

29). The anecdotes about Aristophanes' battles with Cleon offer tribute to the intellectual freedom of the fifth century as well as to Aristophanes' own courage. The epigrammists' distorted reminiscences of literary disputes in Alexandria at least suggest how important scholarship was to the poets of Callimachus' day.

We might have retained a clearer sense of the original value of the *Lives* and anecdotes had more biographers been like Plutarch than Herodicus. But a derisive tendency predominates; much of the biographers' material is drawn from comedy. Inevitably and consistently the biographies in their final form offer simple and demeaning portraits of the poets; they make many of their achievements appear miraculous and represent others as mere reflexes, so that even a Homer or a Pindar need not be too greatly envied. Callimachus complains in the *Aetia* prologue of the Telchines who mutter at his song, the 'race of the evil eye'. Since he is talking about poetry, ancient scholars inferred that the Telchines were other poets. But Callimachus, like Pindar, was aware that envy is not the sole provenance of one's colleagues or rivals; audiences and patrons seek to be pleased and flattered; the gods themselves were thought to resent consistent success. If the poets had been able to predict their future, they would have realised that their biographers would have posed an even greater threat to their achievement. Who else managed for so long to misconstrue the poets' explicit intentions, and to convince audiences to begin with *them* rather than with the poets' own works?

Lefkowitz, M. 1981. *The Lives of the Greek Poets*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

## Appendixes

### I. THE LIFE OF HOMER<sup>1</sup>

[1] Herodotus of Halicarnassus wrote the following history of Homer's background, upbringing and life, and sought to make his account complete and absolutely reliable:

After Cyme (the old Aeolian one) was founded, there came together various Hellenic families in that city, including some from Magnesia. Among them was Melanopus the son of Ithagenes, himself the son of Crethon. Melanopus was not a rich man; in fact, he had only limited means. This Melanopus married in Cyme the daughter of Omyres. She bore him a female child, to whom he gave the name Cretheis. Both Melanopus and his wife then died, but Melanopus had made his daughter the ward of a close friend, Cleanax of Argos.

[2] But after some time had gone by it turned out that the girl had had sexual relations with a man and had secretly become pregnant. At first she kept it a secret, but when Cleanax realised it, he was distressed by what had happened, and he called Cretheis aside and took her to task, because he was concerned about the disgrace especially among his fellow citizens. So he made the following provision for her: the Cymeans happened at that time to be building a town in a corner of the valley of the Hermus river. Theseus gave the settlers the town's name, Smyrna, because he wanted to have a memorial to his wife's name, which was Smyrne. Theseus was one of the founders of Cyme, among the foremost Thessalians, descended from Eumelus the son of Admetus. He was a very wealthy man. It was there that Cleanax sent Cretheis, to

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Wilamowitz 1929.

Ismenias of Boeotia. He had been assigned to the colonists by lot, and happened to be a particularly good friend of his.

[3] After some time had gone by Cretheis went with the other women to a festival on the banks of the river called Meles, and since her time was already near, she bore Homer; he was not blind, but could see. She gave her son the name Melesigenes, calling him after the river. For a while Cretheis stayed in Ismenias' house. But after some time she left and undertook to support herself and her son by working with her hands. She took on odd jobs with various people, and educated her son as best she could.

[4] There was in Smyrna at that time a man by the name of Phemius, who taught boys their letters and all their poetry. He paid Cretheis—since he lived alone—to work some wool for him; he took fleeces from his boys for pay. Since she did the work for him in good order and behaved herself properly, she pleased Phemius greatly. Finally he proposed that she live with him. He persuaded her by various arguments, the sort of thing that he thought would appeal to her, particularly about her son, that he would adopt him, and that if the boy were brought up and educated by him he would be a noteworthy man. He had seen that the child was clever and particularly good-looking. So he persuaded her to do as he said.

[5] The boy had natural talent, and as soon as his drill and education began, he surpassed all the others by far. After some time, when he had reached maturity, he proved to be in no way inferior to Phemius in his teaching. And so when Phemius died he left everything to the boy. Not long afterwards, Cretheis died too. Melesigenes established himself in the teaching profession, and because he was now by himself, he was noticed by more people, and both the locals and new arrivals from abroad became admirers of his. For Smyrna was a market town, and quantities of grain were brought there, much of it grain brought into the city from the surrounding countryside. Visitors, as soon as they finished their work, stopped and rested at Melesigenes' school.

[6] Among the visitors to his school was a merchant, Mentos, who came from the region near Leucas. He had sailed to

Smyrna to buy produce, an educated man, at least by the standards of that time, and very knowledgeable. He persuaded Melesigenes to sail with him and to disband the school: he would receive a salary and all expenses. The idea was that he ought to see foreign lands and cities while he was still young. I think particularly that the notion of travel was very appealing to him, since possibly even then he was thinking of becoming a poet. So Melesigenes disbanded his school and went off in the ship with Mentos, and wherever he went he saw all the countryside and learned by asking questions. It is probable that even then he was writing down a record of it all.

[7] After they had travelled back from Tyrsenia and Iberia they came to Ithaca. And it happened that Melesigenes, who already had suffered from eye disease, became much worse. Because he needed treatment Mentos left him in Ithaca when he was ready to sail to Leucas, at the house of a man who was an especially good friend of his, Mentor of Ithaca the son of Alcimus, and he asked him to take great care of Melesigenes. Mentor nursed him assiduously—he was comfortably off and enjoyed by far the greatest reputation for justice and hospitality among the Ithacans. It was there that Melesigenes happened to make inquiries and learn about Odysseus. Now the Ithacans say that Melesigenes became blind when he was on their island, but I say that he regained his health then, and later became blind in Colophon. And the Colophonians agree with me about this.

[8] Mentos on his way back from Leucas sailed to Ithaca and collected Melesigenes. He sailed about with Mentos for a long time, but when he got to Colophon it turned out that he developed eye trouble again and could no longer resist the disease, and so it was in Colophon that he became blind. From Colophon then, now blind, Melesigenes came back to Smyrna, and so took up composing poetry.

[9] After some time, since he had no means of support in Smyrna he decided to go to Cyme. He journeyed through the plain of Hermus and went to Neon Teichos, a colony of Cyme. The settlement had established eight years after the founding of Cyme. There the story is told that he went and stood at an armourer's shop and recited these first verses:

Respect a man who needs hospitality and a home.  
 you who dwell in the steep city that is the fair daughter of Cyme,  
 lowest foothill of high-wooded Saedene,  
 you who drink the ambrosial water of a divine river,  
 whirling Hermus, whom immortal Zeus begot.

[Epigram 1]

Saedene is a mountain that lies above the Hermus river and Neon Teichos. The armourer's name was Tychius. When he heard the verses he thought he should take the man in, especially since he took pity on him and his request because of his blindness. So he told him to come into his workroom and invited him to share what he had. Melesigenes went in, and as he sat in the armourer's shop recited his poetry also to others who were there, the poems *Amphiaraus' Expedition to Thebes*, and the *Hymns* to the gods which he had written, and when he produced aphorisms out of what the people sitting in the leather-worker's shop said in general conversation, Melesigenes seemed remarkable to all who heard him.

[10] For a time, then, Melesigenes was able to make a living from his poetry in the area around Neon Teichos. The people of Neon Teichos showed me the spot where Homer sat and recited his verses, and they had great reverence for the place. A black poplar tree also grows there, which they say has been growing there since the time when Melesigenes came to their city.

[11] After some time, when he found himself idle and helpless and with barely enough to eat, Melesigenes decided to go to Cyme to see if he could do any better. As he was about to start off he spoke these verses:

May my feet bring me straight to a city of righteous men;  
 their hearts are generous and their intentions best.

[Epigram 2]

He journeyed from Neon Teichos and came to Cyme, making his way through Larisse, since this was the easiest route for him. So, as the people of Cyme tell it, the story is that he wrote the following epigram for Midas son of Gordios, the king of

Phrygia, at the request of Midas' inlaws. The epigram is still inscribed on the stele of the tomb, in four verses:

As long as water flows and the tall trees bloom,  
 and the rising sun shines and the bright moon,  
 I shall remain here on this tomb of great lamentation  
 and tell passers-by that Midas is buried here.

[Epigram 3]

[12] Melesigenes sat down and joined the old men's discussions in the town square of Cyme, and recited the verses he had composed. He brought pleasure to all who heard him, who then became admirers of his. When he realised that the Cymeans liked his poetry and found that they enjoyed listening to him, he made the following proposals to them: he said that if they wanted to feed him at public expense, he would make their city very famous. The people who listened to him were eager to do this, and they advised him to go to the town senate and ask the senators, and they said that they would come and help him. He took their advice and when the senate met came into the senate house and asked the man who was appointed to that office to lead him into the meeting. He promised that he would and at the appropriate moment he led him in. Melesigenes stood in front of the meeting and made the argument about public support that he had made in his conversations. After he had spoken, he went out and sat down.

[13] They deliberated about what they ought to say in reply to him. The man who brought him in and other senators who had been in his audiences at the conversations were eager to support him. But the story is that one of the magistrates opposed his request, using among his arguments that if they thought it right to feed hostages [*homēroi*], they would acquire a large and useless crowd of hangers-on. It was as a result of this event that the name Homer replaced Melesigenes, since the Cymeans call blind men *homēroi*. And so the man who was previously called Melesigenes acquired the name Homer. And strangers have continued to do so, when they tell stories about him.

[14] In the end the argument was won by the magistrate, not

to support Homer, and the rest of the senate also agreed. The officer came out and sat down next to Homer. He went over the arguments on both sides about his request and what the senate had decided. Homer, when he had heard this, lamented his fate and recited the following verses:

To such a fate Zeus gave me as prey  
 When as a child I played at the knee of my dear mother.  
 Her by the will of Zeus the people of Phricon  
 once sheltered, riders of wild horses,  
 they waged war faster than raging fire  
 against Aeolian Smyrna, the sea's neighbour, sea-shaken.  
 The glorious water of the holy Meles runs through it  
 from that source the Muses rose up, the glorious children of Zeus  
 and were willing to praise its rich land  
 and the city of its people.  
 But they scorned the holy voice, the renown of song  
 in their folly. This one of them shall recall when he is in trouble,  
 the man who decided my fate, with his taunts to them.  
 The destiny Zeus gave me when I was born  
 I shall endure, bearing what is yet to come with patient heart.  
 No longer do my limbs strive to remain in the holy streets  
 of Cyme, but my strong heart urges me  
 to go to other men's cities, weak as I am.

[Epigram 4]

[15] After that he moved from Cyme to Phocaea, after placing a curse on the Cymeans that no famous poet would be born in their country who would bring the Cymeans glory. When he arrived in Phocaea he lived in the same way as before, reciting his poetry as he sat in on the men's discussions. In Phocaea at that time there lived a certain Thestorides who taught boys their letters—not an honourable man. When he learned of Homer's poetry he made proposals to him of this sort: he said that he was prepared to take Homer in and look after him and feed him, provided that he could write down what Homer had composed and could take down whatever new poetry Homer composed.

[16] Homer listened and decided that he would agree, since he was in need of the necessities of life and to be taken care of.

While he stayed with Thestorides he composed the *Little Iliad*, the epic that begins:

I sing of Iliion and Dardania with its good horses  
 the city for which the Danaans suffered greatly, servants of Ares.  
 [Il. Par. 1 Allen]

He also wrote the epic called *Phocais*, which the Phocaeans say he composed while he was in their city. When Thestorides had written down the *Phocais* and everything else Homer composed, he decided to move away from Phocaea, because he wanted to represent Homer's poetry as his own. Also, he no longer took care of Homer as he had before. Homer then composed the following verses:

Thestorides, of the many things that make no sense to mortals,  
 none is more incomprehensible than the human mind.  
 [Epigram 5]

Thestorides then moved from Phocaea to Chios and set up a school and recited Homer's epics as his own. He won much praise and profit from them. Homer meanwhile went back to his old way of life in Phocaea and made a living from his poetry.

[17] Not long after some Chian merchants arrived in Phocaea, and heard poetry by Homer that they had first heard many times in Chios from Thestorides. They told Homer that there was someone in Chios who recited the same verses, a teacher of letters, who had indeed won great praise for his recitations. Homer realised that this teacher might be Thestorides and wanted with all his heart to go to Chios. But when he went down to the harbour he could not catch any boats sailing to Chios, though some men were getting ready to sail to Erythraea for lumber. Homer was happy to make the voyage to Erythraea, and he went up to the sailors and asked them to take him on as a passenger. He recited persuasive verses with which he was bound to convince them. They decided to take him, and told him to get into the boat. Homer praised them greatly and got in the boat. After he was seated, he recited these verses:

Hear me, Poseidon with your great strength, earthshaker,  
 you who protect [?] with its broad dancing places and  
 holy Helicon,  
 grant us a fair wind and that there be a voyage home without  
 pain  
 for these sailors who are the ship's escorts and captains.  
 Grant that when I come to the foothills of Mimas  
 with its high cliffs, that I find men who respect me, pious men,  
 and may I be avenged on the man who deceived me  
 and angered Zeus god of guests and a guest's table.

[Epigram 6]

[18] When they got to Erythraea after a calm voyage,  
 Homer then spent the night on the boat. The next day he asked  
 one of the sailors to bring him to the city. And they sent some-  
 one with him. Homer travelled until he came to Erythraea, a  
 place which is steep and mountainous, and he spoke these  
 verses:

Queen earth giver of all, giver of honeysweet happiness,  
 I see how to some men you appear arable  
 but to others infertile and harsh, when you are angry at them.

[Epigram 7]

When he got to the city of Erythraea, he asked about the voyage  
 to Chios. A man greeted him who had seen him in Phocaea,  
 and embraced him. Homer asked him to find a boat, so he could  
 make the crossing to Chios.

[19] Since no vessel was going out from the harbour, the man  
 took him to where the fisherman's boats set out. And somehow  
 it happened that there were some fishermen who were getting  
 ready to sail to Chios. The man who led Homer there asked  
 them to take Homer on board. But they took no account of  
 him and set sail without him. So Homer spoke these verses:

Sailors who travel by sea, ill-fated  
 like trembling diver-birds you lead an unenviable life;  
 respect the honour of Zeus god of guests and his high power,  
 for dreadful is the judgment of Zeus god of guests, when his law  
 is broken

[Epigram 8]

When they set sail it happened that an adverse wind sprang up.  
 So they turned back and returned to the place from where they  
 had set out, and they found Homer still sitting on the beach.  
 When he discovered that they had come back he said: 'Stran-  
 gers. An adverse wind sprang up and caught you. But now take  
 me along with you and you will be able to make your voyage.'  
 The fishermen now were sorry that they hadn't taken Homer  
 on at first. They said that they wouldn't leave him behind, if he  
 wanted to sail with them, and they told him to get on board.  
 And so once they took him with them they set sail and beached  
 the ship on a promontory.

[20] The fishermen set about their work; Homer spent the  
 night on the beach. But during the day he journeyed forth and  
 after wandering around came to the place that is called Pitys.  
 And while he stopped there for the night a fruit from a pine  
 tree fell on him, the kind some call *strobiloi* (spinning tops) and  
 others cones. And Homer spoke these verses:

Another pine tree drops better fruit than you  
 a tree in the hills of windy Ida with its many glens,  
 there men will acquire the iron for war, at the time  
 when the Cebrenians rule the country.

[Epigram 9]

At that time the Cymeans were getting ready to found Cebre-  
 nia on Mt. Ida, and from there came a great supply of iron.

[21] Homer got up from under the pine tree and set out after  
 the sound of goats being herded. When their dogs barked at  
 him, he cried out. When he heard Homer's voice, Glaucus—for  
 that was the name of the man herding the goats—ran quickly  
 and called off the dogs and frightened them away from Homer.  
 For a long time he was in a state of amazement about how a  
 blind man could have come by himself to such a remote place  
 and what he wanted. He went up and asked him who he was  
 and how he had come to this uninhabited spot and places  
 without paths, and what he needed. Homer related all that  
 he had suffered, and led him to pity him. Glaucus, as it seems,  
 was not an ignorant man. He took Homer along and led him  
 to his hut and kindled a fire and prepared dinner. And as he

put the food beside him [22] he told Homer to eat. But since his dogs stood round and barked at them as they ate, as was their habit, Homer spoke these verses to Glaucus:

Glaucus, guardian of pastures, I shall put some verses in your heart:  
 give dinner first to your dogs by the gates  
 of your courtyard. For that is best. Your dog first hears  
 a stranger approaching and the wild animal nearing your fence.  
 [Epigram 11]

When Glaucus heard this he was pleased by the advice and held Homer in high regard. After they ate dinner they feasted on conversation. When Homer described in detail his wanderings and the cities to which he had come, Glaucus was amazed at what he heard. And then when it was time to go to bed, they broke off their conversation. [23] The next day Glaucus decided to make a trip to his master to tell him the story on Homer's behalf. He ordered a fellow slave to herd his goats and he left Homer inside after telling him: 'I shall be back soon.' He went to Bolissos—it is near Pityos. And when he was able to see his master he told him the whole truth about Homer and about his arrival, since he considered it astonishing, and he asked his master what he should do about him. His master didn't take much account of what he said. He considered Glaucus a fool to take in cripples and feed them. But none the less he told Glaucus to bring the stranger to him. [24] Glaucus went to Homer and described what had happened and told Homer to make the journey to his master, since he would prosper there. Homer was willing to make the journey. So Glaucus took him along and brought him to his master. When the Chian spoke with Homer he found him to be clever and widely experienced. He urged Homer to remain and take charge of his children. The Chian had young children, and it was these whom he appointed Homer to educate. Homer did this. While he was with the Chian in Bolissos he composed the *Cercopes* and the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice* and the *Battle of the Starlings* and the *Heptapacticē* and the *Epicichlidēs* and all the other children's works attributed to Homer. As a result he became famous also in the city of Chios because of his poetry. When Thestorides heard that Homer was on the island, he went and

sailed away from Chios. [25] After some time Homer asked the Chian to send him to the city of Chios; he set up a school there and taught boys his poetry. He seemed particularly clever to the Chians, and many were impressed by him. Since he made a good living, he took a wife, who bore two daughters to him. One of these died without marrying, but the other set up house with a man from Chios.

[26] He tried through his poetry to pay back the thanks which he owed; first to Mentor of Ithaca in the *Odyssey*, because he had nursed him assiduously, when he was suffering from eye disease on Ithaca, by putting his name into the poetry and saying that he was a comrade of Odysseus. He composed the story that when Odysseus sailed off to Troy, he appointed Mentor to take charge of his household, because he was the best and most honoured of all the Ithacans. Often elsewhere in his poetry he paid tribute to him by making Athena look like Mentor whenever she engaged in conversation with someone. He repaid his own teacher Phemius for his upbringing and education in the *Odyssey*, particularly in these verses:

A herald put a beautiful lyre into the hands  
 of Phemius, who far surpassed others in singing  
 [Od. 1.153-4]

and also:

but he played the lyre and began to sing a beautiful song  
 [Od. 1.155]

He also remembered the ship owner with whom he had sailed round and had seen many cities and countries—the man whose name was Mentēs—in these verses:

I, Mentēs, say that I am the son of warlike  
 Anchialus, and I rule over the Taphians who love rowing.  
 [Od. 1.180-1]

He also paid thanks to Tychius the armourer, who took him in when he came to his armourer's shop in Neon Teichos, in these verses in the *Iliad*:

Ajax came near carrying a shield like a tower,  
bronze, seven hides thick, that Tycheus had laboured to make,  
the armourer, who made his house in Hyle.

[*Il.* 6.219-21]

[27] Because of this poetry Homer became famous throughout Ionia, and word about him also spread to mainland Greece, and since many people had come to him the Chians advised him to go to Greece. He welcomed the suggestion and was very eager to make the journey. [28] Since he knew that he had written many fine tributes to Argos, but none to Athens, he inserted into his poetry in the greater *Iliad* the verses glorifying Erechtheus in the *Catalogue of Ships*:

The people of great hearted Erechtheus, whom Athena raised,  
daughter of Zeus, and the grain giving earth bore.

[*Il.* 2.2547-8]

He also praised their general Menestheus as best of all at deploying infantry and cavalry in these verses:

These then Menestheus son of Peteos led, no man was like him  
on earth in arranging in battle horses and soldiers with their  
shields.

[*Il.* 2.552-4]

He put Ajax son of Telamon and the men from Salamis with the Athenians in the *Catalogue of Ships* in these verses:

Ajax brought twelve ships from Salamis;  
He stood when he brought them where the Athenian troops  
were stationed.

[*Il.* 2.557-8]

He also wrote in the *Odyssey* that when Athena came to speak to Odysseus she went back to the city of Athens, thus honouring that city far beyond others in these verses:

She came to Marathon and to the wide streets of Athens  
and went into the well-built house of Erechtheus.

[*Od.* 7.80-1]

[29] When he had inserted these verses in his poetry and finished his preparations to go to Greece, he made the voyage to Samos. The people there happened to be deliberating at that moment the festival of Apaturia. One of the Samians saw Homer coming, who had seen him previously in Chios, and went to his kinsmen and told them about him in detail, since he held him in the highest esteem. His kinsmen told him to bring Homer along, and he met Homer and said: 'Stranger, since the city is celebrating the Apaturia my kinsmen wish you to celebrate with them.' Homer said that he would come and went with the man who invited him. [30] As he made his journey he encountered women sacrificing to the protectress of children in the crossroads. The priestess said to him in anger, at the sight of him: 'Man, get away from our rites.' Homer took what she said to heart and asked the man who was leading him who was the person who spoke and to what god was he sacrificing. The man told him that it was a woman sacrificing to the protectress of children. When Homer heard his answer he uttered these verses:

Hear me, as I pray, Protectress of Children, grant that this woman  
reject love and sex with young men, but let her delight in old  
men with grey brows whose strength has been blighted, but whose  
hearts still feel desire.

[Epigram 12]

[31] When he came to the man's kinsmen and stood on the threshold of the house where they were having their banquet, some of them said that there was a fire burning in the house, others say that they kindled one then, because Homer uttered the following verses:

A man's crown is his children, a city its towers;  
Horses are an ornament to a field, and ships to a sea,  
Possessions bring a house glory, and honourable kings  
Seated in the marketplace are an ornament for their subjects to see;  
but a house is more honourable to look on when a fire is burning.

[Epigram 13]

Homer went inside and sat down and ate with the kinsmen,  
and they honoured him and held him in high regard.

And then after Homer had spent the night there, [32] the next day as he was leaving some potters saw him as they were lighting their kiln to make a pot, they called out to him because they had heard that he was a poet, and asked him to sing for them. They said that they would give him the pot and whatever else they had. Homer sang this song for them; it is known as the *Kiln*.

If you will pay me for my song, o potters,  
 come then Athena and hold your hand over their kiln.  
 May their cups turn a good black and all their bowls.  
 [I pray] that they be well fired and win profit by their price,  
 that many, sold in the market, and many [sold] in the streets,  
 that many bring gain, for me and for them to realise.  
 But if you [potters] turn shameless and tell me lies,  
 then I shall invoke the destroyers of kilns,  
 Smasher and Scatter and Sooty and Crasher  
 and Rawcrusher, who brings great problems to your craft.  
 Hear me; [ruin] the fire-porch and the chambers, let the whole kiln  
 be shaken, while the potters weep loudly.  
 As a horse's jaw grinds, may the kiln grind  
 all things inside it and turn them to sherds.  
 Come, daughter of the Sun, Circe with your many spells,  
 cast your cruel spells on them, harm the potters and their  
 handiwork.  
 Come, Chiron and bring many Centaurs,  
 both those who escaped Heracles' hands and those who perished;  
 May they hit these pots hard, may the kiln collapse,  
 and may the potters weep as they look at their ruined handiwork.  
 I will rejoice as I look on their unlucky craftsmanship.  
 And if anyone peers in [the spy-hole], may his whole face be burned  
 over, so that all men may know that they should be honest.  
 [Epigram 14/Hesiod, fr. 302 MW]

[33] Homer spent the winter in Samos. He went out at the time of the new moon festival to the houses of rich people and made some money by singing these verses, the song called *Eiresione*. Some children from the countryside took him around and kept him company.

We find ourselves at the home of a man with great power,  
 A man with great power who thunders loudly in his prosperity.

Doors, open by yourselves. For vast Wealth goes inside.  
 and with Wealth flourishing Happiness  
 and kindly Peace. Let all his grain bins be full.  
 Let the pile of barley flow from the kneading trough.  
 Now may the smiling barley with sesame . . .

. . .  
 Your son's wife will come out from a chair to you.  
 Swift-footed mules will bring her to your house.  
 Let her weave her cloth as she walks on *electrum*.  
 I come, I come each year like the swallow;  
 I stand before your door barefoot, so bring something quickly.  
 We ask you for Apollo's sake, lady, give us something.  
 If you do, give us something good. If you don't, we won't stay.  
 For we did not come here to live in your household.

[Epigrams 15 and 16]

These verses were sung in Samos for a long time by children, when they would go begging at the festival of Apollo.

[34] When the spring came Homer tried to sail to Athens from Samos. He set sail along with some Samians and was taken to Ios. They put ashore not at the city but on the beach. It happened that when Homer got on board he began to feel sick. When he got off the boat he slept on the beach because he was weak. Since they were kept on shore for several days because of lack of winds, people kept coming out from the town and spent time with him. When they heard him they had high regard for him. [35] While the sailors and some people from the town were sitting with Homer some fisher boys sailed to the place and got out of their boat and came over to them. They said the following: 'Come, strangers, listen to us, and see if you can understand what we say to you.' One of the people there told them to speak. And they said: 'We are the ones who caught what we left behind. We didn't catch what we bring.' Some say they spoke in verse:

All we caught we left behind; what we didn't catch we bring.  
 [Epigram 17]

When the people there weren't able to understand what they said, the boys explained that when they went fishing they couldn't catch anything. But when they sat on the land they



looked for lice, and the lice they caught they left behind and the lice they couldn't catch they brought away with them. When Homer heard that, he uttered these verses:

From the blood of fathers like yourselves you are descended;  
Not from those with ancient inheritance or with boundless  
herds of sheep.

[Epigram 18]

[36] It happened that Homer died from this sickness in Ios, not because he couldn't understand what the boys said, as some think, but from weakness. When he died he was buried in Ios there on the beach by the sailors and the citizens who had been present during the conversation with him on the beach. And at a much later time the people of Ios wrote this epitaph, since his poetry had become famous throughout the world and was admired by all. The verses are not Homer's

Here the earth covers the sacred head  
of the poet who gave heroes glory, divine Homer.

[37] That Homer was an Aeolian and not from Ios or a Dorian I have made clear by what I have said, and one can also provide the following evidence. It is likely that such a great poet when he was composing his poetry would find for his poetry the best practices among men or choose those of his own native country. You will be able to judge yourself when you listen to the following verses. For either he discovered the best form of sacrifice or he composed poetry about sacrifice in his own country. He speaks as follows:

First they drew back their heads and slaughtered and flayed  
And cut off the thigh pieces and covered them with fats  
making a double fold and set the raw meat on them.

[*Il.* 1.459–61]

In these lines nothing is said about the loins that they use in sacrifice. Among all Greeks the Aeolian race alone does not roast the loin. One can be certain also from the following verses that since he is an Aeolian he naturally observes these customs:

The old man roasted it on the split wood and poured out the  
bright wine  
and in their hands the young men held out to him the  
five-pronged forks.

[*Il.* 1.462–3]

Only the Aeolians roast entrails on the five-pronged forks, the other Greeks use three. The Aeolians also call the number five [*pente*] *pempe*. [38] This is what I know about Homer's background and death and life. One might also assess Homer's death accurately and correctly by making the following calculation:

From the time of the expedition to Troy which Agamemnon and Menelaus organised, it was one hundred and thirty years before Lesbos was colonised by towns; previously Lesbos had no towns. Twenty years after Lesbos was settled, Aeolian Cyme and the town called Phriconis were settled. Eighteen years after Cyme Smyrna was colonised by Cymaeans and at that time Homer was born. From the time Homer was born, there were 622 years until Xerxes' crossing—in his campaign against the Greeks, when he bridged the Hellespont and crossed from Asia into Europe. From this point it is easy to measure the time if one wishes by referring to the Archons in Athens. Homer was born 168 years after the Trojan war.

## 2. THE LIFE OF PINDAR<sup>1</sup>

[1] The poet Pindar was a Theban from Cynoscephalae, which is a village in the territory of Thebes. He was the son of Daiphantus, or according to other authorities, of Pagondas. Still others trace his genealogy to Scopelinus. Some say that Scopelinus was his uncle and that, since he played the *aulos*, he taught his skill to Pindar. His mother was Cleodice. Other authorities spell it Cledice.

[2] When Pindar was a boy, according to Chamaeleon and Ister, he went hunting near Mt. Helicon and fell asleep from

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Drachmann 1903.

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OF THE  
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