A Model for Kingship: Alexander the Great in Medieval and Early Modern Iberian Literature

By

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the figure of Alexander the Great in three disparate Iberian texts in order to determine if he is portrayed as a model of ideal or flawed kingship as well as how the milieus in which these works were created influenced specific representations of the monarch. The *Libro de Alexandre* (*LAlex*) and the *Historia novelada de Alejandro Magno* (*HNAM*), both from the 13th century, and the *Rrekontamiento del Rrey Alisandre* (*Rrekontamiento*) from the 16th century, present the contradictory images of kingship that coexisted on the Iberian Peninsula in both the Medieval and Early Modern periods. From my analysis I gain a better understanding of how kingship was portrayed in each text, how this portrayal compares with political theory regarding kingship, and finally, why each author chose Alexander to fulfill their specific agendas.

In Chapter 1, I provide a historical review of kingship in the Christian West and in the Islamic world until the 13th century along with a review of political theories from both regions. I base my analysis of each literary work in subsequent chapters upon this information. In Chapter 2, I examine the *LAlex* and propose that the author utilized Alexander's status as "scholar-king" to teach the new university educated generation of lettered knights and clerics about the dangers of excessive pride. In Chapter 3, I analyze the *HNAM* and put forward that Alfonso specifically selected Alexander to be a part of his universal history to bolster his own image as a powerful monarch in an attempt to fulfill his own imperial aspirations. In Chapter 4, I study the *Rrekontamiento* and hypothesize that the narrative was carefully chosen in order to provide an example of true faith and ritual practice to crypto-Muslims who were facing difficult circumstances under Christian rule. Through this dissertation, I provide the first comparison between these three works, the last of which has not received much scholarly attention, as well as

utilize political theory to study literary presentations of kingship in order to understand if these fictional portrayals align with or stray from idealized views of the role of the king.

Introduction

During his short life, Alexander III of Macedon (356 BCE-323 BCE), popularly known as Alexander the Great, forged his legendary reputation by conquering his way East until he reached the borders of India. His sudden death in Babylon in 323 BCE created shockwaves across the lands he had ruled and began 50 years of conflict that stretched from Greece to India, proving that Alexander was key to the stability and unification of his empire. But while the death of the historical Alexander III created a void in leadership that no one could fulfill, it also marked a birth, that of Alexander the Great. In the years following his passing, fabulous stories about Alexander's life continued to be told, until finally, they were compiled into a work commonly known as the *Alexander Romance* (*AR*). In time, this narrative, which Ken Dowden describes as "antiquity's most successful novel" (650), would be "rewritten, expanded and modified" to form the basis of an extensive corpus of literature on Alexander that was created in the "Greek east and penetrated Arabic and Persian traditions, medieval and modern Greece, and, via two Latin translations, the romances of western Europe" (Stoneman, *Alexander* 2).

While several 15th-century manuscripts point to Callisthenes, the historian who followed Alexander during his eastern campaign, as the author of the *AR*, modern scholars have since disproved this theory, believing instead that he was an individual well versed in Greek and familiar with the Egyptian language and culture (Stoneman, Introduction 8; González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte 10; Doufikar-Aerts xix; Budge xxxvi; Cary 9). Although the identity of the original compiler is unknown, the earliest version of the *AR* we now have was written by an Alexandrian Greek in the 3rd-century CE (Doufikar-Aerts xix; Stoneman, *The Alexander* vii; Budge xxxvi; Cary 9). Versions of this text were translated into Armenian, Syriac, and finally Latin, through which it entered the European tradition. The Syriac version was translated into

Arabic around the 9th century and came to merge with Persian and Arabic legends about the Macedonian invader. As of today, narratives on Alexander the Great have been found in Icelandic, English, Spanish, French, Italian, Greek, Latin, Russian, Hebrew, Ethiopian, Arabic, Malay and even Mongolian (Stoneman, *Alexander* 3; Doufikar-Aerts xix; Stock 3-4).

These texts fall into diverse literary genres and are a "patchwork" of elements from the *AR* as well as other sources and legends that have traveled through the world (Seldon 34). In many cases names have been altered, the timeline has become jumbled, and new legends about the Macedonian king have become a part of regional variations of the narrative. But despite these differences, there are still unifying elements recognizable even in the most distant traditions, most notably the young king himself who is always portrayed as a fictitious, extraordinary figure. As Richard Stoneman explains, "the Alexander of the *AR* almost entirely overlays the historical Alexander" (*Alexander* 3). It is this Alexander, and not the historical one, whose story was retold and passed down through generations to eventually become embedded in popular culture all over the world (Selden 35).

But why did Alexander's story become so popular? The most obvious reason is entertainment. Alexander's life is exciting and brings the wonders of the world to the audience. This does not, however, fully explain how and why the work was so easily adopted and adapted by different cultures and faiths. Marcus Stock believes that the wide transmission of the *AR* points to its "transcultural translatability" – it resonates with people all over the world (4). Alexander "became the model of everything one wanted to see in him: the ideal king, conqueror, conciliator of cultures, philosopher, strategist, son of the gods and prophet, but also destroyer and drunkard, object of ridicule and accused of immoral and reckless behavior" (Doufikar-Aerts xix). In the *AR,* Alexander is able to "absorb the color of the world around him (from [champion of]

Islam to crusader for Christianity) and to be a bearer of meaning for pagan philosophers" (Stoneman, *Alexander* 3).

This rich variety in the *AR* is on full display in the Iberian Peninsula, where three distinct versions of the narrative were written, thereby demonstrating not only the popularity of the work and the diversity of source material available in Iberia, but also the flexibility of the narrative to adapt to different cultural, religious and social environments during the medieval and early modern periods. In this dissertation I will analyze those three works, the Christian *Libro de Alexandre* (*LAlex*) and *Historia novelada de Alejandro Magno* (*HNAM*), both written in the 13th century, and the *morisco Rrekontamiento del Rrey Alisandre*, written in the 16th century, in order to determine how Alexander is portrayed as a model of ideal or flawed kingship, and how the milieus in which these texts were produced influenced specific representations of the monarch. In order to frame my analysis of these three texts, in Chapter 1 I will study political treatises from both the Christian West and the Islamic East, ranging from the 8th to the 14th centuries. I will discuss the ideas regarding kingship that were circulating around the time that the *LAlex* and the *HNAM* were written, as well as the cultural understanding regarding kingship/leadership in the Islamic world before the *Rrekontamiento* was produced. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 contain a detailed analysis of the *LAlex*, the *HNAM* and the *Rrekontamiento*, respectively. I will explore how these versions of the *AR* respond to the distinct interests, concerns, and agendas of the different periods, cultures, and social and cultural milieus under which they were produced and disseminated.

Chapter 1

The Theory of Kingship in Middle Ages

In this first chapter, I will discuss a series of theories that were circulating in the Middle Ages regarding kingship, both in Medieval Western Europe (with a focus on the 12th to the 13th centuries) and in the Islamic World. Along with this theoretical overview, I will also very briefly outline the evolution of kingship in both regions in order to understand the historical and political circumstances that explain the representation of the king as it pertains to three Iberian narratives on Alexander the Great that I will study in subsequent chapters: the 13th-century *Libro de Alexandre* (*LAlex*)and *Historia novelada de Alejandro Magno* (*HNAM*), and the 16th-century *Rrekontamiento del Rrey Alisandre*.

1.1 Kingship in Medieval Western Europe [1]

Kingship was the prevalent form of government during the Middle Ages in Europe and as such, periodical attempts were made to define and codify the qualities of the ideal prince for future use, especially in the High Middle Ages. Between the 11th and 14th centuries, political thinkers would look to Rome, both before and after the advent and consolidation of Christianity, in an attempt to link kingship to its ancient roots, while at the same time situating it within the context of Christianity and the Church. The king was a Christian monarch, anointed by a priest, and through the ceremony of the coronation, was transformed into a divinely ordained being

[1] I have elaborated this section from information found in Black (*Political Thought*), Canning (*A History*, "Introduction," and "Law"), Chadwick, Coleman, Kantorowicz, King, Luscombe, Markus, McIlwain, Meyers, Nelson, O'Malley, Pennington, Robinson, Stein, Ullmann, Watt, and Watts. Given that the same information is often repeated in several sources, in order to avoid constantly interrupting the flow of the Chapter I will only cite an author when the information I present is unique to him/her. However, all of them should be acknowledged here as primary sources for what follows.

charged with the task of ruling over others.[2] Therefore, the medieval scholars who defined his role would always consider religious values when describing the duties, virtues, and vices of a monarch.[3]

Before I present this theory, it seems necessary to briefly clarify some terminology that I will repeat throughout this section. Henry A. Meyers defines kingship as "both the rule of one person over a political unit, as at least its nominal head, and the art or science by which such a ruler governs well. [It] can be exercised under a constitution or in the absence of one; a king may rule as the sole governmental authority or in conjunction with other institutions" (1). Although Meyers establishes a distinction between kingship and monarchy, for the purposes of this dissertation, I will consider them to be essentially synonymous.[4] I will use various terms including "prince," "king," "monarch," and "sovereign" to refer to any ruler who fits the above definition, whether he rules over an empire or a smaller principality. The term "emperor" will be used to specifically refer to the leader of either the Roman Empire or the Holy Roman Empire since the title held, at least, a symbolic importance during the medieval period.

1.1.1 Historical Outline

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[2] Ernst Kantorowicz specifically cites the process of anointment where the prince "*becomes* a twin personality…that is to say, the king, otherwise an individual man, is in officio the type and image of the Anointed in heaven and therewith of God" (48). He transforms into this semi-divine being that is charged with a sacred duty. This royal power resides in the *office* of the prince and not in the man himself. When the prince, the man, dies, his divinely ordained power will pass onto the next ruler at the moment of his anointment (48). The ceremony itself was actually popularized all over the continent in the 8th century but practiced in Visigothic Iberia as early as the 6th century (See Canning, *A History,* 27).

[3] Religion would have a close relationship with politics during the Middle Ages. I will not delve into the papal monarchy that was also emerging during this period, but it should be noted that much of the theory that was produced regarding the subject of kingship came from ecclesiastical sources, as will be seen in the following section.

[4] Meyers adds that the king must possess a certain mystique or charisma in order to fulfill his role adequately. He contrasts kingship with monarchy, which he defines as "simply the rule, whole or partial, of one person over a political unit…It can be part of a government which coexists with others" (Meyers 1). Not limited by a constitution of any sort nor forced to share sovereignty with another branch of government, it is then "absolute monarchy" or "despotism" (Meyers 1).

Perhaps the most significant moment in the history of kingship was the consolidation of Christianity during the reigns of Emperor Constantine I (306-37 CE) and Theodosius (379-95 CE). It was at this time that the seeds of the relationship between the temporal and the secular powers were first sown. Henry Chadwick refers to this period as one of "catalytic significance" for the conversion of Europe, since Christianity became the official sanctioned religion of a massive empire (18). As a result, the purpose of the monarchy was irrevocably altered (Canning, *A History* 4). Instead of focusing on the day-to-day activities of running a kingdom, the Roman emperor's task was elevated to that of protector of Christianity and Christian interests, acting as the shield and sword of the Church if necessary. In addition to ruling over his vast domain, he was also required to serve as a moral and religious example for his subjects, guiding them to be good Christians in life. From this moment on, Christianity and monarchy became united.

This "Christianization" of the monarchy, however, was not just happening in the heart of the Roman Empire, but throughout the continent as well. Even in the outer reaches of the empire, where "barbarian kingdoms" were established by invading Vandals, Saxons and Goths, Christianity, Latin, and Roman law were quickly assimilated into Germanic traditions (Canning, *A History* 17).[5] It was these "barbarian" kings who provided us with a very early concept of what it meant to be a prince in the Middle Ages. They fused the pagan Roman ideal of emperorship – an all-powerful, god-like ruler – with that of a Christian one – a king subject to God's power. God was seen as the ultimate source of royal authority while the king was allowed to rule over people by divine approbation (Canning, *A History* 21); therefore, the king was seen as God's vicegerent on Earth, protecting and leading his subjects through life until they entered heaven. In his seminal work, *The King's Two Bodies*, Ernst Kantorowicz describes this as "Christ-Centered

[5] "Barbarian" kingdoms is the official phrase that historians use to refer to the Germanic and Hunnic tribes that were established in Europe as the Western Roman Empire was failing or after its collapse.

Kingship," since the role of the king was defined by his relation to the sacred. He had the power to rule because God had chosen him and because a bishop/pope had performed the religious ceremony that allowed the power of God to enter him. As a secular sovereign, however, his job was to guide the non-religious aspects of his kingdom, leading his people to live good, pure lives. Above all, he was answerable to God for the way in which he ruled his subjects, which meant that he was to always, in theory, govern for their benefit.

Many of these basic ideas about kingship were developed in the early medieval period. In his *Etymologiae,* St. Isidore of Seville (560-636 CE) claimed that the king should aim to do justice and be merciful, which in time became the principal virtue of a Christian ruler (IX.iii4: 200). A good prince should always observe clemency, humility, and patience, as well as serve the Christian religion; in this way, he was always subject to the guidance of the Church. Citing an ancient proverb, Isidore, speaking to a king, added that " you will be king if you act rightly, if you do not, you will not be," suggesting that any ruler who did not fulfill his duties could be deposed (St. Isidore IX.iii4: 200). Isidore was frequently mentioned in political treatises between the 11th and 14th centuries and his ideas, such as those cited here, were expanded upon by political scholars.

While these religiously centered views of kingship were prevalent in the first part of the Middle Ages, as Europe began to experience massive social, economic, and political advancements in the 11th to 13th centuries, kingship became founded in a more earthly institution – the law. In the Middle Ages, law came to be seen as the instrument that organized a society at all levels and gave it a set of binding rules (Coleman 37).[6] It determined property ownership, the

[6] Among the many advancements in this period was the rediscovery of the literature, law, and philosophy of the ancient world, which would transform political thought in the Middle Ages (Canning 84). In addition, there was a growth in urbanization, trade, as well as intellectual life (Canning 83).

rights (or lack of rights) of individuals and groups, the curriculum of universities, and even the intimate relationship between couples before and after marriage. Simply put, without law, society was incapable of functioning. For that reason, medieval scholars would begin a "scientific study" of the law in order to better understand it and apply it to the needs of contemporary society (Canning, *A History* 84). This intensive study would be led by two opposing factions that would attempt to utilize the law for their own purposes. The first group, supported by the Pope, would investigate canon law, while the second, directed by secular monarchs, would study Roman law to defend themselves against the Pope. The Church would attempt to use canon law to restrict the powers of the king, while monarchs, who believed both emperors and kings should have supreme authority with regards to secular matters, used Roman law to assert their independence from Church control.

One of the principal episodes that set the law revival in motion was the Investiture Controversy (1075-1122 CE), which was fought between Pope Gregory VII (1073-85 CE) and Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor (1056-1106 CE). Each believed that their respective institutions had the right to name powerful local church officials. The conflict brought to center stage, for perhaps the first time, the points of contention between the secular and ecclesiastical powers that would lead to a serious reconsideration of the relationship between Church and secular monarchies. Gregory called on monastic reformers to search Church archives and collect decretals from former Popes and canons from earlier Church councils that promoted the superiority of the Holy See.[7] The information was collected into a textbook, the *Decretum*, between 1139 and 1140 CE by Gratian. When faced with a challenge to Church power, the papal curia would refer to this document, while eager students, who were attending universities as a

[7] For more information see Canning ("Introduction," and *A History*), Blumenthal, Coleman, Black (*Political Thought*), and Lusocombe.

part of the larger educational renaissance taking place in Europe, studied it to become legal experts. In fact, virtually all of the popes of the 12th and 13th centuries were trained lawyers, and as such, would continue to advance the study of canon law during their tenures (Canning, *A History* 116).

In the years following this conflict, there would be additional clashes between the Church and temporal monarchs, which would cause rulers to encourage the study of the law in their kingdoms in order to clearly define the boundaries between religious and lay power. The most vocal proponent for the rights of temporal monarchs was Frederick I Barbarossa (1155-90 CE), who encouraged his advisors to gather legal support when he saw his rights being threatened by the Church (Coleman 33). Given that Roman legal practices were already being studied in Bologna, Frederick established the first law school to research Roman law further and find evidence of a ruler's legitimate rights to constitutional rule (Coleman 33). Especially useful was the *Corpus iuris civilis*, a law code compiled by the Emperor Justinian I of the Byzantine Empire in the 6th century, which included works such as the *Institutes*, the *Digest*, the *Codex*, and the *Novellae constitutiones.*[8] The political message in the *Corpus iuris civilis* is a theocratic one, claiming that the ruler derives his power from God and is bound by both divine and human law (Canning, *A History* 7). Since the sovereign was the embodiment of law on Earth, he was

[8] Coleman states that the material in the *Digest*, which is the "chief authority" for the *Corpus iuris civilis*, comes from a few writers, in particular the jurists Ulpian (d. 223 CE) and Paul (early 3rd century CE) (Coleman 34). Most Roman law was established during the Republican Period (508-27 BCE), but the *Digest*, written centuries later, does not have much material from that period (Coleman 34). Therefore, Justinian's law does not reflect legal codes from the Republican Period (Coleman 34). In fact, a large part of Roman legal history was suppressed by Justinian's compilers, who were ordered to choose what they considered to be the best sources, editing any contradictions, repetitions and changes to fulfill Justinian's wishes (Coleman 34; Stein 42). Put simply, the *Corpus iuris civilis* was new doctrine "under the guise of ancient authority" (Coleman 34). Scholars in the Middle Ages believed the *Corpus* reflected "legitimate" Roman legal codes, when in reality, they had found an amalgamation of customary law, "barbarian" laws, and perhaps some remnants of Roman jurisprudence (Coleman 35). Customary law refers to local customs and practices that are considered to be law and Roman law refers to the official legal system of ancient Rome.

exempt from the law himself (Coleman 11). This image of kingship differs from the ideas developing in the "barbarian" kings, which described a more symbiotic relationship between the sovereign and the law.[9]

What we see, therefore, is the simultaneous existence of very different theories concerning royal power even as early as the 6th century. Frederick would study both Roman and "barbarian" law codes to further his cause, ordering scholars to search the various legal codes to look for phrases that supported his view that any lay prince was an independent ruler free from religious interference. The result was that Christian ideals of kingship merged with Roman ones to legitimize the rule of the king.[10]

The new emphasis on law and reason would change the popular perception of kingship completely. Secular royal power would be defined by legal rather than theocratic reasoning. Kantorowicz explains how the king comes to represent law and justice and asserts that there was a shift from "Christ-Centered Kingship" to a more "Law-Centered Kingship" (93). Under this new ideology, the primary duty of any prince was to uphold the law and oversee justice in his realm. He was seen as the legal representative of God, who was lawfully in a place of power. In the 13th century, jurists would use the law again to elevate regional princes to the level of emperor and in turn demonstrate how – in legal terms – each ruler had sovereignty in his own land and did not need to defer to the Holy Roman Emperor. The law became a tool to validate strong, independent kingship. Throughout Europe, temporal monarchs embraced the study of Roman jurisprudence and began welcoming legal experts into their courts to gain support for

[9] In the 6th century, the "barbarian" kings ordered the compilation of legal codes such as the *Lex Romana Visigothorum* and the *Lex Romana Burgundionum* that mostly came from local customs (customary law) and were written down and given authority by the ruler's will (Canning, *A History*, 22).

[10] Their work would further enrich the legal revival (led by the Church) that was taking place in the medieval period. Eventually Roman law and canon law would merge and provide the foundation for the modern judicial system.

their cause and comment on the larger legal debate going on between ecclesiastical and secular scholars with regards to power.

The political theory elaborated from the 12th to the 13th century, anchored in the law, is reflected in the depiction of kingship in the two 13th-century Alexandrian narratives that I will study in Chapters 2 and 3, respectively: the *LAlex* and the *HNAM*. The representation of Alexander as a monarch speaks to the opinions that the texts' authors and compilers had about kingship at the time. As will be discussed, the *LAlex*, a *mester de clerecía* poem, leans towards a more ecclesiastical view of the monarchy, while the second, a narrative compiled in the workshop of Alfonso X as part of his *General Estoria*, tends to follow a more secular approach to rule. In the next section, I will present the political theory that I will use to analyze both works about Alexander the Great.

1.1.2 Theories on Kingship

Almost all of the theorists that I will mention in this section were scholars of law during the legal revival taking place on the continent between the 11th and 13th centuries. They were educated in canon and Roman law, and, in a period of prolific controversies between ecclesiastical and secular forces, they felt the need to comment and give their own opinions on kingship. Many of their texts are *speculum principis*, written to a specific monarch with advice on how to be an optimal ruler, while others are treatises that comment on ecclesiastical vs. secular power. The earliest of the theorists I will discuss is John of Salisbury (1120-80 CE), whose *Policraticus* (1159 CE) is one of the best-known medieval treatises on royal power. The latest of the theorists to form a part of my theoretical basis is Álvaro Pais (Alvarus Pelagius, 1275-1352 CE), whose *Speculum regum* (*Espelho dos reis*), from about 1341, is a lesser known

speculum principis that outlines proper conduct for Alfonso XI of Castile and Leon. I will incorporate the ideas of John of Paris (1255-1306 CE), Ptolemy of Lucca (1236-1327 CE),[11] Thomas Aquinas (1225-74 CE), Vincent of Beauvais (1190-1264 CE), King Sancho IV of Castile (1258-95 CE),[12] Giles of Rome (1243-1316 CE), Dante (1265-1321 CE), James of Viterbo (1255-1307 CE), Marsilius of Padua (1275-1342 CE), Brunetto Latini (1220-94 CE), Walter of Milemete (14th century CE), and William of Pagula (1285-1332 CE). Their theories about monarchy and kingship are almost contemporary with the *LAlex* (from the first third of the 13th century) and the *HNAM* (last quarter of the 13th century) and reflect the cultural milieu in which the Iberian authors fashioned their respective texts on the Macedonian Emperor. In the following section, I will not provide a summary or detailed commentary of the ideas of each theorist, but rather focus on the aspects most relevant in order to understand the similarities and differences between the *LAlex* and the *HNAM* with respect to their presentation of Alexander the Great.

The commonly accepted definition of the king is that of a virtuous human being who has been chosen by God to rule govern his subjects and care for them. His jurisdiction, asserted Dante, was "bound only by the ocean" (36-7).[13] Despite the power he wielded on Earth, the prince should always remember that he is subject to God's law. His primary duty was to promote the common good and aspire to bring peace to his land. Ptolemy of Lucca claimed that the

[11] Ptolemy of Lucca is usually considered to be one of the authors of *On the Government of Rulers,* but scholars agree that this text is the work of at least two authors (Blythe 3). It has been suggested that Thomas Aquinas is one of them, but this fact is heavily debated (Blythe 3-5). The editor of the edition I use includes Aquinas's name as the second author but doubts that he was involved (Blythe 5). I will refer to Ptolemy of Lucca as the only known author of *On the Government of Rulers* in this dissertation.

[12] There is some doubt as to if Sancho actually wrote the *Castigos e documentos para vivir bien*, though there are several instances in the work where he claims to be the author (Rey 14-18). It has been suggested that the work was written under his patronage, but his name was put on the work, much like in the case of his father, Alfonso X (Rey 16). Therefore, I will refer to Sancho as the author of the *Castigos e documentos* in this dissertation.

[13] Dante was specifically speaking about the emperor, but the same idea could easily apply to any conquering ruler.

kingdom did not exist "because of the king, but the king because of the kingdom," since it is for this reason that God "provided for kings to govern and exercise governance over their kingdoms and preserve everyone according to their own right" (178). As Thomas Aquinas adds, the prince "puts order amongst men" (3). This meant that he was to mete out justice amongst his subjects: reward the good, punish the wicked, and expel those whose actions will bring harm to the kingdom and its inhabitants. In order to do this, his principal tool was the law. The ruler was the champion of the law, a "servant" (John of Salisbury, *Policraticus,* 28; Vincent of Beauvais, Chapter III; Dante, 46) or an "intermediary," as described by Giles of Rome, who ensures that the people follow both societal and divine law (Giles of Rome 3: 244). Giles of Rome goes on to state that without the structure of law, the king himself was susceptible to corruption (Giles of Rome 3: 243). The law provided the prince with the framework that allowed him to govern and maintain justice, while the prince needed the stability and guiding principles of the law to ensure that he always carried out his duties to the best of his abilities. Due to the strong relationship between the monarch and jurisprudence, medieval scholars agreed that a ruler's principal offense was to stray from the law. Contrary to Roman thought, which claimed that the emperor was above any human law, medieval theorists, in order to fold the prince into the burgeoning legal system, placed him within the constraints of the law, both man-made and divine. John of Salisbury explained that the king must conform to any law, since "the diligent reader of the law is a pupil, not a master; he does not twist the law captive to his own inclination, but accommodates his inclinations to its intention and purity" (*The Statesman's Book* 32). By working within the framework of the law, John believed that the prince would learn to fear God, since one obeys the law out of wisdom, and wisdom itself comes from a fear of God (*The*

Statesman's Book 32). Therefore, obeying the law means one is demonstrating a healthy fear of God.

As such, no man, not even a king, could break the rules set by the divine. Instead he was to rule by leading his people down a path of virtue. For this reason, John of Viterbo and Álvaro Pais specifically use the term "shepherd" to describe the monarch (John of Viterbo 67; Álvaro Pais 1: 35). This meant that he must look out for the welfare and safety of the community, which included defending his lands against enemies of the "state," as well as providing his subjects with the basic necessities of life: food, water, and shelter. The key concept was "giving." The prince was to give to his subjects and only take from them what was necessary. William of Pagula, when writing to Edward III of England, was very particular about this point. If the king were to take from his subjects, they would hate him for his actions (108). Instead, he should strive to do things that make his subjects love him always. John of Salisbury echoes these same sentiments regarding the relationship between the sovereign and his people (*The Statesman's Book* 11). In contrast, Sancho IV, Giles of Rome, and James of Viterbo acknowledge that fear was an important aspect of rule as well. Giles and Sancho IV assert that if the king punishes the wicked, he will be feared by his subjects, so much so, adds Sancho IV, that they will be too scared to break the law themselves (Giles of Rome 3: 288; Sancho IV 74). James of Viterbo, acknowledging both perspectives regarding the relationship between a monarch and his subjects, describes the role of the king as inspiring "love by courtesy and kindness, and fear by justly avenging injury, not to themselves, but to the law" (121). As we can see, although medieval theorists slightly differed on certain aspects of the monarch's duties, the model of kingship they all agreed upon was certainly "Law-Centered" as described by Ernst Kantorowicz.

Another important aspect of kingship was the preparation of the future ruler, which referred to both his academic education and his behavior. With respect to the first, the prince was to receive a thorough education in order to excel at his future role. Citing a letter from a King of the Romans to a French monarch, Vincent of Beauvais claims that "un rey ignorante es como un asno coronado" (XV). Giles of Rome provides a more detailed guide as to how a prince should be educated, specifically suggesting that a monarch should study the *trivium* and *quadrivium*: grammar, logic, rhetoric, music, arithmetic, geometry, and astrology – the famous seven liberal arts (Giles of Rome, 2: 149-59). Additionally, he also suggests that a prince should learn Latin and be able to read the stories of past kings to learn from their actions (2: 149-50, 104). Although not all of the medieval scholars that I have studied discuss the prince's education, they all agree that the king should have basic literacy skills. The ability to read and write was crucial, as monarchs needed to be able to communicate with government officials and other rulers through letters, read and write their own speeches, have knowledge of scripture, as well as keep secret certain affairs of state (Walter of Milemete 43). As we can see, the opinions regarding the education of the future monarch differ greatly. If we consider the educational revival of the 11th-13th centuries, of which legal studies played a large part, the king, in this period was increasingly surrounded by highly educated individuals, who in many cases, could bring the lessons from their university educations to the royal court in order to help the monarch rule more efficiently. In this way, even though the monarch was not as well-learned as Giles of Rome suggests he be, he would still be surrounded by educated individuals who could help him govern according to the law.

The second aspect of the king's preparation was learning good grooming habits and manners. Thomas Aquinas believed that princes should be raised in such a way that it was

improbable that they become tyrants (24); therefore, they needed to learn how to conduct themselves with dignity and grace in public. According to Matthew Innes, the royal court was "a school in its own right," a place that corrected "men's vestments, their deportment, their speech and actions, and in general held them to the norms of restraint appropriate to a good life" (59). Giles of Rome explains that at a young age future kings should know not to be gluttonous either in food or drink and to not eat things that were too rich (2: 171-72). In addition, the prince required constant monitoring with respect to things that he saw, heard, and said. Seeing something inappropriate, listening to dishonest people or flatterers, and having bad friends was akin to being corrupted from a young age (Giles of Rome 2: 167). Brunetto Latini, when discussing virtues, would recommend that the king should be moderate in all matters (*The Book* 160). In many ways, this extends to all aspects of the monarch's life, including his personal habits. Walter of Milemete recommends that the king should read "delightful" books and hear "temperate songs" to comfort and invigorate his senses (46). If young nobles, especially princes, learned to be more careful about what they experienced through the five senses, they would be better for it. In this way, the sovereign would always appear to be moderate in his actions, clean, healthy, and composed, the ideal model for his subjects to follow.

Another important aspect of the prince's education was his religious formation. Knowing scripture would allow the monarch to always engage in virtuous behavior, as well learn how to guide his subjects along the morally correct path in life. Vincent of Beauvais insists that one could only attain "una impecable conducta moral…por medio de los textos sagrados" (Chapter XV). For this reason, Sancho IV recommends going to Mass often, as well as being well versed in prayers (52-4). Perhaps even more important than learning scripture, however, was understanding that the monarch is second to God. As John of Salisbury writes: "let the prince

fear God, and by prompt humility of mind and pious display of works show himself His servant." (*The Statesman's Book* 32). If a monarch understood his place in the world, as a mere servant of God, there was less of a chance that he would be betray his responsibility to his people.

The final component of a young noble's education was warfare. Given that one of the principal responsibilities of a king was to defend his borders, he would have to be well trained from an early age. Young boys were expected to learn how to fight, use weapons, as well as ride a horse in preparation for future battles (Giles of Rome 3:306). Walter of Milemete specifically recommends that, from a young age, kings should exercise with arms and birds, as well as go on hunting excursions with dogs in order to learn how to use weapons, how to track, as well as how to ride a horse, all of which were useful for battle (46). He adds that they should also be educated on the art of tactical strategy, which included understanding how to organize and properly utilize an army against an enemy. Giles of Rome specifically states that knowledge, rather than the use of a weapon, is more important in times of war (3: 297). His perspective demonstrates how the various elements of a prince's education complemented each other to make him better prepared to fulfill his many duties.

Another important aspect of kingship was the role of counselors. All the medieval theorists in this dissertation agree that the monarch needed to govern with the aid of advisors who helped guide him. These should be people who were honest, loyal, virtuous, wise, and were not afraid to give the ruler their opinion about a variety of topics. Like the ruler, they should want to work towards the common good of the kingdom. Sancho IV provides the most detail about this subject, claiming that the king needs twelve men who are God-fearing, king-fearing, and devoid of jealously, pride, and envy, to advise him (85). A sovereign was more efficient with good ministers around him who would help him to rule for the common good (John of Paris

120). Walter of Milemete emphasizes that these men should not be given posts until their fidelity has been proved over a long period of time (43). Trust was a vital component in finding anyone to fill ministerial posts, and anyone who was not trustworthy, especially to the king, was essentially a traitor (Walter of Milemete 43). Sancho IV explains that anyone who betrayed the confidence of the king should be punished harshly (Sancho IV 184). In order to avoid the possibility of betrayal, it was generally believed that liars, flatterers, tricksters, and devious individuals be kept from the king's company at all time. The worry was that these men would corrupt the king by association, thereby harming his subjects and endangering the common good.

Although controlling who the monarch kept company with was certainly a way to prevent his moral corruption, equally important were the virtues that he had, which would make him a better monarch, as well as one less likely to be corrupted. James Viterbo asserted that if the holder of secular power was worthy enough to be called king, he needed to "act rightly" (121). John of Paris stressed the close relationship between law and virtue: kingship was derived from divine law, he stressed, and the end goal of kingship was that all men live according to virtue; simply put, law brings about virtue (John of Paris 10-11). Marsilius of Padua adds that moral virtue was imperative for all men because "if morals are corrupt, great harm comes to the polity however well-shaped by laws it may be" (84). Marsilius's belief is that the immorality of the ruler, leads to the immorality of the kingdom, which even the best-written laws cannot prevent. The virtue of the sovereign, therefore, was imperative to uphold the spiritual and moral well-being of the kingdom. Brunetto Latini believed that the capacity for virtue was intrinsic and naturally occurring inside men but increased during life through religious doctrine and moral instruction (*The Book* 150). Any good man should ideally have all of these qualities, but a prince,

charged with caring for an entire kingdom, needed to be especially well-versed in religion and morality in order to set a proper example for his subjects.

The ideal virtues that were required of the prince were: justice, mercy, clemency, faith, humility, temperance, wisdom, diligence, beatitude, courage, honor, glory, truthfulness, love of God, charity, chastity, contempt for earthly goods, patience, fortitude, magnanimity, prudence, liberality, sobriety, and caution. Of these, justice, temperance, fortitude, and prudence are most generally considered the cardinal virtues, from which flow the others. Brunetto Latini stresses the importance of temperance, claiming that virtue was essentially a midway point between two extremes (*The Book* 160). Courage, for example, was the midpoint between fear and boldness. It was unhealthy to lean towards an extreme, and the ideal man was able to navigate these emotions in order to find a more tempered option. The ideal king would possess most of the virtues listed above and utilize them for the betterment of his subjects.

When considering the virtues of the model king, however, medieval political thinkers had to also consider vices that could potentially corrupt him. According to Thomas Aquinas, many good men who were virtuous before they gained power, lost their virtue as they reached the height of that power (42). Marsilius of Padua believed that a king who lacked virtue would follow the path of wickedness (111). In order to prevent the corruption of the king, medieval scholars dedicated portions of their treatises to the dangers of particularly dangerous vices such as pride, ambition, excess luxury, and cupidity.[14] Ambition and pride are especially important to this dissertation, since nearly all of the descriptions of these two vices in the included political treatises reference Alexander, associating his fall from grace to these particular qualities. Other possible vices that a king could possess are ingratitude, vanity, jealousy, slander (listening to it,

[14] Dante claimed that cupidity would cloud "the mental attitude to justice" (37)

or spreading it himself), listening to too much flattery, carnal desire, engaging in gossip, and keeping the company of wicked friends. In addition, the desire for honor, glory, and fame were also seen in a negative light; a king should be working towards the common good of the people; therefore, to seek out only glory and fame would be selfish (Thomas Aquinas 30, Álvaro Pais 195). Giles of Rome, in the first book of his *De regimine principum*, describes the positive and negative qualities of youths and older people. The vices of the young that he cites are their ever-changing nature, their gullibility, their proclivity to violence, their tendency to lie and argue, and their pride (1: 297-98). From the elderly, he mentions their constant suspicion of everything, their fear of death, their lack of hope for the future, and their lack of shame as traits to reject (1: 302-03). In addition, he emphasizes that any extreme emotions, such as anger, boldness, hope, love, and desire should be avoided at all cost since they could lead to ruin (John of Salisbury, *The Statesman's Book* 43-44). Once again we return to the idea of the midpoint that Brunetto Latini expressed when talking about virtues (*The Book* 160). Moderation and restraint were the key to living a well-balanced life, since leaning towards an extreme would create an imbalance that would not just affect the king, but the kingdom as well.

Medieval thinkers feared that if a virtuous king utilized the law to bring order to society, a corrupt king would stray from the law and no longer carry out his duties. The more vices a ruler succumbed to, the worse he became. Instead, he would stray from the common good and pursue his own selfish desires, making him an unjust and unfit ruler. Returning to John of Salisbury's earlier idea that a king obeys the law because he fears God, we can also say that law brings about virtue, since in obeying the law a king proves himself to be virtuous and upholding his duty to God (*The Statesman's Book* 32).

If we consider the awesome responsibility placed upon the monarch as an intermediary between God and the people, as a "shepherd" for his subjects, as a defender of justice, and as a model citizen, it would take a unique and especially well-prepared person to fulfill this role. It is no wonder that there were so many treatises and literary representations of kingship that were popular at this time, since the king would need guidance to carry out his duties. What I have outlined here are just some of the basic aspects of kingship that I will be analyzing in the following two chapters as I study the *LAlex* and the *HNAM*. Using the basic ideas presented above, I will provide a contextualized analysis of the representation of kingship in these two works to come to a conclusion about how contemporary political theory helped to shape the opinions of their authors.

The section that follows, however, will very briefly outline the evolution of kingship in the Islamic world in order to provide the necessary background information that will shape the analysis of the third Alexandrian narrative that I will study, the *Rrekontamiento del Rrey Alisandre,* an *aljamiado* text written in the 16th century, but with roots in traditional Arabic literature.

1.2 Kingship in the Islamic World[15]

As discussed in the previous section, kingship was the dominant form of government in Western Europe, but this was not the case in the Middle East where Islam came to be the preeminent religion. As Christian leadership in the 7th century was struggling to find the balance

[15] Much like in section 1.1, here I have I have compiled and elaborated on the information found in Ahmad, Awn, Black (*The History*), Bloom and Blair, Chejne, Crone and Hinds, Hitti, Lambton, Nasr, Safran, Saunders, and Sohail. Given that the same information is repeated in several sources, in order to avoid constantly interrupting the flow of the chapter I will only mention an author when the information I present is unique to him/her. However, all of them should be acknowledged here as primary sources for what follows. In addition, I will be using dates from the Gregorian rather than the Hijri calendar to avoid any confusion since the *LAlex* and the *HNAM* are Western works.

between religious and temporal power, further east in Arabia, the first Muslims chose to, in theory at least, unite the two under one leader. As Seyyed Hossein Nasr states, Muslims consider Islam to be a way of life; there is no domain outside the realm of religion, and religion itself "must embrace the whole of life" (27), whether that be public, private, social, economic, or political. After the revelation, Muḥammad, served as the religious, civil, and military leader of the first Islamic community that he established in Medina (Nasr 50); he never, however, officially claimed the status of ruler, general, or lawgiver, instead calling himself God's messenger (Awn 42). Following his example, Islam tended to encourage the interplay of religion and politics in order to create a "state" that was religiously united in thought, word, and deed, the idea being that a politically stable community was essentially a religiously united one.

1.2.1 Historical Outline

As an institution, kingship was not new to the Middle Eastern regions, since the Byzantine and Sasanian (Persian) Empires were influential, well-established, and massive before and during the advent of Islam. Their rulers were surrounded by pomp, ceremony, and luxury, living in opulent palaces hidden away from their subjects (Saunders 103; Bloom and Blair 66, 84-5; Sohail 171). This did not follow the model of leadership set by the Prophet: one of simplicity, religious observation, and law. As a result, early Muslims shied away from any association with kingship, instead creating the institution of the *khilāfat*, in which the caliph's primary duty was to uphold Islamic law and maintain order using the laws of the *sharī'a*, the body of rules and regulations that dictate the daily lives of Muslims (Ahmad 25).[16] His job was

[16] The word *khalīfa* means "successor" and was a part of a larger title, *khalīfat rasul allāh*, which means "successor to the messenger of God" (Crone and Hinds 20). The first four caliphs saw themselves as political successors to the prophet, but not prophets. Ahmad summarizes the responsibilities of the caliph as the following: "to be accepted by the *umma*,…to live simply, to be a father to his subjects (love them for their virtues and punish them for their

not to create religious law, rather to deal with the day-to-day governing of *dār-al-Islām* ("the abode of Islam"). The *imām,* was the term used for the figure who led Muslims in prayer. Although both terms have different meanings, it was not uncommon that the caliph was referred to as the *imām* when he acted as the religious leader. For that reason, Ann Lambton explains that the two terms, *imām* and *khalīfa,* are largely interchangeable since both are leaders of the community, or *umma.*[17]

The first four caliphs were called the *Rāshidūn,* or the four "rightly-guided" caliphs (Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and 'Alī), for their close relationship with the Prophet and their humble and pious way of life, which opposed the model of kingship presented by the Sasanian and Byzantine Empires. Upon the death of the last "rightly-guided" caliph, however, came the division of the *umma* into various sects, as well as the dynastic caliphates, led first by the Umayyads and then, after a violent coup, by the 'Abbāsids.[18] It is around this period that concerns about leadership and religion in Islam came to a head, prompting many contemporary scholars to attempt to define the *imāmate*/caliphate in order to justify the transfer of power that had just taken place and to promote peace in the realm (Lambton 45). Scholars such as Ibn al-Muqaffa (d. 756/9 CE), Abū Yūsuf (731-98 CE), al-Jāḥiz (776-868/9 CE), and Ibn Qutayba

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faults),...to punish evil doers, to remove bad customs, to suppress tyranny,…to construct buildings of public utility, to abstain from cruelty and tyranny, to abstain from evil company, to consult and seek advice from the wise and sagacious companions, and to treat his subjects with compassion and kindness" (20). The caliph was elected by the learned elders of the community who – it was believed – had enough experience and wisdom to pick the proper leader. Later, the *umma* (community) as a whole pledged an oath of allegiance acknowledging the election results and vowing to obey him.

[17] See Lambton (14-15) for further information regarding the difference between the terms *imām* and caliph, as well as Lambton (21-42) and Bloom and Blair (49-64) about the different minority sects that were formed in the years after the first four caliphs, which is when the terms took on varied meanings for each group.

[18] Both the Umayyads and the 'Abbāsids were *sunnīs*. The caliphate became to transform during the rule of the Umayyads and later the 'Abbāsids until it resembled the Persian and Byzantine models of rule. The Umayyads would claim that the caliph inherited religious authority from the Prophet and declared themselves both religious and secular leaders (Crone and Hinds 21). Under the 'Abbāsids the humble, pious caliphate of the *Rāshidūn* would continue turning into an autocratic form of government that modeled itself off of the Persian model with much pomp, ceremony, and extravagance (Bloom and Blair 66).

(828-89 CE) were especially concerned with ensuring that the central government was stable, strong, and able to withstand attacks from any criticisms or outside groups. Despite their efforts, however, the caliphate weakened considerably during ‘Abbāsid rule, until it was finally extinguished in the 13th century. As its significance waned, smaller, *amīrates* and *sulṭānates*, which were much like the kingdoms of Western Europe, began to take control in the outer reaches of the empire, until they finally gained control of the caliphate itself.

These kingdoms first emerged in the region of the Islamic Empire that was Persian. Ever since the Islamic expansion to what is now Iran, Persians were the largest, and most powerful, minority group in the empire, eventually gaining important bureaucratic posts under caliphal rule; in fact, many political thinkers were of Persian origin, and would come to combine Persian views on kingship with Islamic belief in *shari’a* law. The first glimpses of Islamic political theory began towards the end of the Umayyad caliphate (661-750 CE) – also in Persia – and would continue to develop through the ‘Abbasid caliphate (750-1258 CE), the various *sulṭānates*, and even after that.

The *amīrates* and *sulṭānates* would emerge as true forms of kingship in the 9th century when local governors of the eastern provinces began to assert their independence from the central authority of the *imāmate* and establish independent dynasties. It is this practice that, towards the end of the 10th century, led to the rise of kings, or *amīrs* (which can be translated as “prince”, “general”, or “commander”) and *sulṭāns* (literally meaning “authority” or “power”) in various regions of the empire, each one acting as a caliph would; these were the first steps towards true kingship in the Islamic world. By the 10th century, most *amīrs* called themselves “king,” a title that, because of its pagan associations, had not be used previously (Nasr 65). As Amir Siddiqi explains, the “Sulṭānate [and the Amīrate] were necessary consequences of the kind

of institution which the caliphate had become" – weak and susceptible to outside influence (83). Although the caliph was recognized on coinage and in name in the Friday *khuṭba* (prayer session), he became nothing more than a religious figurehead – but a necessary one. The *amīrates* and *sulṭānates* were created and legalized with the caliph himself investing the new rulers with power. Their duty was to defend the *umma,* to rid their territories of any heresy, and to continue to add to the glory of Islam. In exchange for recognizing the caliph as the "successor" of the Prophet and the true, single, leader of Islam, the *amīrs* and *sulṭāns* were given a type of diploma that invested them with the right to rule their territories as they saw fit (Awn 65). Most tended to seek the approval of Baghdad before carrying out any major decisions but were able to do as they wished unless it interfered with caliphal interests. As factions grew among *sulṭāns* and *amīrs*, however, the balance of power shifted and it became fairly simple for *amīrates* and *sulṭānates* to "occupy" the caliphate, nominate all of their close officials to positions of power, and gain control of the entire empire. By the mid-10th century, the Persian Buyids were the most famous family to do so. When the Buyids fell in 1055, it would be to the Turkish Seljūqs, who would conquer Baghdad and become the de facto rulers of the empire. This practice of usurping control of the caliphate would continue until the Mongol invasion in the 13th century.

There were also, however, challenges to caliphal rule that came from outside of the empire. Further west, two other caliphates were established: the first was the Fatimid *shī'a* anti-caliphate (909-1171 CE) that would eventually be centered in Egypt, and the second a Umayyad caliphate (929-1031 CE) in al-Andalus, established by 'Abd al-Raḥmān III. The success of the former caused considerable anxiety among the 'Abbāsids especially by the end of the 10th century when the Fatimids gained control of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem (Bloom and Blair

87), since, for the first time, a large part of *dār al-Islām* was led by a sect that rejected the ‘Abbāsid’s claims to leadership; by *sunnī* standards they were a heretical caliphate. Upon seeing this, the Umayyad prince in Iberia, ‘Abd al- Raḥmān III, whose family has assumed the modest title of *amīr* until 929 CE, declared himself caliph as well with Cordoba as his capital.[19] Anwar Chejne and Salma Jayyusi agree that, perhaps in order to counteract Fāṭimid ambition as well as declare himself worthy of protecting *Sunnī* Islamic interests, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III declared himself the legitimate caliph and “Commander of the Faithful” (*amīr al-mu’minīn),* stating that any other person that claimed the title was a pretender, intruder, and usurper (Chejne 34; Jayyusi 35). In doing so, he promoted himself as a divinely ordained authority, a unifying symbol for Muslims all over the world. His declaration did nothing to shift the balance of power. Muslims around the world allied with whatever group they either ideologically agreed with or lived closest to. For a time, there were three major centers of Islam, all claiming to be the true caliphate, successors to Muḥammad, and devoted to leading the *umma*. This was probably one of the first major blows to the “united” community. Until 929, despite the growing number of

[19] Until this moment, the Umayyads in the West did not interfere with the ‘Abbāsid east (or vice versa), but because of their strategic location, developed into a cultural and economic center in Europe. When he entered the Peninsula as a refugee, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I refused the title of *caliph*, choosing instead to consider himself an *amīr,* or the “son or prince” of caliphs – a title that would be used until 929 CE. David Wasserstein points out that there is a propagandistic and nostalgic purpose for the use of the title *amīr* (8). Not only was it a reminder of the Umayyad’s rightful caliphal inheritance, but a way of boasting of it and reminding their subjects of the family’s lineage (Wasserstein 8). This decision allowed al-Andalus to develop (relatively) peacefully under Umayyad rule without military interference from Baghdad or North Africa, be accepted as part of *dār-al-Islām*, and keep abreast of cultural developments during ‘Abbāsid rule. That being said, although al-Andalus still looked to the East as the religious center of Islam and the location of the caliphal seat, the ‘Abbāsid caliphs were never formally recognized in the Friday *khutba* by order of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I (in 757 CE) and their black flag was cursed in all of the lands that he controlled (Chejne 15). Therefore, until the establishment of the caliphate in al-Andalus, Iberian Muslims recognized that a caliphate existed in the East, but there was no person specifically attached to the title; the position seems to have been regarded as “*sedes vacans*” (Wasserstein 8; Safran 11). It can be argued then, that Umayyad rule in Iberia was a type of temporal kingship void of any real religious meaning. The *amīrs* fulfilled all the requirements of temporal kings – they succeeded to the throne hereditarily, administered justice, organized and ruled over the state, minted coins in their names (though not gold, which was associated with the caliphate), and were responsible for the security of their people, no matter where they lived. Religiously they were still tied to the birthplace of the Prophet and Islam, but politically they were independent of any caliphal influence; in a way, al-Andalus was the first to proclaim – though not literally – its independence from the caliphate.

*sulṭānate*s across Muslim lands, there had always only been one caliph, one center of Islamic life, and one successor of the Prophet. Now there were three. The denominations and sects that had sprung up about 300 years earlier had now managed to politically break the empire.

Once the caliphate had ceased to be the all-powerful political institution that it once was. It was now seen as a religious symbol, leaving local *amīrs/sulṭāns* to govern as the true sources of political order. Feeling the need to address this change as well as define the relationship between the *amīrs/sulṭāns* and the *imām*/caliph, scholars such as al-Māwardī (972-1058 CE), Niẓām al-Mulk (1018-92 CE), and al-Ghazālī (1058-111 CE) tried to reconcile the two institutions and demonstrate that the strong local kingdoms that had emerged during ‘Abbāsid rule were in fact subordinate to the religious power of the *imāmate*/caliphate. Ann Lambton explains that “Muslim theorists recognize various grades of power. The first was the most perfect and complete power, the power of God, the second was that of the Prophet, the third was that of the *imām*¸ and the fourth was that of the governors, the *qāḍīs* (judges), and other officials” (95). As a result, theorists writing during the *sulṭānate* period, accepted the various forms of rule, but attempted to demonstrate how they functioned alongside the *imāmate*. They were not concerned about the qualities of the caliph, but rather how to “bring the holders of power [the *sulṭāns*] within the framework of Islamic law” (Lambton 102). Despite sharing this common goal, however, al-Māwardī, Niẓām al-Mulk, and al-Ghazālī all differ in their approaches to dealing with the chaotic political reality of their time.[20] Scholars had to consider how they chose to use

[20] Niẓām al-Mulk and al-Ghazālī do not separate the *imāmate* and the *sulṭānate*, but rather discuss kingship as a larger category. In the case of the former, Niẓām al-Mulk was probably writing his treatise for a *sulṭān*, being that he had an important post under the Seljuqs. Al- Ghazālī uses the term “*sulṭān*” to refer to any type of king, which, the translator’s notes explains, was common in his time; it could refer to all rulers including caliphs (*Ghazālī’s Book* 45). Still, F.R.C. Bagley believes that al- Ghazālī perhaps did not mention the caliph, because “there could be no shadow of a doubt concerning the loyalty to the ‘Abbāsid caliph” (liii). Al-Māwardī is the only one who specifically mentions the *imāmate* (the first topic he addresses) and then describes the other positions in relation to it. He essentially shows how religious code and previous theories regarding the caliphate could be reconciled to reflect the historical reality; this theory made rulers dependent on caliphal approval for their legitimacy (Lambton 89). At the

terms like *amīr*, *sulṭān*, *imām*, and caliph, and what place they believed that each position held within the hierarchy of Islamic politics. Each one tried to explain their current situation to the best of their abilities, in a way that they believed would reunite the troubled Empire, and ultimately bring strength to the central government.

These attempts, however, would eventually fail. The ʻAbbāsid caliphate fell in the 13th century, thereby destabilizing the Empire. Therefore, with the imamate no longer a physical reality, theorists focused on *mulk* (kingship) as the necessary form of *siyāsa* (government) in the Islamic world – preferably a Muslim one. More than ever, strong, centralized kingship was seen as a necessary form of government that would unite the *umma* and reunite religion with statecraft. The best-known scholar from this era was actually a North African historian, Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406 CE), who, instead of solely focusing on the state of politics in his time, would attempt to explain his world by studying the mistakes of his ancestors.

Unlike his predecessors, the North African scholar would provide his readers with a historical overview of Islam, beginning with their tribal origins up until the breakdown of the empire. He would use the term *ʻaṣabiyya* to refer to a consolidating force, a "spirit of kinship" that could be based on blood ties or another type of connection that impels one group to establish supremacy over others (Ibn Khaldūn 1: 264, 269). *ʻAṣabiyya*, claimed Ibn Khaldūn, was one of the contributing factors of kingship, along with religion; the latter, he explains, "does away with mutual jealousy and envy among people who share in a group feeling and causes concentration upon the truth" (2: 320). It was these two factors that united the Arabs when the Prophet revealed the word of God and pushed them to abandon their nomadic lifestyle for a more sedentary one. One member of the group would be the leader because of his superiority over the others. Royal

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same time, he also showed how these local rulers could legally take on responsibilities that previously belonged to the *imām;* in this way, he also legalized the rise of the *sulṭān*-caliphates (like that of the Seljuqs) (Lambton 89).

authority, he believed, was "natural to mankind." Humans needed social organization to exist, and a forceful ruler to keep them from attacking each other (2: 381). In order to do this, however, he needed religious law to supervise him; for that reason, Ibn Khaldūn believed that the caliphate was necessary. The caliph was the guardian of Muslims and the supervisor of their affairs both worldly and religious (Ibn Khaldūn 2: 430). Any other type of royal authority falls within the jurisdiction of the caliphate (Ibn Khaldūn 2: 449). Although at this point in time, the caliphate was under the control of the Mamlūk Sulṭānate, for Ibn Khaldūn it still served as the most important form of royal authority on Earth. In a way, much like his predecessors he was reconciling the *sulṭānates* with the power of the caliph in order to reestablish the "world order." The concept of *'aṣabiyya* became his theory for the rise and fall of dynasties over the years, as well as his reasoning for why the caliphate ultimately failed. By losing their *'aṣabiyya,* the 'Abbāsids lost the right to rule over the *umma.* Ibn Khaldūn's theory serves as a type of hindsight, a discussion of kingship and statecraft after centralized rule for Muslims was no longer a viable possibility.

To conclude this historical outline and as a preamble to the Islamic theories of kingship that I will present in the next section, I would like to clarify a few details. As is well known, Islam has several different sects that share different beliefs, the most widespread of these being the *Sunnīs* and the *Shī'a*.[21] Depending on their religious leanings, the theologians, jurists, and philosophers whose ideas I will present in the following pages, will use certain terms or follow certain lines of thinking that originate in these beliefs. I will describe their general ideas on

[21] For *Sunnīs* the *imām* usually referred to a religious leader and the caliph was the political head of the community; in many cases, however, the caliph fulfilled the religious role anyway. On the other hand, for *Shī'as*, believed the *imām* should be the leader of the *umma,* and that he needed a special understanding of Divine Law to carry out his duties. *Shī'as*, therefore, when discussing leadership would give more importance to the imamate than the caliphate (Hitti 185). For more information about the various sects and their differences, see Hitti, Nasr, and Bloom and Blair.

leadership, which will always refer to the *imāmate*/caliphate without delving too much into the religious intricacies that divided them. However, I indicate what sect each theorist belongs to. In addition, I have used and will continue using the words "*imāmate*" and "caliphate" interchangeably here, since in the case of either group, the word referred to the leader of the *umma*.

Despite their different beliefs, each of these sects agrees that the caliph had to be: an adult male, a respected member of the community, knowledgeable about the holy texts, sane, in good physical condition (he could not be blind, deaf, mute, or have any deformities), and be able to carry out the duties of the caliphal seat (al-Ghazālī, *Ghazālī's Book* 74; Ibn Khaldūn 1: 395). His responsibilities included spreading Divine Law, maintaining order within and protecting the borders of *dār al-islām*, appointing judges to officiate in courts, and, in *Sunnī* mosques, leading the Friday *khuṭba* (prayers or sermon) in the capital or wherever he was, collecting taxes, administering public funds, and exacting justice (Nasr 111, Hitti 185-86).[22] The Qur'ān and the *sharī'a* were the guiding principles for the caliph or the leader of any Islamic community, and he was aided in his decision making by the *shūra* (consultation), a group of councilors, who were originally principal companions of the Prophet (Sohail 41). Muḥammad Sohail goes on to emphasize that the majority of the caliph's powers were temporal and that he had no religious authority, but Safran adds that he was still charged with the spiritual and moral welfare of the community – much like a Christian king (Sohail 41; Safran 3).[23] As time went on, however,

[22] *Dār-al-islām* could be contrasted with *dār-al-harb*, or, the "house of war" – land not yet conquered.

[23] It should be noted that scholars do not specifically agree on whether the caliphate had a religious function or not. Nasr (27), and Crone and Hinds (1) believe that they do. Hitti (183) and Sohail (40) disagree on the matter. Crone and Hinds especially emphasize that the first three caliphs were companions of the Prophet, and so their positions perhaps mixed the religious and secular powers more than that of later caliphs. If we consider that the community of Islam was much smaller at that time, it would make sense that their position required them to be religious leaders in order to pass on and cement the Prophet's teachings (Crone and Hinds 2). With the arrival of the Umayyads, the "happy union of religion and politics" ended since the leaders were no longer companions of the Prophet (Crone and Hinds 2). For the purposes of this dissertation, I would argue that although the caliphate may not have been formed

these ideals became corrupted with the desire for power and wealth and the aforementioned conditions were not always met. This was one of the principal reasons for the decline of the caliphate and the cause for much concern amongst the people. These basic ideals constitute the common background of the Islamic political theorists that I will present in the following section, from Ibn al-Muqaffa (d.756/9 CE) to Ibn Khaldūn (1332-406 CE)

1.2.2 Theories on Kingship

Although kingship in Islam as we know it emerged in the 9th century, it was not exactly the style modeled by Persian rulers hundreds of years earlier; it was, rather, Muslim in nature. For this reason, in this section I will be describing theory during the caliphate as well, since this was an important predecessor of the *sulṭānate* and political rule in the Islamic world in general. I will divide the theory thematically rather than chronologically, but it will be important to remember under what circumstances the scholars are all writing, since their treatises reflect the political milieu during three distinct periods in Islamic history. Ibn al-Muqaffa (d. 756/9 CE), Abū Yūsuf (731-98 CE), al-Jāḥiz (776-868/9 CE), and Ibn Qutayba (828-89) come from the first period, when the ‘Abbāsids had just gained power and the caliphate was a strong institution. Al-Māwardī (972-1058 CE), Niẓām al-Mulk (1018-92 CE), and al-Ghazālī (1058-111 CE) write during the second major period, when regional *sulṭāns* either shared power with or took power from the caliphs. Lastly, we have Ibn Khaldūn (1332-406 CE) who wrote during the Mamlūk

to be a religious institution like the papacy, its functions did extend to the religious realm, for their role as spiritual guides to the *umma,* as leaders of a religious community, and as the *Sunnī imām*. If, as Nasr argues, religion encompasses the entirety of life, then I believe that the caliphate must – at least in theory – be a religious office. That being said, the historical reality was that it dealt much more with temporal issues than religious ones.

Sulṭānate, when the Mongols had already destroyed what remained of caliphal power in the East, and the *umma* was fragmented and weak.[24]

The information presented in this section will be used to analyze in Chapter 4 the third Alexandrian narrative of my project, the 16th-century *Rrekontamiento del Rey Alisandre*, which was written nearly two centuries after the treatise of Ibn Khaldūn. Its source is an Arabic version of the story, now lost to us, but itself a possible descendent of the early Arabic recension of the *Alexander Romance*. Unlike with the *LAlex* and the *HNAM*, I will not be able to draw direct correlations or influences between contemporary political thought and the *Rrekontamiento*. I will rather be making parallels to the ideas presented in this section in order to show how kingship/leadership, as seen through a well-known figure, was portrayed in Muslim terms. Although a part of my analysis will incorporate possible *morisco* interpretations of the text, the majority will focus on the Islamic representation of Alexander as a king. The theory, therefore, will allow for a better understanding of kingship from an Islamic lens, and therefore help us to better interpret what type of a sovereign he was.

To begin, it is necessary to explain what the *imām* or caliph meant to Islamic theorists, as well as their relationship to religion. All of the scholars studied for this dissertation were adamant that centralized power was necessary to maintain order in any "state" (al-Māwardī 3; Ibn Khaldūn 2: 388). Niẓām al-Mulk believed that in every age and time, God chooses one person who has been endowed with kingly virtues to care for the *umma.* His wisdom brought people out of the darkness and created stability and order in the world (Niẓām al-Mulk 11); without kingship, he believed that "swords are drawn" and "blood is shed" (Niẓām al-Mulk 9).

[24] Given the difficulty in consulting some of these treatises, I have relied on secondary sources used secondhand sources (namely Black (*The History*), Pellat, and Crone and Hinds) for an exposition on the thoughts of Ibn al-Muqaffa, Abū Yūsuf, al-Jāḥiz, and Ibn Qutayba (828-89). I have used primary sources with regards to the theories of Al-Māwardī, Niẓām al-Mulk, al-Ghazālī, and Ibn Khaldūn.

Ibn al-Muqaffa emphasized that temporal power needed religion to cement itself, and that this type of power was more stable than anything gained by force (Black, *The History* 22). In contrast, al-Jāḥiz would argue the opposite, saying that social order brought about sound religion (Black, *The History* 28). Either way, religion was a much-needed factor in any government, since it was the job of the *imām*/caliph to guide his subjects, uphold the *sharī'a*, and maintain justice, which itself came from Islamic law. The *imām* was chosen by God to be a type of vice-regent, claimed al-Māwardī, who drew his power from both divine and legal sources (3, 15-16). Ibn Qutayba, referring to a *ḥadīth*, states that "the relation between Islam, the ruler and the people is like that between tent, pole, ropes and pegs. The tent is Islam, the pole is the ruler, the ropes and pegs the people. Every one…of them is dependent on the others for [its] well-being" (qtd. in Black, *The History* 54). No matter how the relationship is described, the connection between religion and the ruler is clear – the *imām* is the pillar that defends and upholds religion, expecting the people to follow suit. Ibn Khaldūn, who lived after the caliphate, called the temporal ruler a "substitute for the Lawgiver (Muḥammad)" and necessary for the stabilization of the state (2: 388).[25] This is one of the principal duties of Alexander/Dhulqarnayn in the *Rrekontamiento*.

Given this description, the caliph was referred to as a "shepherd," whose purpose was to "illuminate for the subjects those of their affairs which are obscure to them and to clarify those duties about which they are in doubt" (qtd. in Crone and Hinds 82). His job was to "not waste the command" which he had been given and to look over the affairs of God's nation" (Abū Yūsuf 35). Writing centuries later, and under different circumstances, al-Ghazālī describes the ideal

[25] He uses both terms caliph and *imām* interchangeably. Later Ibn Khaldūn explains that the caliph has also been called the *sulṭān* in later times when there were numerous claimants to the position, or when, because of distance, people were forced to pledge their allegiance to anybody who came to power (2: 388).

leader in a similar way, calling him "God's shadow on earth," and "Lord's delegate over His creatures"; because of this, he was to be "obeyed, loved, and followed" (*Ghazālī's Book* 45).

As we can see, Islamic political theorists generally agreed that the leader was God's representative on Earth. His basic duties (whether he be the caliph or a *sulṭān*) were clear: he had to uphold religious law,[26] defend the borders of Islam, enforce justice, and lead the Friday prayers (2:449). Additionally, each political thinker includes his own list of further duties of the caliph. Al-Ghazālī's treatise contains the most comprehensive list: the caliph must defend the *umma* against its enemies, meet the *'ulamā* and seek out their advice, protect Islamic territory, restrain oppression, enforce and enact punishments, keep the subjects happy, make pilgrimages safe for travelers, care for the infrastructure of the empire (both religious and economic), employ knowledgeable *qāḍīs* (judge) and officials, oversee governmental affairs personally, execute judgement, and not disregard petitioners at his court (*Ghazālī's Book* 13, 19, 23, 24, 29, 30, 46, 56).[27]

In many ways, the responsibilities of the Islamic leader were the same as those of a Christian monarch. The caliph that had begun as a leader of a small community leader, was now the ruler of an empire that had very different needs and concerns. For any ruler, fulfilling these duties would require unique qualities that made him worthy of leading such a massive empire. For this reason, al-Jāḥiz (and all of the theorists) points out, the caliph must be *afḍal*, or, the "most excellent" of the *umma*, with "exceptional merits…that are known to all Muslims" (qtd. in

[26] With regards to religious law and justice, Ibn al-Muqaffa asserted that the caliph could, and should, pass judgement on issues that are not specified in the holy texts, as well as codify and systematize laws, using the *sunna* and the Qur'ān as his guide (Black, *The History of Islamic* 23; Lambton 53).

[27] Al-Māwardī's additional suggestions for the caliph are as follows: he should equip the borders with provisions to stop any enemy movements, to undertake war against those who will not convert, to appoint trustworthy officials, and to oversee his affairs personally (16). Ibn al-Muqaffa, insists that soldiers (especially foreign ones) should be educated in the ways of Islam, as well as kept abreast of political matters (Black, *The History* 24; Lambton 51-2). Niẓām al-Mulk's list advises the *imām* to carefully monitor the activities of all *wāzirs* (advisors) and officials with the use of spies and be apprised of religious matters by listening to religious scholars (23, 59-60).

Pellat 66); he should be the most virtuous, the wisest, the most courageous, etc. Wisdom was another important virtue, which al- Ghazālī believed was "all embracing" and included restraint, trustworthiness, uprightness, self-control, mercifulness, good nature, faithfulness, patience, civility, and clemency – all qualities that are necessary in an ideal leader (al-Ghazālī, *Ghazālī's Book* 154-57; and see Lambton 119). Additionally, the caliph would have to be well read and familiar with the law (Khaldūn 2: 395). Al-Jāḥiz insists that the ruler be conscientious, compassionate, willing (and able) to lead Friday prayers, and have good habits (Pellat 65-66). Ibn Khaldūn adds probity, competence, and freedom of the sense and limbs (meaning he is not imprisoned and does not have any physical defects) to this list of virtues (2: 383-85). He further advises the ruler to not be too clever or shrewd, because that would hinder him from being mild to his subjects (2: 383-85). Instead, he felt that kindness was a better quality to have to maintain power (2: 383-85). Al-Ghazālī wished to impose a strict moral code on the caliph to discourage him from corrupting himself and straying from his duties as both temporal and religious leader of the *umma* (Lambton 119). He believed that a good ruler should avoid luxury, work to overcome his pride, be wary of flattery, and not partake in drink or participate in games for fun (al-Ghazālī, *Ghazālī's Book* 25, 80, 119-20)

Much like al-Ghazālī, Niẓām al-Mulk, sought to remind the caliph of his duties not as a temporal leader, but rather as the religious figurehead of Islam. He stresses piety in all things as the most important trait for any sovereign, as well as restraint and calmness before acting on any matter (59-60, 129). Piety and knowledge about religion, he believed would give the one stronger judgement – another ideal quality for the caliph (Niẓām al-Mulk 60). In this way, the sovereign would be able to lead his people by example. Ibn Qutayba stressed that the ruler should also be humble, like the caliph 'Umar, who despite his exalted position, often visited the

sick, went to funerals, and was like one of the people (Black, *The History* 55). As we will see in chapter 4, Dhulqarnayn exemplifies many of these qualities, and it is for this reason that he was chosen by God to lead. His one flaw (his greed), however, will become a hindrance that will take him away from his faith. How he overcomes this obstacle will be an important test of his kingship.

Unlike Christian authors who described the vices that could corrupt the king, Islamic theorists seem to focus on the qualities of the ideal caliph, rather than those of the flawed one. Only al-Jāḥiz discusses some possible vices, that are not necessarily for a king but for any man such as envy, the inability to keep secrets, pride, and miserliness (Pellat 207, 221, 223, 231, 236).[28] To this, al-Māwardī adds that the caliph should not commit "forbidden deeds" by giving into his desires (17). Ibn Khaldūn, writing long after the caliphate had been extinguished, explains that luxury, which was the result of a sedentary lifestyle and the privilege of royal authority, was the primary cause for the fall of the caliphs (2: 339-41). With each successive generation, Islamic leaders retreated into a life of excess, forgetting their duties and becoming more self-serving until they lost *'aṣabiyya,* the spirit of kinship that allowed them to rule (Ibn Khaldūn 2: 377). In the time of Ibn Khaldūn, monarchy alone governed the people. Although it was necessary, royal authority, he believed, brought out the wrathfulness and animality of man; the temporal ruler would ruin the world – especially without the guiding hand of religious law (2: 385). Therefore, it was wholly necessary that the caliphate (the religious and moral center of Islam) exist to curb the ambitions of kings who were corrupting their subjects. Using his hindsight, Ibn Khaldūn was able to see that temporal power was the glue that would bind

[28] Additional situations (not vices) that would disqualify a caliph from leadership would be a physical disability, if he was captured without any hope for release, or if he was being coerced in some way (al-Māwardī 4, 20-21).

Muslims in the absence of the caliphate, but it was the religious nature of the caliphate itself that would be needed to control the temptations that kingship brought.

His solution would echo the ideas of Ibn al-Muqaffa almost 600 years earlier: that temporal power needed religion to cement itself. As we will see, the *Rrekontamieno* clearly reflects this idea, as well as others that were mentioned earlier. In some ways, Dhulqarnayn is the ideal ruler that all these scholars describe, for although he does lose his way, his dedication to the divine is much stronger, and helps to guide him through his moment of crisis. This is what all caliphs/*sultāns* should aspire to be. In addition, his commitment to spreading the word of God, as well as making religion the foundation of his empire, reflects what Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn al-Muqaffa saw as the ideal relationship between religion and state.

The following chapters of this project will analyze in further detail the image of kingship as portrayed by Alexander in the *LAlex,* the *HNAM,* and the *Rrekontamiento.* Using the ideas presented above, I will show how each text aligns with or deviates from the political theories regarding kingship that were contemporary to their composition (*LAlex* and *HNAM*), or that were produced within the same cultural context (*Rrekontamiento*). In this way, I hope to show how Alexander was used as a model in a variety of social milieus to represent the nature of kingship in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia.

Chapter 2

The "Scholar-King": Kingship in the *Libro de Alexandre*

The first work that I will analyze in this dissertation is the *Libro de Alexandre* (*LAlex*), which is the best known and most studied text about Alexander the Great in the Iberian Peninsula. Using the theory presented in the previous chapter, I will discuss how the *LAlex* presents Alexander as an ideal or flawed monarch. I shall compare the poem's Alexander to the image presented by scholars from the 12th to 14th centuries and evaluate how and if the author-cleric's vision of kingship differs from medieval political treatises.

2.1 Historical Background

The bibliography on the *LAlex* is very abundant. This poem has not only given us the term *mester de clerecía* itself, but seems to inaugurate, and to a certain extant define, the main characteristics of this pioneering literary *genre, school, mode,* or *movement* – didactic texts subject to strict poetic rules with religious or classical themes that extol a particular figure to educate the audience about good and bad conduct in order to teach them about the past as well as to help them lead a morally conscious life.[29] The *LAlex*, however, is much more than that. While retelling the life of a celebrated king, drawing upon a wide variety of sources, the text also provides encyclopedic and moral knowledge, allowing its audience to learn about different topics (Arizaleta, "Alexandre" 6; Uría, *Panorama crítico* 204-05, 208-09; Michael 11; Casas Rigall 18-30, 64-69). The didactic intention of the Spanish poet aligns well with the larger educational renaissance taking place all over Europe at the time (Such and Rabone 22-23). Alexander, being

[29] For different perspectives and more bibliography on the term *mester de clerecía* and its implications, see Uría (*Panorama crítico* 17-51), Weiss (1-25), and Willis ("Mester" 212-24).

the student of the newly rediscovered Aristotle, as well as a well-known symbol of wisdom himself, was the ideal tool to impart knowledge to the intended audience of the *LAlex*.

At the time of its production, 13th-century Iberia was experiencing major social and political changes. Much like in the rest of the continent, the educational renaissance led to the foundation of universities in Palencia and Salamanca (both in first third of the century), followed by many others (Such and Rabone 23). Although there is much debate as to the identity of the author of the *LAlex*, most scholars agree that he was a learned cleric who participated in the educational developments of the Iberian Peninsula during the first three decades of the 13th century, when most critics believe that the poem was composed.[30]

Along with this cultural change, and in connection with it, Iberian rulers were slowly beginning to separate and centralize their secular power from the authority of the Church (Weiss 111). Monarchs were accompanied by courts, which included nobles and high officials as well as clerics, who became increasingly responsible for legal matters and administrative tasks (Such and Rabone 16). Concurrently, on the military front, the Christian Reconquest was gaining major ground due to the infighting and general instability of the various Islamic *taifa* kingdoms (Chejne, *Muslim* 53, 89-90). This chaos allowed the kings of Castile, particularly Alfonso VIII (1158-1214 CE) and Ferdinand III (1217-52 CE), to make major incursions into Muslim territory, effectively reducing it to the Kingdom of Granada (Such and Rabone 13-14). Considering these socio-political changes, Amaia Arizaleta affirms that the author of the *LAlex* was a learned cleric who most likely worked in the court of a Castilian King ("Alexandre" 4-5).

[30] For more information on the authorship and the date of composition of the work, see Casas Rigall (18-30), Rico, Uría (*Panorama crítico* and "El *Libro de Alexandre*"), Hilty, and Franchini.

She specifically believes that he was inspired by the achievements of Alfonso VIII and Ferdinand III, whose reigns were described in detail in the royal chronicles ("Alexandre" 17).[31]

2.1.1 The 13th-century Cleric and the "Lettered Knight"

As mentioned in the previous section, Europe was undergoing a renaissance of sorts, where the cathedral schools, the *studia generalia* (universities), the rediscovery of ancient authors, and an interest in scholasticism were changing medieval society in many ways. In his monograph *The Lettered Knight*, Martin Aurell details this scholastic shift whereby education was no longer solely reserved for the clergy but was also available for the nobility. The older generation of clerics, or "*inscii litterarum*," preferred to stay in the cloister where they could comment on and translate books (Rico 6-8). In contrast, the new generation of learned clerics educated in the universities had an intense desire to learn and wanted to pass on their knowledge by teaching and working in the world (Rico 6-8). Many went to court to pursue opportunities in the seat of power, often as members of the chancery. As both Arizaleta and Aurell explain, the clerics put their knowledge at the service of the monarch and worked to fashion a "consistent political ideology in his support" (Aurell 398); in this way, they contributed to the "building up of a powerful monarchy" (Aurell 398) as well as a "propagande monarchique" (Arizaleta, *Les clercs*, Chapter 1, Paragraph 7). Among their duties in the royal chancery was to "fabriquer des textes qui non seulement *disaient* le politique mais le *faisaient*," since "ce fut sur la chancellerie que s'assit quotidiennement la *potentia* des souverains" (Arizaleta, *Les clercs*, Chapter 2,

[31] Alfonso VIII was a skilled military leader who defeated the Almohads in the Peninsula and also founded the University of Palencia. Ferdinand III captured the major cities of Seville in 1248 and Cordoba in 1236 (among other smaller ones) as well as supported the University of Salamanca. Arizaleta's theory is certainly interesting, but it is difficult to demonstrate, given the uncertainty regarding the poem's date of composition. The major victories of Ferdinand III took place in the 1230's and 1240's, which would probably be too late for a work that was known to other *mester de clerecía* poets.

Paragraph 6). However, not all clerics went to court to be a part of the government. Others passed on their knowledge to the children of kings and other noblemen, thereby creating a new breed of nobility that was educated as well as skilled at battle: a *miles litteratus* (Aurell 16).

Many 12th-century scholars like Gerald of Wales believed that the celebrated kings of the past were successful because of their education: "The more lettered and scholarly the princes (and nobles) were, the better they kept themselves informed of the affairs of war and the braver they showed themselves to be: like Alexander, the brilliant leader of the Macedonians, like Julius Caesar, for the Romans, or like his nephew Augustus" (qtd. in Aurell 25). Ideas like this were prevalent in political treatises of the 12th and 13th centuries and suggest that education "provide[d] the nobility with knowledge of nature and of men, both of which are essential for victory" (Aurell 25). Although the nobility was at the top of the social hierarchy, their duty was said to be to upholding Christian ideals that were emulated and encouraged by clerics (Aurell 18). As Aurell puts it, "chivalry was a warrior ethic steeped in Christian values" (18). For this reason, when clerics began to tutor the children of nobles, often using the vernacular instead of Latin, they used their *clerecía* to remedy any deviant behavior and provide them with the guidance they needed to appear "more courteous and less uncouth" (Aurell 15, 231). Cooperation between the clergy and the nobility, therefore, created a new breed of courtier, one who was both scholar and warrior, the literal union between *fortitudo* and *sapientia*, that emulated the great heroes of Greece and Rome rediscovered in the 12th century (Aurell 395). Their tutors introduced them to Latin, Roman classics, Christian doctrine, the *trivium*, "a smattering" of the sciences of the *quadrivium*, medicine, history, and economics (Aurell 392). It was believed that lettered knights would be able to learn useful battle strategy and cunning from classical texts that would allow them to succeed during times of war (Aurell 25). The additional

moral instruction they received was to help them to control their anger and covetousness in order to act as good Christian knights (Aurell 397-98). The hero of the *LAlex* embodies the spirit of the *miles litteratus* described above, since he has been given both moral and academic instruction from his tutor Aristotle in order to become an effective ruler and lead his men into battle. As I will describe in the following section, the poet highlights Alexander's *clerecía* throughout the work, which very likely has to do with the intended audience of the poem.

2.2 A Moral vs. a Socio-political Interpretation of the Text

Modern scholars of the *LAlex* tend to take an either moral approach (led by Uría) or a socio-political one (led by Arizaleta and Julian Weiss) to their analysis of the text.[32] Uría asserts that the author-cleric's intent in writing the poem was to impart a moral lesson to his audience, specifically about the dangers of pride ("La soberbia" 513). She explains that the *Alexandreis*, its main source, does not have nearly as many references to pride as the *LAlex*, meaning that the author-cleric purposefully inserted additional critiques and commentary about this sin in order to underscore his moral lesson ("La soberbia" 515). As we will see in a later section, pride does not manifest itself in the *LAlex* as vainglory, but rather as the sin of the intellectual and the sin of the overreacher. She explains that:

> nuestro poeta, clérigo letrado, de amplia y profunda cultura, confirió, intencionadamente, al *Libro de Alexandre* esa dimensión ejemplar y moralizante, de advertencia contra el peligro de la soberbia intelectual, pensando en aquellos clérigos que, llevados de la

[32] See Uría (*Panorama crítica* 175-211), Arizaleta (*La translation* 234-61), and Weiss (109-42).

> curiosidad, escrutaban hasta el fondo los misterios de la fe católica y trataban de hacerlos razonables, corriendo el peligro de desviarse de la ortodoxia. ("La soberbia" 527-28)

Alexander is extremely proud of his *clerecía* and, as he discovers more of the world, he desires to understand it better and conquer it for himself. His desire will turn into an obsession that causes him to cross limits that, in the Christian worldview, are tantamount to committing an unholy act similar to Lucifer's rebellion. Given the scholastic revival that was taking place at the time of the poem's composition, Uría believes that the author-cleric directed his moral message to learned clerics who were fully immersed in intellectual culture ("La soberbia" 517-18). As Fernando Riva explains, in his period, university teachers and the new breed of clerics were often criticized for their intellectual pride and for their desire to seek out the secrets of the universe; this criticism extended to their institutions and their disciplines as well, since they chose to acquire knowledge through discovery and debate rather than humbly in the quiet confines of the cloister (Riva 58; Uría, "La soberbia" 524). Alexander, as we will see, is very similar to these clerics in that he is keen on actively pursuing knowledge without considering the consequences of his actions and is willing to cross any boundary in order to attain this information. As such, the author-cleric uses him as an example of the dangers of excessive pride to warn fellow clerics against following in his footsteps ("La soberbia" 527-28).

In contrast, Arizaleta and Weiss, following Willis, believe that the *LAlex* was a *speculum principis* destined for a court audience to present "the scope and limitations of monarchical power" (Weiss 143). The text itself has been heavily Christianized and medievalized for a 13th-century audience, and these changes could reflect the military success and political advances of Castilian kings and Christians in 12th and 13th-century Iberia (Arizaleta, *La translation* 222;

Weiss 113; Michael 24-87, 88-142).[33] Arizaleta adds that the poem's objective is to portray a realistic image of a king during the Reconquest, thus giving us a glimpse at what life was like for rulers of that era (*La translation* 255-61). She goes on to state that, in addition to appealing to learned clerics (thus agreeing in part with Uría) and learned men of the court, the text may have been intended for the nobility as a *speculum principis* (Arizaleta, "Alexandre" 17; Willis, "Mester" 222-23). Weiss, in his monograph on the *mester de clerecía,* states that the poet seems to have been inspired by the political agenda, style of leadership, and military accomplishments of the Iberian rulers of this period (112). If this was the case, the poet would have been using the image of Alexander to reflect upon contemporary events and adding the moral component to teach monarchs about the dangers of pride, as well as to make clear that royal power is subject to divine power (Arizaleta, "El clérigo" 92).

In my opinion, if we consider the political concerns that were being debated amongst secular and canonical legal experts of the 13th century, the views championed by Uría and Arizaleta and Weiss, respectively, actually complement each other quite nicely, since the socio-political and the moral/religious themes work in conjunction throughout the narrative. Alexander is portrayed as a celebrated monarch who achieves numerous military victories, he is eventually struck down because of his excessive pride, one of the worst vices that any man could suffer from (*La translation* 261). The morality of the author and the bellicose nature of Alexander come together to represent the "lettered knights" that were emerging in the 12th and 13th centuries (Aurell 39). As such, the author of the *LAlex* adopts a similar position to that of the clerics who tutored the nobility to teach them appropriate behavior, while educating them to be scholars in their own right. His subject, therefore, is the ideal noble that the clergy intended to create: a

[33] Both Michael (28-87, 88-142) and Willis (*The Relationship* 67-79, 70-72) demonstrate how the author-cleric purposefully inserted new material to medievalize and Christianize the material he borrowed from the *Alexandreis.*

"scholar-king" (Willis, "Mester" 222). As Raymond Willis describes it, "the hero of the poem was moulded by the poet into an exemplar, not simply of the traditional kingly virtues like justice and valor, but also of the attainments of the scholar" ("Mester" 224). Aurell writes that the appearance of Alexander, a *miles litteratus*, among other venerated epic heroes (like Charlemagne, Roland, and Arthur) in the 12th and 13th centuries indicated an increased prestige given to knights with an education in letters (39). That being said, Alexander was certainly praised for his prowess and knowledge, but he was equally criticized for his many faults. Therefore, his popularity points not only to an increased interest in the "lettered knight," but also to a commitment, on the part of the intellectuals of the period, to a "programme of moral reform" (Aurell 237). In the *LAlex,* the poet's criticisms and religious/spiritual digressions serve as the public's moral compass so that they can properly judge Alexander through a Christian lens as they enjoy his life story. In this way, the moral and socio-political approaches to the text converge in the agenda of the author-cleric to praise certain aspects of the lettered knight, but ultimately to warn him against the dangers he may face.

2.3 Alexander in the *LAlex*

In the following sections, I will analyze the portrayal of the Alexander that is presented in the *LAlex* to determine how he is shown to be an ideal or flawed monarch. Utilizing both the medieval political theory as well as the description of the ideal ruler established in Chapter 1, I shall compare this Alexander to the image presented by scholars from the 12th–14th centuries to evaluate how and if the author-cleric's vision of kingship differs from medieval political treatises.

2.3.1 The Education of a Scholar-King

Having a good education is fundamental to being a good leader. Monarchs were especially concerned that their heirs would be properly trained to govern over an entire kingdom. Vincent of Beauvais believed that "el príncipe debe superar a los demás en sabiduría," while Giles of Rome stressed that "si no fueren sabios e entendidos cuando ovieren de ensennorear e ser príncipes, tornarse han en tiranos" (Vincent of Beauvais, Chapter XI; Giles of Rome 2:150). The historical Alexander was considered to be extremely intelligent due to his tutelage under Aristotle as well as his encounters with the Brahmins of India, which resulted in his frequent association with wisdom literature from the Greco-Roman period to the Middle Ages (Asirvatham 312). Of the three texts that I analyze in this project, it is the *LAlex* that goes into greatest detail about Alexander's education, his "*clerecía*," and extols him for being an accomplished student (*Libro de Alexandre* 39a). As the poem opens, we are told that:

> El padre, de siet'años, metiolo a leer;
> diol' maestros ornados de sen e de saber,
> los que mejores pudo en Greçia escoger,
> que'l sopiessen en todas las artes emponer.
>
> Aprendié de las siet'artes cada día liçión;
> de todas cada día fazié disputaçión;
> tanto avié buen engeño e sotil coraçón,
> que venció los maestros a poca de sazón.

> Nada non olvidava de quanto que oyé;
> non le cayé de mano qüanto que veyé;
> si más le enseñassen, él más aprenderié:
> ¡sabet que en las pajas el cüer non tenié! (*Libro de Alexandre* 16-18)

This excerpt speaks to Alexander's education at the hands of the best teachers in Greece, as well as the fact that he was a quick learner who soon outshone not only his classmates, but also his teachers. In addition, it shows us that Alexander was eager to learn and take in knowledge wherever it was provided to him, a trait that he would continue to demonstrate throughout his life. Willis describes Alexander as "half man of action and half scholar" since the "*clerecía* permeates even deeper and manifests itself as an organic component of the hero himself" ("Mester" 220, 219). Alexander possesses just as many scholarly qualities as he does kingly ones, which his most famous tutor, Aristotle, notices (*Libro de Alexandre* 52). Shortly after these verses, we are given a more detailed summary of the young prince's scholastic achievements.

This explanation comes just after the teenage Alexander learns that the Greek kings were vassals of the Emperor of Persia, a truth that upsets him greatly. Feeling an urgent call to arms to fight the Persian threat, he brags to his tutor about his numerous accomplishments that make him the most erudite man he knows (besides his teacher) in an attempt to prove his readiness to leave the classroom and begin the next phase in his life as a warrior. Alexander explains that he has a keen understanding of grammar, can compose poetry, can form arguments and debate, can read the stars, and is a skilled rhetorician, physician, and musician (*Libro de Alexandre* 39-44). Most of these subjects, with the exception of medicine and natural philosophy, comprise the seven liberal arts that were still an important part of higher education in the Middle Ages and therefore,

would have resonated with the intended audience of the *LAlex* (Willis, "Mester" 215).[34] In the second volume of the *Siete Partidas,* Alfonso X lists these areas of study (though not music or medicine), along with law, as the ideal subjects that a royal heir must cover (Alfonso X, *Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title XXXI, Law I; Willis, "Mester" 215; Michael 44-45; *Libro de Alexandre* 142n38-47; Arizaleta, *La translation* 196) According to Ian Michael, the poet's detailed list of subjects reflects his view on the desirable education for kings, which was more like that of a university teacher, and very likely had little relation to the actual training of medieval monarchs (45). As a result, to the medieval reader, Alexander would have the most complete education of anyone in the 13th century, which makes him exceptionally qualified to rule over an empire. From the perspective of the author-cleric, who very likely had a similar education, Alexander is a literal blending of two worlds, since he is a cleric by virtue of his education, but a king by virtue of his fate. In many ways, this makes him the ideal monarch, since he can be a more effective leader by utilizing his knowledge to the betterment of his kingdom.[35] This is proven time and time again during his travels, since we regularly see Alexander putting into practice all the skills of his *clerecía* to achieve his goals. Rhetoric is the art that he most uses during his rousing speeches to encourage his men as well as convince them on various occasions to follow him further East (*Libro de Alexandre* 206-10, 762-72, 787-92, 1195-97, 1835-57, 2283-949). In a few of these cases, he needs to manage differing opinions (ex. *Libro de Alexandre* 798-818, 1838-39, 2272b-79), and so takes on the role of a medieval scholar by engaging in *disputatio*, thereby further demonstrating his *clerecía*. He utilizes his knowledge of grammar when composing and delivering his speeches and whenever he references authors of

[34] Arithmetic and geometry, which have been replaced by medicine and natural philosophy, are the only two disciplines from the *trivium* and *quadrivium* that are not mentioned as part of Alexander's curriculum in the *LAlex.*
[35] For information about the author-cleric's formation and how it could relate to his intentions for writing the *LAlex,* see Arizaleta (*La translation* 193-257).

the past, such as Homer (*Libro de Alexandre* 323). His skills of logic are put to use when he returns Darius's gifts with a new interpretation of their meaning (*Libro de Alexandre* 40, 800-01, 815-18), as well as when he cuts the Gordian knot and plans his battles (*Libro de Alexandre* 828-38, 875-76, 959-61, 976-80, 1284-329, 2067-72). Lastly, he uses his skills in natural philosophy during his expedition in the submarine, his flight with griffins, and his encounters with the various creatures in India (*Libro de Alexandre* 2305-23, 2496-514, 2161-84). As these examples show, Alexander certainly embodies the spirit of a scholar-king.

In addition to this more formal classroom education, Alexander is also an accomplished warrior. The narrator tells us that:

> A cabo de pocos años el infant' fue crïado;
> nunca omne non vío niño tan arrabado.
> Ya cobdiçiava armas e conquerir regnado:
> ¡semejava Hercules, tanto era esforçado! (*Libro de Alexandre* 15)

To be a king, and especially a conqueror like his father Philip, Alexander would most certainly be exceptionally trained. Throughout the *LAlex*, we are inundated with stories of his magnificent victories over great armies and fantastic creatures. His love of weaponry and thirst for battle foreshadow his unrelenting push to travel East and conquer all the lands in his path. In addition to his skills as a warrior, we can also see how he effectively utilizes the advice that he is given by Aristotle at the beginning of the poem, which describe to how one should carry oneself in battle as well as morals by which to live (*Libro de Alexandre* 48-86). The fact that Aristotle acts as both tutor and war advisor to Alexander is significant, since it points to the fact that the

Macedonian's martial prowess is tied to his *clerecía* as well. In fact, during his first expedition into the world after his knighting, we are told Alexander "fízolo mayormente por las tierras veer / los passos e los puertos de las sierras saber," as well as "e por los cavalleros novelas emponer / que se fuessen avezando a guerra mantener" (*Libro de Alexandre* 128). In this way, Alexander's interests in war and natural philosophy are inextricably linked through the poem, which will become more apparent after Darius is defeated. Both allow Alexander to excel in life, not only as a warrior, but as a leader of men, and both will eventually lead to his downfall as well.

Another aspect of Alexander's education that is very lightly touched upon in the poem is the guidance he receives to lead a healthy life. As Aurell points out, the *Alexandreis* presents Aristotle as "more of a moral and political advisor than a teacher" (40). Given Alexander's description of his very complete education, which was presumably guided by Aristotle, and is an amplification in the Iberian poem absent from the *Alexandreis,* we can say that, in the *LAlex*, the philosopher is also very much a teacher to the prince. That being said, the majority of the episode between tutor and pupil does in fact involve moral and political advice to help him fulfill his duties as king. Medieval theorists believed that a monarch needed a traditional scholastic education as well as advice on how to live well so as to present himself as a healthy and robust individual to his subjects. Moderation was the key to achieving this feat, so young men were encouraged to avoid any extreme emotions or habits, as well as control their alcohol and food intake.[36] In the *LAlex,* Aristotle gives the young prince a long lecture (to be discussed more in detail in a later section) that also includes some advice about how to live a good life: "te guarda de amor de mugieres," "En poder de vil omne non metas tu fazienda," "Nin seas embrïago nin

[36] As Maravall explains, moderation, or *mesura,* was a fundamental part of *cortesía*, a code of conduct that that all virtuous men were required to know ("La cortesía" 532, 533).

seas venternero," etc. (53d, 55a, 58a).[37] As far as personal habits are concerned, Alexander seems to be very restrained, but as I will discuss in a later section, he is incapable of keeping his emotions in check, which will eventually cause him problems in life.

The last aspect of a prince's education that was important to medieval theorists was more spiritual in nature. In the 13th century, Christianity was the glue that held society together, and the monarch's role was not just to be the temporal leader but God's chosen representative on Earth. The clergy taught people religious doctrine, but the king was the model they could follow to learn how to realistically manage the temptations of daily life and be pious and upstanding members of secular society. Therefore, it was extremely important that the king have a strong religious formation. In the *LAlex,* there is no evidence that the prince receives a formal religious education, but there are pieces of advice that relate to God that Aristotle offers to his young pupil. The older man tells him that he should not chase after women because they are a distraction from God, to not trust corrupt men because they will corrupt him (and earn him God's wrath), to understand that God gives knowledge to men through His mercy, to share everything that he receives from God, and to have faith that God will grant him favors when He sees fit to do so (*Libro de Alexandre* 53-55, 57, 62, 64).

While this cannot constitute the complete religious formation of a "rey…pagano," (*Libro de Alexandre* 5a), these examples do allow us to see how Alexander, in this medievalized Christian setting, was taught to understand God's place in the world order, why he consistently credits the divine for his victories (ex. *Libro de Alexandre* 797c), as well as explain why he always prays to the Creator before battle (ex. *Libro de Alexandre* 962-63). Alexander is very subtly shown that God is superior to the monarch and that he needs to rely on His favor to

[37] The line "Nin seas embrïago nin seas venternero" is reminiscent of Giles of Rome's belief that a king should not be gluttonous in either food or drink (*Libro de Alexandre* 58a; Giles of Rome 2:171-72).

succeed in life. The principal way that this is demonstrated is by assuring the audience several times that God (sometimes in the form of a Lady Fortune subject to divine will) supports Alexander in his endeavors (*Libro de Alexandre* 1429a, 1534c, 1536cd, 1548a, 2100, 2114). During the Persian campaign, the Macedonian seems to present himself as God's subject rather than his equal. As the story progresses, however, Alexander's actions will clearly show that, although the young king publicly credits God as above him, he actually thinks of himself as an unstoppable force worthy of knowing all of the Creator's secrets. Brunetto Latini, like many other theorists, urges all kings to act with moderation, a belief that is rooted in a fear of God (160). Alexander does not demonstrate a fear of God, which is why he is unable to restrain himself in life, which eventually leads to divine retribution, thereby reminding him of his place in the world before he dies.

As we will see in this chapter, there are numerous themes in the *LAlex* such as *clerecía*, war/conquest, moderation, fear of God, intellectual pride, and the sin of the overreacher that seem to overlap with one another and act in conjunction to cause Alexander's fall from grace. Uría affirms, the Macedonian's true crime was "un deseo desmedido de saber, de conocer lo que está fuera del alcance del hombre, lo que Dios se reserva"; this "deseo" is rooted in the excellent education he received as a youth, of which he is exceptionally proud ("La soberbia" 516). Through his numerous conquests, it was inevitable that Alexander would uncover places, people, and creatures that he had never learned about in the classroom, which would then pique his curiosity about the lands he was conquering and fuel his unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Since he does not fear God, he does not have the ability to moderate his actions, which leads him to overreach and transgress boundaries to seek out the secrets and lands that are not meant for man. To be clear, it is not education that is being criticized in the *LAlex*, but rather the insatiable

quest for knowledge that leads man down a dangerous path by forcing him to abandon all reason and, perhaps most important for the cleric-author of the poem, ignore the sanctity of God's unattainable mysteries.

2.3.2 Legitimizing Kingship, Conquest, and Exploration

Lineage and legitimacy were crucial to kingship in order to maintain and ensure the power of the monarch in the eyes of his subjects. The latter, legitimacy, relied partially on lineage to show that the new king's power would continue the – hopefully – prosperous rule begun by his forefathers, all of whom were divinely ordained to rule since they were uniquely gifted with the exceptional qualities necessary to do so. However, proving that you have familial relations was not enough in many cases. According to Isabel Alfonso and Julio Escalona, legitimization "has to be dynamically maintained, competed for, and denied to rivals…not only in cases of open conflict, or when rulership is at stake, but also as a continuous process of competition for social power" ("Introduction" xi-xii). The *LAlex,* like the *HNAM,* focuses on this theme in several instances by showing how Alexander actively works to assert both his lineage and his legitimacy as he ascends to the throne of multiple kingdoms and justifies both his intellectual pursuits and his further conquests in the East long after his original mission comes to an end.

The earliest reference to these themes clearly highlights Alexander's obsession (or perhaps the narrator's) with his nobility. Just after his birth, we are informed that:

> El infante Alexandre, luego en su niñez,
> empeçó a mostrar que serié de grant prez;
> nunca quiso mamar leche de mugier rafez

si non fue de linaje o de grant gentilez. (*Libro de Alexandre* 7)

Juan Manuel Cacho Blecua explains that it was a common custom amongst the nobility in the medieval period to hire a wet nurse to care for infants, so much so that Alfonso X even addresses the topic in the second, third, and seventh volumes of his *Siete Partidas* (Cacho Blecua, "*Nunca quiso*" 216). The wise king specifically advises people to find a healthy woman of good lineage to care for their child (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title VII, Law III). Cacho Blecua additionally notes that this episode highlights Alexander's "naturaleza extraordinaria," since he picks his own nurse (216, 217). Even as a baby, the Macedonian understands that nothing should sully his royal blood so as to make him less worthy of the throne. Considering that both the historical and this fictional iteration of Alexander claim descendancy from celebrated Greek heroes such as Hercules, it becomes evident that the nobility of his blood was certainly not something he would want to depreciate in any way (*Libro de Alexandre* 238ab).[38]

That being said, any opportunity that would benefit his nobility is welcomed by the monarch. The best example of this is the episode where the Amazon Queen Thalestris visits Alexander, hoping to have a child with him because "Non avrá en el mundo de linaje su par" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1886c). Depending on its gender, this child would either inherit its mother's kingdom or its father's, but either way, it would descend from two extremely good-looking and martially skilled royals. The fact that Thalestris specifically seeks out the Macedonian to be the father of her child is proof that she values his lineage and thinks it is worthy to mix with her own. Although Alexander does not say much during the exchange, we know that he eagerly accepts this proposal, meaning that he too finds the arrangement to be between two people of

[38] See Cacho Blecua ("*Nunca quiso*") for more information on lactation and the care of children, and specifically pages 214-17 about the *LAlex*.

equal rank (*Libro de Alexandre* 1888a). While these examples exhibit Alexander's relatively tame reactions to questions of lineage and nobility, his response when confronted by a threat to his lineage that could disinherit him is extremely violent.

The episode that narrates the death of Master Nectanebo is very brief and very oddly situated within the *LAlex*, since it is neither fully explained nor has much in common with the surrounding storyline.[39] The young prince hears rumors that he resembles Nectanebo because the latter – and not Philip of Macedonia – is in fact Alexander's true father. Deeply distressed by the gossip, Alexander, still a teen, throws the man to his death from a tower (*Libro de Alexandre* 20abc). The last line of stanza 20 reads: "¡Fijo –dixo el padre–, Dios te dexe bevir!" which leads us to believe that the narrator gives credence to the rumors (*Libro de Alexandre* 20d).[40] This incident proves just how far Alexander will go to keep his power when he is merely a teenage crown prince. In addition, we see the importance that he places upon lineage and legitimacy, since he needs an indisputable connection to Philip to become the rightful king. When his legitimacy is threatened, he will stop at nothing to ensure that the rumor about Nectanebo remains a rumor that can never be proved. Weiss believes that with this murder, Alexander "reveals lineage to be something that is not self-evident, [but] created and it entails acts of real and symbolic violence, carried out amidst rumor and doubt" (115). No matter the truth, Alexander's parentage will be whatever he wants it to be, in this case, whatever keeps him close

[39] This entire episode is better developed and explained in the *HNAM*, which incorporates the *AR*'s traditional opening chapters about the Egyptian king Nectanebo and Alexander's supernatural conception. In the *LAlex*, this encounter is poorly explained by the poet and is not well organized within the text. We first learn about the rumor and Alexander's actions in stanzas 19 and 20. Between stanzas 21 and 26, the narrative voice tells us that the young prince is livid upon hearing about Darius's economic hold over Macedonia. In stanza 27, we return to Alexander's anger about Nectanebo, and then in the following stanza, move on to the Persian situation.

[40] Michael, however, believes that since the poet did not include the longer narrative from the *Historia de preliis* (and the *AR*) that describes the origins of this rumor, the poet may not have believed it. He adds that because of the hereditary principle that was followed in the Middle Ages, the poet may not have wanted to give too much credence to the rumor (33)

to the "source of royal power," Philip (Weiss 114). In an effort to assert this fact, when Darius's messenger comes to the palace demanding tribute, Alexander responds: "quand' non avié Filipo fijo en la reína / poniele huevos d'oro siempre una gallina; / ¡quando naçió el fijo, morïó la gallina!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 143bcd). This bold statement is meant as a declaration of independence, while also making it clear that he is not only Philip's son but the next ruler of his kingdom (Weiss 114).[41]

When Philip dies shortly after, killed by the traitor Pausanius, we are witness to the legitimate and unproblematic "transmission of royal power from father to son" (Weiss 116; Arizaleta, *La translation* 235). Alexander, fresh off of his victory in Armenia, arrives "a guisa de varón" and kills Pausanius (*Libro de Alexandre* 183a).[42] The revenge killing of the assassin, coupled with the blessing that Philip gives the young prince before he dies, serve to complete Alexander's transition into adulthood and kingship. His defeat of the Armenians (and Nicolao earlier) has made him into an experienced warrior, and by killing his father's assassin, he assumes the role of the adult son who avenges his father and protects both his mother and his kingdom. With his dying words, Philip calls upon God to help his son win "vitoria e honor" over Darius, as well as help him become an emperor, thereby securing the transfer of power (*Libro de Alexandre* 193bc; Weiss 117; Arizaleta, *La translation* 235). Weiss explains that, although "kings may strive to claim authority by dint of the hereditary principle and divine sanction, the poem dramatizes the fact that in reality both their power and their authority need to be reasserted

[41] For more information about the complex father/son relationships in the *LAlex,* see Weiss (112-23)

[42] Medieval theorists were divided on their opinions regarding hereditary rule. Giles of Rome was a proponent claiming that the people were more inclined to follow the sons of kings than any man who was thrown into power. In addition, he believed that those who grew up with power were less prone to bad behavior than those who grew up with power, and that a king will be more likely to rule well if he knows that his son is going to inherit his kingdom. Finally, he mentions that with hereditary rule, you can be sure of a monarch's lineage (3: 113-15). Marsilius of Padua agrees along the same lines saying that hereditary succession reduces the chances for tyranny, increases obedience to the monarch, makes for an easy transition of power, and ensures that the ruler will be more virtuous (98-103).

by force" (115-16). Just establishing that Alexander is Philip's son and heir, and that he has God's blessing to rule, is not enough to ensure that he will be king. Killing Pausanius, the man who attempts to supplant his father, shows the world that any challenge to the throne will be met with force and blood. With this last act, Alexander has declared his intention to become the next king of Macedonia.

These, however, are not the only ways that the poem underscores Alexander's birthright. Important to his cause are symbolic forms of legitimization that will help him to assert his rights not only over Macedonia but over all the lands that he conquers. The first example of this is Alexander's knighting ceremony. We are told that he offers a prayer to God, bends down on one knee, kisses the altar, and girds himself with his sword, demonstrating his desire to become a true knight (*Libro de Alexandre* 120-23; Arizaleta, "El clérigo" 86).[43] Although the ceremony technically gives Alexander the right to bear arms, Cacho Blecua explains that when it is performed without an intermediary, such as a priest, "puede considerarse como un acto de autoafirmación de su soberanía" ("El saber" 202).[44] In the *LAlex,* it is Alexander who hosts the ceremony, walks himself to the altar, recites the necessary prayer, and not only girds his own sword, but knights 500 other men (*Libro de Alexandre* 119-23, 124b). There is no mention made of the fact that Philip is still alive when he does this, but what the poet highlights here is Alexander's eagerness to not only go to battle, but rule. Much like choosing his own wet nurse, we are shown another example of Alexander's "naturaleza extraordinaria" (Cacho Blecua, "*Nunca quiso*" 216).

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[43] In the *HNAM,* after Philip formally recognizes Alexander as his son, it is Alexander who asks him to conduct the ceremony installing him as his legitimate heir, rather than Alexander organizing the ceremony himself (*General Estoria, Cuarta Parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 9, 315). This is in the *Historia de preliis* as well (*Historia de preliis* 58). This difference, again, points to the "naturaleza extraordinaria" that the Alexander of the *LAlex* has.

[44] Arizaleta explains that Alfonso VIII also had a ceremony of "self-investiture" that was described in the chronicles and was very likely was the source for this episode. ("El clérigo" 88). Cacho Blecua explains that Alfonso X's ceremony was similar as well ("El saber" 202).

The next example occurs when the Macedonian is crowned king after the death of his father, a ceremony that also includes the knighting of his closest companions. Alexander ensures that the coronation happens in Corinth, which is the only place, according to the author, where a monarch can be crowned (*Libro de Alexandre* 197). The poet states that this was not only a "noble çibdat," but one that was considered the "cabeça" of the cities of antiquity and still equally distinguished in Alexander's time. In the future, it would become one of the places where the apostle Paul would go to spread Christianity (*Libro de Alexandre* 197). As such, it held immense symbolism for a Christianized king like Alexander, since it would legitimize him not only as a Greek ruler like his forefathers, but along with the knighting ceremony, as a Christian monarch for the 13th-century audience of the *LAlex*. The Iberian author and his audience would have immediately understood the connection between Corinth and the saint. Therefore, this event is very knowingly organized in a renowned location to declare to the world that he was taking his rightful place as king of Macedonia, and soon after, the king of all the Greeks as well.[45] In addition, if we link the coronation with the blessing Philip gives Alexander on his death bed, "el doble reconocimiento…deja sentado que Alejandro será digno soberano, y hace posible el comienzo de las conquistas del joven rey" (Arizaleta "El clérigo" 87).[46] At this point, the transmission of power has been established and, with the acknowledgement of his subjects, Alexander is the recognized king of Macedonia (Arizaleta, "El clérigo" 87 and *La translation* 325; *Libro de Alexandre* 210).

[45] The historical Alexander was crowned *hegemon* (leader) in Corinth before the Greeks began their invasion of Persia (Green 122). At this point, he had already subdued the Greek city states, but in the *LAlex*, he does this after being crowned.

[46] Arizaleta ("El clérigo" and "Alexandre") describes in more detail specific court ceremonies and how they function to legitimize Alexander's rule as well as the possible inspiration for the episodes themselves. Her book *Les clercs au palais* discusses the role that clerics had in the king's court as well as the works that they produced while in the service of the monarch.

Years later when he becomes emperor of Persia after a long campaign, the death of Darius and Alexander's marriage to Roxana, Darius's daughter, serve to legitimize his new position as emperor (*Libro de Alexandre* 1957-69). It is noteworthy, therefore, that around the time of the marriage, Alexander plans to give up the throne that he fought so hard to win to "ir veer India cóm'era assentada" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1946a).[47] The poet tells us that the Macedonian, restless after his victory, declares his intentions to adopt Darius's young son and make him king when he is knighted. Weiss explains that Alexander's conflict with Darius is much like a struggle against his symbolic father and that "in victory [he] acquires Darius's empire and becomes the paternal protector of his family" (117). Therefore, Alexander, is a symbolic father, by having conquered Darius's kingdom and taking charge of his family, as well as an adoptive father who oversees a legal bloodless transfer of power to Darius's young son, who is now also his son. With this act, he frees himself of any further responsibility in Persia so that he can both explore and conquer the lands between Babylon and India, where Porus resides.

This event serves to highlight a change in the Macedonian's future objectives, while also signaling a new type of "legitimization" in the poem. Initially, Alexander was obsessed with proving that he was the only possible ruler of his inherited kingdoms, but from the moment he embarked on his voyage to Asia, we see that he also needs to legitimize his campaign to Persia along with his further conquests, as he struggles to maintain control of his increasingly frustrated soldiers.

The conquest of Persia is the driving force for Alexander and the Greek army as it is the motivation behind many of their actions during much of the poem. When Alexander first hears of

[47] The quote "ir veer India cóm'era assentada" is one of the earliest indications of Alexander's intellectual curiosity. Immediately after this line, however, the Macedonian also mentions that he would like to defeat Porus, which indicates that conquest is still his primary goal in the narrative (*Libro de Alexandre* 1946bcd).

Darius's economic hold over Macedonia as a young boy, he has a strong physical and emotional reaction (his face color changes, he becomes ill, and seems very angry) and tells himself that:

> Si el mio buen maestro non me lo devedar',
> dexaré Ëuropa e passaré la mar;
> iré conquerir Asia e con Dario lidiar:
> ¡averm'ha, cuemo cuedo, la mano a besar! (*Libro de Alexandre* 25)

The fact that Macedonia pays tribute to Persia and that he will one day be a vassal of Darius disturbs him greatly and hurts his pride. He expresses this very clearly:

> Sobre mí non querría tan grant onta veer,
> nin que, con mi maestro, me sopiesse prender,
> ca serié fiera onta e grant mal pareçer
> por'el rey Alexandre a omne obedecer. (*Libro de Alexandre* 26).

His solution is to conquer Persia and join Darius's lands with his own. There is no doubt of this from very early on in the poem as there are several moments where it is clearly stated that the conquest of Persia is Alexander's ultimate goal. We are told this in the exordium where Alexander is introduced; in Aristotle's advice to the young prince; when he is dreaming of conquest and riches after receiving Aristotle's advice; when his father blesses him; and when he talks to himself upon first arriving in Asia (*Libro de Alexandre* 5c, 62a, 87, 193c, 304cd).[48] In

[48] In stanza 87a, the line reads: "¡Ya tornava las treguas a Dario e a Poro!", which would indicate that he wished to conquer both Persia and India (*Libro de Alexandre* 87a). The *Alexandreis* does not mention the names of any kings

each instance, we are witnessing private moments between the narrator and the audience, a teacher and his pupil, a dying father and his son, and a monarch marveling alone at the wonders of Asia before him. Alexander never speaks publicly of his dreams, which may be an indication that he does not want to share them with anyone just yet. As such, when proposing his campaign to Asia (as well as other endeavors), he gives his subjects other, more noble reasons for leaving their homes. For example, when they are preparing to leave for Persia, he explains:

> Sabedes vuestros padres en quál vida finaron;
> ellos a sus avuelos en tal se los fallaron;
> en grant premia vivieron: nunca dende's quitaron
> ¡Qual ellos la ovieron a nós tal la lexaron!
>
> Avién al rey de Persia por debdo a servir:
> quanto él les mandava, avienlo a cumplir;
> aviense cada año todos a redemir
> ¡De mal sabor que he non lo puedo decir!
>
> Los nietos non podemos d'essa red ixir, –
> si do ellos vivieron queremos nós vevir.
> ¡Mas, si esto quisierdes una vez avorrir,
> faré venir a Dario a merçed vos pedir! (*Libro de Alexandre* 207-09)

in this scene, so we can assume that this was an addition by the poet who was foreshadowing Alexander's victories (*Alexandreis* 41). As we will see, Alexander never becomes "King of India" and there is no mention of conquering India, rather just defeating Porus.

As a "retórico…fino" (*Libro de Alexandre* 42a), Alexander skillfully shifts the emphasis from conquest to liberation. By slightly changing his wording, the young prince implies that he wants to save Greece from oppression, which is a more noble task than conquest. He repeats this message when he speaks to his court and when he encourages his army to sail to Asia and free their people from "premia e de cueita" (*Libro de Alexandre* 208-09, 254, 257b). It is implied that conquering Persia and defeating Darius is the only way to achieve this goal, after which time Alexander and his army would return home. However, the private moments in which Alexander dreams of conquest (as noted in the previous paragraph) point to a greater ambition, one that stretches well past Persia and even the borders of human dominion. In this moment, however, Alexander understands that liberation is a cause for which his men would gladly travel to Asia. Therefore, with careful wording Alexander justifies his initial invasion in order to fulfill step one in his larger plan of world domination.

Another example of the Macedonian's attempts to legitimize his actions comes during the long campaign against Persia. Alexander is adamant that he cannot officially become emperor until he wins – through conquest – the entire region. He proves this when he rejects Darius's peace offer (*Libro de Alexandre* 1261-68). When one of his generals, with the support of other Greeks, suggests that he accept, Alexander haughtily declares:

> ¡Grant honra me acreçe en tal dona tomar,
> la que ante quisieron con Maçeos casar!
> ¡Varón que tal consejo sabe a señor dar
> devrié aver vergüença ante otros fablar!

¡La tierra que me manda yo me la he ganada,
con todos vós a una, con derecha espada!
¡Ante le costarié mucho que la oviés' ganada!:
¡de quanto me promete, él non tïene nada!

¡Demás, si por su mano tomás' nin migaja, –
suyo serié el preçio e toda la avantaja!:
¡serién todas mis nuevas caídas en la paja,
por do vuestro consejo non valdrié una meaja!

¡Si todo su imperio me quisiesse dexar,
yo non ge lo querría de tal guisa tomar,
ca, como en Dios fío, a todo su pesar,
a mejor nuestro preçio lo podremos ganar! (*Libro de Alexandre* 1281-84)

Although his general recognizes that Darius's gesture would effectively end the violence and allow the Greeks to return home, Alexander believes he has already conquered the land that he has been offered, therefore receiving it as a gift is tantamount to an insult. Instead, he asserts that conquest is the only way to truly free Greece for good while also earning fame for both himself and his men. In order to truly attain victory, Alexander must either defeat Darius in battle or the older man must die. The firmness of Alexander's response, along with the confidence with which he delivers his speech to the Persian emissary, convinces his men that their leader speaks the

truth. As a result, they vow to fight alongside their king. Once again, the Macedonian, using his skills of logic and rhetoric, has managed to convince his soldiers of the legitimacy of their campaign.

When Darius is eventually assassinated, however, Alexander has to find a new way to legitimize his continued presence in the region. Denying his soldier's pleas to return home, he explains to them that they need to stay a little longer for two reasons: first, to teach the Persians "nuestros lenguajes [y] nuestro fuero," and ensure that the land that the Greeks won would not descend into chaos after their departure (*Libro de Alexandre* 1849b, 1851d); and second, to track down and punish the men who killed Darius (*Libro de Alexandre* 1855-56). Alexander tells his army that he wants to avenge the Persian king, to help the people of the area, and to ensure their safety (*Libro de Alexandre* 1849b, 1851d). What he really means is that he needs to have a total victory, since all of those actions would also signify unquestionable Greek domination of the area, whether that be culturally, economically, or politically. Weiss very rightly points out that this moment underscores "a specific political problem: how to hold on to conquered territory" (128). Alexander cannot claim to be the true emperor if he allows any resistance movement to grow or if he has no cultural roots set in place in his newly acquired kingdom; this is about stability (Weiss 128).

With respect to Alexander's desire to teach his men "nuestros lenguajes [y] nuestro fuero" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1849b), Weiss explains:

> Military might itself…does not guarantee permanent conquest. Territorial expansion must be consolidated by securing the will of those subjugated; they must be governed by consent rather than by coercion. This consent is established through a period of peaceful

> co-existence and acculturation, understood as the transfer (not the exchange) of custom and culture. (128)

On the one hand, this reflects the historical Alexander's desire to spread Hellenic culture wherever he went; on the other hand, it also serves as a useful way for the fictional Alexander to convince his army to stay in Asia and continue conquering. As usual, Alexander's words are very carefully chosen. He avoids any mention of world domination and focuses on practical reasoning to convince his men to stay on longer. For example, when mentioning his pursuit of Narbazanes and Bessus, he explains that the two men are traitors and that the Macedonian soldiers will all be dishonored if they do not bring them to justice – reasons that will speak to each Greek as men and as soldiers (*Libro de Alexandre* 1855-56).[49] He is able to quell the unrest among his ranks and maintain his position as leader, which is imperative if he wants to conquer the world. Once again he uses his rhetorical skills to justify his continued presence in Asia, while also taking the first steps to legitimize the establishment of a Greek cultural presence in the region.

Alexander's attempts to legitimize his conquest extend to other areas as well, since he manipulates several prophecies and at least two omens to continue his campaign (even after it has ended) and to assert his right to rule.[50] The vague nature of both prophecies and omens could easily be interpreted in such a way that they favor Alexander and his interests in Persia. One example of prophecy is the famous episode of the Gordian Knot, where Alexander cuts the

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[49] There is one instance when Alexander and Darius are exchanging "gifts" that the younger man reveals his plans for world conquest. Darius sends him a ball to play with, which Alexander returns with this message: "la pella, que es redonda, todo'l mundo figura / –¡sepas que será mío, esto es cosa segura!–" (*Libro de Alexandre* 801ab).

[50] Although I am focusing on omens and prophecies that justify Alexander's conquest, we cannot forget the wonderous portents that marked his birth (*Libro de Alexandre* 8-13). They are not necessarily indicative of his lineage or legitimacy, but they do point to his great destiny.

incredibly tangled knot of cornel bark with his sword in front of a large crowd and declares that it is his destiny to become emperor (*Libro de Alexandre* 831-37; Green 213).[51] Later, when the "bishop" of Jerusalem, Jadus, reads to him from the Book of Daniel, he learns of a prophecy stating that a Greek would turn Asia into a monarchy (*Libro de Alexandre* 1145); upon hearing these words, Alexander declares "Yo seré és', por la cabeça mía" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1145). With respect to omens, when the Greek fleet arrives in Asia, Alexander shoots his crossbow into the air for good fortune and happens to shoot a crow; the Greeks interpret the event as an omen of their impending victory (*Libro de Alexandre* 271-73). Finally, after witnessing the panic in his encampment during an eclipse, Alexander asks a wise man named "maestre Aristánder" to explain the phenomena to the soldiers; Aristánder declares that the eclipse is an omen that the Greeks would defeat the Persians (*Libro de Alexandre* 1229-31). Although it is not Alexander who associates the eclipse with his victory, the situation does work to his favor. What we see in each instance is that Alexander takes advantage of a situation that does not specifically refer to him by purposefully inserting himself into the prophecy/omen. In this way, he "proves" that he has always been destined to conquer Asia and defeat the Persians. If we return to the Gordian Knot, Alexander takes the easy way out in order to solve the problem. To many – including the author – this may seem like an ingenious act, but others would say that he does not even bother to solve the puzzle and instead finds a short cut. Weiss believes that the cutting of the knot "severs the ties linking knowledge and power and establishes force as the main legitimizing instrument of sovereignty" (131), while Arizaleta postulates that it serves to bolster the divine authority of the king (*La translation* 236). Both ideas further support my contention that Alexander, upon learning about the prophecy associated with the knot, very purposefully

[51] According to the prophecy associated with the Knot, "qui soltarlo pudiesse emperador serié" (*Libro de Alexandre* 833b). Alexander either cheats by using his sword or shows his ingenuity where others did not.

attempts to undo it to prove that that the prophecy refers to himself, which in turn would validate his conquest. In the case of Jadus's declaration, the prophecy speaks of a Greek, not of Alexander, meaning that any Greek man with an army could have fulfilled the prediction. Similarly, the omens could be interpreted as a victory for the Persians just as easily as they are seen to be portents of a Greek victory. How Alexander takes advantage of these situations shows his need to prove both to himself and to the world that he is not only worthy but destined to conquer the world. Each consecutive declaration of his future success strengthens the validity of his campaign East and emboldens his own belief in himself, gaining him more followers, and hopefully convincing his Greek compatriots that they should not stop in Asia. Utilizing prophecy and omens alone, however, were not the only way that Alexander further legitimized his actions.

According to medieval political theory, the king was considered to be God's representative on Earth, and as a result, received his right to rule directly from Him. Although the *LAlex* does not discuss divine right to rule specifically, it does give us examples of the divine approbation that Alexander receives. The Macedonian exploits this divine support in order to continuously legitimize his attack against Persia, and later his world conquest. After the sack of Thebes, a minstrel visits Alexander and tells him: "¡Señor,…eres de grant ventura! / ¡Semejas a los dios, que ende has natura!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 233ab). This is one of the first comparisons we have between Alexander and the divine, a comparison that Alexander does not dispute. Although he prays to God throughout the poem (ex. *Libro de Alexandre* 962), there is no doubt that, as the story progresses, the young king thinks of himself as exceptional. On two occasions he nearly dies (*Libro de Alexandre* 884-900, 2235-64), but is miraculously brought back to life by God's will, thereby proving that "fue de Dios amado" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1548). In this way, Alexander can claim that all of his conquests divinely sanctioned. During the solar eclipse

mentioned in the earlier paragraph, Aristánder, when discussing the planets and stars, explains that "todas crïaturas a su Crïador sirven," which would mean that the eclipse was a message from God to show support to the Greeks (*Libro de Alexandre* 1211c). In contrast, we are told on a few occasions that Alexander's enemies were not supported by God (*Libro de Alexandre* 986, 1564d, 1567d), thereby demonstrating the special preference that the Macedonian seems to receive (*Libro de Alexandre* 986b, 1564d). These examples all demonstrate that Alexander has been given divine approbation to rule. In the medieval Christian worldview, if he did not have the right, God would not have allowed him to sit on the throne. This is essentially what the poet implies when he claims that "fue de Dios amado" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1548). While proving his lineage, being crowned in Corinth, and fulfilling prophecy are ways to legitimize his reign in a temporal sense, divine approval is important – especially in the Middle Ages – since the king rules "gracias a él" (Vincent de Beauvais, Chapter II).

For this reason, divine support becomes an important part of legitimization after Porus has been pacified. During the Persian campaign and the subsequent pacification of Persian lands, Alexander's attempts at legitimization were centered around conquest. Once Darius has died and Porus defeated, however, he can no longer justify his continued presence in Asia to his soldiers. It is at this moment that his intellectual curiosity is made clear, as he attempts to convince his fellow Greeks that they actually have a very good reason for staying:

> Envïonos por esto Dios en estas partidas:
> por descobrir las cosas que yazen sofondidas.
> Cosas sabrán por nós que non serién sabidas:
> ¡serán las nuestras nuevas en cántigo metidas!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 2291).

Knowing full well that his soldiers loved him but also believed in God, Alexander tells them that it is divine mandate that they explore the world. This is the final step in Alexander's plan. Michael believes that, in the early stages of the poem, Alexander's "immediate aim is to throw off the foreign yoke" and conquer the world, and that his goals change after he visits the temple of Jupiter Ammon (51, 53; *Libro de Alexandre* 1167-83).[52] This is the first episode where Alexander allows his intellectual curiosity to guide him as he explores a bit of Asia, and it is likely, as Michael suggests, the moment when his perspectives on world conquest change, no doubt motivated by his lessons with Aristotle. As mentioned in a previous section, Alexander is trained in natural philosophy, which is the "estudio de…la naturaleza en su comprensión profunda, que implicaba la revelación de sus mecanismos secretos, o en su posibilidad de modificación" (Riva 56). Having been trained at a young age to study and understand his surroundings, it must have been an exciting prospect to explore and learn about unknown lands. From this moment on, conquest takes on a double meaning. In the *LAlex*, Alexander is presented as a "scholar-king," someone who is as talented a warrior as he is a gifted scholar, a mix of *fortitudo* and *sapientia*. During his travels, Alexander is able to explore the world around him, but this scientific interest is tied to his need to conquer and possess whatever he sees as well. As a result, Alexander will desire domination through knowledge, by learning the secrets of the world, as well as literal domination of the lands he visits. Both will give him power over everything – like a god. Once he has conquered the world meant for man, he decides to move on to the worlds that belong to God. Realizing that he needs a reason to justify his unnatural desires

[52] We are told that Alexander, after conquering Egypt, "priso su esportiella e priso su bordón" and visited the temple of Jupiter Ammon in Libya, where Bacchus, with the help of Jupiter, discovered a spring in the middle of extremely dry land (*Libro de Alexandre* 1166a).

for conquest, he uses divine approval to convince his soldiers of his great destiny, and more importantly, of their shared destiny. By including his army as a part of this "prophecy" he is defining the lord-vassal relationship that they share as divinely sanctioned, thereby once again asserting his power over them and validating his own desire to transgress the borders of human dominion to seek out the mysteries he seeks. In this way, Alexander legitimizes his own selfish desires for exploration at the expense of his soldiers.

As I have explained in this section, both lineage and legitimacy play an important role in Alexander's quest for power. While it is not the principal theme of the *LAlex*, it cannot be denied that Alexander is not only concerned with conquest, but how to prove that he deserves it more than anyone else. Questions of legitimacy were becoming more important in the High Middle Ages with increased political centralization and the strengthening of royal power, and the poem reflects these concerns by proving to its 13th-century audience (through lineage, ceremony, prophecy, divine recognition, conquest, marriage, and preparation to rule) that Alexander was not only capable, but the only eligible person who could ascend to the Greek throne (Alfonso and Escalona, "Introduction" xviii). As the narrative progresses, the idea of legitimacy transforms from something personal into not only a justification of the defeat of Persia, but also the annexation of Persian lands into Alexander's Greek empire and his own desire to God's hidden secrets. Legitimization is the vehicle through which Alexander is able to maintain his support base and fulfill all of his ambitions.

2.3.3 The Scholar-King and Wise Counsel

In addition to being well educated, medieval theorists believed that every good ruler needed wise counsel to help him make decisions for the common good (see, for example, John of

Salisbury, *Policraticus* 41-46, who expresses a generalized point of view). Advisors/counselors should be honest, loyal, virtuous, wise and feel comfortable sharing their opinion with the monarch "to assist in the business of the king…and by means of their counsel and faithful service, there will be honor and praise for the lord and prosperity for the whole people" (Walter of Milemete 48). On the other hand, liars, flatterers, tricksters, and devious people should be kept away from the ruler for fear that they could be a negative influence and convince the king to commit wrongdoings in order to benefit themselves (Walter of Milemete 48). Throughout the *LAlex*, Alexander seems to be surrounded by well-intentioned men who want to help him make wise decisions.[53] The monarch's inability to listen to and appreciate this advice later in his life, however, causes him problems.

The first pieces of advice that Alexander receives in the poem come from Aristotle, who prepares his pupil as he enters adulthood and before he officially embarks on his campaign against Darius. In an extended monologue, Aristotle directs Alexander on matters of war and morality, much like what we find in a typical *speculum principis* (*Libro de Alexandre* 48-86). With respect to the first category, some of Aristotle's advice includes: trusting the counsel of older soldiers; sharing the spoils of battle; studying his enemy; understating the number of troops his army will face to give his own men courage; to enter battle with joy and valor; encouraging his men by comparing them to women if they are not fighting well; using as models brave warriors from the past, such as bravely as Hector, Diomedes and Achilles; and fighting in such a way that he is remembered for generations, among other things (*Libro de Alexandre* 61, 63-64, 65-71).[54] With regards to morality, Aristotle tells his pupil to not be a womanizer, to be wary of

[53] There are two notable cases where Alexander is not given good advice: when he is fighting with Thebes and when he is dealing with Narbazanes, Darius's assassin (*Libro de Alexandre* 216-31, 1861).
[54] Aristotle's advice is found between stanzas 51 and 85.

base men, to praise men who do good, to not be a drunkard or a glutton, to be just, to not be greedy, to avoid boasting, and to not show anger towards his vassals (*Libro de Alexandre* 53d, 54-57, 58a, 60). This *speculum principis* forms an integral part of Alexander's formation that determines the young king's conduct during times of conflict. In addition, the philosopher's wise counsel explains how the conqueror manages to maintain the support of his soldiers by showing them that he is willing to fight alongside them in even the most dire moments and not merely lead them. Aristotle, therefore, deserves a vast amount of credit for Alexander's success, since he has not only given him the tools by which he can lead his people, but a code of conduct by which to live and maintain the love and support of his subjects.

As Alexander moves away from Greece, there are others who offer him counsel. Early on in his campaign in Asia, for instance, Alexander forms a council, the 12 peers, whose purpose is to advise him (311-19). The immediate source for the inclusion of the 12 peers was the *Roman d'Alexandre*, but the reference would have been familiar to the medieval public, since it has its origins in the romance tradition (see Willis, *The Debt*). In the Carolingian epics, Charlemagne traveled with a group of 12 knights, much like King Arthur in the Arthurian tradition who, at times, was said to have 12 knights of the round table (*Libro de Alexandre* 214n311-14). The number 12 would have also resonated with the Christian audience of the *LAlex*, since Jesus had 12 apostles. It was also said that Ferdinand III, who may have been king when the *LAlex* was composed, formed a counsel of 12 to administer justice in his lands (*Libro de Alexandre* 214n311-14). Towards the end of the 13th century, Ferdinand's grandson, Sancho IV of Castile would specifically advise rulers to gather 12 honorable men to work alongside him:

> En ante el rey estauan doze omnes honrrados que eran del su consejo, los quales temien a Dios e temien las sus almas e temien a su sennor, e auien desechado de si cobdiçia e soberuia e enbidia e mal querençia e non despreciauan los menores que si; e auian grand cuidado en guardar honrra a buen estança de su señor e de su regno;…e los sus tesoros eran guardar bondat, ca non en ganar algo con cobdiçia (85).

Much like what Sancho IV advises, Alexander chooses some his most loyal companions to complete the task (*Libro de Alexandre* 316-29). Although the 12 peers do not reappear again as a group in the *LAlex,* we do hear about several of its members in the poem who consistently try to advise Alexander during his campaign.

Chief among these voices is Parmenion, the older, more skilled general who historically served with Alexander's father, Philip, for many years. During his lecture, Aristotle specifically tells Alexander:

> Fijo, quando ovieres tus huestes a sacar,
> los viejos por los niños non dexes de levar,
> ca dan firmes consejos que valen en lidiar:
> ¡quando entran en campo, non se quieren rancar! (*Libro de Alexandre* 61)

For this reason, Parmenion is a welcome part of Alexander's campaign as well as a trusted counselor. However, Alexander seems to become increasingly annoyed by the older man, who usually speaks on behalf of the entire Greek army, by frequently rejecting his very thoughtful

advice.[55] For example, when Darius offers to make peace with Alexander (as referenced earlier), Parmenion argues to accept the deal claiming that it would increase his glory, but also benefit the Greeks and honor the dead. Not only does Alexander not agree, but he declares that the suggestion "non valdrié una meaja" and that "¡Varón que tal consejo sabe a señor dar / devrié aver vergüença ante otros fablar!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1283d, 1281cd). Later, before a critical battle with Darius, Parmenion once again advises Alexander, despite knowing that "por bien que te consejo, nunca só escuchado!; / ¡só en cabo de cosa de ti mal sossañado!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1312bc). Seeing that the Greeks were outnumbered, he suggests a night attack to gain some advantage. Once again, Alexander rejects the offer calling it an "engaño maña" carried out by a thief or a coward, something that has a "maña de traïción" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1321bcd). These incidents come after Alexander has proven himself to be a just king who, following Aristotle's earlier advice, listens to the counsel he is given and works with others to achieve his goals. While the narrator does not comment on Alexander's harsh tone, the audience cannot but compare his actions to Darius, who earlier had sharply rebuked his vassal as "desleal" for giving him some very wise counsel as well (*Libro de Alexandre* 929b). It is an instance where the poet foreshadows Alexander's eventual fate.

The two examples with Parmenion point to a change in Alexander. The anger that he experienced in his childhood seems to be returning, and he is becoming increasingly obsessed with conquest rather than freeing Greece from oppression. His worrisome behavior brings to the forefront the numerous warnings that Alexander receives throughout the *LAlex*, but that he

[55] Parmenion is a complex character in the *LAlex*, since he is presented as an experienced general, a noble soldier, and a sound advisor, but also as a troublemaker, a *mezclador*, and a traitor. It is suggested, for example, that he was the person who falsely accused Alexander's doctor of trying to poison him (*Libro de Alexandre* 905, 912c). He was also executed by Alexander as a traitor. Perhaps this duality is one of the reasons why his advice is not usually followed in the poem.

chooses to ignore. For example, Darius, on several occasions, tells him that he suffers from the arrogance of youth, but this does not deter Alexander from his plans (*Libro de Alexandre* 155, 781). His soldiers, upon witnessing the terrifying eclipse, accuse him of wanting to wage war against the whole world and the heavens: "¡Los çielos e las tierras queries yus' ti meter! / ¡Lo que Dios non quïere tú lo cuedas aver!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1204cd). His response is to make excuses, blame them for their weakness, and continue moving forward. The narrator himself speaks of the 'Wheel of Fortune' on various occasions, reminding us that all great men fall from glory at some point in their lives – much like Darius and Porus (*Libro de Alexandre* 1653, 1806). In fact, the latter, upon his defeat at Alexander's hands, reminds him of the same, but Alexander, while recognizing the wisdom in the words, does not learn from them (*Libro de Alexandre* 2213-15). The Scythian emissary also attempts to stop him from acting rashly, accusing him of greed and pride:

> ¡Si toviesses la mano diestra en Orïente,
> la siniestra en cabo de todo Oçidente,
> todo lo ál yoguiesse en el to cosimente,
> tú no series pagado, segund mio ençïente! (*Libro de Alexandre* 1919)

Lastly, as he prepares for his descent into the depths of the sea, the weather suddenly turns stormy, which any normal man would have taken as a sign to stop and turn back. To Alexander, "Todos estos peligros non lo podién domar; / non se querié por ellos repentir nin tornar" (*Libro de Alexandre* 2302ab). All these examples prove that, after a certain point, Alexander is incapable of listening to anyone's counsel except his own. Convinced that he is correct, that his

actions are worthy, and that he has "potestat sin frontera," Alexander thinks that he will always succeed without considering the consequences of his actions (*Libro de Alexandre* 2496a). Throughout his life, several people, from his adversaries, to his own soldiers, and even nature itself attempt to moderate Alexander's actions, which become more extreme as the *LAlex* progresses. Returning to the list of themes in the *LAlex* listed in an earlier section, moderation is closely linked to a fear of God, therefore, Alexander's lack of moderation points to his lack of fear of the divine, which in turn lead him to overreach. As a result, his intellectual curiosity and his thirst for conquest are able to overtake him and lead him to offend God. Once again we see an overlap of numerous themes that act in conjunction to cause Alexander's divine punishment. In addition, we see the important role that advisors – and any type of sage counsel – played in the royal court. Their job was not only to help the king rule efficiently, but, if they were honest men themselves, keep him from making grave mistakes that could endanger the kingdom. Although this is not the principal theme of the *LAlex,* Alexander is a very extreme example of what could befall a king should he fail to accept good counsel.

2.3.4 The Virtues of a Scholar-King

As seen in Chapter 1, although education, legitimacy, and the presence of wise advisors are certainly vital to any good leader, the ideal monarch should also exhibit certain traits that allow him to rule both wisely and justly. Among these virtues are a strong sense of justice, mercy, clemency, patience, courage, honor, fortitude, humility, prudence, wisdom, diligence, temperance, magnanimity, and a contempt for earthly goods. Diametrically opposing these virtues are a number of vices that medieval theorists believed could threaten the righteous rule of any monarch (as well as any man). As seen in Chapter 1, common vices were thought to be

pride, ambition, excess luxury, cupidity, as well as an excessive desire for honor, glory and fame. Alexander has long been shown to have many of these qualities – both positive and negative – but with each iteration of the *AR*, there is a slight difference as to which virtues and which vices are emphasized. In the *LAlex*, we see that the poet, who greatly admires his subject, tries to highlight many of the Macedonian king's positive qualities. However, because of his clerical perspective, he cannot avoid dealing extensively with how Alexander's greatest vice, his pride, is ultimately the cause of his failure.

The first virtue that must be mentioned is Alexander's wisdom (related to good judgement), referred to as his *clerecía*, since, in addition to being greatly emphasized in the *LAlex* in relation to its sources, Alexander is known as a source of wisdom in medieval literature as well as the subject of numerous texts within the genre of wisdom literature (such as the *Bocados de Oro* and the *Poridat de las poridades*). As described earlier, the young prince, having been rigorously trained in the liberal arts, sees himself as having "grant clerecía," something that he boasts about to his teacher Aristotle (*Libro de Alexandre* 52a). Alexander is exceptionally proud of this fact, and although the majority of the poem focuses on his military campaign, there are short episodes during the Persian storyline, such as his trip to the temple of Jupiter Ammon and his brief respite near the ruins of Troy, as well as several more in India, that speak to his desire to continue learning about the world around him. To Alexander, there are no limits to how much wisdom one can gain in a lifetime, and the search for this wisdom is his ultimate adventure (*Libro de Alexandre* 322-33, 1167-83).

Clerecía is not the only quality for which Alexander is known. He is also famous for his generosity/charity, which is most certainly true in the poem. Walter of Milemete dedicates a chapter of his treatise to the provisions that a sovereign must make for his soldiers – both current

and retired – in the form of garments, riches, training, and more (48-50). Similarly, Aristotle counsels Alexander to always divide up any spoils of war amongst his soldiers. Understanding the value of his army, Alexander makes sure to keep each soldier happy. This is demonstrated countless times in the work. Early in the campaign eastward, for example, he gives each man 10 years' worth of pay for agreeing to follow him to Asia (*Libro de Alexandre* 245). Later, after discovering wounded Greek soldiers who had been trapped in a tower for years, he provides them with both servants and riches to maintain them for the rest of their lives (*Libro de Alexandre* 1639). Furthermore, on two occasions, he divides his lands among his men as well, thereby also showing that he does not really care too much about the territory he gains through his victories (*Libro de Alexandre* 308c, 2635-41). Finally, after each battle, he makes sure to distribute the spoils equally among everyone, keeping almost nothing for himself (*Libro de Alexandre* 1080, 1455).

On one occasion we are assured by the narrator that "Él non quiso ende parte nin ovo d'ello cura," which demonstrates not quite a contempt for earthly goods, but that Alexander is not motivated by riches (*Libro de Alexandre* 1455c). This lack of interest in material goods is another one of Alexander's virtues, which is evidenced by the fact that he is willing to destroy his possessions so that his army could move more swiftly to find Darius's assassins (*Libro de Alexandre* 1896). In addition, by consistently dividing both his lands and the spoils he gains in battle among his men, as referenced in the earlier paragraph, he further demonstrates his lack of interest in the monetary benefits of conquest, while also following Aristotle's suggestions from the early verses of the poem. On the one hand, this could be the result of genuine charity, but it is also a very strategic decision since giving away all this booty assures him the support of his soldiers. Given Alexander's initial plans of world conquest, he would definitely understand that

he needs his army to achieve his goals and therefore, actively work to ensure that his soldiers would stay with him. For that reason, his charity and lack of interest in material goods, though certainly virtues, work to his advantage and advance his personal goals as well.

However, Alexander's generosity and his wisdom are not his only good qualities. There are episodes in the *LAlex* that show him to be exceptionally merciful. For example, when subduing the Greek city-states, he initially lays siege to Athens, which refused to accept his rule. Terrified by his show of force, they surrender and beg for forgiveness (*Libro de Alexandre* 211-15). Humbled by their words, he lifts his siege, which leads them to declare: "¡Viva rëy de tan grant pïedat!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 215d).[56] Soon after, upon arriving in Asia he declares that no man, woman, or child that they encounter is to be harmed, an act that allows him to gain numerous supporters during his long march to confront Darius (*Libro de Alexandre* 309-10). Similarly, he is merciful with any city that surrenders to him without any trouble, like Jerusalem, and even saved Tarsus, which was set aflame by the Persians (*Libro de Alexandre* 1165, 878). Returning to the example of the wounded soldiers from earlier, Alexander discovers them locked in a tower in Persepolis and suffering from horrible mutilations. The narrator takes great care to highlight the fact that: "Ploró Alexandre: – vençiolo pïedat; / mostró que le pesava de toda voluntat: / abraçolos a todos con grant benignidat" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1609bcd). He takes the time to listen to their requests and grant them whatever they wish to ease their suffering. In fact, Alexander is very sympathetic to the plight of soldiers in general, and this is his motivation behind accepting Porus's proposal for a duel instead of continuing the battle with their armies

[56] This is very early on in the *LAlex*, when Alexander seems to be more willing to heed advice and work with others. The exception in this case would be Thebes, since its neighbors accuse the Thebans of being morally corrupt, prompting him to destroy the city (216-31). As the Persian campaign progresses, his attitude seems to change. He only favors those who surrender to him and violently subdues anyone who refuses. The fate of Tyre is the best example of this (1114-18).

(*Libro de Alexandre* 2190). When he defeats the older king, Alexander also shows him mercy (*Libro de Alexandre* 2208-10).[57] Finally, during the second battle with Darius, Alexander refuses to kill a Persian warrior named Metha who has just lost both his sons in battle (*Libro de Alexandre* 1380). Despite his many faults, Alexander proves that even in times of war, a king can find opportunities to be merciful.[58]

Together with this quality, Alexander's courage, as well as his charisma, earn him the love of his people. William of Pagula and James of Viterbo assert that monarchs should be loved by their subjects so they can stay in power (William of Pagula 108, James of Viterbo 121). Aristotle gives Alexander the tools to maintain this support by giving him advice on how to lead his men, as well as how to treat his soldiers. Since the majority of his reign is spent at war in Persia, it is especially important that Alexander foster a strong relationship with his men since he needs them to defeat Darius, as well as any other threat that he faces. He achieves this through his willingness to fight alongside his soldiers as well as his strong rhetorical skills. To begin, Alexander is shown to be extremely courageous whether in combat, in the face of impossible odds, when dealing with fierce creatures, or when exploring unknown mysteries. We first see his courage when he promises his father that he can stop the Armenian uprising although he is just a young boy of 15 (*Libro de Alexandre* 160-68). When he is older, despite knowing that he is vastly outnumbered by Darius's army, he shows no hesitation in meeting them in battle (*Libro de Alexandre* 787-95). Later, after conquering both Darius and Porus, he enters the jungles of India to face terrifying creatures without a second thought and enters the sea in his bathysphere to

[57] In the *HNAM* Alexander does not spare Porus, but instead kills the older man while he is distracted.
[58] Two further episodes that do not quite describe Alexander's merciful nature, but rather his compassion, deal with the death of Darius's wife and Darius himself. The Macedonian is inconsolable in both instances and orders Apelles to construct a magnificent tomb for both of them. In addition, Alexander vows to hunt down and punish Darius's assassins. (*Libro de Alexandre* 1235-39, 1772-83, 1791, 1851-56).

explore the oceans without knowing the dangers that he faced (*Libro de Alexandre* 2155-69, 2306-23). In each of these cases, Alexander not only demonstrates his bravery to his men, but continuously proves that he is willing to share the risk of each adventure with them, as well as fight alongside them.

His rhetorical skills are equally useful, since with his powerful speeches, he is able to convince his men to follow him anywhere. First, he convinces his soldiers to leave their homes and families behind to sail across the sea and wage war against one of the largest empires in the world (*Libro de Alexandre* 206-210). Then, he persuades them to continue fighting even after they had accomplished their goal of defeating Darius and, in addition, convinces them to burn their wealth in order to find the Persian emperor (*Libro de Alexandre* 1841-57, 1896-99). Finally, he coaxes his army to follow and support him as he participates in his more extreme adventures, such as his flight with the griffons and his descent into the seas (*Libro de Alexandre* 2283-95, 2306-23, 2496-521). Alexander's energy, his willingness to fight alongside his men, his confidence in all they could achieve together, and his excitement to gain fame like the heroes of Troy is intoxicating and convinces even the most homesick of his soldiers to explore jungles of India:[59]

> Pero, con todo esto, de ti non nos tememos:
> sól' que tú seas sano, todo lo vençeremos.
> De bestias nin de sierpes nós dubdo non avremos:
> ¡a ti teniendo çerca a todo nos trevemos! (*Libro de Alexandre* 2274-75)

[59] Some episodes where Alexander's charisma, and rhetorical skills, help him to encourage his homesick soldiers are when the Greek army first leaves for Asia and when Alexander convinces them to hunt for Darius's assassins (*Libro de Alexandre* 253-60, 1841-58).

Despite understanding that Alexander is ruled by his desire for world domination (as discussed in detail in a later section) and knowing that they might face many hardships along the way, these battle-weary soldiers are willing to forge ahead solely because of the confidence they have in their leader and for love they bear for their king. What the *LAlex* demonstrates with these examples is an extraordinary example of how a monarch can achieve success if he is willing to lead by example and forge a close relationship with his men, thereby earning their loyalty and love even in the most extreme of circumstances.

The last virtue that I would like to discuss deals with upholding justice, which, every theorist studied for Chapter 1 agrees is one of the primary responsibilities of the monarch. Dante asserts that "justice is most effective in the world when present in the most willing and powerful man; only a Monarch is such a man; therefore, justice subsisting in a sole Monarch is the most effective in the world" (34-5). To this Marsilius of Padua adds that the law is the tool that the monarch must use to uphold justice in his kingdom (56). In the *LAlex* there are two examples that specifically deal with the law and upholding justice as per the definitions provided by Marsilius and Dante. The first takes place after Alexander's early victories in Asia. Advised by his close companions, he realizes that he needs to bring order to his new territory and therefore institutes new laws for everyone to follow (*Libro de Alexandre* 320). Later, when Alexander enters Babylon, he does the same: "Metioles fueros nuevos que non solién usar, / que pudiessen las gentes más en çierto andar" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1550cd). Law is seen as civilizing in this instance since the cultured Greeks bring order to the "barbaric" Asians. The third instance involves the famous 12 peers, who are handpicked by Alexander at the behest of his soldiers specifically for the purpose of maintaining justice in his ever-expanding kingdom with a traveling court (*Libro de Alexandre* 315). These references to the law and creating a governing

body are brief and not mentioned again in the poem, most likely because the cleric-author's focus is the moral lesson gained from Alexander's life.

Justice, therefore, is primarily represented by Alexander's harsh treatment of traitors in the *LAlex*, since the crime of treason was considered by many in the 13th century to be "la más vil cosa" (Alfonso X, *Las Siete Partidas, Partida* VII, Título 2, Ley 1). As such, political scholars advised the monarch to keep the company of noble, honorable men with good reputations. The narrator himself declares in several instances that all traitors were vile and should be given the death penalty:

> Todos los träidores assí devién morir;
> ningún aver del mundo non los devié guarir;
> todos, cuemo a merçed, devién a ellos ir;[60]
> ¡nunca los devié çielo nin tierra reçebir! (*Libro de Alexandre* 186)

The young king himself later adds that: "¡quequier' que ladrón faga no'l cae en traición!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 795d). These are words that Alexander lives by, since Pausanius, the man who kills his father, Philotas and Parmenion, his own generals and members of the 12 peers, as well as Bessus, one of Darius' assassins, are all executed for their treachery against their lords (*Libro de Alexandre* 185, 1907, 912, 1910). Philotas, for example, is stoned to death, while Pausanius is given a worse fate:

> Mandol' luego prender: fízolo enforcar;

[60] Such and Rabone translate this line as "all should pursue them as they would God's mercy" (*Book of Alexander* 186c)

ý lo comieron aves: no'l dexó soterrar;

des ý fizo los huessos en un fuego echar,

que non podiés' del falso nulla señal fincar (*Libro de Alexandre* 184)

Although these actions may seem savage to a modern-day audience, in the 13th century, harsh punishment against any form of treachery was the only way to ensure it would not happen again (Michael 84). Middle English romances describe beheading, quartering, and hanging as possible punishments for traitors (Michael 84). In the *Siete Partidas*, Alfonso X addresses treason and traitors on a few separate occasions, stating that traitors: "deben morir la mas cruel muerte et la mas aviltada que puedan pasar; et aun han de perder todo lo que hobieron tambien mueble como raiz, et seer todo del rey, et las casas et las heredades labradas débenlas derribar et destroir de guisa que finque por señal descarmiento para siempre" (*Partida* II, Título XIII, Ley 6). Later Alexander seems to staunchly adhere to these ideals by killing almost every traitor that he encounters, even if that means destroying an entire city. Tyre is one of the best examples of this, since, he not only destroys the city, but orders its people to be horribly murdered because they refuse to accept his rule (*Libro de Alexandre* 1114-18). While this may seem to contradict Alexander's merciful nature, from his perspective, and from that of the author-cleric, the people of Tyre are traitors for opposing the Macedonian king, and as such, deserve such a horrible death. Alexander's "mercy" is conditional in the *LAlex*, and in most cases of treason he chooses to punish the perpetrators rather than forgive.[61]

[61] Another instance where we see this conditional mercy is the episode where Alexander protects the women of Darius's family from being assaulted after a Greek victory (*Libro de Alexandre* 1083). In the stanza immediately before 1083, we are told that Greek soldiers do assault the other women who traveled with the Persian army, and Alexander does nothing to stop them (*Libro de Alexandre* 1082).

In this way, he upholds justice throughout his lands, and provides a clear example of the consequences of betrayal to both Greeks and non-Greeks. As Michael points out, the emphasis that the Spanish poet places on justice is just one way that he transforms Alexander from a fame-seeking warrior in the *Alexandreis* to a medieval king in the *LAlex* (84). If we assume that members of the nobility were the intended recipients of the text, Alexander's actions would be familiar, as they show how a man in a position of power must always uphold his duty to the law and carry out justice to the fullest extent.

That being said, Alexander is not perfect, since there are a few cases where his actions are questionable. For example, after hearing rumors from Thebes's neighbors, that the Thebans were morally corrupt, Alexander decides to attack and destroy the city (*Libro de Alexandre* 221-23).[62] Later, Nabarzanes is allowed to escape with his life, despite having committed treason and killed Darius, his lord, after Alexander is persuaded to do so by a nobleman who flatters him (*Libro de Alexandre* 1861).[63] Soon after, Alexander has two of his loyal soldiers, Cleitus and Ardophilus, killed after hearing rumors of their treachery (*Libro de Alexandre* 1970). On each occasion, Alexander is persuaded by false men (who are also not punished), and therefore falls victim to bad counsel.[64] If we recall Aristotle's advice, he specifically tells his pupil not to trust base men, or "vil omne[s]," since they will always prove to be untrustworthy like "la mala rienda" (*Libro de Alexandre* 55ac). This proves to be true in both cases, since freeing Nabarzanes means he does not fulfill his promise to Darius and killing his generals deprives him of two loyal

[62] Although this is a prime example of how Alexander sometimes takes advice from the wrong people, he is not criticized for this by the author-cleric, perhaps because treason is clearly described as a crime in the poem, and, when in doubt, he is more inclined to punishment than to pardon.
[63] This is the first instance where the author-cleric criticizes the Alexander for his actions, since he does not carry out his duties as king by punishing traitors. In the *Rrekontamiento* and the *HNAM*, he will carry out the punishment.
[64] Giles of Rome suggests that gullibility is a vice of youth, and, although Alexander is an adult at this point, he is still much younger than the other sovereigns that he fights (1: 297). Therefore, I suggest that Alexander's reaction in these episodes could be an example of his gullibility.

companions who would have supported him. Both events occur towards the end of the campaign, when Alexander seems to be acting increasingly rashly, blinded to a point by his increasing pride. If he cannot uphold justice and does not surround himself with wise men (like the 12 peers) – which are the basic requirements of a sovereign – how can he be an effective monarch?

This brings us to Alexander's vices. As mentioned earlier, the Macedonian's greatest vice, to be discussed in detail in the next section, is his excessive pride, which causes him to challenge the boundaries set for man by God. This is what the author-cleric intends to teach the audience of his work. In this instance, however, we see a sharp difference between the intention of the poet and what political theorists consider to be the monarch's vices. Giles of Rome, for example, believed that negative traits such as a changing nature, a proclivity to violence, a tendency to lie and argue, excessive anger, gullibility, and pride were all vices that the young suffered (1: 297-98). Other common vices were ambition, excess luxury, cupidity, as well as an excessive desire for honor, glory and fame. Alexander seems to fit this description exceptionally well, since there are several episodes in the *LAlex* that arguably showcase some of these traits. The poet, however, does not criticize him at all for these vices, and during the especially violent episodes, even sanctions his actions, thereby demonstrating how his views on kingship diverge from those of contemporary political theorists.

The following episodes showcase Alexander's anger and proclivity to violence, both of which are condemned by medieval theorists. It is first suggested that Alexander suffers from excessive anger when we read about his violent reaction to hearing that Macedonia pays tribute to Persia (*Libro de Alexandre* 23bc, 24a, 28b, 31ab).[65] His anger is also apparent when discussing

[65] We are told that: "camiós'le la color, fues' todo demudando: / maguer que blanco era, negro se fue tornando; / las tres partes del día bien estido callando" (*Libro de Alexandre* 23bcd). In addition, "comiés' todos los labros con la grant follonía," "semejaba enfermo de fiera malentía" and "amolava los dientes cuemo león fambriento: / ¡tan bien molié el fierro cuemo si fues´sarmiento!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 24ab, 28bc)

strategy with his generals since, on several occasions, he chastises anyone who does not agree with his point of view (*Libro de Alexandre* 142-44, 798-801, 815-19, 1290). Finally, there are several instances where Alexander is so irate that he commits acts of violence in order to obliterate his enemy for causing him offence, such as in Thebes, in Tyre, and in any Persian city that does not surrender to him. In these cities, Alexander gives the command to murder innocent people, including women and children (*Libro de Alexandre* 242-43, 1081-82, 1114-18, 1454).[66] The ease with which the Macedonian is willing to commit such violence simply because he is unable to control his emotions is problematic and makes him unpredictable, a trait that no one wants in a leader. In fact, the author-cleric hints on at least two occasions that Alexander has a thirst for battle and violence: "…murié el diablo por amor de lidiar" and "porque non guerreava, estava enojado"(*Libro de Alexandre* 1186b, 2266d). Kings should go to war because there is a need for it, not because they desire battle. What a ruler should want is to care for his subjects and carry out his responsibilities. Extreme emotions, like anger and a proclivity for violence, can be a hinderance to a monarch, since they can cloud judgement and cause him to act rashly.

In the *LAlex,* the author-cleric uses many of the more violent episodes to show how a king must maintain order and justice by punishing anyone who threatens his power or who commits treason against him, as in the case of the people of Tyre. Given that most of Alexander's reign is spent in a state of permanent war and that a good part of his subjects travel with him at all times, he must be a bit harsher when it comes to his enemies, since any type of treachery is a threat to his traveling kingdom as well. Therefore, what theorists would consider to be traits of a flawed king the *LAlex* considers to be traits of a strong monarch who is upholding justice and maintaining control of an already unstable situation. Uría explains that the poet "no

[66] After the incident in Tyre, the poet expresses his support for Alexander's actions: "si malos fueron ellos, tan mala fin fizieron / –¡por fe, a mí non pesa, ca bien lo mereçieron!–" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1115cd).

ve pecado en el macedonio, en tanto que éste actúa como guerrero y político, o sea, como conquistador de pueblos y reinos. Lo ve, en cambio, cuando Alejandro pretende entrar en el terreno vedado, cuando quiere escrutar y conocer lo prohibido, y cuando su insolencia llega a la osadía de enjuiciar negativamente las cosas creadas por Dios" ("La soberbia" 521). For the author-cleric, pride is the only issue worthy of concern when it comes to Alexander and he focuses his efforts on making that clear to his intended audience.

2.3.5 Pride, Fame, and *Clerecía*: The Downfall of the Scholar-King

As Uría describes, "la soberbia es fundamental en la estructura del poema, ya que es la que lleva al protagonista a la derrota" ("La soberbia" 513). For the 13th-century author-cleric it seems clear that pride is the "embodiment of the transgression of a limit, of individual excess, [and] of overstepping one's place," the cause of some of the most prolific Biblical disasters such as Adam's fall from grace and the Lucifer's rebellion against God (Pinet 52; *Libro de Alexandre* 2407b, 2409bc). Taking these ideas a step further, the poet tells us that pride is the "emperadriz de los viçios," while the other sins act as her "ministros" or "crïados," implying that if one suffered from an excess of pride, one was likely to commit one of the other sins (*Libro de Alexandre* 2407b, 2406bc).[67] Therefore, Alexander's vices, such as his anger and his proclivity to violence, are the direct result of his pride. As a result, in the *LAlex,* Alexander's downfall is a warning against the dangers of pride, something that everyone – especially kings – can learn from and avoid.

As mentioned in previous sections, there are many overlapping themes in the *LAlex* that work in conjunction to cause the hero's downfall. Among these are Alex's desire for fame and his *clerecía,* both of which are celebrated in the poem. We have already seen the importance of

[67] Brunetto Latini similarly describes pride as the "head and root of evil and sin," which according to Uría was a common belief in the Middle Ages (Latini, *Il Tesoreto* lines 2611-15; Uría, "La soberbia" 514).

clerecía in Alexander's life, which from his early adventures in Greece as a young prince (*Libro de Alexandre* 128ab) to his excursions in Asia during the Persian campaign, all for the sake of curiosity (*Libro de Alexandre* 322-34, 1167-183, 1184). At first glance, these trips seem innocent enough, Alexander's string of victories soon catapult him to the position of emperor, the most powerful monarch in the world, and begin a chain of events that lead Alexander to act rashly in his search for knowledge.[68]

Similarly, the motif of fame is repeated throughout the work to underscore the importance of the immortality that one can enjoy long after death, much like the heroes of Troy. As with his *clerecía*, it is also Aristotle who gives him some of his earliest lessons on fame and glory:

> Dizen que buen esfuerço vençe malaventura:
> meten al que bien lidia luego en escriptura;
> un día gana omne preçio que siempre dura:
> ¡de fablar de covarde ninguno non ha cura!
>
> Pues que de la muert'omne non puede estorçer,
> el algo d'este mundo todo es a perder:
> ¡si omne non gana prez por decir o por fer,
> valdrié más que fues' muerto o fües' por naçer!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 71-2)

[68] Evidence of Alexander's pride is present throughout the poem, but it is the moment that he allows Darius's assassin Narbazanes to go free that the poet finally criticizes him for the first time because has not punished a traitor. From this moment, Alexander's excessive pride also forms a part of the narrator's increased and intense criticism of his hero (Michael 151; Uría "La soberbia" 521).

Earning fame, glory, and the honor that comes with them was only something that the most fortunate of men could achieve during their lives.[69] He repeats this same lesson to his own men on numerous occasions, such as when he assuages their fears when setting sail for Asia, when he explains the importance of the story of the Trojan war, when he encourages them on the battlefield, and when he convinces them that killing Darius's assassins is a worthy cause (*Libro de Alexandre 255*, 765, 1342, 1855). The Trojan episode, in fact, plays a particularly important role in the *LAlex,* since the deeds of the Greek heroes there "set a standard by which Alexander's achievements can be judged and which they can be seen to surpass" (Michael 260; *Libro de Alexandre* 322-773). As a result, everything Alexander does is to ensure that he too is worthy of being the subject of great tales that would ensure his immortality.[70] As he tells his men: "¡Non conto yo mi vida por años nin por días, / mas por buenas faziendas e por cavallerías!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 2288ab). Much like with his *clerecía*, Alexander's quest for fame is encouraged by the poet throughout the *LAlex.* To clarify, knowledge and the desire for fame are not inherently amoral, and Alexander is not criticized by the poet for either. When influenced by *cupiditas,* however, both can become excessive. In Alexander's case, each consecutive victory, along with his explorations of Asia, feed his hunger for more knowledge, more conquest, and more fame. which in turn push him to act without considering the limits imposed upon him by God.

The final link in this chain is pride, which leads Alexander to want to know and see more than anybody else. At the same time, it is the tool that allows him to actually accomplish his goals,

[69] For María Rosa Lida de Malkiel the principal theme of the *LAlex* is the celebration of fame and how, through his great deeds, a hero could live on in the hearts and minds of future generations, like the Trojan heroes, like Alexander, and like the poet himself who has used the poem to show off his *clerecía* (169-96).

[70] Perhaps the best example of Alexander´s attempts to earn fame is the inscription he leaves on Darius´s tomb: "Aquí yaz'el carnero, los dos cuernos del qual / crebantó Alexandre, de Greçia natural. / Narbozones e Bessus, compaña desleal, / estos dos lo mataron con träición mortal" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1802). Darius is remembered because he was Alexander's fallen foe, not because he was the Persian emperor. The older man will be honored in a beautiful tomb, but the epitaph speaks of Alexander's victory over him as well as his death by treachery, which diminishes his fame.

since it leads him to overreach and transgress any borders to achieve glory and learn about the world. This will cause his fall from grace, making him an excellent example of a flawed monarch. The Alexander of the *LAlex* is in many ways the model ruler, since, as I have previously discussed, he embodies the wisdom and knowledge of a cleric with the skill of a warrior. Ideally, he should not fail. But without moral restraint, without moderation, even Alexander was unable to control his desires. The first indication of Alexander's great vice occurs during the eclipse where the Greek soldiers, terrified of sudden darkness, lash out at their king for his lack of moderation:

> Dizién: "¡Rey Alexandre, nunca devriés naçer,
> que con todo el mundo quieres guerra tener!
> ¡Los çielos e las tierras quieres yus' ti meter!
> ¡Lo que Dios non quïere tú lo cuedas aver!
>
> Tanto avemos ganado quanto nunca cuidamos;
> quanto más conquerimos, tanto más cobdiçiamos.
> ¡Traemos grant sobervia, mesura non catamos!:
> ¡avremos a prender aún lo que buscamos!
>
> ¡Tanto avemos fecho que los dios son irados!:
> ¡nin el Sol nin la Luna non son nuestros pagados!
> ¡Todos aquestos signos son por nuestros pecados!
> ¡quando los dios son contra, nós seremos lazrados!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 1204-1206)

While the author never criticizes the king here, nor comments on the declarations that the Greek soldiers have made, this is the first hint that we have that Alexander's pride could be an affront to God. Riva believes that this first mention of pride "enrumba todas las demás a lo largo del *Alexandre* de modo evidente, puesto que aparece aquí en asociación con el *poder*" (183). Since he is in a position of power, Alexander has the ability to carry out his many conquests and confront Darius, which again, feeds his pride. Alexander is unable to understand what his men are telling him, just as he is unable (or unwilling) to use his *clerecía* to interpret the phenomenon himself, asking instead a "maestro ortado" to calm his soldier (*Libro de Alexandre* 1209a). Therefore, this episode not only sets in motion further mentions of Alexander's pride, but also his inability to understand his own actions or the warnings that he is given throughout his journey.

The next indication we see of Alexander's great vice is in his reaction to the Scythian emissary's warnings about pride. Insisting that they live a peaceful life without any material goods, the Scythian diplomat tells Alexander that he will gain nothing by conquering them (*Libro de Alexandre* 1918-939).[71] In response to these very measured and respectful words, Alexander destroys the city and its people rather than listen to and consider the advice that he was given; his reaction is excessive. Soon after, we see that he does not heed the wise words of Porus about rising and falling fortune (*Libro de Alexandre* 2211-2214), further proving his inability to see his own flaws. His own men give him a similar warning after he is wounded, but

[71] Much of how the emissary describes the Scythians is reminiscent of the interactions that Alexander has with the Brahmins and/or Gymnosophists, which are found in other iterations of the *AR* (including the *HNAM* and the *Rrekontamiento*). Like the Scythians, these Indian communities do not live in traditional houses, do not have any material wealth, live off the land, and are very spiritual. In addition, the Indians also warn Alexander about reaching too high and wanting too much. What is different between these communities is that Scythians insist that can and will defend themselves against Alexander if needed. In contrast, the Indians convince Alexander through philosophical debate to leave them in peace.

still eager to discover the secrets of the world: where the sun rises, where the Nile begins, the effects of the wind over the sea (*Libro de Alexandre* 2270ab). They tell him:

> La tu fiera cobdiçia non te dexa folgar;
> señor eres del mundo: non te puedes fartar.
> ¡Nin podemos saber nin podemos asmar
> qué cosa es aquesta que quieres ensayar!
> …
>
> Pero tan fieras cosas sabes tú ensayar,
> que non te podrié omne ninguno aguardar;
> las cosas non recuden todas a un lugar:
> el omne sabidor dévese mesurar.
>
> ¡Si meterte quisieres en las ondas del mar
> o en una foguera te quieres afogar
> o de una grant peña te quieres despeñar,
> en qualsequiere d'ellas lo avrás a lazrar!
>
> Los rëys has conquistos, las sierpes has domadas,
> las montañas rompidas, las bestias quebrantadas,
> ¡Quieres bolver contienda con las ondas iradas!:
> ¡de trebejo de justa non son ellas usadas! (*Libro de Alexandre* 2274, 2276-78)

Rather than hear their desperation, Alexander focuses on their pledge to continue traveling with him to accomplish his goals and gives them a rousing speech about glory, honor, fame, all of the future discoveries that he intends to make, and all the worlds he intends to conquer – worlds that were not meant for men. He declares that he wants to "descobrir las cosas que yazen sofondidas" so that "cosas sabrán por nós que no serién sabidas" (*Libro de Alexandre* 2291bc). In the Christian worldview, the secrets he seeks would, of course, be God's secrets that no one should be able to access. His desire for these secrets shows that he has become an overreacher, unable to recognize a limit to man's dominion nor the greater power of God over all living things. Like Lucifer, he envies God's knowledge and dominions and wishes to earn the glory of surpassing the Creator. Like Lucifer, however, he will fall.

As mentioned earlier, the fact that Alexander is a king is significant when considering his sins. His position of power allows him to dream of surpassing God, since it helped him to reach the highest seat of power in man's dominion. Alexander quite literally thinks he can do anything. It is for this reason that his descent into the seas in a bathysphere to observe and conquer sea creatures is an immense violation to Natura and to God. In his subaquatic machine, Alexander makes an observation about the interaction between the fish, noting that:

> ...'¡Sobervia es en todos lugares!;
> es fuerça en la tierra e dentro en los mares;
> las aves esso mismo non se catan por pares.
> ¡Dios confonda tal viçio que tien'tantos lugares! (*Libro de Alexandre* 2317)

The irony of this statement is not lost on the author (or the audience), who realizes that Alexander has critiqued the pride of the sea creatures without recognizing that he too suffers from the same vice. Not only has he transgressed the laws of Nature and entered a world that is not meant for him to conquer, but he has taken the additional step of criticizing God's creation. Marco Infurna explains that "De su actitud no resulta el respecto y la alabanza del Creador, sino el desprecio de sus criaturas; pero al no sentirse parte de este desprecio universal, rechaza implícitamente la idea de ser también él obra del Creador. Lo que hace es imperdonable, pues emite un juicio como si fuera Dios" (102). Alexander's actions are seen as a challenge to divine power, while also providing evidence that he intended to keep conquering and exploring without end (Uría, "La soberbia" 518; Arizaleta, "Alexandre" 9). It is at this point that the poet explicitly links Alexander to Lucifer:

> En las cosas secretas quiso él entender,
> que nunca omne vivo las pudo saber,–
> Quísolas Alexandre por fuerça coñoçer:
> ¡nunca mayor sobervia comidió Luçifer! (*Libro de Alexandre* 2327)

Riva explains that this is an apt comparison because "La figura de Lucifer…es el ejemplo perfecto de la pérdida de la gracia, producto de su equiparación con Dios" (196). Both figures are punished for challenging God's power (Uría, "La soberbia" 517-18). Therefore, the poet tells us that Alexander's pride is not just dangerous, but diabolical.[72] Upon witnessing the transgression

[72] Alexander's subsequent flight into the air with griffins is further proof of his overreaching (*Libro de Alexandre* 2497-514). Although he receives no criticism for this action, his aerial flight is the literal embodiment of how a man can reach beyond his limits (Arizaleta, "Alexandre" 10-11; *Libro de Alexandre* 1506).

God exclaims: "¡Este lunático que non cata mesura / Yo'l tornaré el gozo todo en amargura!" (*Libro de Alexandre* 2329cd). Taking this as a call for action, Natura descends into hell, finds Satan and convinces him that Alexander would next come to conquer hell (*Libro de Alexandre* 2433-440). This sets in motion a chain of events that leads to Alexander's own vassal, Antipater, traveling to Babylon to poison the king. Ironically, the great monarch who so harshly sought out and punished traitors is killed by traitors himself.

For his part, Alexander accepts his death with grace and dignity. In his last moments he does not repent, but rather praises his men for their achievements and for bringing him glory (*Libro de Alexandre* 2624-25). He does, however, recognize his limitations, the instability of fortune, and dedicates his soul to God, thereby finally acknowledging that he is beneath the divine (*Libro de Alexandre* 2630-31). The author praises Alexander but reminds us that all men should place little trust in the mundane and rather focus on their spiritual wellbeing.[73] It is worth noting that the addition of God is unique to the Spanish poem, as it is not found in the *Alexandreis*, which pits Natura versus Alexander in a battle between two opposing forces (Uría, "La soberbia" 522). The addition of the Christian moralization comes from the author-cleric who wanted to send a very particular message to his audience: If you challenge God, you will be punished. Any man, even a king, can fall victim to pride and overreach. When it is the someone in a position of power, the fall is that much greater. From the perspective of political theory, Alexander strayed from his path as king and neglected his duties. Therefore, his death is divine justice. Although Alexander is not necessarily corrupt nor a tyrant in the traditional sense, his personal endeavors lead him to act in ways that are contrary to the common good. He is no longer a model or "shepherd" for his people, rather an example that should not be followed.

[73] This moral message of the *LAlex* will be similar to what we will see in the *Rrekontamiento*.

2.4 Conclusion

Dante believed that "cupidity is impossible when there is nothing to be desired, for passions cease to exist with the destruction of their objects. Since [the monarch's] jurisdiction is bounded only by the ocean, there is nothing for [him] to desire" (Chapter XI, 36). As we have seen, Alexander desires dominion, both through knowledge and through conquest, which is not technically a material object per se, but "se convierte en codicia material, ya que confía en su derecho de alcanzar y poseer todo eso y su capacidad de descifrarlo" (Infurna 89). The problem is that this desire turns him away from upholding justice, and from improving the condition of his kingdom, which are the basic responsibilities of a monarch. Instead, it very literally leads him into the very "ocean" that Dante declared was the boundary of monarch's jurisdiction. We can see this in Alexander's increasingly questionable behavior after defeating Darius, since he is more focused on his personal gain rather than on what is good for his soldiers who have been away from their homes for years.

From a Christian perspective, the poet focuses on the sin of pride itself, rather than the effect it has on the kingdom, and the punishment that it can lead to in order to highlight his moral message. He subordinates mankind's quest for knowledge to the superior knowledge and power of the divine. Uría explains that the author mantained "una cierta reserva hacia una investigación intelectual sin las garantías de la sinceridad y la humildad, propias de la vida monástica. Temí[a] que se faltase al respeto a la verdad divina, tratando de penetrar en ella, después de haber roto el sello del misterio" (Uría, "La soberbia" 524). Beatriz Quintana Jato adds that:

> el autor subordina el saber humano a una más alta verdad ética y religiosa, y hace que la catástrofe del poema – el asesinato de Alejandro – se produzca precisamente como

> consecuencia de la incapacidad del héroe para comprender, cegado por su orgullo, que hay una sabiduría popular que trasciende a los conocimientos del mundo. (40)

As mentioned earlier, there was a worry that university trained *magistri* desired to discover the secrets of the world and were ruled by their intellectual pride (Riva 58). Isabel Uría further postulates that the monks, who remained in the confines of the cloisters "sentían que la investigación de las letras sagradas por medio de la *disputatio* corría el peligro de ser realizada al margen de toda experiencia religiosa" ("La soberbia" 524). Alexander's actions are a very literal manifestation of these fears. Therefore, in the *LAlex*, his *clerecía*, which seems to be a positive quality, actually becomes a hinderance that cause more harm than good.

Riva explains that in the first half of the 13th century, there was a "preocupación acerca de la orientación de las actividades intelectuales del rey y su eventual redireccionamiento" (65). Added to this was the already negative image of the dangers that a monarch dominated by pride could present in 13th-century Castile, which was detailed by learned men like Diego García de Campos (Riva 58). They believed that the relationship between knowledge and the monarch would always have to be one that was under God, which would mean that there was a limit to the knowledge that any man, even a king, could have (Riva 61). As Riva puts it: "No existe una garantía divina para el saber monárquico" (61). While Uría believes that the moral message of the author-cleric was destined for the "modernos clérigos," the educated clerics, it could just as easily been for the "lettered knights" of the court and the ruler himself (Uría 523). At a time where a Christian society was still adjusting to the newly rediscovered texts from antiquity and opening its mind to different ways of experiencing the world, moderation was a lesson that all educated people needed to learn. Alexander as a "scholar-king" represents the joining of two

different worlds, the scholastic, which previously belonged to the clergy, and the nobility, which ruled over men. Together they were a powerful combination, but one that could be problematic from a religious perspective. The author-cleric's moralizing message therefore can be directed to this new breed of courtly noblemen and clerics who were in very real spiritual danger if they did not exercise *mesura*. Alexander, therefore, as a representative from both worlds, was the perfect model to utilize in order to highlight this agenda.

Of the three works I analyze in this dissertation, the *LAlex* is the only one that provides us a true example of a flawed ruler. Although he has many qualities that no doubt endeared him to a 13th-century audience (such as demonstrating the glory that can be achieved by both the intellectual and the warrior), Alexander's death by treason points to his double failure: to Christian values and to his own subjects. Thomas Aquinas believed that "the aim of any ruler should be directed towards securing the welfare of that which he undertakes to rule" (*On Kingship,* Chapter II, 11). As we have seen in the *LAlex,* Alexander's aim has always been to investigate, discover, and conquer new realities. Instead of utilizing his *clerecía* to help him become a more efficient ruler, he used it to achieve his own dreams. What we can learn from Alexander's example is that an ideal king understands the importance of limitations, whether they be physical or metaphorical. The monarch is a "servant" or "intermediary" between the temporal world and the divine, and in this capacity must direct his attention to leading his subjects down the proper path to God, rather than leading them astray on a path to betray God. As Ptolemy of Lucca stated: "the kingdom does not exist on account of the king but rather the king on account of the kingdom, because it is for this that God provided for kings to govern and exercise governance over their kingdoms and preserve everyone according to their own right, and this is the end of government" (178). The Alexander of the *LAlex* is the perfect example of a

king who believed his kingdom existed because of him and for this reason would not have been the ideal example of monarch for medieval theorists.

This is why the work serves as a cautionary tale for ambitious nobles and clerics alike in a court setting (Arizaleta, *La translation* 257; Weiss). The poet proves that no matter how distant scholarship and the world of the nobility seem, they are both susceptible to pride, one through the search for fame, and the other through the search for knowledge. For this reason, the *LAlex* is not just a *speculum principis,* but a sort of *speculum clerici* as well. The descriptions of Alexander acting as a warrior-king would have resonated with the nobles and knights who lived in or near the royal court, thereby encouraging them to achieve glory in their own lives. Similarly, Alexander's travels and "discoveries" would have inspired any intellectual, noble and cleric alike, who was eager to learn the secrets of the world. The moralizing ending of the work would have cautioned both groups from extending themselves so far, reminding them that all men – no matter their position – can easily suffer from the sin of pride, causing them to overreach.

I would like to take this reading of the text a step further keeping in mind the emergence of the "lettered knights" that Aurell discusses in his monograph. Alexander's life is an excellent example of the greatness that men can achieve and how quickly they can fall when they succumb to their pride; this is a fate that can befall the noblest of warriors and the most erudite of scholars. As a "scholar-king," Alexander is both, which is why his tragic end is so significant. Individually, warriors and clerics, both important members of Medieval society, were certainly capable of transgressing boundaries and allowing their pride to lead them astray. Alexander shows us what can happen when an individual carries the skills of both these groups, which in the 12th and 13th century was becoming a reality. In this way, the author-cleric uses the *LAlex* to

reflect his own concerns with the awesome power of a "scholar-king" who has unlimited resources at his disposal, is a skilled warrior, and possesses the intelligence and learning of a cleric to accomplish nearly anything he wanted to in life. This emerging class of hybrid "lettered knights" would certainly have been a force to reckon with in this period and it was only natural that a cleric, a student of Christian doctrine, would want to caution them about how they could easily fall victim to pride and betray the values that they were supposed to uphold. Alexander was a historical example of how even a "scholar-king" – the best of both worlds – could fall from grace. Realizing the potential of these new "lettered knights," the Spanish poet utilized the story of the Macedonian to caution any new ambitious Alexanders from reaching too high. In doing this, he created a work that would continue to teach as well as entertain for generations to come.

Chapter 3

A Royal Approach: Alexander the Great through the lens of Alfonso X and the *General Estoria*

While the *LAlex* exemplifies, in part at least, the point of view of a clerical author regarding kingship, it was not the only text produced in 13th-century Iberia about Alexander the Great. Some 50 years later, Alfonso X the Wise King (1221-84) incorporated Alexander's life story, entitled the *Historia novelada de Alejandro Magno* (*HNAM*) by Tomás González Rolán and Pilar Saquero Suárez-Somonte, into his massive *General Estoria* (*GE*) project. The narrative serves both to fulfill Alfonso's larger plan to provide a complete and accurate account of Iberian and global historical events (in the *GE* and the *Estoria de Espanna* respectively), and to underscore his own place in history and the world affairs of his time.

3.1 Alfonso and the *fecho del imperio*

The *HNAM* can be considered to be an "exaltación de la función imperial," which was especially important for Alfonso since he aspired to become the Holy Roman Emperor during his life (González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte 33). In the *Siete Partidas*, he explains that:

> Imperium is a great dignity, noble and honored above all other temporal offices which men can hold in the world…For the lord on whom God confers such an honor is both king and emperor…all the persons of the empire obey his commands, and he is not bound

> to obey any one except the Pope, and that only in spiritual matters. (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title I, Law I, 269)[74]

To Alfonso, *imperium* was the highest honor that any king could hope to attain, and his *GE* describes the reigns of all the great kings who held that post in the past. For this reason, when he was offered the opportunity to become Holy Roman Emperor, he not only jumped at the chance, but spent 20 years of his reign fighting for the title. This campaign came to be known as the *fecho del imperio*. During this period, Alfonso gained very little support from other European kingdoms and clashed with his own nobleman over his ambitions several times. Despite the numerous obstacles in his path, however, he was convinced that he had the best hereditary claim to the imperial throne and persisted in his attempts for years only to be disappointed in the end.

Many have wondered why Alfonso was so adamant on gaining the imperial title. In truth, the wise king was heir to two imperial traditions (Sánchez-Prieto Borja xxx). His mother, Elisabeth of Swabia, was a descendent of both the Byzantine and Western imperial families and a part of the Hohenstaufen/Swabian dynasty. On his father's (Ferdinand III) side, he was the descendant of Hispanic 'emperors' and, due to his Ferdinand's military successes, had hegemony over other kings in the peninsula.[75] He could have claimed the right of *sennorio* and *imperium* in Iberia (Gónzalez Jiménez 115, Sabatino López 11). However, Alfonso's aspirations were higher.

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[74] I have used two versions of the *Siete Partidas*, one in Spanish, which is incomplete, and another in English, which is a complete translation of the work. Any direct quotes are from The Spanish edition and are marked by 'Título X, Ley Y' and have no page number in the in-text citation, while the English version uses 'Title X, Law Y' and have a page number.

[75] Alfonso Otero Varela explains that, unlike other European kingdoms, the Hispanic kings shared a national conscience, political unity, and independence that was forged during Visigothic rule (148, 151). When one kingdom gained hegemony over the others, it was not unusual for its ruler to be considered "king of kings," as evidenced by Alfonso VI in 1072 and Alfonso VII in 1135 (Maravall, *El concepto* 437; Iturmendi Morales 84). After the latter, only Ferdinand III considered taking the title when he conquered Seville in 1248 but decided at the last minute that "no era el tiempo de lo fazer" (qtd. in Iturmendi Morales 89).

José Antonio Maravall believes that the monarch abandoned any plans he might have had in Iberia because he did not want to damage any chances of becoming Holy Roman emperor (*El concepto* 461). Not only did he believe in his descendance from an imperial lineage, but he could also boast of numerous cultural accomplishments that he began during his father's rule that rivaled those of Frederick II (1194-1250), his famous kinsmen and contemporary.[76] For these reasons, when he was offered the imperial throne in 1254 by Italian Ghibellines, he jumped at the opportunity. For a young king "en la flor de la vida," explains Manual González Jiménez, the offer was incredibly attractive (115).

For the next twenty years, Alfonso would fight for his rights but faced many challenges from his own countrymen, from a rival to the imperial throne, and from the papal office.[77] To gain support for his cause, he lavished gifts on his supporters, and, on the home front, attempted to expand his territory into what was left of Muslim Iberia. Convinced that his lineage and his great accomplishments would suffice, Alfonso underestimated the international campaigning needed to win complete support and therefore, never left Spain to get support from the German nobles who would eventually vote for the successful candidate (MacDonald 221). Instead, all he gained was strife amongst his nobles, who never understood his ambitions, and an imperial dream never realized (Rico, *Alfonso* 111).

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[76] Fredrick was elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1220 and was both a great patron of the arts and sciences as well as a great military leader. Fredrick, like Alfonso, also faced much opposition within his inherited territories and did not have a strong base in the German lands (Sabatino López 10). Despite this he was still elected Holy Roman Emperor. Alfonso idolized him, and it is not far-fetched to think that, because he was so similar to Fredrick, he perhaps thought himself just as worthy of the imperial throne (Doubleday 77).

[77] During the election in January of 1257, Alfonso was technically elected King of the Romans with four of the seven electoral votes on his side, but his win was heavily contested, and he never received papal recognition (Doubleday 99). His rival, Richard of Cornwall, was crowned by the Archbishop of Cologne and adopted the title and symbols of the imperial office (MacDonald 220). Pope Alexander IV decided to remain neutral and called both candidates "King of the Romans" in official correspondence (Doubleday 99).

Alfonso ordered the compilation of both the *EdE* and the universal history in 1270 when he was failing on the international scene (Gómez Redondo 687). Both formed a part of the cultural campaign that Alfonso launched in support of his imperial aspirations to further his reputation as a patron of the arts and cultured king. More importantly, Alfonso wanted to use these works to portray a specific image of himself, that of a divinely ordained king who deserved not just *sennorio*, but *imperium* (Fernández-Ordóñez *Las estorias* 95; "Evolución" 268; "El taller" 9).[78]

3.2 The *General Estoria*: Background, Authorship, and Language

Written approximately between 1270 and 1284, the *General Estoria,* which is told in six parts, follows the division of time into six ages as first proposed by Saint Augustine and later adopted by other medieval scholars (Fernández-Ordóñez "El taller" 1; Gómez Redondo 687; Rico, *Alfonso* 15-35). In the prologue to the first part of the *GE* Alfonso writes:

> después que ove fecho ayuntar muchos escritos e muchas estorias de los fechos antiguos escogí d'ellos los más verdaderos e los mejores que ý sope e fiz ende fazer este libro. E mandé ý poner todos los fechos señalados tan bien de las estorias de la Biblia como de las otras grandes cosas que acaecieron por el mundo desde que fue començado fasta'l nuestro tiempo. (*General estoria, Primera parte* I, Prólogo, 6)

To fulfill the project of documenting the history of the world from its beginning to 13th century, the *GE* blended different genres (history, myth, science, *speculum principis*, and literary art) to

[78] See Wolf, Valdeón Baruque, and Ballesteros Beretta (*Discursos*) for a more detailed timeline of the *fecho del imperio.*

provide the reader with an impressive encyclopedic breadth of knowledge (Brancaforte 24). Until today, scholars have only been able to completely reconstruct the first, second, and fourth parts, and have partial reconstructions of the third and fifth. Of the sixth *parte* there is only an initial fragment (Rico, *Alfonso* 45). Alfonso was never able to finish the *GE* as he intended.

This brings us to the topic of authorship. There is much debate today as to exactly how involved Alfonso was with the various works that were produced during his reign, with some scholars claiming that he merely sponsored the works, others asserting that he more or less closely coordinated its general production, and still others insisting that he substantially intervened in the creation of his projects.[79] In the first part of the *GE* we are told that:

> Como dexiemos nós muchas vezes el rey faze un libro non por quel él escriva con sus manos, mas porque compone las razones d'él e las emienda e yegua e endereça e muestra la manera de cómo se deven fazer, e desí escrívelas qui él manda, peró dezimos por esta razón que el rey faze el libro. Otrossí cuando dezimos el rey faze un palacio o alguna obra non es dicho porque lo él fiziesse con sus manos, mas porquel mandó fazer e dio las cosas que fueron mester pora ello: e qui esto cumple aquel á nombre que faze la obra, e nós assí veo que usamos de lo dezir. (Alfonso X, *General estoria*, *Primera parte* II, Book 16, Chapter 14, 393)

[79] Some scholars, like Benito Brancaforte, consider him to be like a "moderno director de una editorial," who relied heavily on his team of collaborators, while others like Solalinde claimed that: "No se contentaba el rey con intervenir en esta labor preparatoria, sino que después de que redactada o traducida una obra, eliminaba de ella lo superfluo y añadía cuanto creía necesario, corrigiendo finalmente el lenguaje" (Brancaforte 16; Solalinde xxi). More modern scholarship hesitates in saying just how involved Alfonso was in the production of the *GE* (Sánchez-Prieto Borja xli; Fernández-Ordóñez, "El taller" 2-3).

This passage leads us to believe that Alfonso's participation in the universal history was substantial, but we cannot be sure that the procedure described here is what was actually followed. While we may never know the answer, we can at least say that he chose the texts that were translated and was involved in deciding what works would be newly created.[80] The scribes of the royal workshop who were, without a doubt, the most involved in the production of the *GE* likely worked in groups to translate texts from Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew into *romance*.[81] Throughout this chapter, when referring to the *taller* of translators and writers that Alfonso employed, I will most likely just use the king's name, for sake of simplicity, and because it was his personal interest and ambition that led to the creation of the universal history.

Lastly, it is important to note that the *GE*, like many of the works that came out of Alfonso's workshop, was written in *romance*. This is significant because, as Sánchez-Prieto Borja writes, "el empleo del romance en una obra de esta envergadura no encuentra antecedentes europeos" (xxxvi). During the reign of Fernando III (1199/1201-1252), the vernacular was already being used on biblical translations and chancellery documents, so it would be logical that Alfonso would continue using it in similar texts that he produced in his workshop (Sánchez-Prieto Borja xxxvi; Harris-Northall 154). It is curious, however, that he would make the decision to use the vernacular in the *GE* since his work would never gain any real importance on the international scene where Latin was the *lingua franca* amongst the well-educated (Sánchez-Prieto Borja xxxvi). In Iberia, however, his readership would exponentially increase by using the *romance*, which, according to Ramón Menéndez Pidal, he did because he wanted knowledge to

[80] For more information about Alfonso's participation in his various projects, see Sánchez-Prieto Borja (xxxix-xliv), Solalinde ("Introduction" ix-lxxxi; "Intervención" 283-88), Gonzalo Menéndez Pidal (363-80), Catalán, and Brancaforte (11-31)

[81] This process is described by Mariano Brasa Díez, Gonzalo Menéndez Pidal, and Inés Fernández-Ordóñez ("El taller").

permeate throughout his realm, likely to the more educated base of his readership (xv).[82] Wilhelmina Jonxis-Henkemans explains that we cannot know who the intended readership of the *GE* was, but clarifies that it was probably "meant for individual reading, or at most for reading aloud to a small intellectual audience" ("The Last Days" 144). In the case of the *HNAM*, which narrates the life of an absolutist monarch whose accomplishments echoed Alfonso's own imperial aspirations, the use of the vernacular would have allowed Alfonso's own subjects to read about the success of Alexander the Great to perhaps better understand the wise king's place in the line of *imperium* (as I will soon explain). Additionally, it would potentially convince more nobles that his efforts were not in vain.

3.3 The Alphonsine View of History in the *General Estoria*

As mentioned, the *GE* project, considered Alfonso's "obra magna," began towards the end of his reign when he was making his final efforts with the *fecho del imperio* (R. Menéndez Pidal xxxv). Its first three books cover biblical history, narrating the story of the patriarchs until the Babylonian Captivity, while the remaining volumes describe the rule of the gentile kings: the Persians, the Greeks (Macedonian-Greeks), and the Romans. All these civilizations ruled over empires during the height of their power a fact that the *GE* emphasizes and praises, since 'empire' is not only synonymous with power, but with divine right (Fernández-Ordóñez, *Las estorias* 33), a concept proposed by many medieval scholars, as indicated in Chapter 1. Ptolemy of Lucca explained that God "provided for kings to govern and exercise governance over their

[82] This is supported by Martin Aurell who explains that the vernacular was increasingly used in the 13th century in pedagogical texts (66-67).

kingdoms and preserve everyone according to their own right" (178). It is this idea that Alfonso utilizes to justify his imperial aspirations.

With this in mind, it is necessary to consider Alfonso's views on history and kingship. The basis of Alfonso's historical worldview focused around the concepts of *sennorio, linna, imperium,* and *translatio potestatis* (Fernández-Ordóñez 19-45). As Fernández-Ordóñez explains, the *GE* "es historia de los pueblos que *ensennorearon* la tierra…y ante todo, de sus príncipes o señores naturales" (*Las estorias* 19). S*ennorio* is shown to be the "basamento y principio ordenador de todos los *fechos* ocurridos en el mundo" and refers to any person or group that has lordship on Earth (*Las estorias* 45). *Imperium* refers to empire as we think of it today: a person or group of people who hold ultimate power over a large region.[83] The universal history emphasizes that, without kings or emperors to rule over humankind, chaos would break out and engulf the world. Therefore, it is not surprising that the *GE* uses the *linna* of kings as one of the two bases of its chronology, with the birth of Christ and biblical history being the second (Rico, *Alfonso* 69). Consequently, the first people who have *sennorio* and *imperium* are the Hebrews and they hold onto it with divine blessing for many centuries until they are punished for their sins and lose their right of *imperium* to the Medians in what is historically known as the Babylonian Captivity. This *translatio potestatis*, which is part of the divine plan, marks a shift in the *GE* from Biblical to historical kings, the most powerful of which would have *imperium* (*Las estorias* 31). The Medians lose this power to the Persians, who lose it to the Greeks (through Alexander the Great). After many years of Greek rule, *imperium* would pass to the Romans (*Las estorias* 28). The *GE* essentially narrates how this *translatio potestatis* pushes slowly westward

[83] The Persians are an example of a dynasty that gained *imperium* from God, held onto it by being the most powerful people on Earth, and passed it on as an inheritance to their heirs. All of this was done by divine blessing. When Alexander the Great fought and defeated Darius III, *imperium* was passed to the Greeks.

towards Christianity, Rome, and the medieval Holy Roman Empire. By merging the ideas of *sennorio/imperium* with biblical tradition, all ancient history is shown to be a "prologue" to Christ and Christian rule upon the Earth (Rico, *Alfonso* 69).[84]

Alfonso cements this idea in the first *parte* of the work while narrating the story of Noah, whose descendants populated the world (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* I, Book 3, Chapter IX, 109).[85] His great grandson, Nemprot (Nemrod), is considered by Alfonso to be the first king of the world, from whom all kings descend, including himself at the end of the *linna*:

> E del linaje d'este rrey Nemprot vinieron los reis de Francia e los emperadores de Roma. E de los emperadores de Roma e d'essos reis de Francia por liña vino la muy noble señora reína doña Beatriz, mugier que fue del muy noble e muy alto señor e santo don Fernado, rey de Castiella e de León, padre e madre que fueron del muy noble e alto rey don Alfonso, que fizo fazer estas estorias e muchas otras. (*General estoria, Cuarta Parte* II, "Tolomeo Filadelfo," Chapter 22, 505)

This reference shows us that, according to Alfonso, the *linna* of kings led directly to him, the King of Castile. His line descends from the first king, thereby giving him a legitimate right to rule. In addition, by mentioning his parents, he is placing them in the line of succession as well. Elisabeth of Swabia, his mother, is particularly important, since, in addition to being a first

[84] As a result of this two-track agenda to highlight both kingship and religion, we notice that biblical and traditional historical figures are as real to Alfonso as mythological ones; Jupiter and Ixion existed just as much as Abraham, Isaac, Darius and Alexander. All their life stories are blended together so that, to the medieval reader Jupiter and Isaac were contemporaries. In Book 6, Chapter 40 of the first *parte* of the *GE*, for instance, Alfonso mentions that Isaac died while Jupiter was king in Crete (*General estoria, Primera Parte* I, Book 6, Chapter 40, 385). Alfonso often tries to show simultaneous events with phrases like this or by juxtaposing a few chapters about a biblical figure with a few more about a significant monarch who supposedly ruled at the same time.

[85] Rico provides an overview of other universal histories that included biblical history (15-64).

cousin of Fredrick II, Holy Roman Emperor, she was also related to the Byzantine rulers and therefore his direct link to the Roman empire. To take this a step further, Fredrick II and his grandfather, Fredrick Barbarossa, the only two modern kings that Alfonso mentions in the entire universal history, are coincidentally listed as direct descendants of Alexander the Great in the *GE* (Rico, *Alfonso* 114). Alfonso writes:

> E del linage d'este Júpiter vino otrossí el grand Alexandre, ca este rey Júpiter fallamos que fue el rey d'este mundo…E d'él vinieron todos los reyes de Troya e los de Grecia, e Eneas, e Rómulo, e los césares e los emperadores, e el primero don Frederico, que fue primero emperador de los romanos, e don Frederic su nieto el segundo. D'este don Frederic, que fue éste otrossí emperador de Roma que alcançó fasta'l nuestro tiempo, e los <…> vienen del linage dond ellos e los sós. E todos los altos reyes del mundo d'él vienen. (*General estoria, Primera parte* I, Book 7, Chapter 43, 392)

This lineage is especially significant to Alfonso because it provides legitimacy for his own reign. As Fernández-Ordóñez explains:

> Alfonso justifica el origen divino de un sistema político en el que el personaje que posee el *imperium*, sea el rey u otra dignidad, ocupa el puesto central y obtiene el derecho al *señorio* por descendencia directa desde el primer hombre, creación de Dios. Si desde Adán a David y de éste a Jesucristo hay una línea directa, también lo es la que une a los hijos de Noé con todos los reyes de la tierra. (*Las estorias* 34)

Following this logic, Alfonso is also a part of the divine plan, connected to the most illustrious rulers from history, including Alexander and the Trojans (Rico, *Alfonso* 114). If we recall his words in the prologue of the *GE,* he claimed that he wanted to write about the history of the world "desde que fue començado fasta'l nuestro tiempo" (*General estoria, Primera parte* I, Prólogo, 5). Through six volumes, Alfonso "tenía que explicar cómo el señorío se había ido desarrollando desde el momento en que Dios lo entrega al pueblo elegido hasta que [llegó a] él, el propio Alfonso" (Gómez Redondo 703-04). With this in mind, it is not far-fetched to conclude that Alfonso's true purpose for writing the universal history was not just to create an accurate historical record, but to highlight his own greatness among a long chain of glorious predecessors who were all chosen by God. Manuel Calderón Calderón asserts that Alfonso most likely wanted to "emular las grandezas de la Antigüedad y por sentirse heredero voluntario de cierto pasado" (45). Fernández-Ordóñez adds that for Alfonso, descent from this noble lineage, "da derecho sobre el *imperium* terrenal, pero también sobre el mucho más importante dominio espiritual" (*Las estorias* 39). It is for this reason that Alfonso asserted his rights of *imperium* over what was considered a sacred post, that of Holy Roman Emperor, the only sovereign anointed and crowned by the Pope himself.

James Burke discusses the idea of *theosis*, where a "privileged individual or a privileged place was shown to be an earthly reflection of the divine plan" and how this process "comes to fruition" in Alfonso's works (465, 468). In the case of the *GE,* Alfonso weaves a carefully crafted narrative that proves that he is the rightful heir to *imperium* in the 13th century, first through his *linna,* and second, because of *translatio potestatis*. I have already shown how Alfonso believed and showed himself to be descended from Noah. The connection gives him an almost divine lineage, as well as a link to the establishment of kingship itself. On the other hand,

we can also see how, by virtue of *translatio potestatis*, *imperium* had come to the West and settled in the Holy Roman Empire, where some of Alfonso's more recent ancestors had been granted the power to lead. While the emperors of the past were not always linked by genealogy, this *translatio potestatis* becomes a new type of *linna,* one that is not based on blood, but on power, titles, and the shared responsibilities of *imperium* granted by God. The bond that unites Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great to Fredrick II and Alfonso X is that of *imperium.* This is a type of family defined by powerful men who accomplished marvelous feats during their lives (Rico, *Alfonso* 114). Alfonso not only wants to be a part of this family because of his own cultural accomplishments but believes himself to be the next link in this chain by virtue of his descendance from the first king (as well as other great kings). His only obstacle is proving that point, and the *GE* becomes his best tool to do this. As Fernando Gómez Redondo explains:

> La *General Estoria* es una gigantesca pieza de propaganda política, de promoción personal de unos derechos sucesorios; por eso, quería [buscar] las figuras claves que hubieran ostentado ese majestuoso poder, vinculándolas a los designios de Dios, y que conduce a la misma idea del *imperium* (704).

All the notable monarchs that Alfonso includes, for example, were militarily gifted (and successful) and made a significant cultural impact over their kingdoms – much like Alfonso himself believed he was doing. There are often comparisons made between Alfonso and many of these rulers as well, which never allows the audience to forget the wise king and his accomplishments.[86] In addition, the constant references to lineage and empire cannot escape

[86] One example is when the *GE* narrates the story of Cicrops, the legendary founder of Athens, who in the universal history travels to the already existing city and becomes its king. Alfonso tells us that Cicrops "renovó la cibdad e

anyone's attention, as the production of the *GE* came in the 1270s, when Alfonso was making his last, desperate attempts to be named the Holy Roman Emperor. Throughout the process, which began in 1256, he faced resistance from his own nobles who thought the endeavor was foolish, not to mention expensive (González Jiménez 119). I agree with Gómez Redondo (704) and Calderón Calderón (45) that the *GE* (along with the *EdE*) was written – at least in part – to garner support for a title that Alfonso believed he was destined to have. He created a narrative that would convince his defiant nobles that *imperium* was not something he wanted, but rather something that was rightfully his. The elaborate family tree that he weaved emphasized that his right to the Holy Roman Empire was part of the "designios divinos de la creación del mundo," and that he had been specifically chosen to govern all of the kings of Europe (Gómez Redondo 693). Alfonso was the 13th-century physical embodiment of the ideals that he valued and the only legitimate heir to a powerful bloodline. Alexander's story in the fourth *parte* serves as one link in this familial narrative that the wise king strives to weave throughout the universal history.

3.4 The *Historia novelada de Alejandro Magno*

It is generally believed that the fourth part of the *GE* was finished by 1280, the date of the earliest and most complete manuscript containing this *parte* (Jonxis-Henkemans 142, Sánchez-Prieto Borja xlii). In this manuscript, the 108 chapters that comprise the *HNAM* can be found nestled between the story of Darius (which is just one chapter), Alexander's most famous

refizo los estudios" while also instituting "la caballería centáurica" (*General estoria, Primera Parte* II, Book 12, Chapter 8, 89, 90). Towards the end of the same chapter, we are taken to 13th century Seville (conquered by Alfonso's father in 1248), where we know that the wise king established "estudios y escuelas generales de latin y de aravigo" and are further told that he invested "dozientas cavallerías que dio a dozientos cavalleros" to guard his father's body (Menéndez Pidal 366; Ballesteros-Beretta 83). The comparison is clear: Alfonso is like the great ruler who revitalized a great city known for its philosophers and wise men. On the other hand, he also surpasses Cicrops since, as we go through the passage, "los centauros quedan chicos ante los 'dozientos' de Sevilla" and the king is given the bigger honor (Rico, *Alfonso* 119). It is not only that he can compete with the Athenian, but rather outdo him.

adversary, and the story of the gentile kings in Macedonia, Asia, and Syria, who ruled during the combined 12-year reign of both men.[87] The narrative itself is comprised of popular legends about the Macedonian king, fabulous tales, letters between Darius, Alexander and Porus, as well as letters between the young king and his tutor, Aristotle, and the various rulers and communities that he meets along his travels.[88] Most scholars agree that the principal works used were the *Historia de Preliis* (*HdP*)[89] written by Archpriest Leo of Naples between 951 and 969 CE, along with excerpts taken from the 12th-century *Alexandreis* written by Walter of Chatillon (particularly a lament at the end of the 10th book), and the *Libro de los buenos proverbios* (Jonxis-Henkemans "The Last Days" 150).[90] While the first text is the source for about 96 chapters of the Alphonsine narrative (though not necessarily in the order in which it was originally written), the influence of the latter two texts can only be found in the last 10 chapters, where the narrator refers to the author of the *Alexandreis* as "maestre Galter" and recounts the wise sayings of the many philosophers who gathered at Alexander's tomb (Sánchez-Prieto Borja xxv).[91] The material from the *Alexandreis* and Walter of Chatillon comprise the moral

[87] As indicated above, the title *Historia novelada de Alejandro Magno* is the one used by González González Rolán and Pilar Saquero Suárez-Somonte in their 1982 edition of the text to refer to the narrative about Alexander the Great included in the *GE*, which states that Darius and Alexander ruled for a combined 12 years. Historically, Darius ruled over Persia from 336-330 BCE while Alexander, who officially became Emperor of Persia in 330, died in 323 BCE, which would put the actual reign of both men at 13 years.

[88] It should be noted that Alexander is also mentioned several times in other sections of the *GE*, emphasizing his role as a powerful monarch. Jonxis-Henkemans enumerates all of these references ("Alexander the Great").

[89] In their edition of the *HNAM,* Tomás González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte compare the Alphonsine narrative to the J_2 recension of the *HdP* to show that it was a likely source. The J_2 version was used as the source for a wide number of *AR* versions written in the vernacular including texts in French, Swedish, German, Italian, and Hebrew (González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte 21). The comparison is not perfect, however, and they suggest that the J_2 version that was used was contaminated with J_1 and later J_2 versions (González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte 29). Rubio suggests, and González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte agree, that the original source could also have been an Arabic manuscript (461).

[90] The information borrowed from the *Alexandreis* and the *Libro de los buenos proverbios* are both found between chapters 97 and 108, which take place after Alexander has died.

[91] Though it has been suggested that there were other sources, recent scholarship has only focused on the aforementioned texts, which then brings up questions about the influence of the *LAlex* (Jonxis-Henkemans, "The Last Days" 149; González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte 29; Solalinde xvn6). Written only about 50 years earlier, it would be completely plausible that clerical poem was known at court, but most scholars acknowledge that

judgements made against the hero and are found in the last 11 chapters of the narrative. Besides these pronouncements, there are no other criticisms made against the Macedonian in the *HNAM*.

In contrast with the better known *LAlex*, which, as we have seen, significantly altered its source material, there is debate as to just how closely the *HNAM* follows its main source, the *HdP*. Jonxis-Henkemans insists that the narrative is "an almost literal rendering of the *Historia de Preliis*, without any commentary by Alfonso" and contains "no dissertation on kingship" nor any attempts to describe either his or Alexander's imperial ambitions in great detail ("The Last Days" 154, 162, 165). She does, however, acknowledge additions throughout the work to explain certain events or to "medievalize" certain courtly practices so as to make them more intelligible to their intended audience ("The Last Days" 159). González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte echo this opinión, claiming that the Latin source they used was "fácilmente accesible por lo que nada impedía que se realizase la técnica de traducción palabra a palabra" (González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte 30).

The contrary argument, developed by Antonio G. Solalinde, Daniel Eisenberg, and David Zuwiyya, concludes that Alfonso did make alterations to the source material for his readership. Zuwiyya claims that: "The fact that a text is more than twice as long as its direct source would seem to preclude any notion of literal translation" ("The Modernization" 81). Solalinde had already noticed that Alfonso and his collaborators "muestran también su originalidad" in their revision of the source material for the *GE* through the use of *amplificatio* by adding details "de su propia invención," and by correcting some information like names and numbers; he also acknowledges that they did not comment upon the events of the narrative very much (xvii-xviii).

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it was most certainly not a source for the *GE* narrative (Sánchez-Prieto Borja lxvii; Jonxis-Henkemens, "The Last Days" 142-43).

When specifically discussing Biblical source material, Daniel Eisenberg suggests that Alfonso's work is more of a "compilation rather than a translation" of its source material (Eisenberg 210-12, Zuwiyya, "The Modernization" 82). After my own reading of the *HNAM* as well as other versions of the *AR*, I believe that, while a large portion of the Alphonsine version stays close to its source material, there are definitely additions and changes made with the aim of expanding the text significantly, as well as organizing and facilitating the reading of the narrative for its medieval audience. As outlined by Zuwiyya ("The Modernization" 84-85, 87, 90-91), some of these include: the ability to see the inner thoughts of the characters, the dramatization of scenes (especially battles), the motivation behind certain actions, references to the audience, descriptive chapter headings, insertion of details of 13th-century courtly life, and the exaggeration of numbers (in battle, for example). If we consider these changes in the larger scheme of the *GE*, Alexander's inclusion made the universal history more dynamic for his audience while also strengthening Alfonso's rationale for including him in a project that was used to both praise great kings of the past, as well as uphold his own glorious lineage.

To discuss how the *HNAM* portrays kingship and how Alfonso manifests his own views on the topic through Alexander, I will build upon Jonxis-Henkemans's belief that the Alexander of the *HdP* already portrayed the young king as larger than life and an epic hero, someone to marvel at, an adventurer, a strategist, a wiseman, and a merciful and generous ruler ("The Last Days" 164-65). In this way, he already embodied Alfonso's views on kingship. The modifications in the *HNAM* served to bolster the image of the Macedonian king and, therefore, his own ambitions, presenting himself as a new Alexander for the 13th century. For this reason, during my analysis, I will mention the *HdP* only if a specific episode in the *HNAM* shows a

significant departure from its source material, thereby changing the intentionality of the Alphonsine text.

In the following sections, I will discuss key moments in the narrative that describe what type of a monarch Alexander is in the *HNAM*, and by extension, what type of monarch Alfonso valued, keeping in mind the various theories on kingship presented in Chapter 1 regarding the qualities and responsibilities of the ruler that were circulating through Western Europe in this time. In addition, I will also analyze the last 8 chapters of the narrative to ascertain what moral reflections were included by the Alphonsine authors and discuss their purpose and effect as compared to the moral digressions of the *LAlex* discussed in Chapter 2.

3.4.1 Legitimacy in the *HNAM*

Although this topic does not play a large role in the political theory presented in Chapter 1, legitimacy holds an important place in the *HNAM* (much like in the *LAlex*) as well as in the *GE*. As I have already pointed out, Alfonso's universal history was essentially a lengthy timeline of kingship and *imperium* that served to prove his connection to God, to important biblical figures, as well as great rulers of the past. Each of the featured rulers took their thrones by legitimate means: by inheriting it or by conquest. In the end, however, each of them owed their *sennorio* to God, since it was He who ultimately determined who deserved the "divine right" to rule. Alfonso's aim through the *GE* was to show how he was the only legitimate claimant to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, and I believe that Alexander's example in the *HNAM* provided a model that he could at least appreciate if not follow, since it demonstrates how legitimacy is fundamental to any monarch if he wants to take and assert his power.

Unlike the *LAlex* and the *Rrekontamiento*, the *HNAM* opens with a very elaborate birth story that serves to establish Alexander's legitimate claims to rule over two kingdoms as well as the whole world. The conqueror is shown to be the son of an Egyptian King, Neptanabo, who, using sorcery, seduces the Macedonian Queen, Olympias, in the form of a dragon-God, Amon, and then convinces her husband, Philip, to rear the child as his own (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 1-7, 302-12).[92] The *HNAM*, unlike the *LAlex*, makes it clear that Neptanabo is Alexander's biological father, and that Philip only accepts him because he thinks he is the son of a god.[93] Therefore, Alexander has two fathers in his life and two inheritances that he can claim: Through Neptanabo he is the legitimate Pharaoh of Egypt; because he has been formally accepted by Philip he is the King of Macedon. Alexander carefully utilizes each of these connections to accomplish his goals and cement his legitimacy as king, as emperor, and finally as world conqueror.[94]

This process of legitimization begins at the age of 12 when, after overhearing his mother talking to Neptanabo about how her son does not resemble Philip, Alexander takes the Egyptian

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[92] To clarify, Neptanabo is in Macedonia because the Persians attacked Egypt, forcing him to flee. After leaving, he disguises himself as a poor man and travels first to Ethiopia and later to Macedonia. When he settles in Philip's kingdom he gains a reputation as a wiseman and seer/fortune teller (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 1-2, 303-05).

[93] Neptanabo uses his sorcery to send Philip a dream where he sees Amon seal his wife's womb with a golden ring that is adorened with a stone, and the images of a lion's head, a sun chariot, and a sword. When the King wakes, a dream interpreter tells him that his wife has been impregnated by a god and that the child would conquer many kingdoms (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 6-7, 310). Months later when Alexander is born, Philip declares to his wife that he will raise Alexander as his son: "…entiendo que concebiste tú de dios, porque veo que se mudaron los elementos e trimieron e veo que se fazen otros signos en el so Nacimiento. Onde tengo por bien que se críe el infant a aquella manera de como se criarié si fuesse mio fijo proprio, e assí como aquel otro fijo que ove de la otra mi mugier que murió quiero quell pongan nombre Alexandre" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 7, 312).

[94] Although the comparison is not exact, in many ways the *GE* serves the same purpose for Alfonso that the first few chapters of the *HNAM* do for Alexander. One of the goals of the universal history was to clearly demonstrate Alfonso's legitimate claims to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, which it does by linking him to a long history of *sennorio* and *imperium*. Although Alfonso is not given an elaborate birth story, he emphasizes his descent from Elisabeth of Swabia and Ferdinand III, both of whom gave him the right over two thrones, and he uses the *GE* to show his connection to both historic and Biblical patriarchs who had *imperium.* The *GE* is a type of kingly pedigree used to legitimize Alfonso's aspirations.

to a high tower and pushes him to his death. Before he dies, the older man reveals the truth of his parentage, which Alexander accepts but never divulges to anyone except his mother – a fact that is crucial to the story (*General estoria*, *Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 8, 314). In this moment, much like in the *LAlex*, "killing the father, whether real or reputed, is about identifying and establishing a relationship with the source of royal power," which is again, Philip (Weiss 114).[95] Alexander recognizes that his relationship to Philip will get him power and so he takes quick action and destroys anything that could hinder his path to the throne. Philip, having never learned the truth, continues to raise Alexander as his own literal gift from God, and when the young prince tames Bucifal at the age of 15, he promises that he will be king upon his death: "Fijo Alexandre, agora coñocí yo en ti todas las respuestas de los dioses, que tú deves regnar después de la mi muerte" (*General estoria*, *Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 9, 315). Alexander accepts and they both carry out the necessary rituals to formalize the declaration (*General estoria*, *Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 9, 315).[96] Years later when Philip lies dying, he calls Alexander "fijo" and praises him for killing his assassin, Pausanius, which is reminiscent of what we see in the *LAlex*: Philip's death – and especially the revenge killing – "revolve around the transmission of royal power from father to son" (Weiss 116). Unlike the poem, however, there is no ceremony to celebrate Alexander, nor a formal coronation. Alexander is accepted as king without any question. What is key here is perception. Alexander's ability to manage and contain the rumor of his true parentage, while also establishing himself as the only person worthy of the throne, earns him power. From the perspective of a fellow king,

[95] In both the *LAlex* and the *HNAM*, Alexander kills Neptanabo because eliminating the seer would end the rumors of his illegitimate birth. In the case of the *HNAM*, however, the rumor is true and is acknowledged by Neptanabo, by Olympias, and by Alexander. With Neptanabo dead, however, both Olympias and Alexander can keep this secret hidden and Alexander can continue living as Philip's son and heir to the throne.

[96] In the *LAlex*, we never see Alexander formally declared as the heir, but we do see the ceremony where he takes his first steps into manhood by leading his own self-investiture. In the *HNAM*, Alexander is formally declared as heir and asks Philip to organize the necessary ceremonies to formalize his new position.

Alexander's decisive action in killing both Neptanebo and Pausanius was necessary if he wanted to achieve his goals and ascend to the throne. While Alfonso may not have had to worry about illegitimate parentage, the example that Alexander provides at such a young age shows how a monarch should deal with any threat to power.

Similarly, the *HNAM* also demonstrates how to seize opportunities when they come along, as evidenced when the Macedonian travels to Egypt at the start of his campaign. Upon arriving, he sees a statue that resembles himself with a prophecy below it that reads: "después de yacuanto tiempo que se devié tornar a ellos mancebo desechado de sí la vejez e que vengarié a ellos de sus enemigos conqueriendo a ellos e a los otros" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 3, 306).[97] Alexander quickly understands that Neptanabo was the Egyptian Pharaoh and that by virtue of his resemblance to his biological father, and the prophecy, he could claim to be the new legitimate ruler of Egypt. Seizing the opportunity, he publicly reveals his parentage without any fear or backlash.[98] As a result of his decisive action, Alexander, following Egyptian tradition, becomes a god-king upon ascending to the throne and gains exceptional powers. While this could be seen as problematizing his right to the Macedonian throne, Alexander has already proven himself to be the best option to lead the Greeks because of his hegemony over them and because Philip gave him the throne believing that he was the son of a god. Even if he was not Philip's blood, to the Macedonians, he certainly was Philip's chosen heir.

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[97] The phrase "mancebo desechado de sí la vejez" is written as "debet reverti ad vos iuvenis eiciendo a se senectutem" in the source material (*Historia de preliis* 44). Pritchard, in his edition of the *AR* translates the phrase as "he is to return to you as a young man" (14), while Stoneman's edition reads "this king...will return to Egypt not as an old man but as a youth" (*The Greek Alexander* 37).

[98] Alexander's ascension to the Egyptian throne also anticipates and legitimizes Greek control in the region beyond the Macedonian. Upon his death, his general Ptolemy will take control of Egypt and use his connection to Alexander to establish his own Macedonian-Egyptian dynasty.

If we return to Alexander's ascension to the Egyptian throne, this is one episode that has been expanded by Alfonso and does bolster Alexander's image from the *HdP,* which simply ends with Alexander kissing the statue of his father (*Historia de Preliis,* Chapter 25, 68). The *HNAM* goes on to explain how the Egyptians watching this scene finally understood the prophecy, that they accepted Alexander as their "señor natural," and that Alexander "les puso recabdo de cómo visquiessen em paz e en justicia bien assí como ellos quisieron e lo demandaron" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 14, 324). The information added by Alfonso acknowledges that the Egyptians accepted Alexander as their king without question, and that once he had assumed his position, he went about carrying out his duties as a ruler: upholding justice and keeping the peace – most likely with the rule of law. In Chapter 1, we saw how one of the basic duties of a monarch is to utilize law to better society. There are other examples in the *GE* that demonstrate how other monarchs brought order by introducing law. For example, in the first *parte* of the *GE,* we are told that Nemprot, the first king, "compuso leyes," while his son, the king Jupiter, known to be a *sabio,* civilized his people by bringing them law and making them wiser (*Primera parte* I, Book 6, Chapter 20, 302; Book 7, Chapter 42, 388). Similarly, Alfonso, also known as "el Sabio," worked to educate his people through his cultural achievements like the *GE,* and famously codified local *fueros* in his lands to create the *Siete Partidas*, with the goal of teaching people how to "creer y guardar la fe de Jesucristo, así como ella es, y otrosí de cómo sepan vivir los unos con los otros bien y ordenadamente según el placer de Dios y otrosí, según conviene a la vida de este mundo, viviendo en derecho y en justicia" (*Partida* I, Título I, Ley I).[99] Establishing laws, upholding

[99] Additionally, Alfonso, like Jupiter, has fulfilled the role of a good king as well, since he worked tirelessly to educate his people through his cultural achievements like the *GE.*

justice, and maintaining peace are seen to be fundamental jobs for a king, and in a way, legitimize him, since he not only has ascended to the throne but carries out the necessary duties required of him. Alexander formally establishes himself as the *señor natural* of the Egyptians because of the prophecy, because of his lineage, and because he has governed his people through the rule of law; that is to say he proves his legitimacy through blood and through action. Similarly, Alfonso, who is a descendent of these men, proves that he has the legitimate lineage to earn him the imperial throne and, like his predecessors, demonstrates that he can carry out his duties.

The final episode regarding legitimization in the *HNAM* involves Alexander's ascension to the Persian throne. Every iteration of the *AR* makes it clear that defeating Darius in battle was not enough for Alexander. He needed to find the man himself to have total victory. This eventually leads him to find Darius alone and dying after being fatally wounded by his own men. With his last words, the Persian monarch bequeaths his lands and his family to the Macedonian:

> Alexandre, fijo, rógote yo mucho que ayas tú en la tu comienda a doña Rogodoni mi madre e que la ayas tú en remembrança de la tu madre, e que ayas otrossí piedad de mi mugier. E a doña Roxani mi fija toma tu por tu mugier e casa con ella, ca los fijos que de buenos parientes vienen conviene que se ayunten en uno, e tú vienes de Filippo e Roxani viene de Dario. (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 39, 356)

There are two notable aspects of this quote. One is that Darius calls Alexander "fijo," a term of endearment that very shows that he is, at this point, considered part of the Persian king's

family.[100] The second important aspect is that, like Philip and Neptanabo before him, Darius now leaves his kingdom to his male "heir."[101] To further solidify the transition, his daughter, Roxani is given in marriage to Alexander, thereby serving as the final link to publicly legitimize the younger man's right to the Persian throne. From this moment on, Alexander calls himself "rey de los reis," the traditional title for Persian kings (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 40, 357). The last step is to carry out justice by capturing Darius's assassins, Narbozones and Besso, as he did with Philip's assassin to complete the transition of power. While in both the *LAlex* and the *Rrekontamiento* this action is seen as proof of how Alexander punishes traitors and upholds justice, in my opinion, in the *HNAM*, this can also be seen as a way to quash any challenges to the throne. Regicide is a common way to conquer another kingdom – it is how Alexander will take over Porus's throne in Chapter 55 – and therefore it is logical to presume that Narbozones and Besso posed a threat to Alexander's throne since they were the ones who actually killed Darius. Their deaths once again solidify and legitimize the Macedonian's right to the Persian throne.

Related to this once again is the act of fulfilling one's duties as king, in this case by upholding justice. In the *LAlex*, while Alexander claims that he wants to avenge Darius, he allows Besso to be killed by another member of his court and is convinced by an advisor to let Narbozones go. As a result, he receives his first criticism from the cleric-author (*Libro de Alexandre* 1862d). But that is not true in most iterations of the *AR*: Both men are executed in the *HdP*, in the Greek *AR*, in the Syriac version of the *AR*, in the Ethiopian version of the *AR*, and in

[100] Like in the *LAlex*, Alexander has already gained custody of members of Darius's family, namely his mother and wife who he treats with great respect (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 30, 345).
[101] Earlier, after facing a devastating defeat, Darius actually called Alexander "Mio señoreador," which demonstrates his symbolic acceptance that Alexander now has *sennorio* over him (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 32, 347).

the *Rrekontamiento*, to name a few (*Historia de Preliis*, Chapter 75, 112; *The Greek Alexandre Romance* 112; *The History of Alexander Son of Philip King of the Macedonians,* Book II, Chapter 13, 84; *The Alexander Book in Ethiopia* 57, *Rrekontamiento* 107).[102] We already know from Chapter 2 that Alfonso believed that traitors should be punished harshly by receiving a horrible death, losing all of their property, and having their houses and lands destroyed (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title XIII, Law VI, 346-47). With this in mind, the *HNAM* not only shows how Alexander fulfills his duties as a king to the letter of the law, but also how he once again acts decisively. Alexander is an absolute monarch, one who does not waver and cannot be swayed, and most importantly, one who acts with complete authority. Given that Alfonso faced so many troubles from his nobles, it is understandable that he would emphasize such a strong example of kingship, where the ruler is not held back by any governing body but is allowed to act as he wishes.

If we consider all of this in the context of the *GE*, there are parallels that we can draw between Alexander and Alfonso. As explained earlier, throughout the six *partes* of the universal history the wise king strived to show that all the great kings of the past who had *sennorío* in some moment were related through a *linna* of inheritance, specifically through their divine right to rule. We know that he intended to narrate history until his own reign, including himself in the *GE* as the last link in the genealogical chain. Even though he did not get that far in writing the universal history, Alfonso did attempt to highlight how he descended from Holy Roman Emperors through his matrilineal line, thereby fortifying his claim to the imperial throne even more. Alexander served as an ideal model upon whom Alfonso could base his own imperial

[102] In contrast, the *Alexandreis*, which served as the principal source material for the *LAlex*, describes how Alexander allowed Narbozones to walk free and gave Besso over to Darius's brother (*Alexandreis,* Book 8, 179, 190).

claim since he utilized his many connections to legitimize his rights to three kingdoms as well as his world conquest. Alfonso was the natural heir to Castile and Leon, married to the daughter of the king of Aragon, claimed hegemony over the other Iberian rulers, and through his mother, descended from emperors who themselves descended from gods. Through his carefully crafted family history, he portrayed himself not only as a king worthy of recognition, but as the natural choice to be Holy Roman Emperor.

3.4.2 Education in the *HNAM*

Each of the medieval theorists from Chapter 1 believed that a king needed to be well educated in order to rule. Vincent of Beauvais went so far as to claim that "un rey ignorante es como un asno coronado" (Chapter XV). Alfonso is famous today for his wisdom, and carefully described the education of young nobles in the *Siete Partidas.* He believed that they needed to study the *trivium* and the *quadrivium* along with the law, as well as read the story of past kings to learn from their actions (*Las Siete Partidas*, *Partida* II, Title XXXI, Law I, 527; Title XXI, Law XX 428). Giles of Rome echoes these same beliefs claiming that, if princes do not receive a good education at a young age, "tornarse han en tiranos" (Giles of Rome 2: 149, 2: 153-59).

Given that Alexander is well-known for his wisdom and cultural achievements, it is curious that the *HNAM* does not go into detail about Alexander's education like the *LAlex*, especially if we consider that the Macedonian's most famous teacher was Aristotle. In the *Siete Partidas,* Alfonso warns that the tutor of the prince should be a man with good habits from a family with a good reputation since he was to watch over all aspects of the future king's life, including his eating, his drinking, his repose and his demeanor (*Partida* II, Title VII, Law IV, 302). This is certainly true in the *HNAM,* which tells us that Alexander is taught by the best

philosophers from Athens – Aristotle, Calisten and Maximene – who prepare him to rule using the seven liberal arts (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 9, 315). The mention of the liberal arts was the only addition made by Alfonso from the *HdP*, probably to clarify to his readers what Alexander was specifically learning (*Historia de Preliis* Chapter 14, 56).[103]

From here, the *HNAM* goes on to discuss Alexander's numerous military achievements, all accomplished before he was sixteen. Giles of Rome insisted that the knowledge of warfare rather than the use of the weapon was most important for a king (3: 297). From the narrative, we know that Alexander was well-prepared, given his many military successes, his ability to strategically overcome the armies of more experienced monarchs and generals, and his conquest of the whole world (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 10, 36, 48, 53-54, 57-64, 68-70, 76-79, 80-85).

Returning again to the idea of image, Alexander's education provides another example of how Alfonso desired to be viewed by others. In the second volume of the *Siete Partidas*, Alfonso X lists the seven liberal arts, along with law, as the ideal subjects that a royal heir must cover (Alfonso X, *Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title XXXI, Law I). The addition of this detail in the *HNAM* cannot be a coincidence, since from Alfonso's perspective, a king as wise and successful as Alexander must have had a thorough education to accomplish all that he had in life. On the one hand, the mention of the liberal arts was, as mentioned above, to clarify what the

[103] Although Alexander does not expand upon this topic in the *HNAM*, in the first part of the *GE*, Alfonso does take five chapters to describe the significance of these subjects when he presents Jupiter, another wise king (*General estoria, Primera parte* I, Book 7, Chapters 35-39, 378-85). Perhaps Alfonso hoped that his readers would already understand the value of a thorough education from his earlier explanation and did not find any need to repeat this information in the *HNAM*.

Macedonian studied, but on the other, it also served as a way to draw a comparison between the education of Alexander and the wisdom and intelligence of Alfonso as well.

That being said, Alfonso does not go into further detail about Alexander's formal 'classroom' education but does highlight his role as a celebrated warrior and war strategist. It is well known that Alfonso's many military campaigns within the Peninsula and to North Africa were carefully planned to strengthen his claims to the imperial throne (Doubleday 103). The truth is, however, that while he had some successes in Iberia against the Muslims, Alfonso never became the warrior-king that his father, his grandfather, his great-grandfather, and Alexander were. In fact, each king that held *imperium* in the *GE* was equally talented, and they were all related to Alfonso in some way. Alfonso likely wanted to project this same image to the naysayers of his court who did not support his imperial interests. Interestingly enough, as I have shown in Chapter 2, the *LAlex,* written just half a century earlier, focused on Alexander as a scholar-king in order to demonstrate both the advantages and problems that educated warriors could face. Alfonso chooses to avoid that here and to focus solely on the conqueror. The *HNAM* is about a king written from the perspective of a king who already had numerous cultural achievements under his belt. In his struggle to project himself as a well-rounded monarch, one who was already known in his kingdom as a scholar, Alfonso chose to emphasize the Alexander's military prowess with the hopes that his intended audience would see parallels between himself and his predecessor.

3.4.3 Vice and Virtue in the *HNAM*

Justice, temperance, fortitude, and prudence: these were commonly considered to be the cardinal virtues that, together with the theological virtues, faith, hope and charity, any good

Christian, and especially a worthy king, must have to lead his subjects. From these main virtues flow many others, including mercy, clemency, humility, wisdom, courage, honor, glory, cleverness, chastity, patience, a contempt for earthly goods, diligence, beatitude, truthfulness, love of God, magnanimity, liberality, sobriety, and caution. Brunetto Latini stressed that moderation and restraint were necessary to live a well-balanced life, meaning that any type of excess could be dangerous for a ruler (*Il Tesoretto* lines 1284-86).[104] Alfonso agrees with Latini, citing temperance as his second virtue, preceded by patience, and followed by fortitude and justice (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title V, Law VIII, 289-90). In contrast, qualities such as pride, ambition, excess luxury, vanity, jealousy, slander, carnal desire, listening to too much flattery, stealing from his subjects, and the desire for honor, glory, and fame were seen as vices (Álvaro Pais 1: 181,193, 2: 3; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 18; Thomas Aquinas 30-4, Chapter 3, 18; Sancho IV, 139; Brunetto Latini, *Il Tesoretto* lines 2840-45; Giles of Rome: 1: 225). Giles of Rome adds that extreme emotions such as anger, boldness, hope, love, and desire were also to be avoided at all costs (1: 302-03). A king who prefers to engage in any of these vices seeks to better himself and not serve the common good; he is therefore considered selfish and an unjust leader of his community.

The *HNAM* is not the clerical or scholarly work of a political theorist, but a narrative about a king, that is placed within a work that celebrated kings, and commissioned by a king; therefore, it is a reflection of kingly values. Although a ruler had to live up to certain ideals, ultimately he was a man who was capable of succumbing to very human desires. At times, these desires could lead a monarch to lose his way, so much so that his goals and ideology would cease to align with those described by political theorists. Thomas Aquinas believed that many good

[104] Maravall explains that moderation, or *mesura*, was a fundamental part of *cortesía*, a code of conduct that that all virtuous men were required to know ("La cortesía" 532, 533)

men who were virtuous before they gained power lost their virtue as they reached the height of that power (42). From the perspective of the theorists presented in Chapter 1, such as Aquinas, Alexander falls victim to many of the vices listed above. Unlike the *LAlex,* however, which has a moral agenda, he is not criticized for these qualities at any moment in the *HNAM*. In fact, Alexander does not possesses nearly half of the common virtues I have mentioned, and instead suffers from excessive pride, ambition and an intense desire to seek out fame, glory, and honor. Rather than criticize him for his faults, the lack of commentary by Alfonso seems to present these vices as virtues that help the young ruler to succeed and act as a more efficient leader. Given that the *HNAM* was not written from a moral-religious perspective, it is understandable that these vices were not necessarily regarded as such and morally condemned by Alfonso. They seem to form the image of a strong, noble monarch who is loved by all.

Throughout the *HNAM* Alexander possesses wisdom, compassion, fortitude, and maintains a strong sense of justice. These virtues are fundamental to how the Macedonian keeps the trust of his soldiers so far from home, and how he is able to organize his eastward campaign. A large part of this is due to his wisdom, which Alfonso believed was very "provechosa a su gente," since through it they were to be "mantenidos con derecho" (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Título V, Ley XVI). In the case of the *HNAM,* Alexander's wisdom is used to manage various situations in order to maintain support for his further campaigns. An early example of this is when he takes the time to unite the Greeks under his rule before moving to confront Darius in Asia (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 12, 320). When his older soldiers request to be left out of the campaign, he instead insists that they come along because of their wisdom and experience, thereby proving that he himself was wise enough to understand his own weaknesses as an unseasoned warrior-king (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el

Grand," Chapter 12, 320).[105] In addition, he proves his wisdom and cleverness time and time again when he fights the various creatures that he encounters in India, using the knowledge that he must have gained from his studies (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 53, 58, 68), as well as when finds ingenious solutions to confuse both the Persian army and the elephants of the Indian Army (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 36, 48). Additionally, he figures out how to harness two griffins so that he can visit the heavens (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 80). Finally, he has the foresight to write to his mother when he learns of his impending death to help her cope with the loss (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 80).

This last example also points to Alexander's compassion. In the *Siete Partidas,* Alfonso encourages rulers to be gracious to their subjects, as well as to be liberal when possible (*Las Siete Partida* II, Título V, Law XVIII, 295). Alexander does demonstrate these traits to his fellow Greeks as well as to his enemies. One example can be seen in Asia, when Alexander comes upon a tower full of mutilated Greek prisoners who are crying out in agony. Feeling pity for them, he not only frees them, but provides them with 1,000 dragmas of gold and promises to return all their belongings (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 38, 354). Another example, and perhaps the one that showcases his compassion best, is his treatment of Darius when the older man is found dying alone. The *GE* tells us that Alexander lamented the death of the older man openly and loudly and covered his body with his own (*Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 39, 356).[106] Finally, when he himself is dying, Alexander,

[105] In the *LAlex,* it is Aristotle who gives Alexander this advice (*Libro de Alexandre*, stanza 61).

[106] Other examples are when he refrains from punishing people who have attacked him simply because they were following the directions of their king. The Jews refuse to give him their allegiance because they had sworn loyalty to Darius. Alexander not only forgives the Jews but allows them to live according to their laws and follow their faith because he had a vision from God (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 14, 325). He

touched by the emotions displayed by his soldiers, embraces and kisses each one and allows them to choose the next leader of Macedon (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 95, 418-19). Alexander's ability to empathize with those around him makes him a better person, one who is both "man of the people" and leader.

With regards to the latter, fortitude is another virtue that the Macedonian possesses that help to make him an excellent king and army general. Fortitude, Alfonso believed, would push a man to love and constantly pursue what is good in life. (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title V, Law VIII, 295). Alexander's fortitude is first shown when he launches his campaign against the Persians in order to save the Greeks from subjugation (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 12, 320). We see more evidence of this quality each time his army faces frightening new creatures, as well as when he begins exploring previously unknown parts of the world (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 48, 53-54, 57-64, 68-70, 76-79, 80-85). His fortitude and willingness to fight and bleed with his men plays a large part, along with his charismatic personality, that draws people to him.

Finally, the last virtue I will mention is Alexander's sense of justice, a quality that Alfonso believed was the root of all goodness since it encompasses all of the other virtues (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title V, Law VIII, 295). Much like the *LAlex,* upholding justice is synonymous with punishing traitors and evil men. Alfonso believed that all traitors must be severely punished for turning against their lords (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title XIII, Law VI, 346-47). This is certainly the case in the *HNAM.* The best example is Alexander's tireless pursuit and execution of Darius's assassins, which demonstrates his dedication to serving justice

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does the same for the Indian army after the death of Porus (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 55, 378).

at any cost (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 41, 358). In another episode, when Alexander receives a letter stating that his doctor was poisoning him, he proves his trust in the man by drinking the medicine offered to him by him, and instead, he kills the accuser, one of his own generals. The *HNAM* is careful to show that Alexander always upholds the law and punishes those who do wrong, which is the basic function of any monarch. In the case of treason, there is also an added interest in protecting the figure of the king against anyone who plots against him; for this reason, Alfonso is especially motivated to present Alexander as the eliminator of traitors.

Through these examples, we can see that Alexander has many virtues that endear him to his subjects as well as help him to achieve his many successes. More importantly, from the perspective of medieval scholars, as well as that of Alfonso, he possesses traits that make him a good leader. He uses his wisdom to make important decisions as well as keep his men safe, his compassion to connect with his fellow soldiers, his fortitude to continuously and successfully lead his army into dangerous situations, and his sense of justice to uphold law and order for the benefit of his empire. Alexander is not only a leader, but a "man of the people," someone who can make laws and punish criminals, mingle with other kings and wealthy nobles, and wage war, as well as "acquaint himself" with the poorest of his soldiers. While he is most certainly wise, this Alexander is not a scholar-king like the one we saw in the *LAlex,* but rather a warrior-king who happens to be well-educated. For Alfonso, these would be ideal traits for a Holy Roman Emperor to possess, especially since he himself was much more of a scholar than a warrior and struggled to maintain the support of the nobility in the Peninsula throughout his reign, especially concerning matters related to the *fecho del imperio* (Doubleday 203-24; Foerster 76). Alexander provided an appealing image that he could use to mirror his own dreams. He was strong,

confident, and most importantly, used his positive traits to maintain the support of his army despite his insistence on pursuing wild, unnecessary adventures in unknown lands. In contrast, Alfonso was losing the support of his nobles towards the end of his reign, especially on the battlefield, a fact that embittered him greatly (Doubleday 118-20). Alexander's great ambition, his virtues, and the unyielding support of his soldiers were what Alfonso would want others to see in him in order to convince them that his imperial ambitions were indeed attainable and that he was the man who could attain them.

But how does this positive image account for Alexander's many vices? Although the *LAlex* may not have been used by Alfonso when he composed the *HNAM*, we know that he was familiar with the *Alexandreis*, since it plays a role in the chapters immediately following Alexander's life story. The former, as we saw in Chapter 1, criticizes Alexander for his pride, while the latter reproaches him for his loss of virtue and his corruption due to luxury among other things. Since his death, Alexander had long been lauded for his wisdom, liberality and prowess, but severely criticized for his vices, especially in the 12th and 13th centuries (Aurell 236, 237). While the *HNAM* has almost no criticism of the Macedonian, medieval theorists certainly did. Ptolemy of Lucca explains that Alexander was ultimately a failure because he gave into luxury, was ungrateful for all he had gained in life, and for not being more mindful of his affairs (168). Sancho IV praises him for his many achievements but admonishes him for losing everything because of a "maldat de coraçon" (172). Finally, Vincent of Beauvais mentions him several times when discussing the dangers of earthly power and the harsh punishments that any ruler would receive should he attempt to go beyond the limits set by divine law (Chapter VII). Alexander was not perfect, yet Alfonso chooses to ignore his flaws, especially his lack of temperance and patience, both of which he cites in the *Siete Partidas* as necessary virtues for any

king (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title V, Law VIII, 289-90).[107] Interestingly enough, both of these qualities function in similar ways: to help a ruler pause and reflect before taking any rash decisions as well as to maintain an emotional equilibrium when faced with stressful situations; they are essentially two manifestations of the central courtly virtue of *mesura*. In the case of Alexander, they would have forced him to reconsider his foolish dreams of world conquest and instead appreciate what he had been given in life. Instead, it is precisely this lack of *mesura* that, from a theoretical perspective, causes Alexander to cross limits and betray his responsibilities as a monarch.

In every iteration of the *AR*, the driving force behind Alexander's eastward expansion is rooted in ambition and pride and in his search for fame and knowledge. In order to fulfill these goals, he displays the additional vices of extreme desire and boldness. Alexander does not want to stop exploring the world no matter what happens, and this becomes increasingly apparent to the audience as the narrative suddenly shifts from focusing on Alexander's conquests to his travels and many discoveries (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 53-60). In Chapter 54, we are told that God shows Alexander the mysteries of the world so that he can conquer it during his life:

> Mostráronse aquella noche al grand Alexandre cerca aquel estanco muchas de las maravillas que nuestro Señor Dios tenié encubiertas en los elementos del agua e de la tierra e del aer…E por ende nuestro Señor Dios mostról aqulla noche allí aquellas maravillas, por mostrar otrossí e provar que quisiera él que en punto naciesse Alexandre

[107] Liberality is another trait that is not seen in the *HNAM,* which is interesting since Alexander became known for his generosity. There are many examples of gifts that he receives from other kings, but only one concrete example of Alexander giving wealth and other gifts to his own men, which happens after his wedding to the Persian princess (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 14, 51, 70, 43).

> que venciesse a todas las cosas del mundo con que se tomasse e que el so poder de Dios en todas cosas es egualmient tan mu poderoso que non ay más mester. (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 54, 376)

While the *LAlex* makes it clear that Alexander's adventures are done without divine consent, the *HNAM* explains that the Macedonian had God's approval to explore and conquer. What we see is a monarch that has been blessed by the divine to conquer and rule over the entire world. There are no earthly limitations to Alexander's reach and being a king that has been given both *sennorio* and *imperium*, he is uniquely qualified to rule over the known world. For this reason, during his campaign against Porus, Alexander takes the time to explore India and fight the fierce beasts (such as crocodiles, hippopotami, lions, and an odontotyrannus) and the 'savage' people that he encounters. While this is shown to be God's wish in the *HNAM,* from the perspective of medieval theory, Alexander is no longer worried about the common good, since these adventures do not bring him any closer to defeating Porus, and he does not have his own kingdom's best interests at heart.

This obsession with adventure and personal ambition is never more evident than after Darius has been overthrown and Alexander becomes the Emperor of Persia. His army begs him to return to Macedonia, but Alexander shames them into continuing on, claiming that he had led them into battle and saved their lives numerous times. He adds that they needed a king to lead them: "que ninguna cosa non puede fazer la cavallería de la huest sin el consejo del rey" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 45, 363). Alexander is no longer working for the people, but rather for his own benefit, and he is willing to manipulate the lord-vassal relationship in order to achieve his personal goals. At this moment, Alexander has

ceased to be the ideal king that the theorists describe, but a man serving his own ambitions and challenging his army to act against him, knowing full well that they will not. In fact, instead of arguing further, his soldiers promise to follow him till the end: "¡O tú, muy grand emperador, d'aquí adelant la nuestra vida puesta es en las tus manos, e oquier que tú quieras ve, ca nós por ninguna guisa non te dexaremos que te non sigamos, e así te lo dezimos!" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 45, 363). The lack of criticism here further supports the image of kingship that Alfonso wishes to portray. A king leads and commands his people and it is their duty to obey.

Gómez Redondo also points out that the Alexander of the *HNAM* suffers from excessive pride, which is a vice typically associated with the Macedonian.[108] Here however, this trait is what makes the Macedonian a fierce and confident leader, as evidenced by his ability to stand up to bullies like Nicolás (a Greek king who he challenges at age 15) and Darius. As he continues gaining more power, his pride increases even more. In a letter to Porus, Alexander boldly explains: "sepas que yo vengo a lidiar contigo como con omne e bárvaro lleno de escogencia e de vanagloria e non como con dios, ca las armas de un dios non las podié sofrir todo el mundo, nin las tuyas farié si tú dios fuesses" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 47, 366). Alexander is comparing himself to a God, which the author-cleric of the *LAlex* would likely have criticized, but Alfonso leaves without the slightest comment. This pride will also be demonstrated in Alexander's interaction with the gymnosophists and the Brahmins (as described in the following section) where he refuses to accept their criticism of his greed and instead, believing himself to be justified in his actions, defends his own position without considering their argument.

[108] As we saw in Chapter 1, the *LAlex* highlights pride as Alexander's greatest vice and the author-cleric criticizes him for his transgressions against Nature and God because of this vice.

In addition to the traits already listed, Alexander also exhibits other vices that are described by medieval theorists. Giles of Rome, for example, mentions anger, a changing nature, and a proclivity to violence, and a tendency to lie and argue as the vices of youth (1: 302-303). He also considers any extreme emotions like boldness and desire to be detrimental to a king. Alexander, who died at the early age of 32, most certainly exhibits all these qualities. In his reactions to Darius's emissary at a young age, to Nicolás' challenge when he was 15, as well as Candaucis's revelation that she knew his identity even though he entered her city in disguise, Alexander demonstrates a propensity to anger when challenged (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapters 9-10, 316; Chapter 12, 74; Chapter 74, 400). These moments also act as proof of Alexander's changing nature, since the transition between his usually energetic and positive demeanor and his anger is a quick one. In addition, as a warrior-king, the Macedonian is certainly violent and has razed several kingdoms to the ground, including Syria and Tyre (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 14, 15). In his correspondence with his fellow monarchs, he demonstrates his arrogance (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 17, 332; Chapter 20, 334-35; Chapter 47, 336; Chapter 49, 366; Chapter 51, 371; Chapter 67, 389-90). Lastly, he is not above lying to achieve his goals. When infiltrating enemy camps. For example, he lies about his identity, and when he is looking for Darius's killers, he sends a nationwide proclamation throughout Persia that he wanted to reward the men for their "heroic deeds" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 10). Upon presenting themselves to Alexander, he has them executed for their crimes.

From these examples, we can see that the Alexander of the *HNAM* exhibits a series of traits that could be considered among the vices listed by medieval political theorists. Despite this,

however, Alfonso made no attempt to criticize Alexander in any way for his actions – at least not in the narrative itself. Alexander's numerous questionable actions would have given much pause to medieval theorists about his fitness to be king. Ptolemy of Lucca claimed that the kingdom did not exist "because of the king, but the king because of the kingdom," (178) thereby summarizing how John of Salisbury, Vincent of Beauvais, Dante and all of the other scholars describe the role of a monarch: He should be a "servant" to his people, bound to the law, and work towards the common good for all of his subjects (John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 28; Vincent of Beauvais, Chapter III; Dante 46). Although the *HNAM* does not put any particular emphasis on the importance of the law, it does show that over time Alexander ceased to be the ideal monarch that they describe. As the most prominent individual in his kingdom, a monarch was expected to lead by example because a ruler who strayed into vice could lead his people along that same dangerous path. Alexander was technically, by medieval standards, an unfit king who ceased to be a "shepherd" to his people and instead became a blind, self-absorbed leader. In the *Siete Partidas,* Alfonso specifically warns the ruler against excesses, which cause men to become reprehensible and act against all that is good, something that was especially dangerous for kings, since it would affect how they carry out their duty (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title V, Law XIII, 292). Essentially, he believed that a king should not desire anything that he could not achieve (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Title V, Law XIII, 292). It could be argued that Alexander – as well as Alfonso himself – broke this rule.

In fact, Alfonso wanted what Alexander had, *imperium.* He desired it, fought for it, and nearly lost everything in pursuit of it. By criticizing Alexander, Alfonso would be criticizing himself. The wise king spent over twenty years in pursuit of the imperial throne, during which time he planned military campaigns and cultural projects, all to increase his prominence. Like

Alexander, he was just as guilty of excessive ambition and yearned for fame, glory, and honor. Of course, he never saw these desires as excessive or as vices. In fact, I believe Alfonso felt a kinship with Alexander, a man who exemplified how one's ambition and desire could lead them to accomplish amazing feats.[109] Just as Alexander had a legitimate claim to multiple kingdoms as well as shared a unique relationship with God, Alfonso proves in the *GE* that he too has legitimate claim to *imperium* and was most likely divinely chosen to be the next Holy Roman Emperor. From a historical perspective, Doubleday asserts that his dreams were not so far-fetched; since he was the natural heir to the imperial title from his maternal line, he shared a good relationship with the papacy in the late 1250s, and Castile and the imperial courts shared long-standing relations (95). Alfonso believed that what he desired could in fact take place and worked towards it, like Alexander. Ambition and desire freed Greece from Persian rule under Alexander and could lead Alfonso to make further incursions into Muslim Iberia, as well as initiate his numerous cultural projects. From the perspective of these kings, ambition and desire serve to expand, secure, and better their kingdom.

Although the *GE* has been medievalized for a 13th-century Christian audience, it does not promote a moral perspective on history, rather promotes the power and success of monarchy and of the great monarchs of history (Doubleday 84). As mentioned earlier, *sennorio* is shown to be what brings order to the world, therefore there is always a need for a king and emperor to bring order in times of chaos (Fernández-Ordóñez, *Las estorias* 45). As Alfonso himself explains, "Impero es gran dignidad, y noble y honrada sobre todas las otras que los hombres pueden tener en este mundo temporalmente"; the position is conferred by God, giving the emperor power over all people (except the Pope) and the responsibility of maintaining peace amongst different

[109] Manuel Calderón Calderón goes details the similarities between Alexander and Alfonso in his article. Among these similarities include a love of astronomy and an interest in poetry (44-45).

kingdoms (*Las Siete Partidas, Partida* II, Título I, Ley I). It was only a great king who was both capable and worthy of this position, specifically someone who had the ambition and desire to be bold and the dreams to achieve great things. While Alexander was an extreme example, ultimately, what Alexander represented was more important than what he actually achieved. He desired to conquer the world and had the means of accomplishing that. Alfonso just wanted to be the Holy Roman Emperor to promote peace and justice all over Western Europe. From his perspective, this was a much more moderate, reasonable, and achievable goal. Alexander, however, provided an excellent roadmap for how Alfonso could harness his own ambition and desire to occupy the most sacred temporal position of his time.

3.4.4 Moralization in the *HNAM*

Of the three texts I study in this dissertation, the *HNAM* contains the least moralization. There is no moral commentary from the *HdP* source material nor from Alfonso himself regarding Alexander's actions. Any warnings given to the Macedonian about his greed or any admonishment that he receives for his behavior come from characters within the narrative, such as foreign monarchs. These episodes serve to show that not everyone agrees with Alexander's actions but are not impactful enough to have a moralizing effect upon either the Macedonian king or the audience of the *HNAM*.

The first of episode that includes some slight moralization is Chapter 32, when Darius warns Alexander not to be too prideful, since God is the true power behind all of the Macedonian's victories (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 32,

347).[110] Similarly, Darius also warns Alexander about his pride in the *LAlex* and the *Rrekontamiento,* but what we see in the *HNAM* is only one sentence long, and not elaborated any further with moral commentary by the narrator. As a result, this passes by the audience as a one-off comment that holds almost no weight in the greater scheme of the narrative. Alexander does not react to the warning and Alfonso certainly does not comment upon it at all. For those readers who are familiar with other iterations of the *AR* tradition, the reference to pride would be familiar since Alexander is frequently criticized for this vice. That being said, one comment, without any support from the source material or Alfonso himself, is not especially impactful. In the *LAlex*, the narrator's criticisms, along with the moral digressions, helped the audience to be consistently more critical towards the protagonist's behavior. In the *HNAM*, we focus on Alexander's bold response and move on to the battle preparation.

As Alexander's journey continues, he comes upon two communities, the famous gymnosophists and the "Bracmanes," that are much more critical of his actions. In most *AR* traditions, these episodes contain the central moral lesson for our hero (much like in the *Rrekontamiento*). In Chapter 62, during his travels through India, Alexander comes upon the gymnosophists, who walk around naked and are famous for living with very few material possessions. These gymnosophists hear of Alexander's arrival in the area and preemptively send him a letter telling him that they own nothing of value. Nevertheless, he asks to visit them, remarks on their great poverty, and promises to give them anything that they wish. They ask for immortality, the one thing Alexander cannot give, since he too is a mortal. Their response is: "Si tu mortal eres, ¿por qué vas conqueriendo el mundo por tierras agenas e faziendo tantos males e

[110] There is a slight difference between the wording of the *HNAM* and the *HdP*, but the meaning is essentially the same (*Historia de Preliis,* Chapter 66, 96).

tales?" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 62, 386). Alexander's response is very blunt:

> Esta razón non se govierna si non de la provisión de suso esto, de Dios, cuyos servientes nós somos e fazemos el so mandado. E sabedes vós que la mar por ninguna guisa non se turbia si non cuando entra viento en ella. E yo querría folgar e partirme de batallas, mas ell seso de mí, que es señor, non me lo sufre fazer; e si todos los omnes fuésemos de un entendimiento, todo el mundo serié como una tierra de las que labran por pan. (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 62, 386)[111]

Alexander's response is that it is in his nature to fight, so he does, since God made him the way he is. What's more, he claims that he is ruled by his own "seso," which according to his rationale, is also synonymous with God's will. Therefore, by conquering the world, he is in fact, fulfilling his duty to God. Alexander is given a rebuke and answers saying that he can do whatever he wants because it is divinely ordained. After making this bold statement, Alexander rides off without giving the gymnosophists a second thought; again, there is no comment from Alfonso. If we consider that kings believed themselves to have special divine approbation to rule, Alexander's logic does make sense. God gave him *sennorio* and *imperium* to conquer and rule the world therefore, he is fulfilling his duty. The Macedonian only has to answer to God with regards to his actions, which he makes clear when he rebukes the philosophers. The shortness of this episode, coupled with Alexander's strong reaction seem to support the monarchical perspective more than

[111] This is identical to what we see in the *HdP* (*Historia de Preliis*, Chapter 90, 144).

the moralizing message of the tribesmen. Ultimately, their question does not have much effect on the Macedonian's life or his actions for the remainder of the narrative.

Soon after this encounter, Alexander comes upon a second tribe, the Brahmins ("Bracmanes"), who, like the gymnosophists, do not wear clothing and live in relative poverty.[112] While Alexander's interaction with this tribe is similar to his interaction with the gymnosophists, the reproach he receives from the Brahmins is much harsher. When he comes upon their village, he dispatches a letter to them asking about their way of life and claiming that he is eager to learn of their special knowledge since, as a man of wisdom himself, he is interested in learning from others (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 65, 388). In their response, they praise Alexander for his quest for knowledge because it is especially better than possessing a kingdom, since "emperador que non sabe sapiencia non señorea sus vassalos, mas los vassallos señorean a él" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 66, 389). That being said, because their lives and their values are diametrically opposed, they refuse to give him any of their knowledge because he "no [a] tiempo pora leerlo porque [era] embargado en los pleitos de las batallas" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 66, 389). Lastly, they close the letter by highlighting their simple lifestyle: "E sepas que nós los bracmanos simple vida tenemos e limpia e no fazemos pecado ninguno nin queremos más aver de cuanto la razón de la nuestra natura es. Sofrimos todas cosas e sostenemos lo que acaece e dezimos que aquello es mester lo que non es sobejano" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 66, 389). Marking a clear difference between Alexander's life of excess and their minimalistic lifestyle that is free of sin, the Brahmins are criticizing the king, as well as suggesting that he is neither ready to receive nor worthy of the knowledge that they have to offer.

[112] This episode is also identical to the one we see in the *HdP* (*Historia de Preliis,* Chapter 98-102, 146-150)

This criticism is not subtle and Alexander's own reply, which is equally harsh, does not show any restraint. He begins by claiming that the Brahmins are living "encerrados en aquella partida de la tierra," specifically in a "cárcel penada," praising themselves for their knowledge, and passing judgement on others (*General estoria*, *Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 67, 389-90). Then he continues:

> ¿cuál pena del omne puede seer mayor que seerle negado poder de bevir en franqueza? E semeja que vos non quiso Dios guardar pora las penas perdurables, porque judga que vós vivos seyendo sufrades tanta mezquindad, maguer que digades que sodes filósofos, peró por esto non avedes ningún fruto de alabança. E tengo por verdad, e assí lo firmo, que non es bienaventurança la vuestra vida, mas que es castigo e mezquindad. (*General estoria*, *Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 67, 390)

In addition to sending this letter to the Brahmins, Alexander also orders a large marble pillar to be constructed with his words inscribed and immortalized for all to see for centuries. Alexander's attitude towards the Brahmins changes drastically during their interaction. Not only does he insult their lifestyle that he initially believed was the source of a secret knowledge but claims that God himself did not want to help the Brahmins to escape from their misery. Rather than learn from this situation or react with sadness (as he will in the *Rrekontamiento*), Alexander becomes defensive and seems to imply that his life of battle and world domination allows him to see the world and gather real knowledge from his experiences. While the Brahmins just theorize, preach, and judge others from their earthly prison, Alexander travels and makes the world his own private schoolhouse, which makes him the better man. To spite them even further, he makes

sure that any men who traveled there would read his words and either think the same or perhaps doubt any knowledge they gained from their own interaction with the wisemen.

The extreme nature of Alexander's reaction to the Brahmin's words, and his very decisive action make it clear that he has won this argument, even if he may be wrong. When contrasted with the intensity of the Macedonian's actions, the moralization of the Brahmins pales in comparison. At the end of this episode, we are left stunned by Alexander's behavior, which demonstrates the might of monarchical power. He has not only managed to avenge his insult at the hands of the Brahmins by using his wit, but possibly prevented them from spreading their knowledge in the future. As a result, the effect of the moralization is diminished once again.

These are the only interactions in the *HNAM* where Alexander is criticized or advised to be a better person during his life. Given how quickly they pass, the absence of the narrator's commentary, and how Alexander himself reacts to the criticism he receives, the narrative ends with the audience paying little heed to these episodes and instead focusing on the portrayal of Alexander as an accomplished and successful king of the past. In fact, just before his death we are told that "nin los reis que passaron fasta agora en Macedonia nin en Persia nin los que serán d'aquí adelant non iguaron nin iguarán contigo…vales tú más que non los que depués de ti vernán" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 91, 414). Although Alexander ultimately dies by poisoning, it is never implied that he is punished for any transgression. Instead, we are told that Antipater, his assassin, had sworn to kill the Macedonian and always spoke ill of him (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 92, 414). The events that lead to the king's death are entirely the result of plotting and scheming by treacherous noblemen and are not overtly shown to be the result of divine justice as in the

LAlex.[113] Accepting his death with grace, Alexander is seen as a hero, a warrior-king, and a successful world conqueror at the end of his life. After Alexander dies, Alfonso, following the *HdP*, includes a brief chapter highlighting the Macedonian's accomplishments, thereby again cementing the young man's image at the end of this narrative.

Throughout the *HNAM* there are noticeable additions and edits made to the text such as information to clarify certain events, attempts to Christianize and medievalize the setting of the story, as well as the very obvious reordering of events from the *HdP*, to name a few. With all of the time invested in creating a cohesive and comprehensive narrative, the absence of criticism or moral commentary by the narrator is noteworthy. Jonxis-Henkemans believed that the ultimate image of Alexander was "favorable," "not one picture of a hero, a madman, or a warrior," but the "image of the sources" ("Alexander the Great" 252).[114] Given the care that Alfonso and his translators dedicated to finding, eliminating, choosing, and blending sources, I do not believe that he would have just selected a source – that he utilized nearly in its entirety – that did not align with his own beliefs for his "obra magna" that formed a part of his cultural campaign (R. Menéndez Pidal xxxv). Simon Doubleday explains that "image-making and political theater were essential to Alfonso's self-projection on the European, Italian, and Mediterranean stage" (101-02). This ranged from architectural designs all the way to the works that he chose to produce in his workshop. It is more likely, therefore, that Alfonso specifically chose a version of the

[113] In the 13th-century worldview, Alexander's death will always be a result of God's actions, but in the *LAlex*, the author-cleric includes God as a character to specifically show that the Macedonian was being divinely punished. In the *HNAM*, there are often moments were Alfonso adds references to God, but he chooses not to here, and instead translates directly from the source material.

[114] Jonxis-Henkemens repeats the term "favorable" each time she discusses Alexander's image in the *GE*. I have taken this to mean that he is not described negatively. In her article "Alexander the Great in *General Estoria* I, II, IV, V, and VI: A Discussion on his Image," she studies each instance in which Alexander's name is mentioned in the *GE*. In most cases, the Macedonian is not criticized for his pride or ambition. On at least two occasions Alfonso has presented the negative criticism (By Petrus Comestor and Orosius in *GE* IV) in a milder way to present Alexander in a more positive light (Jonxis-Henkemens, "Alexander" 249, 250).

Alexander narrative that did not include criticism of the king, to present the Macedonian emperor as a model character that he could fashion himself upon. From his perspective as a king, Alexander did nothing wrong. He acted as any king would by defeating a foreign threat, securing his empire, and traveling around his realm getting to know his new subjects. In the end, he lived and died with no regrets and was honored for generations. Alexander embodies monarchical strength, which is something every king would want to project. By including him in the *GE* as one of his ancestors, Alfonso shows that he descends from the same line as Alexander, and therefore, had the potential to be a monarch as great as the Macedonian conqueror.

Although Alexander's life story ends in Chapter 95 of the *HNAM*, there are 108 chapters in the work. Of these 12 remaining chapters, 11, which seem to have been included to provide a reason for Alexander's death, contain some general recommendations, moral pronouncements, as well as several words of praise for the Macedonian.[115] This commentary is presented first, as proverbs by Plato, Aristotle, Alexander, and a group of philosophers who visit Alexander's tomb, and second, through a series of letters between Alexander, his mother (Olympias), and Aristotle. As mentioned earlier, the source material for this final section is the *Libro de los buenos proverbios* and a small section of the *Alexandreis* by "Maestre Galter."[116] The more general recommendations are not directed at anyone in particular but include pieces of wisdom

[115] Chapters 97-99 contain proverbs by Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander himself. Chapters 100-02 includes two letters by Alexander to his mother, Olympias, as well as her response to the letter. Chapter 103 details the moral pronouncements by philosophers who are standing around Alexander's tomb. In Chapters 104 and 106 we return to Olympias's grieving along with correspondence between herself and Aristotle about Alexander's death. Finally, Chapter 107 lists other great men from history and mythology, such as Hercules, Julius Caesar, and Pompey Magnus, as well as introduces "Mastre Galter." Finally, Chapter 108 includes excerpts from the *Alexandreis* that discuss the reasons for Alexander's death.

[116] The *Libro de los Buenos proverbios* is a 9th-century Arabic *speculum principis* written by Hunain ibn Ishaq that contains proverbs attributed to a number of philosophers including Aristotle and his famous pupil Alexander the Great (Sturm 13, 17). The text contains proverbs by both men, proverbs by philosophers who are standing around the Macedonian´s tomb, as well as the famous letter that Alexander sends to his mother when he learns of his impending death (Sturm 28-29). The letters have been completely reproduced in the *HNAM*, whereas Alfonso only takes a selection of the proverbs ("Alexander" 252).

and suggestions to live a better life: do not put too much importance on material things; death will come for all living things; listen twice as much as you speak (since you have two ears); don't worry about what you have lost, but do guard what you have; and heed advice when you are in the company of wise men (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 97, 422, 423). Some of these suggestions can be applied to Alexander's life, but they can equally be relevant to any man as well.

Scattered amidst these sayings and moral/lifestyle advisements are some critical pronouncements that seem to speak of Alexander's flaws.[117] Although there is no doubt that these comments are meant to be a criticism of the Macedonian king, as I will demonstrate, they do not seem to sway the overall positive image that the *HNAM* presents of Alexander. To begin, the translation is difficult to follow and understand. Jonxis-Henkemens believes that Alfonso's compilers did not completely understand the "gnomic reasoning" of the source material, which is why "the reproduction sometimes results in confused lines" ("Alexander" 252). In addition, many of the maxims do not specifically reference the conqueror (except for the ones found in

[117] The following selection of quotes from Chapters 97-108 seem to summarize the moral pronouncements made against Alexander. Much of what can be found in these last 21 pages are the same ideas repeated with different wording: 1) "Ante vos avién todos envidia, e agora asodes en guisa que todos vos an piedad; e ante érades muy alto e agora sodes muy baxo" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 103, 434); 2) "Abondónos en prender exiemplo e castigo en despreciar los buenos tesoros que tú aviés que eran mejores que muchos regnados en que vimos que perdiés tú tamaño regnado e tamaño bien sin lo que veemos perder a otros reis que non eran buenos como tú. E el que te solié siempre aver envidia áte agora piedad, e el que te tenié por grand cosa e lo preciava mucho aquello en que tú estavas aborrece agora to estado" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 103, 435); 3) "¡Ay mesiello de Alexandre! Que mucho semeja la tu salida d'este mundo a su venida a él, ca veniste pobre e saliste podre d'él" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 103, 435); 4) "Este es el que perdió so lazerio andando en sus cobdicias e después vinol la muerte, e preciava más este sieglo que ell otro, e engañaronle las seguranças d'este sieglo assí com engañaron a los que fueron ante que él" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 105, 437-38); 5) "E tú, rey andador, tan aminguados son los tos fechos, e ya pereçudas son tus nuevas, e estajáronse agora de ti tus señales e tos fechos, e partíronse de ti las nuevas, e ermáronse de ti estas cosas…Departido es de ti lo que era yer ayuntado…e tu muerte es castigamiento e exiemplo" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 105, 438); 6) "Alexandre es ende exemplario a quien non abondava el mundo todo cuand éll era vivo, e que dixo que este mundo poco era pora un señor" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 108, 441).

Chapters 103 and 108). If one had knowledge of the Alexander tradition, he could connect the moral lessons to the conqueror, but without it, they could easily be seen as part of a general discourse on *contemptus mundi.* As a result, the moralization does not necessarily paint a negative picture of the Macedonian, but rather acts as a lesson for the readers of the *HNAM* about how not to act in their own lives. What's more, in the chapter dedicated to the moralizations of the philosophers that visit the conqueror's tomb (Chapter 103), Alfonso deliberately cuts short the information from the source material by saying: "Estas razones de los dichos d'estos filósofos que avemos dicho tenemos que cumplen agora assaz pora en este logar" (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 103, 435; Jonxis-Henkemens, "The Last Days" 145, 153). He then goes on to discuss the letters between Olympias and Aristotle, which are of a more sobering and dignified tone. In fact, all of the sections regarding Alexander, his mother, and Aristotle have been copied in their entirety by Alfonso, while the criticisms of the philosophers that would have diminished Alexander's image were either cut short or not included in the *HNAM* (Jonxis-Henkemens, "The Last Days" 163; "Alexander" 252).

To confuse the intention of these criticisms even further, the negative comments are constantly juxtaposed with words of admiration towards the Macedonian monarch:

> Aquel rey es aventurado el qui mejora en el regno de so padre e crece con él el regno en bondad, e assí como es aventurado el qui mejora en el regno, assí es desaventurado el qui mingua en él. (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 97, 424)

> ¡El rey que era coñoçudo por tod el mundo! (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 105, 436)

> Pues fijo, aved bien vivo e bien muerto, ca buen vivo fuestes e buen muerto sodes. (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 104, 436)

> Bien aventurado es el que prende exiemplo e castigo en otro, e bienaventurado es el qui guisa la vianda pora irse, e guiado es el que se trabaja en este sieglo pora aver folgura en ell otro. (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 105, 437)

> Ya, madre de Alexandre, gradece al Señor de tod el mundo e coñoce que es poderoso sobre todas las cosas. E éll es el que dio al to fijo ell regnado e ayudól a aprender la sapiencia e mostrarla, e escogió ell otro sieglo pora casa e la onor d'él por la onra d'este sieglo, e tornól al Señor de los espíritos a cual lograr tú avrás de ir, e conórtate con aquel que te conortó el cuerpo por sí ante que moriesse. (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 105, 437)

> …Alexandre, que fue tan grand príncep e tan bueno en armas (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* II, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 107, 440).

These words of praise, peppered alongside the criticism, make the message of these last few chapters ambiguous. Are we meant to condemn Alexander for his excessive greed or are we to praise him for his amazing and unique accomplishments? Certainly, the grave words of the philosophers give us pause, but as Jonxis-Henkemans admits, the image of the king is "favorable," and the negative comments ultimately ring hollow ("Alexander the Great" 252).

Harlan Sturm points out that in the *Libro de buenos proverbios,* although "Alexander's image ranges from that of an arrogant ruler to that of a just leader concerned with the search for knowledge…Medieval exempla in general, and the *Buenos proverbios* in particular, present [him] in the most favorable light" (17). This range of images that Sturm describes is present in these last chapters of the *HNAM* as well, but the final impression is that of a wise and accomplished monarch (Jonxis-Henkemens, "The Last Days" 162). The letters between Alexander, Olympias, and Aristotle are particularly important to achieve this positive image, since the monarch's touching concern for his mother, coupled with his wise insight on the inevitability of death "contribute to the final impression of Alexander's greatness and magnanimity" (Jonxis-Henkemens, "The Last Days" 163). Even the last sentence of the *HNAM* refers to the Macedonian as "el grand rey Alexandre," thereby cementing the positive image of the conqueror in its final words.

Given that Alexander is ultimately seen as a great king at the end of the narrative, we must ask ourselves why these chapters were included at all. Jonxis-Henkemens believes, and I concur, that "the Spanish authors are convinced of Alexander's greatness, but certainly also of different appreciations" ("Alexander the Great" 253). Alfonso wished to create a very thorough world history and in much of the *GE* includes differing opinions concerning his subject matter. Here, he used the *HNAM* to describe Alexander's life with no interruptions. It is only after the *HdP* material ends that he includes additional material that is again, brief, generalized, and scattered with praise for the Macedonian. The 96 chapters of the *HNAM* seem to contradict those very ambiguous 11 chapters (only 7 of which contain some sort of criticism). That being said, the moral reflection of Alexander's story does not negate Alexander's greatness or Alfonso's own imperial aspirations (Jonxis-Henkemens "The Last Days" 163). Instead, it serves as a lens by

which the readers can better judge the Macedonian's actions, while also acting as a check to Alfonso's own actions as he struggled to gain the imperial title. Emilio García Gómez clarifies that it was relatively easy to find a version of the *HdP* with additional teachings, such as those from the *Libro de los buenos proverbios,* in this period (lix). Still, Alfonso most likely chose a version of the J_2 recension, which did not include any moralization, and decided to include some additional moralizing material to the end of the narrative that he alters in slight ways to maintain the positive image of the protagonist. Jonxis-Henkemens believes that Alfonso may have found that the source material (the J_2 recension) was "sufficient to build up Alexander's image of fame" and for that reason reproduced the *HdP* material as closely as he did and added the additional chapters ("The Last Days" 165-66). As a result, the included sections of the *Libro de los buenos proverbios* and the *Alexandreis* do not diminish Alexander's greatness and the reader is left with the charisma, victories, and reputation of a world conqueror.

If we now step back and consider the *HNAM* within the entire *GE*, it is surprising that Alfonso made no comments of his own while narrating Alexander's life story given that he comments on positive examples of kingship in other moments. In her article "Alexander the Great in *General estoria* I, II, IV, V, and VI. A discussion on his image," Jonxis-Henkemens analyzes all the instances in which Alexander is mentioned in the *General estoria*. She concludes that in parts I, II, V, and VI there are about 55 mentions of the Macedonian, while the fourth book contains 1100 mentions of the conqueror ("Alexander" 246-55). In the moments where Alexander is mentioned that are not from the fourth part, Alexander is shown to be a great king. In a few cases, Alfonso actually presents negative commentary about the conqueror in a more positive light to maintain the "favorable" image that he wants to present of the conqueror (Jonxis-Henkemens, "Alexander" 249, 250, 251). Besides this, in numerous instances before the

HNAM in *GE* IV, Alfonso repeatedly tells the reader that he has to wait for the official story to learn more about Alexander. This repetition builds up a certain anticipation for the *HNAM* that also speaks to the value that Alfonso may have attached to Alexander's story (Jonxis-Henkemens, "The Last Days" 165). It is surprising, therefore, that he reproduces the *HdP* without any commentary given how important the narrative may have been to him. Jonxis-Henkemens points out that the handling of source material is noticeably different in the fourth part of the *GE* as compared to other parts of the *GE* ("Alexander" 253). For this reason, she concludes, again, that Alfonso may have felt that the source material was sufficient to build up the image that he wished to portray of his celebrated 'ancestor' without any additional commentary on his part.

For Alfonso, that means that his image-making efforts are still successful. He has managed to compile a story that stays true to his goal to create a complete world history by utilizing a variety of sources, while celebrating the life of a monarch who he would like to see compared with him in many ways. When we step back and look at the *HNAM* within the context of the greater story that the *GE* is narrating, any possible significance of the few criticisms in the last eleven chapters of the work is further diminished since we are now comparing Alexander (and Alfonso) with the other great kings of the past whose stories surround him. The *GE* is a celebration of kingship and empire. If the line of great kings ends with him – as he believes – then their accomplishments reflect on him as well. Any criticism would only hurt his cause. After reading the entire *GE* and learning about the line of distinguished kings that brought peace and justice to the world, one would most likely end with Alfonso's story and equate him to his great "ancestors." The lasting image of Alfonso would be one of a king, a scholar, the descendent of a renowned bloodline, and the only logical successor to *imperium.*

3.5 Conclusion

Written as a part of an ambitious world history that ultimately sought to glorify a 13th-century Iberian monarch, the *HNAM* tells the popular story of Alexander the Great, the exceptional Macedonian conqueror who lived a life that most rulers envied. However, when comparing Alexander's numerous personality traits as well as his actions to the commonly agreed-upon qualities of a ruler described by medieval political theorists, we find that he does not necessarily meet the standards of what the ideal king should be. Focusing on power, glory, conquest, and adventure, the Alphonsine version of the *AR* does not comment on the moral repercussions that tend to be associated with the life of a king who uses his authority not for the good of his people, but for his own personal gain. Despite this, however, the Alexander of the *HNAM* is still shown to be an accomplished monarch who conquered his way East and passed into legend, a dream that all kings – especially Alfonso – wished to share.

This is evidenced in the numerous instances that seek to glorify Alexander no matter his actions, thereby ultimately proving that the most successful rulers do not necessarily need to be punished for any moral transgressions – as long as they do not hurt their own people. In that last respect, Alexander is irreproachable. The support he gathers throughout his campaign East, as well as the amount of lamentation at his death prove that he was beloved by all his subjects. That being said, many of his actions would have been seen by theorists as detrimental to his reign.

Alexander is famous for his conquests, but many moralists fault him for his pride, greed, and ambition, which they believe was the root cause of not only his almost never-ending travels, but also his death by poisoning. The *LAlex* is the most famous example in Iberia that highlights this opinion. In the *HNAM,* there are several examples of Alexander's abuse of these qualities: his defiance to the warnings of the "Bracmanes," his unrelenting pace during his military

campaigns, his decision to explore the seas and the heavens when his land exploration had ended, his need to learn about every group he met with as well as his need to assert his dominion over them, and his need to identify himself as the son of a God. In the few instances that he receives any criticism, Alexander refuses to concede and continues doing whatever he wants. Furthermore, there are very few instances where the young ruler receives advice from his counselors or fellow generals. Alexander is essentially an autocratic ruler; he does not heed any moral advice and does not think he is doing anything wrong. The only instance where he is thwarted is when he flies in the sky in a carriage driven by griffins and God eases the birds back to Earth each time. We are told that he makes ten flights before he finally gives up, which only proves that he really does not believe that anything can stop him from fulfilling his goals, no matter how ambitious.

Although political theorists would have much to say about these actions (much like the author of the *LAlex*), Alfonso does not. There is not in one instance a narratorial criticism or negative comment to Alexander's actions. Instead, he is continuously celebrated for his many victories until his death. After that, however, the few added chapters that include a series of letters between Aristotle and Olympias that lament Alexander's passing and the moral pronouncements made by philosophers at this tomb could be seen as an attempt to reprimand the monarch for his deeds. While there are certainly comments about the young man's pride, greed, an ambition, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, they have a very minimal effect and seem to have just been added on as an afterthought

In addition, Alexander's other qualities, the ones that line up more with positive emphasized traits in medieval political theory, add to the exaltation of the monarch; for example, he is educated by the best tutors in all of Greece and is such a skilled warrior that he is easily

able to defeat men with considerably more experience. We are shown that he has the blessing of the Gods who consistently help him throughout his life, and, although he is impeded from reaching the heavens, he is still given dominion over the entire Earth. Finally, he has an abundance of virtues that make him an effective leader, while also demonstrating some vices that should theoretically derail his rule, but instead make him an even more successful king. Essentially, the Alexander of the *HNAM* lived his life on his own terms and with no regrets. From the perspective of a king, this would be the ideal way to rule over any kingdom. For this reason, we can say that the narrative gives us an example of a king's "divine right," which states that a monarch derives his right to rule directly from God and was answerable to no earthly power. Alexander's narrative is a textbook example of how a king can lead and rule should nothing stand in his way.

This brings us to the narrative's connection to Alfonso X. The *HNAM* was part of a larger project written by a king who had his own ambitious plans for conquest and empire, but ultimately led a life quite different from that of the subject of his narrative and supposed model. Born with what he believed was the legitimate right to the throne of Castile and Leon as well as that of the Holy Roman Empire, the wise king spent most of his life trying to maintain his hold over the former and gain recognition for the latter, which he could not do. His major plan for conquest outside of Iberia was popularly known as the *fecho de allende*, which would have extended Iberian influence into Northern Africa; this was a failure as well. In the end, even though he was responsible for remarkable cultural advancements during his reign, he died without accomplishing many of his goals. When compared to the Alexander of the *HNAM*, we can say that the narrative describes the life of a monarch who was able to realize his ambitions,

something that Alfonso wished for himself. Unfortunately, the wise king's own dreams were never fulfilled.

Finally, the *HNAM* also played an important part within the larger *GE* project. As we know, Alfonso chose rulers who held *sennorío* during their lifetime, and connected these men through a *linna* that stretched back to Biblical times and led up to his own reign centuries later. While not necessarily connected by blood – though Alfonso's biblical bloodline could very well do this as well – all these monarchs were a part of an elaborate royal family tree that was divinely blessed and given the unique opportunity to rule over empires. Therefore, each king listed in the *GE* was an "ancestor" to Alfonso, a part of his own lineage. Alfonso used his carefully crafted timeline to emphasize his divine right to *imperium*.

With this in mind, we can return to James Burke's idea of *theosis* and how the kings in the *GE*, like Alexander, play a larger part in a divine plan that Alfonso would carry out in his own time (Burke 465, 468). In a last-ditch effort to gain Iberian support for his ambitions to be Holy Roman Emperor, the *GE* was a carefully planned piece of propaganda that would naturally force Alfonso's audience, who would most likely be the literate nobility, to compare Alfonso to great kings of the past as well as see how his ascendency to the imperial throne was predestined. Unfortunately for the wise king, his grandiose plans never came to fruition, but the legacy of his many cultural works, among which the *GE* was certainly the most ambitious, would be what cemented his name in history.

Chapter 4

The *Aljamiado* Alexander: *Īmām* and King

Nearly 200 years after the *LAlex* and the *HNAM,* another text about Alexander the Great was produced in 16th-century Spain, the *Rrekontamiento del Rrey Alisandre* (*Rrekontamiento*). The anonymous *morisco* who wrote the narrative used *aljamiado,* or Arabic script to transcribe Spanish, in order to present the life story of a Muslim Alexander to his community who were facing extreme discrimination under Christian rule. This iteration of the Macedonian monarch is defender of the faith who conquers the lands between the rising and setting sun in the name of God while also exploring the mysteries of the world. His story served as an example for *moriscos* about the value of true faith, the importance of ritual practice, and the legacy of Islam at a time when their way of life was under threat.

4.1 Introduction

Just as his legend spread throughout the West, Alexander became an iconic figure in the eastern lands that he conquered during his reign. Having left his mark on Persian, Hellenic, and Arab cultures, he came to be recognized as a ruler who had irrevocably changed their world forever. Legends about his life and achievements spread so far and wide, that they became embedded in local culture and were embraced by Islam, the religion that spread to much of the same territory that the Macedonian conquered in his lifetime. Within Islam, Alexander's legend found a new purpose and the young king was reinvented to become a Rūm king who was visited by an angel and asked to conquer the world in the name of one God.[118] He was known as Dhu'l-

[118] The word "Rūm" was a generic term used in the Muslim lands to refer to Greek or Roman Christians.

qarnain, the "two-horned one," and became one of the subjects of *Sūra* 18 of the *Qur'ān* (*Qur'ān,* The Cave 18.83-18.98).[119] As with other Qur'ānic figures, his story passed into literature, being copied and studied in schools to serve as an example for Muslims everywhere.[120]

What is perhaps most ironic about Alexander's popularity in Arab culture is that a complete version of the *AR* in Arabic has yet to be found.[121] Before 1929, scholars hypothesized that there was or had existed an Arabic translation of the *AR*, given that Arab historians were familiar with details of the Macedonian's life and conquests (Budge, *The Alexander Book* xx; Doufiker-Aerts 3). It was the discovery, in 1884,[122] and publication, in 1929, of *Un texto árabe occidental de la leyenda de Alejandro* by Emilio García Gómez that served as definitive proof that there had to have existed an Arabic version of the *AR* and that the Syriac *AR* played a large

[119] To avoid confusion, I will generally use the name Alexander throughout this chapter unless the use of Dhu'l-qarnain is required in specific instances. Alexander is commonly referred to as 'Dhu'l-qarnain,' 'al-Iskander,' or simply 'Iskander,' in Muslim Arabic works, but the name 'Dhul'l-qarnain' can also be found in Christian texts from the East (Doufikar-Aerts 145). The names 'al-Iskander' and 'Iskander" are very similar to 'Alexander,' but the origins of 'Dhu'l-qarnain,' the name given to both the historical Alexander in the East as well as the religious figure, are not as clear. There are several reasons given for why Alexander had this name in the *Rrekontamiento*: because he had two horns on his headpiece, because he visited the rising and setting sun, because he was courageous, and because he made sword wounds (marks?) on the two horns of his headpiece (*Rrekontamiento* 71-72). Stories like these can be found in many Arabic texts about Alexander. Offering a more historical perspective, Richard Stoneman refers to the popular iconography of the monarch (made after his death) in which he is wearing the ram's horns of Ammon, suggesting that this may be the origin of the epithet (*Alexander* 156). Whatever the reason, what is agreed is that in Medieval Arabic tradition, Alexander and Dhu'l-qarnain were considered one and the same. For the author of the *Rrekontamiento,* there is no question about that fact, as he explicitly states: Era Dzū-l-qarneini, ke šu lombre era Aleçkandar" (*Rrekontamiento* 63). For the remainder of the narrative, he continues to refer to the young king as Dhu'l-qarnain.

[120] For more information about the diffusion of Alexander's legend in Islamic culture, see Zuwiyya (*Islamic Legends* and *A Companion*) and Doufikar-Aerts.

[121] The term *AR* is used for any variation of the romance, but I will utilize it to talk about Eastern versions in this chapter. The *Rrekontamiento* is most likely an offshoot of an early Arabic adaptation of the *AR.* Some of the better-known eastern versions of the *AR* include: the Syriac version of the *AR,* called the *The History of Alexander the Great The Son of Philip King of the Macedonians* (early 7th century), the Ethiopian *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great* (14th-16th centuries), 'Umāra b. Zayd's *Qiṣṣat al-Iskandar* (late 15th century to early 16th), Mubashshir B. Fātik's *Akhbār Alexander* (11th century), Al-Tha'labī's *Qiṣas al-Anabiyā'* (11th century), Ibn al-Jawzī's *Mir'āt al-zamān* (13th century), the *Ḥadīth Dhulqarnayn* (13th century copy of the Arabic manuscript, translated by Emilio García Gómez in 1929 in *Un texto árabe*), and the *Qiṣṣat Dhulqarnayn* (an 8th century version, translated by David Zuwiyya in 2001 in his *Islamic Legends*).

[122] The manuscript was discovered accidently as a medieval house was being renovated in Aragon (Doufiker-Aerts 5; García Gómez xvi).

part in the transmission of work into Arabic (Doufiker-Aerts 5; see also García Gómez).[123] There are many theories as to how the Alexander legend passed into Arabic, but most scholars agree that it derives from a 3rd-century version of the Greek *AR*. This text was later translated into Syriac between the 5th and 7th centuries by, according to Ernst Alfred Wallis Budge, a Christian priest (Budge, "The Syriac" lviii; see also Southgate 278; Stoneman, "Introduction" ix; Doufikar-Aerts 14). From there, it passed into Persian, Arabic (in the 9th century), and Ethiopic (between the 14th and 16th centuries).[124] There is much debate as to how the original Arabic manuscript was further transformed for a Muslim readership. K.F. Weymann, in his 1901 study of the Ethiopic *AR*, hypothesizes that the Arabic translation originally reflected the Syriac version closely, but the legend of Alexander's supernatural birth (as seen in the *HNAM*) was removed. Then, in subsequent Arabic versions, the references to Greek culture and paganism were eliminated or transformed for Muslim readers (Weymann 81-83; Zuwiyya, "Translation" 250). Weymann's theory, however, is one of many and there is continued debate regarding the evolution of the *AR* in Arabic but no final consensus. Concerning the *aljamiado Rrekontamiento del Rrey Alisandre* which will be the focus of this chapter, David Zuwiyya believes that it was translated from a now lost Arabic manuscript that was most likely an offshoot of the original Arabic narrative.[125]

The *Rrekontamiento* was first brought to light by Francisco Guillén Robles in 1888 under the title *Leyendas de José hijo de Jacob y Alejandro Magno* (Zuwiyya, "A Study" 21). Years

[123] Many scholars agree that Book III of the Syriac version was an important source for authors of the Arabic tradition, along with the *AR* itself, the *Qur'ān*, material from Persian tradition, as well as Arabic legends about Dhu'l-qarnain (Doufikar-Aerts 83, Southgate 278).

[124] For a detailed account of the different theories regarding the Arabic tradition, see Doufikar-Aerts (3-9).

[125] A close analysis of the *Rrekontamiento* shows that it has many episodes that are from the first stage of Weymann's theory, such as Alexander's visit to China and his battle with a dragon, which are only in the Syriac *AR* and not in the Greek. Based on these similarities, Zuwiyya concludes that the *Rrekontamiento* was based on a very old Arabic text, likely from the 9th century, whose author used the Syriac as a base, but also had knowledge of the *AR* legends in the Middle East (Zuwiyya, "Translation" 257).

later, A.R. Nykl, who re-edited the work in 1929, attempted to study its origins as well as trace the transmission of the Alexander legend in the West and the East (Nykl 34-43). He believed that the text was composed in the later part of the 16th century (1588?), and that the author must have been a "half-learned" *morisco alfaqui* whose "knowledge of both Arabic and Castilian was defective" (Nykl 38-39).[126] Nykl theorizes that the *aljamiado* manuscript, was probably not the original translation from the lost Arabic version, since it shows the hand of three copyists and has several curious traits, including passages that are out of place, scribal errors, as well as frequent repetition (Nykl 39-40; Barletta, *Death* 168-69). The *Rrekontamiento* is the longest work in a manuscript codex with 144 folios, 125 of which comprise the narrative itself, while the opening and closing folios contain shorter texts with Muslim prayers and rituals (Barletta, *Death* 167). As with any *aljamiado* narrative, it is impossible to study the text as an individual piece without considering the audience for which it was created. Although the focus of my chapter will be the representation of kingship in the *Rrekontamiento,* in my analysis will also be briefly referring to the lessons it provides and show how it could have been interpreted by *moriscos.*

4.2 Alexander's Transformation into Arab Culture

There is no evidence that Alexander was given any importance in the Arabian Peninsula before the *Qur'ān* was revealed to Muḥammad. Zuwiyya suspects that there were already popular oral legends about the king along with Syriac versions of the *AR* that were circulating in the East during the early days of Islam; both contributed to Alexander's inclusion in the *Qur'ān*

[126] Both Nykl and García Gómez believe that the work was written in Aragon since the author lets words from the Aragonese dialect slip into his work (Nykl 39; García Gómez c).

(*Islamic Legends* 7).[127] As a result, he also became a part of the *qiṣṣaṣ al-ʻAnbiyā* or "Stories of the Prophets," where he is credited with building the wall to keep out the Gog and Magog and travels to the rising and setting sun. This was key to Alexander's survival in Arabic literature and Islamic culture, since Zuwiyya claims that he would have been forgotten had he not been mentioned in the *Qur'ān* (*Islamic Legends* 4). It was then, through further exegesis of the religious text by Muslim scholars, that Alexander cemented his Muslim status in later Arabic redactions of the *AR* and began to take on the role of missionary (Zuwiyya, *Islamic Legends* 3). In fact, this missionary avatar of Alexander is only found in Arabic literature (Doufikar-Aerts 152).[128] As a result, in the Arabic tradition, Alexander's life serves a greater moral, religious, and political message: that piety and complete devotion to God are needed to be an effective Islamic ruler.

The underlying theme of excessive pride and ambition that is present in the many western versions of the *AR* (like the *LAlex*) remained in the post-Syriac legend, but Alexander's popularity in the East "required that his piety be underscored" (Zuwiyya, "Translation" 249). Muslim authors had to find a way to balance these two competing and conflicting themes: Alexander's infamous pride and ambition, and his devotion to God (Zuwiyya, "Translation" 249). As a result, his desire to conquer for wealth, power, and fame was "transformed so as to conform to expectations that would be placed upon an archetypical Muslim leader" (Zuwiyya,

[127] Many of these oral legends and narratives that were circulating in the East were from Persia. Before the arrival of Islam, Persian narratives about Alexander tended to portray him in a negative light as a world conqueror who seeks to better understand life and death (Asirvatham 321).

[128] According to Zuwiyya, when Quranic exegetes attempted to learn more about Dhu'l-qarnain, they discovered the hero of the Christian Syriac legend, as well as the hero of the *AR*. The former was a champion for God, while the latter, motivated by his uncontrolled ambition, attempted to conquer the world and spread Greek paganism (*Islamic Legends* 7). They seemed to be two different people with two different personalities and goals. To resolve the confusion, some scholars described the king as having superhuman longevity (about 1600 years) where the rash young hero learns from his past mistakes and transforms into the pious servant of God (*Islamic Legends* 8). In other Arabic versions, he is just a hero who becomes a champion for God during his very human lifespan. This is the Alexander that we find in the *Rrekontamiento.*

"Translation" 256). In addition, as the Arabic *AR* traveled further west, foreign material was added to the narrative along with the formulaic changes to adapt the tale for a new audience. For example, the epithet "Abd Allāh" (servant of God) is often added to his name and the Islamic creed ("There is no God but Allāh…") became the banner of his conquering army (Zuwiyya, "Translation" 254); none of these features are found in the Syriac text (Zuwiyya, "Translation" 254). As Zuwiyya states: "the Arabic translator has made Dhu'l-qarnain to conquer in the same way as Muḥammad and his successors during the expansion of the Islamic Empire almost one thousand years after Alexander's death, that is in brief, to conquer and convert the subjugated nations to Islam, to collect a *kharāj* tax, to destroy idols and their idolaters" (Zuwiyya, "Translation" 256). Everything he fights for and conquers throughout his life is for God; therefore, Alexander is essentially portrayed as the model Muslim. This is no truer than in the *Rrekontamiento,* where Nykl describes the hero of the narrative as an:

> Islamic leader whose mission is to spread the true religion all over the inhabited world by fire and sword if necessary. With the exception of the Gog and Magog, the Snakes, and some peoples who resemble rather animals than human beings, his success is complete. He is not a prophet, but merely an admonisher, a model for his people to follow in order to escape the punishment of the Day of Judgement. (Nykl 37)

Alexander's adventures serve as a guide for how to maintain religious devotion while living in a world filled with earthly temptations. His life, despite its difficulties, proved to be successful and therefore worth emulating. Al-Ghazālī believed that "the character of subjects springs from the character of kings; for the common people and the royal officials and troops become good or bad

through the instrumentality of their kings inasmuch as they acquire their habits from them" (*Book of Counsel* 60). The Alexander of the *Rrekontamiento* proves himself to be of 'good character,' one that instills good values in his subjects and urges them to serve God just as piously as he does. He is proof that, over time, the intensive work of the Arabic writers merged to create an Islamic Alexander who became a symbol for all Muslims.[129]

In the following pages, I will study how Alexander is viewed in the *Rrekontamiento* as an Islamic king in different ways: first by examining his religious role; second by studying the aspects of Alexander's kingship that do not relate to his religious mission (i.e. how he carries out his responsibilities as a Muslim king and the qualities that make him a good leader); and thirdly, by how he deals with the warnings that he receives throughout the narrative – which constantly point to his struggle to be the ideal temporal monarch as well as a good Muslim. I will then conclude by describing how these three facets of the legendary monarch's portrayal work together to create the Islamic Alexander, as well as the effect that this representation most likely had on the *Rrekontamiento*'s audience.

4.3 Alexander, the *īmām*-king

As stated in Chapter 1, Muslims consider Islam to be a way of life; there is no domain outside the realm of religion and religion itself "must embrace the whole of life" (Nasr 27). Alexander throughout the *Rrekontamiento* embodies this very belief. Having been a temporal

[129] In many cases, Middle Eastern tales about the conqueror have been added to the texts from the Eastern branch of the *AR* line. Despite these changes, however, it is still possible to recognize episodes that stem from the *AR* tradition. In the case of the *Rrekontamiento*, García Gómez groups the episodes according to their origin: the Greek *AR*, the Syriac *AR*, Arabic geographical compendiums, and wisdom literature (García Gómez ciii-cxiii; Zuwiyya, "A Study" 22). The episodes from the *AR*, although fully Islamicized, sometimes seem out of place with the focus of the *Rrekontamiento*, which is Alexander's religious mission. They most likely did not deter from the vision that the authors wanted to create and were left unaltered. From an analytical standpoint, though, it is sometimes difficult to reconcile the obvious inconsistencies present in the text. A few of these episodes will be mentioned in this chapter.

ruler before Muḥammad, as well as the subject of a well-known narrative (the *AR*), the Arabic authors could not just erase the secular basis for Alexander's rule. Instead, as described earlier, they merged it with the religious nature of leadership in Islamic culture. Alexander rules over an earthly empire by the grace of God and lives to fulfill a holy mission – he is part king and part *īmām*.

The foundations of this portrayal are in the very construction of the narrative frame that shapes the *Rrekontamiento* itself: three Jewish men seek out Muḥammad to test if he is the true Prophet of God/Allāh;[130] Muḥammad waits for divine revelation, and then recalls his visitors to narrate to them the story of Alexander/'Dhu'l-qarnain.[131] Alexander's story is shown to be of great importance from the first few pages since knowing and reciting his legend is what convinces the Jewish travelers to believe in Muḥammad's mission (*Rrekontamiento* 69). Furthermore, the figure of the foreign ruler is likened to that of a savior because his great deeds – in the name of God – will bring unity to the world. That being said, it is Muḥammad who speaks these words through divine revelation, ultimately convincing the travelers of the validity of his prophecy; he acts as the authority that cements the chain of transmitters of Alexander's story, the *iṣnād*.[132] Thus, from the very beginning, the author of the *Rrekontamiento* attempts to establish a close link between the Prophet and Alexander.

Zuwiyya analyzes the connection between Alexander's legendary feats and Muḥammad's promised revelation ("Typological"). Like their Christian counterparts, early Islamic theologists

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[130] The religion of these men changes in other versions of the Arabic *AR* works that share the frame narrative set-up.
[131] In the Arabic tradition, the supernatural events present at the beginning of the *AR* have been replaced by a *ḥadīth* frame and include an *iṣnād* (chain of transmitters) to authenticate the text (Zuwiyya, "The Introductory" 96).
[132] Zuwiyya believes that the branch of the *AR* tradition to which the *Rrekontamiento* belongs is likely from the region that is modern day Syria, Iraq, and the Arabian Peninsula, since the *iṣnād,* or "chain of transmitters," listed in the *aljamiado* narrative refers to sources from that region that date to the 1st and 2nd century after Muḥammad (about the 9th century CE) (Zuwiyya, "A Study" 24; Zuwiyya, "The Introductory" 97; *Rrekontamiento* 62).

used typology as an interpretative tool to better explain the *Qur'ān* and convince people to convert ("Typological" 196).[133] Zuwiyya explains that "the establishment of a typological bridge between Muslim practices, like the pilgrimage or ritual ablutions, and events in the lives of the prophets before Islam, grounded and legitimized these practices by demonstrating that they had always existed" ("Typological" 197). With the assimilation of Alexander's story into Islamic culture, he too became the "type" to the Prophet's "antitype" (Zuwiyya, "Typological" 206). Essentially, he is seen to have paved the way for Islam to spread throughout the Middle East and further West and East. The *Libro de las luces* states that, in a way, "all the prophets were in Muḥammad and Muḥammad was in all the prophets" (Zuwiyya, "Typological" 205; *Libro* 151). It was said that his essence has been on Earth in the form of earlier prophets (Zuwiyya "Typological" 205). Although Alexander was never considered to be a prophet himself, he shared a close and privileged relationship with God. As Zuwiyya explains, both Muḥammad's success and the expansion of Islam "had no precedent in a Judeo-Christian tradition long plagued by persecution and exile. If Islam had been created at the beginning of time, then there had to be some previous model on Earth for which Muḥammad's *sīra*¸ or series of military campaigns, was the fulfillment" ("Typological" 205). According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr:

> Islam is a return not only to the religion of Abraham, but even to that of Adam, restoring primordial monotheism without identifying it with a single people, as is seen in the case of Judaism, or a single event of human history, as one observes in the prevalent historical

[133] In this approach, scholars establish a 'type,' which is an event, practice or language in the past or present that prefigures an 'antitype,' which would be a similar event, practice, or language in the present or future. Zuwiyya refers to St. Augustine's linking of Romulus to Cain: the former killed his brother and founded Rome just like Cain killed Abel to found his own city ("Typological" 189). It is only through the "realization of the antitype" that we can understand the "true meaning of the type" ("Typological" 190). In Christian theology, for example, events in the Old Testament foreshadow, and can only be truly understood once they reappear in the New Testament.

> view of the incarnation in Christian theology. The Prophet asserted that he brought nothing new but simply reaffirmed the truth that always was. This primordial character of the Islamic message is reflected not only in its essentiality, universality, and simplicity, but also in its inclusive attitude toward the religions and forms of wisdom that preceded it. Islam has always claimed the earlier prophets of the Abrahamic world and even the pre-Abrahamic world (e.g., Noah and Adam) as its own, to the extent that these central spiritual and religious figures play a more important role in everyday Islamic piety than they do in Christian religious life. (5)

Qur'ānic exegeses strived to show that Islam was rooted in early Biblical legends, in the days of the first "fillōš de Edam" (*Rrekontamiento* 113). In fact, the term "fillōš de Edam" is used by Alexander throughout the *Rrekontamiento* to show that he is charged with protecting all of mankind and at the same time establish that he is part of a longstanding tradition reaching back to Adam and Muḥammad himself.[134] The historical Alexander's legendary conquests and massive empire provided a perfect model to strengthen this connection. There were already numerous similarities between the two men: their conquest in both eastern and western lands was impressive and could only be the result of divine assistance, both were "underdogs" fighting against impossible odds, and both dedicated their lives to spreading a culture and way of life (Zuwiyya, "Typological" 205-06).[135]

[134] This is reminiscent of what Alfonso X is trying to establish by writing the *General Estoria* – a "lineage" of *sennorio* that began with the Kings of Jerusalem and continued into Persia, Greece, Rome, and eventually the Holy Roman Empire.

[135] Alexander fought the Persian Empire, which vastly outnumbered him, while the Prophet fought against established Arab tribes, the Berbers, and the Turks.

In spite of this typological link, Muḥammad and Alexander are not considered equals. There is one crucial difference between the two men, namely that the former was considered the "Seal of the Prophets" (*khatam al-anbiyā'*), which means his "powers" and deeds would always be described as greater than those of the Rūm Alexander. For example, Alexander's life is narrated by the Prophet in many Arabic versions of his life and in the *Qur'ān*, which is itself Muḥammad's account of his divine revelation; it almost suggests that Alexander would not be known to Muslims without the Prophet acting as the voice for his story. In addition, the empire that Alexander managed to create in his lifetime would eventually be dismantled, but the one created by the Prophet would bring God's message to mankind and flourish under his leadership. Both men were ordered to spread Allāh's message throughout the world and essentially nurture the growth of the Islamic *umma* (community). They both succeeded, but it is the one established by Muḥammad that still existed in the time of the *moriscos* – and to this day. To further enhance this relationship, the empire that Alexander created in the *Rrekontamiento* (and in the Arabic *AR* tradition in general) stretched from China to al-Andalus and included Africa, and India. These are all lands where Islam will eventually spread after the Prophet's revelation. Alexander's rule foreshadows the eventual success of Islam.

However, these are not the only connections established between the two men. Both were visited by angels who would act as intermediaries between them and God and experienced a *mi^{c}raj* (ascent) with these angels to learn about their divine missions (Zuwiyya, "Typological" 206-07). In addition, throughout Alexander's conquests, the narrator of the *Rrekontamiento* consistently describes how Allāh put fear in the hearts of Alexander's enemies (Zuwiyya, "Typological" 208). This is the same for the Prophet, except that he himself creates this fear in his enemies and is wiser and braver than even the Macedonian (Zuwiyya, "Typological" 208;

Bloom and Blair 32). Furthermore, Alexander's encounter with the angel with the horn in the land beyond the Darkness (as detailed in a later section) recalls the Prophet's account of Judgement Day in the *Qur'ān* (*The Small Groups* 39.68); this prophecy would be described to Alexander himself when he visits the Brahmins. Finally, the two figures are connected through the episode in the Darkness: The *Libro de las luces* claims that the essence of the Prophet was first created by God at the beginning of time in the form of a glowing stone (*Libro* 88).[136] A similar stone used to guide Alexander and his army through the Darkness. When Alexander came out of the Darkness enlightened, it was the luminescence of the Prophet that guided him into the light (Zuwiyya, "Typological" 208-09). Similarly, Muḥammad's revelation enlightened people to the true religion. These parallels would have been very apparent to Muslims well versed in the *Qur'ān* and other religious works translated in *aljamiado* texts. Zuwiyya believes that the religious leaders, the *fiqhs*, who were the most familiar with this literature, would have been able to identify these similarities and symbols to interpret and explain religious practices to *morisco* audiences ("Typological" 210). For the remainder of this section, I will explore the typological dimension of the *Rrekontamiento* by analyzing how it portrays Alexander, not as an ordinary temporal ruler, but as an *īmām*-king, often utilizing religious symbols and specific language to do so.

In the *aljamiado* narrative, the Prophet describes Alexander as a Rūm king, the son of another Rūm king who was the "šoberbiyo de loš šoberbioš de los kirištianoš" (*Rrekontamiento* 63). As a boy, he was hated by his father for bowing to Allāh at a young age, so a wise man named "Irištotileš," who "konociya a Allāh," was made his successor (*Rrekontamiento* 63).

[136] In the *Rrekontamiento*, the bead was said to be passed down from Adam all the way to Aristotle (according to one source) – or from God to Noah – and to various prophets and religious figures such as Abraham and Isaac, until it came to Alexander himself (*Rrekontamiento* 82).

However, upon finding that the young Alexander was even wiser than him, Irištotileš renounces the throne to guide him to greatness. As his first act, the youth takes his men to the site of the city of Aleškandariya and sets out to build its foundations. Their work is undone each night by birds who eat the flour used to mark the limits of the city until Alexander realizes that it is God's will that he construct the city along with an imposing lighthouse. Already it is apparent the prominent role that Allāh plays in Alexander's life (*Rrekontamiento* 63-65). In accordance with Islamic belief, al-Ghazālī states that Allāh is the "Creator of the entire universe. All that exists in the universe is from Him, and He is one, for He has no equal…the being of all things is through Him" (*Book of Counsel* 6). Even a king is a mere "creature" of this universe who should be humble and grateful for the gifts he has received. Allāh is omnipresent in Islam, as he is in the *Rrekontamiento,* guiding and gracing Alexander with his attention and many gifts. What we see here is the constant interaction between the divine and the chosen ruler; while Muslim political theorists and religious experts discuss this at length in theory, the Muslim variants of the *AR*, like the *Rrekontamiento,* represent this concretely in order to constantly remind their audience of the ever-constant presence of God. Just as He guides Alexander through his life, He controls the movement of birds, the flow of the ocean, and the direction of the wind. A good Muslim should always keep that in mind as they go about life, knowing that everything happens according to divine will.

With that in mind, it is Allāh's will that when Alexander comes of age, he should be formally educated about his life's mission. To do this, he sends a messenger, the angel Zayāfīl (Rafael), to convey his orders to the king. In a scene mirroring Muḥammad's *mi*^{c}*raj* (ascent) into the heavens with the angel Gabriel, Zayāfīl takes Alexander high into the skies and explains to him his divinely ordained mission (Zuwiyya, "Typology" 207). He will rule over all the lands

that lie between the "*šol šaliente*" and the "*šol poniente*," and his mission is to: "[poner] rrazon a el šobre los khaleqadoš" (*Rrekontamiento* 66).[137] Alexander is frightened at the prospect and wonders how he will be able to do this. He asks: "komo me koštrinneš a mi lo ke no a poder a mī kon elo, i komo šera a mī y-a elloš, i kon kual poder llegare a elloš, i kon kual lenwwa leš hablare, i komo šera a mi en ke yo šepa šuš nuebaš, i komo konoçere šuš hablaš, i komo šere giado šobrellos, i kien aplegara entre mi i-ellos?" (*Rrekontamiento* 66). Through the angel, God tells him:

> Yo no koštringo a nenguna persona šino lo ke pueda façer en šu entremetimientō, i-o abre piadad kon ella; i-yo te plegare a elloš, i-ensanchare a tu en tu entendimientō, i demoštrarte, i konoçeraš ṭoda koša, i deprenderlaš, i-entenderaš šu hablar, i demoštrarte el lelwaje de toda koša, i no te hablara ninguno ke no lo entiendaš i tornaraš šu rrešpuešta, i lançare en tu qoraçon laš jornadaš de la tierra toda, y-endebulgare a tū la tierra endebulgamientō; bete en ella kon tuš weštеš i tuš konpannaš i loš onrradoš de tuš konpannaš; allí dokiere ke kaminaraš yo šoy kon tū. (*Rrekontamiento* 66-67)

There are two noteworthy details about this scene, with the first being God's choice of messenger. Zayāfīl acts as the only official intermediary between God and Alexander throughout the narrative. Although Alexander speaks to God often, the divine mandates he receives are sent through the angel. On the one hand, it shows that God has planned for the young king to play an important role in spreading His faith. For that reason, he is worthy of being visited by a celestial being. On the other, the use of Zayāfīl, rather than Gabriel (who accompanied Muḥammad), an

[137] Nykl translates "khaleqadoš" as "the created" (198).

angel of higher rank, shows that Alexander is certainly crucial to God's plan, but he is not as important as the Prophet will be one day.[138] As Muḥammad himself tells the Jewish travelers, Alexander was not a *nabī* (prophet), but a "amīgo de šuš amigos, rrey šabidor"; if he had been a prophet, "ubieše eštado an-nabī abriale benido Jibrīl, i-ešbioše del Jibrīl i binole Zayāfīl" (*Rrekontamiento* 66). That being said, Muḥammad does acknowledge that Alexander was from the house of *lan-nubū'a* (prophecy) (*Rrekontamiento* 66). The Prophet's words firmly place him within the line of prophecy of Islam and reinforce the typological link between the two men.[139]

The second striking detail of the *mi'raj* episode is that God promises to guide the young king along his journeys. Once again, it is God who is the source of Alexander's power and abilities. This divine pledge is consistently demonstrated throughout the *Rrekontamiento*. Alexander is always - despite his many transgressions - saved by God. He survives several terrible storms and encounters with monstrous creatures because it is divine will. He also survives the Darkness and other dangerous adventures because it is divine will (*Rrekontamiento* 78-89, 137). In many of these episodes, the young king is traveling to lands that do not belong to him, in an attempt to unravel the world's secrets and seek out the answers to mysteries that only God knows – much like in the *LAlex*. Although he is punished for his transgression, he survives because of his unwavering devotion to Allāh. As Abū Yūsuf explains, the job of the caliph/*īmām* was to "not waste the command" he had been given and to "look after the affairs of [God's]

[138] In Islamic tradition, Gabriel is described as the messenger of God who delivers divine prophecies to mortals. Rafael, on the other hand, is the angel who waits to blow the horn on Judgement Day.

[139] The author of the *Rrekontamiento* repeatedly reminds us of Alexander's connection to this prophetic legacy. Over the course of his travels, he finds holy relics that once belonged to ancient kings and other prophets of Islam: like the statue of Çayyī-l-Fāramī (cited as a king in the First Age), Moses' staff and shoes, as well as the shoes, staff, and knife of Aaron (*Rrekontamiento* 140, 142; Zuwiyya, "The Introductory Hadith" 99). In addition, as mentioned earlier, the glowing bead that al-Khiḍr uses to in the Darkness was originally given to Alexander as a part of his inheritance because of his place in the long line of Islamic holy men (*Rrekontamiento* 82). The intent is to establish that this seemingly temporal monarch has inherited the legacy of those who came before him giving him a religious standing – and will leave his own mark on the world for those who came after him.

nation" while still maintaining a "godfearingness" (35). He is God's chosen champion and representative on Earth, and in return for the service Alexander does him by spreading his message, God gives him constant aid. His life is proof that true devotion to the divine will always be rewarded with guidance and protection. Alexander also sees himself as worthy of this special honor:

> Aristōtileš….el me dīšo a mi, kel trobo en šu çençia ke Allāh manda šobre loš rreyeš de la tierra un šabio de loš šabioš, onbre šanto de gran al-baraka, šabyo de še umilaran a el loš rreyeš; i-o e ešperanca de Allāh en ke šea yo akel kel ya ša demoštrado akello del; kel ya me a dado konçimeinto kon šu grandeza, i me a ešpeçialado kon šu onrra, i pušo šu rreišmo en mi mano, i-a fecho akaeçer en mi koraçon la çençia i-el šaber; i me a puešto šu ešpada šobre loš deškreyenteš, i kon el i loš deškreyenteš šoberbioš de loš rreyeš de la tierra, i ma konkordado a kien kree kon el i lo širbe en kenššalce šu grado, i-en ke rretorne šobrel kon piadad, i la šanna šobre šuš enemigoš; i ma dado lo ke no dio a ninguno de loš rreyeš del mundo. Ya teng ordenado loš fechoš en šu šennorioš i-en loš rreišmoš…(*Rrekontamiento* 93)

It is because of this belief that Alexander feels he is untouchable and constantly tries to test the limits of his power. Since his daring nature is always balanced by his missionary work, there is no criticism of his actions in the text.

That mission is very similar to Muḥammad's early attempts at conversion. In the *Rrekontamiento,* Alexander is ordered to "gerrear a loš de la tierra de loš deškreyenteš, y derrokar laš iglešiaš, i krebar loš imajeneš" (*Rrekontamiento* 69). Much like the Prophet and the

first caliphs would do almost 900 years later, Alexander was charged with finding non-believers and destroying their sacred idols and places of worship. Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair describe how Muḥammad was adamant about the destruction of idols whenever he conquered a city (33). This is the model that early Muslims – and specifically Muḥammad – would follow as they expanded their empire. We see a similar practice when Alexander first conquers a city. He first sends a messenger or letter asking the inhabitants to declare their belief that there is only one God: "ke no ay šennor šino Allāh šolo, ke no ay konpannero a el, i ke Muḥammad eš šu šierbo i šu menšajero" (*Rrekontamiento* 69). In addition, he announces that Allāh had given him "šennoriya šobrel mundo, i me a lançado šobre loš šuyoš kon la špada, i kien rrešpondera a la obedençia ay kamino a el, i kien nō rrešpondera tormentarle kon la špada. Despueš tormentarlo-a Allāh kon el fuego el dia del judiçio" (*Rrekontamiento* 70). If they accept his terms, they are asked to pay a regular "ešpleyt," or tax, and convert. If they reject his offer, Alexander attacks the city with his full force and makes them obey.

He does this to the smaller cities that he conquers, like l'Eškandaria, Jābarṣā, and Jābalqā. Most fall easily and become a part of his vast empire. The two major kingdoms that resist him are Furçē (Persia), led by Dāriuš, and Hinde (India), led by Liyōn (Porus), which refuse to accept either his kingship or his religion; for that insult, Alexander declares war on both kingdoms.[140] The sections of the *Rrekontamiento* dedicated to these famous encounters (95-105 and 108-12 respectively) are very similar to what we see in the *LAlex* and the *HNAM.* What is different is that, when both kings are finally defeated in their last battle with Alexander, he offers to spare the lives of their men if they convert and/or accept his taxation (*Rrekontamiento* 103 and 113). The conversion is more important than perhaps the throne. Alexander has already been promised

[140] As we saw in the *LAlex* and the *HNAM*, Alexander attacks Persia to liberate Greece. In the Islamic tradition, the importance of Alexander's religious mission supersedes any other motivation.

"*šennorio*" by God and therefore his victories are no surprise. Recruiting new converts, however, is his religious mission. He is preparing the world for Judgement Day by saving all the lives that he can in the process. His only condition is that foreign kings accept his rule – which is mandated by Allāh – and agree to believe in his religion; if they reject it, they at least must agree to pay the mandatory tax. Men like Dāriuš and Liyōn (Porus) who reject his peaceful offer suffer both his and God's wrath. Upon their deaths, Alexander is shown to always be merciful to the defeated armies while still staying firm to his beliefs:

> Del rrey a-Dzū-l-qarneini a loš de laš çibdadeš de Fāriç todaš…y ya šoyš bošotroš jenteš de gran fuerça, i de buen konšeššō, i de buen rrešwarte; i yō, še kerra Allāh, šere a bōšotroš šenblante de lo ke era Dāriūš, še oīš, i-obedeçeyš, y pagayšla obedençia i la berdad akella ke pūšō Allāh a mī šobre bošotros; i yō no boš forçare būeštra kriança; kiyen kiere kreya, i kiyen kiere eškrea; i-a bōšotrōš šia buešroš algoš çeptō la plata i el oro; aplegadlō a mī i mandadlo a mī, para ke mantenga kon ellō kuentra bueštroš enemigoš, i lo špienda šobre laš weštеš de bōšotrōš, i bōšotrōš šoyš enta mī šenblan ke yeraš enta Dāriūš i maš ademante, i nō šakare nengūnō de šu billa. (*Rrekontamiento* 105-06)

On the one hand, this is another example of the Arabic authors adapting *AR* material into an Islamized narrative since there are several legends about Alexander's life that show his generosity and kindness. Muḥammad himself was also kind to the Meccans who surrendered to him, giving them gifts and only asking that they destroy their idols in return (Bloom and Blair 32-33). On the other hand, the theme of conversion is integrated to emphasize Alexander's link

to Islam. Much like the caliph/*īmām*, Alexander is the champion of his religion. He is just and kind to his enemies, but always conscience of his ultimate mission.

For this reason, throughout the *Rrekontamiento*, Alexander serves as a symbol of Allāh's constant presence in the world and acts as his representative. Fulfilling the role of the ideal Muslim leader, he is "God's shadow on earth" and the "Lord's delegate over His creatures" (al-Ghazālī, *Book of Counsel* 45). As Abū Yūsuf goes on to state, he is a type of "shepherd," whose purpose was to "illuminate for the subjects those of their affairs which are obscure to them and to clarify those duties about which they are in doubt" (Abū Yūsuf 36, 38). In that capacity, he constantly reminds his men, and anyone that he encounters, that God is the reason for the existence of the world and for his own successes; the narrative voice echoes his sentiments. Whenever his army suffers a crisis, he reminds them of God's will and urges them to maintain their faith to survive – and they always do. When about to face Liyōn's (Porus') massive army, he encourages them: "ya noš a dado bençir Allāh kon el i kon šuš weštеš, lōš eštruimōš, i-enšennōriemōš šū tierra, i šuš billaš; no bōš ešpante rrey de loš rreyeš del mundo todo, ke Allāh ta'ālā ya ma lançado i me a prōmetido kon layūda šobreellōš…Allāh ta'ālā me a prōmetido akellō [sennorio], i-el nō trešpaša šū prōmeša…." (*Rrekontamiento* 110).

Like this, there are several speeches throughout the *Rrekontamiento* where Alexander reminds his men and his subjects of God's powers. He is the spokesman for God's might and his omnipresence through both his example and his words:

> A kuanto depueš, ya oš e fecho a šaber bueštra dešyerrar akella ke bōšotroš šoyš šobrello, i-akel ke a deškubrido Allāh de bošotroš de la çegedad, i-oš e abišado kon lo ke bošotroš šoyš çiegoš dello, i fueron çiegoš bueštroš koraçoneš antes de mī, i bueštra, çegedad i de

> kien era šenblante de bošotroš eš koša baldera i deškreyençia, pueš agora obrad i pensad dakia ke konoçkayš o ke bošotroš soyš en ello, laš košaš berdaderaš; ke Allāh ya ma dado layuda šobre bošotroš. Noš tirareyš šōbre bien, mientreš ke dure bueštro fecho uno, šobre obedeçer ad Allāh, tan loado eš, en šu šerbitud; no ay šennor sino el; no ay konpannero a el; i-eš akel ke oš aprobecha i boš puede nozir i oš mata, i-oš rrebibka; loš çieloš i la tierra, i-el fecho del mundo i del otro, eš kon su liçençia; no lo enšennorea ninguno otro šino el. Pensad, šierbos de Allāh, en mi dicho a bošotroš, i-eštad de Allāh. (*Rrekontamiento* 92-93)

The word "çegedad" is especially important here. According to Islamic belief, the time before Muḥammad's revelation was the "Age of Ignorance" or *al-jāhiliyyah* (Nasr 48). Muḥammad's prophecy revealed the truth to the world and helped people to see the light. The *Qur'ān* states that:

> [Those] Who believe in what has been revealed to you and what was revealed to those before you, and are certain of the Hereafter. They have found the guidance of their Lord and will be successful. As for those who deny, it is all the same if you warn them or not, they will not believe. God has sealed their hearts and ears, and veiled their eyes. For them is deprivation. (*Qur'ān*, The Cow 2.4-2.7)

Alexander's journeys serve the same purpose. Once again, a link between the Prophet and the hero is established. Recalling the words of Ibn Qutayba, "the relation between Islam, the ruler and the people is like that between tent, pole, ropes and pegs. The tent is Islam, the pole is the

ruler, the ropes and pegs the people" (qtd. in Black 54). Throughout the *Rrekontamiento,* Alexander proves himself to be the pole, holding steady and high his religious devotion for all to see. The authors of the various Arabic *AR* versions, through their many edits, crafted Alexander to be this pole, both *īmām* and king.

4.4 Qualities of the *īmām*-king

In this second section, I will continue to analyze Alexander's portrayal as a model monarch by focusing on episodes that do not directly involve his religious mission. To do this, I will discuss the qualities that make him uniquely suited to his role, as well as the manner in which he carries out his secular duties as king, which are similar to the duties of the caliph/*imām* as seen in Chapter 1. Throughout the *aljamiado* narrative, Alexander is shown to be pious, wise, merciful, and just, qualities that were considered important by the Islamic scholars in Chapter 1. As I have already underscored the Macdonian's piety in the previous section, I will not go into further detail here and instead, focus on his other traits.

Alexander has always been associated with wisdom, given his tutelage under Aristotle and his encounter with the Brahmins of India (Asirvatham 312). In Chapter 2, we saw how, in the *LAlex,* Alexander listed his mastery in the seven liberal arts, which he gained from his lessons with the famous philosopher. In the *Rrekontamiento,* however, the relationship between the two men is very different. Alexander, who worships Allāh from a young age, is shown to be the son of a king who is the "soberbiyo de los soberbios de los kristianos" (*Rrekontamiento* 63). We are told that the king disliked his son's "umildança ad Allāh," and so when he dies, the throne goes to one "Irištotiles… rrey šerbiente ke konoçia a Allāh; i fue kriado kon šençia i ṣaber" (*Rrekontamiento* 63). The text ignores the obvious discrepancy: that both Aristotle and

Alexander practice Islam in a Christian realm, yet Alexander is passed over for Aristotle. Instead, we are told that Aristotle, using the wisdom he had received from God, renounces the throne in favor of Alexander, who is himself described as a "rrey šabidor" (*Rrekontamiento* 66). In the *Rrekontamiento* Alexander's knowledge and wisdom comes from God and are independent from Aristotle's teachings. In addition, it is implied that Alexander was wise enough to turn to Allāh on his own, despite his father's influence over him. In a way, this underscores Alexander's devotion, since he was willing to turn away from the teachings of his community. Given that Aristotle realizes – with God's help – that Alexander is better suited to the throne, we can assume that Alexander is the "most excellent" or *afḍal* amongst his people. As we saw in Chapter 1, al-Jāḥiz, like many of his fellow theorists believed that the leader of the *umma* should be the best among Muslims (Pellat 66). It is significant that the first details we learn about Alexander are related to his devotion to Allāh and his wisdom, both of which were considered exceptionally important qualities for the caliph to have. Niẓām al-Mulk strongly believed that a king who is both pious and knowledgeable about religious matters would be a more capable leader (60); Alexander most certainly demonstrates these qualities in the *Rrekontamiento.*

In fact, much like in the *LAlex* and the *HNAM,* Alexander is driven by his pursuit of knowledge. No matter the changes that the Islamic authors made to the original story, it was impossible to completely erase this obsession, or *pothos*, that led the Macedonian conqueror on his many voyages.[141] Stoneman explains that his expedition became a "campaign in search of something more: all knowledge, all wisdom, and universal rule" (*Alexander* 151); this is what we see in the *Rrekontamiento.* It is curiosity and the need to know all the world's secrets that leads the Islamic Alexander to the highest of mountain tops, to deserts and seas, and into the Darkness.

[141] *Pothos* is the term that Arrian used to describe the historical Alexander's almost religious longing that determined his actions (Stoneman, *Alexander* 151).

His encounter with the Brahmins, where he asks them philosophical questions about life, death, and the natural world is the clearest example of this (*Rrekontamiento* 115-22). It is also this need for knowledge that compels him to always learn more about each city he visits while at the same time asking its citizens to convert. In his letter to the Amazonian queen Bawārīš, after stating his religious mission, he asks: "fedme a šaber kon lo ke ay enta bošotroš de laš marabillaš, akellaš ke haleqō[142] Allāh ta'ālā en bueštra tierra i-en bueštraš billaš, i dadme a ber lo ke boš a dado Allāh" *(Rrekontamiento* 132). Always acknowledging that God is the source of all the mysteries and marvels of the world, he is still insistent on seeing them with his own eyes, even if it is knowledge that is forbidden to man. After his world travels, he will be the most knowledgeable of his people, the only earthly being who holds all the secrets of God. Although several supernatural beings and humans warn him about his ambitions, he still manages to see most of the Earth's wonders. The lessons that he learns along his travels, particularly regarding faith and the natural world, make him a wiser man, and therefore a better ruler. Wisdom and knowledge are key qualities of the ideal king according to all the Islamic scholars, and Alexander's lifelong journey has been to acquire both.

However, these are not the only qualities that make Alexander perfectly suited to his new role. We are also told that Alexander is "de fermoša kara, alegre, onrrado,…[y]kuerdo" (*Rrekontamiento* 68). In addition to being wise and pious, Alexander is fit, which means that he is physically able to carry out his duties; al-Māwardī cites "physical fitness and freedom from handicaps" as one of the requirements of the Islamic leader (al-Māwardī 4). As we know, Alexander's mission is to conquer the world for God, which means that he would need to lead an army as well as fight. The *Rrekontamiento* does not delve into Alexander's education nor his

[142] "haleqō" is from "halequar," which is a variant of "khaleqar". Both verbs mean "to create" (Nykl 198).

preparation as a warrior, but we can assume that he was well prepared since he was able to accomplish his sacred mission. If we return to the idea that Alexander was *afḍal*, his upbringing as a royal prince, which would have included training to be a warrior, would have also made him best candidate to be a champion of God.

Another of Alexander's positive traits is the care he shows for his soldiers. In most iterations of the *AR,* Alexander is shown to boost the morale of his men, carefully bury his dead comrades, and assuage the fears of his soldiers. We have seen this in the *HNAM* and the *LAlex* as well. Similarly, in the *Rrekontamiento,* Alexander also goes to great lengths to ensure that his men are safe and secure. The best example is during their expedition into the Darkness (as detailed in the next section), he realizes that he has no provisions for his army to survive a long trip back to the world of men, so he specifically asks an angel for aid. In return, he is given a bunch of grapes that keeps his men full for days and replenishes itself. He takes the time to give a grape to each of his men personally (*Rrekontamiento* 85-86). Furthermore, after any battle he laments the loss of men, ensuring that they always get a decent and respectful burial. Finally, it is for the sake of the soldiers – on both sides – that he halts his battle with Liyōn (Porus), asking to fight him in a duel instead (*Rrekontamiento* 112). Finally, returning briefly to the religious duties of the Islamic leader, Alexander ensures that his men, who are a part of the *umma,* constantly maintain their devotion to God. This ensures that they too are following the correct moral path.

Other important traits that Alexander demonstrates in the *Rrekontamiento* are clemency toward the people that he conquers. Al-Ghazālī lists both qualities in his description of the ideal leader (*Book of Counsel* 154-57). For example, when the inhabitant of l'Eçkandaria refuse to open their doors to them, he terrifies them with a display of force outside their walls. Then, he promises to forgive them if they accept his terms. He gives them forty days to consider the

proposal, and as promised, forgives their transgressions when they accept and treats them as loyal subjects (*Rrekontamiento* 70). Similarly, during his campaign against Dāriuš, he encounters a city named Aqlabia whose inhabitants also do not open their gates to him. He considers destroying the city until its terrified citizens explain that they denied him entry for fear of Dāriuš. Understanding that they were merely demonstrating loyalty to their king, he promises to protect them if they convert and allow him to enter the city. They agree, and he keeps his promise (*Rrekontamiento* 100-01). Lastly, after suffering insults at the hands of Queen Qandēfa's son, whose father-in-law was King Liyōn (Porus), he chooses to forge a friendship with the family (and make them his vassals) rather than destroy their city.[143]

These are the most prominent qualities that the Alexander of the *Rrekontamiento* possesses. From here, I would like to demonstrate how the young king is shown to carry out some of the basic duties of the ideal Islamic leader, the first of which is to protect the borders of *dar al-Islam* ("House of Islam" i.e. the lands where Islam is practiced). In *Sūra* 18 of the *Qur'ān*, Alexander/Dhu'l-qarnain is shown to protect humanity from the Jūju and Mājūjū (Gog and Magog) by building a wall around them (*Rrekontamiento* 89-90).[144] Arabic redactions of the *AR* usually extend this episode and provide more detail. Finding that the hideous Jūju and Mājūjū attack and terrorize "fillōš de Edam," Alexander orders his men to build a large wall made of wood, iron, and copper, thereby trapping them between two mountains until Judgement Day. Although this scene certainly relates in part to Alexander's religious role, it also shows actively

[143] This episode is actually found in the *HNAM* as well, albeit in a slightly different form. Alexander disguises himself as one of his generals and visits Candace/Qandēfa's city. The Queen identifies him immediately because she had a portrait drawn of him but promises to keep his secret. Her younger son insults Alexander, not realizing that the king was in front of him; instead of killing him, the Alexander, dressed as his general, promises that he will convince "Alexander" to make peace with the city instead of attacking them (*Rrekontamiento* 122-31).

[144] In the *Qur'ān*, the terms used to refer to these tribes are "Yājūj and Mājūj," so what we see in the *Rrekontamiento* is a variation of that name.

shows how he protects his people, the "sons of Adam" from danger. As mentioned in Chapter 1, protecting the borders of *dar al-Islam* was one of the primary responsibilities of the leader of the community. In the Arabic *AR* narratives, Alexander is frequently shown to use his talents as a warrior to rid the world of any threat to humanity by "putting paid to the strange beasts that threaten it and threaten[ing] to upset its conceptual order" (Stoneman *Alexander* 171). Throughout out his journeys, Alexander is constantly defeating different monsters that he encounters: large serpents, the odontotyrannus, a dragon, and other unnamed fierce creatures (*Rrekontamiento* 141 and 145-46 respectively). Most of these episodes are found in the *AR* (in a letter written by Alexander to Aristotle describing India) to describe the young king's many adventures. Here in the *Rrekontamiento* they take on a whole new meaning, since they form a part of the Islamic Alexander's responsibilities.

Another duty of the Muslim leader (and any leader) is to appoint competent officials to fulfill important governmental posts. Al-Ghazālī and al-Māwardī both state that the caliph needed to demonstrate sound judgement in order to find the proper individuals to oversee governmental affairs as well as rule in his stead if needed (al-Ghazālī, *Book of Counsel* 86; al-Māwardī 16). Though they do not have a large role in the *Rrekontamiento*, el Afašakhīd[145] and al-Khiḍr are shown to be Alexander's wise advisors. Both men are well-known within Islam for their wisdom. Additionally, al-Khiḍr is also considered to be a saint who is blessed by God with immortality. The *morisco* audience would certainly have recognized both of the men from the *Qur'ān* and understood the value in having such men travel with Alexander.

[145] Zuwiyya explains that "Afašakhīd" is a corruption of Arpachshad, who is the great-grandson of Noah (Zuwiyya, "A Study" 33n30). He is supposedly the wisest of men because "everything he says agrees with the wisdom with the angels" (Zuwiyya, "A Study" 27).

In addition to choosing personal advisors, we see that, since Alexander is a traveling monarch, he has to choose worthy officials to rule certain kingdoms/villages in his stead. In some cases, he appoints individuals who were already in power before his arrival, and in other cases he finds new people to act as his representative. For example, Queen Bawārīš of the Amazons is allowed to continue in her post so long as she and her people pledge their allegiance to Alexander and his God (*Rrekontamiento* 131-34). In the case of Jābarşā, a city he encounters early in his travels, Alexander is astonished to find a community that has given up its worldly possessions to focus on its devotion to God and the afterlife. Alexander is particularly moved by a wise man he meets there who is unimpressed with his wealth and power. Before he leaves, he claims the land as part of his *šennorio*, and names the old man as the "kapitan" of this village in his name: "Tu ereš bieššo, i eš onbre šabyo, i-ereš konbenible šobre nošotroš en ke te demos a enparar el fecho de akešta çibdad, ke yo no kuydo ke pašaraš en ella, ni trešpašaraš el mandamiento de Allāh, i fiçolo kapitan šobrelloš, i mandoleš en ke le obedeçiešen i oyešen del, i no dešobedeçiešen šu mandamiento" (*Rrekontamiento* 73). Alexander's ability to recognize the wisdom in others speaks to his own wisdom, since the type of people that he chooses to rule in his place reflects the type of legacy he wishes to leave in his kingdom. The old man has lived much longer than Alexander and has had longer to learn about the world around him. He understands the temptations that men face in life – like wealth and power – and has decided to dedicate his life to God. This is precisely what Alexander ultimately wants to instill in his people; therefore, the Macedonian leaves him in charge of the village and leaves knowing that he has made a good decision. Under the wise care of the old man, the villagers will continue to follow Allāh and live humble, pious lives, which is ultimately what Alexander wants for everyone he rules over.

As we can see, the Macedonian possesses many necessary qualities to be an *imām*-king. In many ways, he is the "most excellent" of his time and proves that with everything that he does. Although there are not many examples in this section, Alexander's virtues along with the few official duties he is shown to carry out work to support the portrayal of the Macedonian as the ideal leader of the *umma.* In this way, we can see how the religious theme is always made to be the focus of the narrative so as to constantly remind its intended audience about the importance of faith in their daily lives.

4.5 Alexander, the conflicted king

Given that Alexander is a figure in the *Qur'ān,* Islamic authors were careful to manage his image. The enormity of his sacred mission often overwhelms the text and the Macedonian seems to be shielded from any criticism. That being said, there are some aspects of Alexander's life that are impossible to completely erase, as is the case with the *Rrekontamiento.* The hero of the *aljamiado* narrative is certainly an *imām*-king, but he is also a mortal man who has been thrust into a position of power. While it is not very overt, the narrative suggests that Alexander is caught between his earthly and spiritual interests. The secular life, especially that of a king, lends itself to temptations like power and wealth. As the sovereign finds out, however, there are those who give up these vanities to lead a simpler existence, thereby devoting themselves to God as earnestly as Alexander himself does. These individuals continuously give him warnings about the dangers of his lifestyle, urging him to change his ways. How he decides to deal with these often-conflicting aspects of his life will provide an example of what ideal kingship was to Islamic political theorists.

The earliest warning that Alexander receives is in the early days of his conquest, before he has fully understood the importance of his holy mission. Near Jābarṣā, he encounters an old man who does not lift his head to look at the king as he passes with his army. Irritated by the slight, Alexander decides to talk to the man and finds that he is not impressed by his royal title. He tells the king:

> yo ya e bišto antes de tu rreyeš, ke leš a šido dado del mundo šenblante de lo ke teš dado a tu, i alkançaron del mundo šemblante de lo ke tu alkançaš, enpero ya leš falleçio el mundo, i loš afinado, i še fue kon elloš, i še fue kon elloš šuš algoš, i še an eštruido šuš kašaš i šuš kaštilloš, i še ataššaron šuš rraštroš, i no a kedado šino šuš nuevaš…i ši tu obraš por Allāh, aun šera bueno tu lonbramiento,[146] šera mucho tu bien, i durara tu šennorio. (*Rrekontamiento* 72)

The old man tries to teach Alexander about true faith, which is not necessarily proven through ostentatious display, but simple piety. Although his devotion to God is never questioned, it is implied that he is materialistic and perhaps takes for granted the divine favor that he receives. Allāh promised Alexander an empire but never gave him any assurances that it would last forever. The old man goes on to explain that he spends his total pay, which is only one *dirham*, on all his expenses and his family, thereby proving that riches are not necessary to keep a man happy. Moved by the example, Alexander decides to spare him and move on.

Along his travels, he meets people who live without doors on their houses, with no riches, no leader, no poverty, and with no falseness or jealousy in their hearts (*Rrekontamiento* 73-75).

[146] Nykl translates the term “lonbramiento” to “reputation” or “glory” (Nykl 200).

They are good, pious people who already worship Allāh. Alexander notices that they have bones hanging in their doorways and they explain that it reminds them that death is the end for all men: "Por tal ke no olbidemoš la muerte o šeamoš niglijenteš del" (*Rrekontamiento* 74). Unlike the encounter with the old man, there is no overt warning from this group. Instead, they merely explain to Alexander their lifestyle without any judgement. What is significant, however, is that the placement of this episode with the earlier one – just one page apart – works in conjunction to point out a stark contrast between two different lifestyles, both dedicated to the same God. Alexander's devotion is openly shown and paraded through the world by way of his numerous conquests. In sharp contrast, these villagers reject glory and any material possessions to live a humble life. The old man reminds him that all earthly kings die leaving behind the wealth that they have gathered, and the second group of villagers explain that all men should focus on death, since doing so will help one to ignore the vanities of temporal life. The only true way to live is to devote yourself entirely to God and his message.

There seems to be a contradiction here. Alexander is supposed to be the leader of the Islamic community, and as such he should be *afḍal*. And yet, he is criticized for the way that he lives his life. The issue stems from Alexander's sacred mission, which relies on his kingship to succeed. With power comes temptation. God promised Alexander an empire, which at first glance is a material thing, but he is supposed to unite it through religion. How can he, therefore, live a simple life and still fulfill his responsibilities? The answer lies in faith. By focusing on God and creating an empire or community in His name, he is doing missionary work. He needs to work for Allāh – and only Allāh – and reject the material pleasures that come with his job. His kingship needs to be for a higher calling and not for the baser desires in life. As the old man tells him: "ši tu obraš por Allāh, aun šera bueno tu lonbramiento, i šera mucho tu bien, i durara tu

šennorio" (*Rrekontamiento* 72). The *šennorio* that he refers to is the legacy he leaves behind, the community united by religion; that kingdom will survive and thrive long into the future because it is pure. Long after his death, the Prophet would bring God's message to Earth once again and Islam would flourish. That is the ultimate objective. Recalling once again the belief of Ibn al-Muqaffa that temporal power needed religion to cement itself, we see that the *Rrekontamiento* seems to support this belief, since Alexander embodies both religious and secular power, much as a caliph would have done (Black 22). To do this, he must remember, as the villagers have taught him, that death is his end as well; the material wealth and vanities of his kingship will not follow him into the next life, so the only power worth focusing on is that of God. This idea is finally impressed upon Alexander when he ventures into the Darkness, which is one of the most important episodes in the *Rrekontamiento* and fundamental to the Arabic versions of the *AR*, as it marks a pivotal change in Alexander's character and helps him to rededicate himself towards his mission.[147]

The episode can be divided into three parts: the voyage into the Darkness, the trial at the castle, and the journey out of the Darkness – all of which act in conjunction to show Alexander his lack of complete dedication to his mission, to force him to reaffirm his faith, and to finally reform him. After subduing Jābarṣā, Alexander reaches the end of the *šol poniente*, where he finds a vast expanse of darkness that seems to stretch forever, forty years in length as he would later find out. Recalling the legend that the *awa de la bida* (which grants immortality) is in its center, he desires to go inside no matter the cost and asks God to send Zayāfīl to get more

[147] Doufiker-Aerts explains that the Journey through the Darkness plays a great role in the Arabic Alexander tradition. It usually includes a search for the Source of Life, which is found by al-Khiḍr instead (171-80). Israel Friedländer has done a study on this motif within the Arabic tradition. Mario Casari believe its inclusion has to do with the historical Alexander's interest in exploring the Caspian Sea, and the episode has been added to the *AR* tradition to serve as Alexander's conquest of the North (Casari 182). In this case, the Darkness would represent the Arctic region.

information about the region (*Rrekontamiento* 78). Despite objections from his closest advisors, he is determined to go on with his voyage and enters the Darkness with a large army, led, not by himself, but by his most important advisor al-Khiḍr who uses as glowing bead as the only source of light to guide them through the space.[148]

Alexander's voyage into the Darkness is a metaphor for his transformation into a true champion for Islam. He is without a doubt doing God's work before this incident, there is still something very secular and very human about his rule up until now. When passing by Jābarṣā, for example, he is irritated that the old man is not impressed by his title or his great army. He is prideful and arrogant and thinks much of his power and status as a sovereign. During his travels, he boasts openly of being God's champion and of his mission. He believes himself to be untouchable, the only man worthy of divine favor. In addition, there is Alexander's *pothos,* which is a very human desire; he is curious and wants to know all the secrets of the world, whether they are his to know or not; the Darkness is one of these secrets. This was not the intention of Allāh's mandate. Alexander's mission was to spread the word of God to increase His glory, not his own as a mortal king. He had been charged to conquer and rule over the known world for only this purpose and there was no promise of immortality given. In addition, the borders of his territory were clearly explained to him by Zayāfīl during the *mi'raj*: Alexander rules the land between the *šol šaliente* and the *šol poniente,* everything bathed in light and nothing beyond. Recalling the *LAlex* this episode is comparable to Alexander's descent into the seas where he violated the laws of Natura and challenged God. In the *Rrekontamiento,* the

[148] Al-Khiḍr, or "the green one," is an Islamic hero, saint, and sometimes prophet who is popular in Islamic tradition (Stoneman, *Alexander* 156). He is always associated with wisdom and is described as a pious Muslim. He has been connected to a figure from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* named Glaucus (meaning "sea green"), a fisherman, who upon seeing his dying fish jump back to life after eating an herb, decides to do the same (Stoneman, *Alexander* 272n). He is also associated with Moses and Alexander in Islamic tradition and is an immortal (Campos).

Macedonian is too pious to ever dare challenge God, but he is blinded by his greed and unaware of his transgression.

Therefore, Alexander's desire to drink the awa de la bida demonstrates that he has not fully understood his responsibility. He believes that if he and his armies drink the water: "kizau ke durariyan kon el mundo, i duraria šu šennorio kon el duramiento del mundo, dakia el dia del afinamientō" (*Rrekontamiento* 78). In theory, he could rule the world as God's representative for eternity, but his true motivations are entirely selfish. He wants to be immortal without considering God's will. In a role reversal, it is he who asks for God to send Zayāfīl and not Allāh who sends the angel. Similarly, he must prompt Zayāfīl to get the answers he needs about the Darkness, he must ask his advisors for their suggestions, and he must provide the glowing stone that al-Khiḍr uses to lead them. God offers him nothing. Christine Chism believes that this episode "dramatizes the contrast between the effortless grace of direct revelation from God, on the one hand, and, on the other, the canniest, trickiest strategies of knowledge-management that Dhulqarnayn can assemble using all of the resources at his disposal," which include "an angel, peerless advisors, and a magical instrument of illumination" (67-8). As mentioned, he also faces opposition; both of his most trusted advisors, Afšakhid and al-Khiḍr, warn him not to push forward:

> "Porkella eš eškuridad ke no pueden ber en ella nenguno šu mano, i-e miedo i temo en ke šea tu entramiento en ella i no šea de Allāh apagança, i temo no še enšanne Allāh šobre nošotroš, i noš perdamoš en ella…Teme ad Allāh, yā rey, ke por Allāh, tu te perderaš i perderšan laš jenteš kon tu, i šeran dešyerradaš en eša eškuridad, i no šalrran della nunka

jamaš" (*Rrekontamiento* 80-81).

Fulfilling their duty as good advisors, without openly opposing their king, they do try to correct him before he commits a horrible mistake.[149] But Alexander is determined to become immortal does not listen to their advice as carefully as he should. He is not even swayed upon learning that no one has ever entered the Darkness before: "No y kamina nenguna peršona, ni al-jini, ni-as Sayṭan, ni-al-malak, ni šaben lo ke ay en ella šino Allāh" (*Rrekontamiento* 79). He assumes that immortality is meant for him "because he has always been in God's favor" (Zuwiyya, "The Introductory Hadith" 100). But, as Zuwiyya explains, he has "taken God's will for granted" and will be left with nothing ("The Introductory Hadith" 100).

It is therefore not surprising that he is denied his prize while the wiser al-Khiḍr is shown the path to the Water of Life. Many versions of the Darkness episode – though not the *Rrekontamiento* – specifically state that it is Gabriel who visits al-Khiḍr (Chism 68). As mentioned earlier, Gabriel is associated with divine revelation and Rafael is tasked with waiting to blow the horn on Judgement Day. To be visited by the official messenger of God (like the Prophet), leaving Alexander is left to interface with Rafael, denotes the favored status of the advisor. He was considered worthier of the Water of Life than his master. Chism explains that al-Khiḍr is associated with "esoteric knowledge" and secret-keeping in the *qiṣṣaṣ* tales, therefore with him, the secret of immortality would be kept safe (Chism 68). This is the first clear indication that we have regarding God's displeasure; Alexander has been punished for his transgressions. There is much debate amongst theorists about how to deal with a wayward ruler, but the *Rrekontamiento* leaves no doubt as to who is the ultimate judge of all men: Allāh. Abū

[149] Abū Yūsuf believed that this was how advisors should always act. They needed to guide and moderate the behavior of the caliph but never outright contradict him, since this would be an affront to his exalted position.

Yūsuf, Ibn Qutyaba, and Niẓām al-Mulk specifically mention that God is also the ultimate judge of all kings (Abū Yūsuf 36; Lambton 66, Niẓām al-Mulk 12). Although Alexander was allowed to pass through the Darkness unscathed – and quickly since he traverses in 20 days what should take 20 years – he does so at a high cost. His punishment is to live and die as a mortal. Unfortunately, Alexander has still not understood the high cost of his actions, and so he will be tested again.

After gaining immortality, al-Khiḍr leads the group to the other side of the Darkness where he finds a castle with a bird and an angel, both of which directly question his faith. The bird asks Alexander a series of questions: "Yā Dzū-l-qarneini, no te bašta lo kea ā deššado de laš jenteš i de la tierra, dakia ke aš entrado en lugar ke no y dentra persona, ni-al-jjini nunka; i-eš la rraçon ke tu aš entrado en akešte lugar?" (*Rrekontamiento* 83). Alexander answers that God had sent him there. This statement, though never challenged by the narrative voice, is not technically true – as stated above, it was Alexander who initiated the entire adventure. He truly believes that he is here, not as a personal endeavor, but by Allāh's command; he claims no responsibility for his actions (Zuwiyya, "Royal Fame" 143). That being said, it cannot be denied that he reached this point unscathed, with his army intact. Alexander believes that he has been given a privileged position in God's eye, therefore "his honor is a reflection of God's honor" (Zuwiyya, "Royal Fame" 713). Similarly, he believes his immortality will be an honor for Allāh. The truth is, however, that it was in spite of his transgression that he was helped by God, something that he still does not fully comprehend. The interaction between Alexander and the celestial beings that he encounters beyond the Darkness help him to understand this. The bird goes on to pose a series of questions to Alexander regarding the sins committed on Earth:

> Diššole Dzū-l-qarneini: Fešme a šaber ši šon muchoš loš fijoš de la lušurya i laš rrudeçaš en la tierra? Diššole Dzū-l-qarneini: Šī…Despuš diššole: Yā Dzū-l-qarneini, ea ši amucheçe la teštemoniança falša? Diššole Dzū-l-qarneini: Šī…Depueš diššo: Yā Dzū-l qarneini, fešme a šaber ši šigen laš lujuriaš en la tierra? Diššole: Šī. (*Rrekontamiento* 83)

Alexander answers 'yes' to all of the questions, causing the bird to grow larger and larger until there is barely room for the king, terrifying him. The bird continues with more questions regarding religious practices:

> Yā Dzū-l-qarneini; fešme a šaber por lo key o te demandare por ello. Diššole Dzū-l-qarneini: Demandame por lo ke kerrās Diššole: Fešme a šaber ši dejan laš jenteš de teštemoniar INNA LĀ ILLĀHA ILLĀ-LLĀH.[150] Diššole: No lo dešan…Depueš diššole: Yā Dzū-l-qarneini, fešme a šaber še dešan laš jenteš el aş-şalā adebdeçido.[151] Diššo a el: No…I después diššole: Yā Dzū-l-qarneini, dime ši dejan laš jenteš el bannar de la çuççiedad. I diššole: Nō. (*Rrekontamiento* 83-4)

Alexander responds 'no' to all of the questions, restoring the bird to its original size, pleased that people have not lost faith. In his answers to the bird, Alexander also asserts his own commitment to the God, insisting that he travels around the world to make sure that people pray to Allāh and carry out all of the necessary rituals of Islam: i kon akello e llegado ad akešte lugar, i-o kiero

[150] There is no deity but God/There is no God but Allāh.
[151] Here the bird is asking if people still recited the necessary prayers on Earth. This could refer to any prayer. However, in the same codex as the *Rrekontamiento*, we find a short prayer with instructions on how to do the ritual washings before praying, and what one should recite while doing that washing. There is a good chance that the *moriscos* would have thought of that prayer amongst other ones that they should recite.

matar a laš jenteš todaš šobre akello" (if they do not recite the prayer 'INNA LĀ ILLĀHA ILLĀ-LLĀH') (*Rrekontamiento* 84). By reaffirming his dedication to God, Alexander shows that he is the champion of his faith. The ideal Muslim leader is one who models good religious practice and ensures that the *umma* is following the tenets of Islam. Alexander's true mission is to cleanse the world, purge it of heresy and sin, and prepare it for the word of the Prophet. Again, Alexander is the type and the prophet is the antitype. The bird's questions help to show that key Islamic practices 'existed' before the Prophet and were perfected by him later.

While the bird reaffirms Alexander's faith, the angel that ne meets next will force him to see the error of his ways. Informing the Macedonian that he has entered the Land of the Angels, the angel asks the monarch: "Yā Dzū-l-qarneini, no ta baštado lo kaš bišto de laš jenteš de la tierra dakia ke aš llegado a mī?...fa ke kieš de akešt mundo, i kiereš ke kora tu šennorio šōbre loš al-malakeš?" (*Rrekontamiento* 84-85).[152] Alexander replies again that it was God who sent him there and that he would not have made it had God not wanted him to be there. This is a half-truth. God does help Alexander survive the Darkness. But as we know, it is not so that he can conquer the Land of the Angels, rather so he can finally learn a lesson. The Darkness acts as a border, the end of man's territory – and Alexander's. By crossing that border Alexander entered the world of the divine. What knowledge he gains in that supernatural realm will reorient him in life and help him to rededicate himself to his holy mission.

Before leaving the room, Israfīl gives Alexander a stone, the significance of which neither he nor his advisors can understand, since it is always heavier than anything it is weighed against. Finally, Alexander calls Al-Khiḍr, who, after carefully studying the stone, places it back

[152] The names of both, the young angel in the castle, and the angel that delivers God's message to Alexander are Rafael – although the former is never named in the *Rrekontamiento.* Yet it is clear that they are two separate figures in the narrative.

on the balance and weighs it against a handful of dirt. They balance perfectly. At this moment, he explains God's message to Alexander:

> Allāh da marabillaš a šuš khaleqadoš, i šuš košaš formadaš todaššon marabillaš, ke no lo šabe ninguno šīno Allāh, i šu judiçiyo, i šu ord naçion en elloš; i šu judiçyo eš pašante šobrelloš, -el ya a p'robado a šuš khaleqadoš kon lo ke kiere de pobreça, i de rrikeça, i de çençia, i de torpeça, y tienta a partida delloš kon partida; i-a me a tentado a mi kon tu, i-a miš padreš kon mī…Akešta piedra la puešto Allāh ta'ālā a tu šenblança, kel ta dado de la šennoria lo ke no dio a nenguno de šuš khaleqadoš, i ta dado del bençimiento, i de layuda, i del ešpanto ašī; i tu šennoria šobre loš rreyeš de loš de la tierra en šol šaliente i-en šol ponient, i te a fecho entrar en akešta eškuridad, i ta šakado della, i-aš ido dakia ke aš llegado a al malak akel ke šufla en el kuerno, i ši šabešeš ke de caga[153] de akešta tierra ubieše otra tierra atrebertiaš a dentrar il legar a ella; i ši pudiešeš šobre puyar al çielo, i šaber lo ke ay en el, haçerlo-iaš i no te fartariaš de ninguna koša, i nōaš konfiança en ke kreçkas šennoria a tū šennoria; i-ašī šeraš dakiya ke el dia de la fīn; i ši te fueše dada la vida i todo lo kaš porkaçado, i-aš enšonoriado, i-aš forçado i-aš llegado, dešaraš; i-aši komo no še farta akešta piedra kon piedraš šenblant della, aši tu nunca te fartaraš, i tu tornamiento šera ad akešta tierra, kieš akel ka pešado šobre laš piedraš, i la farto; i no šera tu parte del mundo māš de akešte palmo akel ke duermeš en el el dia de oy, i akešto no puede estar menoš a tu de tornar a el, i dormir deyūšo del. (*Rrekontamiento* 87)

[153] "Caga," when used with "de" means without. In this case, however, it means "behind." The phrase reads "If you knew that behind that land there was another…" (Nykl 190).

Al-Khiḍr explains that Alexander has transgressed the natural order and for that he has been denied the Water of Life. All his struggles to learn the mysteries of the world and gain an eternal empire will end with nothing, because like all mortals, he will die with nothing (Stoneman, *Alexander* 164). Al-Khiḍr recognizes that nothing will satisfy Alexander in life, and only in death will everything be equalized. This is the moment of epiphany. Alexander asks al-Khiḍr to guide the army back through the Darkness to the other side through a path that takes steers them away from the Water of Life. He has finally understood that God has patiently allowed him to survive the journey into the Darkness, but He has denied him immortality.

But this is not the end of Alexander's trial. God will test him once more in the Darkness. As they are leaving the world of the angels, the party reaches a river full of glowing stones, where the soldiers are given the option to take as many of the precious gems as they wish. Alexander does not take any. As the narrator tells us:

> Apiade Allāh a-Dzū-l-qarneini kel entro en akel rrio i-el ya abia aborreçido el mundo; i ši por abentura el laš ubieše bišto antes ke ubieše aborreçido el mundo, abriaše llebado todo lo ke abia en el, i no abria deššado en el ninguna koša. Enpero el dentro en el i-el ke ya abia aborreçido el mundo, i-eš ke Allāh še lo abia fecho aborreçer en šu koraçon kon akella šenblança, akella ke le abia dado Allāh el alto. (*Rrekontamiento* 88)

Alexander has lost his desire for earthly riches. He has no regret for not taking the stones nor does he even wish to look at them. The Darkness now takes on a bigger, symbolic meaning. It is not just a border, but a space of transformation and enlightenment. Alexander entered the Darkness blindly and wandered through it in the same way. He was denied immortality because

of his blindness. It is ironic that he gave al-Khiḍr the bead to guide the army through the Darkness and does not take it himself. Trusting so much in his own abilities and God's undying love for him, he gives away willingly that which would help him to see, leaving himself as blind as those that follow him. Al-Jāḥiz believed that, since the *īmām* was human, it was possible for him to sin and still be able to rule (Pellat 65, 80-81). By disobeying God's command, Alexander sinned, but he is forgiven once again. Despite his transgression, Allāh still believes that he is the best man to spread his religion and unite the people; therefore, he denies him the Water of Life but allows him to continue his journey and eventually learn his lesson. This is quite unlike the *LAlex,* where the monarch is ultimately punished for his transgressions against God and *Natura.* Alexander emerges from the Darkness (near the castle) tired and afraid but soon regains his lost confidence. Everything that follows helps him to understand his true place in the world and the consequences of his own greed. He reemerges from the Darkness an enlightened man. The episode at the river serves as the final test to prove that he has really changed. Alexander purges himself of his sins (his darkness) in the emptiness of the Darkness and enters the earthly realm as a new man, a better man.

Reflecting on the themes of death and leadership that I am analyzing in this section, the episode in the Darkness emphasizes both Alexander's favored status and his mortality. He is the best man to spread God's message, not only because of his leadership qualities, but because he is able to understand his own error and reform. As mentioned earlier, Alexander will have to use his status as king to work for God, rather than for himself, rejecting the temporal wealth and glory that comes with his position and focusing instead on the spiritual benefit. Furthermore, he can only do this in one lifetime, therefore he must use all his talents and skills to fulfill his divine mission in that time. No one, not even Alexander/Dhu'l-qarnain, the friend of God, is exempt

from divine will or the constraints of mortality. With this message clearly cemented in his mind, Alexander embarks on more adventures. Although he will receive more warnings during this time, there will be no more tests or trials. Alexander has learned his lesson.

The episodes that I will now discuss are from the *AR* material that the Arabic author decided to keep. The climactic moment of the narrative is Alexander's epiphany in the Darkness, and yet the *AR*'s most famous episodes, most of which have some moral lesson attached to them, are still present in the text – albeit with necessary cultural changes. As a result, we have final text that seem to have redundant moral repetitions that do not add anything to the development of the story. As a result, the need to preserve traditional material and to Islamize the message of the narrative raises issues regarding the logical development of the plot, mostly because there is no need for Alexander to be warned any longer. Therefore, I propose that these passages, rather than work towards the internal evolution of the story had a mainly external effect: to act as constant reminders to the monarch, but particularly to the audience, that death is the end for all humans, and that the vanities of the world do not equate with ultimate devotion to God.

The first of these episodes is Alexander's final encounter with Dāriuš. Stabbed by his own men, the old king is found dying and clinging to whatever remains of his life. His last words are a warning to the young conqueror:

> Ke nō eš buenō en ke akošigaš el fechō todo, i plegeš del rrišmo lo kaš plegado; i bengate imien a lo ke tieneš de tornar a ello; komō šakabō depueš ke yera en ello de la šennoria i-en el rrišmo lo ke no abia a nengunō de nengunō de loš rreyeš del mundo šenblan dellō, i loš rreyeš del mundo todoš eran ke tenían miedo; para mientreš komō yō šo el dia de oy lançado en la tierra, muerto, abilitado. (*Rrekontamiento* 105)

Dāriuš pleads with him not to ask for more than he has been given. This warning is heard, but there is nothing from the narrative voice – nor Alexander himself – that indicates to the audience that he has been strongly influenced in any way. In fact, the episode in the Darkness is the only time that the narrative voice makes it clear that he has been profoundly altered by an experience. The Darkness was the turning point in Alexander's story and Dāriuš' warning acts as an unnecessary reiteration for our hero. Therefore, while it has no function for the character development of the monarch, perhaps it could have worked as a reminder for the audience. Repetition is an important part of works intended to be orally communicated to help the audience remember and learn certain details of a traditional story – in this case, a moral message. The next episode, the encounter with the Brahmins, will serve a similar purpose.

In the *AR* tradition, the Brahmins not only warn the conqueror about his impending death and the vanities of life, but also teach him about the mysteries of life. This episode is probably the most prominent in the *Rrekontamiento* besides the adventure into the Darkness. The Turjāmanin, as they are called in the text, are a group of villagers who have no weapons or riches and live harmoniously far from the material world. Curious, Alexander visits them himself. They urge him to seek knowledge, which for them is the greatest wealth they could ever have. In addition, echoing previous advice, they urge him to give up his earthly desires since they would not help him when he died:

> Para mientres a tū mišmō, i lo kaš aplegado daderredor de tū de loš khalqadōš para ke fagaš abōreçer a lošde la tierra lur mundo, i tu prešona no i šemella ninguna koša; no te viene imien la muert akella ke te demanda del dia ke te fōrma tū šennōr? I la muerte

> kuando te akōšigira fara abōrreçer šobre tū tū mundo i loš kaš allegado en ella; ferla aborrecer en tūš ochōš, i-eš ke te bašt lo ke bibeš kon ellō dia enpueš dia, i te farte lō pokō, še te konpaša kon ellō. (*Rrekontamiento* 115)

Once again, Alexander is given lessons on how to live his life. The first is about knowledge. As we have already seen, the king has spent much of his life in pursuit of this, even traveling to the ends of the Earth to learn about all of God's mysteries. The difference is that while he has been out actively gaining knowledge through experience, the Turjāmanin have stayed in one place and prayed for it. In the end, they are shown to be much wiser than Alexander. Much like in the Darkness, the monarch never asked God for this knowledge, but went looking for it himself. On the other hand, the villagers trusted in God, and He gave them all the wisdom and knowledge that they could ever want, more than Alexander had access to during his life. Alexander recognizes this, but there is no great epiphany as in the Darkness, rather he humbly falls at their feet seeking their wisdom. The message is clear: true knowledge comes from the divine. Trusting in God worked out better for the Turjāmanin than the sovereign's independent approach.

The second lesson that Alexander learns from their advice is that he should focus on death, because no material goods that he gains will follow him to the afterlife. This is technically something that he has already learned in the course of the narrative, and so seems repetitive. But, if we look at it again as a reiteration to reinforce a message, more for the audience than for the monarch, it perhaps acquires a different value.

After this, Alexander poses a series of questions to the Turjāmanin about the natural world and the mysteries of life. Satisfied by their answers, he offers to give them anything that

they want. They ask for immortality, something he cannot give them because he too is mortal. They reply:

> Ši tū šabeš ke tū aš a morir, ke kieš de la peleya de loš de akešta tierra i el aplegamientōde loš algoš? Ke beeš še bençišeš a tōdoš i-enšennoriešeš i forçašeš a tōdaš laš jenteš, no šabeš ke tū laš aš de dešar para otro šieneš de tū, i bernaš šobre kien no teškūšara, ni te lōara, i rrepentirtaš šobre tu obra akella kaš adelantado…Yā Dzū-l-qarneini, ke a tū en akeštō ke mataš tu prešona en demandar el mundo i-amarlō, i-aborreçeš a laš jerenaçioneš i-a loš rreyeš lureš bidaš, i te baškon lur mundo, i no še farta tū ocho de ninguna koša, i tod ora ke tomaš ninguna koša kieš kreçer a ellō otro, i todō kuantō beyeš de maravillaš kiereš ver otra, i ši te fueše dado kuantō ay entre el çielo i la tierra dešeyariaš maš de akellō, i-ašte pueštō a fer kautela šobre lo ke ay en loš šōlareš de loš monteš i de laš mareš, i tū anšia nō abra kabō dakia ke llegeš a tu plaçō, i šalçe tu šennoriō a otro šieneš de tū...nō mateš tu prešona, yā Dzū-l-qarneini, en demandar el šaber todo, ke no y poriaš llegar; ke Allāh a dado de šū šaber lo ke kiere, i no a dado del šinō pokō, i baštate. (*Rrektonamiento* 116-19)

Alexander has just learned another lesson about God. Allāh will decide what men need in life and give it to them, whether that be material goods or knowledge. When Alexander went searching for the Water of Life, it was because he believed he deserved it and that it would make him happy. But God is the only one who knows what he needs, therefore, he should be happy with what he has been given in life; by demanding more, he gains nothing. Accepting the advice, Alexander moves on.

Eventually he comes across the Turjāmanin, who warn him that he should repent and prepare for his death (*Rrekontamiento* 121). This is the beginning of the end for the hero. The last two prophecies that he receives will focus on his own impending death. The first of these is given during the famous adventure of the talking trees of the sun and moon focuses. Only lasting four lines in the *Rrekontamiento,* this short episode prophesies his final days: "morraš en la tierra šanta, i tuš konpannaš apreš de tū, i no leš demandamoš por nenguna koša ke nō noš haçen a šaber por ello" (*Rrekontamiento* 144). Not only will Alexander die, but so will his men, meaning that his *šennorio* will also end. This is something that we have been told several times throughout the text, and therefore, comes as no surprise. The audience is reminded yet again that even Alexander, a great king and champion of God, will leave the world with nothing.

The final prophecy the hero receives is from his teacher and friend Irištotileš who also recognizes that his disciple's time has come. Acknowledging the success that he has had throughout his life Aristotle urges him to prepare for his departure from the world:

> B-içmi-llāhi-r-raḥmāni-r-raḥīmi. A kuantō depueš, ya me a llegado tuš nuebaš, i lo kaš eškonçado de loš ešpantoš, i de laš peleaš, i de loš afereš fuerteš, i de laš marabillaš, i lo ke ta dado Allāh del poder en la tierra, i lo kaš konkištado de laš çibdadeš, i lo kaš bençido de loš rreyeš; akellō kon layuda de Allāh i šu potençia. Ya konbiene šobre tū loarlō, i-agradeçerlo, y-apartarte a šerbirlō, i-a obedeçerlō; i la obra buena, akella ke trobaraš en tū al-ākhira;[154] ke loš diaš še ban, i tū plaçō šaçerka de tū, i tū dešaraš tū ad-dunya[155]; apareššate para al-ākhira probišion de temor i-obra buena, anteš ke te benga la muert i tū dellō niglijente. (*Rrekontamiento* 152)

[154] "Al-ākhira" is the Arabic term for "the hereafter."
[155] "Ad-dunya" is the Arabic term for "world"

Finally heeding all of the warnings that he has received throughout his life Alexander goes home and makes arrangements for his death. Then, he peacefully leaves the world. Given the exalted place that ‘Dhu’l-qarnain holds in Islamic culture, it would be illogical for God to have him killed to teach him a lesson. Why would anyone follow the example of a man who is punished to die? Why would a man who received such a harsh punishment from God be celebrated in the *Qur’ān*? Instead, Alexander’s epiphany in the Darkness proves to be a much stronger message than any punishment he could receive from God. It shows the power of true faith as well as God’s forgiveness. Although he was denied the Water of Life, Allāh still gave Alexander everything that he needed in life. He was born to rule over a vast empire, but, as he is told several times, he ended with nothing. By finally facing his mortality towards the end of the narrative and dying peacefully, Alexander proves that death is what all men can look forward too, even great kings who were blessed by God.

4.6 Alexander, symbol of faith and pride

Until now, I have analyzed the *Rrekontamiento* looking at Alexander as a monarch. But, given that it is an *aljamiado* text, it is important to also consider what impact the story of Alexander’s/Dhu’l-qarnain’s kingship had upon those who read his story. These narratives are traditionally studied in a social context, since they were conceived to bridge two languages, while simultaneously transferring cultural knowledge to a minority group facing discrimination, the *moriscos*. After the Reconquest officially ended in 1492, there were several laws enacted to restrict their lifestyle, culminating in an Edict in 1566 which prohibited them from speaking Arabic, using Arabic script, possessing any books or manuscripts in Arabic, wearing their

traditional clothing, congregating in public baths, using Arab names, or practicing their customs among other prohibitions (Chejne, *Islam* 10). Naturally this caused much concern among community leaders who were desperate to hold on to their culture at any cost. They turned to a trusted and already popular method to do just that: *aljamiado* script. Using Arabic characters to transcribe their Romance dialect, *aljamiado* was a hybrid form of expression used by *mudejars*, and later *moriscos*, to navigate their bilingual world.

While there is much debate amongst scholars as to when *aljamiado* began to be used, what can be agreed upon is that one of the first known Muslim scholars in Iberia to employ it in an official capacity was the *mufti* (jurist or legal scholar) Yçe de Segovia, who in 1462 used it to write his *Breviario Sunni*, a "comprehensive work dealing with the major religious obligations of a Muslim" (Chejne, *Islam* 38-39).[156] In his introduction, he stated that using "ajami" was better because it was "mas amorosa á los oyentes é ayan plazer de escoitarla e obrar por ella porque alcancen por ella el gualardon que allah prometió en ella a todos" (qtd. in Wiegers 207).[157] He saw it as a functional language that could be used to reach a *mudejar* community that was more comfortable communicating in a romance language. Kathryn Miller describes *aljamiado* as part of a "bilingual documentary culture" (102); it was used to write official documents such as notarized texts, marriage contracts, dower exchanges, divisions of inheritances and sales, and property transactions, as well as simpler messages for personal use like laundry lists, recipes, and prescriptions (Miller 87, 89, 104; López-Baralt 9-12). She explains that "it was practical but endowed with Arabic script – so the *aljamiado* instrument was poised at an interface between two legal cultures. It was a purposeful adaptation" (Miller 104).

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[156] Anwar Chejne believes *aljamiado* texts could have been used as early as the 11th century. Luce López Baralt believes it was the 12th century (Chejne, *Muslim* 377; López-Baralt 41).

[157] Chejne (*Islam* 39), LP Harvey (273-74), and Epalza ("A modo" 10) believe that his work was the principal influence upon all *aljamiado* texts that followed.

However, not all scholars agree with this point of view. In fact, Luce López-Baralt believes that "[e]l solo hecho de que los moriscos tuvieran que escribir en un idioma dividido – en un castellano transliterado con carácteres árabes delata una situación altamente conflictiva *ab initio*" (45). The very existence of *aljamiado,* to many, pointed to growing problems within the community. In addition, the term '*aljamiado*,' is itself "a corruption" of the Arabic word '*ajamiyyah*,' which means "foreign" and was applied to people of non-Arab ancestry (Chejne, *Muslim* 376). The *mudejars/moriscos* were neither completely accepted by their Christian neighbors, nor by their own people living in Islamic lands; they were Spanish Muslims, hybrids, much like the language they used to write in and preserve their works. In addition, they were losing their ability to communicate in Arabic and becoming increasingly comfortable interacting with their Christian neighbors using the vernacular dialect. This made things difficult for several reasons, the principal among them being that Arabic was considered a sacred language, one that was needed to read and properly understand the *Qur'ān*, as well as the *ḥadīth,* and any prayers. The religious leaders of the community, the *fiqhs,* understood that their brethren were losing their connection with *dar al-Islam* (House of Islam).[158] This, in conjunction with the increasing discrimination that they were facing (especially after the forced conversions in the early 16th century, which ended in 1526 in Aragon), threatened to eradicate any trace of their culture on the Iberian Peninsula. As López-Baralt describes, the Muslims "no se resignaron a perder su lengua materna sin ofrecer batalla" (44); *aljamiado* became their tool to do just this.

[158] Fiqhs were traditionally experts in Islamic jurisprudence. In Christian Spain, however, they could also be the town *qadi* (judge), *mufti* (legal scholar), *īmām* (leader of prayers), *khatib* (preacher), or *muwaththiqu* (notary) (Miller 8). They were considered the "lamps of the *umma*," essentially lighting the path for *moriscos* to maintain their faith (Miller 10). *Fiqhs* were equally as bilingual as their "flock" but worked closely with Arabic texts. They copied and studied what they liked, be it treatises of law and medicine, poetry, or longer works of *ḥadīth* (Miller 61). In addition, when given the chance, they visited Islamic intellectual cities, met prominent Islamic scholars, and went on the *hajj,* often returning home with texts to share with their community – and probably rewrite in *aljamiado* (Miller 74). It is through their connection with the larger Muslim community that *moriscos* were able to maintain any link to their culture.

However, this was not an easy battle to fight. The Inquisition was determined to destroy any trace of Arab and Islamic culture that they could find. Books were constantly confiscated and burnt, and Muslims had to follow their religion in secret (a practice known as *taqiyyah*).[159] As a result, *moriscos* had to find ingenious ways to hide their literature. This is why many *aljamiado* texts have been found in the most unusual places hundreds of years later: under floorboards, in walls, and even in caves. In addition, most are anonymous, so they cannot be traced back to any one author and are found in codices with other seemingly unrelated manuscripts.[160] The types of *aljamiado* texts that have been found, in addition to the ones already named, are *khuṭbas* (sermons), polemical texts, and *qaṣaṣ* (stories). They all had a didactic value and were carefully chosen – probably by *fiqhs* – for the moral and educational development of their communities. *Aljamiado* works were their only way to maintain their religion, their culture, and their way of life; they were a "mark of their survival" (Barletta, *Covert* 78).

Vincent Barletta believes that these narratives were most likely read aloud on celebratory days within the *morisco* community (*Covert* 77). Led by *fiqhs*, crypto-Muslims would come together in a day of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which would also include stories related to the Prophet and other important figures. This process "provided a means by which even those who did not own books themselves or know how to read *aljamiado* were able to engage traditional Islamic narratives in group settings characterized by religious worship and the conscious affirmation of Muslim institutions within their community" (Barletta, *Covert* 77). The *aljamiado* texts would have been a way for *moriscos* to "negotiate, question, and align

[159] *Taqiyyah* was the official practice of concealing one's beliefs and abstaining from religious duties in the face of threats, death, or injury.
[160] These codices were probably compiled together at a later date. The fact that many different *aljamiado* manuscripts include a variety of seemingly disparate texts leads Chejne to believe that they were probably owned by individuals who wanted to have an encyclopedia of religious material for daily religious practice (*Islam* 49).

themselves with their communal and personal identities" (Barletta, *Covert* 77). With the help of religious leaders, they could learn from the example of Qur'ānic figures and apply the valuable lessons from these traditional stories to their own lives as Muslims. The *Rrekontameinto* would have been the perfect narrative to recite at one of these events since it highlights unwavering faith, the importance of obedience, the consequence of disobedience, the vanities of earthly life, and the legacy of Islam.

Given that he was in the *Qur'ān*, Alexander/Dhu'l-qarnain would have been a well-known figure to *moriscos*. As a religious figure and a representative of God on Earth, he would have taught them much about faith. The first lesson would have most certainly been that God is omnipresent and all-powerful. He dictates the lives of all humans and they follow his mandate. In the *Rrekontamiento,* God has a powerful presence, even though He is not a character himself. It is He who gives Alexander his mission, who brings him victory, who guides him, and who saves him every time. In return, the young monarch conquers the known world for God. Wherever he marches, he recites the declaration of faith (there is only one God) and works tirelessly to bring Allāh's message to everyone he meets. But most importantly, Alexander is the embodiment of faith himself. No matter what mistakes he makes, no matter how much he is tested, he never forgets his devotion to God. That is the same devotion that the *moriscos* need to be able to survive their own ordeal.

In addition, the audience can see that anyone, even a king, can be punished by God for disobeying a divine mandate; Alexander is denied immortality. At the same time, he is also saved by Allāh and goes on to have many more adventures, where he is also saved because of his faith. The *Rrekontamiento* highlights divine justice and mercy by showing that Allāh is all powerful, and the final judge of all humanity; He can reward one just as swiftly as He punishes,

and true faith is what He requires at all time. During the 16th and 17th centuries, *moriscos* practiced their faith in secret. *Aljamiado* narratives, like the *Rrekontamiento,* taught them ways in which to maintain their faith and remind them of the ritual practices that they had to do to continue being good Muslims – like the ritual ablutions and the prescribed prayers. If we recall the questions posed by the bird to Alexander in the castle, they all dealt with rather simple, but important customs that people had to follow to be considered good Muslims (prayer, the declaration of the oneness of God, and ritual washing). Alexander confirmed to the bird that people still did these things on Earth, and it is this confirmation that causes the bird to reduce back to its original size, happy that people still practiced Islam. These are all relatively simple things that even the *moriscos* who were practicing *taqiyyah* could do in secret to maintain their faith. While it is not explicitly said, the *Rrekontamiento* acts as a type of guide to the *moriscos,* informing them of the most basic, and important rituals that they could perform even under their harsh conditions. So, while the narrative is very clear in demonstrating the punishment one receives for disobeying God, it also provides examples of what Muslims could do to still follow religious tenets to still be his loyal and obedient servants.

Besides these examples, the episode in the Darkness would have been equally as significant to the *moriscos* as it was to Alexander himself. The young monarch entered the space blindly, ruled by his own pride and ambition. When he came out, he was a new person, one who had realized that vanity and riches were not nearly as important in life as faith; the second half of the narrative, proves this as Alexander achieves his goal of world domination, not for himself, but for a higher power. The king reaps no tangible rewards for his deeds, rather receives blessings and glory for completing his divine mission. Similarly, the *moriscos* had come from splendor: the powerful Umayyad *amīrate* and later caliphate. As Mikel de Epalza explains:

"muchos moriscos tenían una consciencia de su tiempo histórico, como musulmanes de al-Andalus, la España musulmana que había precedido a la España cristiana que les había tocado vivir. Eran nostálgicos de los gloriosos tiempos pretéritos, tiempos mejores, en los que había vivido el islam dominante de la Península Ibérica, venciendo a los cristianos" (*Los moriscos* 107). Now their power and influence were over, and their kingdom destroyed. This was their Darkness. If they continued to focus on material wealth, they would be lost. But, if they refocused their energy and dedicated themselves to God, they too might be able to come out of their proverbial Darkness. The narrative allows the *moriscos* to see firsthand how one can conquer temptation and suffering to become an even better Muslim.

Besides faith and religion, the continuous warnings that Alexander receives throughout the narrative would have been extremely important to anyone reading/listening to the *Rrekontamiento.* After the Darkness episode, Alexander is fundamentally changed, but the unaltered *AR* material is still present and full of warnings about the dangers of temporal life. This moral advice, although it moves the king (and almost convinces him to give up his throne once), has no profound effect on him. Therefore, while it probably was not the original intent of the original Arabic authors, these sections could have had more of an effect on the audience. As mentioned earlier, repetition is an important part of orally transmitted works to help the audience remember and learn certain details of a traditional story. Similarly, the repeated warnings would have worked as a didactic tool to cement the importance of faith and death in the minds of the *moriscos* who were listening to – or reading – the narrative.

In addition to these examples, Alexander's conquests would have also resonated deeply with this community. The lands that he conquered throughout his life were within the boundaries of the known world according to Islamic geographical belief of the time (Zuwiyya, "Alexander's

Journey" 302). The places that he mentions – China, al-Andalus, Africa, Persia, India etc. – these are all places to which Islam would eventually spread. Alexander's success was Islam's success. He united the world through religion, making it a community of like-minded followers, an *umma*. Considering they were separated from the rest of the Islamic world; this sense of community must have been very powerful. Chejne points out that, before the Reconquest, loyalties among most Muslims of al-Andalus were more ethnic and regional rather than national or religious (*Islam* 18). But this must have changed significantly with the fall of Granada since they only had religion to bind them – religion and a shared history. As Chejne explains, the *moriscos* were "staunchly attached to their traditions and memories of the glorious past" (*Muslim* 378). He also states:

> There was a historical consciousness about [their] past Islamic ascendency, and by extension, about [their] place in history. This produced not only strong pride in past Islamic accomplishments and faithfulness to Islamic values and practices, but also the unshakeable belief in the morisco's ultimate deliverance. This consciousness of a glorious past and present tribulations strengthened belief in a future redemption through the triumph of divine power over the deeds of men. (Chejne, *Islam* 17)

Hearing of Alexander's deeds would have filled them with pride, especially since he did everything for God. If, as the *Rrekontamiento* tries to show, Alexander is in the line of prophets, the *moriscos* were just as much a part of his legacy as they were a part of Muḥammad's legacy. Not only was he an example of piety, but he was their conqueror, a man who had saved the souls of millions during his lifetime. Perhaps, that could happen again for them, since Alexander's life

provides an example that other Islamic leaders could follow. Now, in an age where *moriscos* no longer had any Islamic leaders to look up to, *aljamiado* narratives were their only way to connect with their faith and keep them united. The *Rrekontamiento* describes the creation of their *umma* centuries before the Prophet, proving that their community was predestined and divinely ordained, while its hero maintains his role as the "tent pole" that upholds Islam even in difficult times.

4.7 Conclusion

The *Rrekontamiento* uses Alexander the Great to give us a uniquely Islamic view of what the ideal Muslim leader should be. Ibn Khaldūn believed that it was a life of luxury, one that came with power, that ultimately destroyed the caliphate (2: 39-41); the *Rrekontamiento* agrees, showing us that a truly devout Muslim king is willing to give up the comforts of his position and instead uses his power to promote religious unity in his territory. But this message is not obvious from the beginning, and just like any other ruler, Alexander must learn this through his own experiences. Throughout his life he is seen to fulfill two ideals of leadership: that of religious figurehead, as well as political ruler of his people. The young ruler is charged with a sacred duty, and is therefore an *īmām*-king, part religious leader and part temporal monarch. He is shown to be one link in a longstanding tradition stretching back to early Judeo-Christian-Islamic figures and reaching forward to the Prophet himself. His cry to battle is a religious one, and he brings people under his rule to be united under one faith. That being said, he is still a man, one with qualities that make him a natural leader. He is wise, educated, just, magnanimous, kind, honorable, and an accomplished warrior. In addition, he is capable of recognizing leadership qualities in others and able to show both civility and clemency to even his enemies. Besides that,

he is the son of a king, the natural heir of his kingdom. It is these qualities that make him worthy of God's special favor, and at the same time, these qualities that help him to fulfill his duties.

On the other hand, the intersection of secular and religious can be problematic, since at times they seem to negate one another. Alexander is constantly confronted with another interpretation of true devotion: that of an ascetic, one who gives up all worldly pleasures to focus on God and the afterlife. Although he is moved by these examples, he will always be a part of the secular world, and as a result, vulnerable to its many temptations (glory, pride, wealth etc.). His dilemma – and that of countless other rulers before and after him – is that giving up this life would be disobeying God's will (since his job is to bring everyone under his rule). The solution to this struggle comes after he emerges from the Darkness: he must rule for God and not for himself. He must rule unselfishly and accept that his time on Earth is limited, which requires him to truly make a difference in the short time that he has. Recalling the words of Ibn Khaldūn – and those of Ibn al-Muqaffa almost 900 years earlier – it was the religious nature of the 'caliphate' that needed to control the temptations of kingship for the latter to be successful (Ibn Khaldūn 2: 391; Black 22). Alexander had to cede his love of luxury to a more important cause. Once he understood this, his empire would be secure. For the author of the *Rrekontamiento*, this is what a good monarch certainly is, and Alexander is the prime example of this.

In fact, his life story serves as a source of inspiration to Muslims who read about it years later. Facing increasing discrimination in 16th-century Spain, Alexander's story is proof of God's power and validates the *moriscos* own beliefs since he is the embodiment of true faith. His devotion never wavers despite his own mistakes, and he is rewarded for this. This is an example that the *moriscos* could follow. At the same time, the fact that he was punished for his transgressions – despite being a king – shows that anyone who disobeys God can also suffer the

same fate. In this way, he is also a source of motivation for *moriscos* to obey religious mandate in spite of the problems that they faced. The numerous warnings that are repeated throughout the text also remind them to focus on their faith, as it is the only thing that will help them in the afterlife. This was the model that Alexander provided them, and it proved to bring him fame and an honored place in Qur'ānic legends.

Ultimately, the *Rrekontamiento* shows us that Alexander was just one piece in a larger puzzle that would end with Muḥammad's prophecy. His role is understood to be predestined, while his *šennorio* was a footprint that Islam would follow and surpass in the modern age. His kingship is an example that later Islamic leaders could emulate to overcome their own struggles to become both religious and political figureheads of their communities. Through them, and through his story, Alexander's legacy would live on and become a symbol of hope and pride to his people centuries after his death.

Conclusion

In this dissertation I have examined the portrayal of Alexander the Great in three Iberian works, two from the 13th century written by Christian authors, the *LAlex* and the *HNAM*, and one from the 16th century written by a *morisco* author, the *Rrekontamiento*. Each of these narratives is a variation of the *AR* tradition, and shares with the others certain narrative elements, such as Alexander's campaigns against Darius and Porus, his adventures in India, his encounters with the Amazons and the wisemen of India, as well as his early death in Babylon. And yet, despite these similarities, we have three unique narratives that provide us with distinct perspectives on kingship. In what follows, I will focus on the three questions that prompted this dissertation: How is kingship represented in each text through Alexander's portrayal? How does this portrayal align with or stray from political theory regarding kingship? And finally, why did each author choose Alexander as the model to fulfill his specific agenda?

Representation of Kingship:

While all three narratives portray Alexander as a powerful and dynamic ruler, they also address the limitations and boundaries placed upon the monarch, which was a topic of concern among medieval political theorists, since a ruler needed to properly understand the full extent of his power in order to discharge his duties. In both Islam and Christianity, God is the ultimate power in the universe, the one who made the world, created all living creatures, and carefully selected certain men to rule over others in His name. Therefore, it is only natural that God is superior to the monarch and can therefore place restrictions upon his actions. While a king has the power to do many things, there are still some actions that are forbidden to him.

The *LAlex* and the *Rrekontamiento* are the most explicit in showcasing this idea given that the Alexander of the Christian work is literally punished by God for transgressing boundaries (a decision he made under the influence of his pride), while the Alexander of the *aljamiado* narrative is denied immortality when he crosses the boundary of the lands promised to him by God into the Darkness and then into the land of the angels. Divine law is shown to be what ultimately limits the power of a monarch, which places him within the fold of both moral and religious purview.

In sharp contrast, the *HNAM* describes no such boundary, and instead, presents the power of the monarch as almost unlimited. Though there are allusions to the Almighty and the supernatural, these references are mostly related to visions or dreams that Alexander experiences rather than serving as evidence that proves the superiority of God and how Alexander fits within the cosmic hierarchy. Although the Macedonian is very clearly prevented from ascending into the sky with griffins by the "vertud de Dios," there is no divine punishment for this transgression, nor any condemnation by the narrative voice (*General estoria, Cuarta parte* IV, "Alexandre el Grand," Chapter 80, 408). As a result, the monarch's power goes unquestioned. While he may not be able to fly into the heavens, Alexander certainly has free reign on Earth because he has been given that right by God.

A significant difference between the *HNAM* and the *LAlex* has to do with the moralization within the latter. The steady increase of criticism directed at the hero, both from characters within the narrative and from the author-cleric himself, have a strong effect on the audience who are eventually forced to examine Alexander's actions from a moral perspective. As a result, Alexander is ultimately presented as a flawed king who, despite his thorough preparation for his role (i.e. his impressive *clerecía* and his martial prowess), as well as the

divine support he seems to receive, demonstrates how pride can bring down the most erudite of scholars and the most celebrated of kings. In an attempt to moderate the actions of the new generation of educated clerics and noblemen, the author-cleric's moralizing message is a harsh reminder that there are limits to pursuing knowledge and that both power and knowledge are subject to a higher power.

In sharp contrast, the *HNAM* lacks any sort of moralization in the chapters that contain the life story of the Macedonian and instead, presents a very straightforward narrative that details Alexander's achievements throughout his life. Without any specific guidance or emphasis included by Alfonso X, we are allowed to see the young sovereign for what he is: an absolute monarch who rules without any limitations placed upon his power. While the few chapters following Alexander's death do contain some admonishments towards him, without the constant references that we see in the *LAlex,* the moralizing message falls flat. If we place the *HNAM* within larger context of the *GE,* the moralization is effectively forgotten. While Alexander does die young, *imperium*, which is transferred because one group loses divine favor, stays with the Greeks for several more centuries. Therefore, neither he nor the Greeks are explicitly described as having lost divine favor at any point in the narrative. In addition, the lack of critique and moralization in the *HNAM* points to a more direct relationship between the ruler and the divine, while in the *LAlex,* the cleric's digressions and interjections serve as a type of intermediary between God and the monarch. Leaving aside the specific milieu, courtly and/or scholarly, of production and dissemination, the stronger religious/moral overtones found in the *LAlex* point toward a marked clerical role in its creation and intentionality, versus the more secular, monarchical approach found in the *HNAM*, which was, as we saw, commissioned, sponsored,

and to a certain extent authored by Alfonso X to advance his own agenda regarding, not only a specific concept of kingship, but also very concrete political aspirations.

What is interesting, therefore, is that the *Rrekontamiento* manages to combine the strength and independence of the Alexander of the *HNAM* with the religious humility of the hero of the *LAlex* to present a very Muslim Alexander. Here, while the Macedonian is shown to be an absolute monarch, the presence of God is always felt in every action that he takes, since it is the divine that gives him his message of conquest and guides him constantly throughout his travels. While not moralizing per se, the *aljamiado* work is the most religious of the three texts that I study, showing how kingship can adhere to religious boundaries, but still maintain its strength when the ruler has true faith. Unlike the *LAlex,* there are no critiques of Alexander that are woven through the narrative, rather one episode that underscores Alexander's flaw, his greed, and the lesson that he learns while in the Darkness. We learn that a king is capable of making mistakes, but that rededicating himself to his faith is what keeps him in God's good graces. While secular monarchies in the Christian West were struggling to separate themselves from the grip of the Church, which at times could be overbearing, Islam had always insisted that religion was a part of daily life that served to almost inspire the faithful. Therefore, it is no surprise that this iteration of Alexander is both pious and triumphant as a secular monarch, since it is faith that inspired his mission. This in turn provides an ideal example of leadership for *moriscos*, while also teaching them how to incorporate religion in small ways into their daily lives. Given the restrictions placed upon the community in the 16th century, religious stories, like that of Alexander, acted as a guide upon which *moriscos* could base their own ritual practices.

The Three Alexander Narratives and Political Theory:

As presented in Chapter 1, there was a concern about leadership and government in both the Christian West (especially between the 11th and 14th centuries) and in the Islamic East (after the ʻAbbāsids took power in the 8th century), specifically about the qualities of the ideal ruler, what type of preparation he would need, who he should surround himself with, and how he should go about his duties.

Of the three works I study in the dissertation, the *Rrekontamiento* is the one that most closely reflects the type of kingship outlined in the various Middle Eastern treatises presented in Chapter 1, even though we cannot say that political theory influenced its production in any way. As we see early on in the narrative, "Irištotileš," who takes the throne after Alexander's father dies, gives it up for the younger man because he realizes that Alexander is much wiser. This detail together with Alexander's many virtuous qualities make him *afḍal,* or the "most excellent" of his time. That being said, this Alexander certainly has his flaws, namely his greed and/or pride for knowledge, much like the hero of the *LAlex*. The difference is that unlike the hero of the Christian poem, this Alexander is punished during his lifetime by God (who denies him immortality), which causes him to leave the Darkness a changed man. In contrast, the events in the submarine do not change the hero of the *LAlex*, rather fuel his ambitions even further, which is perhaps, what marks the difference between the flawed kingship demonstrated in the 13th century poem and the more ideal kingship portrayed in the *aljamiado* narrative. In the *Rrekontamiento,* Alexander always knows his place in the world and never forgets that he is beneath God. His entire mission of conquest is in the name of the one God, since he goes through the world subjugating cities in order to create a community of people united under one faith. According to the Muslim theorists from Chapter 1, the role of the *imām*/caliph was to act as a

"shepherd" to his subjects, to guide them along the proper path, and to ensure that people were following religious mandates. Alexander, despite his flaws, always upholds and defends God's faith, which make him *afḍal.*

In contrast, the Alexander of the *LAlex* is a flawed ruler who is condemned to a death by treason ordered by God and orchestrated by Nature. While the focus of the narrative is certainly Alexander's pride, from the perspective of medieval political theorists, he also suffers from other vices (namely arrogance, a proclivity to violence, and anger) that make him a problematic ruler. His biggest flaw is his lack of *mesura,* which is why he tends to exhibit extreme emotions. That being said, this Alexander certainly has the most complete preparation of the three kings and is most often shown to use his *clerecía* to help him achieve his goals. He also has many virtues that make him an admirable leader, namely his wisdom, his skills as a warrior, his dedication to upholding justice (until he allows Narbazanes to go free), his general treatment of his soldiers, and his generosity. What he lacks, however, is a necessary humility before God, which is something that medieval scholars believed was necessary for the ruler to have. This is the lesson that the author-cleric wishes to teach. This Alexander thinks himself as almost equal to the divine, and as a result, has no care for any boundaries that are placed on his power. The poem, therefore, demonstrates that spiritual matters always take precedence over temporal ones, since a monarch, even the most powerful, is still second to God.

Finally, in the *HNAM,* written by a king to express his concept of kingship and advance his own ambitions, Alexander is shown to be a flawed ruler from the perspective of medieval political theory. Yet, he is portrayed as an ideal ruler in the Alphonsine narrative. The negative traits that would give pause to medieval political theorists are presented as valuable characteristics of a strong ruler that allow him to achieve his goals. In addition, because neither

the Christian God nor the pagan gods play a large role in the *HNAM,* there is nothing to show us that Alexander demonstrates humility before the divine. Alfonso himself believed that God was superior to any king, but the *HNAM* shows us that Alexander can complete miraculous feats as if he were god-like himself. Once again, Alexander's inability to show his understanding of the cosmic order plays a large part in his representation as a flawed leader.

While we cannot say that the Alexander of any of the three Iberian narratives is the model ruler, we can say that they certainly have qualities that make them worthy of admiration both to a Christian and a Muslim audience. In the *Rrekontamiento,* we find the closest portrayal of an ideal ruler; in the *LAlex,* we have the clearest admonition on how easily power can distract the leader; while in the *HNAM,* we encounter a leader whose flaws are avoided by the author to support his own monarchical agenda.

The Three Alexanders:

Finally, we come to the question of why Alexander was used as the vehicle through which each of these authors wished to project their views on kingship. During his short life, Alexander the Great managed to reunite the Greek city-states, lead a successful campaign against the largest empire of his time, capture the city of Babylon, and begin an ultimately unsuccessful invasion of the Indian subcontinent – all before he turned 33. It is no wonder that he became a legendary figure from almost the moment of his death and that stories about his life were passed on and cherished from generation to generation, with each one using his life story to demonstrate the values of their time and/or their society.

In the East, most likely by the time that the Koran was put into writing, the Alexander legend had been thoroughly Islamicized by oral tradition and the careful work of Muslim

exegeses, thereby making him the ideal Islamic leader. For this reason, the Alexander of the *Rrekontamiento* has very few flaws, and is still worthy of occupying his place in Koranic legend. While the *aljamiado* text does not directly reflect the influence of Islamic political theory, it does reflect the values and concerns of the *morisco* community of the 16th century who translated this work from Arabic to share amongst themselves. Not only was Alexander's story exciting, but when told from an Islamic worldview, it also became a celebration of Islamic history, since the *Rrekontamiento* recounts the Macedonian's victories in Africa, China, and al-Andalus in addition to Persia and India. The story of the Darkness, which is commonly found in the eastern *AR* tradition, added a didactic element that validated religious values, while the references to certain rituals reinforced cultural/religious practices that were being suppressed in 16th-century Spain. As the celebrated Koranic hero who enclosed the Gog and Magog and lived his life as a champion of God, Alexander was a model that all Muslims could follow. For this reason, in the *aljamiado* narrative, Alexander is shown to carefully follow the most important tenets of faith (such as recite the first Pillar of Islam and complete ritual washings before prayers) under difficult circumstances, which would encourage *moriscos* to do the same.

While Alexander was fully embraced by Islamic culture, he was never as fully Christianized. Even before the advent of Christianity, there was a tendency to view Alexander from a moralizing perspective given the fact that he managed to attain extreme heights in his life but died quite mysteriously at a very young age. How could someone so successful die so quickly? This tendency to moralize grew as Christianity took hold in Europe and Alexander was celebrated for his martial prowess and education while simultaneously condemned for his ambition.

This is clear in the case of the *LAlex.* The author-cleric wanted to highlight the dangers of pride to the growing population of learned noblemen and clerics; therefore, Alexander, a king who was both scholar and monarch became the ideal model. In addition, the numerous episodes in the various *AR* narratives recounting Alexander's exciting adventures in the East had long been seen as an example of his *pothos*, or longing, that drove him to seek out and learn all of the world's secrets. In addition, his early death at the height of power was interpreted by Christian scholars as evidence of either his greed or his pride. All of these details made Alexander especially suitable for the author of the *LAlex*, since the poet shows us that Alexander's pride does not stem from his many victories, nor does he desire to conquer the world for riches and power (in the traditional sense). Instead, he transgresses the boundaries set by God because of his *clerecía*, which pushes him to seek out secrets that no man should have. Alexander's actions echo the fear that older clerics had about the new generation of highly educated clerics and noblemen. Lacking the humility of the older generations who tended to remain in the cloisters, this newer generation had the desire and means to seek out new information with no regard for the secrets of God. The poet, a learned cleric himself, recognized in Alexander the love of learning and the pride that these younger scholars shared and interpreted his early death as a punishment from God.

In contrast, the author of the *HNAM,* who avoids any of the moralizing overtones of the *LAlex*, found in Alexander a world-renowned conqueror and an ambitious monarch who was destined to become an emperor. Alexander's story is one link in a chain that spans the six-volume *GE*, which narrates the history of the world through the lens of *sennorio* and *imperium*. Who better than Alexander to form a part of this history and support Alfonso's aspirations to become Holy Roman Emperor? He was dynamic, courageous, and most importantly, the

emperor of the largest kingdom of his time. The fact that he was also celebrated for his wisdom and skills as a warrior made him the perfect addition to Alfonso's royal family tree to advance his imperial agenda.

In sum, the *LAlex*, the *HNAM,* and the *Rrekontamiento*, produced in Iberia for both a Christian and a Muslim audience, prove the "transcultural translatability" of the Alexander the Great of the *AR* (Stock 4). This fictional narrative about the Macedonian conqueror's life is the ultimate tale of how far one man can go if he follows his ambitions, while simultaneously demonstrating how suddenly and how far one can fall should he lose his way. This very simple story has been adapted and rewritten to produce three texts from the same region that present the same man as a scholar-king, a warrior-king, and an *imām*-king, thereby reflecting not only the versatility of the fictional Alexander the Great, but the variety of political and cultural ideas that existed in the Peninsula.

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