The Non-Homeric Cyclops in the Homeric *Odyssey*

Andrew T. Alwine

οὐ γάρ πω τέθνηκεν ἐπὶ χθονὶ δῖος ᾿Οδυσσεύς,
ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι που ζωὸς κατερύκεται εὐρέϊ πόντῳ,
νήσῳ ἐν ἀμφιρύτῃ, χαλεποὶ δέ μιν ἄνδρες ἔχουσιν,
ἄγριοι, οἵ που κεῖνον ἐρυκανόωσ᾽ ἀέκοντα.

For god-like Odysseus has not yet died on the earth, but he is, I believe, still alive and on a sea-girt island, held back on the wide sea; cruel men are restraining him, wild men, who, I believe, hold him back against his will.[1]

THIS STATEMENT BY ATHENA should strike a reader who is familiar with the rest of the Homeric *Odyssey* as strange. As Eustathius notes, at this point in the narrative Odysseus is alive and being held on a sea-girt island, but violent, wild men (χαλεποί, ἄγριοι) are not restraining him (*Od.* 1410.30 ff.). Eustathius reasons that Athena, here disguised as Mentes the Taphian, does not want to inform Telemachus that Odysseus is under the power of a divinity, lest he despair of ever seeing his father again. Athena may also be sparing Telemachus' feelings. She avoids telling him that Odysseus is under the spell of a beautiful woman and replaces the truth with a more heroic version. These considerations may provide the rationale for Athena's falsehood, but they do not explain why she tells this particular story. The "wild men" can, however, be explained in terms of the *Odyssey*'s relationship to

[1] *Od.* 1.196–199. Citations of the *Odyssey* follow the text of P. von der Mühll, *Homeri Odyssea* (Stuttgart 1993); the Homeric scholia: F. Pontani, *Scholia Graeca in Odysseam* I (Rome 2007); Dictys: W. Eisenhut, *Dictys Cretensis Ephemeridos Belli Troiani Libri* (Leipzig 1973); Malalas: I. Thurn, *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia* (Berlin 2000); John of Antioch: U. Roberto, *Ioannis Antiocheni Fragmenta* (Berlin 2005).

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non-Homeric traditions.

Before analysis of this passage, a summary of the assumptions that underlie the argument is necessary. The traditions and epics about the Trojan War in Archaic Greece were manifold and fluid, as is suggested by the fact that, as several scholars have noted, non-Homeric myths depicted on vases appear much earlier than their Homeric counterparts and remain dominant into the sixth century.[2] In the case of the Cyclopeia in particular, iconographic evidence for the most part does not draw from the Homeric version.[3] Rather than regarding the Homeric epics as the source from which all other epics derive, then, we may envisage a massive stock of story-telling material on which all known epics drew. As traditions evolved over time through repeated performance and recomposition by numerous bards, they crystallized into forms that became canonical by virtue of their Pan-Hellenic appeal, that is, their appeal to significant cross-sections of the Greek-speaking world. To achieve this status, these canonical epics necessarily distanced themselves from other traditional multiforms that had not enjoyed wide enough appeal to survive the distillation process and were thus to remain "non-canonical."[4] The narratives of Pan-Hellenic epics like the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* contain polemics against such alternative myths, which were typically local, or "epichoric," myths, lacking an appeal to a broad range of Greek audiences.[5] In the words of Jonathan Burgess, it may be

[2] S. Lowenstam, "Talking Vases: The Relationship between the Homeric Poems and Archaic Representations of Epic Myth," *TAPA* 127 (1997) 21–76; A. Snodgrass, *Homer and the Artists: Text and Picture in Early Greek Art* (Cambridge 1998); J. Burgess, *The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle* (Baltimore 2001) 35–44, 53–114.

[3] Burgess, *The Tradition* 94–114.

[4] A. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1960) 99–123, shows that the terms "original" and "variant" are not applicable to oral poetry. For the use of the term "multiform" in preference to "variant," see G. Nagy, *Homer's Text and Language* (Urbana 2004) 25–39.

[5] G. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore 1990) 70–72; G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*^{2} (Baltimore 1999) 8–9; J. Marks, "Alternative Odysseys: The Case of Thoas and Odysseus," *TAPA* 133 (2003) 209–226, at 209–210.

assumed that these traditions "were composed with rival poetic versions of the Trojan War in mind."[6]

To return to the difficulty at *Odyssey* 1.198–199, Georg Danek, following a suggestion by S. R. West, has argued that the substitution of χαλεποὶ ἄνδρες for Calypso may be an allusion to an alternative tradition that included Odyssean adventures in a real-world setting in which Odysseus engages with real groups of humans rather than the monsters that populate the canonized *Apologoi*.[7] I propose that Athena's statement does indeed constitute an allusion to another tradition, though not to the myth of an alternative *nostos* suggested by Danek. Rather, the Pan-Hellenic narrative of the *Odyssey* polemicizes against a competing epichoric tradition of the Polyphemus story, in which a more realistic Cyclops and others with him (the χαλεποὶ ἄνδρες, as it were) pursue Odysseus by sea. I accordingly identify in *Odyssey* 9 a second reference intended to de-authorize versions of the same alternative tradition. These two polemical allusions to the same group of myths in different parts of the narrative are significant for understanding the nature of "intertextuality" in Homeric poetry.

The first question to be raised in regard to Athena's misleading statement concerns the identity of the "wild and savage men" preventing Odysseus' return. Although nowhere in the *Odyssey* is Odysseus himself forcibly detained by "wild men," the description of these men as ἄγριος calls to mind Polyphemus, since the adjective is applied to Cyclopes repeatedly in

[6] Burgess, *The Tradition* 134. See also P. Pucci, *Odysseus Polutropos: Intertextual Readings in the Odyssey and the Iliad*² (Ithaca 1987) 29 n.30, for the concept of intertextuality in oral traditions.

[7] G. Danek, *Epos und Zitat: Studien zu den Quellen der Odyssee* (Vienna 1998) 34–35, 55; S. West, "An Alternative Nostos for Odysseus," *LCM* 6 (1981) 169–175. On alternative versions of the *Odyssey* that contain adventures in the "real world," see also S. Reece, "The Cretan Odyssey: A Lie Truer than Truth," *AJP* 115 (1994) 157–173. P. Vidal-Naquet, *The Black Hunter* (Baltimore 1986) 33 n.40, notes that 1.198–199 raises the possibility of identifying the people that Odysseus comes across in his travels with wild tribes. I. Malkin, *The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity* (Berkeley 1998) 185–186, has speculated that the "Wild Ones" in the *Odyssey* were peoples from the hinterland, especially in the Greek West.

the *Odyssey* (2.19, 7.206, 9.215, 9.494). Other groups of people that Odysseus meets qualify as wild and cruel, but the centrality and extreme brutality of the Cyclops episode mark it out as the natural referent.[8] At least one scholiast made this connection: οἷος ὁ Κύκλωψ (schol. M[a] to *Od.* 1.199). However, Polyphemus was alone in keeping Odysseus from returning to his ship; he had no accomplices that would justify the plural (cf. 9.112–115). Neither does Polyphemus hinder Odysseus by "restraining" (ἔχουσιν, ἐρυκανόωσ', 1.198–199) him. In a sense Polyphemus restrains Odysseus and his companions in his cave, but only for a couple of days, hardly enough time to account for his long absence, especially in view of the fact that the narrative chronology of the *Odyssey* places the encounter with Polyphemus at least seven years before Athena's conversation with Telemachus.[9]

The key to the identity of Athena's χαλεποὶ ἄνδρες ἄγριοι can be found in a scholion on this passage. This scholiast understood these words as referring to an alternative version of the Cyclopes (schol. PY to *Od.* 1.198):

> ἤγουν ὁ Κύκλωψ καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ. ἁρπάσαντος γὰρ Ὀδυσσέως τὴν θυγατέρα τοῦ Κύκλωπος, ἣν ὡς ὀφθαλμὸν εἶχεν, οὗτος μετὰ πολλῆς ἰσχύος νῆας ποιήσας κατὰ τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως ἐφέρετο, καὶ οὕτως οὐκ εἴα αὐτὸν πρὸς τὴν οἰκείαν ἐπιστρέψαι πατρίδα.

> That is to say, the Cyclops and those who were with him. For after Odysseus abducted the Cyclops' daughter, whom he loved as his own eye, the Cyclops, by his great strength of body, made ships and chased after Odysseus. And in this manner he prevented Odysseus from turning back toward his homeland.

That is, Athena's "wild men" could well be Polyphemus and "those with him" (οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ), who pursue Odysseus by ship to punish him for the theft of the Cyclops' daughter. A comment on *Odyssey* 1.69 (schol. Y) also mentions a similar myth: "The Cyclops outfitted ships, pursued him, and killed many of his men. He forced Odysseus to wander on the sea" (ὁ

[8] E. Cook, *The Odyssey in Athens: Myths of Cultural Origins* (Ithaca 1995), esp. 93–110.

[9] I. J. F. de Jong, *A Narratological Commentary on the Odyssey* (Cambridge 2001) 587–588.

δὲ Κύκλωψ πλοῖα καθοπλίσας τοῦτον κατεδίωξε καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν αὐτοῦ ἑταίρων ἀπέκτεινε, τοῦτον δὲ πλανηθῆναι ἐποίησεν ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ). Another scholion (M[1]) provides further details: "Cyclops, Antitheus, and Polyphemus were brothers. They also had a sister named Elpis, whom Odysseus abducted" (ὁ Κύκλωψ καὶ ὁ Ἀντίθεος καὶ ὁ Πολύφημος ἐτύγχανον ἀδελφοί· εἶχον δὲ καὶ ἀδελφὴν τὴν λεγομένην Ἔλπιν, ἣν ἀνήρπασεν Ὀδυσσεύς). This version of events, especially in the Cyclopes' faculty for seafaring, is of course inconsistent with the abilities of the Homeric Cyclopes. The *Odyssey* emphatically denies them such technology, as will be discussed below in reference to *Od.* 9.125–131.

My approach here is to treat the information provided by the scholia as evidence for a competing myth (or group of myths) that existed alongside the *Odyssey*'s version,[10] consistent with the argument of Gregory Nagy, who classes the Homeric scholia with other chronologically "late" sources, such as Eustathius and Pausanias, that preserve traditional readings and myths.[11] Since these writings can be treated as repositories of much older stories, the late date at which the authors actually compiled their material does not present problems. By this methodology, anything preserved in such sources represents a potentially authentic multiform that affords evidence for oral traditions that underlie or even conflict with the canonical narrative.

There are compelling reasons for accepting this version of the story as an authentic multiform within the oral tradition, not the least of which is the general ubiquity of Polyphemus myths, some quite distinct from our *Odyssey*'s version, in all eras of Greek culture.[12] Equally important, the account preserved

[10] This is not meant to imply that a single and uniform story is under investigation here. Rather, the scholia and the other sources cited below provide evidence for various strands of myths that followed a similar pattern. Consistency in the details should not be expected.

[11] G. Nagy, "Homeric Scholia," in I. Morris and B. Powell (eds.), *A New Companion to Homer* (New York 1997) 101–122.

[12] Cook, *The Odyssey* 93–110, has a useful discussion of different versions of the Cyclopeia, along with a substantial bibliography. See also J. G. Frazer, *Apollodorus* II (Cambridge [Mass.] 1921) 404–455; R. M. Dawkins,

by the scholia shares typologies with other myths from the *Odyssey* and elsewhere. As scholars have long recognized, a female often mediates the interactions between the hero and her father or community, as does Eidotheia between Menelaus and Proteus (*Od*. 4.363–446), Nausicaa between Odysseus and Alcinous (*Od*. 6), and the Laestrygonian girl between Odysseus and Antiphates (*Od*. 10.105–115).[13] Polyphemus' daughter performs a similar function in the tale known to the scholiast. As for her abduction by Odysseus, the motif of one man stealing another's daughter or wife and sailing off with her is as familiar as Paris and Helen, Theseus and Ariadne, and Jason and Medea.[14]

Evidence from other sources suggests that this version was widely circulated. The Latin work bearing the name of Dictys Cretensis, which draws heavily on myths from non-canonical traditional material in accordance with its "anti-Homeric" agenda,[15] reports that Polyphemus' daughter, this time named

More Greek Folktales (Oxford 1955) 12–24; D. L. Page, *The Homeric Odyssey* (Oxford 1955) 1–20; J. Glenn, "The Polyphemus Folktale and Homer's Kyklopeia," *TAPA* 102 (1971) 133–181; G. S. Kirk, *Myth: Its Meaning and Functions* (Cambridge 1975) 162–171; C. Calame, *The Craft of Poetic Speech in Ancient Greece* (Ithaca 1995) 139–173.

[13] W. F. Hansen, *The Conference Sequence: Patterned Narration and Narrative Inconsistency in the Odyssey* (Berkeley 1972) 9, notes that the role of "informer" is often played by a female who furthers the narrative action. B. Louden, *The Odyssey: Structure, Narration, and Meaning* (Baltimore 1999) 4–14, demonstrates that the females Circe, Nausicaa, and Arete advance the story and thereby act as mediators of Odysseus' homecoming. Although Polyphemus' daughter does not fit the role of informer or helper exactly, in that she causes Odysseus to flee farther from home, she still falls well within the typology of minor female characters who further the plot by acting as go-betweens for two males. In this respect, her dramatic function is similar to that of two women in the *Iliad*, Chryseis, who causes strife between Agamemnon and Chryses, and Briseis, who causes strife between Agamemnon and Achilles.

[14] The affinities between the *Odyssey* and the story of Jason and the Argonauts are well documented: M. L. West, "*Odyssey* and *Argonautica*," *CQ* 55 (2005) 39–64.

[15] Lord, *The Singer* 158; R. M. Frazer, *The Trojan War: The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian* (Bloomington 1966) 5–15; Burgess, *The Tradition* 45.

Arene, has fallen in love with Alphenor, one of Odysseus' comrades. Odysseus attempts to spirit Arene away, but Polyphemus discovers his plans. Odysseus then takes her by force and sails away (6.5):

> *[Ulixes] dein per misericordiam Polyphemi in amicitiam receptus filiam regis Arenen, postquam Alphenoris socii eius amore deperibat, rapere conatus. ubi res cognita est, interventu parentis puella ablata per vim.*
>
> Finally, once Polyphemus made a truce with Odysseus out of pity, Odysseus attempted to steal Arene, the king's daughter, after she had been smitten with love for Alphenor, one of Odysseus' comrades. When the plan was discovered, Polyphemus intervened and the girl was taken from them by force.

John of Antioch records that Odysseus fooled Polyphemus with wine, as in the Homeric version, but adds another detail. Odysseus seizes the Cyclops' only daughter as he escapes: "Odysseus fled after seizing the Cyclops' only-begotten daughter" (ἔφυγεν ἁρπάσας τὴν ἐκείνου θυγατέρα, ἣν εἶχε μονογενῆ, 48.2.28). John also adds that some poets had allegorized the burning of Polyphemus' eye by Odysseus as a reference to Odysseus' abduction of the Cyclops' daughter, who was "inflamed" with love ([ὀφθαλμὸν] ὃν καὶ διετύφλωσεν μετὰ πυρὸς <Ὀδυσσεύς>, ὅτι τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ ἐκκαυθεῖσαν ἔρωτι ἀφείλατο). Another Byzantine writer, John Malalas, records that Polyphemus' daughter, here identified as Elpe, fell in love with one of Odysseus' crewmen and was carried off (5.18.75–78):

> ἡ δὲ θυγάτηρ τοῦ Πολυφήμου ὀνόματι Ἔλπη ἐρωτικῶς διετέθη πρός τινα εὐπρεπῆ ἄνδρα τῶν μετὰ τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως ὀνόματι Λεΐωνα· καὶ ἐπιτηδείου ἀνέμου πνεύσαντος ταύτην ἀφαρπάσαντες <τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως ἀγνοοῦντος> ἐξώρμησαν ἐκ τῆς Σικελίας νήσου.
>
> Polyphemus' daughter, named Elpe, fell in love with a good-looking member of Odysseus' companions, named Leion; and when a favorable wind started to blow they abducted her and left the island of Sicily.[16]

[16] Malalas and John of Antioch may have based their accounts of the Trojan War in part on Dictys (N. E. Griffin, "The Greek Dictys," *AJP* 29 [1908] 329–335, at 329–330; S. Merkle, *Die Ephemeris belli Troiani des Diktys*

These versions of the myth are clearly inconsistent with the *Odyssey*'s own version, which includes a direct encounter with only one Cyclops and makes no mention of any children of Polyphemus. At the same time, they satisfy the criteria for the reference of *Odyssey* 1.198–199, which states that multiple men hold back Odysseus on an island. Odysseus meets with several different "wild, cruel men"[17] in his encounters with the Cyclopes, although their names and relationships differ in the sources.[18] These Cyclopes command veritable armies, with which they make war on Odysseus and his companions.[19] The latter are detained by both battle and capture (συλληφθείς John of Antioch 48.2.22, ἐν τῷ σπηλαίῳ κατακλεισθείς 48.2.24; συλλαβόμενος τὸν Ὀδυσσέα καί τινας τοῦ στρατοῦ αὐτοῦ Malalas 5.17.44, τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς ἀπέκλεισεν 5.17.49).[20] And, of course, all of this takes place on an island, Sicily. Taken together, these sources provide further confirmation that the

von Kreta [Frankfurt am Main 1989] 22–23). Thus, it is possible that these three sources are not entirely independent, although there are significant differences in this particular story of Odysseus, especially between Dictys on the one hand and Malalas and John of Antioch on the other (see nn.18–19 for some of the dissimilarities). Independent or not, I maintain that all these stories potentially trace back to oral traditions that developed alongside the *Odyssey*.

[17] John of Antioch calls them ἄνδρες δυνατοὶ καὶ ἄγριοι (48.2.19), John Malalas ἄνδρες χαλεποὶ καὶ μηδέποτε ξένους ὑποδεχόμενοι (5.17.34).

[18] In Dictys Cretensis, Odysseus meets with the brothers Cyclops and Laestrygon, and then with Cyclops' sons, Polyphemus and Antiphates. For John of Antioch and John Malalas, Antiphates, Cyclops, and Polyphemus are all brothers and sons of Sicanus. Laestrygon does not appear in these latter two sources, but the Laestrygonians evidently make up Antiphates' army in Malalas (5.17.38).

[19] Odysseus' wars with the armies of the Cyclopes are an especially prominent feature of the narrative. In Dictys Cretensis, Odysseus "loses many men" at the hands of Polyphemus and Antiphates (*ab eorum filiis Antiphate et Polyphemo plurimos sociorum amiserit*, 6.5). In John of Antioch (48.2) and John Malalas (5.17), Odysseus wars with each of the three brothers in succession.

[20] Dictys Cretensis may also imply that the Cyclopes held Odysseus in captivity in the brief notice that he "suffered many indignities" (*multa indigna expertus*, 6.5). From iconography it is evident that other alternative versions of the Cyclopeia also included restraint (Snodgrass, *Homer* 90–99).

scholiast has recorded an authentic multiform of the tale, since they agree substantially in many details.

The *Odyssey*'s motivation for alluding to alternative versions of Odysseus' story can be explained in terms of its synthetic, Pan-Hellenic narrative, which distances itself from traditions in conflict with its own vision of its hero, frequently undercutting them and painting them as plausible, but untrue, fabrications.[21] The canonical epic attempts to define such alternative accounts as mere conjecture, portraying them as a hypothetical construct. Thus Athena, who is herself in disguise, says the word που ("I suppose," "somewhere") twice. The *Odyssey* represents Athena's words here as mere speculation designed not to provide a divinely inspired account of Odysseus' actual situation, but to supply a plausible and palatable story for Telemachus. At the same time the deceitful speech of Athena provides a convenient opportunity for passing off a conflicting tradition as a lying tale or erroneous invention.

Multiforms of this group of myths are also the target of a polemical allusion in Odysseus' own narrative of his adventures with the Cyclopes. In Book 9, as Odysseus is providing his audience with some background information on the Cyclopes and their territory, he makes clear that, despite their descent from Poseidon, they were not capable of sailing and therefore have never visited a rich and attractive island nearby, known to scholars as "Goat Island," where Odysseus and his comrades encamp before visiting the Cyclops (9.125–131):

οὐ γὰρ Κυκλώπεσσι νέες πάρα μιλτοπάρῃοι,
οὐδ' ἄνδρες νηῶν ἔνι τέκτονες, οἵ κε κάμοιεν
νῆας ἐϋσσέλμους, αἵ κεν τελέοιεν ἕκαστα
ἄστε' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων ἱκνεύμεναι, οἷά τε πολλὰ
ἄνδρες ἐπ' ἀλλήλους νηυσὶν περόωσι θάλασσαν·
οἵ κέ σφιν καὶ νῆσον ἐϋκτιμένην ἐκάμοντο.
οὐ μὲν γάρ τι κακή γε, φέροι δέ κεν ὥρια πάντα.

For the Cyclopes have no red-cheeked ships. Nor are there among them any builders of ships, who would construct well-

[21] For the "Panathenaic bottleneck," see G. Nagy, *Homeric Responses* (Austin 2003) 69–70; Nagy, *Homer's Text* 25–39. For this phenomenon elsewhere in the *Odyssey*, see Marks, *TAPA* 133 (2003) 209–226.

> benched ships which would bring all sorts of supplies, traveling to the cities of men, as men often cross the sea in ships to visit each other. Such men could have made this island also well inhabited for them. For the island was not at all barren, but it could bring forth all things in due season.

By repeatedly asserting that the Cyclopes have no concern for nautical matters, Odysseus presents a forceful and rather extended explanation of their failure to inhabit Goat Island. This detailed account of the Cyclopes' inability to sail is conspicuous in Odysseus' tightly-constructed narrative and even seems emphatic. The stress on this one point is just what we would expect a contradictory tradition would elicit from the Pan-Hellenic narrative.

The dramatic motivation for the digression is that, as scholars have noted, Goat Island provides an opportunity for Odysseus to leave the majority of his men in safety and out of the reach of the Cyclopes.[22] Such an uninhabited island is also of significance for the unfolding of the story. With only his own crew to aid him, Odysseus must rely on his own resourcefulness. Furthermore, as Erwin Cook has suggested, Goat Island provides an opportunity to remove the motivation (hunger) that drives Odysseus and his companions to the island of the Cyclopes in other versions of the myth. The paradisiacal setting of Goat Island makes the trip to Polyphemus nonessential and motivated only by intellectual curiosity.[23] In view of these considerations, it was essential to have Odysseus leave most of his men on an island without Cyclopes and sail to the land of the Cyclopes with only one ship.

None of this, however, explains why Odysseus requires six lines (125–130) to deny that the Cyclopes could sail to Goat Island. I suggest that this extended digression amounts to another attempt to undermine the same set of traditions al-

[22] K. Reinhardt, "Die Abenteur der Odyssee," in C. Becker (ed.), *Tradition und Geist: Gesammelte Essays zur Dichtung* (Göttingen 1960) 47–124, at 62–63; J. S. Clay, "Goat Island: *Od.* 9. 116–141," *CQ* 30 (1980) 261–264, at 261; A. Heubeck and A. Hoekstra, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey* II (Oxford 1989) 21–22.

[23] Cf. Cook, *The Odyssey* 99.

luded to at 1.197–199, in which Polyphemus or other Cyclopes pursue Odysseus by sea after he has left the island. Such a version of the myth naturally runs counter to the *Odyssey*'s need for the Cyclopes to be landlocked. If Polyphemus and his friends were able to take to the sea, then the isolation of Goat Island in the *Odyssey* would be nonsense. Seafaring would also be incongruous with Odysseus' depiction of the Cyclopes as wild and even antithetical to cultured civilization (9.106–108).[24] Because the Homeric *Odyssey* requires an island like Goat Island, to which the Cyclopes cannot sail, it polemicizes against alternate traditions which record the Cyclopes chasing after Odysseus by ship. In other words, Odysseus' emphatic statement that the Cyclopes lack seafaring capability has the effect of de-authorizing non-Homeric versions of the story in which the Cyclopes take to the sea in order to pursue Odysseus, while at the same time fulfilling the dramatic purpose of cutting the Cyclopes off from the island.

If this analysis is correct, the passages in *Odyssey* 1 and 9 represent two polemical references to the same set of myths. Whatever their origin, these multiforms apparently circulated widely enough to elicit two polemical responses from the canonical *Odyssey*. The ubiquity of the Polyphemus myth and of the various versions of the sailing ability of the Cyclopes in later literature supports this hypothesis. That the *Odyssey* would make two allusions to the same category of competing stories spread out over the space of nine books is striking, suggestive of the intensity of interactions among competing narrative traditions and the sophistication of both the ancient Greek epic singers who performed canonical and non-canonical songs and the audiences who listened to them.[25]

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Dept. of Classics
Univ. of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611
aalwine@ufl.edu

[24] Cf. Cook, *The Odyssey* 97–100.

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