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Cover Page Footnote

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Abstract

This paper seeks to analyze how modern colonialist readings of the relationship between ancient Greek settlers and indigenous populations have influenced scholarly understanding of identity in ancient Cyrenaica (modern-day Libya). I show that Cyrenaic identity has thus far been externally defined in terms of its otherness by both ancient Greek writers as well as modern scholars. The reasons for this, I argue, are that Libya's modern history and its relationship with modern colonial powers have influenced how scholars perceive ancient sources on Libya, both material and textual. Thus, interpretations of local hybrid Greek/Libyan statues discount the possibility of Libyan agency in cultural exchange, and the language used in translations of ancient texts discussing Libya has been shaped by colonialist perspectives which frame Libyans as inherently violent, exotic, and uncivilized. Such problematic readings of the evidence can be eliminated if we adopt a postcolonial perspective which does not assume Greek superiority. In doing so, one finds evidence for much more complex identities and exchanges in which Libyans had a greater amount of agency than they are typically assigned. Interactions between these two groups resulted in the construction of hybrid identities, which may be seen in the production of such materials as the Libyan carved ostrich eggshells decorated with images employing Greek aesthetics. In sum, this paper argues that the perceived "otherness" assigned to hybridizing

primary evidence springs from circumstances created by modern colonialism rather than actual ancient conditions.

Keywords: Postcolonial Theory, Cyrene, Historiography, Ancient Mediterranean

The ancient city of Cyrene is located on the shore of modern-day Libya's Jebel Akhdar plateau. The ancient Greeks recounted multiple stories for its foundation, ranging from mythical ties to Jason and the Argonauts to more historically grounded accounts. According to the ancient Greek historian Herodotus, Cyrene's mother city Thera¹ faced hardship and sent leaders to the oracle at Delphi to seek help. The oracle commanded that the Therans found a colony in Libya. Being unfamiliar with the land they were to settle, the Therans sought help from the Cretans, who did have knowledge of Libya, and eventually settled on the nearby island of Platea. This satiated the oracle for a time, but after two years, poor luck pushed the Therans to seek its guidance yet again. The oracle replied that a colony needed to be founded upon the land of Libya itself, not an offshore island, and the Theran Greeks complied under the leadership of a founder (*oikist*) named Battos. Not long after the Therans established their settlement, the native Libyans convinced the settlers to move to a land they claimed was better, and it was there that Cyrene was founded in 630 BCE and subsequently ruled by the dynasty of Battos (Herodotus 4.150-159; Hodos 158).

The Therans' actions were part of a broader phenomenon occurring throughout the Mediterranean during the Iron Age: "colonization" as many historians have traditionally called it, in which "colonists" from Greek city states founded cities along the coastlines of the

¹ Modern-day Santorini. Thera itself was founded by Sparta.

Mediterranean and Black Seas. Yet using the word “colony” to describe settlements such as Cyrene is controversial. First, at the time of Cyrene’s founding in 631 BCE, a centralized “Greek” or “Hellenic” power did not exist (Hall 121). The settlements in question, known as *apoikiai*, were generally city states (*poleis*) founded by peoples from other, already established *poleis*, though trade-oriented settlements known as *emporía* also existed. Either way, there was no centralized power that could effectively subject another population to any form of colonial power through the establishment of these settlements. Second, the term colonization is laden with modern connotations. These connotations are especially insidious in the case of North Africa, where Cyrene was situated, considering this area’s history of exploitation and underdevelopment by European powers in the modern era. The connotation of the word “colonization” creates an ahistorical sense of connection between Greek settlers and modern European colonizers, clouding any attempt to examine the true relationships between settlers and native populations.

Although calling Cyrene a colony may be problematic, its overall history is certainly one affected by colonial processes; specifically, colonialist historiographies and treatments of primary evidence. Because of this, approaching the study of Greek presence in North Africa via a postcolonial lens, as I do here, not only invites reconsideration of past scholarship, but encourages new scholarship of a more dialectical nature than that of the past. Via this method, the complexities of cross-cultural encounters may be more fully explored. Due to its long history of settlement and colonization, Cyrene offers an excellent case study on how the history of this Greek settlement has been colonized, how this colonization arose from modern conditions, and how understanding modern colonization may enrich our understanding of the actual relations between Theran settlers, native Libyans, and the rest of the Greek world.

While ancient Greeks and Libyans appear to have developed a sense of otherness for each other, meaning they both had some sense of identity that separated them from the other group, neither group had a truly unified identity as has been assumed in many studies of the two populations thus far. Rather than operating in binary opposition, Greeks and Libyans were groups characterized by internal diversity of sub-ethnic groups. Moreover, the region of Cyrenaica served as a “middle ground” in which the Greek and Libyan groups were entangled in a complex relationship characterized by a mix of kinship and otherness. Meanwhile, modern scholars have created a false binary between the two groups which has only recently begun to be challenged. This paper aims to help deconstruct this dichotomy further by comparing the modern imposition of otherness on Cyrenaica’s populations and the actual, historical conditions which Cyrenaica’s people experienced, showing that most of the “otherness” assigned to the Libyans comes from non-Cyrenaic sources – whether ancient or modern – while Cyrenaic sources generally lack this othering dynamic.

“Colonies” such as Cyrene have long been interpreted within the framework of Western classicism, which until relatively recently positioned “classical” Western civilizations, such as the Greeks and Romans, as ideal societies that serve as the origins for Western ideas. Such notions are a part of the context in which modern historians work, and therefore “undertaking an archaeology of colonization requires first understanding the colonization of archaeology” (Dietler 33). Understanding this development may begin with the Italian Renaissance, a period which saw a heightened interest in classical Greek and Roman civilizations. During this time, “the very basis of [classics] was that classical antiquity was studied to provide aesthetic and moral models for the present,” and as time went on these ideals became tied to Western institutions such as archaeology, the museum, the Western university, and so forth. By the mid-

19th century these connections were practically ingrained into institutional understandings of the Mediterranean region. The Renaissance also happened to coincide with the beginnings of modern European colonialism, meaning that intentionally or not, the field of classics and modern colonialism developed side by side (Andren 10-11; 13-15).

Perhaps as part of this idealization of Greek civilization, the assumption of a historically consistent and unified Greek identity arose despite contradictory evidence related to Greek migration and settlement during the Iron Age (Hall, 121). Such an attitude may be seen in early studies of Greek “colonial” activity, which assigned “cultural primacy” to Greek civilization, a theme which is “perhaps more pervasive in scholarship on Greek colonization than any perceived colonialist ideologies” (Hodos, 10-11). The study of Greek colonialism rose to prominence in the mid-20th century with the work of two Oxford scholars, Thomas Dunbabin and his successor Sir John Boardman, who both advanced interpretations of “colonial” encounters in which native populations lacked agency and were dominated by the Greeks (Dunbabin, *Western Greeks*; Boardman, *Greeks Overseas*). The lack of discussion of Libyan agency continued into the seventies with R.C.C. Law’s “North Africa in the period of Phoenician and Greek Colonization, c. 800 to 323 BC.” Law continued to push the narrative that the Greek settlement in Cyrenaica hellenized North Africa and provided a center from which Greek cultural influence could spread among the indigenous populations of the region (107). Yet around this time significant studies on the material culture of ancient Cyrenaica were being conducted, such as Gerald Schaus’ research and Donald White’s excavation of the Extramural Sanctuary of Demeter (Schaus, “A Foreign Vase Painter” and “Greek Trade;” White, *Extramural Sanctuary*). These studies provided evidence for trade and cultural exchange

between Cyrenaica and the rest of the Greek-speaking world, in turn providing evidence against Law's claim.

In more recent scholarship, postcolonial studies have taken a clear stance in the study of Greek migration as scholars question the use of terms such as "colonization" and whether or not assuming the existence of a unified Greek identity, much less Greek domination, is valid. Even those who are less explicit about their postcolonial influences and methodology, such as Patricia Rovik, still assign more agency to the peoples of Libya than earlier scholars, marking a trend in the field that is becoming increasingly established as the norm.²

Postcolonialism as an interpretive framework outside of ancient studies arose around the time ancient Greek colonization was gaining prominence as a field of study. Several classic works in the field of postcolonial theory concern contact situations and colonial situations on the African continent. Franz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, published in 1961 (just three years before Boardman's *The Greeks Overseas*) discusses colonization and decolonization in Africa explicitly, describing decolonization as a historical process which cannot be understood unless "we can discern the movements which give it historical form and content;" at the same time, "the settler makes history and is conscious of making it" (Fanon 36; 51). By this analysis, modern discourse concerning Greek colonization is an active force in both colonization and decolonization. Its narrative is created and understood through the framework of the settler, and this framework becomes the target of decolonization, the historical process which operates in direct opposition to colonization. Understanding colonial processes in such a way grounds postcolonial theory in historical materialism from the start: the material conditions of the

² For more, see the work of Michael Dietler, Lieve Donnelan, André Laronde, Irad Malkin, and S. Rebecca Martin.

colonized and the colonizer are central to both constructing and ultimately deconstructing the colonial framework.

Walter Rodney expands upon the historical materialist approach taken on by postcolonialism in his work *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, written hardly over a decade following Fanon's work. In particular, Rodney emphasizes how the exclusion of certain peoples from history drives colonialism, stating that:

The removal from history follows logically from the loss of power which colonialism represented. The power to act independently is the guarantee to participate actively and consciously in history. To be colonized is to be removed from history, except in the most passive sense. (272) This sort of colonialism may be seen in the examples discussed earlier, which downplayed the agency of Libyan peoples in Greco-Libyan encounters. To grant agency to the colonized is to give way to postcolonialism and even the process of decolonization, as this allows the colonized people to both question and engage as actors in the same history which has been used to justify their subjugation.

Where Rodney and Fanon take staunchly Marxist, historical materialist approaches to postcolonialism, Edward Said's *Orientalism* approaches the subject from a perspective rooted in Marxian tradition but with a Gramscian focus on cultural hegemony. *Orientalism* does not discuss Africa, but rather the East, seeking to understand how Europe constructed a view of the "Orient" as Other as well as how it constructed itself in contrast to this Other. Said's argument may be summarized in the following quote from *Orientalism*'s introduction: "the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures" (Said, 6). One sees this idea play out in the histories of many

colonized peoples and especially in the subfield of ancient Greek “colonization,” in which Western scholars at times fall into the assumption that the Greeks shared their sense of cultural hegemony and supremacy. When taken with the arguments of Fanon and Rodney one may see the risks posed by such colonialist readings of history. Removing the agency of native actors and instead emphasizing the agency of those identified as “European” harms understanding of the complex relationships between colonial groups by imbuing such scholarship with the assumption of European colonial hegemony.

While none of the aforementioned pieces may be directly applied to the ancient Greek “colonization” of Africa, they may be used to understand and ultimately deconstruct the modern colonialist thought which has existed alongside classical studies for so long. A postcolonial perspective allows for more nuanced approaches to both modern and ancient interpretations of Cyrenean interactions. In colonial situations, multiple power dynamics could exist at once, and the consequences of these dynamics could vary dramatically. For example, metanarrative might be mixed with an externally constructed narrative. This is evident in several odes written by the fifth-century BCE Greek poet Pindar in honor of Cyrene’s king, who won several chariot races at the Pythian games. Pindar praises the king by glorifying his city-state of origin, in this case Cyrene. The narratives Pindar creates are based in both mythical and historical events. The complex chronology that overlaps the mythical with the historical narrative allows for both the creation of clearly defined (though multilayered) identities based on the ideals each story embodies. Through these stories we see both the construction of the Libyans as “Other” and the construction of the Greek dynasty ruling Cyrene as a great kingship.

Pindar develops his themes of otherness and kinship by creating a specific type of metanarrative which has similarities to various types of stories with which Greek-speaking

audiences might construct identities, demonstrating how non-Cyrenean Greeks attempted to understand Cyrenean identity and position it in relation to their own. A key characteristic of these metanarratives is the presence of a “chronologically indeterminate past... stemming from a known time and place,” which makes them fit the criteria for a myth in the anthropological sense. Claude Calame offers an understanding of these metanarratives which is valuable for understanding their role in constructing identity, but which errs in its reading of Pindar as Hellenizing.

Calame claims that Pindar’s odes concerning Cyrene -- *Pythian* 2, 5, and 9 -- fall under the realm of *palaia* (“ancient deeds”) rather than the *muthodes* (“myth”), as the victory each ode celebrates is tied to the past and therefore connects the legendary past to a material present in the process (Calame 38). Yet these two genres – *palaia* and *muthodes* – may work together in the same poem to create the social dynamics Pindar uses to conceptualize Cyrenean identity in relation to his own identity as someone from outside Cyrenaica. Pindar accomplishes this via coexisting images of hybridity and otherness. Although Pindar emphasizes Libya and its people’s otherness by using phrases such as “ἄλλοδαπαῖς” (foreign lands) (Pindar, *Pythian* 9, 254), the existence of hybridity becomes clear in his construction of imagined kinship ties, such as when he uses “γένος Εὐφώμου” (the race of Euphemus) to describe the Libyans (Pindar, *Pythian* 9, 256). In the same ode, Pindar portrays “three matrimonial unions -- Apollo’s, Alexidemus’, and Telesicrates’” which function as “nothing other than foundational acts meant to anchor a Greek city in foreign territory:” Apollo and the nymph Cyrene’s union represents Greek arrival in Libya and the legitimacy of Greek presence, Alexidemus’ represents intermarriage between a Greek man and an indigenous woman, and Telesicrates’ represents the union of two Cyreneans (Pavlou, 73). In his analysis, Calame also demonstrates the dissipation

of disparate Greek and Libyan identities within Cyrene but misreads this process as Hellenization rather than an imagined kinship utilized to construct a new identity (Calame 73). To read this process as Hellenization rather than hybridization removes agency from the indigenous actors either mentioned explicitly or implied in this process. Rather than their existence inherently indicating the dominance of one group, “concocted kinships [declare] composite identity” (Gruen, 276).

Not only do the coexisting themes of kinship and otherness as seen in Pindar provide a way for Greek and Libyan sources to construct identities in relation to each other, but also for modern scholars to understand societies in contact. In addition, modern colonialist readings of ancient texts appear not only in critical analyses, but also in more subtle forms, such as in translation. Modern translations of Herodotus have misrepresented notions of hybridity and otherness in Herodotus. Word choice in translations modifies the degree to which Herodotus appears to other the populations about whom he is writing. For example, according to Herodotus’ account of Cyrene’s foundation the people of Thera “had no idea where Libya was,” and “did not dare to send off an *apoikia* to the unseen (ἀφανές)”³ (Herodotus 4.150.4). In English translations, ἀφανές (unseen) tends to take other meanings: Purvis and Macaulay use “unknown,” while Godley uses “uncertain destination” (Purvis; Macaulay; Godley). Purvis’ and Macaulay’s translations are valid when taken out of context; however, in the next section of text Herodotus describes the Therans searching for a person from Crete or any other person who may have been to Libya in an attempt to find help with their dilemma. This demonstrates that Libya was not “unknown” to the Therans, and that they were aware of its connectivity to other parts of the Greek world and specifically its historical relationship with Crete. Thus, Godley’s

³ “οὔτε Λιβύην εἰδότες ὄκου γῆς εἴη οὔτε τολμῶντες ἐς ἀφανές χρῆμα ἀποστέλλειν ἀποικίην.”

translation, while not as literal, is more apt given the context, and has a significantly less othering connotation as it specifies that the location itself is what is unknown rather than the peoples of Libya. Likewise, translating the word as “unseen,” as I do here, is a more literal translation of the original Greek and similarly indicates that the Therans had never been to Libya before and perhaps were uncertain about its location but they knew of its existence and the cultures of its people.

This is not to suggest that Purvis’ and Macaulay’s word choice in this one instance was made in order to intentionally support a view of Libya as Other, but rather that it was a subconscious choice that demonstrates the internalization of colonialism which has endured in the field for the century between the two translations’ publications (Macaulay’s translation was published in 1890 while Purvis’ was in 2007). All of these translators were operating within a tradition favoring colonialism, and the existence of an othering word choice in one translation and not the other merely demonstrates that colonialist perspectives are often internalized and manifest themselves from the subconscious. Rather than being an active, constructive force, this othering appears in the form of a perspective already created and accepted: it is a given fact for those doing work regarding the area. In situations such as this, the construction of the Other is not being actively developed, but rather maintained by virtue of its acceptance as part of the field.

In other cases, word choice in translation is more referential to modern politics and more active in constructing a view of Libya as Other. For example, Rackham’s 1944 translation of Aristotle’s *Politics* renders *κοινωνία* (“communion,” “fellowship,” or “partnership”) as “communism” in a section describing Libyan marriage practices.⁴ The section itself is a

⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944), 2.1262a.26.

response to Socrates' idea of "abolishing the family." Aristotle uses his observations on family structure in Libya as an example to argue against Socrates that family cannot be abolished as people would suspect a person is their relative based on resemblance (Stalley 191-192). In providing how Libyans handle the situation, Aristotle implicitly posits that human nature is universal, but his use of the Libyans as an example shows that Libyans were seen as Other enough for them to be a good example of human nature as a universal constant. The description may be read as othering while creating some level of kinship, as Aristotle seems to position the practice as foreign and unfamiliar while offering it as an example for Greek readers to consider. In other words, using a Greek people in his argument would have worked, but would have lacked the added dimension of discussing human (not just Greek) nature; therefore, Aristotle must have seen the Libyans as foreign to some degree to have included them in his argument.

But to translate the word *κοινωνία* as "communism" constructs a different sort of Other than the one Aristotle constructs, one which directly ties ancient Libya to a modern movement growing in Africa at the time of the 1944 translation. In the 40s, Libya was a settler-colony under the rule of Italy, and it served as a front during the Second World War. Not only was such a proxy front better for Italy, but also for the British and French, fellow settler-colonialist powers for whom the Libyan littoral offered multiple strategic locations. Libya continued as a strategic location as the Cold War developed and progressed, to the point that the Soviet Union "demanded... a trusteeship over Tripolitania" in 1945. Therefore, while communism did not exist in Libya at this time (though a form of socialism would come into being later under Qadhafi), the tensions and anxieties of the Cold War and the territorial disputes of the major powers of the Cold War following World War II appear to manifest in the details of Rackham's

mid-century translation (Wright 170). Thus, both Aristotle and his later translators othered the Libyans, but in ways that differed based on the contexts in which they wrote.

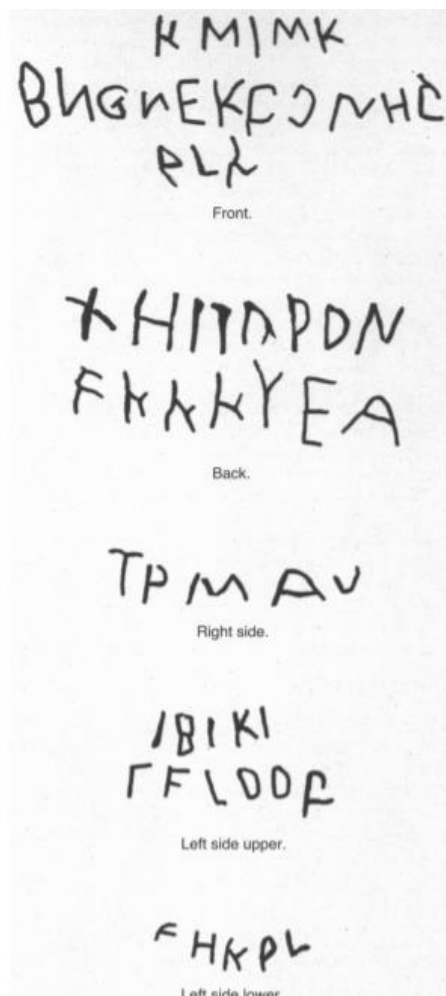


Figure 1. Inscriptions from the statuette known as the *Libyan Athena*. Rovik, *Libyan Athena*, 83.

A different way in which linguistic evidence is vulnerable to colonialist readings, can be seen in modern interpretations of a statuette known as the “Libyan Athena,” featuring several inscriptions. Discovered in Tobruk, Libya,⁵ the statuette features “untranslatable” inscriptions in an Ancient Greek script (see *fig. 1*) (Rovik 82). In the notes to her description and analysis of the statuette, Patricia Rovik mentions the possibilities of the text being either magical or simply a nonsense script, but also states that the former possibility has been rejected. Rovik also

⁵ Tobruk is about 100 miles east of the site of Cyrene.

suggests that the Greek script may have been used to render the language spoken by the indigenous populations as there is no evidence of an independent Libyan script. She suggests as an alternative, that the “creator wanted the inscription to be understood by both bilingual Berber [Libyans] and Greeks” (Rovik 84). Such a statement still implies that the Libyans were capable of reading Greek script, and that if the Greeks reading it were bilingual then they were capable of understanding the Libyan language. The picture created, then, is one in which Greek and Libyan speakers reached some level of mutual intelligibility, or at the very least shared aspects of their languages to aid in better disseminating information. In spite of this, however, Rovik still adheres to a reading of the statuette which is focused on the expression of Greek identity rather than seriously considering Libyan agency. Especially in cross-cultural spaces such as Libya, a reading which instead recognizes both peoples as significant agents in the production of material culture offers a more rich and balanced understanding.



Figure 2. The statuette known as *Libyan Athena*. Rovik, *Libyan Athena*, Plate IV.

In addition to the evidence for linguistic contact on this statuette, the statuette's aesthetic counters its reading as an "Athena" or otherwise predominantly Greek piece, instead reinforcing a reading of the piece as an example of Greco-Libyan hybridization. While there are indications of borrowing, borrowing is not necessarily evidence for the dominance of one group or the other. The statuette (*fig. 2*) is firmly Libyan in aesthetic terms: "the head of the figure is one-fourth the length of the body -- from topknot to toes -- as is traditional in much North African art, especially sculpture" (Rovik 82). When paired with the linguistic evidence, it demonstrates that the piece is hybridizing and predominantly Libyan. Furthermore, while the intelligible iconography, such as the presence of a bird on the right side of the statuette which seems to be

an owl, is characteristic of Athena, each symbol is also typical in depictions of the goddess Neith, popular in ancient Egypt and Libya (Rovik 86). There is one exception: a “lower protuberance” on the reverse of the statuette which Rovik suggests is “the head of Medusa” (Rovik 84). While this is a possibility, it is not strong enough evidence that the statuette has enough Greek characteristics to justify a reading of it as Athena rather than Neith in the face of other evidence, especially since in the Greek imagination even Gorgons were associated with Libya. An amphora from the seventh century BCE shows the Gorgons in Libyan dress pursuing Perseus and Diodorus Siculus regards the Gorgons as a tribe of Libyan women (Rovik 89; Diodorus Siculus 52.248). The early date of the amphora shows that at least since the period in which Cyrene was founded, the Gorgons had been connected to Libyan identities, and therefore even if the protuberance is a portrayal of Medusa, this only reinforces the Libyan character of the statuette.

Reading this statuette as a “Libyan Athena” rather than a Neith with Greco-Libyan influences and inscriptions only appears plausible if one assumes Greek dominance: to assume that a goddess of Libyan origin, carved in a Libyan style, but with inscriptions using a Greek script must be a Libyan portrayal of a Greek goddess is to assume that the Libyans lacked the agency to decide for themselves that they desired textual inscriptions on their sacred art and used a pre-existing, readily available, and phonetically-based orthographic system in order to fulfill this desire. Furthermore, this assumes that artistic borrowing must indicate dominance. While some Greek inspiration is undeniable, inspiration does not equal dominance.

This does not necessarily mean that the conditions for cross-cultural interaction always existed between the two groups, nor does integration of artistic styles and media indicate a lack of othering processes or other exertions of power. While working to understand the construction

of otherness, hybridity and kinship may offer insight into the identities and interactions of groups which participated in these processes, qualifying any of these processes as either “positive” or “negative” is problematic without deeper analysis of the conditions surrounding them. As studies of more recent societies have demonstrated, hybridity may be used by a subjugated people as an act of resistance against the dominating or oppressive group. In addition, cross-cultural and even colonial encounters do not always share the same patterns and characteristics, as the agency of both groups shapes the situation (Kelly). Furthermore, hybridity has at times been used in opposition to purity and may therefore take on a more “xenophobic” connotation than it may appear to at first. Just as hybridity is not always positive, otherness is not always negative, as a lack of hybridity may indicate that a native population has succeeded in keeping its culture out of the reach of a dominating power (Martin 140). Therefore, instead of providing clear-cut conclusions regarding the nature of cross-cultural relationships, these situations of exchange and interaction can offer the groundwork upon which other authors -- both ancient and modern -- interpret Cyrenean identity and position their own identities in relation to it.

The varying, often contradictory implications presented by hybridity and otherness do not represent a flaw in the postcolonial model, but rather an example of how a postcolonial perspective may allow for the study of “complex scenarios with more nuance than diffusion, core-periphery, or conflict-consensus approaches” (Martin 139). Furthermore, the complexities discussed thus far only highlight the need for postcolonial analysis within the field of Mediterranean studies and how such analysis may allow for the understanding of phenomena which prior models either oversimplified or neglected entirely. Within a postcolonial framework no action is inherently colonial or anti-colonial; rather, it is connected to its historical conditions

as well as the historical conditions of those analyzing it, and it is these conditions which are either in service of colonization or decolonization.

The above cited examples from Cyrenaica's extended contact with European powers -- from Greek *poleis* such as Thera to modern imperialist states such as colonial Britain, France, and Italy -- all demonstrate how the complexities of identity in various *apoikiai* may be better understood by using a postcolonial framework to critically analyze not only ancient sources but also modern ones. In taking such a perspective, one may see how levels of hybridity and otherness differed depending on *polis* or tribe, and that both hybridity and otherness played essential roles in the creation of identities. Meanwhile, many foundational studies in the study of Greek "colonization" have reduced such complex groups and identities to a binary of Libyan versus Greek or a positive hybridity versus a negative otherness. Applying an understanding of modern colonial conditions to these sources aids not only in creating a fuller critical analysis of these sources, but also in understanding how colonialist thought may manifest in modern studies and how current scholarship may avoid it in favor of richer, less problematic approaches.

Via a postcolonial framework, one may more easily recognize the assumptions which may cloud consideration of more thorough, nuanced approaches to the evidence, whether those assumptions manifest in a way that is explicit -- such as is found in early scholars of Greek colonization -- or less subtle, such as in translations or readings of evidence which imply Greek cultural domination without considering native agency. As discussed by Fanon, Rodney and Said, principled analysis of cross-cultural interactions (whether or not they can be qualified as "colonial") must rely on a materialist approach rather than the assumption of any sort of cultural hegemony, as these assumptions tend to arise from an idealized, invented foundation for Western society rather than actual historical conditions. Actual historical conditions portray

Cyrene as a complex middle-ground in which various degrees of otherness and kinship were assigned to various peoples and these various groups intermingled. Ultimately, while these understandings varied, each was based upon constructions of identity which both Libyans and Greeks had the agency to create. Thus, Cyrene becomes more than what Said describes as an “otherwise silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries” which Europe “represents, animates, constitutes” (Said 57); it becomes a rich middle ground from which varied peoples speak.

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