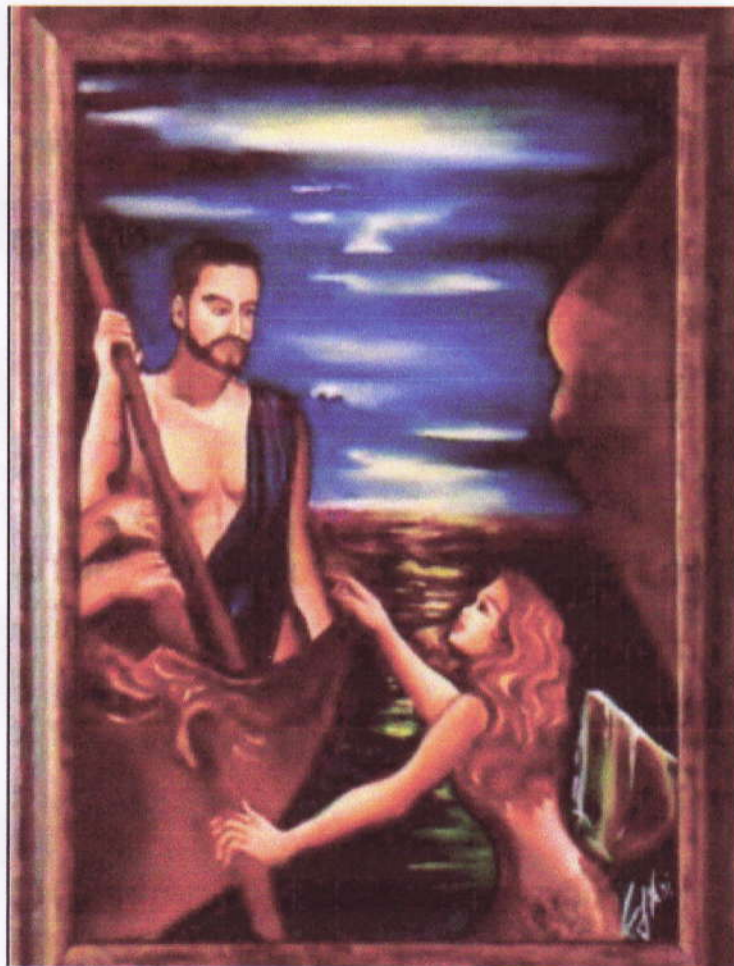


*THE KING AND THE MERMAID
THE MYTH ABOUT THESSALONIKI*



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Alexander the Great while fighting and conquering all the kingdoms of the world and everybody was terrified of him. He called all the magicians and wizards and asked them:

“You, who possess all the written fates of the world, tell me what I can do to live for many years and enjoy the world I have conquered?”

“My everlasting king your power is enormous but whatever fate has written cannot be changed. But there is only one thing that can make you live forever in your everlasting kingdoms in glory, but it is very difficult.”

“I am not asking you if this is difficult but what, what is the specific thing?”

“Oh, then, my king, in your orders, this is the *IMMORTAL WATER* and when somebody drinks it, he will not be afraid of death. But it is very difficult!! Anyone who wants to acquire it must go through a passage between two mountains which opens and closes constantly in seconds and not even a bird can fly through fast enough. If you manage to get out between the two mountains a sleepless, dragon is there waiting and protecting the immortal water. At this time you must kill the dragon and grab the water.”

At the same time, Alexander immediately ordered them to bring him his beloved horse, Voukefalas and even though he had no wings he flew like a bird and Alexander jumped on his back and started riding fast. He passed through the mountains and very easily killed the dragon and managed to steal the bottle of water containing the immortal water.

Unfortunately, on his return to the palace he didn't protect it carefully and his sister without realizing what is contained in this bottle and in her ignorance dropped it. The liquid fell accidentally on a wild onion flower and till this day these flowers never wither or get dry.

After a while, Alexander the Great went to drink the water from his bottle but to his surprise what happened to the water? He asked his sister with anxiety and disappointment and she replied that she didn't know what this bottled contained and as a result she unfortunately dropped it!!

He went crazy with anger and desperation and cursed her to be transformed into fish from her waist down, a mermaid and to be tortured forever!!

God heard this and since then anyone who sails by boat or ship sees her struggling in the waves. But she doesn't hate Alexander and when she finds a boat or ship she grabs the deck and asks:

“Is Alexander the king alive?”

And if the captain doesn't know how to answer the myth everyone dies!! Alexander's sister the mermaid makes waves with her hands and long flying hair sinks the ship.

But if the captain or anyone knows the answer and says

“Alexander is alive and reigns the world”

to this answer the mermaid stops the winds, waves and starts playing with her harp and sings so soft and sweet and the sailors learn new lyrics from her.

The myth of Europe

In ancient times, Aginoras the son of Poseidon; ruled in the famous Sidon. Aginoras had a daughter, she was called Europe. She was so beautiful that even the goddess Venus was jealous of her beauty.

One night, while Europe was sleeping, she saw two women in her dream; the East and the West. They were fighting for her. In the race, West won. According to the dream, Europe should have left the East and her family and be installed in the West.

She woke up frightened and started begging the Olympian gods and specially Zeus not to let her dream to become true. But Zeus had different plans for her because he felt in love with her and he wanted her close to him in Greece.

It was spring and Europe was in the bloomed gardens with her friends where there were bulls of the king Aginoras. Suddenly a white bull approached Europe and she was impressed by her beauty. She touched the beautiful bull with her hand and she got onto his back. The bull was calm but suddenly he got mad! He rushed in the sea and started flying above the waves that Poseidon had already calmed down. The bull was not different from the same Zeus who was transformed so as to trick and kidnap Europe.

Their destination was Crete. There, Zeus dealt with Talos (a terrible giant) not to let Europe leave from the island. From now on, Crete and Greece and the whole country until the sea, took the name of the beautiful daughter-Europe. So this Greek myth gave the name to the continent where our country belongs.

The journey of Zeus and Europe

Europe's journey towards West was fabulous. Europe preceeded up on the bull. The wind was blowing through her thick and long hair. Her red dress was dancing with the wind. Poseidon and Afrodite's chariot was following pulled by four sea horses.

Poseidon, standing up on his chariot, calmed the sea with his trident. The sea Nymphs, playing merrily with dolphins, were following behind the golden god's chariot. Seabirds were flying and singing above them. Triton, Poseidon's son, was standing nearby Europe. He was trumpeting triumphantly the coming of Europe to the West, blowing through a big white shell.

That's how Europe came to West, leaving back the East for ever.