

LYCOPHRON ITALICISED*

ON 12th March, 1800 Charles James Fox wrote thus to Gilbert Wakefield, imprisoned for seditious libel in Dorchester Gaol.¹ 'I have lately read Lycophron, and am much obliged to you for recommending it to me to do so: besides there being some very charming poetry in him, the variety of stories is very entertaining. . . . There remain, after all, some few difficulties, which if you can clear up to me, I shall be much obliged to you. . . . The most important of these is, that which belongs to the part where he speaks of the Romans in a manner that could not be possible for one who lived in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, that is, even before the first Punic war.' Fox accordingly inferred that either the Roman passages (1226-80, 1446-50) were interpolated (which he thought the more probable hypothesis) or the poem as a whole was not the work of the author to whom it was traditionally ascribed, Lycophron the tragedian, who organised the texts of comedy for the Alexandrian library under Philadelphus. Wakefield, though normally a far from conservative critic, was not convinced: 'Is it incredible, that an attentive observer of the times, and the rising greatness of the Romans, might venture to predict the extent of their future sway in the general terms of ver. 1229?' Fox thought this 'morally impossible', and the subject continued to occupy their letters during the remaining months of Wakefield's incarceration. In this remarkable correspondence we find clearly adumbrated the main lines on which the Lycophron Question was to develop. If our hearts sink before the considerable bibliography generated by this controversy, we may find reassurance in the characteristic air of invincible common sense with which its initiator,² having hit on a peculiarly happy expedient for cheering the enforced leisure of his imprudent friend, steadily maintained his position, armed against Wakefield's superior erudition by better judgement and a stronger sense of style.

Modern readers may feel some surprise at Fox's favourable verdict on Lycophron. The poet's standing at the turn of this century was well defined by Gildersleeve: 'Few scholars

* I owe my ideas on the *Alexandra* to a class on Lycophron given by Mr P. M. Fraser in 1981; but it would be a poor return for his guidance and encouragement to imply his approval of my speculations. I have also profited from discussion with Mr A. S. Hollis, Dr N. M. Horsfall, Prof. A. Hurst, and Prof. Lloyd-Jones. To all of these my warmest thanks are due. The following abbreviations will be used:

Bachmann: L. Bachmann, *Lycophronis Alexandra* (Leipzig 1830)

Ciaceri: E. Ciaceri, *La Alessandra di Licofrone* (Catana 1901; republ. with appendix containing testimonia and fragments by M. Gigante, Naples 1982)

Fraser 1972: P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972)

Fraser 1979: *id.*, 'Lycophron on Cyprus', *Report of the Dept. of Antiquities, Cyprus* (1979) 328-43

Holzinger: C. von Holzinger, *Lykophron, Alexandra* (Leipzig 1895)

Josifović: S. Josifović, *RE* suppl. xi (1968) s.v. 'Lykophron' 888-930

Mascialino: L. Mascialino, *Lycophronis Alexandra* (Leipzig 1964)

Momigliano: A. Momigliano, 'Terra marique', *JRS* xxxii (1942) 53-64, = *Sec. Contrib.* 431-46

Perret: J. Perret, *Les origines de la légende troyenne de Rome* (Paris 1942)

Scheer: E. Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra* i, ii (Berlin 1881-1908)

Walter: G. Walter, *De Lycophrone Homeri imitatore*

(Diss. Basle 1903)

West: S. West, 'Notes on the text of Lycophron', *CQ* xxxiii (1983) 114-35

Wilamowitz 1883: U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *De Lycophronis Alexandra commentatiuncula* (Greifswald 1883), = *Kleine Schriften* ii 12-29

Wilamowitz 1924: *id.*, *Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos* ii (Berlin 1924)

Ziegler: K. Ziegler, *RE* xiii (1927) s.v. 'Lykophron (8)' 2316-82.

The reader should be warned that Mascialino's edition is no substitute for Scheer's and should be treated with caution. All dates before 1796 are BC.

¹ *Correspondence of the late Gilbert Wakefield, B.A., with the late right honourable Charles James Fox, in the years 1796-1801, chiefly on subjects of classical literature* (London 1813) = *Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox*, ed. Lord John Russell, iv (London 1857) 296-440, Letter xxxi; the following quotations come from Letters xxxix (27 May 1800) and xlvi (26 Jan. 1801). The parts of this correspondence relating to Lycophron were translated into German and published by Doederlein under the title 'Über Lycophron' in *RhM* iii (1829) 465-73.

² We cannot claim Fox as the first modern reader known to have been troubled by the problem, since he appears to have been anticipated by an unidentified scholar whose comments on 1229 and 1281, recorded 'manu satis antiqua' in a copy of Potter's first edition in the Leipzig Ratsbibliothek, are reported by Bachmann.

now-a-days read Lykophron and almost all who do read him claim a reward of merit by writing something about him';³ it seems unlikely that the poet's stock stands any higher today. Undoubtedly the *Alexandra* was more popular when the Roman passages attracted no particular attention, and scholarly concentration on two short, and in many ways untypical, sections of the poem must be regarded as in part responsible for the low esteem into which this undeniably interesting work has fallen. It has, however, become increasingly plain that the problem of the author's date is inextricably intertwined with the question of his poetic purpose, so that it seems scarcely possible to consider any other aspect of the *Alexandra* while remaining agnostic over the issues raised by the parts of the poem relating to Roman affairs. We are faced with an awkward critical dilemma in that what seem to some readers to be the cornerstones of the work appear to others to be later additions quite alien to the author's purpose.

The persistence of this problem is remarkable. Today the analysts are in a minority, though Fox's interpolatory hypothesis found an able exponent in Welcker and was for much of the nineteenth century the majority view. The theory that the poem as a whole was composed in the early second century BC, Fox's *δευτερος πλους*, was advocated by Niebuhr,⁴ and now enjoys the weighty support of two *RE* articles; we may call this the radical unitarian view. Those who, like Wakefield, hold that the Roman passages contain nothing incompatible with the traditional date for the poem, may correspondingly be styled conservative unitarians; they appear at present to be the most numerous party.⁵ In part their ascendancy may be attributed to Momigliano's advocacy, but of course their solution has the attraction of apparent simplicity.

The overwhelming majority currently enjoyed by the combined unitarian parties may suggest that the analysts were pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp. Yet though the objections to the Roman passages⁶ are often reported as if apparent anachronism were the only difficulty, no reasonably attentive reader can avoid the impression that these sections of the poem are poorly integrated with their respective contexts, and this inconcinnity raises a serious critical problem which has not been properly faced by the unitarians. This article is inspired by the suspicion that the analysts have not in fact gone far enough. The critic who holds a text to be interpolated in one place cannot afford to take anything about it for granted, and if we believe that there may be something in the arguments for the athetesis of the Roman passages, we ought to consider whether the critical net has been cast far enough.

This requirement may, at first sight, appear slightly unreal. Given the loosely episodic structure of the poem's central section, an ingenious critic could no doubt find grounds for questioning the authenticity of a large proportion of the work, and we ought to confine our suspicions to obvious anomalies: if the rest of the poem has passed muster hitherto (it may be argued), it cannot convincingly be maintained that reasonable grounds for suspicion exist. Yet the poem presents another long-standing, and more pervasive, source of difficulty in its notorious mythological inconsistencies, surprising in themselves within a relatively short work, and particularly disconcerting in an author who evidently weighed his words carefully and looked for attentive readers who would appreciate the subtleties of his riddling and allusive style. It was this feature of the work which led Geffcken to his memorable picture of Lycophron as a poetic hobgoblin, laughing maliciously at the reader's bewildered attempts to follow him.⁷ It seems worth considering the hypothesis that the most serious of these contradictions, together

³ *AJP* xxii (1901) 344, = *Selections from the Brief Mention of B.L. Gildersleeve* (Baltimore 1930) 69.

⁴ Niebuhr had been anticipated by another aristocratic amateur, Viscount Royston, in the introduction to his spirited blank-verse rendering, published when he was only twenty-two: *Cassandra, translated from the original Greek of Lycophron and illustrated with notes* (Cambridge 1806).

⁵ The controversy is lucidly surveyed by Ziegler (2354 ff.), whose account is brought up-to-date (to 1968) by Josifović. The following contributions should

also be noted: Fraser 1972 ii 1065–7 n. 331 (analyst), A. Hurst, 'Sur la date de Lycophron', *Mélanges P. Collart* (Lausanne/Paris 1976) 231–5 (conservative unitarian), Fraser 1979 (radical unitarian).

⁶ I shall use this phrase as a collective for 1226–80, 1446–50; though some have doubted whether the second passage in fact relates to Roman affairs, recent discussions indicate that this point is no longer regarded as controversial.

⁷ *Hermes* xxvi (1891) 579, cf. Wilamowitz 1924 152.

with certain other difficulties, result from the intervention of a second hand concerned to augment the Italian interest of the work.

This thesis may suggest a perverse nostalgia for the heroic methods of nineteenth-century textual criticism. I am uneasily aware that not only is it uphill work to make out a convincing case for interpolation on internal grounds alone but also that any further complication of the Lycophron Question is likely to aggravate this controversy's depressant effect on the poem's popularity. But while there is bound to be some resistance to any hypothesis involving deliberate alteration to any classical text, the force of such prejudice ought to be less where Lycophron is concerned than in the case of an author universally admired. There is a general feeling that there is something odd or perverse about the *Alexandra*; when we have, with some effort, worked out the individual items, it remains strangely difficult to decide what the total is supposed to be. It would beg too many questions to say that the poem leaves a sense of divided purpose, but certainly the overall conception is elusive. Nor, I think, would anyone deny that the work is too long, and, more specifically, that the latter part of its central section (365–1282) tends to drag.⁸ Its form and style undoubtedly make it vulnerable to interpolation, as I shall shew below. In these circumstances the hypothesis that many of our difficulties arise from later interference will not, I hope, be dismissed out of hand as a far-fetched attempt to revive in an unsuitable environment the methods of an old-fashioned style of Homeric analysis.

My argument is based mainly on internal incoherence, not on the historical considerations which originally drew attention to the problem presented by the Roman passages, but it would be disingenuous to pretend to regard it as a matter of indifference whether the *Alexandra* is the work of the author to whom it is traditionally ascribed or of a contemporary of his grandson. The burden of proof lies with those who contest the traditional attribution, but apart from the Roman passages there is nothing to make us question it,⁹ while there are some positive considerations in its favour. The latest event mentioned (outside the Roman passages) is the murder of Heracles, allegedly son of Barsine and Alexander, by Polyperchon in 309 BC (801–4); as Momigliano notes, 'that does not help a date a century later'.¹⁰ Moreover, we should not ignore the fact (almost too obvious to be worth mentioning if it were not sometimes overlooked) that in its general character the *Alexandra* appears remarkably well suited to the author to whom tradition credits it. It may be thought frivolous to suggest that a penchant for such conundrums as *παρθενοκτόνον Θέτιν* (=the Hellespont, 21) and *τὸν δυνάστην τοῦ πετρωθέντος λύκου ἀποιοδόρπου* (=Peleus, 901–2) argues the same turn of mind as that facility with anagrams which Tzetzes regarded as the main reason for the tragedian's success in life;¹¹ a taste for riddles and elaborate verbal games is characteristic of the period. But certainly

⁸ Holzinger's remarks on the poet's fading enthusiasm should be compared (*Einkl.* 26).

⁹ P. M. Fraser has recently argued (Fraser 1979) that the *Alexandra* is substantially indebted to Eratosthenes for information on Cyprus; since Eratosthenes' *Geography* was most probably composed between 240 and 210, and Lycophron the tragedian is unlikely to have been less than seventy (if not already dead) in 240, this conclusion would provide valuable support for the radical unitarian case. The argument (to which I cannot do justice in a footnote) depends heavily on what seems to me a very questionable interpretation of the opening sentence of the scholium to 447 (ε' δέ φησιν εἰς Κύπρον ἀπενεχθῆναι Τεῦκρον, Ἀγαπήνορα, Ἀκάμαντα, Πράξανδρον καὶ Κηφέα), taking the subject of φησιν to be not Lycophron but Eratosthenes, who is mentioned in the last sentence of the immediately preceding note on Μάγαρος (444) (μέμνηται δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἐρατοσθένους). Even if this reading of the scholium is possible, the move from the sources of the scholia to the poet's sources is tricky. Since the *Alexandra* does not

display very extensive knowledge of Cyprus, it seems easier to suppose that its Cypriot details derive from the accumulated store of a magpie mind rather than from consultation of an up-to-date work of reference; thus Lycophron may be supposed to have known about the Satrachus, as most of us do, because of its associations with Myrrha/Smyrna (*Catul.* 95), whose incestuous love-affair was related by Panyassis (*fr.* 25 K) and Antimachus (*fr.* 102 Wyss).

¹⁰ Momigliano 58.

¹¹ εὐδοκίμει δὲ τότε ὁ Λυκόφρων οὐ τοσοῦτον διὰ τὴν ποίησιν ὅσον διὰ τὸ λέγειν ἀναγραμματισμοὺς οἷον ὅτι Πτολεμαῖος ἀπὸ μέλιτος λέγει μεταγραμματιζόμενον, Ἀρσινόης δὲ ἴον ἼΗρας καὶ ἕτερα τοιαῦτα τούτοις ὅμοια (Tzetzes). The fact that this detail was remembered suggests there might be more to it than meets the eye: could there be a connection between the second anagram and Callimachus' use of the epithet ἰόζωνος for Arsinoe in the *Coma Berenices* (*fr.* 110.54)?

the poem's considerable erudition should surprise us less in the work of a professional scholar than if it came from the pen of a completely unknown figure. A strong affinity with Callimachus, manifested both in subject-matter and in vocabulary, is undeniable,¹² and makes it tempting to suppose that the *Alexandra* originated in the same intellectual environment as the *Aetia*. To be sure, donnish poetry may be written by others besides professional scholars (and *vice versa*), and the poet's links with Callimachus might (perhaps) merely reflect the enthusiasm of a later admirer. But though these quasi-biographical considerations do not amount to an irrefragable argument, they should be allowed some weight. However, our main concern is with the *Alexandra* itself, not with its composer's biography.

I shall start by reviewing the objections to the Roman passages, and then deal with other sections of the poem where difficulties of various kinds (for the most part long recognised) seem to me most satisfactorily explained by the hypothesis that they stem from a second hand. I shall then discuss the interpolator's motives and circumstances, and finally offer a brief account of what I suppose to have been Lycophron's original conception.

I. THE ROMAN PASSAGES

Questions were raised in antiquity about the celebration of Roman power which introduces the passage on Aeneas and his descendants (1226–31):

γένους δὲ πάππων τῶν ἐμῶν αὐθις κλέος
 μέγιστον ἀξήσουσιν ἄμμαοί ποτε,
 αἰχμαῖς τὸ πρωτόλειον ἄραντες στέφος,
 γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης σκῆπτρα καὶ μοναρχίαν
 λαβόντες. οὐδ' ἄμνηστον, ἀθλία πατρίς,
 κῦδος μαρανθὲν ἐγκατακρύψει ζόφω.

The *scholia vetera* offer the following comment: ἐντεῦθεν περὶ Ῥωμαίων λέγει καὶ Λυκόφρονος ἑτέρου νομιστέον εἶναι τὸ ποίημα, οὐ τοῦ γράψαντος τὴν τραγωδίαν· συνήθης γὰρ ὢν Φιλαδέλφῳ οὐκ ἂν¹³ περὶ Ῥωμαίων διελέγετο. It is uncertain whether the ancient commentator whose views are here reproduced should be classed as an analyst or a radical unitarian,¹⁴ but clearly he could not credit the passage to a poet who lived at the court of Philadelphus.

'Morally impossible' thought Fox, unrivalled in his experience of the relationship between words and political realities. Others have argued that we make difficulties for ourselves by reading too much into a complimentary formula. 'Per vocabula σκῆπτρα καὶ μοναρχίαν unam notionem comprehendit Lycophro imperii nihil subditi: liberi sunt Romani et ipsi imperium exercent. γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης exercent imperium: hocine est omnem terram, omne mare eis servire? nihil dicitur nisi esse terram, esse mare Romanum': so Wilamowitz, against the analyst

¹² 'Si respicias quot res et vocabula Lycophro et Callimachus ex iisdem fontibus prompserint, Alexandram potius tertio saeculo tribuas quam altero' wrote Pfeiffer, *Callimachus* ii (Oxford 1953) xliii. The passages selected for inclusion in his index s.v. 'Lycophro' represent only a fraction of the relevant material as revealed by his notes; see also *History of Classical Scholarship* i (Oxford 1968) 120.

¹³ οὐκ ἂν <οὔτω>? Scheer.

¹⁴ Against Ziegler who claims him as a radical unitarian (2355), see Fraser 1979 341–2; neither interpretation is quite satisfactory, and the note has evidently suffered some garbling in the course of transmission. As

it plainly represents inference, not independent testimony, its ambiguities do not directly affect my argument. But since the younger Lycophron conjured up here has been taken very seriously by the radical unitarians, it should be stressed that such hypothetical homonyms are a regular expedient of ancient scholarship. Perhaps the best known example is Didymus' second Antiphon (ap. Hermog., *de ideis* ii 11.7 DK 87 A 2); one of the earliest instances is Herodotus' attempt to avoid certain difficulties arising from the over-generous application of *interpretatio Graeca* by postulating a second Heracles (ii 43). See further E. Heitsch, *AAWM* 1972, xi 6–16.

orthodoxy then prevalent.¹⁵ The attractions of this interpretation have been considerably enhanced in the light of the material assembled by Momigliano to support the thesis that ‘the attribution of rule over land and sea was . . . a compliment often used of respectable states and sovereigns of the Hellenistic age’, a compliment ‘which might or might not correspond to reality, although, of course, it must not contradict reality too flatly’.¹⁶

There are, however, difficulties. We should not overlook the fact that the composer of these lines rather underscores the idea of pre-eminence with *αἰχμαῖς τὸ πρωτόλειον ἄραντες στέφος* (1228) and, later in the passage, *τὴν πλείστον ὑμνηθεῖσαν ἐν χάσμασι πάτραν* (1271): such phrases seem to imply something rather grander than Wilamowitz’s paraphrase. *πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἀοιδοί*: it would be unreasonable to expect of an encomiastic poet the sober assessment of an historian or a political commentator, and if our author were supposed to be addressing himself to a Roman readership we should not be much troubled by some hyperbole in his estimate of Rome’s place in the world. But, as the scholiast implies, Lycophron at the court of Philadelphus has no business paying fulsome compliments to the Romans with never a nod in the direction of the king to whose discernment and liberality he owed his employment. Even if we were to suppose that Lycophron composed the *Alexandra* before he came to Alexandria, it can hardly be imagined that he conceived it primarily for the delectation of a Roman audience, and we lack what might be regarded as the normal precondition for the over-generous application of complimentary formulae; the poet’s kind words will not come to the notice of those who would be most rejoiced to hear them. The Roman success-story stands out like a solitary beacon against the otherwise unrelieved gloom of Greek suffering, and it would be strange if Lycophron failed to realise that such a tribute would leave the impression that Rome was the dominant power in his world.

However, those who hold the passage to be authentic (radical unitarians as well as conservative) face a more formidable obstacle in the very awkward manner of its connection with what follows. Having related the Trojan settlement of Italy Cassandra sums up (1281–2):

*τοσαῦτα μὲν δύσκλητα πείσονται κακά
οἱ τὴν ἐμὴν μέλλοντες αἰστώσειν πάτραν.*

This is quite inconsequential as a comment on the preceding passage.¹⁷ While it might be argued that the establishment of Aeneas’ domain would entail various undesirable consequences for any Greek communities on which it impinged, Cassandra has not referred to anything of the sort, and the last Greek to be mentioned was Odysseus who, surprising as it may seem, is to join forces with Aeneas in Etruria (1242–5). Equally, 1281–2 would be perfectly satisfactory as a comment on the *versos penatis Idomenei* (1214–25) immediately preceding the section on Aeneas. This clumsiness is quite uncharacteristic of Lycophron; though digressions are an important aspect of his style, he is elsewhere careful and ingenious in linking them properly to their context.

This difficulty is not insurmountable. The unitarians may fall back on the hypothesis of authorial second thoughts: some striking Roman achievement, it may be supposed, inspired Lycophron to add this section some time after the *Alexandra* was otherwise complete.¹⁸

This hypothesis introduces a further variable. But we shall in fact have established something of great importance if we can be sure that the section on Aeneas and his descendants is alien to Lycophron’s original plan, and we need not, for the moment, worry too much about the difficulty of distinguishing between the work of the same poet grown older and composition by another hand. We can, I think, find further indications that this passage is an afterthought, and

¹⁵ Wilamowitz 1883 10.

¹⁶ I have concentrated on Momigliano’s presentation of the conservative case because of the influence which his exposition has enjoyed.

¹⁷ As Fox and the anonymous critic ap. Bachmann (n. 2 above) noted (though the scholiast fails to remark

on it).

¹⁸ Thus (though they take very different views of the relevant historical circumstances) Sudhaus, *RhM* lxxiii (1908) 487 n. 2, Christ-Schmid, *Gesch. gr. Lit.*⁶ (Munich 1920) 170.

thus rule out the theoretical possibility that the abrupt transition of 1280–1 is the result of loss, not of addition.¹⁹

Consideration of the general structure of the poem suggests that Aeneas was not originally cast for a major role. This is his first mention: an earlier reference to an important figure might be thought intrinsically desirable, and would have avoided the very clumsy recapitulation of 1263–9, where the tale of his departure from Troy is told in a manner so compressed as to be virtually unintelligible without extraneous assistance.²⁰ The stories of two other Trojans are completed in this closing section of the *nostoi*, Hecuba (1174–88) and Hector (1189–1213); the reappearance of characters introduced in the earlier part of the poem (258–306, 314–44) helps to tighten the structure. It might be supposed that there would have been corresponding advantages in similarly dividing the material relating to Aeneas. Moreover, the Trojan leader's successful migration westward argues against the view expressed immediately afterwards (1283 ff.) and developed at some length (with acknowledgements to Herodotus) that East is East and West is West and that trouble must result from any contact between them until, at last, Alexander's conquests bring reconciliation and an end to the ancient antipathy between the two continents. The proximity of Cassandra's statement on *apartheid* to the section on Aeneas draws attention to this contradiction.

We have, I think, satisfied ourselves that there is something odd about this passage, which begins with apparent anachronism and ends in inconsequence. We might be prepared to accept that the first of these difficulties is more apparent than real if it stood alone, but the second, though often overlooked or minimised, is more serious and confirms the disquiet created by the first. We must surely accept that, whether we are dealing with authorial second thoughts or an insertion by another hand, the rebirth of Troy in the west was irrelevant to the poet's original conception.

Whoever the writer, it is worth briefly considering what may be observed about his style and narrative technique. Ziegler claimed that the Roman passages were stylistically indistinguishable from the rest of the poem.²¹ With such short passages stylistic arguments are inevitably somewhat subjective, but we can only speak as we find, and some have thought the passage on Aeneas untypically plain, in both senses.²² Certainly (though Ziegler's exceptional familiarity with the poem may have made the point less obvious to him than it is to most of us) it is unusually easy to translate.²³

There might of course be more than one explanation for this. Lycophron might be supposed

¹⁹ Scheer suggested that something was missing (though he held 1226–80 to be interpolated); this hypothesis has not, so far as I know, appealed to any unitarians. But certainly this section of Lycophron's *nostoi* (1090–1280), dealing with those who returned to domestic tragedy, is short of candidates. We might wonder why Lycophron did not include Neoptolemus, whose childless marriage to Hermione sent him on the journey to Delphi which ended in his death. Cassandra does not pass over his dreadful part in the sack of Troy (335 ff.), and his death beside Apollo's altar might well be regarded as divine retribution for his slaughter of Priam at the altar of Zeus Herkeios (cf. Pind. *Pae.* 6. 112–20); this exemplary punishment of an appalling act of sacrilege would have made an impressive end to the tale of Greek misfortune. But what inference we should draw from this omission is another matter.

²⁰ Fortunately we do not depend on the *Alexandra* alone for the story: cf. X. *Cyn.* 1.15 (probably spurious: see *RE* s.v. 1913–14), D.S. vii 4, Varr. *Res Hum.* ap. Serv. Dan. ad *Aen.* ii 636, *Historiae* 2 ap. Schol. Ver. ad *Aen.* ii 717, Ael. *VH* iii 22. Here two separate actions are conflated: the rescue of Anchises preceded, and made possible, the rescue of the Penates. When the Greeks

offered Aeneas, like the other surviving Trojans, the chance to take away something from the sacked city, he chose to save his father; the Greeks were so impressed by this evidence of *εὐσέβεια* that they granted him alone (*τούτῳ μόνῳ* 1268) a second choice, which enabled him to rescue his household gods; he was then allowed to take what he would and leave unmolested. Holzinger well observes 'Lycophron erzählt weder, warum die erste Wahl gestattet wurde, noch auch, dass die Rettung des Vaters und der Penaten zwei Acte waren, noch auch, dass dem Aineias ein drittes Zugeständnis gemacht wurde, in Folge dessen er seine ganze werthvolle Habe mitnahm'.

²¹ 'Stilistisch zeigen sie keinerlei Abweichung gegen das Übrige, ebensowenig metrisch' (2365); rather oddly he offers in support of this claim some statistics bearing on the distribution of third- and fourth-foot caesuras, a feature of the tragic trimeter not normally thought to be of particular significance.

²² Not only the analysts Scheer and Schmidt, but also the unitarian Holzinger (*Einl.* 26).

²³ It also appears to me to offer a relatively large number of phrases and patterns of line occurring earlier in the poem (1234 ~ 403, 1244 ~ 823, 1249 ~ 804,

to have curbed his wonted erudite euphuism because his material here was unlikely to be well known to his readers. Yet, oddly, throughout this section it seems to be assumed that the reader is already familiar with the legend of Aeneas and the general topography of the area;²⁴ stories are told without enough detail to make sense on their own, and the topographical relationship of the various places mentioned is treated so casually that we are given no idea of the actual situation of Rome.

To us this whole section looks much easier than it could have done to Lycophron's first readers (whether they belonged to the third or the early second century). Few come to the *Alexandra* without a good knowledge of Vergil, and though this account exhibits some differences from the *Aeneid*, we sense familiar ground; after threading our way through so many mythological anfractuosités we view with relief the portentous picnic (1250–2) and the prodigious pig (1255–8) without considering how perplexing we should find them if they were novelties. As we have seen, the successive stages of the rescue-operation which established Aeneas' reputation for piety (1263–9) are so conflated as to be barely comprehensible. The parts to be played by Odysseus, Tarchon and Tyrsenus in establishing Aeneas' dominion are dealt with in a tantalisingly summary fashion (1242–8).²⁵ The *Βορείωνοι* (1253) are a mildly amusing conceit, but we should hardly know what to make of them if we were not already familiar with *Aborigines*.²⁶ Throughout the passage we encounter this frustrating lack of essential detail, this sense that the story is supposed to be too well known to need proper telling. This is not characteristic of Lycophron's narrative technique elsewhere. Though he presupposes in his readers a good knowledge of classical mythology and may be allusive in handling familiar stories, he is usually full and colourful in relating what he deems novel or important. Yet however struck he himself may have been by Timaeus (or by any other author interested in Italian affairs)²⁷ he ought not to have assumed that his readers would be thoroughly conversant with such writers, and the elliptical manner appropriate to retelling stories from the *Odyssey* is out of place here. Whatever Stesichorus may have said about Aeneas' journey westward,²⁸ whatever value we attach to such testimony as there is before the late fourth century for a legendary connection between Troy and Rome,²⁹ this was clearly not a tradition likely to be familiar to every reader with an intelligent interest in the Trojan saga. If we compare the graphic and ingenious detail with which Lycophron relates the strange fate of Diomedes (592–632), we can hardly avoid the conclusion that less than justice is done to Aeneas: this is surprising if the passage is genuine, since we should naturally infer from its presence that Roman legend and achievement had fired the poet's imagination, and certainly the stories here touched on might have been expected to appeal to him. But, for the moment, we shall simply note these phenomena without attempting to draw any further inferences from them.

Our problems recur in a more acute form with the conclusion of Cassandra's visions (1435–50):

1252 ~ 978, 1257 ~ 967), but this impression may merely reflect a greater alertness on my part to such phenomena when they relate to this passage.

²⁴ See further Perret 345–66.

²⁵ What we are here told about Tarchon and Tyrsenus (1245–9) is hard to reconcile with what is later said about Etruscan origins (1351–61), following Herodotus (i 94) and Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 62).

²⁶ See further Perret 637–41.

²⁷ Not the least noteworthy feature of this passage is the absence of any reference to Timaeus in the scholia.

²⁸ The only evidence that Stesichorus told of Aeneas' journey to the West comes from the *Tabula Iliaca Capitolina* (*PMG* fr. 205; c. 15 BC), which shews Aeneas *σὺν τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀπαίρων εἰς τὴν Ἑσπερίαν*, allegedly following the *Ἰλίου Πέρσις κατὰ Στησίχορον*. Some scholars have found this hard to believe: see further N.

Horsfall, 'Stesichorus at Bovillae?', *JHS* xcix (1979) 26–48, who well says (43) 'There is, moreover, an *argumentum ex silentio*, well-worn but still powerful, to reinforce scepticism. Dionysius of Halicarnassus knew his Stesichorus, scoured the sources for references, however obscure, to the legend of Aeneas in the West, and did not come up with Stesichorus' *Iliou Persis*. Had he not known the poet and had he not read so widely in both prose and poetry for the material in *Antiquitates Romanae* i, then the argument might seem feeble; as it is his silence commands our respect and attention.' See also F. Castagnoli, *Studi Romani* xxx (1982) 7–8. At all events it cannot be supposed that the story would have been well known to Lycophron's original readers.

²⁹ Besides Perret, see N. Horsfall, 'Some problems in the Aeneas legend', *CQ* xxix (1979) 372–90.

πολλοὶ δ' ἀγῶνες καὶ φόνοι μεταίχμιοι 1435
 λύσουσιν ἀνδρῶν οἱ μὲν †έν γαίᾳ† πάλας
 δειναῖσιν ἀρχαῖς ἀμφιδηριωμένων,
 οἱ δ' ἐν μεταφρένοισι βουστρόφοις χθονός,
 ἕως ἂν αἴθων εὐνάση βαρὺν κλόνον,
 ἀπ' Αἰακοῦ τε κἀπὸ Δαρδάνου γεγῶς 1440
 Θεσπρωτὸς ἄμφω καὶ Χαλαστραῖος λέων,
 πρηνή θ' ὀμαίμων πάντα κυπῶσας δόμον
 ἀναγκάση πτήξαντας Ἀργείων πρόμους
 σῆναι Γαλάδρας τὸν στατηλάτην λύκον
 καὶ σκῆπτρ' ὀρέξει τῆς πάλαι μοναρχίας. 1445
 ᾧ δὴ μεθ' ἕκτην γένναν αὐθαίμων ἐμός
 εἷς τις παλαιστής, συμβαλὼν ἀλκὴν δορὸς
 πόντου τε καὶ γῆς κείς διαλλαγὰς μολῶν,
 πρέσβιστος ἐν φίλοισιν ὑμνηθήσεται,
 σκύλων ἀπαρχὰς τὰς δορικτήτους λαβῶν. 1450

Ὑστερον πρότερον Ὀμηρικῶς. The last five lines constitute the most obvious difficulty. Though, as we shall see, some have held that these lines do not in fact refer to Roman affairs, their phraseology undeniably recalls the passage on Aeneas,³⁰ and the resemblance between the two passages strongly suggests that Cassandra's enigmatic kinsman is Roman, whether he is to be identified as an individual commander or as the Roman people collectively. Yet though the composer of these lines evidently supposed that the achievements here celebrated would so far stand comparison with Alexander's exploits that there was no risk of bathos in this juxtaposition, it is not at all clear what he had in mind, and one of the few specific details appears to point to a date too late for a contemporary of Philadelphus. The scholia, which have so often illuminated what would otherwise be impenetrably obscure, offer only wild and worthless guesses. Our feelings of bewilderment are, if possible, enhanced by the relatively plain style in which the prophetess expresses herself, discarding the veil of elaborate circumlocution and recondite vocabulary in which her predictions have hitherto been shrouded.

Our first and most obvious difficulty consists in the translation of the phrase connecting this passage with what precedes, ᾧ δὴ μεθ' ἕκτην γένναν. The antecedent of ᾧ appears to be Alexander; μεθ' ἕκτην γένναν looks as if it means 'in the seventh generation after the last episode', i.e. after Alexander's conquests.³¹ *Prima facie* this produces nonsense, and sense is imposed on it by taking ᾧ to mean 'with Alexander in the person of one of his successors', an unusually strained expression. The interpretation of this phrase would be considerably easier if, as Wilamowitz argued, the wolf of 1444 represented the Macedonian nation as a whole, but Lycophron's heroic beasts normally represent individuals; though those who regard the passage as an interpolation may reasonably suppose that this interpretation corresponds to its composer's intentions, unitarians should feel uneasy about such a solution. μεθ' ἕκτην γένναν looks as if it were intended to give a date, and taken in a straightforward chronological sense ('after six full generations and part of another') indicates a period considerably later than the reign of Philadelphus; though the unrivalled attractions of seven as a symbolic number³² might lead to

³⁰ ἐμός τις σύγγονος 1232 ~ αὐθαίμων ἐμός 1446; γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης σκῆπτρα καὶ μοναρχίαν | λαβόντες 1229–30 ~ συμβαλὼν ἀλκὴν δορὸς | πόντου τε καὶ γῆς 1446–7; τῷ καὶ παρ' ἔχθροῖς εὐσεβέστατος κριθεῖς 1270 ~ πρέσβιστος ἐν φίλοισιν ὑμνηθήσεται 1449. These resemblances do not of course argue a single author for both passages, though almost all scholars have supposed that they come from the same hand.

³¹ Wilamowitz 1883 suggested that the generations might, in effect, be reckoned backwards: taking μεθ' ἕκτην γένναν closely with αὐθαίμων ἐμός, 'mihi post sex generationes cognatus', he identifies Cassandra's

kinsman as Artabazus, her fifth cousin about thirty times removed (their common ancestor being Zeus, father of both Dardanus and Perseus) and grandfather of the Heracles to whose death Lycophron earlier alludes (801–3). This interpretation allows Cassandra's predictions to terminate with Alexander, but is more ingenious than plausible; not surprisingly Wilamowitz himself thought better of it.

³² See further W. H. Roscher, *Die Sieben- u. Neunzahl im Kultus u. Mythos der Griechen*, ASAW liii (1906) 1, D. Fehling, *Die Quellenangaben bei Herodot* (Berlin 1971) 154–67.

some licences with inclusive reckoning and to the assumption of a relatively short generation, the phrase seems to exclude a date before the second century. If it is not to be understood in what, without further specification, must be regarded as, in this context, its most obvious sense, we can only guess at its meaning.³³ This kind of difficulty is not at all characteristic of Lycophron; though without the guidance of the scholia the surface unintelligibility of his riddling style would defeat us, thanks to the diligence of the ancient commentators there is seldom any uncertainty about the translation of his Wardour Street Greek.³⁴ His work is, to be sure, full of surprises, and it would not be altogether untypical if he misled us into supposing that he had made an absurd chronological error only to reveal in the next line that he was using *γέννα* in a sense other than we had assumed; but here we are denied the fullness of expression which is an essential element in his style and which normally removes any risk of misconception. Our poet was surely quite sharp enough to see that, if his work survived, posterity would be likely to infer from this phrase that its author, and the events here celebrated, belonged to a time many years after the reign of Philadelphus; if this was not true, can we really believe that he would have deliberately exposed himself to the danger of a misunderstanding likely to lead future readers, if they considered the matter at all, to deny him the authorship of his poem?

What we are surely justified in calling the straightforward interpretation of this opening phrase is confirmed by the impression of high achievement created by the following lines. This is largely due to the proximity of Alexander, which predisposes us to give a grand sense to what in themselves are rather vague phrases. This is an odd way for a poet contemporary with Philadelphus to express himself about such Roman successes as might have come to his notice. If Lycophron had really seen Roman dealings with Pyrrhus as so significant that they could be mentioned at this point without any sense of anticlimax, he ought also to have appreciated the need to elaborate and explain to less perspicacious contemporaries what would otherwise seem a silly paradox or unconvincing hyperbole.

The culmination of Cassandra's prophecy thus appears to advertise a date of composition too late for Lycophron the tragedian. These historical difficulties are of course well known; they constitute the core of the radical unitarian case for a later date of composition for the work as a whole. There are, however, further grounds for suspecting the *bona fides* of Cassandra's kinsman, and we must now consider some old arguments³⁵ which have for some time been too lightly dismissed, partly because of a preoccupation with historical questions and partly, perhaps, because of a tacit assumption that the *Alexandra* is such a peculiar work that normal critical standards do not apply: *πάντα τολμητὰ, βατὰ καὶ γραπτὰ τῷ Λυκόφρονι*, as an exasperated scholiast observes.³⁶

Our fundamental difficulty lies in the fact that Alexander's victories are the natural conclusion to the historical process with which the last part of Cassandra's prophecy (1283 ff.) is occupied.³⁷ The conflict between Europe and Asia ended, so far as the foreseeable future was

³³ Momigliano does not ignore this difficulty, but, I think, underestimates its seriousness (59): 'What the sixth *γέννα* means, I do not know: neither does anyone else. It may refer to the Macedonians, and in this case allude to the six kings after Alexander (Alexander, Philippus Arrhidæus, Cassander, his sons, Demetrius Poliorcetes, Pyrrhus), or it may refer to the Romans . . . Timæus may have spoken of the Roman-Etruscan reckoning of human life-spans, and Lycophron may have been tempted to use it more or less exactly. Where much is obscure, and the possibilities are many, further discussion is useless'. But what did Lycophron expect his readers to make of the phrase?

³⁴ Many readers must have been struck by the thought that the poem would have been incomprehensible if it had not been provided by its author with some explanatory notes, and certainly we ought to wonder

about the sources for much of the curious information confidently retailed by the scholia. We may note that in *POxy* 2528 Euphorion is perhaps the interpreter of his own poems: see further Pfeiffer, *Hist. Cl. Schol.* i 150 n. 5.

³⁵ Derived mainly from Welcker (*Die griech. Tragödien* iii [Bonn 1841] 1259 ff.) and Cauer (*RhM* xli [1886] 396–7).

³⁶ On 1253.

³⁷ Cassandra's historical knowledge is another aspect of her prophetic powers, hindsight as well as foresight being part of the ancient conception of a prophet; thus Calchas (*Il.* i 70) *ἤδη τὰ τ' ἔόντα τὰ τ' ἔσσομένα πρό τ' ἔόντα*, and Cassandra's Aeschylean counterpart establishes her reliability by alluding to the earlier misfortunes of the house of Atreus before turning to the future (*Ag.* 1087 ff.).

concerned, with Alexander, and indeed Lycophron appears to say as much (1439). Though Alexander's death did not bring peace but a sword, subsequent events cannot naturally be presented as the next stage in the feud between the two continents. It may be said (and indeed has been said) that Cassandra's kinsman, though a Roman, may by reason of his Trojan ancestry, represent the Orient. This is an artificial notion: apart from any other consideration, Romans did not claim to be pure-blooded Trojans. It might yet not be too artificial for Lycophron, but if that was what he had in mind we might expect him to face the apparent paradox more directly and to exploit the poetic conceit whereby a Westerner might represent Eastern interests. A new era began with Alexander's Asiatic conquests: this makes a worthy, as well as logical, end to Cassandra's predictions, and any further development of the series must come as an anti-climax.

Not only analysts have felt this. Two distinguished (conservative) unitarians, Wilamowitz and Ciaceri, argued that 1446–50 in fact describe Alexander's conquest of Asia.³⁸ Ciaceri's approach requires us to reckon *μεθ' ἔκτην γένναν* from Xerxes' invasion of Greece, an impossibly strained interpretation, and appears to have won little support. Wilamowitz himself came to reject his earlier view in favour of what seems at first sight a very attractive idea, taking the passage to refer to the future (like Anchises' forecast of Eastern conquests in the *Aeneid*, vi 794 ff.); this Messianic hope makes a noble end to the poem, but the picture of the future peacemaker has just too much detail to be purely ideal.³⁹

Nevertheless, while Alexander's triumph may seem the right end to Cassandra's visions, 1445 does not make a very satisfactory close to her prophecy, nor is all plain sailing if we excise 1446–50. If an interpolator has been at work, it must be feared that he is responsible for more than the addition of five lines.

Cassandra's review of the conflict between Europe and Asia (1283 ff.) reached a magnificent climax with Xerxes' invasion (1412–34), but after that we find ourselves on debateable ground. However, though 1436–7 are corrupt,⁴⁰ the general sense of 1435–8 seems clear: there will be inconclusive conflicts between Persia and Greece by land and sea.⁴¹ The next event in the series must be Alexander's conquest of Persia. But Holzinger, who argued that the lion of 1439–41 was not Alexander but Pyrrhus, drew attention to some serious difficulties.

The most important of these is, essentially, the brevity of Cassandra's account. Alexander's career not only marked the beginning of a new age but was rich in colourful and romantic incident, including a visit to the Troad⁴² on which we might have expected Cassandra to comment. Her apparent approval of the events described in 1443–5 is very strange if these lines refer, as is generally supposed, to Alexander's Persian conquests. Moreover, we may feel some surprise that she fails to remark on the fact that a second Alexander is to play a decisive role in the series of conflicts initiated by her brother;⁴³ to Alexandra⁴⁴ the coincidence should be of

³⁸ On Wilamowitz's interpretation see above, n. 31.

³⁹ Wilamowitz 1924 146. This reading of the passage, earlier suggested by Cessi (*SIFC* xix [1912]75) and commended by Lesky as the least unsatisfactory of the available options (*Gesch. gr. Lit.*³ [Bern 1971] 835), comes very near to allowing Lycophron to predict, in rather Old Testament terms, the coming of Christ; if the same idea had occurred to any of Lycophron's Byzantine admirers, the poet might have been added to the small band of pagan authors traditionally deemed to have been granted some prevision of the Incarnation.

⁴⁰ We expect an expression meaning 'by sea' in 1436, but though there have been several ingenious conjectures, none is immediately convincing.

⁴¹ Contrast these out-of-the-way periphrases with the plain phraseology of 1447–8.

⁴² Strab. 593, *Arr. An.* i 12.7–8.

⁴³ Timaeus would surely not have let such an opportunity slip: compare his laboured onomastic fantasy of a link between the mutilation of the Hermae

and Hermocrates, son of Hermon, the agent of the Athenians' destruction (*FGrH* 566 A 102a).

⁴⁴ This designation is obviously modelled on Paris' *alias*, but the explanation given in the scholia (on 30) *παρὰ τὸ ἀλέξειν τοὺς ἀνδρας* surely has something in it. The name is perhaps also to be connected with the curious Laconian identification of Cassandra with the mysterious Alexandra worshipped at Amyclae: Paus. iii 19.6, *cf.* 26.5; Hsch. *Κασσάνδρα· Ἀλεξάνδρα ἐν Λακεδαιμονίᾳ*; *Bull. Epigr.* 1968, no. 264; see further R. Stiglitz, 'Alexandra von Amyklai', *JÖAI* xl (1953) 72–83 (who, however, questions whether this is relevant to Lycophron). Wilamowitz ('Lesefrüchte', *Hermes* xlv [1919] 60 f., no. 160, = *Kl. Schr.* iv 298–9) saw an allusion to the Spartan cult in 1126–7, but I am not altogether convinced; it is clear from Pausanias that the identification was unfamiliar in his day, and the couplet goes so easily with what follows (taking *αἰθι* as 'hereafter', like *αἰθις*, not as 'there') that such an allusion would be all too easily overlooked. At all

peculiar interest. 'Surely no prophet could afford to miss . . . So clear a proof of providence as this.' The poet not only fails to maintain his heroine's perspective but remains strangely unmoved by the extraordinary saga of Sultan Iskander. We may well wonder why he allowed Cassandra's vision to stretch so far into the future if he found Alexander a less congenial theme than Epeius (930–50) or Elephenor (1034–46).

There are further problems. As a description of Alexander's achievements 1443–4 can be explained only on the principle that nothing is too odd or perverse for Lycophron. Apart from the fact that Cassandra seems to have forgotten which side she is supposed to support, there are two main difficulties. In 1443 we have to choose between *'Αργείων*, the reading of the MSS, and the variant *'Ακταίων* explained in the scholia. If we wanted a word meaning 'Greeks', either would be satisfactory, but *'Ακταίων* would be clearly preferable as the *lectio difficilior*. However, if Alexander is the subject, we expect a word meaning 'Persians' or 'Orientals', and neither will naturally bear that sense.⁴⁵ Moreover, the wolf of 1444 is problematic. If the poet is talking about the conquest of Persia, this should be Alexander, who has, however, already appeared in the sentence as a lion; he thus experiences as a wolf the effects of actions which he initiated as a lion, a Protean metamorphosis which robs this animal imagery, highly characteristic of oracular language, of all its force. Wilamowitz tried to avoid this absurdity by taking the wolf to represent the Macedonian nation, but in such an expression it is unnatural to distinguish between the commander and his men.

Such an agglomeration of considerable and generally acknowledged difficulties is disconcerting, particularly since we should have expected the poet to take special pains when he came to the culmination of Cassandra's prophecy. If we are prepared to entertain the hypothesis that 1446–50 are a later addition, we ought also to consider the possibility that the interpolator modified what immediately preceded, so that his subject should not be diminished by the proximity of Alexander. If Lycophron had risen to his theme here, some pruning and re-writing would surely be required if a further figure was to be introduced.

Cumulatively, then, there are surely sufficient problems in this not particularly attractive passage to lend substance to the suspicion that the poem is not here in the condition in which it left Lycophron's desk. But it will be better to return to the question of the interpolator's date and purpose when we have considered other passages which may reasonably be regarded as later additions.

II. SOME OTHER INTERPOLATIONS?

Hitherto we have followed a path which, though now not much frequented, was once well trodden; from this point onwards we shall explore a new route. Those whose confidence in the authenticity of the Roman passages remains unshaken will scarcely be persuaded by what is to follow, and I shall assume that any reader who continues to accompany me is prepared, at least, to entertain the suspicion that some parts of the poem may be by a later hand than the rest. Once this suspicion is raised, it must be conceded that it would be illogical to take it for granted that interference with the text has been confined to those passages to which our attention is attracted by apparent anachronism. On the assumption, then, that the reader is now disposed at least to put a question-mark against the Roman passages, we shall scrutinise some other oddities.

events, though knowledge of the Amyclaeon Alexandra may have influenced Lycophron's choice of nomenclature, he can hardly have expected this association to spring to the minds of his readers.

⁴⁵ The scholia offer the following note on *'Ακταίων*: *'Ακταῖοι δὲ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι. ἀπόκησαν δὲ μετὰ τῆς Μηδείας εἰς Πέρσας τινὲς τῶν Ἀθηναίων. νῦν οὖν Ἀθηναίους λέγει τοὺς Πέρσας διὰ τὴν ἀποικίαν.* This

sounds more confident, but is no more convincing, than Wilamowitz's explanation of *'Αργείων* (Wilamowitz 1924 145): 'Dass unter die Argeiern die Perser, von Perseus und Andromeda her (Herodot vii 150), nicht die Argeaden zu verstehen sind, ist allerdings toll genug, bringt aber zum Ausdruck, dass sich in den Herrschern von Ost und West das Blut bereits gemischt hat'. Scheer conjectured *'Αρταίων* (cf. Hdt. vii 61).

(i) Odysseus' mortuary arrangements present a notorious problem.⁴⁶ At 799–804 we are told that among the peoples of north-west Greece he will be honoured as the giver of oracles (like Podalirius in 1050–1):

μάντιν δὲ νεκρὸν Εὐρυτὰν στέψει λεῶς
ὁ τ' αἰπὺ ναίων Τραμπύας ἐδέθλιον,
ἐν ἧ ποτ' ἀθίς Ἡρακλῆ φθίσει δράκων
Τυμφαῖος ἐν θοίναισιν Αἰθίικων πρόμος,
τὸν Αἰακοῦ τε κἀπὸ Περσέως σπορᾶς
καὶ Τημενείων οὐκ ἄπωθεν αἰμάτων.

Odysseus' oracle in Aetolia was mentioned by Aristotle in his *Ithacasion Politeia* (cited in the scholia *ad loc.*);⁴⁷ 799 plainly implies the physical presence of the hero's corpse.⁴⁸ Trampya was associated with the missionary journey by which Odysseus was to propitiate Poseidon⁴⁹ but there is no need to suppose he had an oracle there too; Lycophron presumably means that the Eurytanean sanctuary will also enjoy the respect of the people of Epirus.⁵⁰ It looks as if his main reason for mentioning Odysseus' connections with Trampya was to supply the link which allows the reference to Heracles, the last of Alexander's line; in the economy of the poem this may be seen as foreshadowing the important role to be played by Alexander in the last phase of the conflict between East and West (1439–41).⁵¹ No doubt Lycophron incidentally relished the illusion of mythological paradox (immediately resolved) in this apparent reversal of the legendary Heracles' first exploit. He may have thought Trampya nearer to Aetolia than in fact it is; from the point of view of a poet living in Chalcis or Alexandria they lie in the same general direction.

This eerie and impressive finale to Odysseus' unique career is not, however, the end. We learn to our amazement that, after all, his remains will rest in Etruria⁵² (805–11):

Πέργη δέ μιν θανόντα, Τυρσηνῶν ὄρος,
ἐν Γορτυναίᾳ δέξεται πεφλεγμένον,
ὅταν στενάζων κήρας ἐκπνεύσῃ βίον
παιδὸς τε καὶ δάμαρτος, ἣν κτείνας πόσις
αὐτὸς πρὸς Ἄιδην δευτέραν ὁδὸν περᾶ,
σφαγαῖς ἀδελφῆς ἠλοκισμένος δέρην,
Γλαύκωνος Ἀψύρτοιο τ' αὐτανεψίας.

The scholiast (on 805) rightly protests: πῶς δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν Εὐρυτάνῃ τῆς Ἠπείρου καὶ

⁴⁶ On the various legends about Odysseus' death see A. Hartmann, *Untersuchungen über die Sagen vom Tode des Odysseus* (Munich 1917), esp. 145 ff., K. Meuli, *Hermes* lxx (1935) 167 f. (= *Gesammelte Schriften* ii 868–70); on Odysseus' Italian adventures see E. D. Phillips, 'Odysseus in Italy', *JHS* lxxiii (1953) 53–67.

⁴⁷ Ἀριστοτέλης <δέ> φησιν ἐν Ἰθακησίῳ πολιτείᾳ (fr. 508 Rose) Εὐρυτᾶνας ἔθνος εἶναι τῆς Αἰτωλίας ὀνομασθὲν ἀπὸ Εὐρύτου, παρ' οἷς εἶναι μαντεῖον Ὀδυσσεύς.

⁴⁸ As Geffcken well emphasises, *GGA* clviii (1896) 122.

⁴⁹ Sch. 800: Τράμπυια πόλις Ἠπείρου ἔνθα μετὰ τὸν νόστον Ὀδυσσεὺς ἀπῆλθε, καθὰ καὶ Ὀμηρος ἱστορεῖ εἰσόκε τοὺς ἀφίκηται, οἳ οὐκ ἴσασι θάλασσαν' (*Od.* xi 122) ἔνθα καὶ τιμᾶται ὁ Ὀδυσσεύς; Steph. Byz. p. 182 Mein. s.v. Βοῦνεμα· πόλις Ἠπείρου, οὐδετέρως, κτίσμα Ὀδυσσεύς, ἣν ἔκτισε πλησίον Τραμπύας, λαβὼν χρησμὸν ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ἄνδρας, 'οἳ οὐκ ἴσασι θάλασσαν' βούν οὖν θύσας ἔκτισε; p. 631 Mein. Τραμπύα, πόλις τῆς Ἠπείρου πλησίον

Βουνίμων.

⁵⁰ Holzinger's note on 800 is surely right: 'ἐδέθλιον ist nicht ein Tempel (wie in vs. 987), sondern überhaupt ein ἐρυμνὸν κτίσμα (vs. 78)'.

⁵¹ τὸν Αἰακοῦ τε κἀπὸ Περσέως σπορᾶς 803 ~ ἀπ' Αἰακοῦ τε κἀπὸ Δαρδάνου γεγώς 1440.

⁵² Wilamowitz, in his valuable discussion of this passage, *Homerische Untersuchungen* (Berlin 1884) 189–90, argued that the lines do not in fact refer to Etruria: 'Bei diesem rätselpoeten ist nicht grade wahrscheinlich, dass die Tyrsener, die es ziemlich überall gibt, bedeuten was am nächsten liegt. Nun wohnen nach Herodot Tyrsener bekanntlich zwischen Axios und Strymon, im innern Makedonien, und am mittleren Axios liegt eine Stadt Gortynia oder Gordynia.' This is ingenious, but some hint that the reader should look towards Macedonia would be needed if the trick credited to Lycophron were to work. But even Wilamowitz's interpretation does not avoid the apparent bilocation of Odysseus' remains.

Τυρσηνία κείσθαι συνέβη; Tzetzes' justified exasperation with Lycophron's commentators has a certain prophetic force:⁵³ ἔμοι μὲν, ὦ Λύκοφρον, ἀνακόλουθα ταῦτα καὶ γελοιωδέστατα φαίνεται, οὐ μόνον δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα σὰ ῥήματα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τῶν πειρωμένων ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις συμμαχεῖν σοι. He examines two explanations (if such they can be called): either Odysseus' remains were removed from north-west Greece to Etruria, or he was brought to life again by Circe,⁵⁴ and so could die a second time. It is clear that these hypotheses were merely extracted from Lycophron's text and that no ancient tradition lies behind them. 'Wer mit dem Wissen, welches Lykophron von seinen Lesern verlangt, das las, der fand unausgesetzt Widerspruch auf Widerspruch' soberly observed Geffcken.⁵⁵ It should be emphasised that we have no right to object to mythological innovation (ἀμάρτυρον οὐδὲν αἰίδω does not come from a code of practice for Alexandrian poets) nor should we be troubled if Lycophron had united elements from different versions of Odysseus' post-Odyssean adventures into a new story combining episodes from the *Telegony* with the tradition attested in Theopompus and Aristotle that the hero left Ithaca for Etruria.⁵⁶ But the skill with which, for example, he produced a further variation on the story of Helen in Egypt (115 ff., 820 ff.), by re-combining the very different versions of Stesichorus and Herodotus,⁵⁷ is quite absent here. Two virtually contradictory accounts are simply juxtaposed without explanation or apology.

This does no credit to the poet, and it cannot be thought audacious to wonder whether Lycophron is entirely responsible for this perplexing narrative. I would suggest that an interpolator intended 805–11 as an alternative to 794–804,⁵⁸ thus transferring to Etruria not merely Odysseus' interment but also his death and, by implication, his last years, in accordance with the traditions recorded by Theopompus and Aristotle. No one, I imagine, would much regret the removal of the gratuitous complications presented by Odysseus' access of prophecy *in articulo mortis* (807–11); the effort involved in figuring out the meaning is quite disproportionate to the result. Relative terms like δάμαρ and πόσις are employed most confusingly,⁵⁹ and 809 is merely silly, by contrast with the similar-looking 813. Some may regard such convolutions as typically Lycophronic, but unredeemed by any features of stylistic interest they seem unworthy of him.

This passage is surely connected with the later reference to Odysseus' joining forces with Aeneas (1242–5):⁶⁰ there too we are on Etruscan ground, and the author of the latter passage must, on any view of its composition, have imagined this strange Greco-Trojan alliance occurring after Odysseus had left Ithaca to seek a newer world, not as a brief interlude during his *nostos*.

(ii) This is not the only point at which I suspect Odysseus' story has been expanded to add local Italian interest. From 648 to 788 we have, for the most part, a clever iambic counterpoint to

⁵³ He would have been unmoved by the attempts of Holzinger and Ciaceri to refute him.

⁵⁴ As in the *Telegony*, where, however, Odysseus was made immortal (Τηλέγονος δ' ἐπιγνοὺς τὴν ἀμαρτίαν τό τε τοῦ πατρὸς σῶμα καὶ τὸν Τηλέμαχον καὶ τὴν Πηνελόπην πρὸς τὴν μητέρα μεθίστησι. ἢ δὲ αὐτοὺς ἀθανάτους ποιεῖ, Proclus).

⁵⁵ *Op. cit.* (n. 48) 123 n. 1.

⁵⁶ Sch. 806: Θεόπομπός φησιν (FGrH 115 F 354) ὅτι παραγενόμενος ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Πηνελόπην ἐγνωνκῶς ἀπῆρεν εἰς Τυρσηνίαν καὶ ἔλθων ᾤκησε τὴν Γορτυναίαν, ἐνθα καὶ τελευτᾶ ὑπ' αὐτῶν μεγάλως τιμώμενος. According to Aristotle (*fr.* 507 Rose; from the *Ithaceseion Politeia*) Odysseus, having been exiled after his massacre of the suitors, εἰς Ἰταλίαν μετέστη; *fr.* 508 should be compared (see n. 47), but there is no reason why Aristotle should not have recorded in the same work various traditions about

what happened to Odysseus after the *Odyssey*.

⁵⁷ As in Herodotus (ii 112 ff.) Helen is detained in Egypt with Proteus, without any extenuation of her guilt, though Lycophron retains the Stesichorean *eidolon* invented to exculpate her; see further S. West, 'Proteus in Stesichorus' *Palinode*', *ZPE* xlvii (1982) 6 ff.

⁵⁸ This involves taking *σῶφρα* as a substantive, as indeed it usually is.

⁵⁹ The problems of kindred and affinity are sorted out in the scholia; there is much to recommend Fox's conjecture in 808, *κάσις* for *πόσις*, implied, as he notes, by Scaliger's translation 'frater'.

⁶⁰ I need not discuss the awkward question of a possible connection between Odysseus and Hellanicus' Nanas, the Pelasgian founder of Cortona (FGrH 4 F 4), though I would not object to the idea that some such thought suggested *vānos* at 1244; see further Horsfall (n. 29) 380–81.

the familiar Odyssean melody.⁶¹ But between Odysseus' consultation of Teiresias (681–7) and the storm sent by Helios (738–40) a series of episodes located on or near the coast of Campania calls for detailed scrutiny. We first realise where we are when Odysseus comes, by design or accident, to Pithecussae (688–93); then, after burying his helmsman Baeus (694), he travels on to Cumae. On leaving the awesome neighbourhood of Avernus he dedicates his helmet to the infernal deities (710–11), and then sails on to demonstrate his fatal superiority to the Sirens (712–16), who were destined to die if any traveller could resist their songs; their *Nachleben* is treated at some length (717–37). We then rejoin the *Odyssey*.

This itinerary has some puzzling features. The reference to Lake Avernus looks at first like a localisation of the *nekuia*;⁶² Odysseus' dedication should mark something more than appreciation of a visit to a site of touristic interest, and it would be natural to suppose that it celebrated the conclusion of his dealings with the shades.⁶³ If necromancy was not his object, why did he go to Avernus? Yet the interposition of his visit to Pithecussae prevents our taking this as an extension of the *nekuia* of 681–7. This is perplexing. The immensely cumbersome sentence on Campanian topography⁶⁴ (which, like the section on Aeneas, seems to presuppose in the reader a general familiarity with the area)⁶⁵ would not in itself excite suspicion if it followed immediately on 687, but as it is Lycophron seems to treat the same episode twice. Here again I wonder whether this rather puzzling effect of duplication is produced by the addition of what was intended as an alternative version; on this hypothesis Pithecussae and its apes represent a demythologisation of Circe's island with its enchanted beasts. 688 would follow on well after 666, and *μονοστόλον* (690) would then have some point, underlining the fact that Odysseus' ship alone escaped the destructive fury of the Laestrygonians (664–5).⁶⁶

Having allowed myself to entertain these suspicions, I cannot wholly suppress a doubt about the Sirens (712–37). Odysseus' successful resistance to their songs is entirely to his credit, and free from any unfortunate consequences as far as he is concerned; it is thus a little strange that Cassandra should dwell on its aftermath at such length. Moreover, when Lycophron mentioned the Sirens before (671), they were firmly located in the area associated with their father Achelous; if the poet was as intrigued by their place in Italian folk-lore as this digression suggests, it is odd that he should have permitted himself this inconsistency. The account of their several landfalls requires, if it is to be properly understood, a better knowledge of obscure Campanian rivers than the scholiasts could muster; these are not place-names hallowed by literary associations, and we may wonder what Lycophron's original readers would have made of them. We may also note the very abrupt return to Odysseus at 738; there have been several changes of subject since the last reference to him (712), and though familiarity with the *Odyssey* prevents

⁶¹ On this section see Walter 8–47.

⁶² Cf. Strab. 244: ἐμύθειον δ' οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ Ἀόρνῳ τὰ περὶ τὴν νέκυϊαν τὴν Ὀμηρικὴν καὶ δὴ καὶ νεκρομαντεῖον ἰστοροῦσιν ἐνταῦθα γενέσθαι καὶ Ὀδυσσεῖα εἰς τοῦτ' ἀφικέσθαι. Wilamowitz was surely right in locating Aeschylus' *Psychagogoi* here (*Aischylos. Interpretationen* [Berlin 1914] 246 n. 1). The question has attracted renewed interest with the publication of the Cologne fragment of that play (*PKöln* iii 125): see, most recently, J. S. Rusten, 'The Aeschylean Avernus', *ZPE* xlv (1982) 33–8.

⁶³ Thus Holzinger (on 710): 'Odysseus wird nach glücklicher Vollendung seines Ganges in die unterweltlichen Gefilde der Persephone und ihrem Gemahle Hades ein Anathem darbringen.'

⁶⁴ Editors usually punctuate with a high stop at the end of 709, but Holzinger's comma and dash make matters clearer for the reader.

⁶⁵ For a sensible discussion of the rather sketchy geography of this passage see Phillips (n. 46) 59.

⁶⁶ The text is uncertain in 664: see *app. crit.* The

reading generally adopted by modern editors, εὔτορνα σκάφη, fails to convey the essential restriction of πάντα to ships in the harbour; the scholia and periphrases preserve this by retaining the MS reading εὐτόρνω, though with some disagreement as to whether it should be taken substantivally (ἐν τῷ εὐτόρνω καὶ περιφερῆ—λείπει λίμενι) or with σκάφει, read by some MSS and understood as meaning 'basin'. Walter, who draws attention to this difficulty (which is ignored by Holzinger and Ciaceri), commends Schaefer's conjecture ἐν τόρνω, comparing the description of the Laestrygonian harbour at *Od.* x 87–90: 'etiamsi genuinam lectionem non restituerit, in eo certe a vero non deerravit, quod portus notionem in hac voce inesse voluit'. However, ἐν τόρνω is not in itself convincing, and the general effect seems somewhat bald (for Lycophron) if we simply assume that some more recherché term for a harbour lurks in this part of the line; moreover, εὔτορνα σκάφη is rather pleasing as an iambic equivalent for νέες ἀμφιέλισσαι. I suspect a line has dropped out after 664.

our supposing that the subject of the sentence might be the people of Naples or an Athenian admiral, grammatically it is clumsy.⁶⁷

I suspect, then, that 688–737 were composed to replace 666–86 with a view to increasing the appeal of this section to an Italian audience; it may be significant that immediately before and after what would, on this hypothesis, be the connecting points for the interpolated passage, the text seems disturbed.⁶⁸ The removal of the Italian alternatives (688–737, 805–11) from Lycophron's *Odyssey* would reduce it from 171 lines to 114, leaving it still by far the longest and most impressive of the *nostoi*.

(iii) Are there similar grounds for suspicion elsewhere? After narrating the sensational history of Epeius, Cassandra, as Wilamowitz noted, seems for a time to lose the thread (951–1010).⁶⁹ In this rather rambling survey of Sicilian and South Italian sites settled in the aftermath of the war she loses sight of the distinction between Greeks and Trojans; many places mentioned are wholly obscure, nor are we given enough detail to locate them.

We have first the strange tale of the daughters of Phoenodamas (951–77),⁷⁰ who, having established themselves in Sicily some time before the war, are to be joined by a further Trojan contingent under Elymus (965), who will found Segesta. We have already heard part of these girls' sad story (470–5): there the reader was required to extract the identities of the main characters from periphrases, but here Laomedon and Phoenodamas⁷¹ are introduced by name, as are the Laestrygonians, who were similarly veiled in recondite allusion at their first appearance (662–3).

The next group of immigrants is to settle round Siris, but it is not immediately clear who they are. The fact that they are to build a city like Ilium (984) might lead us to think them Trojans, but then, without explanation, we are told of Achaeans committing terrible atrocities as they take over a site previously occupied by Ionians (986–92). With the help of other sources an edifying history of crime and retribution may be reconstructed;⁷² what we have here is confused and bewildering. Concentrating on the sacrilegious murder of the young priest,⁷³ the writer becomes oblivious to the difference between Greeks and Trojans and quite fails to make clear the sequence of events or whether these happenings occurred shortly after the war or some generations later.

The passage presents a further difficulty in its opening reference to Calchas' tomb at Siris (979–81). *πάλιν ἀνακόλουθα ληρωδεὶ γράφων* observes Tzetzes, and though his discussion

⁶⁷ We may note that the Sirens' necrology contains what is generally supposed to be the poem's only anapaest (*Παρθενόπην* 720); but see further n. 71.

⁶⁸ On 664 see above n. 66. On 738–40 Tzetzes justifiably comments *κακῶς δὲ καὶ συγκεχυμένως καὶ ἀδιαθρότως ὁ Λυκόφρων τὴν περὶ Ὀδυσσεύως ἱστορίαν λέγει*. 738–9 take us back to a much earlier stage in the narrative, Odysseus' dealings with Aeolus (*Od.* x 1–75), and lack logical connection with what follows, the disastrous storm in which Odysseus' comrades perished (*Od.* xii 405–19); *συμφλεχθήσεται* ought to mean 'will be burnt to ashes', and hardly suits Odysseus, who escaped the thunder-bolt unscathed. This incoherence must be connected with the absence of any counterpart to the crucial Thrinacian episode (*Od.* xii 260 ff.).

⁶⁹ 'Pluris fecit Lycophro eruditionem geographicam et historicam quam quid Alexandrae conveniret; saepius enim narrantem eam facit quae cum bello Troiano aut omnino non coniuncta sunt aut certe per filum tenuissimum, velut in Egestae Siridis Tylesii Terinae antiquitatibus' (Wilamowitz 1883 5).

⁷⁰ On this legend see Perret 257–83, 631–6. He convincingly argues that the story so obviously has the

makings of a tragic plot that we are justified in assuming it formed the basis of a lost *Laomedon* or *Hesione*; his attempt to connect this with the Athenian alliance with Segesta in 428 is obviously rather speculative, but harmless in itself provided it is not treated as a starting point for further hypothesis.

⁷¹ I am reluctant to credit even an interpolator with the extraordinary lengthening *Φοινοδάμαντος* (953); we have the licence of an anapaest to admit a proper name at 720, and *Φοινοδάμας* could have been accommodated similarly. Sir Charles Willink (*per epist.*) has suggested reading *Φοινοδαμαντείους* (*cf.* *Δυμαντείου* 1388), which is much better than my own idea that *κόρας* had replaced a cretic like *ἐκγόνους* (West 119).

⁷² The complicated story is unravelled by Jacoby on Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 51); see also *RE* s.v. 'Siris', iiiia 1.309 ff. (Philipp).

⁷³ A second reference to ocular reaction by Athena's statue in the presence of sacrilege (988–90) diminishes the dreadful effectiveness of 361–2; this may not be much of an argument against the authenticity of the passage, but should reduce any lingering regrets at its removal.

betrays some confusion, the comment is justified.⁷⁴ We were earlier told that Calchas died when he was defeated in a contest with Mopsus near Colophon, where he was buried (426–30); subsequently Lycophron carefully describes a monument associated with Calchas in South Italy as *τάφων . . . ψευδηρίων* (1047–8) lest we suppose him to mean that Calchas was actually buried there. These funerary complications recall the case of Odysseus (805–11).⁷⁵

The next contingent (993–1007) must be Trojans or Trojan allies, since they are led by an Amazon; the location of their settlement is unknown, but they pose no particular problem. Next come a group of unspecified provenance (1008–10), who make their home where the Siren Ligeia drifted to land (*cf.* 726–9), wherever that might be; if there is reason to doubt the authenticity of the earlier passage on the Sirens, this must create a prejudice against these lines.

(iv) I suspect that two further short passages dealing with unidentified groups of immigrants⁷⁶ should be regarded in the same light. First comes the problematic settlement on Melite (1027–33).⁷⁷

ἄλλοι δὲ Μελίτην νῆσον Ὀθρωνοῦ πέλας
πλαγκτοὶ κατοικήσουσιν, ἣν πέριξ κλύδων
ἔμπλην Παχύνου Σικανὸς προσμάσσεται.

Though *Μελίτη* was the ancient name of both Malta and Mljet (near Dubrovnik) the subsequent reference to Sicily appears to remove any ambiguity, and we must infer that the more famous of the two islands is meant. However, *Ὀθρωνοῦ πέλας* points in the opposite direction; the island of Othronus, to be mentioned seven lines later (1034) as the final home of Elephenor,⁷⁸ is north-west of Corfu. We are thus led to suppose that we are still on the eastern side of the Adriatic (as in the preceding and following sections, 1016–26, 1034–46) only to discover in the next line that we have moved south. This apparent geographical paradox may be resolved if we regard as reliable the testimony of Stephanus of Byzantium that according to some authorities Othronus was the name of an islet south of Sicily,⁷⁹ though it may be over-optimistic to suppose he had evidence independent of this passage.⁸⁰ However, while this information answers the geographical problem, it leaves us wondering about the poet's purpose in creating these apparently gratuitous perplexities. Only someone with unusual local knowledge could be expected to think of this obscure Sicilian Othronus, and the majority of Lycophron's readers must surely have found these *prima facie* incompatible details simply baffling. The problems created by this passage, essentially concerned not with Malta but with

⁷⁴ He returns to this problem in his note on 1047. Since I have more than once appealed to Tzetzes as a witness to inconsistency sufficiently blatant to worry a reasonably careful reader, I should note that he also quite unjustly accuses Lycophron of self-contradiction over Laodice's death (see his notes on 314, 447, 497).

⁷⁵ Geffcken (n. 48) 123 rightly rejects Holzinger's attempt to remove the inconsistency by taking the name Calchas to be used 'proleptisch als den des Vertreters des ganzen Gattung', to designate an unknown Italian seer. The passage presents a further problem arising from the scholiasts' confidence that the seer's death was brought about by Heracles; thus Tzetzes complains at some length about anachronism: *νῦν δὲ φλυσῶν ὑφ' Ἡρακλέος φησὶν αὐτὸν ἀναιρεθῆναι . . . πρὸ γὰρ τῆς στρατιᾶς Ἀγαμέμνονος πολλῶ πρότερον ἐν Οἴτῃ Ἡρακλῆς ἐτελεύτησεν ὅμως δὲ ὁ Λυκόφρων μῆδ' ὄλως τῆς ἀληθείας ἢ κἂν τοῦ πιθανοῦ πεφροντικῶς οὕτω φησὶ τὴν ἱστορίαν.* This criticism looks quite unfair, since there is no discernible reference to Heracles in the text: I wonder whether something has dropped out.

⁷⁶ Josifović (905) takes this group to be Colchians, but they must surely be Greeks (so Holzinger, Ciaceri).

⁷⁷ The scholia here are obviously defective and offer no help: see Scheer's apparatus. The problem has been recently discussed by A. Bonanno, 'Lycophron and Malta', *Φιλίας χάριν: miscellanea di studi classici in onore di Eugenio Manni* i (Rome 1980) 271–6.

⁷⁸ Holzinger rightly observes that the repetition of *Ὀθρωνός* at so short an interval is 'auffallend'.

⁷⁹ Mein. p. 484. *Ὀθρωνός· πόλις, οἱ δὲ νῆσον πρὸς νότον Σικελίας· ἄλλοι δὲ μελιτηνῆς.*

⁸⁰ Not everyone has accepted this evidence, and there have been other attempts to meet the difficulty. Scheer, *RhM* xxxiv (1879) 452, thought Lycophron had somehow muddled the two Melitae; on the ancient tendency to confuse them see Pfeiffer on Call. fr. 579. Ciaceri proposed re-punctuation, putting commas after *νῆσον* and *πλαγκτοί* (so Mascialino), 'dopo esser sbalzati sin presso ad Otrono', but this is artificial and no-one could be expected to understand the text like this without modern punctuation. Holzinger's attempt to deal with the problem (n. on 1042) is far-fetched.

Sicily,⁸¹ seem out of all proportion to its interest, except for readers with Sicilian connections.

A second anonymous group comes to Lucania (1083–6):

οἱ δ' αὖ Πελασγῶν ἀμφὶ Μέμβλητος ῥοὰς
 νῆσόν τε Κερνεάτιν ἐκπεπλωκότες
 ὑπὲρ πόρον Τυρσηνὸν ἐν Λαμητῖαις
 δίναισιν οἰκήσουσι Λευκανῶν πλάκας.

Holzinger prudently begins his discussion by observing that ‘in dieser räthselhaften Partie ist das Subject, ferner der Fluss Membles, die kerneatische Insel und der in Lucanien gegründete Ort unbekannt’;⁸² less satisfactory is his conclusion, that the passage relates the colonisation of Hipponion by Locrians from Sardinia. Apart from its toponymical abstruseness the passage is very awkwardly expressed.⁸³ No further items of interest are related, and it is hard to see the point of this catalogue-style entry. But I wonder if these four lines were introduced in the wake of the unfortunate Setaea (1075–82), whose fate is recounted in a passage remarkably similar, both in expression and thought, to that on Segesta (968–77). The lines which form the conclusion of this part of the *nostoi*, on (Greek) misfortunes resulting from the violence done to Cassandra (1087–9), would read rather oddly if what immediately preceded was a reference to Trojan suffering, and I suspect that some wandering Greeks have been cobbled up to avoid an incoherence created by the addition of Setaea to the text.

The argument against this passage may seem rather tenuous, and to rely too much on a suspicion of guilt by association; it would not amount to much if 1083–6 appeared to offer any sort of poetic merit or interest, let alone sufficient of these qualities to outweigh its difficulties. But as it is, it seems to share certain characteristics with passages which offer more substantial grounds for suspicion, and since it is hard to imagine why it should have been interpolated for its own sake, I am inclined to suspect it was introduced so that Setaea might rest more comfortably.

The passages where I seriously suspect interpolation thus amount to just under 200 lines (688–737, 805–11, 951–1010, 1027–33, 1075–86, 1226–80, 1441–50), nearly a seventh of the poem. All present difficulties which, one way and another, raise questions about what Lycophron thought he was doing. In some cases we are faced with contradictions sufficiently blatant to trouble any reasonably attentive reader. Elsewhere inadequate relevance to the main theme of the central section of the poem, Greek tribulations following the Trojan War, is combined with an emphasis on out-of-the-way Italian and Sicilian sites of little appeal, it might be supposed, to readers without local knowledge. Overall, the prominence afforded to Italy and Sicily in the *Alexandra's nostoi* creates a sense of uncertain authorial intention as we read of Greeks (and Trojans) scattered from end to end of the Mediterranean (but especially to Italy); Cassandra seems uncertain whether her theme is Greek tribulation, *infanda per orbem supplicia*, or immigration to Italy in the heroic age. The Italocentrism of this section is not properly adjusted to the theme of conflict and reconciliation between East and West developed in the latter part of the poem; we may be able to imagine interpretations of history which would allow the two conceptions to mesh together, but it ought not to be left to the reader to supply this important element.

We are of course free to construct biographical fantasies which would explain the poem's oddities by reference to Lycophron's personal circumstances. Perhaps the work is unfinished; perhaps in a fit of youthful enthusiasm inspired by a holiday in Magna Graecia or by perusal of

⁸¹ Odysseus' visit to Cape Pachynus is mentioned again, rather more horrifically, at 1181–8.

⁸² Sch. ad 1083, Μέμβλητος ποταμὸς Ἰταλίας πλησίον τῶν Λευκανῶν οἴτινες εἰσιν ἔθνος Ἰταλίας: this looks like a guess.

⁸³ The starting-point for ἐκπεπλωκότες is very oddly defined; ἐν Λαμητῖαις δίναισιν must mean ‘beside Lametian waters’, but is hardly a natural way to convey this simple notion.

Timaeus⁸⁴ the author embarked on an over-ambitious project with which he grew bored, and therefore careless, before it was completed. But it is another matter to account for these phenomena in terms of serious poetic intention, and if we find unconvincing Geffcken's picture of Lycophron as a literary Puck crowing over the bewilderment of his victims, and are reluctant to judge the poet simply incompetent, we must look for a more satisfactory alternative.

The cumulative effect of interpolation on the scale I suspect should not be underestimated; it could hardly fail to throw the poem out of kilter, while obscuring its structure and reducing the effectiveness of cross-references between its various parts. We are of course moving on slippery ground once we allow the possibility of interference extending considerably beyond the Roman passages; oddities of various sorts may attract our attention to interpolations, but it is obviously conceivable that there are further interpolated passages so well in tune with Lycophron's work that they offer no grounds for reasonable suspicion though their presence must distort the balance of the work and confuse our judgement.⁸⁵ We also have to reckon with the possibility that genuine material may have been removed or drastically altered; we have seen reason to suspect that what Lycophron originally said about Alexander has been cut. I cannot pretend that my hypothesis would simplify the study of the poem.

III. 'DEUTERO-LYCOPHRON': MEANS, MOTIVE, AND OPPORTUNITY

If these suspicions are to be set on a firm footing we must consider what incentive and what opportunities there might have been for interference with Lycophron's text. Even the most intransigent unitarian must allow that the poem was peculiarly vulnerable to interpolation. Lycophron's distinctively hyper-aeschylean style and austere monotonous but simple metre present an interesting, though not unduly demanding, challenge to anyone with a taste for pastiche, while the loosely episodic catalogue of post-war misfortunes comprising the poem's central section would easily accommodate insertions. Still, simple zest for creative writing does not seem an adequate explanation, and we need to supply a more substantial motive for interpolation.

It may at first sight seem tempting to look for parallels from the literature of apocalyptic prophecy, constantly revised to take account of delays in the ultimate triumph of divine justice, or, rather less frequently, to provide supernatural validation for a change of regime.⁸⁶ Yet Lycophron's erudite and clever poem has little in common, despite its oracular veneer, with such anonymous and semi-literate compositions as the Jewish *Sibylline Oracles* and the Greco-Egyptian *Oracle of the Potter*, which rely for their effect on the reader's acceptance of a bogus and extreme antiquity, and we cannot expect reliable illumination from their direction.

Contemplating the disputed credentials of Cassandra's problematic relative we may be reminded of Auden's fantasy of a supplement to *Aeneid* viii,

⁸⁴ I hope this will not be taken to imply an excessively naive view of Lycophron's debt to Timaeus; on this much-discussed question see Fraser 1972 i 763 ff., ii 1065–7 nn. 330, 331.

⁸⁵ I must admit to some unease about the second, Italian, half of Menelaus' *nostos* (852–76). The narrative is not sufficiently elaborated: we are not told why Menelaus makes for Italy, nor is it clear whether 871 ff. refer to permanent settlement—Elba as an alternative to Elysium (*Od.* iv 563 ff.)?—or to the turning point in his peregrinations. There are various peculiarities of expression (in particular at 855, 857, 869, 875–6) and the topographical details of 868–70 are problematic: see further A. Platt, *JPh* xx (1892) 113 ff., E. Manni, *Geografia fisica e politica della Sicilia antica* (Rome 1981)

33–5. 851 would undeniably form a more effective close to Menelaus' adventures than 876; Cassandra would then create the impression of a disastrous *nostos* by simply suppressing the happy sequel to Menelaus' Egyptian adventures. (With similar effect Vergil's Diomedes, cataloguing Greek misfortunes after the fall of Troy and understandably not quite *au courant* with the latest developments, speaks of Menelaus as exiled 'Protei . . . adusque columnas', *A.* xi 262–3.)

⁸⁶ Thus Welcker (n. 35) 1261: 'Wenn irgendwo Interpolation nicht unerwartet ist, so muss es in einer langen Orakelpoesie seyn: und wenn irgend ein Gegenstand zur Fortführung derselben auffordern konnte, so war es die Morgenröthe einer Weltherrschaft'.

an interpolation
 Scrawled at the side of a tattered text
 In a decadent script, the composition
 Of a down-at-heels refugee rhetorician
 With an empty belly, seeking employment,
 Cooked up in haste for the drunken enjoyment
 Of some blond princeling whom loot had inclined
 To believe that Providence had assigned
 To blonds the task of improving mankind.⁸⁷

Should we perhaps imagine that Flaminius' victory-celebrations after Cynoscephalae were enlivened by the recitation of a similarly up-dated *Alexandra*? But while some such scenario offers a suitable occasion for the addition of the Roman passages, the prominence afforded to Sicily and South Italy would remain hard to explain. We shall do better to consider the problem in relation to the genre to which the *Alexandra* is most closely akin.

The *Alexandra* presents itself as a tragic messenger's speech, and there should be no dispute that its closest affinities lie with tragedy.⁸⁸ Lycophron lived in an age much given to literary experiment; the move from drama to dramatic monologue was to be repeated somewhat over two millennia later by Browning. Whether, however, the *Alexandra* was intended for the stage is another matter; taken as a whole it is surely too long, too difficult, and too monotonous to appeal to an impresario. Nevertheless, in parts it is undoubtedly well suited to the Hellenistic vogue for theatrical recitations, a fashion which not only made less intellectual demand on the audience but was also considerably cheaper than full-scale productions of tragedy.⁸⁹

This development did not lead to the neglect of classical tragedy; concert performances of tragic highlights (prologues, messengers' speeches, arias, etc.) found a place in the programme, and it is to be feared that our MSS of tragedy have been affected by the efforts of actors to 'improve' excerpts selected for such performances. Alterations and additions designed to enhance the effectiveness of a single speech or scene when delivered on its own are likely to produce incoherence and contradiction if they come to be incorporated in complete texts, and we have to reckon with a virulent exacerbation of the perpetual tendency to histrionic interpolation which received practical recognition in the decree of Lycurgus (c. 330) establishing official copies of the plays of the three major tragedians.⁹⁰ The effects of this more drastic style of tampering in Euripides' *Phoenissae* have recently been studied by Dihle;⁹¹ even those who find his arguments less cogent than I do must, I think, concede that he has adequately demonstrated the greatly increased potential dangers to the text inherent in Hellenistic and Roman theatrical practice.

Against this background interpolation such as I have posited in the *Alexandra* is readily comprehensible. The poem's loose and episodic structure makes it easy both to excerpt virtually self-contained sections and to add supplements. Lycophron's undeniable interest in Italy, represented in the stories of Diomedes (592–632), Philoctetes (911–29) and Epeius (930–50), gives the work an obvious appeal to South Italian audiences, an appeal which an ingenious composer could augment without too much difficulty. The major contradictions and inconcinnities in our text may be simply explained by the hypothesis that they arise from the conflation of additions intended for piecemeal performance: the audience which heard of Calchas' burial at Siris (979 ff.) had not earlier in the evening been told of his interment near Colophon (424 ff.); the abrupt transition at the end of the section on Aeneas (1280/1) need

⁸⁷ *Secondary Epic* (Collected Poems of W. H. Auden, ed. E. Mendelson [London 1976] 455–6).

⁸⁸ Pace Wilamowitz 1924 148–9.

⁸⁹ See further A. Dihle, 'Der Prolog der "Bacchen"', *SHAW* 1981 2, and with reference to the Alexandrian theatre Fraser 1972 i 620–1.

⁹⁰ Plut. *Vit. Lycurg.* 15 (*Mor.* 841a); see further D. L. Page, *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford 1934), W. S. Barrett, *Euripides' Hippolytos* (Oxford 1964) 46.

⁹¹ *Op. cit.* (n. 89).

trouble no one if 1280 concluded the performance, or was immediately followed by 1435 ff. We thus avoid the necessity of attributing to either Lycophron or an interpolator an unlikely combination of cleverness and obtuseness (or, at any rate, inattention). It might be objected that this hypothesis presupposes an improbably bookish interpolator. But some of his abstruse information surely derives from what a travelling player might have gleaned on the spot: no doubt Neapolitans were happy to tell visitors about the origins of the festival honouring Parthenope (732–7), and we do not need to suppose these details to be drawn from Timaeus who is cited in the scholia here.⁹²

Deutero-Lycophron, then, is to be sought among the artists of Dionysus active in southern Italy. But though for the sake of simplicity I have expressed myself as if all the interpolated passages were the work of a single hand, this is not an essential element in my hypothesis, and if the circumstances of their composition were such as I have suggested it is no more difficult to imagine that additions were made over quite a long period, as occasion demanded, than to suppose that the enthusiast who first saw commercial possibilities in this peculiar script adapted it to a projected tour in a single burst of inspiration. It does not, therefore, seem to me very profitable to speculate about the date when the work of interpolation was done. Though we may assume that the concluding celebration of Cassandra's kinsman's victories (1446–50)⁹³ was not added before Rome had broken the power of Macedon, we are not entitled to suppose that it was inspired by any recent Roman triumph; it may merely mark a recognition that times had changed since Lycophron's day. An approximate *terminus ante quem* for the passage on Aeneas (1226–80) is provided by Theon's note on 1236, preserved by Stephanus of Byzantium.⁹⁴ Theon's dates are slightly uncertain, but his activities most probably belong to the late first century BC.⁹⁵ It would be over optimistic to take it for granted that Theon's *hypomnema*⁹⁶ secured texts circulating among the reading public against further histrionic interpolation; it is clear that Aristophanes' edition did not achieve this for the tragedians, and the obscurity surrounding Lycophron's *Überlieferungsgeschichte* does not justify the assumption that the *Alexandra* must have fared better, though its relatively restricted appeal should have provided some protection. With these rather negative conclusions we must, I think, rest content.

At this point the reader who has seen no reason to object to the main lines of my argument thus far may feel inclined to protest that these suspicions fall some way short of demonstration and that so bold a hypothesis does not deserve to be taken seriously so long as there is room for reasonable doubt. The sceptic should, however, bear in mind that literary scholarship lacks criteria analogous to watermarks and thermoluminescence and ask himself what, if he allows the theoretical possibility that Lycophron's text has suffered interpolation, would constitute conclusive proof in the absence of external evidence.⁹⁷ Though most people would agree that

⁹² *FGrH* 566 F 98.

⁹³ I cannot altogether repress a suspicion that Cassandra's mysterious relative may be Augustus, who could, as Vergil shews, credibly be presented out-trumping Alexander's achievements (*A.* vi 791 ff.; cf. E. Norden, 'Ein Panegyrikus auf Augustus in Vergils Aeneis', *RhM* liv [1899] 466–82, = *Kl. Schr.* 422–36). *πρέσβιστος* (1449) nicely combines the connotations of *Augustus* and *princeps*, and the line as a whole well suits Augustus' preference for titles without clear-cut official connotations. I have argued for this interpretation elsewhere (West 127 ff.) and suggested that the immediately preceding lines (1442–5) were intended to refer to the Second Macedonian War but have been rendered virtually unintelligible by accidental omission before 1442. I now think this corollary may be over-ingenious; the interpolator may simply have made rather a poor job of adapting whatever Lycophron said about Alexander so that it would take an extension. Admittedly, *μεθ' ἔκτην γένναν* may not seem adequate for an

interval of about three centuries, but the attractions of seven as a symbolic number would account for some poetic licence.

⁹⁴ Steph. Byz. p. 50 Mein.: *Αἴνεια, τόπος Θράκης, ὡς Αἴπεια Ζέλεια, ἀπὸ Αἰνείου. Θέων δ' Αἰνειάδας ταύτην καλεῖ, ὑπομνηματίζων τὸν Λυκόφρονα. Αἰνείας δὲ μετὰ τὴν Ἰλίου πόρθησιν εἰς Θράκην παρεγένετο καὶ ἔκτισε πόλιν Αἰνειάδας, ὅπου τὸν πάτερα ἔθαψε.*

⁹⁵ See further C. Guhl, *Die Fragmente des alexandrinischen Grammatikers Theon* (Diss. Hamburg 1969) 1–3.

⁹⁶ *ὑπόμνημα* is applied to a variety of literary productions ranging from rough jottings to the history of Polybius (see F. Bömer, 'Der Commentarius', *Hermes* lxxxii [1953] 215–50), and we cannot tell whether Theon attempted a systematic commentary or just wrote about passages which interested him.

⁹⁷ Of course, even external evidence, unless it consists of the author's autograph, does not settle such

there are few ancient authors whose transmission was so well protected as to exclude the possibility of additions by a later hand (and surely no one would include Lycophron in that small group), those who voice such suspicions in any particular instance must expect to be charged with exaggerating trivial difficulties and to be required, by implication, to produce a type of argument which in the nature of the case will not be forthcoming.

In the end, the best argument against disputed passages is that the work as a whole is significantly the worse for their presence,⁹⁸ while the most effective defence lies in shewing that the weaknesses to which critics take exception in fact serve some higher artistic purpose. It cannot be said that those who defend the general soundness of Lycophron's text have met the latter requirement, but they have undoubtedly gained ground at the expense of the analysts because the expulsion of Aeneas and his descendants seems to leave us with a less interesting poem. It is not the ungenerous desire to deprive Lycophron of a character for political sagacity that has led me to enter this minefield, but the belief that the Italian accretions distract attention from matters of more importance and that by their removal we gain a better poem.

IV. LYCOPHRON'S POEM

Few of those who have written about Lycophron have shared the enthusiasm of Wakefield, who found him 'as delightful . . . as any of the Antients'.⁹⁹ The derogatory witticisms of later scholars convey a sense of something perverse about the *Alexandra*; the poet's purpose may be controversial, but the means by which he sought to achieve it are generally agreed to have been unsuitable.¹⁰⁰ I am aware that much of my argument might be deemed to be invalidated by an unduly favourable estimate of the poem's merits, and I can see no way of properly meeting this objection if it is seriously intended. Yet much of the criticism directed against the work seems to me simply unfair; what would be praised for subtle erudition in the *Aetia* is condemned for obscurantism in the *Alexandra*, and the interest of the poem's sources is deemed its principal recommendation, without regard to the poet's discernment in selecting from these sources or to his skill in converting this material into memorable and often macabre narrative.

The idea of relating the Trojan saga from the standpoint of the defeated is imaginative and, so far as we know, original; moreover, the Trojan through whose eyes we see events is a girl who is not only fey but represents the near *adunaton* of the maid who for modesty won't wed. Cassandra's perspective is of primary importance for Lycophron's conception, not just a matter of changing past tenses into futures and adding some notes on South Italian fashion to give a feminine touch. Something of her personality is indicated at the outset by her designation as Alexandra (30), and though the name is obviously modelled on, and meant to recall, Paris' *alias*, the explanation given in the scholia, *παρὰ τὸ ἀλέξειν τοὺς ἄνδρας*, is also relevant.¹⁰¹ Lycophron emphasises her commitment to perpetual virginity (348 ff., cf. 1131 ff.), and her rather jaundiced view of sexual passion is well illustrated by her periphrasis of marriage as *παρθένειον ζυγόν* (1131); she is temperamentally inclined to see *eros* as a perpetual source of trouble. So she well may; the burden of her vision is Paris' sin and its effects, among which are Ajax's similarly motivated offence and its even more horrendous results. Both Paris and Ajax brought disaster on those associated with them by their sacrilegious lust,¹⁰² and Cassandra was to suffer terribly for her brother's concupiscence.

arguments beyond peradventure, as may be observed from the debate surrounding the opening lines of Euripides' *Phoenissae*, against which there is now considerable papyrological testimony: see further M. W. Haslam, *GRBS* xvi (1975) 147–74, M. van der Valk, *GRBS* xxiii (1982) 235–40. Stylometric criteria, it need hardly be said, are no use in dealing with short passages.

⁹⁸ Interpolations which actually enhance a work are theoretically conceivable, but it is difficult to suggest

probable examples, and critics seem generally to discount the possibility.

⁹⁹ *Op. cit.* (n. 1) Letter xxix, 27 Nov. 1799.

¹⁰⁰ The poem's most sympathetic interpreter is the radical unitarian Josifović; but though his approach to the poem is in many ways attractive, the argument on which it is based seems to me quite unconvincing.

¹⁰¹ See above, n. 44.

¹⁰² Paris' seduction of Helen is sacrilegious because it is an offence against Zeus Xenius.

The shift in emphasis from heroic exploit to suffering and humiliation is a natural reflection of Cassandra's personality and, at the same time, an entirely appropriate way to handle the perennially fascinating Matter of Troy in an age when the wild exhilaration of epic warfare could not easily be made to carry conviction. Cassandra's prophetic gifts allow Lycophron to cover with at least a semblance of unity heterogeneous and episodic material stretching over more than a thousand years. The use of prophecy as a vehicle for narrative was not of course a Hellenistic invention,¹⁰³ but Lycophron was, so far as we can tell, breaking new ground in this extensive use of the device.

Lycophron takes some care to maintain his heroine's point of view, and a failure on the part of his critics to appreciate that it may not be his own has sometimes led to adverse comment. Her *Tendenz* is obvious in the *nostoi*, where she is made to confuse two lines of thought. Opening the catalogue of Greek suffering she observes (365–6):

ἐνὸς δὲ λώβης ἀντί, μυρίων τέκνων
Ἑλλάς στενάξει πάσα τοὺς κενοὺς τάφους.

Nearly a thousand lines later she sums up (1281–2):

τοσαῦτα μὲν δύσκλητα πείσονται κακὰ
οἱ τὴν ἐμὴν μέλλοντες αἰστώσειν πάτραν.

There was no room for doubt that the disastrous storm which scattered the returning host resulted from Athena's wrath against a community so ungodly as to suffer Ajax's sacrilege to go unpunished. The glory of the Greek victory was thus irreparably tarnished, and the effects of Athena's anger were widespread and permanent. So far no one will disagree; but this consideration does little to restore the Trojans in our estimation. Paris had offended against Zeus Xenius in seducing the wife of his host; the Trojans by their apathy became his accomplices after the event, and the invading Greek army was the instrument of Zeus' justice. That the Greeks were unworthy agents of the cause they served does not diminish the guilt of those they were sent to punish. But Cassandra, who understandably feels that there was something wrong in this assault on her country, combines various examples of post-war hardship with misfortunes directly arising from the war, and by associating both with the consequences of Ajax's sacrilege implies that all alike represent well-deserved punishment for Greek aggression. There is a certain pathos in this slightly muddled thinking; it also permits Lycophron to include a much wider range of material than would have been possible if Cassandra had confined herself to misfortunes directly attributable to connivance in Ajax's crime.

It is often said that the *Alexandra* lacks both profundity and pathos. I suspect that this criticism reflects irritation with Lycophron's *recherché* style, 'that quaintness of phraseology which borders on the burlesque' as Wakefield (who regarded this as the *Alexandra*'s only defect) well put it.¹⁰⁴ The poet's elaborately cultivated air of enigmatical obscurity creates an impression of insincerity, and raises the suspicion that he attached supreme importance to his manner of expression.

Perhaps he did. But it should be recognised that he gives us plenty to think about and that the poem is not short of emotional appeal. Cassandra's lament for Hector and Troilus, her eldest and youngest brothers (258–313), is moving in itself and admirably combines Homeric heroism with more romantic elements. Her account of her own humiliation at Ajax's hands (348–65) evokes more complex reactions. Our sympathy for the terrified victim of a brutal assault gives way to appalled fascination as the eyes of the Palladium roll up to heaven, and the rapid transition from Ajax's crime to the great storm, omitting any reference to intervening events,¹⁰⁵ vividly conveys the speed and certainty of divine vengeance.

¹⁰³ On its popularity with Hellenistic poets see further L. Hensel, *Weissagungen in der alexandrinischen Poesie* (Giessen 1908).

¹⁰⁴ *Op. cit.* (n. 1), Letter xxxii, 13 March 1800.

¹⁰⁵ We are presumably to understand that Apollo simply does not shew Cassandra what happens after the

Perhaps our appreciation of the effect which the poet may be supposed to have intended here suffers from our rather different attitudes towards both sacrilege and the loss of virginity. But no one can fail to be horrified by Lycophron's description of the Locrian Maiden Tribute (1141–73). Much has been written about this cruel and unusual punishment;¹⁰⁶ I am not concerned with what really happened (though it seems certain that the custom was neither as ancient nor as grim as Lycophron supposed), but with the clear and terrible picture which Cassandra paints. For a thousand years girls are to be chosen by lot to go from Locris to serve as menials in Athena's temple at Troy; they risk being murdered as they make their way in, and when death at last brings an end to their servitude, proper funeral rites are to be denied them.¹⁰⁷ Such is the penalty to be paid by Ajax's people for his sacrilegious lust. It is hard to see how anyone can complain after reading this that the *Alexandra* lacks pathos.

Though we should not assume that Lycophron went to much trouble to verify his facts here, it would be perverse to suppose he did not believe his account to be true, or that he failed to see the implications of this extraordinary institution. Its continuity, bridging the gulf between the heroic age and historical times, rendered it peculiarly impressive among examples of divine judgements inflicted upon a sinner's posterity; what may seem to us a gross disproportion between crime and punishment demonstrates forcefully that it is not for men to assess the proper penalty for offences against the gods. It is not altogether drained of significance by some demythologisation; the rationalist who scoffs at superstitious folly has shelved the questions raised by the practice, not answered them. Callimachus' fifth and sixth *Hymns* take as their subject the punishment visited on those who violate divine law, whether accidentally, as in Teiresias' case, or intentionally, as in Erysichthon's. Neither tale brings home to us as sharply as Lycophron the sense that the gods remain jealous for their *τιμή*.

The Locrian Maidens' long servitude perpetuated the memory of the wrong done to Cassandra, and I would like to suggest that Lycophron's decision to present the Matter of Troy as she might have seen it was inspired, at least in part, by his knowledge (or, more exactly, misconception) of this strange religious survival. Undoubtedly it implies a theology which must have seemed old-fashioned to his readers; this acceptance of collective responsibility and hereditary guilt belongs to a view of the world which, for educated men, faded in the light of the intellectual developments which we associate with the sophists.¹⁰⁸ Old-fashioned ideas call for an old-fashioned presentation; what looks at first sight like a clever pastiche of Aeschylus and Herodotus serves to create a fittingly archaic atmosphere.

This is not the place to attempt a thorough survey of Lycophron's borrowings from these

Palladium's miraculous reaction, so that she is left to infer that Ajax will achieve his deplorable purpose (cf. 411–12, 1089, 1142–3, 1151). If this inference were correct, it would be hard to understand her subsequent selection as Agamemnon's concubine (1108 ff.); while Agamemnon might be satisfied with a second-hand concubine when, as in the *Iliad*, only a rather restricted selection was available, it is almost incredible that with first refusal of every girl in Troy, he should choose one who had been violated by an unruly subordinate only hours earlier. Euripides, who like Lycophron combines both aspects of Cassandra's tale, expressly assures us that she was rescued from Ajax before the worst occurred (*Tro.* 69–71, 453); Athena could, after all, save her suppliant quite simply, by sending other Greeks after Ajax. Lycophron has incurred some criticism for combining incompatible erotic motifs here, but I suspect he intended us to supply a rescue-party from our general knowledge of the story; we are handicapped here by the loss of the Cyclic *Iliou Persis*. Cassandra's

second sight is restricted to what the god cares to reveal, and it is not his purpose to save her unnecessary anxiety.

¹⁰⁶ See further J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle* (Berkeley 1978) 131–7, F. Graf, 'Die lokrischen Mädchen', *SSR* ii (1978) 61–79 (where references to earlier discussions may be found).

¹⁰⁷ The text of 1157 is clearly corrupt: I would emend *ὄταν* to *ὄτων* (with *ἐκβράσσει* in 1158), and transpose 1159 to follow 1173. Though Lycophron appears not to say how many girls were involved, our other sources, including the Vitrimitsa inscription (*IG* ix. 1²(3) 706), leave no doubt that two girls served (until, perhaps, the Tribute was reduced to one). Lycophron could be made to supply this detail, which seems quite important, if *ταῖς θανουμέναις* (1160) were changed to *τοῖν θανουμένων*: see further West 119–21.

¹⁰⁸ On these aspects of the archaic world-view see further E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley/L.A. 1951) 28–63, esp. 33 ff.; on hereditary guilt see also R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford 1983) 199–206.

authors; I must restrict myself to a selection. His debt to Herodotus¹⁰⁹ is most conspicuous in Cassandra's account of world-history (1291–1434). There is a deliberate naiveté in his versification of Herodotus' opening chapters (1291–1301,¹¹⁰ 1309–21, 1362–5 ~ Hdt. i 1–5) which is no doubt intended to make us smile;¹¹¹ I suspect that Lycophron saw in this allegedly Oriental (specifically, Perso-Phoenician) version an anticipation of his own procedure for giving fresh life to an old story by relating it from an unfamiliar point of view. Cassandra, we may note, attempts to meet Herodotus' implied criticism that the discontinuity between the Trojan War and the conflicts of historical times reduces the cogency of the Oriental account: she can list further hostilities following the Trojan War (1374–1408). Still, though Herodotus starts with a rather comic deflation of heroic legend, soon enough he becomes more serious, and Lycophron follows suit. Cassandra's own position, as a wise counsellor destined to go unheeded, exemplifies a motif of profound and tragic significance in Herodotus' work.¹¹²

The idea of a natural antipathy between the two continents reflects alike Herodotus and Aeschylus' *Persae*, and Aeschylus is undoubtedly Lycophron's major creditor. Cassandra herself, by her prophetic role and the manner of her death (1099–1122), recalls the *Agamemnon*.¹¹³ In her rejection of marriage she has much in common with the enigmatic daughters of Danaus, who find the prospect of wedlock so intolerable that they do not scruple to involve the pious king of Argos in a war which brings his death, rather than consent to a union to which there is no obvious objection.¹¹⁴ That Aeschylus can, at least in some degree, enlist our sympathies for these girls well illustrates the peculiar horror with which he at times invests the loss of virginity;¹¹⁵ this attitude is central to Cassandra's character, and while it may not evoke an immediate and spontaneous echo in the hearts of most of Lycophron's modern readers, the poem as a whole inevitably seems somewhat lacking in emotional interest if we underrate the force of such ideas and treat the heroine as merely eccentric. In her combination of long-term prediction with a wide geographical sweep we are reminded of Prometheus;¹¹⁶ the *Prometheus Solutus* may in fact be more relevant than the *Prometheus Vincitus* since it evidently included a prophecy of Heracles' adventures in the West,¹¹⁷ balancing the account of Io's eastern wanderings. But the most substantial of Lycophron's debts to Aeschylus is undoubtedly his style, and we have to allow that its defects, above all bombast and apparent unintelligibility, are those for which Aeschylus was criticised in antiquity.¹¹⁸

The assumption of an Aeschylean *persona* lends an air of traditional authority to Lycophron's words; we may compare Callimachus' appeal to Hipponax at the beginning of the *Iamboi*.¹¹⁹ But if there is a serious message behind the veil of oracular obscurity, what is it?

Alcaeus had used the story of Ajax and Cassandra to bring home to his fellow-citizens the terrible consequences of allowing criminal fecklessness (as he saw it) to continue unchecked.¹²⁰

¹⁰⁹ On Hellenistic interest in Herodotus see O. Murray, 'Herodotus and Hellenistic culture', *CQ* xxii (1972) 200–13 (though Lycophron is unfortunately passed over).

¹¹⁰ There is a nice verbal reminiscence of Herodotus' ταῦτα μὲν δὴ ἴσα πρὸς ἴσα σφι γενέσθαι (i 2.1) at 1302–3, οὐδ' οἱ γ' ἀπὴρ κέσθησαν ἀντ' ἴσων ἴσα / λαβόντες, introducing non-Herodotean material.

¹¹¹ Aristophanes is generally supposed to have found this section rather comic (*Ach.* 524–39). Even if we are wrong in seeing an allusion to Herodotus here (see C. W. Fornara, 'Evidence for the date of Herodotus' publication', *JHS* lxxxix [1971] 25–34), the idea that there might be a connection must have struck many readers independently and might be expected to have occurred to Lycophron in connection with his work on comedy.

¹¹² Eg. i 32 (Solon), 71 (Sandanis), iv 83 (Artabanus), v 36 (Hecataeus), viii 68 (Artemisia); see further R. Lattimore, 'The wise adviser in Herodotus', *CPh* xxxiv

(1939) 24–35.

¹¹³ The symbolic beasts of her prophecies of course remind us of the animal imagery of the *Oresteia* and the *Supplices*, but are a conventional feature of oracular language.

¹¹⁴ See further A. F. Garvie, *Aeschylus' Supplices: Play and Trilogy* (Cambridge 1969) 163–233. The Danaid theme of cousins in lustful pursuit of cousins (*cf.* A. *PV* 855 ff.) is echoed in Lycophron's narrative of the combat between the Dioscuri and Apharidae (546–7).

¹¹⁵ *Cf.* *Cho.* 71–4, where the loss of virginity is used to illustrate and underline the indelible pollution of murder.

¹¹⁶ The question of the authenticity of the *Prometheus*-plays is irrelevant here, since no-one in antiquity, so far as we know, doubted their ascription to Aeschylus.

¹¹⁷ *Fr.* 326 Mette (= 199 Nauck).

¹¹⁸ *Cf.* *Ar. Ra.* 923 ff.

¹¹⁹ *Fr.* 191. 1–4.

¹²⁰ *LGS* 138 (*SLG S* 262, *fr.* 298 Voigt). It is surely

Lycophron reinforces the paradigm with the similar case of Paris,¹²¹ whose lust destroyed his city and set in motion a series of conflicts which lasted a thousand years.¹²² The *Alexandra*'s catalogue of suffering reviews the horrifically far-reaching consequences of two brief acts of self-indulgent folly.

It does not enhance our appreciation of sophisticated works of literature to reduce them to illustrations of the nursery adage that silliness always ends in crying, and I do not wish to suggest that Lycophron employed all his ingenuity and curious learning simply as jam for a familiar pill. But beneath the fantasticated vocabulary and riddling allusions a moral (perhaps indeed more than one) is not far to seek, and its sobering implications make the *Alexandra* something more than an extended *technopaigion*.

There is, however, a brighter side to Cassandra's prophecy, and if it is not much emphasised we should bear in mind that it would be out of character for her to dwell, Polyanna-like, on the silver lining to the cloud, and that Lycophron could expect his readers to take a hint. The line of Locrian Maidens does not stretch on to the crack of doom; after a thousand years (1153) the tribute had, as he believed, been paid in full.¹²³ An end had likewise come to the ancient strife between Europe and Asia as a result of Alexander's victories, the natural culmination of Cassandra's vision. The parochial anguish of Locris and the vaguer but more widespread anxieties of an intercontinental Cold War had passed away. For a poet who lived (or hoped to live) in the greatest of Alexander's foundations there could be no more fitting theme than the celebration of Macedonian supremacy as the long desired end to a millennium of suffering, and whether or not I am right in supposing that Lycophron must originally have said more about Alexander, the implications of this conclusion to Cassandra's historical survey were surely more flattering to the house of Lagus than more direct eulogy could have been.

'Hindsight as foresight makes no sense', comments Auden *à propos* of the *Aeneid*'s prophecies of Augustan splendour, 'Wouldn't Aeneas have asked "What next? After this triumph, what portends?"' If Cassandra's predictions suggest a like question, Lycophron's first readers should not have been at a loss for an answer. The era which opened with Heracles' vengeance on Laomedon's perjury (33) was over; a new age was beginning. A king who traced his descent from Heracles reigned in the land of the righteous Proteus (128 ff.), where an Argive princess had become a great goddess (1291-4)¹²⁴ and where, as anyone familiar with Herodotus would suppose,¹²⁵ the brightest hopes might be entertained of the harvest to be expected from the intermingling of Greek and Oriental cultures made possible by Alexander's conquests and encouraged by his example.

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more likely than not that the well-read Lycophron knew this poem, which was sufficiently popular in Roman Egypt for two copies (*PKöln* 59, *POxy* 2303) to have been identified, as well as a fragment of a commentary on it (*POxy* 2506, *fr.* 84+108).

¹²¹ Cf. Thgn. 1231-4.

¹²² Approximately this period is indicated by Lycophron's reference to the duration of the Locrian Tribute as *τὸν χιλιῶρον χρόνον* (1153), which implies a fairly high date for the Trojan War. Duris had contrived to date the fall of Troy to 1334/3 (*FGrH* 76 F 41); in view of the obvious poetic appeal of a round millennium from the Trojan War to Alexander's invasion of Asia, Lycophron might be expected to prefer this computation to more sober estimates such as those of Herodotus (c. 1250, ii 145.4) and Timaeus (1193, *FGrH*

566 F 125).

¹²³ We of course know from the Vittrinita inscription (n. 107) that c. 280 Locrian girls were again (?) serving Athena, and a tradition about the resumption of the Tribute can be pieced together from the literary sources; but that is another story.

¹²⁴ The scholia are surely right to interpret *Μεμφίτη πρόμω* (1294) as a reference to Osiris; for the identification of Io with Isis cf. Call. *Epigr.* 57.1, *fr.* 383.12 ff.

¹²⁵ On Herodotus' Egyptophilia see further E. Lüdeckens, 'Herodot und Ägypten', *ZDMG* civ (NF xxix) (1954) 330-46, = *Herodot. Eine Auswahl aus der neueren Forschung*, ed. W. Marg (Darmstadt 1962) 434-53, and C. Froidfond, *Le Mirage égyptien dans la Littérature grecque d'Homère à Aristote* (Gap 1971) 115-207.