Close Reading

[Author Name(s), First M. Last, Omit Titles and Degrees]

[Institutional Affiliation(s)]

Author Note

[Include any grant/funding information and a complete correspondence address.]

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Odysseus, a mortal hero of the poem Odyssey, has managed to escape from the Cyclops Polyphemus injuring him. Cyclopes is a god who was always proud of his power, but Odysseus has made him frustrated injuring his eye. The passage is in the form of dramatic monologue and it is rich with mythical allusions.

Odysseus shares his experience of interaction with Cyclops and the poem develops in the form of Odysseus’ speech. The passage is in free verse style and without any meter. Odysseus glamorizes himself sharing his dialogue with Cyclops when he claimed that any man who had the power and courage to injure a god was himself. Cyclops does not address the audience directly rather he speaks from the mouth of Odysseus when he introduces a new mythical character Telemus, and his father Eurymus. Cyclops recollects the word of Telemus who had told him earlier that Cyclops would lose his sight one day and it would be Odysseus who would make it happen. Thus, dramatic monologue develops and Odysseus recalls how Cyclops attempted to tempt him by offering help to make his voyage to home possible. Odysseus speaks like an adventurous hero here and how manly he declined the offer of Cyclops. The passage is a typical Greek poem excerpt as it revolves around Greek mythology of interaction between man and divinity. One more divine character has been introduced: Hades. The poem might have lost its rhyme scheme after being translated from the Greek language to English, but the rhythmical flow of the poem does not depart even after translation.

The main character and mortal hero Odysseus is the sole speaker in this passage who speaks like a story-teller. He shares his interaction with a giant god Cyclops (Laughlin, 1985). The interaction is followed by Odysseus’ adventures move of injuring a god. Thus, this passage is an ideal example of a dramatic-monologue rich with mythical allusions.

**References**

Laughlin, M. A. (1985). [Review of] Ken Levine and Ivory Waterworth Levine. Becoming American, The Oddysey [Odyssey] of a Refugee Family (film or video). *Explorations in Sights and Sounds*, *5*(1), 48-49.