus). *AR* 1.14 (Stoneman 1991, 47).
53 Curtius writes about a "contest in mourning" between the Persians and Macedonians when Alexander died. He tells us that the queen mother Sisygambis dies because of her sorrow. According to Curtius, Macedonians as well as their Persian opponents and subjects lamented and shed tears copiously. Curtius 10.5.1, 7–8, 10, 17–25. Cf. Arr. *an*. 7.11.5; Just. *Epit*. 13.13.4; Plutarch gives no attention to the reactions of the Macedonians or Persians to the king's death. For the references to the grief that followed Alexander's death in the *AR* tradition, see *AR* 3.32, 33 (Stoneman 1991, 152. 156).
54 In the Alexander Histories male characters are depicted as expressing their grief with tears when Macedonian soldiers protest against and show their discontent and disappointment with Alexander and his policy. The disagreement between the king and his men is followed by emotional agreement where the two parties shed tears and express their attachment to each other. The mutiny at the Hyphasis river and later at the Opis both end in scenes were Alexander and his men are reconciled with tears, see Arr. *an*. 5.28.1; 6.13.2.
55 Diod. Sic. 17.73.2–3; Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 43.1–5; Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 332f. In Curtius' *Historiae* there is a lacuna in the passage that may have depicted Alexander finding Darius, whom his commander Bessus had betrayed, still alive. In Curtius' account, Alexander is even said to have wept in the Persian manner when Darius' wife died, which could imply that Curtius portrayed Alexander in tears before Darius' body. Curt. 4.10.20–23. On Stateira, see Diod. Sic. 17.54.7.
56 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 43.5. Plutarch in *On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander* praises Alexander's grief over Darius as follows: "When he [Alexander] saw Darius pierced through by javelins, he did not offer sacrifice nor raise the paean to indicate that the long war had come to an end; but he took off his own cloak and threw it over the corpse as though to conceal the divine retribution that waits upon the lot of kings. "Like a philosopher!" Trans. Frank Cole Babbitt. Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 332f.
57 Trans. Richard Stoneman. *AR* 2.20–21 (Stoneman 1991, 109–110).
58 Arm. *AR* 196, 198 (Wolohojian 1969, 103–105); Heb. *AR* 72–73 (Kazis 1962, 111–112); Syr. *AR* 2.12–13 (Budge 1889, 80–81).
59 Cf. Syr. *AR* 2.13 (Budge 1889, 81).
60 On Alexander fulfilling Darius' wish to marry his daughter and punishing Bessus by crucifying him on the grave of Darius, see *AR* 2.20–21 (Stoneman 1991, 110–112); Arm. *AR* 197–198, 202 (Wolohojian 1969, 104–105, 108–109); Syr. *AR* 2.11–13 (Budge 1889, 79–84); Heb. *AR* 74–76 (Kazis 1962, 113).
61 Most (2003, 71–72). Hom. *Il*. 24.507–551.
62 Lateiner (2009, 121); Libero (2009, 220). Hdt. 7.45–52. On Caesar shedding tears because of Pompey, see Val. Max. 5.1.10; Plut. *Vit. Caes*. 48. Plut. *Vit. Pomp*. 80; Cass. Dio. 42.8.1–3; Luc. 9.1010–1108. For illustrious men shedding tears in Plutarch's Lives, see Lateiner (2009, 128–132).

63 *AR* 2.23 (Stoneman 1991, 115).
64 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 69.1–3. For other examples of similar scenes, see Polyb. 8.20.9–11. Cf. 15.34.2.
65 Curt. 5.5.5–24. Curtius writes of 4000 mutilated Greeks while Diod. Sic. 17.69.2–9. Just. *Epit*. 11.14.11–12 gives the number 800, and its shorter version does not depict Alexander's empathy or sorrow over the mutilated. *AR* 2.18 (Stoneman 1991, 107–108). For a discussion on Alexander's treatment of the group of mutilated Greeks, and its historical relevance, see Morris (2018, 830–831).
66 Curt. 5.5.18.
67 Curt. 5.5.24: *Atque ille, non solum fortunae solum eorum, sed etiam paenitantiae miseritus*.
68 Diod. Sic. 17.69.4.
69 Curt. 8.2.1–13.
70 Libero (2009, 232). For the references to appearance of tear-filled self-pity and weepy self-accusation in Ammianus, see Ammian. Marc. 14.11.16; 21.15.2; 29.5.15.
71 Diodorus does not include any criticism of Alexander's grief over Hephaestion, but in his narrative it is briefly stated that the king grieved his death intensely. But Diodorus does describe the magnificent funerals that Alexander arranged for his friend, Diod. Sic. 17.110.8; 114.1, 4, 115.1–6. Curtius most likely included an account of Alexander's tears after the death of Hephaestion but unfortunately at this point there is a lacuna in Curtius' text. For a discussion on whether the bereavement of historical Alexander was excessive, or not, see Reames-Zimmerman (2001).
72 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 72.2: τοῦτ' οὐδενὶ λογισμῷ τὸ πάθος Ἀλέξανδρος ἤνεγκεν.
73 Asikainen (2018, 138). Plut. *Mor. Cons. ad Apoll*. 102c–e; Plut. *Vit. Sol*. 11.4–6.
74 On Arrian's long account of the different stories of Alexander's grief and its expressions, see Liotsakis (2019, 201–205).
75 Hom. *Il*. 23.
76 Arrian's reserved view of expressing sorrow and tears can be traced also in the way he comments on the emotional reactions of the Macedonian soldiers at the Hyphasis river and at the siege of Malli with tones of astonishment. Arrian states that the speech produced uproar among the audience and that many Macedonians "even shed tears." Again, he writes that when the soldiers saw the wounded Alexander, they thought their king would die or was already dead, and many of them "even wept involuntarily." In the eyes of Arrian the image of males displaying sorrow with tears was unusual and expressing extreme and uncontrollable grief was odd, see Arr. *an*. 5.28.1; 6.13.2.
77 Tac. *Agr*. 29.1; *Hist. Aug. Hadr*. 14; Lucian mocks Herodes Atticus for the way he displayed sorrow over his foster son Polydeukion. According to Lucian it was excessive and somewhat insincere. Lucian. *Demon*. 24, 33.
78 Cf. Barnett (2017, 65).
79 Curt. 9.5.26–27. This scene is also included in *Alexandreis*, see Chât. *Alex*. 9.464–488 (Pritchard 1986, 211–212).
80 Conway (2008, 29–30). For Indian Calanus as an exemplary male figure enduring pain patiently, see Cic. *Tusc*. II. 22.52; Arr. *an*. 7.3.1–6; Ael. VH 5.6.
81 Chât. *Alex*. 4.11–18 (Pritchard 1986, 99–100). The death of Darius, see Ibid. 7.348–363 (Pritchard 1986, 171–172).
82 Davis (2007a, 467–468).
83 Davis (2007a, 469–470, 474–475).
84 Trans. Peter Such & Richard Rabone. *Lib. Alex*. 1233–1238, 1255 dead of Stateira. Darius' death, see *Lib. Alex*. 1762–1790. 1772, 1777, 1790.
85 For crying in the crusader narratives, see Jensen (2017). Cf. Throop (2011, 59).
86 *Lib. Alex*. 252–262.

87 *Lib. Alex*. 260. *Esforçadvos, amigos, en vuestras voluntades! Por poco non vos digo que mugeres semejades*.
88 As an exception is Tatian's *Address to the Greeks* (*Oratio ad Graecos*). According to Tatian the king's expressions of repentance after killing Cleitus were not for the action itself but for fear of punishment and disfavour. Tatian. *Ad. Gr*. 2.1.
89 Cf. Asikainen (2018, 145–147). Asikainen states that Jesus' behaviour in terms of expressing sorrow was against the Greco-Roman views of hegemonic masculinity and represented Christian marginal masculinity. However, if we think the example of Alexander, who represented the expression of hegemonic masculinity, the shedding tears seems not anymore so distant from the masculine ideal, and one could ponder whether there were more room in expressing grief in masculine culture.
90 For a survey of the conspiracies in Alexander's reign, see Badian (2000). For the consequences and political impact of the murder of Cleitus, see Carney (1981, 158–159).
91 Baraz (2008, 366–367) remarks that in Latin there are no words suggesting that pride has any connotation of virtue, but concepts such as *adrogantia*, *insolentia*, *fastus* and *superbia* seem to refer to the excess of pride.
92 In Herodotus there is already the idea that particularly in absolute monarchies the man in the position of power is easily corrupted and turns into a tyrant. He loses his mental balance as his arrogance grows, see Hdt. 3.80.3–4.
93 Amitay (2022, 109–111). As an example, Josephus saw the he-goat as Alexander, see Jos. *AJ*. 10.273–274. Also, early Christians after Hippolytus of Rome saw the he-goat as Alexander, see Peltonen (2019a, 190–195); Djurslev (2020, 100–106).
94 1 Macc. 1.2–3. ὑψώθη καὶ ἐπήρθη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ.
95 The aspect of Alexander's *hubris* in Daniel and 1 Maccabees is recognised also in Amitay (2022, 115–117). According to Kleczar (2017, 203) the image of the universal ruler and evil tyrant are combined in the image of Alexander in 1 Maccabees, cf. Kleczar (2018, 381–384). For a discussion on the role of Alexander in the 1 Maccabees, see Peltonen (2019a, 57–59, 64); Djurslev (2020, 140–142).
96 1. Sam. 13:1–14 (Saul); 1. Kings. 11:9–13 (Solomon); 2. Chron. 26:16–21 (Uzziah); Exod. 5–14 (the Pharaoh of Exodus); Dan. 4:29–37 (Nebuchadnezzar); 5:1–6, 17–30 (Belshazzar); Isa. 37:33–37; 2. Chron. 32:21 (Sennacherib).
97 Kuefler (2001, 151–153).
98 Oros. 3.18.10, 3.20.4. Fulg. *De aet. mund. et hom*. 10.37–40.
99 In Aphrahat's *Fifth instruction on wars* composed in the fourth century CE this view deriving from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament writings is addressed also in the context of the fall of Alexander's empire foretold by prophet Daniel, see Aph. *Dem*. V. 3, 5, 7, 12, 17–19.
100 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 40.1–4.
101 Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 41.1. In his essay *On the fortune or the virtue of Alexander* Plutarch, for example, writes that the king acquired his vast empire by displaying greatness of soul (*μεγαλοψυχία*), keen intelligence (*σύνεσις*), self-restraint (*σωφροσύνη*), and manly courage (*ἀνδραγαθία*). Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort*. 327e-f, 332c.
102 In Strootman's (2022) recent survey he regards *πόθος* as a historical universal ideology developed at the Argead court. Ehrenberg (1938, 52–61) suggested that *πόθος* was Alexander's way of explaining his aims to his contemporaries and constructing a heroic self-image. Cf. Nawotka (2010, 109–110). Bosworth (1980, 62), sees it as a Herodotean phrase and formula, not one copied from the contemporary works of Nearchus or Ptolemy. For a list of its occurrences in Arrian, see Stewart (1993, 84) (n. 47).

103 Hom. *Il.* 2.134–138, 2.275–277. For example, Thersites encourages Greek warriors to return home from Troy and end Agamemnon's war, which is motivated by greed. For a survey of the hero's return in epic poetry and tragedies, see Alexopoulou (2009).
104 Arr. *an.* 5.27.9.
105 Trans. Pamela Mensch Ibid. Arr. *an.* 5.26.1: *Πέρας δὲ τῶν πόνων γενναίῳ μὲν ἀνδρὶ οὐδὲν δοκῶ ἔγωγε ὅτι μὴ αὐτοὺς τοὺς πόνους, ὅσοι αὐτῶν ἐς καλὰ ἔργα φέρουσιν*. In this passage Alexander reminds his men that the Macedonians have surpassed the accomplishments of Dionysus and Heracles. Cf. Arr. *an.* 5.26. 5–6.
106 As demonstrated above, Arrian also introduces in his work the opposite portrait of philosophical manliness in the way he presents the Indian Brahmans, whose lifestyle and doctrines question Alexander's actions: see the note 122 of Chapter 4.
107 Peltonen (2019a, 41–46).
108 Curt. 5.1.36–37; 5.10.1. (Cf. chapter 5).
109 Possible this term derived from a common formulation in the Hellenistic tradition. For the occurrence of the, see Curt. 3.1.16; 4.7.8; 4.8.3; 7.11.4; 9.2.9, 12.
110 Curt. 4.7.8–9, 25–26, 29–31. The king's famous (or infamous) visit to Siwah was motivated by his *cupido,* which produced *superbia* and an unbalanced self-view. In contrast to Arrian's or Plutarch's romantic narratives, Curtius' passage is clearly the most negative treatment of the visit to Siwah. Greek writers like Arrian and Plutarch describe difficulties and the divine omens that occurred during the journey, while Curtius deals with the episode in an ironic tone. For a negative portrait of the king's divination, see Lucian. *Dial. mort.* 12.1, 5, 6, where Alexander, now in the Underworld, is not only forced to admit that Philip is his father, not Amon, but that he is mortal just like everyone else.
111 Curt. 9.2.12, 28.
112 In the third book of *Historiae* Curtius states that Alexander would have been happier if he had continued to maintain a degree of moderation (*continentia animi*) to the end of his life instead of imitating the triumph of Father Liber and continuing his campaign to the ends of the known world. In the fourth book the lack of self-control becomes evident when the king allows the flattery of the priest of Ammon influence him in Siwah. As a result, Alexander not only allowed but even ordered that he should be called the son of Jupiter. In the sixth book Curtius returns to this topic of degeneration of the king when depicting the process that made the king emulate the Persian ways and abandon the customs of his country. Curt. 3.12.18–21; 4.7.8–9, 25–26, 29–31; 6.6.1–2. On these passages in Curtius, see Peltonen (2019a, 41–46).
113 In the Greek *AR* Alexander in his letter to Aristotle expresses his desire to search for the borders of the inhabited earth, see *AR* 2.41 (Stoneman 1991, 122–123; 2008, 229).
114 *AR* 3.17 (Stoneman 1991, 135); Jul. Val. 3.17.565–585 (Foubert 2014, 140); Arm. *AR* 224 (Wolohojian 1969, 130); Syr. *AR* 3.7 (Budge 1889, 106).
115 *AR* 3.17, Nawotka (2017, 228) links the prodigies appearing in the *AR* tradition with the existence of "universal belief in antiquity that the death of an important person could not happen without divine signs and prophecies predicting it." For a survey of the prodigies on Alexander's death in the *AR* tradition, see Djurslev (2021). In the medieval versions of *AR* the death of the king is foreseen by divine powers but does not necessarily occur due to divine punishment. Instead, it is death following the miserable treason of Antipater, in *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.534.7900–535.7920 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 629–630) it is highlighted as treason that is not planned by God. Cf. *Hist. de prel.* 3.106, 124–127.
116 In the end of the Armenian *AR* the author states: "This life [Alexander's] that was directed by Providence above ended in man's common death." Arm. *AR* 286 (Wolohojian 1969, 159).

117 *AR* 3.31 (Stoneman 1991, 149–150); Jul. Val. 3.31.1320–1340 (Foubert 2014, 162–163); Arm. *AR* 260–261 (Wolohojian 1969, 149); Syr. *AR* 3.20 (Budge 1889, 135–136).
118 When the different versions of *AR* and the last appraisals of the king's reign are compared, it seems that the earliest Greek and Latin versions gives the shortest description, while the Armenian and Hebrew versions give the most lengthy eulogies, see *AR* 3.34, 35 (Stoneman 1991, 158–159); Jul. Val. 3.35.1440–1455 (Foubert 2014, 165–166); Arm. *AR* 285–286 (Wolohojian 1969, 158–159); Syr. *AR* 3.24 (Budge 1889, 142–143). Heb. *AR* 130 (Kazis 1962, 158).
119 Lafferty (1994, 80); Rabone (2022, 254–255).
120 *Lib. Alex*. 2317–2318. Rabone (2022, 258–260) understands this episode as emphasising Alexander's moral blindness, and points out that the scene is preceded by Porus' warning to Alexander on the potential to fall having been incredibly successful in *Lib Alex*. 2213–2214.
121 Chât. *Alex*. 10.6–159 (Pritchard 1986, 216–222); *Lib. Alex*. 2325–2327, 2439, 2449–2450.
122 Chât. *Alex*. 10.128–142 (Pritchard 1986, 221); *Lib. Alex*. 2441–2444. For the Satan's/Devil's role when Judas betrayed Jesus in synoptic gospels, see Luke 22:3–4. John 13:2.
123 Chât. *Alex*. 10.171 (Pritchard 1986, 222).
124 Cf. Michael (1970, 278–279); Rabone (2022, 266–267). See, *Lib. Alex*. 2668–2669
125 Chât. *Alex*. 10. 351–352 (Pritchard 1986, 228). Cf. Chât. *Alex*. 10. 191–204 (Pritchard 1986, 223).
126 *Lib. Alex*. 2395–2402.
127 For a discussion on pride as a deadly sin in western thought, see Dyson (2006, 9–26); Clarke (2018, 1–22). For the image of the devil seducing men into deadly sins, see Hill (2007, 66–68) (gluttony); Johnson (2007, 133–134) (pride). For pride as a sin of Lucifer, who arrogantly sought to become the equal of God, see Robertson (2012, 215); McDonald (2012, 295–297). August. *de Trin*. 4.13.18;13.13.17.
128 Cf. Asikainen (2018, 136) where this division to two ideals is made.
129 In her discussion of *Troy* (2004) and the way in which it differs from the *Iliad*, Cavallini (2015, 75–80), does not discuss the lack of emotional display by Achilles.

7 The Ideal of Masculine Dominance and Self-Control

> "A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that."[1]
>
> *Gospel of Luke*

> "It takes a strong man to rule. Alexander was more, he was Prometheus."
>
> Oliver Stone, *Alexander* (2004)

We might ask how and why Alexander became such a prominent historical figure embracing all historical periods. How did people become so familiar with the legend of Alexander in the premodern world? For upper-class Greeks and Romans, the stock of stories about Alexander circulated through literature that was read and taught as an essential part of their upbringing. The masculine ideals that were related to the stories of the Macedonian king belonged to *paideia*. In addition to Greek and Latin historiography, there were poems and epic poetry, philosophical works and geographical treatises that dealt with Alexander or referred to the stories around him. Even though their voices are missing from the sources, even the lower classes, who were mostly illiterate, must have known at some level the story of King Alexander. For example, a statue erected in an agora or a portrait on a copper coin made his persona known to them. For them, Alexander was presumably a heroic king who lived a long time ago. Since Alexander appears also in the Jewish tradition and in early Christian works, it is probable that Alexander's campaign against Persia was known of widely in the Greco-Roman world.

In a male-dominated society the importance of masculine dominance was taken for granted in the Greco-Roman and medieval world. By referring to the figure of Alexander the Great, upper class men discussed and maintained this ideal. The word "ideal" refers to a representation of something that is considered desirable or perfect, but at the same time almost unattainable or beyond reach in real life or earthly life. It is often used to describe something which is above the standards that are expected from a

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"normal" mortal, a state of perfection which serves as a model worthy of imitation. In the Hellenistic, Roman and medieval eras, different authors explicitly described Alexander as a role model for kings and warlords and statesmen. In many ways he set a standard for future kings to achieve. He was certainly portrayed as an "ideal" form of masculinity, for all males to imitate, but his career or aspects of it were also sometimes a warning to future rulers of the excesses and lack of self-control to avoid. At the same time, although Alexander is frequently presented as an exceptional male, he is not presented as flawless, and some authors referred to him as an antithesis of true masculinity. Nevertheless, it is arguable that whether these authors took a positive or negative standpoint on Alexander himself, all were promoting a certain ideal of masculinity, and his role was to be either an embodiment of the masculine ideal or an example of some of the pitfalls that might undermine that ideal. For the Roman Greek authors like Plutarch and Arrian, Alexander is the ultimate ideal. For authors like Curtius, Alexander is both a good and a bad example of masculine ideals. The Stoic and early Christian authors, though aware of Alexander's status as a masculine ideal in Roman society, seem to criticise and question his exemplarity as well as some of the contemporary masculine ideals themselves. Whatever their standpoint, all these prominent authors formed an opinion on Alexander and took their stand either for or against his exemplarity as an ideal man: thus, whether Alexander represented the highest masculine ideals or not, all premodern writers could negotiate on true manliness through his figure. The authors' opinions reflected the ideals that existed in the societies that had bred them, and the myths of Alexander, as well as other figures in their works, were used to promote, propagate, and sometimes question these ideals. Even if the ideals mattered more than the legend itself, Alexander became the yardstick by which many authors measured what they considered the proper courses of action.

As the example of the Stoic and Cristian authors shows, in a given period of history there always existed more than one type of ideal masculinity. Classical and medieval authors propagated their ideals by using certain famous characters, either in a positive or negative way. Besides Alexander, we encounter other male characters that were used to emphasise and represent stereotypical versions of masculinity. Masculine ideals of another kind can be found in the reception of Socrates in the works of Plato and Xenophon or Jesus in the synoptic gospels. The differences between the reception of Alexander and that of these two famous figures can be explained in some respects by the fact these latter two were not military figures. Plato's Socrates is a male figure who competes verbally against his opponents and uses his intellect to dominate other men. These features we also encounter in Jesus, whose life and deeds as illustrated in the synoptic gospels offered another masculine ideal that in many respects differs from the masculine ideal that Alexander represented, which focused on competitive spirit and ability to rule others.

In the quotation at the beginning of the chapter, composed in the first century, Jesus as representative of a marginalised masculinity rebukes his male disciples. Jesus' male disciples have just expressed competitive spirit by disputing which of them should be regarded as "the greatest (*mégas*)," the one enjoying the most notable status among the hierarchy of the Christ's followers. One could argue that they were acting according to the ideals of hegemonic masculinity, which stressed the dominant paradigm of masculinity. However, Jesus as a representative of marginal masculinity prevents his male disciples from pursuing a status where they can dominate others. According to him, the status of a male monarch ruling over others does not encompass true greatness. Even though the author of the gospel does not mention Alexander by name, in his era the Macedonian world conqueror represented the archetype of a gentile king. Particularly the use of the word "great" in these verses might have reminded his readers of Alexander, who already had the title "Great" in the Roman world. In the quoted passage the masculine ideal of a seeking dominance and power is not depicted as an ideal that Christ's male followers should follow. The passage also shows that in first-century Palestine the idea of hegemonic masculinity was well-known (and famous monarchs were the best representatives of that masculine ideal). Though Jesus' life includes the concept of serving others, despising of worldly status, and glory in "shameful" death, there are also elements of dominant masculinity since he defeats his opponents in wisdom contests and proves himself an authoritative teacher.[2]

While we see in Jesus's teachings an alternative ideal of masculinity, it was acknowledged as an ideal way of behaviour by only a relatively small number of people in the first three centuries CE. There is also a question of the extent to which the early Christians saw Jesus's behaviour in terms of ideal masculinity, and whether it had an actual impact on how the early Christians saw an ideal of masculinity. While Jesus' masculinity – as it appears in the synoptic gospels – may have served as an ideal for a marginal group, the Christians in the first century, in the same period Alexander's figure was a notable paragon of hegemonic masculinity for Greek and Roman upper class males. When Jesus was born Alexander had been this representative of hegemonic masculinity for over 300 hundred years in the Hellenised world. After the Roman Empire was Christianised, Jesus' status as the uppermost masculine ideal was strengthened and his life and deeds became exemplary for upper class males throughout Christendom. This change did not remove Alexander's status as an ideal man and monarch whom Christian kings and knights could still imitate. After all, the parameters of hegemonic masculinity in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages did not change radically and there was still need for the masculine ideal that Alexander's martial figure represented, that is, the ideal of the masculine warrior. Even though the Macedonian world conqueror was sometimes presented as a pagan monarch praying to Almighty God instead of Greek gods, the masculine ideal his figure represented survived almost intact from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

Alexander's figure fulfils the ideals of hegemonic masculinity in most texts composed from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. He successfully pursued status and public recognition. His childhood and upbringing are idealised. He is presented often as an exceptional young male whose deeds differed from his peers. After ascending to the throne, he proved that he was a worthy follower of his father King Philip. All the good traits of character that were already visible when he was a boy are manifested when the grown man king asserts his masculinity by dominating others as well as controlling himself.

It would, however, be oversimplifying to state that the figure of Alexander merely fulfils the ideals of hegemonic masculinity in the premodern world. The texts concerning the Macedonian king in the Classical and medieval world also construct a powerful masculine ideal that stands on its own. The historical Alexander and his deeds, as well as the literary and visual self-image he created, was the foundation of this ideal of the exemplary man. After he died, different authors could add their interpretations and gendered views to the story. In the Middle Ages the writers could modify his figure so it would better respond to contemporary views of masculinity. The Roman image of Alexander who had difficulty in controlling his passions, like those appearing in the different versions of *AR,* is almost entirely omitted from the many medieval versions of the story. As we have seen, Curtius' work contains criticism of the king's use of wine. However, Châtillon and the author of the *Libro* who knew and used Curtius' work as their source material omitted these passages. The same can be said of the Curtian references to Alexander as a king who eventually became the slave of his *libido*. During the Middle Ages Alexander becomes a tool to construct ideal knighthood; in other words, the story of the illustrious Classical hero is medievalised. He is rarely presented as a pagan monarch who was a slave of his passions, but instead becomes a Christian chivalrous knight. Evidently, the popularity of the *AR* influenced this portrayal, so that the vices of the Macedonian king were washed away also in the medieval epic. In late antiquity and the Middle Ages, the authors could either introduce him as a pagan king who had a providential role or even convert him into a Christian or Muslim, so their image of him would better correspond to their masculine expectations of a male hero figure. However, for an author like Seneca Alexander never fulfilled the Stoic ideal of masculinity. Unlike medieval writers, this Stoic philosopher did not make Alexander a Stoic philosopher-king or an example of a stoic sage but the antithesis of one.

In Classical and medieval thought males were not "built" to act in a manly way. Instead, they had to learn how to be a man by imitating manly males of the past or from mythology and by learning the theories of virtues and vices. Being a man did not just involve fighting external enemies, but fighting an internal battle to avoid or suppress womanlike or effeminate traits. For many male authors Alexander – the king from the distant past – is presented as a spokesman of masculine virtues. Alexander's appearance and actions are often gendered, and he clearly represents idealised masculinity. His life

is often an example of martial masculinity and self-controlled masculinity. Sometimes scholars have distinguished two different masculine ideals, one being the dominant paradigm of masculinity and the other emphasising the importance of self-control, which were competing for the hegemonic position in society.[3] Based on my analysis in this book these two masculine ideals should not be treated as divergent ideals. Instead, the dominant idea of masculine man derived from that of self-controlled masculinity. A manly man dominating other males and women had to control himself first. It can be argued that the portraiture of Alexander as an idealised male represented both the dominant and self-controlled masculinity that are part of the same ideal. Those writings that criticise Alexander's conduct and underline his failure to control himself are also enforcing this ideal of dominant and self-controlled masculinity. The status Alexander had in the premodern world made him the obvious candidate for praise or criticism which helped the authors make their points.

In the ancient and medieval literature Alexander – in this sense as a figure like Jesus – was used as a tool to learn the correct ways to be a man. The idea of imitating or not imitating the king (*imitatio Alexandri*) is behind all the written accounts of the idealised world conqueror. Not all upper class males were able to live up to this idealised model, or even to strive for it. However, with his image they could negotiate what was undesirable for a man of their status and what one had to do to become a truly illustrious male.

At the top of the Classical gender system – which was related to social status – there were free, elite, adult male citizens, whereas slaves, effeminate males, eunuchs and barbarians were at the bottom of the gender system. Alexander is himself a free, elite male and therefore he can represent ideal manhood and convey hegemonic masculinity. Since masculinity was not regarded as a permanent state but one a man could lose, and it was open to the scrutiny of other men, the story of Alexander in most cases is a story of a man successfully performing his masculinity. In the works or parts of them that praise the Macedonian king the author describes how Alexander proved he was a true man and a representative of the masculine ideal. By contrast, in the critical passages or works the author demonstrates how and why the king fails to maintain his masculinity and becomes effeminate.

Sometimes, Alexander's behaviour represents a type of masculinity that I call hypermasculinity. On these occasions, the expression of Alexander's masculinity tests or even breaks the masculine ideal. For example, in warfare Alexander's fervour for personal glory and courage produces recklessness and he almost gets killed. By the image of hypermasculine Alexander the authors negotiate the borders of ideal masculinity; what happens when a man is too courageous? These hypermasculine expressions of masculinity stress the need for self-control and balance. A man must know when an action would be going too far. However, it is often challenging to assess whether the authors condemn Alexander's hypermasculine behaviour on these occasions. Instead, they seem to construct a setting in which

Alexander was after all Alexander: an exceptional man whose qualities might challenge the norm.

In the second quotation at the beginning of this chapter, taken from Oliver Stone's *Alexander*, Ptolemy states that only a "strong man" can rule. In this context, it seems obvious that here the word "man" refers only to males and it is not used to mean "human." The statement in this case would exclude weak or effeminate males and women as incapable of ruling others, which from the modern western perspective sounds both prejudicial and discriminative (not to mention, from our perspective, demonstrably false). However, it corresponds well with ancient gendered thinking. According to the statement, Alexander was a "strong man" who proved himself worthy to rule. But Alexander was not just a strong man as he was in many ways an exceptional man whose life resembled that of Prometheus. As we know, this famous figure of Classical mythology was a titan who stole fire from the gods and gave it to humans. Prometheus' exceptional deeds profited mankind, but Zeus punished him by sending an eagle to eat his liver. Interestingly, in the above quotation we can distinguish the core elements of the masculine ideal that Alexander stands for. The idea of exceptionality as masculine and the image of Alexander as a powerful man able to rule over others, as in Stone's film, was foremost in the Roman and medieval reception of Alexander. The idea that for real males to earn remembrance, admiration and even reverence they must perform remarkable deeds that profit their community also lives on. In the first chapter, I mentioned that I would discuss the different masculine ideals the stories of Alexander the Great promoted in premodern world. I will conclude my book by summarising the parameters of ideal masculinity which stand out in the Classical and medieval sources.

1) *The narrative of Alexander supporting the patriarchal order*. Alexander and the minor figures appearing in the narratives strengthen the prevailing cultural constructions that connect masculinity with power. Chapter 3 underlined the importance of the education of upper-class boys and young males so that they could take their place in society as rulers and members of the elite. Men had to be trained to exercise power. As highlighted in Chapter 4, Alexander is portrayed as a commander and a decision maker whose judgements determine the fate of thousands of soldiers and other subjects. The narrative stresses the idea that only a strong man can and should wield power; weaker males and females are excluded from the arenas of power. Warfare was regarded as a manly pursuit where unmasculine males and females were incapable of succeeding. In the literary imaginary, monarchs are supposed to earn their titles by their bravery in battle. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, the discourse on sexuality was focused on male sexuality while effeminate males and females were marginalised. Yet it must be remembered when discussing patriarchal order in premodern times that the focus of literature was on male dominance of other men and women were mostly excluded from this discourse. The discourse was not about men in relation to women but men in relation to men: this in itself tells us that the assumption of women's

exclusion from positions of political and military power was so ingrained in these societies that it did not require discussion.

2) *The portrait of Alexander promoting the idea of dominance as a masculine ideal.* The Roman and medieval reception of Alexander favours the idea that a masculine man has power and he knows how to use it. A dominant man governs everything and everybody, including other males. In Chapter 2 we saw that Alexander's appearance, including his gaze, his leonine appearance and his long hair symbolised control and dominion over his kinsmen as well as his enemies. As explored in Chapter 3, this is demonstrated in the portrait of Alexander as a boy advising his peers or taming Bucephalus, which clearly embraces the ideal of male dominance: already in his childhood, a prince should show a capability to rule over his peers, adult men and even wild animals. The same ideal of dominance is recognisable in the stories of young Alexander acting more wisely than the experienced Parmenion, or in the way the king prefers older soldiers when recruiting his army before the Persian expedition. Focusing on the martial valour and battle-narratives, Chapter 4 included a number of references to dominant masculinity. The warrior-monarch dominates his enemies, overcoming and killing them using his sword and spear. The imaginative stories of Alexander as a beast-slayer merely broaden the scope of dominant masculinity; the hero figure is even claiming dominance over terrible beasts dwelling on the fringes of the known world. Only in the works of the Roman Stoics and early Christians is the positive discourse of male dominance and warfare at least partially questioned. Chapter 5 emphasised that an ideal man must be dominant in his sexual relations with effeminate males and women. Sexually effeminate and impotent males were not considered to represent hegemonic masculinity. In the literary accounts even Alexander's mercy towards captive women and his sexual self-mastery express dominance, since only those who are in control are in a position to show mercy towards their subordinated objects.

3) *Self-controlled masculinity dominates the texts concerning Alexander's manliness.* Self-control, or lack of it, appears in almost all the texts discussed in this study. Both praise and criticism of Alexander's deeds underline the importance of self-controlled masculinity. Chapter 2, focusing on Alexander's appearance, showed that in the literature the king has a mesomorphic body type. This characteristic might even be taken as a physical expression of the ideal of moderation (see below). As demonstrated in Chapter 3, in the idealised image of Alexander's childhood, he was described as a boy who displayed more self-control than his peers. Again, the portraying the Macedonian king as an ideal young male lauds Alexander's ability to master his bodily needs, even though juveniles were expected to lack self-control. Incidents where Alexander lacks self-control due to his young age merely highlight the importance of self-controlled masculinity. Chapter 4 pointed out that self-control is also seen in the way the warrior-monarch conducted himself on the battlefield: He gave priority to the needs of his fellow-soldiers', suffered thirst

and hunger with them, and was willing to shed blood on the battlefield just as they did. The battle-narratives embrace the ideal of self-control: real men were expected to control their fears, thus proving themselves courageous. However, for certain Roman intellectuals, Alexander's martial masculinity was not a sign of his self-control but quite the opposite; they saw his martial conduct on the battlefield as reckless behaviour that was a result of his lack of self-control. Nevertheless, in these accounts self-control was seen as an important factor defining masculinity. Chapter 5 demonstrated that the need for self-control extended to sexuality too. According to this masculine ideal, sexual abstinence was a desired result of self-mastery. By such self-mastery, a man was able to behave sexually within the boundaries regarded as an acceptable norm by the community. Chapter 6 discussed the normative, manly way of displaying emotions. For instance, both in displaying anger and grief a man had to act according to his status and role in society. Sometimes Alexander acts according to this masculine ideal and sometimes he fails. In every case, whether Alexander was seen as a good or bad example, the importance of self-control as masculine behaviour comes to the fore.

Both eulogy and critique of Alexander as an exemplary man is frequently based on observation of whether the king managed to follow the path of moderation. Alexander's lack of modesty and moderation is an underlying factor in the criticism presented by Roman intellectuals and Christian writers. Alexander's vices result from failure to control himself. For the Classical and medieval intellectuals, excess and extremes in war, sexuality, emotions and consumption of alcohol were harmful. No matter what a man's status, self-controlled masculinity was desirable.

This ideal of moderation was widely accepted in the Classical world. The Roman poet Horace in his *Odes* famously wrote about "golden moderation" as a path for upper-class Roman males. Nowhere is this ideal more prominent than in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, where the true virtue and virtuous life depends on *mesotes* (Latin *mediocritas*). The pursuit of moderation can be identified in the Hippocratic writings and in Galen's medicinal works, which argued that sickness came from an imbalance of the four bodily fluids while health meant that within the body these fluids were in the correct proportions to one another.[4] *Sōphrosynē* – referring to restraint, the practice of self-control, abstention, discretion and moderation tempering the appetite – was also regarded as the most important virtue by Plato. This Greek concept and its Latin equivalent *temperantia* also stressed the importance of self-control as an essential quality for every man. Early Christian male thinkers and theologians embraced the ideal of self-control and suggested that their Christian fellow-believers should avoid all extremes. It has been argued that the idea of self-controlled masculinity is an essential feature in the presentation of Jesus.[5] In the Middle Ages chivalric literature also stressed the importance of self-control.[6]

4) *Exceptional masculinity is pivotal for the presentation of Alexander as an ideal man*. Compared to others of his age, Alexander proves to be

unique in many ways. The material examined in Chapter 2 showed that the visual and textual presentation of Alexander's appearance is exceptional. His beautiful but extraordinary looks corresponded to what the Greeks and Romans viewed as an ideal appearance, even though the ignorant "barbarians" expected great men to be unusually tall and physically strong. However, the king was *not* characterised as the tallest and physically strongest but still easily surpassed all his contemporaries underlines the idea that a truly great man must have exceptional characteristics and qualities. Undoubtedly, the decision to depict Alexander as a clean-shaven and long-haired young warrior-monarch was intended to present him as different from the stereotypical bearded Greek and Macedonian males before him. In addition, in the *AR* Alexander's peculiar appearance, including heteroglaucos and the leonine mane, even brings out the divine nature of the king. Chapter 3 demonstrated that in some of the Classical and medieval sources, the king's childhood as well as his qualities as a juvenile are presented as exceptional. While children were usually depicted as vulnerable and helpless, Alexander as a child was presented as a *puer senex,* impatiently awaiting adulthood and physical maturity. In Chapter 4 it becomes apparent that as an exceptional warrior and commander on the battlefield, Alexander's valour surpasses that of both his generals and his soldiers, who try to imitate him but fail to achieve his high standards. Chapter 5 demonstrated that according to many ancient and medieval authors, in his ability to express self-control in connection with sex and bodily desires, Alexander exceeded average males who often failed to control their desires.

The Classical and medieval source material supports the view that in autocracies the one who rules must stand out from other males. The one fit to rule is expected to be *primus inter pares,* that is the first among equals, as well as reflect the prevailing masculine expectations and ideals. He must exceed all others in the number of virtues and express manliness in times of war and peace. When the state is ruled by one man, he personally must maintain the values representing the accepted value system. The king – or anyone exercising power in the community – is always a model for his subjects as well those in posterity. If this person acts wrongly he sets a bad example to his subjects, who are likely to imitate his bad traits, which in turn will negatively influence the whole of society.[7] When those who wrote about him criticised Alexander's qualities or aspects of his manhood, they made this point clear.

5) *The ideal man must be ready to compete successfully with other men.* The Alexander narratives make a constant comparison between the idealised Alexander and an average man, which underlines the importance of competition in the masculine imaginary. The spirit of competition gives a framework within which the ideals of masculinity are constructed. Chapter 3 discussed how Alexander's greatness is constructed in the social space where young boys and young males compete against each other, and this rivalry serves as an inducement to glorious accomplishments. As is demonstrated

in Chapter 4, warfare is presented as a prime sphere for manly rivalry and competition. War is a masculine contest where males can prove themselves as true men and their value before the other male members of the community. In most of the Classical and medieval source material Alexander intends to excel and outdo his male peers. His eagerness to compete with all the male heroes of old like Achilles, Heracles, Perseus and King Cyrus the Elder, and even to surpass them makes him an exemplary man. The majority of the ancient and medieval authors seem to give their wholehearted approval to this type of male thinking. With their praise the Roman historians as well as the authors of the *AR* give the impression that the king manages to surpass all the Macedonians as well as the barbarians. One could also argue that competitive spirit and dissatisfaction with the existing state of things is the driving force that makes Alexander enter unknown regions in the *AR*. In the Roman and medieval narratives the Macedonian generals and individual soldiers constantly compete for the favour of the higher status man: the king, Alexander.

We know that competition was an essential aspect of Greek culture: not only in sport and war but also in music, drama and among craftsmen, there were contests that were popular. In this agonistic culture, to becoming a good man (*kalós kai agathós*) was to compete successfully. In this sense, Alexander as an idealised man acts like a true Greek. Alexander's figure may even be seen as the embodiment of the agonistic Greek (and western) culture. In one of Aelius Aristides' *Orations* composed in the second century CE, Alexander is even explicitly described as a contestant in the Olympic Games who after overcoming his opponents died before he fairly fitted the crown to his head.[8] In the medieval world competition among males was also an important part of the culture. For example, tournaments offered a forum for masculine competition and demonstration of fighting skills for upper-class males. In this way, Alexander's competitive spirit fitted well with the masculine expectations placed on upper-class males and knights. The greatness of Alexander's self-mastery, honour and martial valour are created by comparing his masculine performance to that of average males. Most of the source material promotes the idea that the ideal man devotes himself to competition, and his accomplishments are expressions of a competing spirit that is the path leading to greatness.[9]

6) *A man's human errors and faults make him more accessible and highlight the fragility of masculinity*. Even though Alexander's figure is idealised he has his failures, making him more human and a more suitable and long-lasting paragon for males. Chapter 3 pointed out that there are several Alexander narratives that openly discuss Alexander's faults. In this tradition, these flaws and faults were related to his young age and vices that were typical of young men. Openly presenting the faults typical of young men brought out the human side of the male hero figure. As explained in Chapter 4, along with the hypermasculine side of the Macedonian world-conqueror as a courageous warrior-monarch, there were

several references to situations where Alexander was wounded in battle. Sometimes he felt fear when he encountered terrible beasts. Chapter 5, focusing on the king's sexuality, made it clear that Alexander also had problems with controlling his libido. Particularly Curtius gave attention to this side of the king when he wrote about the seductive power Bagoas and Roxanne exercised over him. In Chapter 6, we encountered tales of Alexander failing to display his emotions, such as anger and grief, in a proper manner. For example, the tragic scene where Alexander first murders his companion Cleitus in a rage and afterwards repents it greatly, highlighted his imperfection. Alexander's imperfect side makes him more accessible, reprieving his imitators and admirers who would like to aim for greatness and renown themselves but might otherwise think Alexander too remote a model. It reminded them that a man's pursuit of an ideal Alexander-like masculinity should not be hindered by the illusion of flawlessness. In fact, Arrian in his epilogue of *Anabasis* (7.30.1.) mentions this when writing about those who criticise Alexander. The recognition and proper acceptance of vulnerability in Greek epic, tragedy and philosophy has been recognised in previous research. The heroes of Homer and Sophocles receive wounds and sometimes die, frequently struggling with various forms of moral weakness.[10] One could argue that the errors and faults in the literary tradition also make Alexander vulnerable and emphasise human incompleteness. One of the failings (perhaps the worst) of Alexander sometimes discussed (by the Roman authors) was failure to accept that he was vulnerable to them, that is, *hubris* or *superbia*, deriving from his success "going to his head."

The critical tone of the writing about situations where Alexander was not able to live up to the manly virtues emphasises that the authors were not merely underlining the fragile side of masculinity and humanity but also highlighting responsibilities and duties that the authors regarded as essential for all males regardless of their social status, possibly by their critical remarks the authors in question intended to promote the masculine ideal of their marginal groups. Alexander's deeds and failures of masculinity were used to demonstrate the philosophical and religious truths and aspects of life the representatives of marginal masculinities venerated. Roman Stoics could promote the philosophical lifestyle and passion therapy. In the Middle Ages especially the need to question the value of worldly glory is so important that it appears as a topos; here, the question of whether Alexander at the end of his life was guilty of *superbia* can identified in the literature. In Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages early Christians stressed that for every male, and female too, acceptance before God was the fundamental endeavour. No one was free from the seduction of the Devil and harm resulting from sin, and even the most virtuous man can fall.

7) *The venerated male is a self-sufficient individual as well as a servant of the community and common good*. Both Classical and medieval culture support the idea that a man should contribute and profit those

belonging to his own group, whether defined by social, political, religious or even ethnic parameters. If Alexander's individual pursuit of glory does not profit the community as a whole, but instead is harmful to the common good, it can be seen as conflicting with the masculine ideal. In the eulogising about Alexander's masculinity, the king's manly behaviour benefits those around him, encouraging his male friends and soldiers to follow his lead in serving the common good, thus showing true manliness and helping them to become "true" men. This appears particularly in Plutarch's *Vitae,* but also in Arrian and Curtius. Yet, in certain critical passages, Alexander's individualistic pursuits do not benefit the community and are therefore condemned as inglorious and unmanly projects. If a man does not serve his *patria* and fellow countrymen, his actions are no longer masculine but selfish, feminine and twisted. The beast-slayer stories uphold the masculine ideal of a man who serves the community by defending the civilised world of men from the external threat of monsters and dragons. The male hero uses his exceptional skills for the profit of the community. It is not always a question of waging wars and battles. For example, in the stories of *AR,* Alexander serves the community from an intellectual viewpoint, since his expedition increases his teacher's Aristotle's knowledge of the known world and encourages his contemporaries to undertake glorious deeds. However, for the Stoic intellectuals and many early Christians Alexander's world conquest did not serve the common good but harmed all the inhabitants of the world and Nature itself. Their works demonstrated how the deeds of the Macedonian king's hypermasculine behaviour could be interpreted as destructive.

When it comes to the reception of Alexander, dominance, self-control and competitive spirit (2, 3, 5) are all related to the idea of gender as practice. An essential characteristic of being a man is behaving in a manly way. On the other hand, failure to demonstrate dominance and self-control are considered unmasculine behaviour, which encompasses the idea of shame and fear of losing one's dignity before other males. There is plenty of evidence that for the Roman and medieval upper-class masculinity was performed. Also, the idea of learning by imitation was known to the Classical philosophers and pedagogues. Quintilian's influential book *The Orator's Education,* which was also known in the Middle Ages, repeatedly refers to the idea that humans learn by imitation and the literature concerning Alexander clearly has this educative aspect. At the same time, the stories about Alexander offered amusement for upper-class males.

Minor male figures in the story and the question of genre

As an antithesis of the male ideal, a man might be labelled effeminate due to his inability to exercise control. Effeminate men constituted a negative paradigm that reinforced the masculine ideal: they allegedly lacked the essential qualities and appearance of real men. In the Classical and medieval narratives,

males were emasculated if they didn't behave according to masculine ideals. However, Alexander was rarely among these males. There were exceptions, though, in the passages written by Roman intellectuals on Alexander's anger and his consumption of wine, as well as in the Curtian account of Bagoas. However, in the narratives, there are many less prominent or minor male figures that are emasculated and presented as effeminate men because they fail to control themselves and meet the masculine standards. Many of these males are among the conquered barbarians, but not all. These antitheses of true men are criticised strongly by the authors because they shamefully lose their masculinity. Some of them die without honour. Even King Darius is described as being defeated shamefully in battle due to his inability to control his fear and fight in as manly a way as Alexander. An even clearer warning example of losing one's status before other males is the despicable figure Bessus. By his inglorious, treacherous and contemptible decision to betray his king Darius, Bessus shows he is the antithesis of a manly male. Bessus is also presented with reference to his injurious lust for power and inclination to excessive wine consumption. In the aftermath, Bessus is punished with death by Alexander and for the audience this provides an educative example of what takes place when a man fails to meet masculine standards. Curtius and the medieval writers focus particularly on the negative portrayal of Bessus since, in his uncontrollable lust for power, he has betrayed his king and therefore acted like an effeminate male.[11]

Curtius also associates Bagoas with the wrong kind of male sexuality: he is a soft man (*kinaidos*) who wants to be penetrated and sexually dominated by other men and who could not control his appetites. However, in the medieval epics this figure that represents an alternative version of effeminate masculinity is omitted, probably as too shameful to be included in the story of the idealised Alexander. In the many versions of *AR* Nectanebos, who is driven by strong passion for women, is not only presented as unmanly but as a humorous figure. Curtius savagely criticises Bagoas, while the *AR* tradition often portrays Nectanebos as a laughing stock. Although the unmasculine sex drive of the latter is not judged harshly – it is nonetheless clear to the reader that Nectanebos is not a representative of true maleness.

Many of those portrayed as unmasculine in the sources are not Greek-Macedonian, or, just as important to the classical writers, Roman, but alien ethnic background alone does not make a man effeminate: for instance, the "barbarian" Indian king Porus proves himself a true man in battle. In addition, some men among the ranks of the Macedonians are emasculated. The Macedonian general Cleander, who raped freeborn aristocratic women, is presented as an unmasculine figure, condemned for his inability to control his libido. Using brute force is not seen as a manly quality when its use contravenes the prevailing moral norms of society. Cleitus too fails to control his emotions, in this case so that he seriously provokes the king, and therefore is guilty of unmasculine behaviour. What male figures like Bessus, Bagoas, Nectanebos, Cleander and Cleitus have in common in the Alexander accounts is

their lack of self-control: they can therefore function as cautionary examples of what happens if a man is, or becomes, effeminate and unmasculine. By his actions each one loses his dignity and status, and the respect of other males as well as the whole community.

Even though the accounts of Alexander the Great – the energetic warrior-monarch – focus on martial masculinity and military virtues, they are nevertheless used to promote the ideal of a wise man. In the Roman and medieval texts, Alexander's tutor Aristotle represents another non-martial but still masculine ideal - the philosopher, sage, scholar and man of letters. In the works of Plutarch, and particularly in the various versions of the *AR,* Aristotle embodies an alternative masculine ideal to the soldier. He is presented as a provider and enabler of Alexander's greatness, and even adds substance to the king's status as a masculine ideal in that he becomes philosopher-king as well as soldier-king. Other secondary philosopher figures in the narrative, like Diogenes of Sinope and the Indian Brahmans, represent the ideal of the experienced older man whose wisdom is as much admired in society as the martial virtues of the king.[12] The positive image of the sage as the tutor and counsellor is complementary to the ideal of a warrior-king: neither ideal diminishes the other. Rather, the cooperation between the representatives of these two divergent masculine ideals denotes success and prosperity. In addition, the image of sage and philosopher propagates the ideal of dominant masculinity. Though an old man like Aristotle is not able to dominate others with his strength and physical power, his wisdom gives him the status and ability to influence and have some power over the minds of others. This philosopher sage often succeeds in controlling himself better than the king, which make this ideal appear superior in some ways to the martial ideal. The dominant and strong male – whether a young aggressive male warrior or an old and experienced man of letters – is considered as the definitive human with whom other men and women are compared and contrasted.

This analysis has covered mainly genres of historiography, epic, romance and philosophical treatises. Evidently, these genres have an impact on the construction of the masculine ideal of Alexander. Ancient historiography focused on the famous and infamous deeds of kings and statesmen and therefore they were undoubtedly used as portraits of male figures to function either as exemplary or cautious examples. The same is true regarding epic poetry, which traditionally included stories of illustrious warriors of old pursuing personal glory. The genre of Romance focused on the tales of heroes and villains as well. In different genres, different aspects of masculinity are emphasised. For example, the presentation of anger is common in Homer's epic literature since it was important for him to portray the anger of men and gods. However, philosophical treaties belong to a literary genre where views of hegemonic masculinity were sometimes questioned. These treatises provide a different and a more nuanced presentation of the masculine ideal.

The dynamics of masculine ideals from antiquity to modern times

Expressions one sometimes encounters in the modern world like "Roman masculinity" or "Medieval masculinity" indicate that there were probably strong masculine ideals in these eras, but otherwise tell us nothing. As we know, in ancient Rome and medieval Europe there were many masculine expectations and versions of masculinity. There were different ways of being a man. The existence of different views of masculinity and masculine ideals have been recognised in previous research. In the Classical period, the social structures of Athens and Sparta produced different and sometimes divergent ideals and views of masculinity.[13] Since different city-states had regimes and economic systems of their own, the ideal of the freeborn citizen male also varied. In Imperial Rome, as a norm, the privileged freeborn men possessed the right of Roman citizenship. Expressions of masculinity were intersectional: they were related to one's status, ethnicity, age and marital status.

The masculine ideal characterised above, and promoted by the male figure of Alexander, represented one version of the hegemonic masculinity. We cannot overemphasise that the masculine ideal of Alexander was created and maintained by Greek and Roman upper-class males. The medieval texts concerning Alexander were also written by upper-class males. It was possible for the freeborn members of the upper class, especially rulers, statesmen and high army officials, to identify with the Macedonian conqueror, because he was himself one of the elite. Many Roman commanders and emperors famously saw Alexander as their role model. The references to their imitation and emulation of Alexander underline the popularity of Alexander as a representative of the masculine ideal among Roman upper-class males. Imitation of Alexander seems to have been like a famous brand. By using that brand, notable Romans expected to gain more recognition among their peers.

As stated above, the ideal of a male philosopher appears clearly in the literary tradition of Alexander in the anecdotes of Aristotle as Alexander's tutor and Alexander's encounters with Diogenes and Indian wise men like Calanus. The presentation of these male figures in the narratives shows that there was an ideal of a male philosopher who concentrated on leading a good life and living according to higher ethics. Roman Stoics wrote about an ideal wise man (*sapiens*) whose actions differed radically from those of Alexander. For the philosophers, the lives and deeds of illustrious fellow-philosophers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Diogenes of Sinope defined the masculine ideal.

Sometimes, the different constructions of ideal masculinity are portrayed as competing. However, I would be inclined to think that in premodern societies different masculine ideals coexisted rather than competing fiercely. A student of philosophy or a philosopher in ancient Greece or Rome could have regarded the masculine ideal represented by the Alexander narratives as fascinating and heroic even though these narratives idealised a man who symbolised a life very different from the exemplary lives of admired philosophers Socrates and Plato. On the other hand, an upper-class male serving

in the Roman army did not necessarily see a philosopher-type of male as unmasculine. The different expressions of masculinity were not seen as opposed. Rather, these masculine ideals represented different lifestyles. Good examples of this combination of ideals in ancient Rome were the philosopher-emperors Marcus Aurelius and Julian, who were both devoted to philosophical studies as well as military matters. In addition, Arrian, one of the authors analysed in this book, while being fully aware that the warrior-monarch and philosopher were distinct masculine ideals, did not see them as mutually exclusive or contradictory. While Arrian may sometimes be criticised for portraying his hero in line with Stoic ideals, Plutarch seems to present Alexander as a philosopher in arms. The positive and laudatory presentations of Aristotle and other philosopher figures in the Alexander tradition also show that the authors approach different masculine ideals as complementary. This is not to deny that Roman Stoic and early Christians still questioned the masculine ideal represented by Alexander. Yet even they could write about Alexander's life and deeds in a positive and even admiring tone.

In the Middle Ages, the social groups were more clearly differentiated. There were defined expectations and ideals for knights, clerics, craftspeople and peasants. Among these ideals, the model of knight represented the hegemonic one.[14] In the Middle Ages, knights were soldiers who were wealthy enough to possess a warhorse and armour, and often land and property. Alexander presented as a mounted knight - he is explicitly called a *chevalier* – and a warrior-king became a representative of the medieval chivalric culture and the privileged males who espoused it. The scene of Alexander being knighted in the medieval versions of *AR* and the medieval epics also gave him a role as a model for squires or even boys who expected to be knighted in the future.[15]

In the Middle Ages scholars, and from the twelfth century onwards university students, represented a type of distinguished clerical masculinity, an ideal which differed from that of a knight. For them, the masculine ideal was that of a saint or a Church Father. Yet most of the authors of medieval works on Alexander, such as Walter of Châtillon and the author of *Libro de Alexandre,* were clerics, who one might think would represent the clerical masculinity. It can be argued that the medieval reception of Alexander was a creation of the clergy and scholars. This itself was not unusual since most medieval literature was written by churchmen. This provides further evidence that divergent masculine ideals were not seen as conflicting or competing by either the clergy or their lay audience. The literary images of Alexander created by writers who themselves represented clerical or scholarly masculinity were also a way of influencing the men who represented military masculinity. References to education, sexual moderation and observance of Christian morality would certainly support this approach. At no point in the romances is the secular masculine ideal of the knightly warrior-king placed in opposition or presented as superior to scholarly

masculinity, nor the reverse. The community needed both groups and these works emphasised how a man was expected to behave as part of the social group to which he belonged.

The ideal of the warrior-knight was very popular in the Middle Ages, and all literate groups, including monks and nuns, read chivalric literature. Scholars have recognised that the Church could use knighthood for its purposes (as the clergy would argue, for God's purposes) and call crusaders knights of Christ.[16] In monastic writings, the language of war was used to describe spiritual and intellectual combat against the devil and his agents. The concept of the dominant masculine warrior was therefore seen on several levels as useful for many male social groups. As stated above, in the medieval versions of Alexander's story we find the positive ideal of the man of letters, male figures such as Aristotle and other experienced wise men. The men of letters of the Middle Ages might have identified themselves more with the philosopher figures than the warrior figures when they wrote or read about Alexander. This connection is highlighted in the way the "medieval" Aristotle is motivating Alexander with his teaching just as the clergy would motivate knights during the crusades. In the texts portraying Aristotle with Alexander, the two representatives of divergent masculine ideals reminded the medieval audience that both were important and should work in tandem. So too they remind modern readers that both ideals were important in premodern society.

Expectations and assumptions about masculinity change with time and context. Nevertheless, they change slowly. At least the masculine ideal of dominance and self-control changed only a little during the classical and medieval eras. In both these eras, a man's greatness did not depend on his muscular body but the way in which he used his masculine potential. This is not to say that strength and fitness were not important: in the premodern world a man was expected to maintain his physical capacity for work and warfare. Alexander's fervour for war and his first-class military performance were desired and admired. It is desirable that the king participates in war-operations and leads his soldiers "from the front," even though Romans could be critical of the recklessness he sometimes showed on the battlefield. The Roman and medieval Alexander is an exemplary man because his actions and deeds in battle are worthy of imitation. In the Roman and medieval worlds, warfare was an essential aspect of the gendered expectations. It is therefore not surprising that the successful male commanders and warriors were deeply admired and regarded as masculine role-models for upper-class males.

When it comes to male sexuality and displaying emotions, there are certain changes in masculine assumptions from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. Greek and Roman authors could write about same-sex relations openly and without judging them, although it was defined as contravening the masculine ideal to be sexually penetrated and act like an effeminate male. As discussed earlier, it was important that a masculine man was not an object in same-sex

relations. The medieval masculine ideal incorporated only male-female sexual relations, with the same restrictions on moral conduct as in the classical era and more - the purpose of the sexual act was supposed to be only for procreation. It must be remembered that the ideal of self-control and self-mastery existed in both the Roman and medieval ideals of masculinity. In the masculine ideal there was the ideal of males as protectors of women. However, both in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, this meant protecting women of the same social class, not women in general. Males of the upper echelons of the society were expected to guard the chastity of freeborn virgins and women of elite lineage, but not so much of those of peasants, for example. Slaves, in turn, were legally totally outside of any kind of personal protection. Displaying anger is usually presented in the works of the Greek and Roman intellectuals as unmanly, while in the medieval works the king's anger (*ira regis*) was a manly feature.

Was the presentation of Alexander as the representative of the masculine ideal of dominance and self-control directed only to upper-class males? It is true that the masculine ideal Alexander represented suited best the upper-class males of highest status like emperors, kings, princes and warlords. However, lower-class males like craftsmen and farmers could also find something to identify with in this ideal. Firstly, the ideal of a masculine warrior and soldier as an essential feature of manhood was relevant also for the lower classes. In the Greek city-states and Republican Rome, farmers served in the army. During the Imperial period, a military career preceded the civilian career, although most poorer folk no longer served as soldiers. In the Middle Ages, infantry – like pikemen and archers – were recruited from the lower ranks of society. In premodern societies martial masculinity and bodily strength was expected from all male members. In the event of an attack by the enemy, it was the freeborn farmers and male inhabitants of urban communities who were expected to defend their lands and cities.

Secondly, all males, regardless of their social status, were expected to become good fathers by meeting the masculine standards related to fatherhood. The ideal of male dominance and the demand for self-control were important in domestic relations: the idea of fathers as wielders of paternal power was both legally established and culturally acceptable. Usually in Roman society, rich freeborn males were not only masters of their families, but of a *familia*, a household that included slaves and servants. When farmers and craftsmen led their households, "manly" qualities were needed from them; they had to be physically and mentally strong and at the same time capable of self-control when taking care of their wife and children and servants. In other words, the head of the family or *familia* – whether a craftsman in the medieval world or an upper-class male in the Roman world – needed the combination of ideals of dominance and self-control, which appear frequently in the masculine ideal of Alexander.

Monarchs were also expected to govern their households well, and in times of war the ruler was expected to act like a father figure to his male soldiers.

The emperors and kings were often seen as the father of the state and their relationship with their soldiers was compared with the relationship between father and children.[17] Admittedly, the Alexander tradition pays minimum attention to family life and the man's role as the leader of royal household. However, in the ancient and medieval texts Alexander is frequently presented as a father figure to his generals and male soldiers, sharing their hardships and caring for them. Also, the view that an army is a grand family appears in the literary tradition on Alexander. When the king makes reference to his childless state in Curtius' *Historiae* he remarks that in his Macedonian soldiers he has children and parents, and as long as his soldiers are safe the king cannot be childless: "In you I have children, relatives, kinsmen; while you live, I cannot be without offspring."[18]

Thirdly, the idea of competitive masculinity was undoubtedly known among lower-class males. In the cities, public spaces were full of statues and frescoes portraying athletes, distinguished commanders, or heroes of the distant past. These visual presentations were visible to those of all social classes. Even though lower-class males were not regarded as worthy opponents for nobles, they were still familiar with the concept of competition. True, the hegemonic ideal of Alexander as a person in power represented something that most men were unable to attain, since the majority of ancient and medieval males would never be kings or army commanders. Nevertheless, the ideal still existed and it could inspire and fascinate those who did not belong to the upper ranks of their society. All men, no matter what their status, recognised the gendered expectations and duties they had as fathers, workers and fighters. Being a (true) man and remaining one was an objective they all shared.

Notes

1 Luke, 22:24–27. Trans. *New International Version* (NIV): Ἐγένετο δὲ καὶ φιλονεικία ἐν αὐτοῖς, τὸ τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν κυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες αὐτῶν εὐεργέται καλοῦνται. ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως:
2 Cf. Gleason (2003, 325–326).
3 Asikainen (2018, 27–28, 44–45); Cf. Liew (2003, 109–110).
4 Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1109a 24–27; 1104a 4–9. Hor. *Carm.* 2.5. For the effects and sickness caused by the imbalance of the four bodily fluids in premodern medical thinking, see Weissenrieder (2003, 51), and as a reason for melancholia, see Schnell (2020, 193–194).
5 Conway (2008, 151–152); Asikainen (2018, 185).
6 Karras (2003, 163).
7 The demand that particularly those possessing power must display virtues is recognised in the Classical literature, where it is asserted that bad behaviour by such people will influence negatively all sections of society, see Pl. *Leg.* 711b-c; Xen. *Cyr.* 8.8.5; Cic. *Leg.* 3.31; Cic. *Fam.* 1.9.12.
8 Aristid. *Or.* 26.25.
9 Cf. Vijgen (2020, 197–200).
10 McCoy (2013, 205–210).

11 For Bessus's negatively presented lust for power, see Curt. 4.6.4; 5.10.1, 12; 5.12.1; 75.19. For Bessus' inclination to excessive use of wine and anger, see Curt. 7.4.19. For Alexander rebuking Bessus for acting outrageously against Darius, see Curt. 7.5.38. In the medieval sources, Bessus is presented as an entirely evil figure who is later judged and punished by God for the great crime of rebelling against his good king because he desired the kingship for himself. Chât. *Alex*. 7.127–194; 8.334–357 (Pritchard 1986, 165–167, 189–190). *Lib. Alex*. 1699, 1713, 1717–1718, 1727, 1730, 1737–1738. 1759.
12 For the discussion on these passages, see Peltonen (2019a, 99–107).
13 Cf. Rubarth (2014).
14 Karras (2003, 163).
15 In *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* of Thomas de Kent, the father Philip knights his 15-year-old son Alexander and the author gives a detailed description of the ceremony. *Rom. de toute chevalerie*, 1.27.533–563 (Gaullier-Bougassas & Harf-Lancner 2003, 48–51). A similar episode occurs in *Roman d'Alexandre,* composed by Alexander of Paris, Alex. Paris. 1.18 (Harf-Lancner 1994, 97–99). In *Libro* Alexander knights 500 hundred men before the expedition to Persia, see *Lib. Alex*. 124. Cf. *Lib. Alex*. 89.
16 For a discussion of Christian elements of knightly masculinity, see Karras (2003, 41–43). Cf. Murray (2004, 27–29).
17 For a discussion of emperors as father and uses of *pater patriae*, see Mengestu (2013, 55–74).
18 Trans. John C. Rolfe. Curt. 6.9.12: *In vobis liberos, parentes, consanguineos habeo; vobis salvis orbus esse non possum*. In Just. *Epit*. 13.13.4 it is stated that when Alexander died all barbarian races the king had defeated, grieved him not as an enemy but as a father.

8 Epilogue

In the present Western world, masculine ideals are evolving rapidly. You need only to watch one music video on YouTube to see how ambivalent the concept of masculinity has become. One important way of redefining gender roles and views of masculinity is to introduce or adjust terminology and concepts to convey new ways to be a man and redefine the responsibilities and expectations placed upon men. The concept of toxic masculinity, referring to cultural norms allegedly supporting harmful and even dangerous ways to be a man, is one example of a re-evaluation of modern manliness. Many modern intellectuals and scholars regard as toxic masculine ideals that focus on "toughness" and displays of aggression, which support phenomena such as patriarchy, white supremacy, organised criminality and domestic violence. Some scholars argue that separation of a healthy masculinity from toxic masculinity is important to encourage men to acknowledge their emotions and accept their vulnerability. However, Pease (2022) argues that this separation is simplistic and merely reinforces gender binaries and essentialist understandings of gender. Regardless of the varying views on the correct gendered terminology, many modern western intellectuals and political activists think that benign ideals of masculinity – allowing and encouraging men to show their emotions and to act primarily as loving fathers and caregivers in the domestic sphere of home and family – should be supported in society.

Given the continuing fame of Alexander, the question of whether his literary figure and his myth symbolise a toxic or a healthy version of masculinity becomes important in the current discussion of gender. There is no question that masculine ideals, which can be recognised from the gendered Roman and medieval reception of the Macedonian world conqueror still exist today in the modern western world. Praise of male beauty and the ideal that the exemplary man must be a young and physically attractive hero-figure – which appear in the Alexander myth – are still pervasive in modern thinking. Male appearance and muscular male bodies are highly idealised today, just as the idea that an illustrious and worshipped man must be physically attractive was sold by the visual and textual portraits of Alexander. To the written accounts of the success and accomplishments of the statesman, adventurer and world conqueror, Alexander is added his desirable and aesthetic image, helping to persuade the

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modern-day viewer that he is worthy of admiration. In Instagram alone, one can find over 120,000 images with the hashtag "alexanderthegreat." Many of these photos are selfies of people posing with a sculpture or mosaic of the Macedonian conqueror, a clear demonstration that his magnetic charisma lives on even today. These pictures, modern versions/reflections of a long-lasting *imitatio Alexandri* and *comparatio Alexandri* tradition, are used to highlight ethnic background as well as the masculine or feminine beauty of the poser to make him or her look sexier and more appealing. They emphasise the enduring fascination with Alexander and his status as an exemplary man.

Success stories of alpha males told in the forums of mass media and popular culture promote the idea of competitive masculinity. Narratives and images of male athletes as well as actors, authors and inventors reinforce the idea that a desired, admired and imitated expression of masculinity is to compete and be victorious. The biographies, films and web texts on males are filled with references to exceptional and talented individuals who by their hard work and decisiveness have proved to be the best in their field. The ideal of self-controlled masculinity – so important in the reception of Alexander – appears in the stories of male athletes who are willing to sacrifice their time with their peers and family to achieve great status as adults. Even the social status, physical strength and performance of professional sportsmen are far beyond the reach of most modern consumers, yet these male figures are popular among those who are far from that masculine ideal themselves. Globally much venerated football players are presented as spokesmen of the ideal of dominant masculinity. The idea of dominance and power is reflected in the way they control the crowd and their opponents by their eulogised abilities to compete in the race or control the ball during the game. Besides being talented they are said to have been devoted to hard work already when they were boys. They are highly admired both because of their accomplishments for the community, for their country or sport club, and because they had the guts to act differently from others. As underlined in this book, these elements can be recognised in the premodern story of Alexander retold in Roman and medieval times.

Regarding male sexuality, the power to restrict one's sexual appetites no longer seems to be such a fundamental masculine ideal as it was in the Roman and medieval upper-class male Alexander discourse. Frequently nowadays a strong sex drive is romanticised and presented as a manly habit. Uncontrolled and promiscuous sexual behaviour – sixty years ago regarded as licentious – are trendy. Among modern western groups of young men who represent hegemonic versions of masculinity, sexual abstemiousness is rarely seen as a demonstration of "true" manliness but rather as an indication of a narrow-minded and old-fashioned approach to sexuality. The idea of sexual continence as a masculine trait can still be found in some religious communities that expect from their members stricter sexual behaviour restricted to heterosexual marital relations. While some Roman and almost all the medieval writers could not accept Alexander's alleged same-sex desires and promoted relations only within their masculine ideal,

modern gay groups have welcomed the king's sexual orientation and see it as a way to construct their identity. However, as Llewellyn-Jones and Tougher (2022) have noted, there are still those people who do not want to see Alexander as a gay since this would mean that he no longer conformed to their view of the exemplary man and cultural hero.

The idea that one becomes a man by fighting valiantly in war – a significant aspect of the Classical and medieval reception of Alexander – has not disappeared in the modern versions of his myth and lives on as a version of desirable masculinity. Even though some modern people may consider martial masculinity and male aggression as expressions of toxic masculinity, the idea of performing one's masculinity by using violence or participating in war has not disappeared from the modern western world. It can also be noted that macho mass-killers or conquerors are often heroes (even promoted as "national heroes") of modern countries. In addition to Alexander's popularity as a national hero in modern Greece and North Macedonia, to take just a few examples, Romania's national hero is Vlad the Impaler, Mongolia's Ghengiz Khan, France's (with some reservations) Napoleon. The majority of all national heroes seem to be leaders in war. The image of masculine and muscular man as a soldier and warrior is still a popular version of manhood in popular culture as well. The modern phenomenon of special forces and their soldiers as admired archetypes of manly courage and endurance shows clearly that male violence and aggression are desirable expressions of masculinity, that is, as long as they "benefit the community"!). In our society, martial masculinity and male dominance are often promoted in television series, films and sports like boxing, even though these gender definitions and expectations are difficult to define. Most television series, films and video games that include violence idealise an image of a strong man who avenges some injury to him or his kin or society by demonstrating his power over other men and women, his violence justified by the cause of vengeance or defending the weak. In a similar way, modern armies use the concepts of masculinity when they recruit soldiers. Again, use of violence to defend the community from external threat is frequently praised. The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine – which began in earnest after Vladimir Putin's full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022 – has undoubtedly increased the pressure to promote fighting ability as a desired form of masculinity in European countries, which will probably continue in years to come. It seems that after being de-emphasised to an extent for a few decades after the Second World War, the version of masculinity that encourages/demands men to turn into cold killing machines, has returned to the fore in today's Europe.

Hollywood films, TV series and videogames today recycle the premodern catalogue of monster-slayers. As a difference to premodern societies macho heroines are also included in the storyline. For example, in the first season of the most expensive series in the history of filmmaking, *the Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* (2022), the royal female elf Galadriel is presented as the most fearless warrior who fights better than all the men around her, and

who is obsessed with the quest to destroy the evil Sauron and save Middle-Earth from destruction. In other words, she is carrying out tasks that in the premodern imagination (and Tolkien's imagination, just seventy years ago) would belong only to men: in ancient Mesopotamia, Classical antiquity and the Middle Ages beast slayers were only exceptional males, in the classical myths admittedly those whose births resulted from divine intervention, who were devoted to performing memorable deeds. In the storyline, the male hero succeeds in staying alive in the face of a terrible threat posed by the beast because of his wit and strength and so defends the "weaker" members of the community from the external threat. Undoubtedly the eulogising treatment of martial masculinity as an ideal for men as well the fantastic images of premodern and modern beast-slayer stories, derive from the role of man as a provider of protection, which may well have existed in the hunter-collector societies as well as the earliest human civilisations based on agriculture. According to this ideal the manly man is willing to face his fears and control them, as well as to face difficulties and challenges, whether created by extreme weather conditions or terrible and demonic beasts. Human societies have long nourished the idea that among the ranks of its male members, there must be those who are willing and able to use violence if necessary. It is often a matter of debate when male violence and aggression is considered to serve the community and when it is seen as toxic.

It is as yet unclear whether Alexander will continue to be a representative of the masculine ideal and exemplary man, or whether a radical change in the masculine ideals that have long dominated the western world will occur. Arguably his figure has reinforced the patriarchal dominance from antiquity to the twenty-first century. Nowadays, the traditional patterns of female and male expectations regarding sex and gender roles are more and more seen as a social and cultural burden and in the western world many attempts have been made to deconstruct the traditional concepts of sex and gender and move towards more fluid gender views. In the modern world, boys and girls are not necessarily categorised with the traditional binary division. Even though this development now dominates western intellectual thought we cannot be sure that it will last. (Older ideas once popular in history may become "new" trends in times to come). However, if Alexander as representative of the masculine ideal does continue to attract such a remarkable number of supporters, we may assert that he will also reflect the popular contemporary assumptions of masculinity. It is also possible that in the future, a "new" more gender-fluid and androgyne representation of Alexander will become popular. One recent example of this approach can be seen in the anime presentation of Alexander in *Reign: The Conqueror* (*Arekusandā Senki*) that was first published in 1999. Perhaps in the future, Alexander will be neither male nor female. Regardless of the image presented, it should not prevent us from recognising the cultural background of many of the still-existing gender ideals or the masculine ideals and binary gender order that the Macedonian world conqueror represented from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

Appendix 1: Primary Sources

Ael. *VH*. Aelian, *Varia Historia*
Ambros. *De ob. Valent*. Ambrosius, *De obitu Valentiniani consolatio*
Ammian. Marc. Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*
Apoc. Ps. Meth. Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*
App. *B. Civ.* Appian, *Bella Civilia*.
App. *Mith*. Appian, *Mithridatica*
Apul. *Flo*. Apuleius, *Florida*
AR *Alexander Romance*
α
β
γ
Arm. (*Armenian*)
Heb. (*Hebrew*)
Hist. de prel. (*Latin*) *Historia de Preliis*
Jul. Val. (*Latin*) Julius Valerius, *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis*
Kon. Alex. (*Swedish*) *Konung Alexander*
Rom. de toute chevalerie Thomas of Kent, *Le Roman de toute chevalerie*
Syr. (*Syriac*)
Alex. Paris. Alexander of Paris, *Roman d'Alexandre*
Arist. *Hist. an* Aristotle, *Historia Animalium*
Arist. *An. pr.* Aristotle, *Analytica priora*
Arist. *Gen. an*. Aristotle, *De generatione animalium*
Arist. *Eth. Nic.* Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*
Arist. *[Phgn.]* Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*
Arist. *Rh*. Aristotle, *Rhetorike*
Arist. *Pol.* Aristotle, *Ta Politika*
Aph. *Dem.* Aphrahat, *Demonstrationes*
Arr. *an*. Arrian, *Aleksandrou anabasis*
Arn. *Adv. nat*. Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*
Aristid. Or. Aristides, *Orationes*
Ath. Athenaeus, *Deipnosofistai*
August. *De civ. D*. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*
August. *de Trin*. Augustine, *de Trinitate*

Basil. *Ad adolesc.* Basil, *Oratio ad Adolelescentes*
Caes. *B. Gall.* Julius Caesar, *Bellum Gallicum*
Cass. Dio. Cassius Dio, *Historiae Romanae*
Chât. *Alex.* Gautier de Châtillon, *Alexandreis*
Cic. *Fam.* Cicero Marcus Tullius, *Epistulae ad familiares*
Cic. *Leg.* Cicero Marcus Tullius, *De legibus*
Cic. *Phil.* Cicero Marcus Tullius, *Orationes Philippicae*
Cic. *Sen.* Cicero, *De senectute*
Cic. *Top.* Cicero, *Topica*
Cic. *Tusc.* Cicero Marcus Tullius, *Tusculanae disputationes*
Curt. Curtius Quintus Rufus, *Historiae Alexandri Magni Macedonis*
Clem. Al. *Strom.* Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromateis*
Dio Chrys. *Or.* Dio Chrysostomus, *Orationes*
Diog. Laert. Diogenes Laertius, *Apophthegmata tōn philosophōn*
Diod. Sic. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*
Epist. *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem*
Euseb. *Vit. Const.* Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*
Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*
Fulg. *De aet. mund. et hom.* Fulgentius, *De aetatibus mundi et hominis*
Gel. *NA.* Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*
Hdn. Herodian, *Ab excessu divi Marci*
Hdt. Herodotus, *Historiae*
Hist. Aug. Com. Historia Augusta, *Commodus*
Hist. Aug. Hadr. Historia Augusta, *Hadrian*
Hist. Aug. M. Ant. Historia Augusta, *Marcus Aurelius Antonius (Caracalla*
Hist. Aug. Sev. Historia Augusta, *Septimus Severus*
Hist. Aug. Tyr. Trig. Historia Augusta, *Tyranni Triginta*
Hist. Aug. Pes. Nig. Historia Augusta, *Pescennius Niger*
Hom. *Il.* Homer, *Iliad*
Hor. *Ars. P.* Horatius, *Ars Poetica*
Hor. *Carm.* Horatius, *Carmina/Odes*
Isoc. *Ad. Nic.* Isocrates, *Ad Nicolem*
Itin. Alex. *Itinerarium Alexandri*
Jer. *C. Ruf.* Jerome, *Apologiae contra Rufinum*
Jo. Mal. *Chron.* John Malalas, *Chronographia*
Jos. *AJ.* Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae*
Just. *Epit.* Justinus, *Epitome Trogus*
John Chrys. *Ad. Illum.* John Chrysostmos, *Catacheses ad Illuminados*
Juv. Juvenal, *Satires*
Lib. Alex. *Libro de Alexandre*
Liv. Titus Livius, *Ab Urbe condita*
Lucian. *Dem.* Lucian, *Demonax*
Lucian. *Dial. mort.* Lucian, *Dialogi mortuorum*
Lucian. *Hist. conscr.* Lucian, *Quomodo Historia conscribenda sit*
Lucian. *Nav* Lucian, *Navigium*

Lucian. *Ind.* Lucian, *Adversus Indoctum*
Luc. Marcus Annaeus, Lucanus, *Bellum Civile*
Lys. Lysias
1. Macc. Maccabees
M. Aur. *Med.* Marcus Aurelius, *Ta eis heauton*
Onas. *Strat.* Onasander, *Strategikos*
Oros. Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos*
Pallad. *De gentibus Indiae* Palladius, *de Gentibus Indiae et Bragmanibus*
Pan. Lat. *XII Panegyrici Latini*
Paus. Pausanias, *Graeciae descriptio*
Philo. *Mos.* Philo Judaeus, *De Vita Mosis*
Philo. *Op.* Philo Judaeus, *De Opificio Mundi*
Philostr. *V A.* Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii*
Pl. *Leg.* Plato, *Leges*
Pl. *Prt.* Plato, *Protagoras*
Pl. *Resp.* Plato, *Respublica*
Plin. *HN* Pliny (Maior), *Naturalis Historia*
Plut. *Mor. Apophth. Lac.* Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconica*
Plut. *Mor. De Alex. Fort.* Plutarch, *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute*
Plut. *Mor. Cons. ad Apoll.* Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apollonium*
Plut. *Mor. De cohib. ira* Plutarch, *De cohibenda ira*
Plut. *Mor. De cur.* Plutarch, *De curiositate*
Plut. *Mor. De sera.* Plutarch, *De sera numinis vindicta*
Plut. *Mor. De virt. mor.* Plutarch, *De virtute morali*
Plut. *Mor. Reg. et Imp. Apophth.* Plutarch, *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata*
Plut. *Vit. Alex.* Plutarch, *Alexander*
Plut. *Vit. Arist.* Plutarch, *Aristides*
Plut. *Vit. Caes.* Plutarch, *Caesar*
Plut. *Vit. Dem.* Plutarch, *Demosthenes*
Plut. *Vit. Marc.* Plutarch, *Marcellus*
Plut. *Vit. Pomp.* Plutarch, *Pompeius*
Plut. *Vit. Pyrrh.* Plutarch, *Pyrrhus*
Plut. *Vit. Sol.* Plutarch, *Solon*
Polyb. Polybios, *Historiai*
Polyn. *Strat.* Polyaenus, *Strategemata*
Procop. *Goth.* Procopius, *De bello Gothico*
Prop. Propertius, *Elegiae*
Quint. *Inst.* Quintilianus, *Institutio oratoria*
Sen. *Ben.* Lucius Seneca minor, *De beneficiis*
Sen. *Clem.* Lucius Seneca minor, *De clementia*
Sen. *Ep.* Lucius Seneca minor, *Epistulae*
Sen. *Ira.* Lucius Seneca minor, *De ira*
Sil. *Pun.* Silius Italicus, *Punica*
Sozom. *Hist. Eccl.* Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica,*

Stat. *Silv.* Statius, *Silvae*
Strab. Strabo, *Geografia*
Suet. *Aug.* Suetonius, *Divus Augustus*
Suet. *Calig.* Suetonius, *Caligula*
Suet. *Claud.* Suetonius, *Claudius*
Suet. *Iul.* Suetonius, *Divus Iulius*.
Suet. *Ner.* Suetonius, *Nero*
Suet. *Tib.* Suetonius, *Tiberius*
Suet. *Tit.* Suetonius, *Titus*
Symm. *Ep.* Symmachus, *Epistulae*
Syn. *Enc. Calv.* Synesius, *Calvitii encomium*
Tac. *Ann.* Tacitus, *Annales*
Tac. *Ag.* Tacitus, *Agricola*
Tac. *Germ.* Tacitus, *Germania*
Tac. *Hist.* Tacitus, *Historiae*
Tatian. *Ad Gr.* Tatianus, *Oratio ad Graecos*
Ter. *Phorm.* Terence, *Phormio*
Tzetzes Tzetzes John
Thuc. Thucydides, *Historiae*
Val. Max. Valerius Maximus, *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium*
Veg. *Mil.* Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*
Vel. Pat. Velleius Paterculus, *Historia Romana*
Verg. *Aen.* Virgil, *Aeneid*
Xen. *Mem.* Xenophon, *Memorabilia*
Xen. *Ages.* Xenophon, *Agesilaus*
Xen. *Cyr.* Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*

Vetus testamentum

Exod. Exodus
Judges Judges
1. Sam. 1. Samuel
1. Kings 1. Kings
2. Chron. 2. Chronicles
Isa. Isaiah
Dan. Daniel

Novum testamentum

Matt. Matthew
Luk. Luke

Appendix 2: Timeline of Alexander's Life

356 BCE	Alexander is born in the city of Pella
c. 343	Aristotle starts as a tutor of Alexander
338	Battle of Chaeronea
336	King Philip is killed in Aegae; Alexander ascends to the throne
334	Battle of the river Granicus
334	Battle of Issus; Alexander encounters with Darius' mother Sisygambis
332	Siege of Tyre
331	Alexandria is founded in Egypt; Battle of Gaugamela
330	The burning of Persepolis; Death of Darius, Alexander founds his body and arranges royal funerals for him; the plot of Philotas; Alexander assassinates Parmenion
329	Bessus is arrested and killed
328	Alexander kills Cleitus at Maracanda
327	Alexander marries Bactrian princes Roxanne
326	Battle of Hydaspes: Macedonians defeat the armies of Porus; the mutiny at the Hyphasis river
325	Alexander receives near-fatal wound in the siege against Malli
324	Hephaestion dies at Ecbatana
323	Alexander dies in Babylon

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