Lycophron's Alexandra: "Restaging" the East-West Conflict

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Stephanie West has likened Lycophron's *Alexandra* to the modern novel stating that they share the same kind of "unstoppable imperialism… with its tendency to absorb imaginative literature of every sort."[1] In fact, Lycophron's work appears to fold the world into 1500 iambic trimeter lines, condensing both the heroic and historical world of the Greeks and their respective conflicts with their "Asian" rivals into a grand narrative of epic scale. Because of its difficult language, its meter, and its theme of East versus West, the work is often likened to Aeschylus' tragic works.[2] Lycophron's poem, however, also evokes another key fifth-century figure in the shaping of the continental rivalry, Herodotus. The poem, in fact, culminates in its "Herodotean" narrative, two hundred lines that play upon and expand Herodotus' Asian account of the conflict between Asia and Europe. By taking up Herodotus in an Aeschylean guise, Lycophron gives a nod to his literary predecessors but also reimagines and re-situates the conflict between East and West from a fifth-century perspective to one that better suits the realities of the world in the wake of the conquests of Alexander.[3]

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1   West (2000, p. 166).

2   Hornblower (2015).

3   Priestley has briefly surveyed the differences and similarities between Herodotus' work and Lycophron's, focusing on how the work "presents a synoptic history of the Mediterranean that, in a Herodotean manner, includes in its scope a survey of East-West relations through time, and yet its compression and abstruseness stand in stark contrast to Herodotus' own expansive narrative and engaging style" (2014, p. 186).

In this manner, Lycophron's poem attempts to reimagine the world, both reinforcing and undermining the Herodotean geographic and cultural divide between the "Asia" and "Europe." The poem does this by subtly revealing how the two sides share a past, forged precisely through the cycle of violence that defines their relationship. Unlike Herodotus' narrative, the *Alexandra* supplies its audience with the possibility for reconciliation between the two sides in the form of a "future" reconciler, [4] Alexander the Great, albeit one who will achieve that reconciliation through violence. Ultimately, Lycophron's literary work mimics the imperialism of the age, attempting to reconcile competing narratives assembled from a hodgepodge of sources into a singular single poetic creation, much as the world of Alexander and his successors attempted to reconcile and shape a wide range of competing cultural and political groups into a coherent and cohesive political whole under the umbrella of performing "Greekness."

I. "GREEKNESS"

"Greekness" or Hellenicity is not a static concept, but one that was continually contested and redefined in antiquity. Greeks throughout antiquity consistently relied on the binary of Greek versus barbarian as the means of defining themselves.[5] From the time when they encountered *barbaroi* in the seventh century BCE down through the Second Sophistic, the concept of who fit within which category was continually negotiated and renegotiated and became a palimpsest of cultural difference. The provisional nature of these categories is to be expected, but the manner in which cultural identity historically played out cannot be examined apart from the broader political and historical events that informed exchanges among the various participants involved.

From its earliest narratives, we can see how Greek-speaking peoples imagined their relationship with the other or barbarian as one that catalyzed into a sense of panhellenic identity. Initially, this is evident in their interactions with non-Greek speakers in the age of colonization in the Archaic period, where there had been an ambivalence toward peoples some of whom would have become members of "Greek" colonies.[6] With Persian invasions of the early fifth century, however, we begin to see a more negative, orientalist depiction of barbarians in the works of

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4   Pouzadoux and Prioux (2009) also explore the idea of Alexander as a reconciler but in the context of the late third century BCE in Southern Italy and Western Greece.

5   For the term, Hellenicity, see J. Hall (2002).

6   See J. Hall (2002) and Antonaccio (2003).

Aeschylus and Herodotus, whose narratives could be easily seen as narratives of resistance to the larger and imperialistic "barbarian" invader, the Persians. Cultural identity came to the fore in the late fourth century exacerbated by the colonial and imperial ambitions of the Greco-Macedonians. The fourth century saw the growth of a broader and more developed sense of panhellenic identity constructed vis-à-vis the othering of barbarian peoples within the Greek discourses of tragedy, history, and oratory.[7] The fourth century orator, Isocrates, for example, expanded the definition of "Greekness" so as to include aspects of culture as well as nature in his *Panegyricus*.[8] Still Isocrates was not calling for a world culture, but rather for all Greeks to unite behind the shield of Athens in a campaign against the Persians. His statement nevertheless reflects a willingness of the Greeks to debate the terms of what constitutes their identity.

After the conquests in the early Hellenistic period, the notion of Hellenicity appears to have shifted from being primarily determined biologically to one determined through performing Greekness. Naturally, the language of defining identity in the Hellenistic period was still very much couched in the traditional genealogical forms inherited from earlier generations, but from the start we see those traditional discourses molded for a new audience in newer political situations. Throughout the history of this notion, we witness the politics of cultural identity formation, where power relations among an ever-changing slate of political players (the Athenians, Spartans, Ionians, Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, Greco-Macedonians, Celts, Indians, Jews, Scythians, Italic peoples, etc.) are played out in the discourse surrounding the manner in which people no longer can easily define themselves merely vis-á-vis

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7   For more on this notion of the "other" informing the construction of Greek identity in the fifth century BCE, see Hartog (1988), E. Hall (1989 and 2006), Vasunia (2001), and J. Hall (2002). For views running contrary to this approach, see Miller (1997) and Gruen (2010).

8   Section 52 of Isocrates' speech is as follows:

> τοσοῦτον δ᾽ ἀπολέλοιπεν ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν περὶ τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ λέγειν τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους, ὥσθ᾽ οἱ ταύτης μαθηταὶ τῶν ἄλλων διδάσκαλοι γεγόνασι, καὶ τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὄνομα πεποίηκε μηκέτι τοῦ γένους ἀλλὰ τῆς διανοίας δοκεῖν εἶναι, καὶ μᾶλλον Ἕλληνας καλεῖσθαι τοὺς τῆς παιδεύσεως τῆς ἡμετέρας ἢ τοὺς τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως μετέχοντας.

> So far has our city left other men behind with regard to wisdom and expression that its students have become the teachers of others. The result is that the name of the Hellenes no longer seems to indicate an ethnic affiliation (*genos*) but a disposition (*dianoia*). Indeed, those who are called 'Hellenes' are those who share our culture (*paideusis*) rather than have a common biological inheritance (*physis*).

The translation is Jonathan Hall's (2002, p. 209). For a detailed discussion of this passage, see Hall (2002, pp. 209-210).

some distant other. Instead, we begin to see a transformation of the idea of what exactly constituted these categories of Greek and barbarian. Even in terms of performance, the idea of being Greek was no longer *merely* wrapped up in participating in local or regional rituals and traditions or even in partaking in earlier panhellenic institutions, such as the Games, the Homeric tradition, or the more recent Athenian inspired cultural institution of tragedy.[9] For many thousands of Greek colonists living outside of the traditional Greek homeland and for the numerous native elites in the newly conquered lands, new ways for defining and participating in "Greekness" were needed.

Literary works from this period both reflect the anxiety of the period and also provided their readers with narratives that gave a place for a new audience living in areas formerly considered "barbarian" and helped those living in the traditional lands of the Greeks a way to view those "Greeks" now living in them. This trend is most clearly seen in early Hellenistic historical treatises that negotiated the situation as old and new players set their hand at defining the past. For example, Hecataeus of Abdera, in his third century BCE history of Egypt, tried to define Egypt for Greeks in a traditionally Greek mode, while native elites, such as Manetho and Berossus, wrote the histories of Egypt and Babylon respectively in order to write their own ethnic groups into the dominant cultural discourse.[10] By the late second century BCE, intellectual elites throughout the Successor kingdoms were competing with one another by claiming the central figure of the Greek cultural past, Homer, for themselves, as elites still struggled with ways to present themselves as part of the dominant cultural paradigm. This anxiety over who controls the past is clearly visible in an epigram of the late second century BCE poet and grammarian, Herodicus of Babylon:

φεύγετ᾽, Ἀριστάρχειοι, ἐπ᾽ εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάττης
    Ἑλλάδα, τῆς ξουθῆς δειλότεροι κεμάδος,
γωνιοβόμβυκες, μονοσύλλαβοι, οἷσι μέμηλε
    τὸ σφὶν καὶ σφῶιν καὶ τὸ μὶν ἠδὲ τὸ νίν.

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9   This is not to suggest that these "older" institutions were no longer highly influential entities through which culture was defined, since they were. It is just not within the scope of this article to discuss the implications of these ideas to their fullest extent.

10   It seems fairly clear, however, that both Manetho and Berossus did not merely "borrow" Greek methods of historiography to tell their own versions of their respective countries. They also introduced native or foreign modes of history into their accounts and therefore transformed the very mode historical discourse. For a fuller discussion on the authors, please see Kuhrt (1987); Verbrugghe and Wickersham (2001); Moyer (2015); Haubold (2013).

τοῦθ᾽ ὑμῖν εἴη δυσπέμφελον· Ἡροδίκῳ δὲ

    Ἑλλὰς ἀεὶ μίμνοι καὶ θεόπαις Βαβυλών.   (*SH* 494)

Flee, students of Aristarchus, over the wide back of the sea

    from Greece, you who are more cowardly than the nimble deer,

buzzers-in-corners, masters of the monosyllable, concerned with

    sphin versus *sphoin* and *min* versus *nin*.

This is what I wish for you, storm-tossed ones. But may Greece

    and Babylon, child of the gods, always be there for Herodicus.[11]

This epigram not only seems to lay claim to the Greek literary tradition but places that tradition in both Greece and Babylon.[12] Lycophron's work, produced in the period between the earliest writers mentioned here and the last, presents a similar kind of anxiety and offers a similar solution of bringing together disparate pasts and traditions through learned discourse in the present.

The *Alexandra* and other texts like it not only reinforced a sense of alienation from the world but also provided a way for integrating oneself within it. In form, it appears to be a tragedy due its meter, iambic trimeter, and yet it takes a topic more suitable to epic meter, a grand one in both temporal and geographic scope. Moreover, the text dresses up history, mixing it with mythology and mythography - subjects more suitable to prose - and putting it into tragic form. In all these ways, the work in all its facets seems to harmonize much that was hitherto considered in-compatible, matching form with substance. Written texts, like Lycophron's, as at no time before, provided a way of bridging the distances between people, compensating everyone for their collective sense of displacement. Moreover, the contents of those works also supplied its consumers with new modes of forming communities.

As we can see from the issues discussed above, the ability to comprehend, par-take, and reproduce this type of learnedness in the Greek cultural past, or being *pepaideumenos*, came to be seen as a way of becoming a civilized, imperial Hellenistic subject.[13] Birth was no longer *the* prerequisite to having a voice in the larger political community—now both a member from the priestly caste in Memphis and a Greek colonist in the *chôra* could perform and take part in larger and broader political states of the period.

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11   This is a modified translation from Olson (2006, pp. 560-561).

12   For more on this epigram, see Yatsuhashi (2010, pp. 173-175) and Haubold (2013, pp. 178-181).

13   For a more thorough treatment of these ideas, see Yatsuhashi (2010).

The first line of the *Alexandra* begins with a guard responsible for looking after the Trojan princess, Cassandra, reporting her most recent "rantings" to her father, King Priam. He states: Λέξω τὰ πάντα νητρεκῶς, ἅ μ' ἱστορεῖς. On the most basic level, the line's meter, iambic trimeter, would signal to its reader that this is a tragedy and that this character is merely here to provide background of the play, much like the watchman at the beginning of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. In this case, however, it is a guard or slave announcing to King Priam that he will report (λέξω) exactly (νητρεκῶς) everything (τὰ πάντα), of which the king has asked (ἱστορεῖς) from him. Naturally, the "joke" or "punch line" of this supposed tragedy will be realized after its reader gets through the next fifty lines, when it becomes clear that this opening speech will never end, and that this play will, in fact, be one continuous messenger speech. Since it will be the Trojan guard recounting the entire narrative, it makes sense to examine just exactly how one should interpret this decision to focalize the text through this specific character.

When closely examining just exactly who is doing the "talking" or "telling" of the *Alexandra,* it is curious that the person who actually retells the course of the history of the Greek-speaking world is a barbarian, most likely a Trojan. The use of iambic trimeter, the meter of tragedy, and narrators who are barbarian immediately suggests a connection to Aeschylean tragedy dealing with themes of the conflict between Asia and Europe with non-Greek characters playing primary roles, such as *The Persians* and *The Suppliant Women*. It should come as no surprise that a work that takes up themes, narrative perspectives, and the style of Aeschylus is actually restaging works of the master tragedian. And, much like Aeschylus, Lycophron makes his characters speak in obscure words and references with constant use of *hapax legomena, prima dicta*, and with frequent references to characters as animals.[14] Although there are many examples of pre-Hellenistic literary works that have barbarians playing a central role,[15] we should consider that Hellenistic *literati*, especially the Alexandrians, were writing from a radically different political position than their

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[14]   Exactly 518 of the 3000 distinct words in the *Alexandra* are *hapax legomena* while another 117 appear here for the first time, Hopkinson (1988, p. 230).

[15]   One immediately thinks of the *Iliad* and the important role the Trojans play within it, Aeschylus' *Persians* and *Suppliant Women*, Euripides' *Medea* and *Trojan Women*, and even Herodotus' *Histories*, in which Xerxes among others plays a central role to the larger work. The key in these works is that the "barbarian" speaks for himself or is at least presented in that manner.

predecessors. Given that a *barbaros* is giving word to events of a conflict between Greek and non-Greek, the last word of the *Alexandra*'s first line, ἱστορεῖς, should be looked on in a different light since the word appears to invoke another key figure who shaped the Greek-barbarian binary, Herodotus.

It is and was well known that its root word, ἱστορίη, is featured prominently in the first line of Herodotus' *Histories*.[16] At first glance, the term visually and aurally evokes connections to history, and further examination of the word also points to it as a reference to Herodotus. From a superficial reading of the poem, ἱστορέω appears to merely mean "to ask," but if one looks at several factors, the word position at the end of the first line also suggests other valences of the term, like "to seek to know" and "to research." Clearly, Lycophron's poem was built upon an enormous amount of research from other literary and non-literary texts, which this messenger is reporting, and it seems more than plausible that the term can be seen as an early reference to Herodotus in the poem. Furthermore, seeing the root of this word as a reference to Herodotus also makes sense considering the undeniable role that Herodotus and his accounts play within the work as a whole. Furthermore, recent scholars of Lycophron, such as Pouzadoux and Prioux, identify lines 1283-1450 as a clear reworking of Herodotus, and Hornblower, in his recent commentary on the work, sees references to Herodotus in the second line. For instance, Hornblower points to "ἢν δὲ μηκυνθῇ λόγος" (line 2) and states that Herodotus' *Histories* are unmistakably and programmatically recalled from the very start of this poem." Furthermore, Hornblower further argues that this work specifically alludes to Herodotus' Egyptian and Samian *logoi*.[17] It, therefore, seems more than plausible that the use of ἱστορέω on the first line also suggests a similar reference to Herodotus, especially after encountering the second line.

Herodotus was not the first to use or coin the term, ἱστορίη, but it is clear that by the third century BCE, the word had become associated with his work.[18] According to Gould, words related to ἱστορίη appear twenty three times in his text.[19] Of those twenty-three incidences, nine appear in Herodotus' famous Second Book, which provides of an account of ancient Egyptian society as seen through Greek

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16   Herodotus' text begins: Ἡροδότου Ἁλικαρνησσέος ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε (1.1).

17   Hornblower (2015, p. 121). For connections to the Egyptian and Samian *logoi*, Hornblower cites Hdt. 2.35. I, ἔρχομαι δὲ περὶ Αἰγύπτου μηκυνέων τὸν λόγον and 3.60, I, ἐμήκυνα δὲ περὶ Σαμίων μᾶλλον.

18   Gould (1989, pp. 9-11). Naturally, later historians used the term as well, but many of those historians, like Polybius and Plutarch clearly post-date any likely date for Lycophron's work.

19   Gould (1989, p. 9).

eyes.[20] By invoking this word in the first line of the *Alexandra*, Lycophron's work seems to lay claim to the genre of history and to put the spotlight on his Second Book, Egypt. Lycophron's account of the conflict between Asian and Europe (1283-1450) rewrites Herodotus' account (1.1-1.5). Just as Herodotus constantly calls upon words related to ἱστορίη to attain a sense of epistemological authority over both his logographic predecessors and his audience, so here too Lycophron attempts to achieve that same type of authority over his readers through an intertextual reference to that earlier work in order to rewrite that work for his new audience.

Lycophron's *Alexandra* is filled with tales about the conflict between the "East" and the "West" or the "two continents," to quote the author himself,[21] but it is not until line 1281 that the narrative directly engages with the Herodotean account of the origins of the conflict between the Greeks and barbarians (1.1-1.5).[22] In Herodotus' *Histories*, the historian gives us his version of what the Persians and Phoenicians claim to be the causes of the conflict. Herodotus states that the Persians' claim that the Phoenicians started it by abducting Io from the Greeks, and that the conflict lingered due to "common violence" (Μέχρι μὲν ὦν τούτου ἁρπαγὰς μούνας εἶναι παρ' ἀλλήλων), but that ultimately the Greeks would be "greatly to blame" (Ἕλληνας δὴ μεγάλως αἰτίους γενέσθαι).[23] The Phoenician account naturally clears their own sailors of blame, offering an alternative story in which Io goes willingly with the sailors to Egypt. This account attributed to foreigners was ultimately a Herodotean construction that created the illusion of a perceived, long-standing tension between Asia and Europe. After the account, Herodotus himself intervenes and claims that he will no longer dither on about all these stories and will instead move onto something about which he actually knows.[24] Herodotus, in this manner,

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20   2.19.14 and 2.19.17 near the beginning of his inquiry on the nature of the Nile; 2.29.4 used describing his journey up the Nile to Meroe; 2.34.6 where he compares the Nile to the Ister; 2.44.17 where he visits Phoenicia; 2.99.1 ending his account of Egypt; 2.113.1 begins a discussion he had with Egyptian priests over Helen while 2.118.3 and 2.119.13 where he concludes his inquiries with the priests where he reconciles Egyptian and Homeric accounts of stories about Helen. The last usages are telling in linking the method of Herodotus with Lycophron both in approach as well as subject matter.

21   See line 1295 for "ἠπείροις διπλαῖς."

22   See West for the most recent treatment of this issue (2000, pp. 154-56).

23   Both passages are from Herodotus 1.4.

24   The Greek runs as follows (1.5):
      Ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο,
      τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον
      σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα
      ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιών.

claims authority and legitimacy over the competing accounts of the conflict privileging his own rational perspective and relegating the mythic stories of prehistory to the other side.

The *Alexandra* expands upon Herodotus' 1.1-1.5, both in terms of its length and temporal scope. His "Herodotean" narrative runs from line 1291 to 1460, tracing the conflict's origins back to the age of the gods and pushing it forward down to the "prophetic future" in the age of Alexander the Great.[25] The tale of the conflict is once again posed as one narrated by the Asians. Its narrators, the guard and Cassandra, reclaim the authoritative high ground from the Herodotean narrative by claiming comprehensive knowledge of the strife.

Lycophron begins his retelling of the history of the conflict between the Greeks and barbarians within the personal tragic narrative, having Cassandra foretelling her enemies' destruction:

> Τοσαῦτα μὲν δύστλητα πείσονται κακὰ
> οἱ τὴν ἐμὴν μέλλοντες αἰστώσειν πάτραν.   (1280-81)

> So many are the woes, hard to bear, which they shall suffer who are to lay
> waste to my fatherland.[26]

Much as Herodotus in his preface (1.4.1-1.4.4) claims to present the Persian version of the conflict between Europe and Asia as a series of abductions leading to the Greek sacking of Troy, Lycophron, here, begins to present a similar retelling of the back and forth between the two sides:

> Ὄλοιντο ναῦται πρῶτα Καρνῖται κύνες,
> οἳ τὴν βοῶπιν ταυροπάρθενον κόρην
> Λέρνης ἀνηρείψαντο, φορτηγοὶ λύκοι,
> πλᾶτιν πορεῦσαι κῆρα Μεμφίτη πρόμῳ,
> ἔχθρας δὲ πυρσὸν ἦραν ἠπείροις διπλαῖς.   (1291-1295)

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25   In terms of length, I merely mean that Lycophron's treatment spans a little over ten percent of his work whereas Herodotus 1.1-1.5 is a very small fraction of its entirety.

26   For most of the translations, I have relied on Mair's translations (1921) which I have modified on occasion, mostly by inserting parenthetical explanations.

My curse, first, upon the Carnite (Phoenician) sailor hounds! The merchant wolves who carried off from Lerne (Argos) the ox-eyed girl (Io or Isis), the bull-maiden, to bring to the lord of Memphis (Telegonus, King of Egypt, or possibly Osiris) a fatal bride, and raised the beacon of hatred for the two continents.

This act of curse and blame is the first noticeable departure from the Herodotean version. No longer will the barbarians place more blame on the Greeks, but blame will be spread evenly between the two parties as in the following passage:

αὖθις γὰρ ὕβριν τὴν βαρεῖαν ἁρπαγῆς
Κουρῆτες ἀντίποινον Ἰδαῖοι κάπροι
ζητοῦντες αἰχμάλωτον ἤμπρευσαν πόριν
ἐν ταυρομόρφῳ τράμπιδος τυπώματι
Σαραπτίαν Δικταῖον εἰς ἀνάκτορον
δάμαρτα Κρήτης Ἀστέρῳ στρατηλάτῃ.   (1296-1301)

For afterwards the Curetes (Cretans), Idaean boars, seeking to avenge the rape by their heavy deed of violence, carried off captive in a bull-formed vessel the Saraptian (a Phoenician town) heifer (Europa) to the Dictaean palace to be the bride of Asteros, the lord of Crete (Zeus).

Then Lycophron continues to rewrite the narrative of Herodotus, deepening his narrative by adding motivation to his actors, having Cassandra state that the Greeks are not satisfied with a tit-for-tat:

οὐδ᾿ οἵ γ᾿ ἀπηρκέσθησαν ἀντ᾿ ἴσων ἴσα
λαβόντες, ἀλλὰ κλῶπα σὺν Τεύκρῳ στρατὸν
καὶ σὺν Σκαμάνδρῳ Δραυκίῳ φυτοσπόρῳ
εἰς Βεβρύκων ἔστειλαν οἰκητήριον,
σμίνθοισι δηρίσοντας, ὧν ἀπὸ σπορᾶς
ἐμοὺς γενάρχας ἐξέφυσε Δάρδανος,
γήμας Ἀρίσβαν Κρῆσσαν εὐγενῆ κόρην.   (1302-1308)

Nor were they contented when they had taken like for like; but sent with Teucer and his Draukian father Skamandros a host of plunderers to the dwelling-place of the Bebryces (Trojans) to war with mice; of the seed of

those men Dardanos begat the authors of my people, when he married the noble Cretan maid Arisba.

Although Cassandra directly names the Greek army a "raping army" or "host of plunderers" (κλῶπα στρατὸν, 1303), she begins to attempt to reconcile the two parties in the last two lines, when she points out that this conquest also began a system of mixing between the two sides and concludes with the detail that the Trojans have Greek ancestry through Dardanos.[27] Here, a Trojan princess lays bare the common ancestry between the two sides through which there might be reconciliation.

In the examples cited above, Lycophron uses the language of song or literature to convey Cassandra's judgments. Much as Herodotus "invented" historical prose by borrowing from genres such as epic, tragedy, and the early logographers, and recombining them into a new form, in a similar fashion, Lycophron mixed together form, primarily borrowed from tragedy, with content drawn from both the mythological past and more recent historical past. Although there had been tragedies, such as Phrynicus' *Sack of Miletus,* most tragedies were set in the mythical past and a tragedy was never the vehicle that had mixed together subject matter better suited to a wide range of genres into one form. In this manner, both authors attempt to displace their predecessors and create a space for their new way of presenting the world through generic innovation. Here, Lycophron absorbs both poetic and prose traditions within his narrative, producing a hybrid product to impose an authority upon his readers, an authority based on new means of viewing the world presented through the lens of erudition.

Over the next 150 or so lines, Cassandra recounts the wars waged back and forth between the two sides, including all of their major figures: the Argonauts, Theseus, Herakles, the Amazons, Paris and the Trojans, Helen, Agamemnon, Orestes, the Dorians, Midas, and Xerxes. Even within this stretch of narrative, there are still episodes where Lycophron complicates the narrative by mixing in examples that foreshadow the way a hero-figure could resolve this conflict but have clearly not been successful in doing so. For example, Cassandra points out that Orestes will found a colony in Aeolis in Asia Minor of many races and diverse tongues.

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27   Dionysios of Halicarnassos (1.61-62) states that Dardanos was originally from Arcadia. Furthermore, although the mixing between the two sides was present from the beginning in the Iliad, that narrative had been sublimated under the broader Herodotean narrative that emphasized the geographic and cultural divide between the two sides.

Ὁ δεύτερος δέ, τοῦ πεφασμένου κέλωρ
ἐν ἀμφιβλήστροις ἔλλοπος μυνδοῦ δίκην,
καταιθαλώσει γαῖαν ὀθνείαν, μολὼν
χρησμοῖς Ἰατροῦ σὺν πολυγλώσσῳ στρατῷ.   (1374-1377)

And, second (Orestes), the son of him that was slain in a net, like a dumb
fish, shall lay waste with fire the alien land, coming, at the bidding of the
oracles of the Physician (Apollo), with a host of many tongues.

Ultimately, Cassandra ends her narrative in the historical present of the early third
century BCE. She ends her tale foretelling the arrival of a lion and a wrestler, who
will resolve the conflict. The idea of a man resolving the conflict with a polyglot army
or host is a precursor to the end of this narrative and this conflict, with some figure
bringing the world's together whether it be Alexander the Great, Pyrrhus, or any
other Hellenisitc candidate, the narrative clearly foretells a ruler who will finally end
the conflict as it had in the early Hellenistic period:

ἕως ἂν αἴθων εὐνάσῃ βαρὺν κλόνον
ἀπ᾽ Αἰακοῦ τε κἀπὸ Δαρδάνου γεγὼς
Θεσπρωτὸς ἄμφω καὶ Χαλαστραῖος λέων
πρηνῆ θ᾽ ὁμαίμων πάντα κυπώσας δόμον
ἀναγκάσῃ πτήξαντας Ἀργείων πρόμους
σᾶναι Γαλάδρας τὸν στρατηλάτην λύκον
καὶ σκῆπτρ᾽ ὀρέξαι τῆς πάλαι μοναρχίας.
ᾧ δὴ μεθ᾽ ἕκτην γένναν αὐθαίμων ἐμὸς
εἷς τις παλαιστής, συμβαλὼν ἀλκὴν δορὸς
πόντου τε καὶ γῆς κεἰς διαλλαγὰς μολών,
πρέσβιστος ἐν φίλοισιν ὑμνηθήσεται,
σκύλων ἀπαρχὰς τὰς δορικτήτους λαβών.   (1439-1450)

until a tawny lion—sprung from Aiakos and from Dardanus, Thesprotian
at once and Chalastraian—shall lull to rest the grievous tumult, and,
overturning on its face all the house of his kindred, shall compel the chiefs
of the Argives to cower and fawn upon the wolf-leader of Galadra, and
to hand over the scepter of the ancient monarchy. With him, after six
generations, my kinsman, unique wrestler, shall join battle by sea and land

and come to terms, and shall be celebrated among his friends as most
excellent, when he has received the first fruits of the spear-won spoils.

This passage has rightly generated much scholarly controversy, which probably
would have pleased Lycophron. The issue of who the "lion" is and who the "wrestler" is has produced many candidates ranging from Alexander the Great to Pyrrhus of Epirus to Titus Quinctius Flaminius.[28] Ultimately, the issue is irresolvable,
and it seems to make the most sense to seek out plausible ways of interpreting the
prophecy rather than seeking out *the* definitive way to view them. What is clear is
that everyone who has offered answers to this puzzle has believed that one of the
players is Alexander the Great. Simon Hornblower has made a compelling case
that Alexander is the lion spoken in these lines. He argues that line 1440 highlights
Alexander's maternal descent from both Aiakid Pyrrhus and his son Neoptolemus,
and Helenus, son of Priam and a descendent of Dardanus, and therefore line 1441
addresses his paternal side and his connections to Macedonian kings with its reference to Chalastra, a town in Macedonia. Thus, Alexander is painted here as a figure
who has three ethnic identities: as a Macedonian, a Trojan, and Greek.[29] This more
than plausible reading of these lines presents a figure who can achieve reconciliation
by bringing together separate groups and their respective histories, an idea presented
many times throughout this part of the poem.

Through an analysis of the Herodotean passage, we can see how Lycophron's
poem is an attempt to reconcile all narratives, conflicting or not, within one grand
comprehensive narrative, simultaneously reinforcing and undermining the constructed geographic divide between the "Asia" and "Europe."[30] Lycophron, however,
constantly complicates and muddies the water with his use of obscure language
and references to characters and prophecies that spark argument and controversy,
such as his prophetic finish. In the Herodotean section, Lycophron complicates the

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28   To provide a brief sample of some of the various theories from the modern era: Wilamowitz (1883)
argues that the "wolf" is Alexander and does so using convoluted reasoning that identifies the Argive
chiefs of line 1443 as Persians. Holzinger says that the "lion" is Pyrrhus (1895). Niebuhr believes the
wrestler is Flaminius and therefore hypothesizes that the work was by a younger poet named Lycophron working in the early second-century BCE (1827). Mair argues that the "lion" is Alexander but that
the "wolf" and "wrestler" symbolize entire peoples (2006). West even calls it a panegyric to Alexander
(2000). For fuller discussion, see Mooney (1921); West (1983, 1984, and 2000); Mair (2006); Hurst
(2008); Pouzadoux and Prioux (2009); McNelis and Sens (2011); Hornblower (2015).

29   Much of this argument is based on Hornblower (2015, p. 494).

30   See West (2000, pp. 158-59).

relationship between these two "foes" by spreading equal blame to both parties and highlighting shared ancestry; he seems to present that the cycle of violence between the two sides demands resolution through his presentation of a great reconciler in this part of the story. In this manner, Lycophron's literary work attempts to reconcile the conflicting sides by showing how they have been resolved in a single poetic creation in a work that simultaneously reimagines and partially neutralizes the Manichean divide between the two continents which Herodotus constructed in his *Histories*.

III. CONCLUSION

Lycophron relied on the cultural capital he has accrued through the composition of his poem to redefine the traditional Herodotean binary between the Greeks and barbarians for the Hellenistic Age. He pushed aside the Herodotean model of Greekness and demonstrated how it had broken down. The complexity and shifting nature of the world he inhabited suggests that such a world demanded a work that reflected that complexity, one that takes on this complexity in a different manner from his predecessor, Herodotus. The world of the third-century BCE was a place where the Greeks found themselves masters of the known world. They were no longer threatened by a foreign other as formulated in earlier discourses, and the *Alexandra* provided a way to deal with the politics of this new age. His work seems to have provided a means of recuperating, reformulating, and reconciling cultural-historical narratives, such as the Greek ancestry of the Trojans, by overwriting the traditional Herodotean narrative which emphasized the natural enmity and difference between the two sides. The poem, thereby, provides a means for dealing with the historic situation of the early Hellenistic period when Greek identity had expanded beyond its biological parameters, which in turn raised anxieties about what constituted Greekness, and how the Greeks could form a cohesive ruling class from such a diverse group of peoples. Any reader of the Successor kingdoms who possessed the erudition to comprehend the *Alexandra* could begin to see themselves as part of a broader community of readers in a different way from the older narratives of Herodotus (and even Aeschylus). For a role model for performing this new type of "Greekness," they only needed to look at the narrator of the poem.

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