

NOTES ON THE TEXT OF LYCOPHRON*

The proverbial obscurity of the *Alexandra* discourages conjecture, and Lycophron's editors have not been given to bold emendation.¹ It may indeed seem that much has been suffered to pass unquestioned which no-one would think tolerable if it stood in the MSS. of Aeschylus, whose style Lycophron clearly sought to emulate. Yet despite the prophetic form of his *Rahmenerzählung* his manner of expression is far removed from the deliberate opacity, all too often accompanied by defective grammar (and, where appropriate, defective metre), characteristic of genuine apocalyptic prophecy, whether *bona fide* or *post eventum*, nor does the appeal of this rather bookish poetry lie in that power to enlist our sympathies for impossible dreams and lost causes beside which animadversions on syntactical abnormality seem stony-hearted.

Obscurity comes in various brands. A certain cloudiness about the means to their desired end is natural in those whose vision embraces the advent of the New Jerusalem (or even the destruction of Alexandria), but such is not Lycophron's case. His manner of expression has attracted a good deal of pejorative comment, but it is surely wrong to suppose that he sought obfuscation for its own sake. His distinctive style is better seen not as a discrete series of oddities, but as a sustained tribute to Aeschylus.² Undoubtedly Lycophron exaggerates the typical features of his model, and the obscurity characteristic of Aeschylus is compounded by an aversion to saying what anyone else might have said and a mind well suited to composing literary crossword-puzzles. But we should not overlook the fact that Lycophron also cultivates a certain

* Without guidance from Mr P. M. Fraser I should not have ventured among Lycophron's πολυγράμποις λαβυρίνθοις; Mr A. S. Hollis and Professor A. Hurst have saved me from various forms of error and obscurity. I am most grateful for their help.

¹ The following works are cited by the author's name alone:

C. G. Müller, *Isaaci et Joh. Tzetzae scholia in Lycophronem, cum notis variorum et scholiis minoribus nondum editis* I–III (Leipzig, 1811)

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

E. Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra* I–II (Berlin, 1881–1908)

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

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

(I have not been able to consult the edition of E. Ciaceri (1901).)

As Mascialino's edition neglects the papyri, which cover some of the passages to be discussed, a list may be convenient; all dates are A.D.:

P. Oxy. 17. 2094 (Pack² 1285; ii): 586–92, 924–39, 1345–79

P. Monac. inv. 156 (Pack² 1286; ed. pr. Hartmann, *Philologus* 76 (1920), 228–33; i): 1108–28, 1156–63

PSI 6. 724 (Pack² 1287; re-published by Vitelli, *Aegyptus* 3 (1922), 141 f.; iii?); commentary on 743–7

? *P. Oxy.* 27. 2463 (Pack² 2861: ii or iii): perhaps from a commentary on 326 ff.

The first two are discussed by U. Criscuolo, 'Per la tradizione papiracea dell' *Alexandra* di Licofrone', *Dioniso* 44 (1970), 72 ff. (with good photographs).

² The following characterization of Aeschylus' style brings out very well the features which clearly appealed to Lycophron, and indeed, *mutatis mutandis*, would serve very well as a description of Lycophron's own style: 'For ancient and modern critics alike the most outstanding characteristic of Aeschylus' style is undoubtedly its *δγκος*, the luxuriance, boldness, exuberance, and grandiloquence, and often the apparent unintelligibility, that is effected partly by the diction itself – long compound words, many evidently of Aeschylus' own invention – and partly by the use of circumlocution and redundancy' (A. F. Garvie, *Aeschylus' Supplices: Play and Trilogy* (Cambridge, 1969), p. 57).

fullness of expression, and normally provides enough clues to leave us, in the end, reasonably confident about his meaning, and impressed by the ingenuity with which he has conveyed it. It would be absurd to deny that his style is often riddling (though it must be remembered that a good riddle has only one answer), but poetry with a puzzle element should need no apology. I shall take it for granted that Lycophron did not intend to be hermetic; the mystification of Cassandra's concluding conundrum (1446 ff.), natural enough if it refers to events of which Lycophron could not have known unless he was fey,³ is not typical of the poem as a whole.

This highly artificial style, with its pervasive effect of literary allusion, *φωνάεντα κυνετοῖσι*, requires the author to weigh his every word with more than usual care, and addresses itself to readers who will do likewise (preferably more than once). Clumsiness, incoherence, hints which seem to have no object, are thus less tolerable than in many other kinds of writing. While it would be circular to argue that, since Lycophron is a careful writer, he could never have expressed himself negligently, we do him no service by supposing that, where syntax or interpretation seems somehow odd, the difficulty is less likely to result from scribal error than when we meet similar problems in the messenger-speeches of tragedy, his nearest formal model. Those who have invoked the obscurity of Lycophron's style as a defence against conjecture (or even obelization) have not always seen that their chosen weapon is a boomerang. This very quality must have rendered the text peculiarly liable to corruption due to misconception, while Lycophron's preference for stichic composition made accidental omission more probable in itself, and more likely to pass subsequently undetected, than would be the case with an author who regularly employs enjambment. Thus, where the text of the *Alexandra* seems inconsequential or elliptical, it would surely do no harm to entertain more freely than has been customary the hypothesis that the trouble arises from accidental omission, sometimes complicated by subsequent insertion in the wrong place, or by other forms of scribal first aid. The following notes mainly concern what I believe to be examples of this kind of corruption.

(1)

νῆσον δ' εἰς Κρόνω στυγουμένην
 Ἄρπην περάσας, μεζέων κρεανόμον,
 ἄχλαινος ἱκτης πημάτων λυγρῶν κόπις,
 τὸν μυθοπλάστην ἐξυλακτῆσει γόον,
 ἀρὰς τετικῶς τοῦ τυφλωθέντος δάκους. 765
 οὐπω μάλ', οὐπω, μὴ τοσόδ' ὕπνος λάβοι
 λήθης Μέλανθον ἐγκλιθένθ' Ἰππηγέτην.
 ἦξει γάρ, ἦξει ναύλοχον Ῥείθρου κέπας
 καὶ Νηρίτου πρηῶνας. ὀψεται δὲ πᾶν
 μέλαθρον ἄρδην ἐκ βάθρων ἀνάστατον 770
 μύκλους γυναικόκλωψιν. . .
 ὃν Βομβυλείας κλιτὺς ἢ Τεμμικία 786
 ὕψιστον ἡμῖν πῆμ' ἐτέκνωσέν ποτε,
 μόνος πρὸς οἴκους ναυτίλων σωθεὶς τάλας. (761-88)

Lycophron pursues his learned iambic variations on the familiar Odyssean theme.⁴ There is a certain malice in his placing Odysseus' *nostos* in the series of those who fail to return (365-1089); by thus democratically starting from the fate of his comrades (648) Cassandra is made to draw attention to a point which undoubtedly embarrassed the poet of the *Odyssey*, his hero's failure to bring home his men. Lycophron clearly

³ See further pp. 125 ff.

⁴ I have not been able to consult G. Walter, *De Lycophrone Homeri imitatore* (Basle, 1903).

took for granted readers who appreciated his frequent verbal reminiscences of the *Odyssey* and were alert to divergences from it.

763–4 look as if they represent Odysseus' experiences on Scheria. *μυθοπλάστην* (764) thus casts aspersions on the veracity of the tale Odysseus tells the Phaeacian court. The word appears to be a Lycophronic coinage, and the second half of the compound surely implies downright invention,⁵ not merely that narrative skill which won Alcinous' praise (*Od.* 11. 367 ff.); it recalls Cassandra's earlier reference to Odysseus' lying tales (432 *Αἴθωνος αὐτάδελφον ἐν πλασταῖς γραφαῖς* (of Idomeneus, cf. *Od.* 19. 183), cf. 818 *πλασταῖσι λύσσης μηχαναῖς*). Now Cassandra might well have judged *Od.* 9–12 fictitious, but not without self-contradiction, since she has herself just told the same story of witches, ghosts and monsters. Her malice loses its effect if she seems merely muddled. This oddity may be connected with a later difficulty. 788, as it stands, is blatantly ungrammatical. An easy remedy, transposition to follow 790, was suggested independently by Wilamowitz and Platt.⁶ Rather surprisingly this has not appealed to later editors,⁷ despite the extraordinary syntax of the transmitted text, the simplicity of the change proposed, and the authority of the two scholars who proposed it. This sturdy determination to defend the MS-order against overwhelming odds well illustrates Housman's view that transposition is 'the most unpopular of all methods of emendation',⁸ but perhaps reflects a feeling that 786–7 on their own seem somehow lacking in weight. Two birds could be killed with one stone by transposing 763–4 to follow 788, so that *μυθοπλάστην γόον* now refers to the series of cover-stories told by Odysseus on his return to Ithaca (*Od.* 13. 256 ff., 14. 199 ff., 17. 419 ff., 19. 172 ff.):

<i>ὄν Βομβυλῆας κλιτὺς ἢ Τερμικία</i>	
<i>ὑψιστον ἡμῖν πῆμ' ἐτέκνωσέν ποτε,</i>	
<i>μόνος πρὸς οἴκους ναυτίλων σωθεῖς τάλας,</i>	788
<i>ἄχλαινος ἱκτής πημάτων λυγρῶν κόπης,</i>	763
<i>τὸν μυθοπλάστην ἐξυλακτῆσει γόον.</i>	764

This transposition gives *ἄχλαινος* more point, since one of Odysseus' fictions is specially designed to extract a cloak from Eumaeus (14. 459 ff.); on Scheria the problem presented by the loss of his clothes is solved without much exertion on his part. We thus get a sharp contrast between the relative clause, Cassandra's reluctant tribute to Odysseus as the most formidable among the Greek warriors, and the main clause underlining the humiliation of his return home. It must be conceded that it is not Lycophron's normal practice to allow a relative clause to precede its main clause completely, but the emphasis of an unusual sentence structure seems justified as Cassandra sums up Odysseus' extraordinary career.

⁵ 'Coiner of legends' LSJ; the translations of Holzinger, Mair and Mooney agree in taking this to imply something more than a tendency to improve the tale in the telling ('Und bricht in Jammer aus, der seinen Lügen hilft', 'Shall yelp out his fictitious tale of woe', 'And whining shall recount fictitious woes').

⁶ *Homerische Untersuchungen* (Berlin, 1884), p. 193 n.; 'Notes on Alexandra and Lithica', *JPh* 20 (1892), 113 ff.

⁷ Holzinger's note 'Der Vers ist als Uebergang zu einer neuen Partie aufzufassen; daher ist die Umstellung... abzulehnen' explains nothing. Mascialino ignores the suggestion.

⁸ 'Transposition in the *Ibis* of Ovid', *JPh* 34 (1918) 222 ff. (= *Classical Papers* III pp. 969 ff.). He was not at a loss for an explanation: 'One of the causes why any proposal to correct a verse or sentence alarms and distresses the natural man is that it makes an unusual demand upon his intellect and entails the weary work of reading and considering the context. That form of correction which consists of transferring a verse or sentence from one place to another is in consequence doubly discomposing, because the mental fatigue which it involves is twice as heavy. There are two contexts to be read and considered, not only one.'

We must now return to Corcyra. The passage now looks even more excited than it did before, and the punctuation needs care:

νῆσον δ' εἰς Κρόνῳ στυγνομένην
 "Ἀρπην περάσας, μεζέων κρεανόμον, 762
 ἀράς τετικῶς τοῦ τυφλωθέντος δάκους – 765
 οὐπω μάλ', οὐπω, μὴ τοσόσδ' ὕπνος λάβοι
 λήθης Μέλανθον ἐγκλιθένθ' Ἴππηγέτην –
 ἥξει γάρ, ἥξει ναύλοχον Ῥείθρου σκέπας
 καὶ Νηρίτου πρῶνας, ὀψεται δὲ πᾶν κτλ.

A comma (so Scheer), rather than a full stop, is essential in 769; ἥξει γάρ κτλ. has the force of a concessive clause, and the emphasis lies on ὀψεται δέ.

Cassandra's prayer to Poseidon, clearly meant to recall *Od.* 13. 125–6 οὐδ' Ἐνόςιχθων λήθεται' ἀπειλάων, is not quite free from difficulty. 'Let not such a sleep of forgetfulness find Melanthus, lord of horses, bending' is decidedly odd. Scheer persuaded himself that the line in fact referred to Odysseus:⁹ his conjecture ἀγκλιθένθ' 'leaning back' produces a slightly easier sense, but the phrase still does not seem quite satisfactory. Holzinger saw a reference to Poseidon fathering the horse Scyphius,¹⁰ but this combination of an otherwise unattested sense of ἐγκλίνω with an out-of-the-way detail apparently irrelevant to the context demands too much of the reader. (It might also seem a little inappropriate to Cassandra's somewhat spinsterish approach, though her observations on animal-behaviour at 84–5 might be compared.¹¹) We could avoid these complications with a slight change of λήθης: λήθη... ἐγκλιθένθ' 'having yielded to forgetfulness'. For this sense of ἐγκλίνω cf. Eur. fr. 431 N., 4–5 (= Soph. fr. 684 P., Radt: on ἔρωc): καὶ τόνδ' ἀπείργειν οὐδ' ὁ παγκρατῆς κθένει/Zεύς, ἀλλ' ὑπέικει καὶ θέλων ἐγκλίνεται.

It might be said that I have strained at gnats in this section while tacitly swallowing two camels in the immediate vicinity, and that the poet who expected us somehow to supply explanations for a *nekuia* bisected by excursions to Baiae and Pithecussae (681–7, 703–11) and for a twice deceased Odysseus (793–800, 805–11) was treating his story too oddly to allow any particular significance to the discrepancy from which I started. These problems in fact seem to me quite overwhelming. However many legends surrounded Odysseus' death, however erudite and subtle the readers Lycophron envisaged, the effect produced by this extraordinary juxtaposition without any explanation is surrealistic. Lycophron can be ingenious and convincing in combining details from apparently incompatible legends into a coherent narrative, as we see, for example, in his exploitation of the Stesichorean phantom-Helen.¹² Why, we may

⁹ *RhM* 34 (1879) 464: 'Man hat die Spielerei der Stelle nicht verstanden: nicht von Poseidon, sondern von Odysseus ist die Rede. Mit ὕπνος λήθης deutet der Alexandriner auf ν 92 δὴ τότε γ' ἀτρέμας εἶδε λελασμένος ὦν ἐπεπόνθει. Μέλανθος – dabei ist das homerische Μελανθεύς verwendet – ist ein passender Räthselname für den, von dem es ζ 231 heisst καὶ δὲ κάρητος οὐλας ἦκε κόμας, ὑακινθίνῳ ἄνθει ὁμοίας... ἱππηγέτης endlich konnte zu ähnlichem Zwecke sehr wohl der genannt werden, von dem es θ 494 heisst ἱππου... ὦν ποτ' ἐς ἀκρόπολιν δόλω ἦγαγε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς vgl. λ 522'.

¹⁰ 'Möglicherweise deutet aber Lycophr. gerade durch ἐγκλίνεσθαι (= κύπτεσθαι), vgl. Hom. h. xxiii, 3: ἐγκλιδὸν ἐζομένην, auf die Erschaffung des Rosses Scyphios durch den schlafenden Poseidon. Vgl. Schol. Pind. Pyth. iv, 246'. The reference to h. Hom. 23. 3 does not support this interpretation.

¹¹ This detail perhaps throws a strange new light on Menelaus' Egyptian experiences (848–9).

¹² 113–43. Stesichorus' invention of the εἶδωλον was intended to exculpate Helen; Lycophron reduces the guilty couple's mutual enjoyment to a minimum, without any diminution of Helen's guilt. For a lucid account of the various versions of the legend see A. M. Dale, *Euripides' Helen* (Oxford, 1967), pp. xvii ff. 'Lycophron zu gern kontaminiert' observes Wilamowitz (*Hellenistische Dichtung* II (Berlin, 1924), p. 160); this is fair warning to those who would like to use the *Alexandra* to reconstruct lost works, but rather unfair as literary criticism.

wonder, did his skill and judgement fail him when he came to deal with the latter end of the hero who enjoys a larger allowance of space than anyone else in the *Alexandra* and whose importance is stressed by his central position? These difficulties must, I think, be seen as part of a systematic attempt to increase the Italian interest of this poem by simple addition, but this is not the place to consider whether we are faced with authorial second thoughts or interpolation by another hand.¹³

(2)

πεφύσεται δὲ τοῦ θερικτῆρος ξυρῶ
 φάλαινα δυσμίσητος ἐξινωμένη,
 ἵπποβρότους ὠδῖνας οἶξαντος τόκων
 τῆς δειρόπαιδος μαρμαρώπιδος γαλῆς·
 ὃς ζωοπλαστῶν ἄνδρας ἐξ ἄκρου ποδός
 ἀγαλματώσας ἀμφελυτρώνει πέτρῳ,
 λαμπτηροκλέπτης τριπλανοῦς ποδηγίας.

(840–6)

840 πεφύσεται] παιφάσεται Scheer

845 ἀμφελυτρώνει] ἀμφελύτρωσεν Scheer (rectius ἡμφελύτρωσεν)
 πέτρῳ Scheer: πετρῶ A p περῶ B πέτρων CDET

Perseus' achievements are ancient history for Cassandra, and Scheer's conjectures remove illogical futures. The general predominance of future tenses made this kind of mistake inevitable, and two other passages present similar difficulties, though for both there is a simple remedy,¹⁴ and we are not entitled to assume that Lycophron was simply careless.

However, Scheer's suggestion for 840 is unconvincing: in classical authors *παιφάσσω* ('dart about') is intransitive, and the historic present is unsatisfactory. The problem may perhaps be solved by a different interpretation of *πεφύσεται*. This has always been taken as the future passive of *θείνω*, but it could be from *φαίνω* (cf. *Il.* 17. 155): Cassandra thus envisages the disembowelled monster on show to posterity, whether as a tourist-attraction in the form of a conspicuous rock near Joppa or as the rather woolly constellation Cetus. If this is right, the slight trap is rather in Lycophron's manner: we are led on to suppose he has been careless, and then realize that he has used a relatively out-of-the-way Homeric form.

ἀμφελύτρωσεν for *ἀμφελυτρώνει* (845) is a minimal change. But this sentence contains another oddity, which makes me wonder whether Scheer's remedy is the right one. It is hard to see the point of the differentiation in tense between *ζωοπλαστῶν* and *ἀγαλματώσας*, since both apparently refer to the same activity. The variant *πετρῶν* suggests the possibility that *ἀμφελυτρώνει* might be the dative of an otherwise unattested **ἀμφελύτρωσις* ('wrapper').¹⁵ Should we read *ἡγαλμάτωσεν ἀμφελυτρώνει πέτρων*?

¹³ Something also seems to be wrong with the transmitted text at 738–40: Tzetzes (on 740) rightly protests: *κακῶς δὲ καὶ συγκεχυμένως καὶ ἀδιαρθρώτως ὁ Λυκόφρων τὴν περὶ Ὀδυσσεῶς ἱστορίαν λέγει*. If Cassandra is supposed to be following the Odyssean order, 738 belongs before 662; there might be a connection between its apparent displacement and the disquieting combination of carelessness (*πάντα*) and textual uncertainty in 664. The difficulty is not altogether met by supposing that Cassandra is rearranging the order of events, since 738 as it stands is simply an isolated detail, without any proper connection with the following narrative. Moreover, *συμφλεχθήσεται* (740) is used in a very strange sense if it merely means that Odysseus was mildly scorched by the thunderbolt which destroyed his comrades: we expect it to mean that he shared their fate.

¹⁴ 892 *αὐδάξει*] *ἠῤῥαξεν* Wilamowitz (op. cit. II, p. 173 n. 1); 1350 *καθιέρωσει*] *καθιέρωσε* Scheer; Holzinger (on 845 and 1350) adds 890 *ἐνήσει* to the list, but this is in order after *δείξαντι*, representing the tense which Triton used in giving his directions.

¹⁵ So LSJ, though I do not understand how the substantive was extracted from Scheer's text.

- (3) ὁ δ' ἱπποτέκτων Λαγαρίας ἐν ἀγκαλαῖς,
 ἔγχος πεφρικῶς καὶ φάλαγγα θουρίαν,
 πατρῶων ὄρκον ἐκτίνων ψευδῶμοτον... (930-2)
 ὃς ἀμφὶ Κίριν καὶ Κυλιστάνου γάνος
 ἔπηλυσ οἴκους τῇλε νάσsetαι πάτρας. (946-7)

The twelve lines from 933 to 945 are occupied with the sensational history of Epeius' father Panopeus. We have a long wait for the finite verb which we might reasonably have expected any time after 930, and when we reach 946 there is nothing to indicate that the author was aware that he was returning to the rescue of an apodosis which had been left unattended for an unusual length of time.¹⁶ Presumably a line has dropped out after 931.

- (4) ἔνθα Λαυμέδων τριπλᾶς
 ναύταις ἔδωκε Φοινოდάμαντος κόρας (952-3)

The extraordinary scansion Φοινოდάμαντος might have been expected to lead to some raising of eyebrows. The *Alexandra* admits the rare indulgence of an anapaest with the proper name Παρθενόπη (720), and Φοινოდάμαντος could have been accommodated here by the same licence without any abnormality. Perhaps we should suspect κόρας: a word like ἐκγόνους would restore the metre. I should prefer something more interesting, but Lycophron's oracular menagerie does not include many beasts suitable as symbols for well-conducted girls, and I have been unable to think of any animals of the right metrical shape. Possibly βοράν at the end of 955 caught the scribe's eye and led him to substitute one of Lycophron's favourite words.

At first sight there are attractions in the hypothesis that Φοινოდάμαντος is an intrusive gloss of a common type.¹⁷ But Phoenodamas is a fairly obscure figure, and there would be something perverse in referring to him by a periphrasis when the familiar Laomedon appears undisguised, surprising as this is in view of Lycophron's general aversion to the usual names of relatively well-known people and places: contrast the treatment of the earlier part of this episode at 470 ff. But even if, as I suspect, 951-1010 are the work of an interpolator, we should hesitate to believe an otherwise competent composer capable of this anomalous lengthening.

- (5) ὑμεῖς ἐμῶν ἑκατι δυσσεβῶν γάμων
 ποινὰς Γυγαίᾳ τίset' Ἀγρίσκα θεᾶ,
 τὸν χιλιῶρον τὰς ἀνυμφεύτους χρόνον
 πάλου βραβεῖαις γηροβοσκοῦσαι κόρας. 1155
 αἷς ἀκτέριστος ἐν ξένη ξέναις τάφος
 ψάμμῳ κλύδωνος λυπρὸς ἐκκλυθήsetαι,
 ὅταν ἀκάρποις γυῖα συμφλέξας φυτοῖς
 Ἥφαιστος εἰς θάλασσαν ἐκβράσsetη σποδὸν
 τῆς ἐκ λόφων Τράρωνος ἐφθιτωμένης. 1160
 ἀλλαι δὲ νύκτωρ ταῖς θανουμέναις ἴσαι
 Σιθῶνος εἰς θυγατρὸς ἴzονται γύας...
 δῆμος δ' ἀνατεῖ τὸν κτανόντ' ἐπαινέset,
 τεθμῷ χαράset, τοῦπιλώβητον γένος. 1172
 (1151-73)

Lycophron's account of the Locrian Maidens is unambiguous and horrifying.¹⁸ It is clear from his emphasis on their perpetual virginity (1153-4, cf. 1145 παῖδας

¹⁶ As, for instance, at 128, where the return to the main clause, after a long relative clause describing Proteus' unsatisfactory family-life, is marked by the resumptive κείνός set.

¹⁷ On intrusive proper names supplied where the author used a circumlocution see R. Merkelbach, 'Interpolierte Eigennamen', *ZPE* 1 (1967), 100-2.

¹⁸ Problems of course arise when we try to relate it to the other evidence: see further F. Graf, 'Die lokrischen Mädchen', *Studi Storico-Religiosi* 2 (1978), 61 ff., and J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic oracle* (1978), pp. 131-7.

ἔστερημένας γάμων) that he believed there was no return to Locris for the girls selected to serve Athena at Troy, and his account of their period of service starts with death and works backwards. The first part corresponds closely to Timaeus, who is quoted in the scholia on 1155,¹⁹ but something is clearly wrong with 1157. Most MSS. give the unmetrical ὅταν ἀκάρποις γυῖα συμφλέξας φυτοῖς; ὅταν δ' (V) looks like scribal first aid.²⁰ Editors usually adopt Hermann's transposition of ὅταν and φυτοῖς, though this is out of keeping with Lycophron's style.²¹ Scheer avoided this with ἐπὶ for ὅταν, but the corruption is not easily explained, either as simple miscopying or as an intrusive gloss. ὅτων for ὅταν (with B's ἐκβράσσει for ἐκβράς(ς)η ACDEV in 1158) would solve the immediate problem; for the corruption cf. Xen. *Ana.* 7. 6. 24 σπάνια δ' ἔχοντες ὅτων ὠνέσσει: ὅταν X, ὅτου det.: corr. Stephanus.²² Something now has to be done about 1159, which is clearly surplus to requirements if we already have a genitive in 1157. Even with the transmitted text the shift from the plural αἰς to the singular τῆς... ἐφθιτωμένης, used with collective sense, is a clumsy distraction, without the partial justification of metrical advantage;²³ this difficulty would be aggravated if τῆς... ἐφθιτωμένης had to be understood in apposition to ὅτων. The line is too striking in expression to allow us to suppose it to have been manufactured in order to supply a desirable genitive once ὅτων had been corrupted to ὅταν, so we must consider the possibility that it has been displaced. A good home can in fact be found for it after 1173. That the present ending, τοῦπλωβητον γένος, might be felt a little abrupt is indicated by Holzinger's note, 'sc. τὸ τῶν Λοκρίδων.' At first sight, this abruptness may seem a positive advantage, as contributing to the generally macabre atmosphere, but Lycophron's normal practice is rather to elaborate his descriptions with inorganic lines. There is, moreover, some point in the use of the singular with the line in its new position. It is not clear that the ritual opposition to the girls' arrival often had serious consequences;²⁴ normally, as we learn from Aeneas Tacticus (31. 24), the Locrians smuggled them in unnoticed. But it is certain that one girl died (sch. ad 1159),²⁵ and that this led to the suspension of the custom until famine and other afflictions convinced the Locrians that the goddess's wrath had not yet passed. Lycophron, I assume, knew of one fatality, and believed that there must, in the course of a thousand years, have been more; the periphrasis τοῦπλωβητὸν γένος

¹⁹ Τίμαιος (FGrHist 566F 146) ἱστορεῖ ὅτι αἱ παραγενόμεναι παρθέναι ἐδούλευον ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς, β' οὐκ αἶ. εἰ δέ τις ἀποθάνοι, ἑτέραν παραγίνεσθαι ἀντ' αὐτῆς· ἐκείνην δὲ οὐ θάπτεσθαι παρὰ τῶν Τρώων, ἀλλὰ καίεσθαι ἀγρίοις ξύλοις, καὶ τὰ ὅσα αὐτῆς ῥίπτεσθαι εἰς θάλασσαν.

²⁰ The Munich papyrus preserves the beginnings of 1156–63, but only the first letter of 1157 survives.

²¹ 'Ebensowenig duldet der Stil φυτοῖς und ὅταν zu vertauschen' noted Wilamowitz (*Die Ilias u. Homer*² (Berlin, 1920), p. 387). He himself, without much confidence, suggested something like βαιὰν δ'.

²² There is probably another instance at Xen. *Oec.* 3. 2.

²³ Müller, whose notes reveal a good sense of Lycophron's style, interestingly observes that 'hoc vers. plane omisso sensum reliquorum verborum sibi bene constare, servato autem omnia turbare atque obscurari'. His feeling that the line would be better removed is significant, though with ὅταν the clause lacks a genitive and one seems desirable.

²⁴ Graf (loc. cit. 66) compares the Agrionia at Orchomenus, in which the priest of Dionysus, armed with a sword, pursued a group of women and might kill any he caught; but when a priest actually did kill someone, signs of divine displeasure followed (Plut. *Quaest. Gr.* 38, 299e–f).

²⁵ συνέβη μὲν στελλομένη ἐκ Λοκρίδος διαφθαρῆναι ἐπὶ τινος λόφου τῆς Τροίας καλουμένου Τράρωνος· εἶτα τοὺς Λοκροὺς τὴν μὲν θάψαι, σιωπῆσαι δὲ καὶ μηκέτι πέμπειν τὰς παῖδας φάσκοντας πεπληρώσθαι τὸν τῶν ἐτῶν χρόνον· ἀκαρπίας δὲ κατασχούσης αὐτοὺς πάλιν πέμπειν οὐκέτι δύο, ἀλλὰ μίαν, ἀρκοῦσαν εἶναι δοκοῦντας τὴν τιμωρίαν. ὁ δὲ χρησμὸς οὐκ εἶχεν ὠρισμένον χρόνον.

τῆς...ἐφθιτωμένης suggests further casualties without actually going beyond the evidence. The obscure geographical reference of ἐκ λόφων Τράρωνος does not distract us at the end of the passage, since by now it is clear that the scene is Troy, and we automatically infer that this must be the name of a mountain or promontory in the Troad; this may not, in itself, be thought a significant advantage, but, such as it is, it makes for easier reading.

We might have expected Lycophron to tell us how many girls are involved. His narrative style tends to concentrate on what may be visualized (since Cassandra's second-sight seems to work rather like a film with no sound-track and only occasional sub-titles), and this detail is an important part of the picture; it is, moreover, one we naturally supply if we are giving an account of the practice, even if we think we are merely retelling Lycophron's story in ordinary language. It would be possible to introduce this item of information by reading τοῖν θανουμέναιν for ταῖς θανουμέναις in 1160; though I do not think this is the sort of conjecture to be introduced into the text, the possibility ought to be borne in mind by anyone who complains that Lycophron omits important details. The dual would refer to the original pair; they could not be expected to expire simultaneously, and Lycophron no doubt envisaged their successors arriving singly.²⁶ We find duals elsewhere in the *Alexandra* (103, 940, 1048, 1168), quaint though they must have seemed in Lycophron's day. The ease with which duals may be corrupted to plurals is indicated by the frequency with which they are found side by side as variants: e.g. *Il.* 9. 185; 12. 447; 14. 281; 23. 216; *S. Ant.* 56; *OC* 423, 445.

(6) From Cassandra's catalogue of Greek misfortune there is one surprising absentee. Whether the explanation is a matter of literary or of textual criticism I am not sure, but the question seems worth considering.

Vergil's Diomedes saw the same pattern in post-war events as Cassandra did: 'Quicunque Iliacos ferro violavimus agros / ...infanda per orbem / supplicia et scelerum poenas expendimus omnes':²⁷ τοσαῦτα μὲν δύστηλα πείσονται κακὰ / οἱ τὴν ἔμην μέλλοντες αἰστώσειν πάτρην (1281–2). Diomedes illustrates his answer to the Latin envoys with examples: Menelaus (262), Odysseus (263), Neoptolemus (264), Idomeneus, the Locrians (265), Agamemnon (266 ff.), and himself (269 ff.). Cassandra, who casts her net much more widely, does not include Neoptolemus, and I think we should ask why. He played a conspicuous and terrible part in the sack of Troy, culminating in the slaughter of Priam at the altar of Zeus Herkeios (335 ff.). His own death, at Apollo's altar at Delphi, seemed to Pindar divine retribution for this atrocity,²⁸ and it is hard to imagine a more obvious instance of punishment fitting the crime.

Those with clearer insight into Lycophron's purposes may see a ready explanation for Cassandra's silence, but it can do no harm to consider briefly the possibility that Neoptolemus' absence might be an accident of transmission. This hypothesis would be easily refuted if Lycophron's narrative were so tightly structured that there seemed no point at which Neoptolemus could be fitted in, but there does not appear to be

²⁶ The dual is used of the Maidens in the Vitrinitsa inscription; the conditions of service presupposed in it are less nightmarish than in Lycophron, and the girls go, and return, as a pair; *IG* xi. 1². 706: 9/10 τοῖν/κόραυν; 23 δικάζειν τοῖν κόραυν, ἐπιδικῆσαι τοῖν πρόσθεν.

²⁷ *A.* 11. 252 ff. All that concerns me here is a similar line of thought, and it makes no difference to my argument whether Vergil had Lycophron in mind or not (though I believe he had). On reflections of the *Alexandra* in the *Aeneid* see appendix.

²⁸ *Paeon* 6. 112 ff. (cf. the proverbial Νεοπτολέμειος τίσις (Paus. 4. 17. 4)); a different version in *N.* 7, better suited to Aeginetan patrons. Cf. Tryph. 640 ff.

any such accommodation-problem. Since he got home (*Od.* 3. 188 f.), even if with some delay (*Apollod. Epit.* 6. 5. 12–14), and did not subsequently leave Greece, the place for him would be in the section 1090–1282, with Agamemnon and Idomeneus; he could be inserted before 1174, 1214, 1226, or 1281. Further speculation becomes regrettably subjective, but it would be undeniably impressive to end the survey with the condign punishment of an appalling war-crime. Cassandra's exposition includes many cases where subsequent hardship is only tenuously connected with the expedition against Troy. If she could end the series as she began (365 ff.), with an irrefragable instance of divine vengeance for a sacrilegious assault on a Trojan suppliant, it would undoubtedly help to camouflage those parts of her argument which depend too much on the inference *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*.

Mere contemplation of this possibility brings us alarmingly close to the notorious difficulties presented by the section on Aeneas and the rise of Rome (1226–80).²⁹ The extraordinarily abrupt transition at 1280–1 creates a strong suspicion that something is wrong with the text. As a comment on what immediately precedes, 1281–2 make little sense; the only Greek who has been mentioned in the last fifty lines is Odysseus, here unexpectedly appearing as Aeneas' ally, and a reference to Greek suffering is inconsequential. No doubt the extension of Roman power might be supposed to have had various undesirable consequences for the Greek settlements on which it impinged, but Cassandra does not say anything like that, and it is unreasonable to expect us to supply the missing link in her thoughts. Discussion of this problem has been bedevilled by the related problem of Lycophron's knowledge of Roman affairs, but it is not to be dismissed as a quibble, insignificant provided the date of composition be put late enough. If, after describing the martyrdom of Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer, a writer is led to relate at some length the equally heroic ends of the Jesuits

²⁹ For a concise and lucid exposition of the problem see P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* II (Oxford, 1972), pp. 1065 ff., n. 331. Ziegler's assertion (*RE* 13. 2365) that stylistically and metrically the passage is indistinguishable from the rest of the *Alexandra* needs some qualification. That it is metrically indistinguishable proves nothing: the austere monotony of Lycophron's hyper-aeschylean iambs is unmistakable and would greatly simplify an interpolator's task. Assessment of the style must be subjective; the passage is too short to allow any inference from quantifiable phenomena. That the passage seems at first reading easier than the rest of the poem might be accounted for in various ways, but is not simply explained by the fact that the general outline of the story is so familiar to us. The passage shews a relatively high proportion of phrases and patterns of line which occur earlier in the poem: 1234 ~ 403; 1244 ~ 823; 1249 ~ 804; 1252 ~ 978; 1257 ~ 967; though Lycophron has other repeated hemistichs (e.g. *Κιθώνος εἰς θυγατρὸς* (583, 1161), *λοιβαῖσι κυδανοῦσι* 929, 1213) and patterns of line, the concentration here seems suggestive, and might be thought a sign of an interpolator playing safe rather than of flagging invention on the poet's part. 1263–9 is a very clumsy sentence, and would be hard to follow with the rather economical punctuation normal when Lycophron composed; this kind of difficulty is not characteristic of his work in general. It may, incidentally, surprise us that Aeneas was not introduced earlier in the poem if he was an important element in Lycophron's plan. His departure from Troy was a well-known episode in the tale, and his universally acknowledged piety would have formed an effective contrast to the sacrilege of Neoptolemus (335 ff.) and Ajax (348 ff.); an earlier mention would have avoided the need for the clumsy recapitulation of 1263 ff. The impracticability of settling the authenticity of short passages on stylistic grounds alone is well illustrated by the controversy surrounding the Helen-episode in *Aeneid* 2 (567–88); since the magisterial discussion by G. P. Goold (*HSCP* 74 (1970), 101 ff.) it is hard to believe that anyone might ever again argue that the passage could be by Vergil, but Goold's demonstration rests on a painstaking examination of the circumstances of its transmission, not on consideration of those stylistic niceties which had left those best qualified to judge deadlocked. Here we can probably say with confidence that the passage is not up to the standard of Lycophron's best work, and since, if we are dealing with an interpolator, he was clearly a competent composer, this is about the most the circumstances allow.

Campion and Briant under Elizabeth, he cannot sensibly conclude 'Such were the sufferings of those who upheld the principles of the Reformation', nor, if he does so, shall we take him to mean 'Brave and intelligent men were to be found on both sides'. The inconcinnity here is surely comparable.

This difficulty is not completely met by the venerable hypothesis that 1225–80 are an interpolation, since we have to envisage an interpolator who had studied Lycophron's style with sufficient care to produce a convincing pastiche of over 50 lines and yet failed to observe how ill his composition coheres with what immediately follows. The kind of carelessness which so often betrays interpolation in tragedy is a little surprising when we are dealing with a passage of such length, to which its composer surely attached importance. Scheer, who was in general a fairly conservative editor, took drastic measures here: he athetized 1226–80, marked a lacuna after 1280, and suggested transposing 1214–25 (*versosque penatis Idomenei*) to follow 1173. His conviction that much is wrong in this area carries some weight. Here would be a fine place for Neoptolemus. But this unsettling speculation has gone far enough.

- (7) οἱ δ' αὖ τέταρτοι τῆς Δυμαντείου σποράς,
 Λακμώνιοι τε καὶ Κυτιναῖοι Κόδροι,
 οἱ Θίγρον οἰκήσουσι Κάτνιον τ' ὄρος κτλ. (1388–90)

1390 οἱ: εἰς Scheer

Cassandra's subject is Dorian migration to Asia Minor, but she seems to express herself rather strangely. Scheer's conjecture draws attention to one oddity: the relative appears to have no real function except to alert us to the need to supply a main verb for the sentence. Why, we may wonder, did Lycophron prefer this rather clumsy locution to something like *Θίγρον κατοικιοῦσι*? Scheer's proposal is valuable as a diagnostic conjecture, but produces a construction as unlikely as 'dwell into' in English. Müller had suggested that οἱ *Θίγρον* concealed a trisyllabic place-name; Thigros is otherwise unknown, apart from a reference in Stephanus of Byzantium, who cites this line (with *Θίβρον*) and apparently had no other information about the place. But I suspect the trouble lies elsewhere.

As it stands, *Κόδροι* (1389) seems impossibly difficult. The scholia try to persuade us that *καί* has been omitted and that *Κόδροι* simply means 'Athenians',³⁰ but no-one is likely to believe that. Holzinger compares Hesychius' gloss *Κόδρου: οὗς ἡμᾶς λέγομεν κρονικούς τινες, τὸ ἀρχαῖον αὐτῶν ἐμφανίζοντες*.³¹ This can hardly have been a usage familiar to every schoolmaster, or we should expect to find an explanation on these lines in the scholia. There are simply not enough clues in the text for the intelligent reader to work out what is meant, and this extreme obscurantism is not characteristic of Lycophron.

This combination of difficulties suggests that a line (or more) has been lost before or after 1389, in which a highly desirable main verb was supplied and the mysterious *Κόδροι* illuminated with some phrase indicating attachment to old-fashioned ways. The plural *Κόδροι*, 'men like Codrus', is admittedly odd when Codrus himself is not included in the group, but less so in view of the reference to him in the preceding section (1378 *ἄνακτος τοῦ δρυγκόπου*).

- (8) Πολλοὶ δ' ἀγῶνες καὶ φόνοι μεταίχμιοι
 λύουσιν ἀνδρῶν οἱ μὲν Αἰγαίαις πάλας
 δύναισιν ἀρχῆς ἀμφιδηριωμένων, 1435

³⁰ *λείπει δὲ ὁ καὶ σύνδεσμος, ἢ ἡ "καὶ Κόδροι".* δηλοῖ δὲ τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἀπὸ Κόδρου βασιλεως Ἀθηνῶν. μέτεσχον δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι τῆς ἀποικίας τῶν Ἑρακλειδῶν.

³¹ cf. Eust. ad *Od.* 1. 58, p. 1391, 37.

οἱ δ' ἐν μεταφρένοισι βουστρόφοις χθονός,
 ἕως ἂν αἰθων εὐνάσῃ βαρὺν κλόνον
 ἀπ' Αἰακοῦ τε κατὰ Δαρδάνου γεγώς
 1440 Θεσπρωτὸς ἄμφω καὶ Χαλαστραῖος λῶων
 πρηνή θ' ὁμαίων πάντα κυπώσας δόμον
 ἀναγκάσῃ πτήξαντας Ἀργείων πρόμοις
 εἶναι Γαλάδρας τὸν στρατηλάτην λύκον
 καὶ κῆπτρ' ὀρέξαι τῆς πάλαι μοναρχίας.
 1445 ὦ δὴ μεθ' ἔκτην γένναν αὐθαίων ἐμός
 εἰς τις παλαιστής, συμβαλὼν ἀλκὴν δορὸς
 πόντου τε καὶ γῆς κείς διαλλαγὰς μολών,
 πρέσβιτος ἐν φίλοισιν ὑμνηθήσεται,
 1450 σκύλων ἀπαρχὰς τὰς δορικτήτους λαβών.

(1435–50)

1443 ἀναγκάσῃ Scheer: ἀναγκάσει (ἀγκάσει B) codd. Ἀργείων codd.: Ἀκταίων v.l. ap. schol.: Ἀρταίων Scheer

Here, at the conclusion of Cassandra's prophecy, it is unusually hard to find firm ground to stand on. I shall not discuss the text of 1436–7, where obelization seems the only prudent course; whether its unsatisfactory state is connected with the problems of 1439–50 is uncertain, but it is probably irrelevant to the interpretation of the latter passage. This, despite the relative simplicity of its style, presents several problems, of which the most serious is the identity of Cassandra's mysterious kinsman (1446 ff.). I think these difficulties may be more closely linked than has hitherto been supposed, and that accidental omission has rendered the concluding enigma formally insoluble (though not absolutely unguessable), while obscuring the rest of the passage.

That this section as a whole is so puzzling calls for some explanation. The difficulties we face here are not typically Lycophronic; there are few rare words or learned allusions. While much that appears to us obscure might have been easily interpreted by the poet's contemporaries in the light of current events, this is no spontaneous effusion tossed off the night before to greet a visiting celebrity, and we might have expected Lycophron to express himself in such a way that his meaning would be clear some generations later, at any rate to those who had followed him thus far through his mythological labyrinth. We observe with dismay the baffled floundering of the scholia.

First, who is the lion of 1441? The scholia take it to be Alexander, and most modern interpreters have agreed, though the claims of Pyrrhus have been argued. I cannot believe that Lycophron allowed Pyrrhus a special mention while merely including Alexander under the general category of 1436 ff. From the Herodotean viewpoint adopted for this survey of world-history (1291 ff.), the next major event in the conflict between Asia and Europe after Xerxes' invasion must be Alexander's conquests. Prophets like homonyms, and Cassandra might be expected to be struck by the coincidence that a second Alexander was to play a major role in the story; her own designation as Alexandra makes us the less likely to overlook the point. But, 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.

There are two difficulties. In 1443 we have to choose between Ἀργείων, the reading of the MSS., and the variant Ἀκταίων explained in the scholia. If we want a word meaning 'Greeks', Ἀκταίων (cf. 504) is clearly preferable as the *lectio difficilior*. But if the subject is Alexander, we expect a reference to Persian conquests. Expositors, ancient and modern, assure us that either word may bear the required sense. The scholia offer the following note on Ἀκταίων: Ἀκταῖοι δὲ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι. ἀπώκῃσαν δὲ μετὰ τῆς Μηδείας εἰς Πέρσας τινὲς τῶν Ἀθηναίων. νῦν οὖν Ἀθηναίους λέγει

τοὺς Πέρσας δια τὴν ἀποικίαν. This is not immediately convincing. On Ἀργείων I cannot do better than quote Wilamowitz:³² '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.' This is not much better. Lycophron has given us no hint (as he might have done at 836 ff. or 1412 ff.) to prepare us for this curious application of either Ἀκταῖος or Ἀργεῖος; many of his odder usages are illuminated by repetition (as, for example, with what might at first sight appear similar, his equation of 'Zeus' and 'Agamemnon' (335, 1370, cf. 1124)) and if the idea of racial mixture were as important to him as Wilamowitz implies, we might have expected him to provide further clues.

If this is the best that can be offered by way of explanation of Ἀκταίων/Ἀργείων, Scheer's Ἀρταίων (cf. Hdt. 7. 61) looks irresistibly attractive. However, there is a further problem in determining who is represented by the wolf of 1444. If the poet is still talking about the conquest of Persia, this should be Alexander, who has, however, already appeared in the sentence as a lion. The lion thus initiates actions the effects of which he experiences as a wolf, a Protean metamorphosis which deprives this animal-imagery of all its force. Wilamowitz attempted to evade this difficulty by taking the wolf to represent the Macedonian nation, but in an expression of this sort it would be artificial to distinguish between the commander and his men, and Lycophron's beasts normally represent individuals. Wilamowitz's interpretation does, however, take account of another serious problem, that of finding a suitable antecedent for φ in 1446. This is generally taken to mean 'With Alexander, i.e. in the person of one of his successors', which seems impossibly strained. The difficulty presented by this apparent nonsense is not satisfactorily met simply by denying 1446–50 to Lycophron, since no reasonably competent composer ought to have let this sort of thing get into his fair copy.

These considerable and acknowledged difficulties in a passage on which we might have expected Lycophron to bestow some care are worrying, but have been overshadowed by the notorious problems of 1446 ff.³³ This passage has been immensely debated; I can only hope that the following rather summary account of the controversy will not appear so over-simplified as to be positively misleading.

The problem is simple. The description given in 1446 ff. does not precisely fit anyone who might reasonably be supposed to come within the purview of the author of the *Alexandra*. So either the passage is interpolated, or the poet was curiously oblique. The difficulty is often stated as if it was simply a matter of the date of composition, but it is equally a matter of poetic purpose, and the problem of explaining why, if the passage is authentic, the poet did not express himself more distinctively remains, whether the *Alexandra* is ascribed to Lycophron the scholar and tragedian contemporary with Philadelphus, or (against the testimony of the *Suda*) dated round about 196. Placed thus emphatically, at the culmination of Cassandra's prophecy, this eulogy of an unknown war-lord must be supposed, if it is genuine, to have been as near to the poet's heart as was, for example, Vergil's compliment to Pollio in the fourth *Eclogue*; this is not a passing reference, where the reader's incomprehension (or misconception) would not affect the interpretation of the rest of the poem, and where a certain quirkiness would be understandable.

If the passage is authentic, there are two serious candidates, Pyrrhus and Flamininus;

³² op. cit. II 145.

³³ The very full discussions by Ziegler, *RE* 13. 2354 ff., and Josifović, *RE Suppl.* 11. 888 ff., summarize earlier literature; see also A. Hurst, 'Sur la date de Lycophron', *Mélanges P. Collart* (1976), pp. 231–5.

if Flamininus is our choice, the poem must be denied to Lycophron the tragedian, and dated to the early second century. Alternatively, we may interpret the lines as a Messianic hope without reference to any particular individual (though those who favour such a view appear to be moved by dissatisfaction with the available options rather than by a spontaneous conviction that this is the obvious sense of the passage). If the passage is an interpolation, Flamininus is the only nomination; this view, which goes back to Welcker, was long the most popular solution.

Pyrrhus' supporters can make out a reasonable case for supposing that, at least briefly and with some allowance for poetic licence, Pyrrhus might have appeared in the light in which Cassandra's kinsman is here presented, but *μεθ' ἑκτην γένναν* seems hopelessly intractable on this interpretation. This phrase, on its own and without further definition, must mean 'in the seventh generation after the last event'. The period cannot be reckoned from a starting point earlier than the birth of Alexander nor be less than 138 years³⁴ (6×23): no reasonable man would use such a phrase to describe events of the first half of the third century B.C. But the case against Pyrrhus seems to me adequately dealt with by Flamininus' supporters, and it is against the latter that I shall direct my fire.

The lack of specificity which lies at the heart of our problem to some extent reflects on the poet's competence. The proximity of Alexander called for considerable tact in handling a lesser figure. A poet may certainly hope to persuade us that the liberation of Greece was a finer thing than all Alexander's conquests, but vague talk of successful engagements by land and sea invites invidious comparisons. An encomiastic poet should be able to convey some sense of the abiding significance of the events he celebrates, and should have an eye for the kind of memorable detail which impresses those whose grasp of political history is on the lines of *1066 and all that*. We do not find that here. The expression is pedestrian, except for the striking *εἰς τις παλαιστής*; in Cassandra's mouth this can hardly fail to recall the words in which her Aeschylean prototype speaks of Apollo (*Ag.* 1206), but such erotic connotations seem in poor taste, and were surely not intended by the composer of these lines. If Flamininus is indeed the subject, the poet missed a splendid opportunity for word-play and etymologizing with the name *Τίτος* and cognates of *τίω*.³⁵

By this point in the poem we have had a fair chance to judge our author's style. We have seen that he was clever, imaginative, and skilled in exploiting literary associations; sublimity may have been denied to him, but at times he rises to a baroque grandeur that is not unimpressive. If poetic encomium was part of his purpose, we might expect something interesting and memorable. Though such judgements may be subjective, what we have here seems sub-standard.

These arguments do not meet Wilamowitz's view of the passage.³⁶ Firmly maintaining that it could not naturally be construed as a reference either to Flamininus or

³⁴ We might expect Lycophron to follow Herodotus' declared principle of reckoning three generations to a century (2. 142), though it must be admitted that Herodotus himself is inconsistent in his practice: he allows 505 years for 22 generations of Lydian kings (1. 7), i.e. a generation of 23 years. No ancient historian appears to have used a generation shorter than 23 years: see further A. E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology* (Munich, 1972), pp. 241 ff.

³⁵ *ἄντιος*, *παλάντιος*, and the lexicographically rather dubious *τιτός* (as in *Il.* 24. 213 *τότ' ἄν τιτὰ ἔργα γένοιτο*) would be particularly useful. Josifović's attempt to press *Τιτοῦς* (941) into service in this way (op. cit. 928) is most unconvincing, given the difference in quantity and the very unsuitable context.

³⁶ op. cit. II 146; he had advocated a different (but over-complicated) approach forty years earlier (*De Lycophronis Alexandra commentatiuncula* (Greifswald, 1883) = *KS* 2. 12 ff.). Wilamowitz's theory has often been dismissed as a curious aberration, but is revived as the least unsatisfactory explanation, with a marked lack of enthusiasm, by Albin Lesky (*Gesch. griech. Lit.*³ (Bern and Munich, 1971), p. 835).

to any third-century figure, he argued that Lycophron here spoke of the substance of things hoped for: 'Was bleibt da anders, als dass Lykophron die Alexandra zuletzt wirklich prophezeien liess, wirklich von einer Zukunft reden, in der nicht mehr Asiaten oder Europäer herrschen, sondern nebeneinander stehen'. Since Wilamowitz plainly found Lycophron rather irritating, it is significant that he preferred to see in the passage the gleam of a noble vision rather than the well-tried motif of *vaticinium ex eventu* as a vehicle for poetic compliment. But his interpretation of *μεθ' ἔκτην γένναν* as simply a pointer to the future, endowed with a certain symbolic force,³⁷ but without real chronological significance, is unconvincing, and the portrait of the future peacemaker as a whole has just too much detail to be purely ideal.

Our most obvious difficulties evaporate if we assign the lines to an interpolator. But some problems remain. If they refer to Flamininus, the reference to the spoils of war (1450) is rather less appropriate here than would usually be the case after a successful campaign. Moreover, it is in some ways difficult to see the point of interpolation *ad maiorem Flaminini gloriam*, and we might well feel some surprise that an interpolator managed to impose his composition on the subsequent tradition if that was the period when it was done. It seems the wrong moment for simple modernization with no intent to deceive, since the poem would seem dated and out of fashion without being old enough to be ripe for revival. Alternatively, if the intention was to flatter the conqueror by the suggestion that a poet some time dead had foreseen his victories, it might be supposed that readers clever enough to make anything of the poem would have viewed Lycophron's alleged prophetic gifts with some scepticism, and might have confirmed their suspicions by hunting out copies free from interpolation.

If we are no longer restricted by what might be regarded as a reasonable date for the composition of the poem, we could extend the short list of distinguished figures with whom Cassandra might claim kinship. At first sight it seems no more than a queer coincidence that her enigmatic relative bears an odd likeness to Augustus. The strange *εἰς τις παλαιστής* would not be an inappropriate way to indicate the unique and hard-won position of the 'sole sir of the world'.³⁸ *πρέσβιστος* combines the connotations of *Augustus* and *princeps*, and the line as a whole would nicely suit Augustus' preference for titles without clear-cut official connections. The familiar Augustan slogan 'Peace by land and sea' is recalled by 1448.³⁹ Is all this an illusion generated by familiarity with Vergil's picture of Augustus' reign as the consummation of the long historical process which began, as in the *Alexandra*, even before Ilium rose into towers?

Once again, we seem to stub our toes (as those who take a leap in the dark deserve to do) against the chronological stumbling-block of *μεθ' ἔκτην γένναν*. But we have seen that there are difficulties about the interpretation of the passage from which the period must be reckoned. Let us look at it from the other end and see where we find ourselves if we reckon backwards from that fortunate age.

³⁷ 'Zu bedenken ist auch das orphische Rätsel *ἔκτῃ δ' ἐν γενεῇ καταπαύσατε οἶμον ἀοιδῆς* (Plato *Phlb.* 66c [fr. 14 Kern])'. It is of course true, and relevant, that seven is a typical number such as storytellers and prophets favour; when such numbers occur in reality (or when reality may be interpreted according to such a pattern) they impress themselves on the imagination. See further D. Fehling, *Die Quellenangaben bei Herodot* (Berlin, 1971), pp. 154 ff., J. W. S. Blom, *De typische getallen bij Homeros en Herodotos* (Nimwegen, 1936), A. Dreizehnter, *Die rhetorische Zahl* (*Zetemata* 73, Munich, 1978).

³⁸ If indeed it is sound; Ziegler (op. cit. 2370-1) rightly draws attention to its oddity and questions the conventional translation of *εἰς* as 'peerless, unique'.

³⁹ e.g. Livy 1. 19. 3; *Res Gestae* 13; Suet. *Aug.* 22. See more fully Momigliano, 'Terra marique', *JRS* 32 (1942), 53-64 (esp. 62 ff.).

‘quo iuvenis Parthis horrendus, ab alto
demissum genus Aenea, tellure marique
magnus erit’

as Teiresias put it.⁴⁰

Calculation by generations is an imprecise affair, and the sum is complicated in this case by the possibility of inclusive reckoning. However, we are saved some tedious arithmetic by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who thus surveys the course of recent Roman history (1. 3. 5): *ἐξ οὗ δὲ ὅλης ἐκράτησεν Ἰταλίας καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπάντων ἐθάρρησεν ἀρχὴν προελθεῖν, ἐκβαλοῦσα μὲν ἐκ τῆς θαλάττης Καρχηδονίους, οἱ πλείστην ἔσχον ναυτικὴν δύναμιν, ὑποχέριον δὲ λαβοῦσα Μακεδονίαν, ἥ τέως ἐδόκει μέγιστον ἰσχύειν κατὰ γῆν, οὐδὲν ἔτι ἀντίπαλον ἔχουσα, οὔτε βάρβαρον φύλον οὔτε Ἑλληνικὸν γενεὰν ἐβδόμην ἤδη τὴν ἐπ’ ἐμοῦ διαμένει παντός ἄρχουσα τόπου.* Dionysius offers no further explanation, and it is not clear whether he reckoned the period of Roman supremacy in Macedonia from Cynoscephalae, or from Pydna (168); it looks as if the calculation was a familiar one. I believe the composer of this passage was thinking on the same lines.

We have already seen that 1443–4 present grave problems when interpreted (as they must be if the text is sound) as a description of Alexander’s conquests. Here, I suspect, lurks a (Roman) wolf which brought an army against Galadra, his presence concealed by the accidental loss of a line (or more) after 1441. Cassandra has now moved on to the Second Macedonian War. The missing line will have contained the subject of *ἀναγκάσει*, which does not, after all, require emendation. We no longer have to decide whether *Ἀκταίων* or *Ἀργείων* is less unsuitable as a designation for ‘Persians’. Since what we now want is a word meaning ‘Greeks’, *Ἀκταίων* is to be preferred on stylistic grounds and as the *lectio difficilior*. But it also fits the facts (or at least Livy’s view of them):⁴¹ prominent among the factors which moved Rome to war was the Athenian appeal for help against Philip’s aggression. Whoever composed these lines surely had in mind the description of the Dioscuri as *Ἀκταίων λύκοι* (504), not ‘Attic wolves’, but ‘wolves which ravage Attica’. We may note the slightly derogatory description of the Athenians; Livy too is less than complimentary.⁴² I assume the wolf represents a particular Roman leader rather than Roman power in general, but I would prefer not to guess which of the various commanders who distinguished themselves in Macedonia our interpolator had in mind. The next line is not so straightforward: Philip may have forced the Athenians to seek help from Rome, but he could hardly be held responsible for the end of the ancient Athenian monarchy. However, with the change of one letter we can extract something more sensible: with *ὀρέξει* for *ὀρέξαι* the line may be taken to refer to the Macedonian surrender at Cynoscephalae. We can now see a possible answer to the awkward question of the antecedent of *ᾧ* in 1446: if the subject of the sentence was not Philip, but some more general or collective term indicating Macedonian power (or the forces of unrighteousness), this could be regarded as embodied, six generations later, in Cleopatra’s armada at Actium. We thus have something like this:

[e.g. *αἰθις* δ’ *Ἑορδῶν* } *πῆμα κινῆσει λεώς*,
ἄθεσμος }

⁴⁰ Hor. *Sat.* 2. 5. 62–4.

⁴¹ 31. 1. 9; 5. 5; 7. 6; 14. 6 ff., etc.

⁴² 31. 14. 6: *contraxerant autem sibi cum Philippo bellum Athenienses haudquaquam digna causa, dum ex vetere fortuna nihil praeter animos servant*; 44. 9: *Athenienses quidem litteris verbisque, quibus solis valent, bellum adversus Philippum gerebant*.

πρηνῇ θ' ὁμαίων πάντα κυπώσας δόμον
 ἀναγκάσει πτήξαντας Ἀκταίων πρόμους
 cάναι Γαλάδρας τὸν στρατηλάτην λύκον,
 καὶ κήτρ' ὀρέξει τῆς πάλαι μοναρχίας.

This leaves absurdly short measure for Alexander, but his unique career calls for more in the way of a flourish of trumpets than we get even on the conventional interpretation of 1442–5. Perhaps something has been accidentally lost, but it is to be feared that Alexander has been pruned to ensure that Augustus' glory should not be diminished by an implied comparison; it may be no accident that 1439–41 could be taken as a reference to Pyrrhus.⁴³

This hypothesis may seem over-complicated, since it involves both deliberate tampering with the text and accidental omission, but it is more economical than accounting piecemeal for the several difficulties of 1439–50, and interpolation carries no guarantee against scribal carelessness. If 1442–50 are an Augustan addition, then so, almost certainly, is the section on Aeneas (1226–80), though admittedly the close connection between the two does not amount to mutual entailment.⁴⁴

In many ways the late first century B.C. provides a more likely setting for this kind of interpolation than the early second. Lycophron's work enjoyed a modest resurgence of interest in the Augustan age;⁴⁵ texts must have been scarce, and the prospects bright for ingenious additions. Theoretically there are two possibilities, deliberate forgery designed to impose on the reading public, and innocent modernization. In practice, a writer who merely intended to bring the poem up to date (rather like eighteenth-century versions of Shakespeare) might be gratified and amused if his work was taken as authentic Lycophron, and a pervasive lack of interest in bibliographical precision would facilitate misconception.⁴⁶ The adaptation of Greek poetry to suit contemporary taste or local patriotism was all too common before the Hellenistic age, but as late

⁴³ It is a long shot, but 1345 ἀλκῇ νέανδρος, ἐκπρεπέστατος γένους looks tailor-made for Alexander the Great; in its present position it describes a not certainly identifiable Trojan king. The coinage νέανδρος seems to hint at something, but no-one appears to know what. If it stood after 1441, ἀλκῇ νέανδρος would seem to point unmistakably to νέος Ἀλέξανδρος, a new and superior version of Paris. Such a play on names is eminently Lycophronic, the outstanding example being Cassandra's own designation as Alexandra; there was good Aeschylean precedent: see further W. Kranz, *Stasimon* (Berlin, 1933), pp. 287 ff., Schmid-Stählin, *Gesch. griech. Lit.* 1 2 (Berlin, 1934), p. 297 n. 3. Accidental displacement over so great a distance is unlikely, though not impossible. Perhaps our interpolator thought the line too good to sacrifice completely and moved it to a position where it was harmless but deprived of its real point.

⁴⁴ 1446 ~ 1229, 1449 ~ 1270–1, cf. 1265; see also Ziegler, op. cit. 2371.

⁴⁵ It seems certain that Vergil had read Lycophron: see below, appendix. There is perhaps an allusion in Propertius (4. 1. 51 f.); Theon's commentary belongs to this period. But the most telling piece of evidence comes from Statius' elegy on his schoolmaster father (*Silv.* 5. 3. 156–8): 'tu pandere doctus / carmina Battiadae latebrasque Lycophronis atri / Sophronaque implicitum tenuisque arcana Corinnae'. This sounds like occasional fare for particularly able boys, as opposed to the core curriculum of Homer, Hesiod, Theocritus and the lyric poets (148–56), but, at all events, Lycophron had by now attained the status of a set book; the pairing with Callimachus is significant. Plainly, we are lucky to have testimony as explicit as this, and a sceptic might wonder whether the absence of evidence of interest in Lycophron during the century before Vergil really indicates that his work was neglected. The lack of Ptolemaic papyri proves nothing, since the *chora* was slow to acquire a taste for Hellenistic poetry. But Catullus would surely have found the *Alexandra* interesting; he liked difficult poetry, and we might expect to detect some allusion in 64 (which is, in some ways, very similar in spirit) or in 68, had he known Lycophron's work. The long servitude of the Locrian Maidens would have provided Lucretius with a terrible illustration of the folly and suffering engendered by conventional religious belief. This survey of Republican poetry which might have been otherwise does not prove very much, but it seems safe to infer at least that Lycophron was not known at Rome to Catullus' generation.

⁴⁶ See further W. Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum* (Munich, 1971), especially pp. 32 ff., 111 ff.

as the eighteenth century an editor of Dionysius Periegetes judged it a service to his readers to extend the text with descriptions of America and Asiatic Russia.⁴⁷ Such treatment was not often accorded to learned Hellenistic poets. But the *Alexandra* was unusually fitted, by Lycophron's interest in the West and, above all, by its Trojan (i.e. proto-Roman) standpoint, to appeal to Roman readers, and it is understandable if someone thought it a good idea to enhance its attractions. Deliberate forgery is a more sensational hypothesis than simple modernization. Vergil's revival of *vates*, with its implied (and ancient) assimilation of the roles of the bard and the seer, suggests an atmosphere in which it might not be too hard to make plausible the idea that a poet might enjoy a measure of second sight.⁴⁸ Prophecy was in the air; Augustus was so much beset by it that he burned more than two thousand prophetic books.⁴⁹ Such literature is commonly, though not invariably, associated with political protest; here, perhaps, we have a rare instance of ancient prophecy in support of the regime.⁵⁰ *Haec incerta tamen, nec nostri munera census.*

The main obstacle to this view of 1442–50 as an Augustan addition seems to be the difficulty of reconciling it with the labours of Theon, to whose work on Lycophron our scholia owe much.⁵¹ If the text contained a scarcely veiled allusion to Augustus, he should have smelt a rat. It is impossible to deal satisfactorily with this problem without a clearer conception of Theon's work than our evidence allows; papyrus discoveries have often demonstrated the futility of speculating about the methods of ancient scholars.⁵² We do not know whether Theon attempted conscientious coverage

⁴⁷ The editor was Edward Wells, and his text, first published in 1704, extends to a generous 1459 lines (against the conventional 1187); since his work achieved a sixth edition (1761), he was presumably right in supposing it to be needed.

⁴⁸ Another line of defence against awkward questions about Lycophron's prophetic gifts is suggested by the poem's reference (807 ff.) to the ancient belief that dying men have second sight (cf. *Il.* 22. 356 ff., *Genesis* 49. 1–27; Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*, D. 1715; 1812. 2. 4); perhaps *in articulo mortis* Lycophron foresaw the glories of the *pax Augusta* and his dying words were faithfully recorded by his sorrowing relatives (for a second edition?).

⁴⁹ Suet. *Aug.* 31.

⁵⁰ Similarly a Sibylline oracle turned up conveniently when Augustus was preparing to celebrate *ludi saeculares* in 17 B.C.; see Fraenkel, *Horace*, pp. 365 ff., text in Kiessling–Heinze on *Carmen Saeculare*.

⁵¹ On Theon see C. Guhl, *Die Fragmente des alexandrinischen Grammatikers Theon* (Diss. Hamburg, 1969).

⁵² Two examples should suffice. (1) Aristarchus' commentary on Herodotus 1 (*P. Amherst* 2. 12 = Pack² 483; reprinted by A. H. R. E. Paap, *De Herodoti reliquiis in papyris et membranis Aegyptiis servatis* (Leiden, 1948), pp. 37 ff.; third century A.D.): the subscription is preserved 'Ἀριστάρχου / Ἡροδότου / α̅ / ὑπόμνημα. The editors comment: 'Unless the papyrus gives only a series of excerpts from Aristarchus' commentary, which is not very likely, that work must have been extremely brief, for in the second column, which is fairly well preserved but has only sixteen lines, as many as twenty-two chapters are disposed of, there being no notes on chapters 195–214'. Before the discovery of the papyrus there was no reason to suppose that Aristarchus had commented on Herodotus at all, and the meagreness of the material preserved here suggests that the work simply comprised observations on passages which happened to interest him without any attempt at systematic coverage; ὑπόμνημα covers a wide range of literary production, from rough jottings to the history of Polybius, and such an interpretation would not imply misleading labelling. (Pfeiffer (*History of Classical Scholarship* (1968), pp. 224–5) takes a different view, but there is no more reason now than there was sixty years ago to suppose that the papyrus merely contains extracts or was based on a defective copy.) (2) Didymus on Demosthenes' *Philippics* (*BKT* 1 = Pack² 339; second century A.D.): the subscription runs Διδύμου περί Δημοσθένους κη Φιλippικῶν γ̅. This appears slapdash and ill digested, and its deficiencies cannot be explained away by the hypothesis that the papyrus merely preserves extracts or that this was a monograph designed to supplement a proper commentary; particularly worrying is the cursory discussion of the authenticity of Dem. 11 (col. 11, 7 ff.). See further *CQ* n.s. 20 (1970), 288 ff.

and commented on virtually every line, or was selective. What the scholia offer on 1446 ff. is neither helpful nor likely to derive from Theon, and in considering this section we cannot, as far as I can see, rule out any of the following possibilities, though not all are equally likely: (1) Theon's text was free from interpolation here; (2) his text was like ours (i.e. (on my view) interpolated but defective, so that the reference of 1446 ff. was obscured); (3) his text was interpolated, but otherwise sound; (4) he was himself responsible for the interpolation. If the protest about the section on Aeneas which we find in the scholia goes back to Theon, we might have expected him to notice the obvious verbal similarities between the two passages, but the scholium seems strangely garbled, and allows no further inferences.⁵³ At all events, there are too many uncertainties here for arguments based on Theon's hypothetical reactions to bear much weight if the interpretation I have outlined seems otherwise reasonable.

I have suggested above that interpolation may have augmented the Italian element in the poem elsewhere, but this article is primarily concerned with accidental corruption, and I must postpone pursuing the matter further. Such a theory may suggest a liking for complication for its own sake. But the very oddities which led Geffcken to his memorable picture of Lycophron as a poetic hobgoblin⁵⁴ are just such as in other authors have suggested major interpolation or redaction by a second hand. No doubt it is regrettable if an imaginative and clever poem has been distorted in a well-intentioned attempt to increase its interest for later readers, but perhaps without the intervention of an interpolator it would not have survived at all.

⁵³ Sch. ad 1226: ἐντεῦθεν περὶ Ῥωμαίων λέγει καὶ Λυκόφρωνος ἑτέρου νομίστεον εἶναι τὸ ποίημα, οὐ τοῦ γράφαντος τὴν τραγωδίαν· συνήθης γὰρ ὦν τῷ Φιλαδέλφῳ οὐκ ἂν περὶ Ῥωμαίων διελέγετο. To suggest at this point that the poem as a whole might be by someone other than the famous third-century Lycophron seems extraordinarily unmethodical. This possibility, if it is worth taking seriously, ought to have been mentioned in the introduction. The reference to a homonym implies a rather blinkered view of the possibilities of false attribution. Interpolation would be the obvious explanation for the difficulty, and an ancient scholar might have been expected to suggest athetesis, or at least to explain why he thought such a remedy unsatisfactory here. But this note cannot possibly be so construed. The hypothesis of a homonym is irrelevant to interpolation, and it is normal, and necessary, in discussing interpolation to specify the length of the suspect passage. These two difficulties might, I suppose, be met by (1) excising Λυκόφρωνος as an unintelligent insertion, (2) taking the commentator to mean that everything after 1226 (ἐντεῦθεν) is spurious; τὸ ποίημα would then refer to the last 250 lines, and τὴν τραγωδίαν would mean the *Alexandra* (which could no doubt be called a tragedy in much the same way as we might call *Watership Down* an epic). (1) is easy enough, but not (2); ancient critics were often drastic in athetesis, but I cannot imagine how anyone could have thought 1412–34 or 1451–74 were by any hand but Lycophron's. Whatever point was originally made here has surely been muddled in transmission. It should be noted that Tzetzes seems to have misunderstood τοῦ γράφαντος τὴν τραγωδίαν ('the writer of tragedy' as opposed to 'another Lycophron'), since he protests τοῦτο δ' οὐ δύναμαι νοῆσαι, πῶς οὐκ ἔστι τοῦ γράφαντος αὐτό· οὕτω γὰρ ὤφειλεν εἰπεῖν· οὐκ ἔστι τοῦ λεγομένου γράφων αὐτὸ Λυκόφρωνος, ἀλλ' ἑτέρου. His misconception suggests a possible source of confusion for his predecessors. This scholium could probably be made to support any view of the passage we care to take, but does not provide a satisfactory basis for further argument. The note may be made to look slightly more sensible by the insertion of οὕτω after οὐκ ἂν, as Scheer suggested, but superficial improvement is probably mistaken kindness.

⁵⁴ 'Zur Kenntniss Lykophrons', *Hermes* 26 (1891), 567 ff. (a remarkably perceptive article, though apparently animated by an altruistic determination to prevent others wasting time on this author). I quote his concluding paragraph: 'Von dem Geiste der Melancholie, der noch einem Wakefield aus den eintönigen Versen der Alexandra herausklang, empfinden wir nichts mehr. Eher glaubt man, wenn man dem Dichter durch seine verschlungenen Irrwege gefolgt ist, glücklich den Sinn erkannt zu haben wähnt und schliesslich sich doch so oft genarrt sieht, das schadenfrohe Lachen eines neckischen Koboldes zu hören'.

APPENDIX: LYCOPHRON AND VERGIL

Commentators on Vergil seem surprisingly reluctant to contemplate the possibility that he owed anything to Lycophron.⁵⁵ The material assembled by Josifović ought to be enough to establish the general principle that the *Aeneid* at times reflects the *Alexandra*,⁵⁶ but he includes some instances of rather doubtful value, and does not attempt to analyse the effect of these allusions to Lycophron. This subject would be better studied by a Vergilian specialist; the following rather random observations will have served their purpose if they incite others to pursue the matter further.

We should certainly expect Vergil to have found the *Alexandra* interesting if he read it at all. Lycophron was his only known predecessor in relating the matter of Troy from the Trojan point of view, and the most obvious model for the extensive use of prophecy to bridge the gap between the heroic age and his own day. Narrative cast in the form of prediction was a popular device with Hellenistic poets⁵⁷ (though they did not invent the idea), but Lycophron, by reason of his heroine's peculiar powers, achieved an unusually close and effective connection between form and content, and provided an impressive example of the use of prophecy to impose unity on episodic and heterogeneous material. Still, this *a priori* argument does not on its own get us very far.

There are, however, two clear formal parallels, which were surely intended to be recognized as reminiscences of Lycophron. Cassandra's dispassionate summary of the effects of Ajax's crime is echoed in Juno's opening speech:

ἐνὸς δὲ λῶβης ἀντί, μυρίων τέκνων
Ἑλλὰς στενάξει πᾶσα τοὺς κενοὺς τάφους
(*Al.* 365–6)

‘Pallasne exurere classem
Argivum atque ipsos potuit sommergere ponto
unius ob noxam et furias Aiakis Oilei?’
(*A.* 1. 39 ff.)⁵⁸

Odysseus' necromantic conjurations are recalled in Vergil's description of the Greek ghosts' reaction to Aeneas:

ἀκούει κείθι πεμφίδων ὄπα
λεπτήν ἀμανρᾶς μάστακος προσφθέγμασιν
(*Al.* 686–7)

pars tollere vocem
exiguam: inceptus clamor frustratur hiantis.
(*A.* 6. 492–3)⁵⁹

On its own, either of these might be mere coincidence, but together they are difficult to dismiss; each offers not simply a parallel to a striking turn of phrase, but a parallel

⁵⁵ There is a useful, though necessarily brief, discussion of Vergil's debt to Lycophron by I. Trensényi-Waldapfel in 'Das Bild der Zukunft in der Aeneis', *Studii Clasice* 3 (1961), 281–304.

⁵⁶ *op. cit.* 922 ff.

⁵⁷ See further L. Hensel, *Weissagungen in der alexandrinischen Poesie* (Giessen, 1908).

⁵⁸ Scaliger, whose remarkable translation of the *Alexandra* into iambic senarii may most conveniently be found in Bachmann's edition, actually uses the Vergilian phrase here.

⁵⁹ The parallel is noted by Norden *ad loc.* as 'auffallend ähnlich in der formellen Ausdrucksweise'; he draws attention to other parallels in *A.* 6, though without committing himself as to their significance (e.g. 88 *Dorica castra* ~ *Al.* 284 *Δωριεὺς στρατός*; 94 *externi thalami* ~ *Al.* 60 *λέκτρων θ' ἑκατι τῶν τ' ἐπεισάκτων γάμων*). There may be a reflection of Lycophron in the Sibyl's presentation of the impending war in Latium as a kind of replay of the Trojan War, with Aeneas cast for the uncomfortable role of Paris (88 ff.); as with Lycophron, proper names serve for mystification ('non Simois tibi nec Xanthus nec Dorica castra / defuerint; alius Latio iam partus Achilles'). But it is difficult to be sure whether all this is intended to evoke Lycophron in particular or the language of oracles in general.

in a similar context to Lycophron's. It thus does not seem unduly optimistic to suppose that some other passages which may remind us of Lycophron were actually intended to do so.

Diomedes' speech to the Latin envoys (*A.* 11. 252–74) is, as I have said, remarkably close in spirit to the central section of Cassandra's prophecy (*Al.* 365–1282), though there are some differences in detail in his account of the various calamities suffered by the returning host.⁶⁰ Diomedes is explicit about what Cassandra merely implies, that these misfortunes are a punishment for the sack of Troy (*Al.* 1280–1, *A.* 11. 255 ff.). This point is much more effective as an admission from one of the victorious Greeks, since in Cassandra's mouth there is a danger that it may sound merely vindictive. However, this advantage is achieved at the cost of a slight improbability: 'noli nimis subtiliter quaerere, unde Diomedes in litus Calabriae eiectus haec omnia resciscere potuerit' is Heyne's comment. As in Lycophron, Athena and Nauplius together exact a merciless revenge (259–60, cf. *Al.* 373 ff., 1090 ff.). The transformation of Diomedes' comrades into birds (271–4) certainly brings Lycophron to mind; his account (*Al.* 594–609) is one of the most attractive parts of the poem,⁶¹ and the subject is well suited to his distinctive style. We know of no poet apart from Lycophron who told the story before Vergil, and, given the context in which Vergil sets it, it seems over-cautious to by-pass Lycophron as Vergil's source.

Where prophecy is concerned we may more than once detect an allusion to Lycophron. Two interesting examples come from *A.* 7. A strange detail in the ritual of the oracle of Faunus has an exact parallel in the practice of the Daunian oracle of Podalirius as described by Lycophron, whose source was Timaeus:⁶²

huc dona sacerdos
cum tulit et caesarum ovium sub nocte silenti
pellibus incubuit stratis somnosque petivit,
multa modis simulacra videt volitantia miris
et varias audit voces fruiturque deorum
conloquio atque imis Acheronta adfatur Avernis. (A. 7. 86–90)

δοραῖς δὲ μῆλων τύμβον ἐγκοιμωμένους
χρῆσει καθ' ὕπνον πᾶσι νημερτῇ φάτιν. (Al. 1050–1).

We are not of course bound to infer that Vergil derived this detail about the use of the victims' skins from the *Alexandra* (though we might have expected him to find Lycophron more to his taste than Timaeus). But even if his account of the oracle of Faunus was based on a thorough study of Italian religious antiquities, the literary associations of this detail might be expected to carry some weight with him.

More important is the fulfilment of the prophecy of *mensarum morsus* related shortly afterwards (*A.* 7. 107 ff.). Vergil's style at this point causes some embarrassment to his commentators: 'The expression of these lines, to our taste turgid and pretentious, represents the poet's concern to invest commonplace notions with a distinction consonant with their place in a heroic narrative... Virgil rarely indulges in this

⁶⁰ On Neoptolemus see above pp. 121 ff. 'Libycone habitantis litore Locros' (265) was found puzzling in antiquity, to judge from Servius' comments; it is perhaps worth considering whether it was suggested by Lycophron's account of Thessalian settlement in North Africa (*Al.* 876–908).

⁶¹ His accurate ornithological observation is commended by S. Benton, 'Two notes', *CQ* n.s. 10 (1960), 110–11, who identifies the birds as shearwaters (*Procellaria diomedea*).

⁶² *FGrHist* 566F 56. We learn from Strabo (6. 3. 9) that there was a similar practice at the neighbouring (associated?) shrine of Calchas: δέικνυται δὲ τῆς Δαννίας περὶ λόφον, ᾧ ὄνομα Δρίον, ἡρῶα, τὸ Κάλχαντος ἐπ' ἄκρα τῇ κορυφῇ· ἐναγίζουσι δ' αὐτῷ μέλανα κρινὸν οἱ μαντεύομενοι, ἐγκοιμώμενοι ἐν τῷ δέρματι· τὸ δὲ Ποδαλειρίον κάτω πρὸς τῇ ῥίζῃ, διέχον τῆς θαλάττης ὅσον σταδίου ἐκατόν. The same ritual was observed at the sanctuary of Amphiarus (Paus. 1. 34. 5).

“euphuistic” style’.⁶³ In his account of what immediately preceded Iulus’ fateful joke Vergil achieves an effect far more like Lycophron than what Lycophron’s interpolator manages at this point:

instituuntque dapes et adorea liba per herbam
subiciunt epulis (sic Iuppiter ipse monebat)
et Cereale solum pomis agrestibus augent.
consumptis hic forte aliis, ut vertere morsus
exiguam in Cererem penuria adegit edendi,
et violare manu malisque audacibus orbem
fatalis crusti patulis nec parcere quadris... (A. 7. 109–115)

ἔνθα τράπεζαν εἰδάτων πλήρη κιχών,
τὴν ὕστερον βρωθεῖσαν ἐξ ὀπαόνων,
μνήμην παλαιῶν λήσεται θεσπιμάτων (Al. 1250–2).

There is a good reason why Vergil might have wanted to turn our thoughts towards the *Alexandra* at this point.⁶⁴ Among the more obvious inconsistencies in the *Aeneid* is the provenance of the prophecy fulfilled at this picnic; tradition was not unanimous on this point.⁶⁵ In A. 3 (255 ff.) it is assigned to the senior harpy, Celaeno; the idea would be likely to appeal to her, in view of the harpies’ vocational interest in food. Here Aeneas says he owed the information to his father (122–7):

‘Hic domus, haec patria est, genitor mihi talia namque
(nunc repeto) Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit:
“cum te, nate, fames ignota ad litora vectum
accisis coget dapibus consumere mensas,
tum sperare domos defessus, ibique memento
prima locare manu molirique aggere tecta”.’

Now Anchises himself, while he is alive, has no prophetic gifts, nor any particular expertise in the interpretation of oracles, as is shewn by his error in misdirecting the party to Crete (A. 3. 102 ff.). On the other hand, Aeneas sounds as if he was recalling something he heard long ago (‘nunc repeto’, ‘reliquit’), not as if he was reporting information gained recently from Anchises in Elysium.⁶⁶

Comparison with A. 3. 180–7, where Anchises learns that the Penates have re-directed the party to Crete, solves the problem without our needing to suppose any inconsistency in Vergil’s conception of Anchises:

agnovit prolem ambiguum geminosque parentis,
seque novo veterum deceptum errore locorum.
tum memorat: ‘nate, Iliacis exercite fatis,
sola mihi talis casus Cassandra canebat.
nunc repeto haec generi portendere debita nostro
et saepe Hesperiam, saepe Italia regna vocare.
sed quis ad Hesperiae venturos litora Teucros
crederet? aut quem tum vates Cassandra movebat?’⁶⁷

⁶³ Fordyce ad loc.

⁶⁴ But not necessarily towards the parallel passage. I have argued above that the section on Aeneas is almost certainly an Augustan interpolation, and it may not have been known to Vergil. This uncertainty does not affect my argument.

⁶⁵ Dionysius (1. 55. 4) says that the prophecy was variously ascribed to Dodona and to the Erythraean Sibyl.

⁶⁶ cf. Conington’s note on 7. 123.

⁶⁷ Josifović (922) sees in this passage a specific allusion to the *Alexandra* (i.e. to 1226 ff.): ‘Wo hatte jedoch Kassandra ausführlicher die Irrfahrten des Aeneas und die zukünftige Grösse der Römer prophezeit als in der *Alexandra*?’ But 183 does not encourage this interpretation; the *Alexandra* is a report to Priam by his servant, not a confidential communication to Anchises.

The occurrence of 'nunc repeto' in both passages is, I suspect, more than coincidence. Vergil surely thought of Cassandra as the source of the curious prediction about tables to be devoured: hence the Lycophronic style of his narrative when he relates its fulfilment. The ascription of the prophecy to Celaeno looks as if it represents his second thoughts (whatever view we take in general of the composition of *A.* 3); it was Cassandra's doom to win no credence for her prophecies until it was too late, and Vergil does not elsewhere allow her any useful contribution.⁶⁸

The girl who cheated Apollo was not qualified to bear any part of the *Aeneid*'s prophetic burden. But Vergil was clearly struck, as Lycophron was, by the widespread consequences of her sufferings. Juno (*A.* 1. 39 ff.) and Diomedes (*A.* 11. 259 ff.) emphasize the terrible effects of Pallas' anger at Ajax's sacrilegious assault; more than a thousand years later the Roman conquest of Greece brings retribution for that crime (*A.* 6. 838–40):

'Eruet ille Argos Agamemnoniasque Mycenae
ipsumque Aeaciden, genus armipotensis Achilli,
ultus avos Troiae templa et temerata Minervae'.

It is significant that Vergil chose this incident, rather than the equally sacrilegious murder of Priam, to typify Greek brutality and ungodliness. Cassandra strove, if any Trojan did, to bring home to her fellow-countrymen the dreadful implications of Paris' offence, and could thus be regarded as a victim wholly innocent of that collective guilt which brought disaster on her homeland.

Still, this is a familiar part of the story. But one detail of Vergil's account of the episode was perhaps meant to suggest Lycophron (*A.* 2. 403–6):

'Ecce trahebatur passis Priameia virgo
crinibus a templo Cassandra adytisque Minervae,
ad caelum tendens ardentia lumina frustra,
lumina, nam teneras arcebant vincula palmas.'

The emphasis on Cassandra's upturned gaze is very striking (and not something Aeneas could easily have observed unless he practically tripped over her); this is not a conventional gesture. I cannot help wondering whether it was suggested by, and intended to recall, the most terrible of many macabre pictures in the *Alexandra*, the outward and visible sign of Athena's wrath, when the Palladium rolled up its eyes to heaven at Cassandra's violation (*Al.* 361–4):

ἦ δ' εἰς τέραμνα δουρατογλύφου στέγης
γλήνας ἄνω στρέψασα χύσεται στρατῶ,
ἐξ οὐρανοῦ πεσοῦσα καὶ θρόνων Διός,
ἄνακτι πάππῳ χρῆμα τιμαλφέστατον.

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⁶⁸ The other references in the *Aeneid* to prophecy by Cassandra are these: 2. 246–7: she warns the Trojans against the Wooden Horse: a conventional motif underlining the critical moment in Troy's history; 5. 636 ff.: Juno, disguised as the Trojan Beroe, claims that Cassandra in a dream urged her to burn the ships; this bogus appeal to Cassandra's authority enjoys a success quite unprecedented in her earthly career; 10. 67–8: Juno again unscrupulously exploits Cassandra's reputation, to cast aspersions on Aeneas' common sense: 'Italiam petiit fati auctoribus (esto) / Cassandreae impulsus furiis'; she overlooks the fact that Cassandra's predictions must pass unheeded until it is too late for them to matter.