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Cratinus' Cyclops – and Others

Abstract
The primary topic of this paper is Cratinus' lost *Odusseis* ("Odysseus and his Companions"), in particular fr. 147, and the over-arching question of what can reasonably be called "Cyclops-plays". My larger purpose is to argue for caution in regard to what we can and cannot regard as settled about the basic dramatic arc or "storyline" of individual lost comedies, while simultaneously advocating openness to a larger set of possibilities than is sometimes allowed for. Late 5th-century comedy seems to have been fundamentally dependent on wild acts of imagination and fantastic re-workings of traditional material. Given how little we know about most authors and plays, we must accordingly both beware of over-confidence in our reconstructions and attempt to not too aggressively box in the impulses of the genre. As an initial way of illustrating and articulating these issues, I begin not with Cratinus but with the five surviving fragments of Nicophon's *Birth of Aphrodite.*

Temi principali di questo contributo sono i perduti *Odissei* (*Odisseo e i suoi compagni*) di Cratino, in particolare il fr. 147, e la più complessiva questione di quali commedie possano essere ragionevolmente definite "commedie sul Ciclope". Il mio scopo più ampio è di indurre alla prudenza rispetto a cosa possiamo e non possiamo ritenere stabilito riguardo alla struttura drammaturgica di fondo o alla "trama" di singole commedie perdute, e al contempo incoraggiare l'apertura verso uno spettro di possibilità più ampio rispetto a quanto talvolta non sia consentito. La commedia di fine quinto secolo sembra esser stata ispirata fondamentalmente da liberi atti di sfrenata immaginazione e da riscritture fantastiche di materiale tradizionale. Considerato quanto poco sappiamo della maggior parte degli autori comici e dei loro drammi, dobbiamo conseguentemente far attenzione all'eccessiva sicurezza con cui procediamo nelle nostre ricostruzioni ed evitare di ingabbiare in maniera troppo aggressiva le tendenze del genere. Come punto di partenza per illustrare e discutere tali questioni, prenderò l'avvio non da Cratino ma dai cinque frammenti superstiti della *Nascita di Afrodite* di Nicofonte.

The primary topic of this paper is Cratinus' lost *Odusseis* (*Odysseus and his Companions*), in particular fr. 147 of that comedy, and the over-arching question of what can reasonably be called "Cyclops-plays"[1]. The discussion that follows is concerned with specific texts and problems but also attempts to make some larger points, arguing for caution in regard to what we can and cannot regard as settled about the basic dramatic arc or "storyline" of

[1] For the reception of the Homeric Odysseus in later literature, see MASTROMARCO (1998, esp. pp. 20-33 for Euripides' *Cyclops*, pp. 33-40) for the comic poets, especially Cratinus; CASOLARI (2003, esp. 47-55, 197-225). Also useful are STANFORD (1954) and MONTIGLIO (2011), with further bibliography, although neither treats the material discussed below. BROMMER (1983, 57-68) discusses the reception of the Cyclops story in art. Thanks are due Olimpia Imperio and two anonymous referees for this journal. An earlier version of this paper was delivered as part of the Gavrilov Readings in Moscow in 2012.

individual lost comedies, while simultaneously advocating openness to a larger set of possibilities than is sometimes allowed for. Late 5th-century comedy seems to have been fundamentally dependent on wild acts of imagination and fantastic re-workings of traditional material. Given how little we know about most authors and plays, therefore, we must both beware of over-confidence in our reconstructions and attempt to not too aggressively box in the impulses of the genre. As a way of illustrating and articulating these issues, I begin not with Cratinus but with the five surviving fragments of the late 5th/early 4th-century comic poet Nicophon's *Birth of Aphrodite*[2]:

fr. 1 ἅπερ ἐσθίει ταυτὶ τὰ πονήρ᾽ ὀρνίθια,
σέρφους ἴσως, σκώληκας, ἀκρίδας, πάρνοπας

The very items these poor little birds eat:
gnats perhaps, grubs, grasshoppers, locusts

fr. 2 οὐκ ἐς κόρακας τὼ χεῖρ᾽ ἀποίσεις ἐκποδῶν
ἀπὸ τοῦ σκυταλίου ⟨ ... ⟩ καὶ τῆς διφθέρας;

Get your damned hands off
my messenger staff … and my jacket!

fr. 3 ἆρ᾽ ἀράχνιόν τι φαίνετ᾽ ἐμπεφυκέναι;

Does it look like a spider-web is growing in there?

fr. 4 Νικοφῶν δὲ τὰς τοιαύτας πάγας ἐν Ἀφροδίτης γοναῖς δελέαστρα εἴρηκεν

Nicophon in the *Birth of Aphrodite* refers to traps of this sort as 'lures'

fr. 5 [ ] ἐὰν τρέχῃς
α[ ]ας βλέψεις πάνυ
π̣[

] if you run
] you'll see quite

[2] Fragments and testimonia of comic poets are cited from KASSEL – AUSTIN (1983-2001). Nicophon's name appears at the top of the third column in the list of comic poets who took the prize at the City Dionysia (*IG* II^2 2325C.35), and about a third of the way down the second column in the list of comic poets who took the prize at the Lenaea (*IG* II^2 2325E.22), suggesting initial victories at both festivals *ca*. 400 BCE. The *Suda* (ν 406 = test. 1) calls him a contemporary of Aristophanes, but we otherwise know only that his *Adonis* was staged at the same festival as Aristophanes' *Wealth* in 388 BCE. See in general PELLEGRINO (2006), revised and modestly expanded in PELLEGRINO (2013). For divine-birth comedies, see NESSELRATH (1995, 3f. on Aphrodite plays).

These fragments are all that is known of Nicophon's play. All the same, a way of tying the majority of them together into something approaching a coherent storyline readily presents itself. The action presumably takes place on the divine level, and the only divine character likely to carry a messenger staff is Hermes, who seems to be engaged in fr. 2 in a scuffle with another individual, most likely another male god. The reference to spider-webs and traps in frr. 3f. is easily taken to be part of a reworking of the story in *Odyssey* VIII of how Aphrodite (Nicophon's title-character) and Ares were caught in bed together by Aphrodite's husband Hephaestus[3], an incident in which the Homeric Hermes plays a part, as an amused but jealous spectator (Hom. *Od.* VIII 334-43). Fr. 5 can then be understood as a summons by one character – perhaps Hephaestus[4] or Helios[5] – to another to come enjoy the lovers' humiliation. One might object to this reconstruction that the title of Nicophon's play is *The Birth of Aphrodite*, not *The Romantic Misadventures of Ares and Aphrodite* or the like. But Aphrodite was born full-formed and beautiful, and the sixth *Homeric Hymn* reports that the moment she entered the company of the other Olympians, the male gods all begged for the right to take her as their wife[6], hence perhaps Hermes' jostling with another character in fr. 2; and it is easy to imagine a comic poet tying that story together with one about the spectacular (and potentially spectacularly funny) collapse of her first marriage. What the significance of the birds in fr. 1 might be is impossible to say. Perhaps they are the goddess' sparrows (Sappho fr. 1, 10).

My purpose in advancing this interpretation of these fragments of Nicophon is not to argue that it is true – although it might be. Instead, my real point is that the mere existence of *Odyssey* VIII exercises something like a magnetic effect on what little remains of *The Birth of Aphrodite*, making it almost inevitable that a reader familiar with Homer and the *Hymns* will attempt to put the fragments together in a way similar to the one I have suggested, even if no one would have come up with the idea independently. Much historical

[3] Cf. Hom. *Od.* VIII 278, 280 ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' ἑρμῖσιν χέε δέσματα κύκλῳ ἀπάντῃ· / ... / ἠύτ' ἀράχνια λεπτά («He spread the bonds everywhere about the bedposts / […] fine as spider-webs»).

[4] Cf. Hom. *Od.* VIII 306-309 Ζεῦ πάτερ ἠδ' ἄλλοι μάκαρες θεοῖ αἰὲν ἐόντες, / δεῦθ', ἵνα ἔργα γελαστὰ καὶ οὐκ ἐπιεικτὰ ἴδησθε, / ὡς ἐμὲ χωλὸν ἐόντα Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἀφροδίτη / αἰὲν ἀτιμάζει, φιλέει δ' ἀίδηλον Ἄρηα («Father Zeus and you other blessed and eternal gods — / come here, so you can see a laughable and intolerable deeds, / how Aphrodite the daughter of Zeus always treats me with contempt, / since I am crippled, and she loves destructive Ares»).

[5] Cf. Hom. *Od.* VIII 270f. ἄφαρ δέ οἱ ἄγγελος ἦλθεν / Ἥλιος, ὅ σφ' ἐνόησε μιγαζομένους φιλότητι («Straightaway came to him as a messenger / Helios, who noticed them making love»).

[6] *hHom.* VI 15-18 ἦγον ἐς ἀθανάτους· οἳ δ' ἠσπάζοντο ἰδόντες / χερσί τ' ἐδεξιόωντο, καὶ ἠρήσαντο ἕκαστος / εἶναι κουριδίην ἄλοχον καὶ οἴκαδ' ἄγεσθαι, / εἶδος θαυμάζοντες ἰοστεφάνου Κυθερείης («[The Graces] took her to the immortals. When they saw her, they welcomed her, / and extended their right hands in greeting; every male god prayed / that she would be his wedded wife and that he would take her home, / for they were astonished at the appearance of the violet-crowned goddess of Cythera»).

and philological progress is made via the process of analogy, but the fragility of such results must always be kept in mind. Perhaps the speaker of fr. 2 is in fact a Spartan herald, for example, and Aphrodite has just come ashore at Cythera (cf. Hes. *Th.* 195-98), and the action in Nicophon's play all took place on the human level.

With those considerations in mind, I turn to Cratinus fr. 147:

(A) ποῦ ποτ' εἶδές μοι τὸν ἄνδρα, παῖδα Λαέρτα φίλον;
(B) ἐν Πάρωι, σικυὸν μέγιστον σπερματίαν ὠνούμενον.

The verses are quoted at Athenaeus II 68c, and when I translated them for the Loeb edition of that text, I thought about the definite article in the middle of line 1 and the adjective at the end of it; decided that the first speaker must be Penelope and the second the disguised Odysseus, and that what is preserved is a fragment of a reworking of the interview of the disguised hero by his wife in *Odyssey* XX; and translated thus[7]:

(A) Where did you, please, see my husband, the beloved son of Laertes?
(B) On Paros, where he was buying a huge seed-filled cucumber.

Kassel – Austin, on the other hand, take the speakers to be the Cyclops and Odysseus, and when Ian Storey translated the fragment for his Loeb edition of the Old Comic poets, he objected to my interpretation that «the comedy seems to have been a parody of Odysseus and the Cyclops, not [of] the larger story», and rendered it in the following way[8]:

(A) Where did you once see the man, Laertes' dear son?
(B) On Paros, buying a jumbo-sized pumpkin.

Most of the rest of this paper is devoted to inquiring into the bases for the various modern interpretations of the contents and structure of Cratinus' play. Put another way: What «magnetic fields» led Runkel[9], and Kassel – Austin and Storey after him, to conclude that the first speaker in fr. 147 must be the Cyclops – in defiance, it should be said, of the obvious surface sense of the first line? At the end, I offer some specific, tentative reconstructions of the plot of *Odusseis*. I will not claim to have escaped the alternately virtuous and vicious circle of analogy and reconstruction. My larger goal, however, is to argue that we ought to be quite cautious – or at least self-conscious – when we draw conclusions about the structure and content of fragmentarily preserved texts such as this.

[7] OLSON (2006, 387).
[8] STOREY (2011, 337).
[9] RUNKEL (1827, 41f.).

Of the other fragments of Cratinus' *Odusseis* that survive, three share what has traditionally seemed an obvious, easily identifiable dramatic context[10]. Fr. 150 is patently the Cyclops threatening the men he has trapped in his cave:

> ἀνθ᾽ ὧν πάντας ἑλὼν ὑμᾶς ἐρίηρας ἑταίρους
> φρύξας χἀψήσας κἀπανθρακίσας κὠπτήσας
> εἰς ἅλμην τε καὶ ὀξάλμην κἆιτ᾽ ἐς σκοροδάλμην
> χλιαρὸν ἐμβάπτων, ὃς ἂν ὀπτότατός μοι ἁπάντων
> ὑμῶν φαίνηται, κατατρώξομαι, ὦ στρατιῶται

> In return for which I'll take all you noble companions,
> and roast and stew and braise and fry you,
> then dip you into salt and vinegar-salt and warm,
> salted garlic-sauce; and whoever of you all looks
> the most well-roasted – I'll gobble him down, soldiers!

Fr. 145 is Odysseus addressing the Cyclops a little later on:

> τῆ νῦν τόδε πῖθι λαβὼν ἥδη, καὶ τοὐνομά μ᾽ εὐθὺς ἐρώτα

Here – take this now, and drink it, and immediately ask my name!

And fr. 146 is the Cyclops after he has tasted the fateful wine his visitor offers him:

> οὔπω ᾽πιον τοιοῦτον οὐδὲ πίομαι
> Μάρωνα

> I never drank such a Maron[11], nor will I drink it
> in the future

Whether fr. 149 is Polyphemus explaining the grounds for the punishment he intends to deal out or Odysseus attempting to hearten his men for another stage of their adventure (perhaps encouraging them to meet the monster whose possessions they have been plundering) is unclear:

> ἧσθε πανημέριοι χορταζόμενοι γάλα λευκόν,
> πυὸν δαινύμενοι κἀμπιμπλάμενοι πυριάτηι

> You sat there all day long, feasting on white milk,
> dining on beestings, and filling yourselves with curds

[10] For a helpful recent survey of the consensus view of the contents of *Odusseis*, see CASOLARI (2003, 61-77).
[11] I.e. "such Maronic wine"; cf. Hom. *Od*. IX 196-212.

But even though fr. 146 is only conjecturally assigned to *Odusseis*, this material combined is to all appearances a relatively faithful, if intriguingly polymetrical adaptation of the famous story in *Odyssey* IX, in which the hero and his men visit the Cyclops' cave and steal his food; are trapped and some of them eaten there; and ultimately get the monster drunk and escape with help from the false name *Outis*. Polyphemus has grown a bit more "civilized" than in Homer: he is now prepared not just to cook the Achaeans (rather than eating them raw, as in the *Odyssey*) but to cook them in at least four different ways, and to eat them with three different sauces, and to pick only the most perfectly roasted for consumption. And apparently the setting has evolved a bit as well, as fr. 148 – seemingly part of a messenger speech or the like, featuring a vivid "historical" present – suggests:

> οἱ δ' ἀλυσκάζουσιν ὑπὸ ταῖς κλινίσιν
>
> But they try to escape beneath the couches

Runkel suggested that the speaker here must be Odysseus describing the behavior of his companions when he encouraged them to help him blind the monster[12]. But couches belong to a symposium, not in a cave doubling as a goat-pen, and the natural conclusion is that the other Greeks were lying on them before they decided to climb underneath instead, *sc*. when trouble of one sort or another began[13]. What we have in Cratinus' play thus seems to be not so much a botched burglary (as in Homer's version of the story) as a dinner-party gone terribly wrong, a point whose implications I take up later on.

The Homeric story of Odysseus and the Cyclops was clearly well known in the 5th century and thus readily available for comic adaptation. In the opening scene of Aristophanes' *Wasps*[14], for example, Philocleon's final ploy to escape the house is to suspend himself beneath a donkey that is being taken off to the market to be sold. When spotted, the old man claims to be *Outis* – "Nobody"; but he then goes on to identify himself as an Ithacan, and to suggest that his captors may be interested in eating him; and once he has been unceremoniously shoved back inside, a large stone mortar is placed against the

[12] RUNKEL (1827, 42).

[13] MASTROMARCO (1998, 39) compares *Od*. IX 236 ἡμεῖς δὲ δείσαντες ἀπεσσύμεθ' ἐς μυχὸν ἄντρου (a reaction to the first sight of the monster).

[14] Ar. *Vesp*. 184f., 191-95: (Βδ.) τίς εἶ ποτ', ὦνθρωπ', ἐτεόν; (Φι.) Οὖτις, νὴ Δία. / (Βδ.) Οὖτις σύ; ποδαπός; (Φι.) Ἴθακος Ἀποδρασιππίδου. / ... / (Βδ). πονηρὸς εἶ πόρρω τέχνης καὶ παράβολος. / (Φι.) ἐγὼ πονηρός; οὐ μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶσθα σὺ / νῦν μ' ὄντ' ἄριστον· ἀλλ' ἴσως, ὅταν φάγῃς / ὑπογάστριον γέροντος ἡλιαστικοῦ, «(Bd.) Who in fact are you, sir? (Ph.) Outis, by God. (Bd.) You're Outis? Your origins? (Ph.) An Ithacan, the son of Horseflight. […] (Bd.) You're unspeakably tricky and treacherous. (Ph.) I'm no good? No, by God; you're unaware that I'm actually excellent/good "for lunch". But perhaps you'll understand, when you eat some old juror ribs».

door to keep it closed (*Vesp*. 201f.). We also know of a satyr-play *Cyclops* by the tragic poet Aristias (active in the 460s or so), of which only a single fragment survives, but enough to suggest that Aristias' Polyphemus too was not just an unwilling drunk but a symposiast (*TrGF* 9 F 4):

ἀπώλεσας τὸν οἶνον ἐπιχέας ὕδωϱ

You ruined the wine by adding water to it

The earliest and most intriguing evidence, however, comes from the Sicilian playwright Epicharmus (active early in the 5th century), of whose *Cyclops* we have three short but suggestive fragments:

fr. 70 ναὶ τὸν Ποτειδᾶν, κοιλότεϱος ὁλμοῦ πολύ

By Poseidon, much more hollow than a mortar

fr. 71 χοϱδαί τε ἀδύ, ναὶ μὰ Δία, χὠ κωλεός

Entrails are delicious, by Zeus, as is the ham

fr. 72 φέϱ᾽ ἐγχέας ἐς τὸ σκύφος

Come on, after you pour it into the drinking cup

The first is perhaps said of a large drinking vessel; the second is easily taken as an appreciative evaluation of a meal or anticipated meal of human flesh by a sophisticated man-eating monster; and the third suggests that Polyphemus was once again got drunk by his visitors.

Not only was the sub-Homeric, 5th-century Cyclops seemingly a quite amusing character, therefore, but the comic and satyr-play versions of the story, as widely imagined and reconstructed (including in this paper so far), are all strikingly similar: the monster comes into contact with and/or captures Odysseus and his men; there is a feast, but a more sophisticated one than in the *Odyssey*; Polyphemus is offered wine and gets drunk; and the Greeks escape, presumably after blinding him. The fact of the matter, however, is that we do not know even that much about these fragmentarily preserved plays, and if the generic plot described above sounds strikingly like that of the surviving Euripidean *Cyclops*, I suggest that that is no accident. We know what went on in *Cyclops*, and we know that there were other 5th-century stage-adaptations of Homer's story; and the "attraction" of the one complete text we have is such that all the other "lost" plays come to resemble it. Thus

Penelope "cannot" be speaking in Cratinus fr. 147, because Penelope "cannot" be in a Cyclops-play, because she is not a character in the one complete play entitled *Cyclops* that we have. As noted earlier, analogy is a powerful tool for recovering lost poetic structures, making this a difficult argument to escape. All the same, in what follows I propose to look at some other 5th- and 4th-century Cyclopes and to use the diversity apparent there to open up additional possibilities for how Cratinus might have presented the story.

The crucial figure in this connection is the dithyrambic poet Philoxenus of Cythera, about whose biography and work we know relatively little, in part because ancient scholarship routinely confused him with another poet, Philoxenus of Leucas[15]. But Philoxenus of Cythera is several times associated with Dionysius I, tyrant of Syracuse *circa* 405-367 BCE[16], and he thus belongs to the late 5th or early 4th century, making him a rough contemporary of Aristophanes in the second half of his career and of other comic poets such as Nicophon (discussed above) and Antiphanes and Nicochares (discussed below). What Page presents as ten fragments of Philoxenus' *Cyclops or Galateia* are preserved, and a number of them contain elements of the "traditional" character and story discussed earlier[17]. Polyphemus is a rustic figure, who seemingly keeps goats (*PMG* 820)[18]; he captures Odysseus in his cave and terrifies him (*PMG* 824)[19]; and at some point he says «You sacrificed; you will be sacrificed in turn» (*PMG* 823)[20]. As for the end of the story, Odysseus speaks *PMG* 824 in retrospect, so he must escape the cave, and the chorus of Aristophanes' *Plutus* mock the slave character Cario by quoting (and parodying) Philoxenus' poem (*PMG* 820), comparing Cario to a drunk Cyclops collapsed on the floor and subsequently blinded. The chorus might be running several versions of the story together for comic effect, and similar objections can be raised to Athenaeus' claim (*PMG* 821)[21] that by referring to the beautiful eyes of someone else, Philoxenus' Polyphemus ironically anticipated what Odysseus would do to him. All the same, the obvious

[15] Fragments of Philoxenus are cited from PAGE (1962) = *PMG*.
[16] Phaenias of Eresus fr. 13 Wehrli ap. Ath. I 6e–7a (= *PMG* 816, quoted and discussed below); Ael. *VH* XII 44; Diod.Sic. XV 6; Plut. *Mor*. 471e; cf. Duris *FGrH* 76 F 58; Macho 64-67 (both of which merely put Philoxenus in Sicily and Syracuse, respectively).
[17] For Philoxenus' poem, see in general HORDERN (1999, esp. 450f.); CASOLARI (2003, 127-34).
[18] *PMG* 820 (= Ar. *Pl*. 298-301): πήραν ἔχοντα λάχανά τ᾽ ἄγρια δροσερὰ κραιπαλῶντα / ἡγούμενον τοῖς προβατίοις / εἰκῆ δὲ καταδαρθόντα που / μέγαν λαβόντες ἡμμένον / σφηνίσκον ἐκτυφλῶσαι, «with a beggar's bag, some damp wild greens, and a hangover, leading his flocks, and casually fallen asleep somewhere; and taking a big, blazing stake, to blind him with it».
[19] *PMG* 824 οἵωι μ᾽ ὁ δαίμων τέρατι συγκαθεῖρξε, «What a monster the deity shut me up with!».
[20] *PMG* 823 ἔθυσας, ἀντιθύσηι.
[21] *PMG* 821 *ap.* Ath. XIII 564e προμαντευόμενος τὴν τύφλωσιν ... λέγων ὧδε· / ὦ καλλιπρόσωπε χρυσεοβόστρυχε / χαριτόφωνε θάλος Ἐρώτων, «foreseeing his blinding […] putting it as follows: "O child of the love gods, with your beautiful face, and your golden locks of hair, and your pleasant voice!"».

conclusion is that the Cyclops was blinded, particularly given the interpretation of the poem put forward by the late 4th-c. Peripatetic scholar Phaenias of Eresus, according to whom it was written to mock Dionysius I[22]. There is good reason to think that the anecdote this interpretation preserves (discussed below) regarding how the relationship between Philoxenus and Dionysius fell apart is an invention. But Dionysius' son and successor Dionysius II is repeatedly said to have been so far-sighted that he could not find dishes on the dinner table without assistance, which is to say that he was (mockingly put) "blind"[23], and it seems a reasonable hypothesis that Phaenias confused the two men and interpreted Philoxenus' poem as a veiled reference to Dionysius specifically because Philoxenus' Cyclops, like Homer's and Euripides' before him, lost his eye[24].

The other striking feature of Philoxenus' Polyphemus is his love for a sea-nymph named Galateia (literally "Milky White", that is, as white as the Cyclops' own milk and cheese). According to Aristophanes' *Plutus* and the *scholia* to that play (*PMG* 819)[25], Polyphemus appeared in Philoxenus' poem playing the lyre, a sound the nonsense word θρεττανελό was supposed to represent, and "teasing" Galateia or "stirring her up", which probably means encouraging her to come out of the water to meet and perhaps marry him. We also have several fragments of Philoxenus' poem in which the Cyclops praises his beloved's beauty and charm (*PMG* 821f.)[26], and if we follow Bergk and Page in believing that a version of the story preserved by the 5th-century CE Christian bishop Synesius of Ptolemais (*PMG* 818) comes more or less direct from Philoxenus, perhaps Odysseus offered to charm Galateia for Polyphemus as a way of escaping the monster's cave[27]. The significant point, at any rate, is that Philoxenus' Cyclops had an erotic side, and that he was thus not just once but twice disappointed at the end of the poem: not only did he fail to eat Odysseus, and lose his eye as result, but he also failed to get the girl for whom he pined. That those two disasters were intertwined is suggested once again by Phaenias' interpretation of the poem. According to him, Dionysius had a lover named Galateia, and when he caught Philoxenus trying to seduce her, he had the poet thrown into the quarries. Phaenias claims that Philoxenus wrote *The Cyclops or Galateia* there, modeling

[22] Fr. 13 Wehrli = *PMG* 816 (quoted and discussed below).
[23] Ath. VI 249f; X 435d-e.
[24] Cf. Σ^{VEV57} Ar. *Pl.* 290 and Tzetzes on the same passage; WEBSTER (1970², 20f.).
[25] *PMG* 819 = Ar. *Pl.* 290 with *scholia*: διασύρει δὲ Φιλόξενον τὸν τραγικόν, ὃς εἰσήγαγε κιθαρίζοντα τὸν Πολύφημον. τό δέ θρεττανελό ποιὸν μέλος καὶ κρουμάτιόν ἐστι. ... ὃς ἔγραψε τὸν ἔρωτα τοῦ Κύκλωπος τὸν ἐπὶ τῆι Γαλατείαι. ... ἐκεῖ γὰρ εἰσάγει τὸν Κύκλωπα κιθαρίζοντα καὶ ἐρεθίζοντα τὴν Γαλάτειαν. «He is making fun of the tragedian Philoxenus, who brought Polyphemus onstage playing the lyre. The expression *threttanelo* is a song, as it were, or a musical phrase. […] He wrote about the Cyclops' love for Galateia. […] Because he brings the Cyclops onstage there, playing the lyre and exciting Galateia».
[26] *PMG* 822 Μούσαις εὐφώνοις ἰωμένη τὸν ἔρωτα, «she who inspires love with fair-voiced songs».
[27] For Synesius and Philoxenus, see HORDERN (2004, 285-88).

Polyphemus on Dionysius, Galateia on the tyrant's lover, and Odysseus on himself. Whether one believes all this or not, the implication is that the dithyramb presented something like a love-triangle: the Cyclops did not get Galateia because Odysseus came between them, perhaps because she found the hero more attractive than the monster. Indeed, one can easily imagine Odysseus at the end of the poem sailing off into the sea toward Ithaca, escorted by his sea-goddess lover and leaving the hopeless, hapless Cyclops behind.

This image of Polyphemus as a clumsy rustic lover of a woman "far too good for him" was taken over by the Middle Comic poet Antiphanes, three fragments of whose *Cyclops* survive[28]. Fr. 129[29] might be taken as a comment by the monster himself, explaining how he plans to finance the wedding or the marriage, although this is a very tentative thesis. Frr. 130[30] and 131[31] are lists of food – the first of seafood, the second of herd-animals and their products – which the speaker and someone else aspire to share, and is presumably part of a wedding-banquet catalogue or the like. Kock (followed by Kassel – Austin) took the speaker of fr. 130 to be Polyphemus explaining what his bride, as a sea-goddess, would be able to contribute to the projected meal[32], although there is no reason why the lines should not be assigned to Galateia herself. But the tragedy – and thus the humor – comes in fr. 131, which can only be a list of the Cyclops' own anticipated contribution, and which begins with lovingly detailed descriptions of various sorts of cows, goats, and pigs, but ends bathetically «and cheese, and cheese, and cheese, and cheese, and cheese and cheese».

Even less survives of Nicochares' comedy *Galateia*, which must date to about the same time as Philoxenus' poem, a question to which I return below. But Nereids were mentioned in the play[33], among them presumably Galateia herself, and someone says to

[28] For the comedies discussed below, see in general CASOLARI (2003) pp. 136-38 for Antiphanes, pp. 134-36 for Nicochares, pp. 138-43 for Alexis.

[29] Antiph. fr. 129 κέρμα γάρ τι τυγχάνω, «I happen to have some small change».

[30] Antiph. fr. 130 ἔστω δ' ἡμῖν κεστρεὺς τμητός, / νάρκη πνικτή, πέρκη σχιστή, / τευθὶς σακτή, συνόδων ὀπτός, / γλαύκου προτομή, γόγγρου κεφαλή, / βατράχου γαστήρ, θύννου λαγόνες, / βατίδος νῶτον, κέστρας ὀσφύς, / † ψηττας κισχος † / μαινίς, καρίς, τρίγλη, φυκίς· / τῶν τοιούτων μηδὲν ἀπέστω, «Let's have sliced grey mullet, baked electric eel, perch split down the middle, stuffed squid, roasted four-toothed sea-bream, the front half of a *glaukos*, the head of a conger-eel, the belly of a fishing-frog, the flanks of a tuna, the back of a skate, the tail of a spet, † a flounder's [corrupt] † a minnow, a shrimp, a red mullet, a *phukis*-wrasse. No fish of this kind should be missing».

[31] Antiph. fr. 131 τῶν χερσαίων δ' ἡμῖν ἥξει / παρ' ἐμοῦ ταυτί· / βοῦς ἀγελαῖος, τράγος ὑλιβάτης, / αἶξ οὐρανία, κριὸς τομίας, / κάπρος ἐκτομίας, ὗς οὐ τομίας, / δέλφαξ, δασύπους, ἔριφοι, / τυρὸς χλωρός, τυρὸς ξηρός, / τυρὸς κοπτός, τυρὸς ξυστός, / τυρὸς τμητός, τυρὸς πηκτός, «Of land-animals, I'll contribute the following to our event: a herd-cow, a high-striding he-goat, a heavenly mountain goat, a castrated ram, a eunuch boar, an uncastrated pig, a sow, a hare, kids, green cheese, dried cheese, chopped cheese, grated cheese, minced cheese, pressed cheese».

[32] KOCK (1884, 66).

[33] Nicoch. fr. 6 Νηρῆιδες· ... Νικοχάρης Γαλατείαι, «Nereids: […] Nicochares in *Galateia*».

someone else[34]: «What in the world? Are you worse educated than Philonides of Melite?». As Meineke again saw, this is easily taken to be Galateia abusing her would-be lover[35], and while we have no idea what went on in the play beyond this, the difficulties a bumbling, one-eyed goatherd had in negotiating a love-affair with a sea-goddess were certainly fundamental to the story[36].

Nicochares' play is undated, but the *Suda* (ν 407 = test. 1) calls him a contemporary of Aristophanes, and his *Laconians* was performed at the same contest as *Plutus* in 388 BCE[37]. What one would like to know is whether Nicochares' *Galateia* is earlier than Philoxenus' *Cyclops or Galateia*, otherwise dated only by the quotation and reference to it in *Plutus*, and thus whether the idea of an erotic Polyphemus was invented by Philoxenus or was widely available by his time – and perhaps therefore also available for Cratinus. Euripides' satyric *Cyclops* has no substantial "love-interest" (although Silenus is forced to serve as the monster's Ganymede at one point), but is simply a parodic version of *Odyssey* IX, and it is on that basis, I have argued above, that it is routinely assumed that Cratinus' *Odysseis* too must have lacked an erotic element and been similarly restricted to a travesty of Homer. But those are dubious assumptions, based on little more than accidents of preservation and the "magnetic field" generated by the small number of texts we have complete. Whether Polyphemus had a romantic side before Philoxenus of Cythera composed his *Cyclops or Galateia* is impossible to say, although the performance of Nicochares' *Galateia* around the same time raises the possibility that he did. In any case, Philoxenus saw the erotic potential of the monster, and his poem had a sufficiently wide appeal to be parodied at least once in comedy, by Aristophanes, so there is no reason why another poet should not have had a cognate idea a generation earlier. Nor, as I argue below, are we required to believe that the plot of Cratinus' *Odysseis* was quite as simple as it is usually made out to be. Before taking up that point, however, I return to fr. 147.

One can easily manufacture reasons why Polyphemus might ask for news of Odysseus' whereabouts and refer to him as τὸν ἄνδρα (translating the words «the man») and even more unexpectedly as «the dear son of Laertes». One can also generate explanations for why the second speaker – by universal consent Odysseus himself – might put the Cyclops off but claim to have seen the hero elsewhere, proving that he is still alive although otherwise occupied. But the far more likely and obvious conclusion, if one simply

[34] Nicoch. fr. 4 τί δῆτ'; ἀπαιδευτότερος εἶ Φιλωνίδου / τοῦ Μελιτέως;
[35] MEINEKE (1826, 254).
[36] Alexis also wrote a *Galateia* a generation or so later (frr. 37-40), but nothing is known of the plot except that a slave described a crude master who had studied with the hedonist philosopher Aristippus of Cyrene in his youth (fr. 37), and who ARNOTT (1996, 141) suggests may have been Polyphemus.
[37] Nicochares' name is perhaps to be restored three lines below Nicophon's in the middle of the second column of the list of comic poets victorious at the Lenaea at *IG* II^2 2325E.25 (test. *4).

looks at the fragment itself, is that the first speaker is Penelope, who appropriately refers to Odysseus as «my husband» (τὸν ἄνδρα) who is dear (φίλον) to her. The question then becomes, Why is Penelope in a Cyclops-play? In the final section of this paper, I offer two suggestions, neither susceptible of proof but worth considering nonetheless[38]. The first is that, by some plot-twist we can only very tentatively reconstruct, Penelope has made her way to the Cyclops' island, fallen into Polyphemus' hands, and become an object of erotic fascination for him. Penelope "ought not" to do this. But surely that sort of "ought not" is at the core of one type of mythological parody; perhaps Odysseus' wife went to look for him, as Telemachus does in Homer's story, and was shipwrecked, kidnapped or the like. In addition to the Polyphemus-Galateia-Odysseus love-triangle reconstructed for Philoxenus' poem, one might compare Euripides' *Helen* of 410 BCE, a very similar comic tale of a hero's wife stranded in a distant land, threatened by a barbarian lover and ultimately rescued by her husband.

Alternatively, and with consequences of a different sort for our understanding of Cratinus' dramaturgy: In her inventive and insightful discussion of the opening sections of *Odusseis*, Emmanuela Bakola has shown that the play must have begun with a storm at sea (esp. fr. 143), in the course of which the hero and the chorus of Ithacan sailors travelled through the orchestra in an elaborate stage-boat, finally coming "to shore" near the edge of the raised stage, on what was presented as the island of the Cyclopes[39]. Bakola emphasizes the enormous investment, practical and dramatic, made by the playwright in this boat and thus in the opening sequence of the comedy. But she also goes on to insist, on no substantial evidence, that the rest of Cratinus' play must have taken place before Polyphemus' cave because dramatic settings of comedies do not change radically once the action is underway – although Aristophanes' *Peace*, where the scene oscillates between Heaven and Earth, is one obvious counter-example, and *Frogs*, which includes a journey from Heracles' house (wherever that may) to the Underworld[40], is another, and there is no reason why Cratinus should not have done what he wanted in this regard in any case. Indeed, to the extent that Bakola is right about the extent of the poet's "investment" in the boat in the orchestra, it is that much less likely that he abandoned it after the opening sequence. Platonius gives us our only real summary of the plot of Cratinus' play, after all,

[38] I assume a more or less coherent narrative providing the basic structure of Cratinus' comedy. As one of the anonymous referees points out, the playwright may instead simply have strung together a series of reworked scenes from the *Odyssey*. Once we allow centrifugal hypotheses of that sort, all bets are off about making larger sense of the fragments of the comedies preserved for us – although (in line with the larger thesis of this paper) that might not be an entirely unhappy development for modern scholarship.
[39] BAKOLA (2010, 234-46).
[40] Cf. from tragedy Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, which moves from Apollo's sanctuary in Delphi to Athens.

and he calls it a parody not of the Cyclops-story but of the *Odyssey tout court*[41]; and once we recognize that Odysseus and his men may well have set sail a second time or even a third, there is no reason why fr. 147 should not belong to a comic Penelope and Odysseus playing out a version of their traditional Homeric story back on Ithaca. In that case, the couches in fr. 148 might belong in the *megaron* in the palace, so that this becomes part of a parodic description of the battle in *Odyssey* XXII, not of the confrontation with the monster in his cave. Indeed, one can imagine a plot in which Odysseus and his men are blown not to the Cyclopes' island, as in Homer, but straight to Ithaca, where Polyphemus has (for some once again indecipherable reason) taken up residence, like the Suitors in the traditional version of the story, courting Penelope and eating up the household's food, so that the various mythic exemplars collapse neatly and amusingly in upon one another.

That some of the arguments advanced above about Cratinus' *Odusseis* are open to objection and debate is obvious. But the fact that they are is fundamental to my larger point: The same can be said of all other reconstructions of the play, and in matters of this sort, we generally do better to admit what we do not know and acknowledge a wide range of interesting possibilities, rather than clinging to a few sure facts that are no facts at all.

[41] Platonius *Prolog. de com.* I 51f. Holwerda (p. 5) οἱ γοῦν Ὀδυσσεῖς Κρατίνου ... διασυρμὸν ... Ὀδυσσείας τοῦ Ὁμήρου («Cratinus' *Odusseis*, for example, is a parody of Homer's *Odyssey*»).

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