

the *Odyssey* contains elements from more than one tale;⁸ we are concerned here with the one which tells of a hero's escape by blinding a giant. In 74 out of 125 modern versions, the giant has only one eye, and in many of the remainder he has some other defect of vision.⁹

Interestingly, Porada suggests that 'perhaps the rather frequent third hollow on the forehead of the hero with upright curls in cylinders of the Fara style . . . was meant to indicate a third eye'.¹⁰ We may compare Servius *ad Aen.* iii 636, 'multi Polyphemum dicunt unum habuisse oculum, alii duos, alii tres . . .'.¹¹

It is tempting to see in the first seal described above a portrayal of a Cyclops victorious against lions who might have threatened his sheep in their enclosure. An enclosure of some sort (hut, house, cave, castle etc.) features in most modern versions of the tale, and sheep are more often than not involved.¹²

It would be tempting also to find some hint of our hero preparing his weapon, in the figure brandishing a stick. However, the stick shown in the seal is curved or bent, and it is hard to connect it with any of the weapons commonly used in more recent versions (spit, boiling liquid, staff or stake).¹³

We are well into the realm of speculation now, and using even cuneiform sources (let alone Homer!) to interpret scenes in cylinder seals is notoriously hazardous. There is a long gap of time and place between Mesopotamia in 2500 B.C. and the *Odyssey*; a gap which at present can only be bridged by postulating persistent oral traditions and possible transmission via, say, Ugarit.¹⁴

Yet such transmission is not inherently improbable, and the 1500-year gap between the *Odyssey* and the earliest modern versions of the tale, as well as its extremely wide geographical distribution¹⁵ testify to its enduring appeal. It may well be that the Cyclops should join the ranks of Greek monsters who have oriental ancestry.

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⁸ Glenn *op.cit.* 143–4.

⁹ *Ibid.* 154–5.

¹⁰ 'Sumerian Art in Miniature (n. 3) 115–16. The cylinders she refers to date from the Early Dynastic period, in the first half of the 3rd millennium B.C. See Frankfort, *Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* pl. 39A for a particularly clear example.

¹¹ The three-eyed giants of modern Cretan folktales, however, are not a convincing parallel, since their third eye was apparently at the back of their head: Faure, *REG* lxxviii (1965) xxvii–xxviii.

¹² Glenn, *op.cit.* 152 and 167.

¹³ *Ibid.* 164–5.

¹⁴ See for example M. Schretter, *Alter Orient und Hellas* (Innsbruck 1974) 7–15; J. T. Hooker, *Mycenaean Greece* ch. 6, esp. 117–18.

¹⁵ Glenn, *op.cit.* 134–5.

AP ix 272 (Bianor) and the meaning of φθάνω

Καρφαλέος δῖμει Φοίβου λάτρης εὖτε γυναικός
εἶδεν ὑπὲρ τύμβου κρωσσίου ὄμβροδόκην,
κλάγξεν ὑπὲρ χείλους, ἀλλ' οὐ γένυς ἤπτετο βυσοῦ·
Φοῖβε, σὺ δ' εἰς τέχνην ὄρνι ἐκαιρομάνεις·
χερμάδα δὲ ψαλμῶν σφαιρονί, ποτόν ἀρπαγι χεῖλει
ἔφθανε μαιμάσσω †λαοτίτακτον† ὕδωρ.

In verse 6 Professor Giangrande (*JHS* xcv [1975] 36–7) would read *λαοτίταντον*, saying that it means 'expanded

by the stones'.¹ But *τιταίνω* does not mean 'expand' in volume; it ordinarily means 'extend', 'stretch' in length, and *-τίταντον* has no real claim to be regarded as suitable here. Besides, Giangrande's whole approach is based on the assumption that we have in this epigram exactly the same version of the story as is found in e.g. Pliny *NH* x 125, where the bird uniformly raises the level of the water by dropping stones into the vessel and can then drink at leisure. But some of the wording here suggests snatching haste; in particular *ἔφθανε* suggests that the bird 'caught' water splashed by the dropped stone(s) 'before it got away', i.e. before it fell back to the bottom of the vessel (*cf.* Gow–Page, *The Garland of Philip* ii 203 *ad loc.*).² Salmasius' *λαοτίτακτον* ('stone-shaken'; LSJ should indicate s.v. that it is a conjecture), very widely accepted and not mentioned by Giangrande, fits well with this interpretation (though there may be some doubts about the complete suitability of *τινάσσω* as a word for disturbing water; *λαοτάρακτον*, which I have not seen suggested, perhaps deserves a place in the apparatus).

To suit his view Giangrande gives *φθάνω* a new meaning, saying that *ἔφθανε* means simple 'reached', 'got at', and in support of this he cites a number of occurrences of *φθάνω* in the *Anthology*, to wit *AP* 384.3; *AP* vii 183.2; ix 252.5; ix 278.6. Anyone who thinks that *φθάνω* is devoid of the notion of anticipation in *AP* 384.3 (*τοὺς τρεῖς ἐνίκα, πρῶτος αἰθέρα φθάνων*) should think again, about *πρῶτος*: what justification can there be for creating a new meaning for *φθάνω* on the basis of this verse, in which *πρῶτος* and *φθάνων*, with its true and expected sense, reinforce each other in expressing the clearly paramount notion of anticipation, of victory? *AP* vii 183.2 (*Ἄιδης τὴν Κροκάλης ἔφθασε παρθενίην*) is part of an epigram of which the first verse is lost, but the sense is clear and it is quite certain that *ἔφθασε* does not simply mean 'reached', 'got at'; it means 'took' her virginity 'before her husband could': she died on her wedding day before consummation of the marriage. In *AP* ix 252.5–6 (*ἔφθανε δ' ἄνδρα / νηχομένων θηρῶν αὐτοδίδακτος ἀρης*) the ingenious wolves caught, overtook, their quarry before he could escape. In *AP* ix 278.6 (Bianor) (*αὐτὸς ὑπὸ βλοσυροῦ χεύματος ἔφθάνετο*) the boy was carried off by the flood before he could gain the shore: it is ludicrous to suggest that *ἔφθάνετο* means 'was reached'—he was already *in* the flood (*χεύμα δ' ἀναιδὲς / εἰσέθορεν*, 3–4). The boy (ix 278), the man pursued by the wolves (ix 252), and the water (ix 272) are all *prevented* from doing what they are trying to do or would naturally do; the subject of *φθάνω* is in each case too quick for the object and gets ahead of it, as it were, and stops it.

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¹ In the *Liverpool Class. Month.* ii (1977) 91 Professor Giangrande puts forward this supposed corruption of *λαοτίταντον* to *λαοτίτακτον* against me as an example of confusion of K and N.

² The doubts expressed in Gow–Page on whether Bianor quite knew what he was about are without justification; Professor Page's conjecture in v 5 (*χερμάδι δ' ὑψηλῶν*, the participle being a neologism) fits better with the usual version of the story.

Fulvio Orsini and Longus

H. van Thiel demonstrated only 16 years ago that the text of Longus's novel rests on two manuscripts, Laur.