

## THE CONTEST OF HOMER AND HESIOD

THE work of many scholars in the last hundred years has helped us to understand the nature and origins of the treatise which we know for short as the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*.<sup>1</sup> The present state of knowledge may be summed up as follows. The work in its extant form dates from the Antonine period,<sup>2</sup> but much of it was taken over bodily from an earlier source,<sup>3</sup> thought to be the *Μουσεῖον* of Alcidamas.<sup>4</sup> Some of the verses exchanged in the contest were current even earlier,<sup>5</sup> and some scholars have supposed that the story of a contest went back to the fifth, sixth, or even eighth century; but this is now much doubted.<sup>6</sup>

The questions that seem to me to need further clarification are:

1. Did Alcidamas really write the narrative that lies behind the *Certamen*? If so, how much of the detail did he invent, and how much had been invented already? And what was the purpose and nature of his work?
2. How many other sources did the compiler use, what was his procedure, and what was he aiming at?

<sup>1</sup> This, in its Greek and Latin forms, was H. Stephanus' abbreviation of the title in the archetype (Laur. 56. 1), *περὶ Ὁμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου καὶ τοῦ γένους καὶ ἀγώνος αὐτῶν*.

<sup>2</sup> The expression *ὅπερ δὲ ἀκηκόαμεν ἐπὶ τοῦ θειοτάτου αὐτοκράτορος Ἀδριανοῦ εἰρημένον* (§ 3, lines 32–33 Allen) implies that Hadrian is dead, but of fresh memory. *Ἀδριανοῦ* is Stephanus' correction of *Ἀδριανοῦ*. —In citing passages from the *Certamen* I shall use the section-numbers of Wilamowitz (*Vitae Homeri et Hesiodi*, 1916), which are also adopted by Colonna in his edition (*Hesiodi Opera et Dies*, 1959), and the lineation of Allen (*Homeri Opera*, v). Of the various twentieth-century editions, that of Rzach in his big edition of Hesiod (1902) still offers the fullest and most accurate report of the readings of the manuscript; Allen's is the most widely circulating, Wilamowitz's the most intelligent, Colonna's the most recent. That of Evelyn-White in the Loeb Hesiod (revised ed. 1936) may also be mentioned. A facsimile of the manuscript as far as § 13, line 214, is published by R. Merkelbach and H. van Thiel, *Griechisches Leseheft*, 1965, pp. 6–10.

<sup>3</sup> Proved by the close agreement with the Flinders Petrie papyrus (now P. Lit. Lond. 191), which is dated to the third century B.C. The trivial differences of wording are not necessarily to be attributed to the Antonine compiler: I agree with Wilamowitz's judge-

ment that 'die Prosa so viel und wenig stimmt, wie man erwarten konnte, die Verse durchaus' (*Die Ilias und Homer*, p. 400).

<sup>4</sup> Nietzsche, *Rh. Mus.* xxv (1870), 536–40, argued so, firstly because the two verses 78–79 are quoted by Stobaeus (iv. 52. 22) as from this work, secondly because the *Certamen* itself (§ 14, line 240) cites it for the death of Hesiod at a point where an alternative version is given. His hypothesis received support, firstly from the Petrie papyrus, which showed that the account of the contest, at least, went back to Hellenistic times or earlier, secondly from the Michigan papyrus inv. 2754 (ii–iii A.D., ed. J. G. Winter, *TAPA* lvi (1925), 120 ff.), which gave the end of a narrative closely resembling the end of *Cert.*, followed by what appeared to be an epilogue and the subscription *Ἰδαμαντος περὶ ὁμήρου*. But there are difficulties, which must be discussed presently.

<sup>5</sup> 78–79 (the same two that Stobaeus attributes to Alcidamas) = Theognis 425/7 (Stobaeus quotes the Theognis lines, with their accompanying pentameters, later in the same section *ἐπαινος θανάτου*, iv. 52. 30); 107–8 = Ar. *Pax* 1282–3, with inessential variants.

<sup>6</sup> E. Vogt, *Rh. Mus.* cii (1959), 193–221; K. Hess, *Der Agon zwischen Homer und Hesiod*, Diss. Zürich, 1960.

## I. ALCIDAMAS

*The problem of the Michigan papyrus*

The simple view, that the two papyri are both fragments of copies of Alcidas' *Museum*, was dealt a sudden blow by G. S. Kirk in 1950.<sup>1</sup> He argued that the part of the Michigan papyrus which corresponds with the *Certamen* is unlike the following sentences (and the rest of Alcidas' remains) in its simple style and admittance of hiatus,<sup>2</sup> that no connexion of thought can be discovered between it and them, and that its language in some details resembles the koine. He concluded that it was an interpolation in the Alcidas. E. R. Dodds then pointed out that the supposed epilogue of Alcidas is more like an extract from a prologue, and substituted for Kirk's interpolation-hypothesis the suggestion that we have to do with a collection of excerpts *περὶ Ὀμήρου*, of which the last comes from Alcidas, being chosen by the excerptor to end his book 'as a worthy description of the motives for Homeric study'.<sup>3</sup> If the arguments of Kirk and Dodds are accepted, the situation will have to be restated as follows:

Alcidas, in the course of a work called *Museum*, told the story of Hesiod's death, and elsewhere in the same work, we do not know for what purpose, quoted two hexameters which also appear in our *Certamen* in the mouth of Homer. This is just a coincidence.

The compiler of the *Certamen* made extensive use of a contest narrative which existed in Hellenistic times but was not the *Museum* and not by Alcidas.

He did, however, know Alcidas' *Museum*, and cited its account of Hesiod's death.

The occurrence in a papyrus of part of the Hellenistic contest narrative in conjunction with what is agreed to be a piece of Alcidas' *Museum*, with no external sign that they are not part of one text, is just another coincidence.

These coincidences are suspicious; and there are other circumstances that call for further thought.

(i) In the *Certamen*, at § 5 (line 54), the writer clearly switches from one source to another, from a life of Homer to the contest narrative. It is explained that Homer was staying in central Greece at the time because he had been to Delphi, where he had received an oracle warning him that he would be buried in Ios, and should beware of a boys' riddle; so he was staying away from Ios. This is obviously preparation for the account of his death in § 18, lines 321 ff., where the boys confront him with the riddle, and he remembers the oracle. Therefore, although the compiler in the latter part of his narrative (after the conclusion of the contest) may have drawn on other sources besides, the account of Homer's death stood in the contest narrative in this or a similar form. But if the contest narrative included the account of Homer's death, it is likely also to have included the account of Hesiod's death, which is prepared for in an identical way, by means of an oracle which induces Hesiod to keep away from a certain place, and likewise rounded off with an epitaph. The nexus

<sup>1</sup> C.Q. xlv (1950), 149 ff.

<sup>2</sup> This had been remarked by A. Körte, *Arch. f. Pap.* viii (1927), 263, who supposed Alcidas to be quoting an earlier composition.

<sup>3</sup> C.Q. n.s. ii (1952), 187 f. Körte, p. 264,

had already declared himself unable to believe 'daß ein kultivierter Schriftsteller wie Alkidamas seine Schrift über Homer mit so stammelnden Sätzen abgeschlossen habe', and assumed shortening by the thoughtless copyist.

contest—death of Hesiod—death of Homer, which gives the *Certamen* such structural cohesion as it possesses, thus goes back to the original contest narrative.<sup>1</sup> Why, then, does the compiler, in giving us two versions of Hesiod's death, ascribe one to Alcidas and one to Eratosthenes? Is he not reporting what was said in the contest narrative before him,<sup>2</sup> or was Alcidas already cited as an authority in it? When we observe how the words *ὡς φησιν Ἀλκιδάμας ἐν Μουσείῳ* (§ 14, lines 239–40) are added as if an afterthought, at the end of the first version of the story, where Eratosthenes is about to appear, it looks very much as if the compiler, having so far reproduced a simple narrative in which no sources are named, now remembers Eratosthenes and takes the opportunity to appear scholarly, in the manner of the age of Pausanias and Athenaeus, by citing a second authority. This prompts him to disclose the identity of his first authority, which he had concealed under *τινες* in § 5, line 54, in his other guise as elegant writer of the sophist type.<sup>3</sup>

(ii) A troubling feature of the Kirk–Dodds approach is the peculiar view it requires us to take of the Michigan papyrus. For Kirk it is a book of Alcidas with the whole story of Homer's death interpolated from a life of Homer in the middle of the peroration. Dodds calls this hypothesis desperate; but his own solution is not altogether convincing. A book of excerpts about Homer is a reasonable thing to find. But if the excerptor wanted to throw a noose of literary form round his collection for the purpose of publication, surely he would have written a preface and put it at the beginning, not taken an unsuitable piece out of someone else's preface to a quite different kind of work and put it at the end. And then, we are asked to think that the copyist was careless enough to write *ΑΛΚΙΔΑΜΑΝΤΟΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΟΜΗΡΟΥ* in large letters underneath, supposing himself to have just copied a work by Alcidas.

These difficulties mount up. I propose to evade them by returning to the simple view that the Michigan papyrus is Alcidas, Homer's death and all, and that earlier in the same book there stood an account of Hesiod's death closely resembling *Cert.* §§ 13–14, lines 215–39, and before that an account of the contest closely resembling *Cert.* §§ 5–13, lines 54–214. I must first counter the arguments of the *χωρίζοντες*.

1. A difference of style between the two sections of the papyrus text is inevitable. One is narrative, the other is manifesto: the style that Alcidas thought appropriate for the second was simply inapplicable to the first. We can only deny him the use of a straightforward narrative style by denying that he would ever choose to write straightforward narrative; and then we shall have to explain how exactly he dealt with Hesiod's death.

2. One linguistic oddity in the narrative deserves notice: *ἀναμνησθεῖς δὲ τοῦ μαντείου, [ὅτι] ἡ καταστροφή αὐτῷ τοῦ βίου ἦκεν, π[οι]εῖ εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐπίγραμμα τῷδε*. The corresponding sentence in the *Certamen* runs *ἀναμνησθεῖς δὲ τοῦ*

<sup>1</sup> So Vogt, pp. 199 ff. The alternative, that the Antonine writer worked Homer's oracle in at the beginning of the contest, would presuppose an artistry with which the inconcinnities of his compilation are to my mind incompatible.

<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche, p. 538, makes this point.

<sup>3</sup> The contrast between his two *personae* struck Allen, *Homer, The Origins and the Transmission*, p. 21: 'The austerity of Apol-

lonius and Herodian cannot be suspected, the book is too erudite in form for a sophist ... this mixture of erudition and rhetoric...'. But his suggestion that the author might be Porphyry is improbable. Porphyry dated Hesiod 100 years after Homer (*Suda* s.v. 'Ἡσίοδος, cf. s.v. 'Ὀμηρος), an opinion which besides being incompatible with the contest story is not mentioned in the earlier sections.

μαντείου, ὅτι τὸ τέλος αὐτοῦ (αὐτῷ Westermann) ἦκοι τοῦ βίου, ποιεῖ τὸ τοῦ τάφου αὐτοῦ ἐπίγραμμα. The conjunction of 'remembering the oracle' and 'that his hour of death had come' is very strained; and one may conjecture that ὅτι ἡ καταστροφή αὐτῷ τοῦ βίου ἦκεν, or whatever the original wording may have been, was an explanatory addition by a copyist for whom the earlier mention of the oracle seemed too far back for instant recall. There is no difficulty in the assumption that it was in the text when the compiler produced the *Certamen*.

The removal of these seven words abolishes at a stroke four of the seven instances of hiatus in the papyrus narrative. If we look at the remaining three, we find that in each case the *Certamen* has a variation of wording in which the hiatus either disappears or appears in a different place.

Pap. 4-5 οἱ δ' ἔφασαν ἐφ' ἀλείαν οἰχόμενο[ι ἀγρ]εῦσαι μὲν οὐδέν.	Cert. οἱ δὲ φασιν ἐν ἀλείᾳ μὲν ἀγρεῦσαι
10 ποιεῖ εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐπίγραμμα τόδε.	329-30 μηδέν.
13-14 καὶ ἀναχωρῶν πηλοῦ ὄντος ὀλισθάνει καὶ πεσὼν ἐπὶ πλευρὰν οὕτως, φασίν, ἐτελεύτησεν.	333 ποιεῖ τὸ τοῦ τάφου αὐτοῦ ἐπίγραμμα.
	334-5 ἀναχωρῶν δ' ἐκείθεν ὄντος πηλοῦ ὀλισθῶν καὶ πεσὼν ἐπὶ τὴν πλευρὰν τριταῖος ὥς φασι τελευτᾷ.

This does not of course mean that the original was free from hiatus. It means that the transmission of a text such as this is too inexact in details of wording and word order to allow us to argue from a small number of apparent instances. The part of the *Certamen* that is thought to derive from Alcidas does in fact exhibit some hiatus, but less than the other parts; see below, p. 449.

3. Kirk, p. 154, adduces the following words as evidence for a Hellenistic date.<sup>1</sup>

(a) *σχεδιάζω* 'improvise' instead of *αὐτοσχεδιάζω*. In noting that, even if there has been corruption, *αὐτοσχεδιάζω* is not likely to have been used immediately after *αὐτόν*,<sup>2</sup> Kirk suggests an answer to himself: although Alcidas uses it regularly in his *περὶ τῶν τοῦς γραπτῶν λόγων γραφόντων* (*Soph.* for short), the *αὐτόν* would have been a sufficient reason for his using *σχεδιάζω* here. The word is attested three times in the fourth century: in P. Hibeh 13. i. 12, of careless argument; in Anaxandrides fr. 15. 3, of improvising on a musical instrument; and in the pseudo-Platonic *Sisyphus*, of speaking off the cuff.<sup>3</sup> It cannot be shown that Alcidas could not have used it of the boys who met Homer and set him a riddle on the spur of the moment. If we prefer not to believe it, we need not, for the word does not appear in the *Certamen* version, and it is not essential to the sense.

(b) *ἀλεία*. This occurs twice in Aristotle, and is the expected noun corresponding to the regular Attic *ἀλιεύομαι*, *ἀλιεύς*. There is no reason why Alcidas should not have used it.

(c) *φθειρίζομαι*. This again is used by Aristotle, and presupposed by *φθειριστική*, which appears in Plato, *Soph.* 227 B. Alcidas would have been more likely to use this than the clumsy *φθεῖρας κατακτείνω* of Heraclitus.

<sup>1</sup> He was here arguing against Körte's theory that the account of Homer's death was a quotation in Alcidas of an earlier work. His argument may be thought to have slightly more force against fifth-century authorship than against fourth.

<sup>2</sup> Alcidas does actually tolerate *τὴν αὐτὴν κατ' αὐτόν*, *Soph.* 27.

<sup>3</sup> 'Très probablement, cet écrit pseudo-platonicien fut composé au temps d'Aristote ou peu après.' J. Souilhé in the Budé *Platon*, xiii (3), p. 65.

(d) 'φασίν in οὕτως, φασίν, ἐτελεύτησεν at line 14 smacks of post-Alexandrian scholarship.'

4. The other argument is the unsuitability of the manifesto as the end of a work and its apparent lack of connexion with the preceding narrative. We are hampered here by the difficulty of understanding what it says. It reads as follows.

περι τουτου μεν ουν ποιεισθαι την αρετην ποι 15  
 ησομεν μαλιστα δ' ορων τους ιστορικους θαν  
 μαζομενους οδη.ος γουν δια τουτο και ζων  
 και αποθανων τετιμηται παρα πασιν ανθρω  
 ποις ταυτη[ν] ουν αυτω της παιδιας χαριν α  
 ποδιδο[.....]ενος αυτου και την αλλη[ν] ποι 20  
 ησιν δια.[...]ειας μνημης τοις βουλομε  
 νοις φι[λοκαλ]ειν των Ελληνων εις το κοινον  
 παραδω[ ]  
 [ Αλκι]δαμαντος  
 περι Ομηρου 25

I have consulted the photographs in *TAPA* lvi (1925), pl. A, and *Rh. Mus.* cii (1959), facing p. 210. 17 \*Ομηρος Winter. 'μ habe ich im Mikrofilm sicher gelesen' Vogt p. 210, but I find this hard to accept against the photograph in *TAPA*. 19 παιδιας = παιδείας (Körte). 20 ]ενος: for the reading of the epsilon see C. H. Roberts ap. Dodds p. 187. 21 after δια an angle on the line with thickening at the point (β, or possibly α or φ), or the scried foot of an upright (γ, κ, τ). 22 suppl. Hunt.

The first line is unintelligible, and agreed to be corrupt by all except the first editor, who translated 'In regard to this, then, we shall bring it to pass that we win distinction for ourselves'; he then had to change *ορων* to *δρώντες*. Körte rightly rejected the translation, and proposed to delete *ποιεῖσθαι* and render 'an ihm also laßt uns unsere Tüchtigkeit (Meisterschaft) erweisen'. Page altered *ποιησομεν* to *πειρασόμεθα*: 'On this theme, then, we shall endeavour to make our reputation.' Dodds altered *ποιεῖσθαι* to *πονείσθαι*<sup>1</sup> and *ορων* to *δρῶ*: 'On this subject, then, we shall make it our especial service to labour'.<sup>2</sup> I do not find any of these convincing, because they all tolerate the unparalleled expression *τὴν ἀρετὴν ποιῶ* or *ποιούμαι*, and involve changing *δρῶν*. I think it likely that something has fallen out, especially as there is nothing for *μάλιστα δέ* to answer. Purely by way of example: *περὶ τούτου μὲν οὖν ποιεῖσθαι <δεῖν ἡγοῦμαι τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν, ἀφ' οὗ Μούσαις φίλην> τὴν ἀρετὴν ποιήσομεν, μάλιστα δ' ὁρῶν τοὺς ἱστορικοὺς θαυματοζομένους*.

The next sentence is clear if we adopt the correction \*Ομηρος, which is hard to avoid in view of what follows. 'Homer has shown me a way to win honour.'<sup>3</sup> The next sentence begins with a logical continuation of this idea: 'I give him this return for his teaching.' Now we encounter the second difficult patch. The supplements suggested are *ἀποδιδ[ο]ς* (or *-δ[ν]τες*) *τὸ γ' ἐνός αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ποιήσιν δι' ἀκ[ριβ]είας μνήμης . . . παραδῶ* (or *παραδῶμεν*).<sup>4</sup> But *ἀκριβείας*, if

<sup>1</sup> But the active is more normal. So Alcidas, *Soph.* 30.

<sup>2</sup> He also suggests *ποιήσομαι* for *ποιήσομεν*.

<sup>3</sup> For the importance of *ιστορία* cf. *Soph.* 1; Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit*, ii<sup>2</sup>, 47-50, 347. The argument from the honour won

by Homer may be compared with *Soph.* 9 *τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας ὡς ἰσόθεον τὴν γνώμην ἔχοντας ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων τιμωμένους ὀρόμεν*.

<sup>4</sup> Page, Dodds. Alternatives *ἀγ[ώ]ωνος* and *ἀγ[χι]στ[ε]ίας* (Winter) do not make sense; the former does not seem to fit the traces either.

it is meant as an adjective (and an adjective is what we expect), will not do: it should be ἀκριβοῦς.<sup>1</sup> Nor is τὸ γένος satisfactory, for it leaves us wondering what is meant by τὴν ἄλλην ποίησιν.<sup>2</sup> There seem to be only two possibilities. Either ]ενος conceals a reference to some part of Homer's poetic production, and I do not see how it can; or τὴν ἄλλην ποίησιν, coming after talk of Homer, means 'the rest of poetry', poetry not by Homer.<sup>3</sup> This is surely the answer; the supplement will be on the lines ταύτη[ν] οὖν αὐτῷ τῆς παιδείας χάριν ἀποδίδο[ύς, ἀφέμ]ενος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν ἄλλη[ν] ποίησιν διὰ β[ραχ]είας μνήμης . . . παραδώ[σω]. 'So offering him this return for his teaching, I will leave him and go on to make the other poets available too, in a conveniently brief form of remembrance, to those of the Greeks who desire to love beauty.'

It has often been assumed that Alcidas' *Museum* dealt with a number of poets,<sup>4</sup> and that the subscription περὶ Ὁμήρου in the papyrus marks the end of one section of the work. If I have argued correctly, both these assumptions are confirmed. What we have is the end of a section on Homer, at least, a section that began and ended with Homer, though it also dealt with Hesiod. This whole section served as a kind of prologue to the rest of the work, and that accounts for the forward-pointing language recognized by Dodds.

The arguments of Kirk and Dodds have now been countered, and we need no longer believe in the singular coincidences that they postulated. We can return to the view that Alcidas was the creator of the contest—death of Hesiod—death of Homer nexus that lies behind our *Certamen*.

#### *Alcidas' sources*

There are indications that the stories about the poets' deaths were current before Alcidas' time.<sup>5</sup> He may have elaborated them a little, but he did not invent them. What of the contest? Here the ice is thinner. We can at least dismiss the theory of Bergk<sup>6</sup> and Allen<sup>7</sup> that the story of the contest goes back to a biographical poem by the cyclic poet Lesches. The passage of Plutarch on which this is based, *Sept. Sap. Conv.* 153 F, runs:

ἀκούομεν γὰρ ὅτι καὶ πρὸς τὰς Ἀμφιδάμαντος ταφὰς εἰς Χαλκίδα τῶν τότε σοφῶν οἱ δοκιμώτατοι [ποιηταὶ] συνῆλθον . . . ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰ παρεσκευασμένα τοῖς ποιηταῖς ἔπη χαλεπὴν καὶ δύσκολον ἐποίει τὴν κρίσιν διὰ τὸ ἐφάμιλλον, ἥ τε δόξα τῶν ἀγωνιστῶν [Ὁμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου] πολλὴν ἀπορίαν μετὰ αἰδοῦς τοῖς κρίνουσι παρεῖχεν, ἐτράποντο πρὸς τοιαύτας ἐρωτήσεις, καὶ προύβαλε μὲν ὥς φασι Λέσχης

Μοῦσα μοι ἔννεπε κείμενα τὰ μήτ' ἐγένοντο πάροιθεν  
μήτ' ἔσται μετόπισθεν

<sup>1</sup> Alcidas agreed with other Greeks in this matter: *Soph.* 18 ποιεῖσθαι τὴν μνήμην καὶ τὴν μάθῃσιν ἀκριβῆ.

<sup>2</sup> 'His origin and the rest of his poetry', Page; 'where he came from and what else he wrote', Dodds. See the criticism by Kirk, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> This hardly needs illustration; but cf. *Isoc.* 12. 33 περὶ δὲ τῆς Ὁμήρου καὶ τῆς Ἡσιόδου καὶ τῆς τῶν ἄλλων ποιήσεως.

<sup>4</sup> Μουσεῖον meant, among other things, a place where books were collected. Just as

later writers such as Diodorus and the mythographer Apollodorus called their books *Βιβλιοθήκη*, because they gave information for which you would otherwise need a whole repository of books, Alcidas gave the title *Μουσεῖον* to a work which covered a variety of poets. Callimachus also wrote *Μουσεῖον* (*Suda*; i. xcv, ii. 339 Pf.).

<sup>5</sup> Homer: Heraclitus fr. 56; Hesiod: *Thuc.* 3. 96.

<sup>6</sup> *Griech. Literaturgeschichte*, ii. 66.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 25 ff.

ἀπεκρίνατο δ' Ἑσίοδος ἐκ τοῦ παρατυχόντος·

ἀλλ' ὅταν ἀμφὶ Διὸς τύμβῳ καναχήποδες ἴππου  
ἄρματα συντρίβουσιν ἐπειγόμενοι περὶ νίκης·

καὶ διὰ τοῦτο λέγεται μάλιστα θαυμασθεῖς τοῦ τρίποδος τυχεῖν.

The verses correspond to *Cert.* 97 ff. Plutarch has changed the speakers round: in the *Certamen* the riddle is set by Hesiod and answered by Homer. Plutarch has to make the change because he is making this riddle decide the contest, coming after the recitation of the *παρεσκευασμένα ἔπη*. In the *Certamen* the latter decide the contest, and the riddle comes earlier.

Bergk and Allen read ὥς φησι Λέσχης, as given by one manuscript, so that Lesches suddenly appears as a quoted authority. But this is inappropriate in Periander's mouth; and it is hard to believe that a contest poem by Lesches existed in Plutarch's time, or ever. We know of a considerable number of early hexameter poems that were current in antiquity, and not one of them was about post-Dark Age personalities. 'Biographical' poetry did not exist, to the best of our knowledge; and there is nothing to suggest that Plutarch or the other imperial writers who allude to the contest story knew it from any other source but Alcidas.<sup>1</sup>

Wilamowitz read φασι, which is better attested in the manuscripts,<sup>2</sup> making Lesches instead of Homer the antagonist of Hesiod; he had bracketed the words Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἑσιόδου after ἀγωνιστῶν.<sup>3</sup> The interpolation is evident, but Plutarch surely is talking about Homer and Hesiod even if he does not name them both. He is talking about the funeral games of Amphidamas, and that was the occasion of the famous contest between Homer and Hesiod, not only in the *Certamen*, Philostratus, and Themistius, but elsewhere in Plutarch himself (*Quaest. Conv.* 674 F). A contest between Hesiod and Lesches is nowhere recorded, and inherently improbable.<sup>4</sup> Nor can Lesches plausibly be cast in the role of a judge between Homer and Hesiod: the contest was organized by the relatives of Amphidamas, and Amphidamas' brother Panedes was the famous judge.<sup>5</sup> If Lesches has any relevance here at all, the only possibility I see is that someone was reminded of him by the verses

Μοῦσά μοι ἔννεπε κείνα τὰ μήτ' ἐγένοντο πάροιθεν  
μήτ' ἔσται μετόπισθεν.<sup>6</sup>

The *Certamen* version (97f.) has

Μοῦσ' ἄγε μοι, τὰ τ' ἔοντα τὰ τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἔοντα,  
τῶν μὲν μηδὲν αἶειδε, σὺ δ' ἄλλης μνήσαι ἀοιδῆς.

The riddle is produced by inversion of the phrase τὰ τ' ἔοντα τὰ τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἔοντα, which was used in early poetry, and specifically in connexion

<sup>1</sup> A. Kirchhoff, *S.B. preuss. Ak.* 1892, pp. 865-91.

<sup>2</sup> See Kirk, p. 150 n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> First in *Hermes* xiv (1879), 161 = *Kl. Schr.* iv. 1.

<sup>4</sup> There is more point in the fiction of a contest between Lesches and Arctinus (Phaenias ap. Clem. *Strom.* i. 131. 6). They

are the two main poets associated with the cyclic epics.

<sup>5</sup> Alcidas (Petrie papyrus); Philostratus, *Heroic.* p. 318; *Tz. vit. Hes.*; Apostolius 14. 11 (*Paroem. Gr.* ii. 606. 20) Πανίδου ψήφος· ἐπὶ τῶν ἀμαθῶς ψηφίζομένων.

<sup>6</sup> For the original one might conjecture ἔννεπε ἔργα, after *h. Aphr.* 1.

with the Muses' power.<sup>1</sup> Possibly it or something like it was used in an invocation of the Muses in one of the poems ascribed to Lesches, the *Little Iliad* or *Iliu Persis*. A reader jotted *Λέσχης* in the margin of a copy of Plutarch, near enough to the words *προύβαλε μὲν, ὡς φασιν, Ὅμηρος* for the one name to displace the other.<sup>2</sup>

Another doubtful scrap of evidence for a pre-Alcಿದamantine contest is the fragment of verse quoted from 'Hesiod' by Philochorus (328 F 212) ap. schol. Pind. *Nem.* 2. 1 (iii. 31. 7 Dr.) in support of the derivation of *ῥαψωδός* from *ῥάπτειν τὴν ᾠδὴν*:

ἐν Δήλῳ τότε πρῶτον ἐγὼ καὶ Ὅμηρος ἀοιδοὶ  
μέλομεν, ἐν νεαροῖς ὕμνοις ῥάψαντες ἀοιδὴν,  
Φοῖβον Ἀπόλλωνα χρυσάορον ὃν τέκε Λητώ.

(Hes. fr. 357 M.-W.) Here we have Hesiod speaking of a contest with Homer, not at Chalcis as in all other accounts, but at Delos, where they each sang a hymn to Apollo. *τότε πρῶτον* (or, with Paulson, *τὸ πρῶτον*) implies that there was then a later contest somewhere else. The origin of the fragment is difficult to determine. It cannot have come from one of the poems generally attributed to Hesiod, or there could never have been a debate about which poet was earlier, and the Delian contest would have been famous. Alcidas presumably did not know it, or he would have set his contest at Delos instead of basing it on the *Works and Days* passage (650–60), where Homer is not mentioned. The poem Philochorus saw seems to have been a fairly recent forgery in which Hesiod (contradicting the *Works and Days*, where he said he had never crossed the sea except when he went to Chalcis) told of two contests: an earlier one at Delos, at which Homer defeated him with the *Hymn to Apollo*, which according to *Cert.* § 18, line 320, was inscribed on a *λεύκωμα* and dedicated in the temple of Artemis, and the later one at Chalcis, in which Hesiod got his revenge, and dedicated the famous inscribed tripod to the Muses. The poem seems never to have had a wide circulation, and disappeared early. We have no reason to think that it existed before Alcidas.<sup>3</sup>

There remains the quotation in Aristophanes' *Peace* (1282–3) of the joke lines

ὥς οἱ μὲν δαίνυντο βοῶν κρέα καυχένας ἱππων  
ἔκλυον ἰδρῶντας ἐπεὶ πολέμου ἐκόρεσθον.

They appear (with two variants) in *Cert.* 107–8, as the first of a series of couplets or triplets in which Hesiod recites an apparently absurd verse which Homer has to restore to sense by supplying a suitable continuation. This seems to have been a recognized type of party game; but riddles of this sort are more easily repeated than created, and if Alcidas invented the contest between Homer and Hesiod, it would be natural for him to use those that were current. There is nothing to suggest that Aristophanes associated the lines with Homer and Hesiod. There is another indication that Alcidas used pre-existing lines in this section, and in a new context. In his narrative, Hesiod sets the puzzles

<sup>1</sup> Hes. *Th.* 38, shortened in 32; cf. *Il.* 1. 70, [Hes.] fr. 204. 113 M.-W., orac. ap. Diod. 9. 3. 2, Solon 3. 15, Eur. *Hel.* 14.

<sup>2</sup> A similar suggestion in Bergk, *Analecta Alexandrina* (1846), i. 22 n.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase *ῥάψαντες ἀοιδὴν* may seem

to have an early ring, but is rather a poetic archaizing equivalent of *ῥαψωδεῖν* as used in *Cert.* § 5, lines 55–56 *ποιήσαντα γὰρ τὸν Μαργίτην Ὅμηρον περιέρχεσθαι κατὰ πόλιν ῥαψωδοῦντα*: § 17, lines 286–7 *ἐκεῖθεν δὲ παραγενόμενος εἰς Κόρινθον ἐρραψάδει τὰ ποιήματα*.



and Homer answers them. But through a misunderstanding he has included some double riddles, in which both speakers have to solve a puzzle.

- 121-3 A. δειπνον δειπνήσαντες ἐνὶ σποδῷ αἰθαλοέσση  
 B. σύλλεγον ὅστέα λευκὰ Διὸς κατατεθηῶτος  
 A (or C). παιδὸς ὑπερβύμου Σαρπηδόνης ἀντιθείου.  
 124-6 A. ἡμεῖς δ' ἄμ πεδίον Σιμοέντιον ἤμενοι αὐτως  
 B. ἴομεν ἐκ νηῶν ὁδὸν ἀμφ' ὥμοισιν ἔχοντες<sup>1</sup>  
 A (or C). φάσγανα κωπήεντα καὶ αἰγανέας δολιχαύλους.  
 133-7 A. τοῖσιν δ' Ἀτρείδης μεγάλ' εὖχετο πᾶσιν ὀλέσθαι  
 B. μηδέποτ' ἐν πόντῳ καὶ φωνήσας ἔπος ἡῦδα·  
 ἐσθίετ' ὦ ξείνοι καὶ πίνετε, μηδέ τις ὕμων  
 οἴκαδε νοστήσειε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν  
 A (or C). πημανθείς, ἀλλ' αὖτις ἀπήμονες οἴκαδ' ἴκοισθε.

Alcidamas evidently thought that only the last line of these contained the answer to a puzzle, even if the introductory words 105-6 ἔστιν οὖν ὁ μὲν πρῶτος (στίχος) 'Ἡσιόδου, ὁ δὲ ἐξῆς 'Ομήρου, ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ διὰ δύο στίχων τὴν ἐπερώτησιν ποιούμενον τοῦ 'Ἡσιόδου should not go back to his version. Particularly significant is the third riddle quoted, 133-7. It is the last of the series, and the narrative proceeds πρὸς πάντα δὲ τοῦ 'Ομήρου καλῶς ἀπαντήσαντος πάλιν φησὶν ὁ 'Ἡσιόδου κτλ. 137 must in view of this be attributed to Homer, and 134-6 to Hesiod; but 133 must also be Hesiod's.<sup>2</sup> Alcidamas has therefore, in a scene in which one poet only is on trial, used verses that were not designed for such a situation.

We are left with no evidence for a contest between Homer and Hesiod before Alcidamas. The motif of a contest between poets, seers, etc., is old; we have the contest between Calchas and Mopsus in the Hesiodic *Melampodia* (fr. 278 M.-W.), and that between Aeschylus and Euripides in the *Frogs*.<sup>3</sup> It was natural that one between Hesiod and Homer should be invented when they emerged as the two great names in early epic. But by whom? A comedian might be one answer; but the case of Aeschylus and Euripides in the *Frogs* had a topical relevance which a comparison of Homer and Hesiod could never attain, apart from the fact that Tragedy is a more regular object of comic parody than epic. Allen and Kirk have proposed the Homeridae, who certainly told stories about Homer's life.<sup>4</sup> But there is a serious obstacle to this view in that the Lives of Homer, which must ultimately derive from these stories, know nothing of the contest with Hesiod; nor are the Homeridae likely to have spread the story of Homer's defeat by another poet. Eustathius or his source is probably referring to the Lives when he writes (*in Hom.*, p. 4. 38) εἰ δὲ καὶ ἤρυσεν 'Ομηρος 'Ἡσιόδῳ τῷ Ἀσκραίῳ καὶ ἡττήθη, ὅπερ ὄκνος τοῖς 'Ομηρίδαις καὶ λέγειν. No, it is difficult to imagine a likelier kind of writer to have invented the contest than a sophist.

<sup>1</sup> I do not understand this. ἄμ πεδίον needs a verb of motion, so that 124 is a paradox; but 125 fails to account for ἤμενοι αὐτως (οὕτως cod.). Barnes conjectured that a line has fallen out after 124.

<sup>2</sup> So Rzach. The only alternative is Busse's division (*Rh. Mus.* lxiv (1909), 115 n. 1): A. 133, B. 134 μηδέποτ' ἐν πόντῳ, A. καὶ φωνήσας to 136, B. 137. But the division

of the line between two speakers is surely unacceptable. The first paradox must be answered with at least one complete line.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Rohde, *Kl. Schr.* i. 103 f.; Radermacher, *Aristophanes' Frösche* (*S.B. Wien. Ak.* 198/4, 1921), p. 30; Dornseiff, *Gnomon* xx (1944), 139.

<sup>4</sup> Pl. *Rep.* 599 E, *Isoc.* 10. 65.

*The judgement of Panedes*

It is time now to analyse the contest with a view to determining Alcidas' aim. Hesiod begins by asking Homer τί φέρτατόν ἐστι βροτοῖσι; Homer replies with the two lines

ἀρχὴν μὲν μὴ φῦναι ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἄριστον,  
φύντα δ' ὅπως ὤκιστα πύλας Αἰδαο περῆσαι,

which Stobaeus quotes as from Alcidas' *Museum*, but which appear with added pentameters in the Theognidea and are no doubt fairly early.<sup>1</sup> Then Hesiod asks the almost identical question τί θνητοῖς κάλλιστον; (so the papyrus; or τί θνητοῖσιν ἄριστον;), and Homer replies in the words of Odysseus, *Od.* 9. 6-11. That is the first round, and it is based on old verses. Secondly, Hesiod asks for a song that refers to events of neither past, present, nor future, and Homer replies with the negative prophecy

οὐδέποτ' ἀμφὶ Διὸς τύμβω καναχήποδες ἔπποι  
ἄρματα συντρίψουσιν ἐρίζοντες περὶ νίκης.

This may have been a traditional riddle, like the paradox verses to which Hesiod proceeds thirdly and which I have already mentioned. Fourthly, he asks how many Greeks went to Troy with Agamemnon, and Homer answers with lines which may conceivably have come from a cyclic epic.<sup>2</sup> So far Alcidas has presented Homer with a ragbag of tests and puzzles, all probably traditional, and seems to be aiming at nothing more than entertainment. Now there is a change. Hesiod starts once again asking questions like 'what is best for men?' But this time there is a series of eight questions, and the questions and answers are much more sophistic; they reek of the late fifth or early fourth century, and may be Alcidas' own composition. The contest has moved on to a more serious plane. And now, as the crowd applauds Homer's display and clamours for him to be crowned victor, Panedes steps in and sets the final, decisive test: each must recite the finest piece (τὸ κάλλιστον) of his poetry. The passages that Alcidas selects (*Op.* 383 ff.;<sup>3</sup> *Il.* 13. 126-33 + 339-44) are indeed fine; but they are clearly chosen so as to embody what he wished to

<sup>1</sup> Alcidas wrote an essay in praise of death (*Cic. Tusc.* 1. 116, *Menander Rhet.* iii. 346. 17 Sp., *Tz. Chil.* 11. 745 ff.), and these verses may have made a particular impression on him.

<sup>2</sup> They are of the same sort as *Il.* 2. 123 ff., [*Hes.*] fr. 304 M.-W. The irrelevant note that follows in the manuscript, τοῦτο δὲ εὐρίσκεται πλῆθος ἄπιστον κτλ., is clearly interpolated. It is incomplete at the end, possibly because of damage to a lower margin in which it was written.

<sup>3</sup> In the manuscript, the quotation ends rather abruptly at 392, with γυμνὸν δ' ἀμείν, ὅταν ὦρια πάντα πέλωνται where the actual text of Hesiod proceeds γυμνὸν δ' ἀμείν εἰ χ' ὦρια πάντ' ἐθέλησθα | ἔργα κομίζεσθα Δημήτερος κτλ. But originally the extract may have gone on to 404, since Philostratus, *Heroic.*, p. 318 says ἐπὶ Ὀμηρὸν τὲ φασὶ καὶ Ἡσίοδον, ὅτε δὴ ἄσαι ἀμφω ἐν

Χαλκίδι τὸν μὲν τὰ ἐπτά (?) ἔπη τὰ περὶ τοῖν Αἰάντων καὶ ὡς αἱ φάλαγγες αὐτοῖς ἀραρυαῖαί τε ἦσαν καὶ καρτεραί, τὸν δὲ τὰ πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Πέρσην, ἐν οἷς αὐτὸν ἔργων τε ἐκέλευσεν ἀπτεσθαι καὶ γεωργίᾳ προσκεῖσθαι, ὡς μὴ δέοιτο ἐτέρων μηδὲ πεινῶν. This seems to be, not a vague account of the contents of the *Works and Days*, but a particular reference to the lines

ἐργάζεω, νήπιε Πέρση,  
ἔργα, τὰ τ' ἀνθρώποισι θεοὶ διετεκμήραντο,  
μὴ ποτε σὺν παῖδεσσι γυναικί τε θυμὸν ἀχεύων  
ζητεύης βίοντα κατὰ γείτονας, οἱ δ' ἀμελῶσι.  
ἀλλά σ' ἄνωγα  
φράζεσθαι χρειῶν τε λύσιν λιμοῦ τ' ἀλεωρήν.  
(397-404.)

Cf. Tzetzes, *Vit. Hes.*, p. 49. 6 Wil. Ἡσίοδος δὲ τῶν Πληθῶν Ἀτλαγενέων ἐπιτελλομένων ἀπάρχεται καὶ ὁμοίως Ὀμήρῳ προβαίνει μέχρι πολλοῦ τῶν ἐπῶν, and Nietzsche, pp. 530, 532.

represent as most characteristic of and peculiar to the two poets. The 'sophistic' questions that Homer has answered imply the idea that a poet is to be judged by what he can contribute to the community; he was asked for example

πῶς ἂν ἄριστ' οἰκοῖντο πόλεις καὶ ἐν ἡθεσι ποίοις;<sup>1</sup>

Aristophanes had already said, through Aeschylus' mouth, what Hesiod and Homer were thought to be good for (*Frogs* 1032-6):

Ὀρφεὺς μὲν γὰρ τελετὰς θ' ἡμῖν κατέδειξε φόνων τ' ἀπέχεσθαι,  
Μουσαῖος δ' ἐξακέσεις τε νόσων καὶ χρησμούς, Ἡσίοδος δὲ  
γῆς ἐργασίας, καρπῶν ὥρας, ἀρότους· ὁ δὲ θεῖος Ὀμηρος  
ἀπὸ τοῦ τιμῆν καὶ κλέος ἔσχεν πλὴν τοῦδ' ὅτι χρήστ' ἐδίδαξεν,  
τάξεις ἀρετὰς ὀπλίσεις ἀνδρῶν;

These are just the things that Alcidas picks on. The judgement of Panedes comes down to a choice between peace and war. The crowd is delighted by the verses of Homer, but the king awards the victory to Hesiod.

According to Vogt,<sup>2</sup> the account of the contest shows a marked bias in favour of Homer; and in this he finds a striking manifestation of Alcidas' preference for the extempore over the premeditated speech, as shown in *Soph.*<sup>3</sup> This interpretation is, I believe, mistaken. There is no suggestion in the whole narrative that Homer is contrasted with Hesiod as an improviser against a lucubrador, and no reference to Homer in *Soph.* It is Hesiod who wins the prize, not Homer, and it is no good saying that he wins it only through the perversity of the adjudicator (Vogt, pp. 199, 201, al.); there is not a word to suggest that the decision was unjust.<sup>4</sup> The story belongs to a type much favoured by the Greeks, in which a man does the opposite of what is expected, and justifies himself with an original and by no means contemptible analysis of the situation, expressed in epigrammatic form. It is true that by any other criterion Homer deserves to win. He passes every test except the last. But this does not mean that the narrator really wishes he could win. It is preparation for the final surprise assessment, and like the crowd's acclamation of Homer, it makes the final assessment all the more telling.

Hesiod is the poet of peace; therefore, according to Alcidas, Homer must concede him the prize. Yet someone else in antiquity, while characterizing Homer and Hesiod in terms of the same antithesis, assessed their worth in the opposite sense. According to Plutarch,<sup>5</sup> Κλεομένης ὁ Ἀναξανδρίδω τὸν μὲν Ὀμηρον Λακεδαιμονίων εἶναι ποιητὴν ἔφη, τὸν δὲ Ἡσίοδον τῶν εἰλωτῶν τὸν μὲν γὰρ ὡς πολεμεῖν, τὸν δὲ ὡς χρή γεωργεῖν παρηγγελκέναι. Is this disagreement unconnected with the fact that in the 360s Alcidas upheld the independence of the Messenians, and peace, while others argued that Sparta might justifiably re-enslave them through war?<sup>6</sup> The opinion ascribed to Cleomenes looks suspiciously like a reply to Alcidas.

<sup>1</sup> For this criterion of art cf. Ar. *Ran.* 1420 ff., Alc. *Soph.* 9, 26, 27, Isoc. 2. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Rh. Mus.* cii (1959), pp. 199, 201, al.

<sup>3</sup> So already Nietzsche, 539f.

<sup>4</sup> There is in Lucian (*Vera hist.* 2. 22), Philostratus, and Apostolius, but that is not relevant. To ignore the original point of the story would be typical of the Second Sophistic. The phrase recorded by Apostolius is

probably drawn from a writer of that period, though not from the Philostratus passage as some have thought.

<sup>5</sup> *Apophth.* Lac. 223A; cf. Ael. *VH* 13. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Busse, p. 119; Dornseiff, p. 137. The *Μεσσηνιακὸς λόγος*, mentioned more than once by Aristotle, seems to have been among Alcidas' most important works.

## II. THE COMPILER

The Antonine compiler took from Alcidas a narrative comprising

1. Oracle to Homer.
2. Contest.
3. Oracle to Hesiod.
4. Hesiod's death.
5. Homer's death.

In Alcidas this formed a substantial part of an essay on Homer, which served as the introduction to a collection about various poets. The compiler discarded the rhetorical framework, and combined the narrative with material from other sources.

§ 1, lines 1–8. *Introduction*

The treatise begins "Ὀμηρον καὶ Ἡσίοδον τοὺς θειοτάτους ποιητὰς πάντες ἄνθρωποι πολίτας ἰδίους εὐχονται λέγεσθαι. This is so obviously inappropriate to Hesiod that the compiler must be suspected of having taken from a Life of Homer the sentence "Ὀμηρον τὸν θειότατον ποιητὴν πάντες ἄνθρωποι πολίτην ἰδιον εὐχονται λέγεσθαι, and simply adapted it to his own work.<sup>1</sup> He immediately contradicts himself by continuing ἀλλ' Ἡσίοδος μὲν τὴν ἰδίαν ὀνομάσας πατρίδα πάντας τῆς φιλονικίας ἀπήλλαξεν εἰπὼν ὡς ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ

εἶσατο δ' ἄγχ' Ἑλικῶνος οὐζυρῇ ἐνὶ κώμῃ,  
Ἄσκηρ, χεῖμα κακῇ, θέρει ἀργαλή, οὐδέ ποτ' ἐσθλή.

"Ὀμηρον δὲ πᾶσαι ὡς εἶπεν αἱ πόλεις καὶ οἱ ἔποικοι αὐτῶν παρ' ἑαυτοῖς γεγενῆσθαι λέγουσιν. That this goes back direct to an earlier source appears from its agreement with Velleius 1. 7. 1 (*Hesiodus*) *qui uitauit ne in id quod Homerus incideret, patriamque et parentes testatus est*. A similar remark is made by Proclus, *Vita*, lines 4–8 Severinus "Ὀμηρος μὲν οὖν τίνων γονέων ἢ ποίας ἐγένετο πατρίδος οὐ ῥᾶδιον ἀποφῆναι οὔτε γὰρ αὐτός τι λελάληκεν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ οἱ περὶ αὐτοῦ εἰπόντες συμπεφωνήκασιν, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ μηδὲν ῥητῶς ἐμφαίνειν περὶ τούτων τὴν ποίησιν αὐτοῦ μετὰ πολλῆς ἀδείας ἕκαστος οἷς ἐβούλετο ἐχαρίσατο.<sup>2</sup> There are other points of contact between Velleius and Proclus,<sup>3</sup> and the same source evidently lies behind both. We may accept that it was also used by the *Certamen* compiler.

§ 2, lines 8–17. *Homer's birthplace*

A different source must be postulated for the section that follows, in which three alternative birthplaces for Homer are given, each with an argument: Smyrna, Chios, Colophon. No authors are named; it is *Σμυρναῖοι . . . φασί . . . Χῖοι δὲ πάλιν . . . Κολοφώνιοι δέ . . .*, but all must be taken from literary

<sup>1</sup> *θεῖος* is particularly used of Homer: *Cert.*, lines 214, 309, 338, *Ar. Ran.* 1033, [Plut.] *Cons. Apoll.* 104 D, *Tz. Exeg. in Il.*, p. 7. 26, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also [Plut.] *Vita I*, Eust. in *Hom.*, p. 4. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Vell. 1. 5. 3 *quem si quis caecum genitum putat, omnibus sensibus orbus est* ~ Procl. lines 47–49 (cf. also *Luc. Vera hist.* 2. 20); Vell. *ibid.* *hic longius a temporibus belli quod composuit*

*Troici quam quidam rentur abfuit, nam ferme ante annos DCCCCL floruit, intra mille natus est* ~ Procl. lines 59–63; Vell. 1. 7. 1 *huius temporibus aequalis Hesiodus fuit, circa CXX annos distinctus ab Homeri aetate* ~ Procl. lines 50–57. Velleius' chronological framework comes from Apollodorus via Nepos: Jacoby, *Apolodorus Chronik*, pp. 101 ff.; Dihle, *RE* viiia 642 f. Cf. Rohde, *Rh. Mus.* xxxvi (1881), 551–2 = *Kl. Schr.* i. 87–88.

sources.<sup>1</sup> The absence of any reference to Ios (Aristotle), Athens (Aristarchus), and the various minor claimants that proliferate in some of the Lives, suggest a fairly early, perhaps fourth-century, date for this source. The manner of presentation suggests a historian.<sup>2</sup> The source of Velleius and Proclus would seem to be later, since the chronology of the second-century scholars appears in both. Besides, the Velleius-Proclus source that made the remark about Homer's blindness cannot have gone on to cite, as if it were a reasonable theory, the opinion that Homer (*né* Melesigenes) changed his name to Homer when he became blind.<sup>3</sup>

§ 3, lines 18-43. *Homer's parentage*

This section begins oddly: 'About his parents there is again much disagreement among all authorities. Hellanicus and Cleanthes say *it was* Maion, Eugaion says Meles,' etc. A list of fathers only, mostly with named authorities. And then, 'As for his mother, some say it was Metis', etc., a list with no authorities named. In fact the list of mothers belongs with the list of fathers, as we see if we put them in parallel columns.

<i>Authority</i>	<i>Father</i>	<i>Mother</i>
1. Hellanicus, Cleanthes (or Neanthes)	Maion	Metis
2. Eugaion	Meles	Kretheis
3. Callicles	† Masagoras	Themiste
4. Democrines of Troezen	Alemon	Hyrnetho
5. 'some'	Thamyras	An Ithacesian sold abroad by Phoenicians
6. 'Egyptians'	Menemachus	Calliope
7. 'some'	Telemachus	Polycaste

1. Cf. *Suda* iii. 525. 2 Adler *ὡς δὲ Χάραξ ὁ ἱστορικός* (103 F 62), *Μαίονος καὶ Εὐμήτηδος* [*ἢ Μήτιος*] *μητρός*. (*ἢ Μητίου* (sic) ante καὶ Εὐμ. codd., om. W; correxi.)

2. The river Meles and the *Κρηθῆϊς νύμφη* are paired in all the Lives.

3. Callicles made Homer a Cyprian from Salamis (*Vita Romana*, p. 31. 1 Wil.); the Cyprians who claimed Homer as theirs called his mother Themisto (Paus. 10. 24. 3). Cf. *FGrHist* 758 F 13, and, for the father's name, Gow-Page, *Hellenistic Epigrams*, ii. 27.

4. All the names in this row are emended from other sources; the manuscript gives *Δημόκριτος*, *Δαήμονα*, *Εὐγνηθώ*. I have found no direct evidence for Hyrnetho's being Alemon's wife.

5|6. The mothers have been transposed. Menemachus is described as *ἰερο-*

<sup>1</sup> The Smyrnaeans' story that Homer was so named after he became blind comes from Ephorus (70 F 1), who made Homer of Cymaeian stock but born in Smyrna. The Chian claim based on the Chian Homeridae may have come in Hellanicus (4 F 20); though the Roman Life, p. 30. 24 Wil., does not name him among the authorities for Homer's Chian origin, it names Damastes (5 F 11), Anaximenes (72 F 30), Pindar (fr. 264), and Theocritus *ἐν τοῖς ἐπιγράμμασιν*

(sc. *ἄλλος ὁ Χίος*; cf. *Idyll* 7. 47). The Colophonian claim was made by the Colophonians Antimachus and Nicander.

<sup>2</sup> Alcidas is not likely. He referred somewhere to Homer's not being a Chian (Arist. *Rhet.* 1398<sup>b</sup>12), and the oracle given to Homer before the contest makes Ios the homeland of his mother.

<sup>3</sup> Proclus cites it, but in an earlier section of his Life, from a different source.

γραμματεὺς. An Egyptian origin for Homer, with different parents, in Eust. *Od.* p. 1713. 17 ff., who names Alexander of Paphos (unknown) as his source.

7. The last pair as in the oracle given to Hadrian, which the compiler records a little later. It is clear that in the source the mothers and fathers were united: *περὶ δὲ τῶν γονέων αὐτοῦ . . . Ἑλλάνικος μὲν γὰρ καὶ Κλεάνθης Μαίονα λέγουσι καὶ Μῆτιν, Εὐγαίων δὲ Μέλητα καὶ Κρηθίδα νύμφην*, and so on. The compiler has separated them, presumably with the idea that two lists look more learned than one, and has not covered his traces by substituting 'father' for 'parents' in the first sentence.

The source here used knows writers who make Homer a Cyprian, Egyptian, or Ithacesian, and is therefore not the same as the source of the preceding section. And as it has hardly anything in common with Proclus' Life, it seems not to be the same as the source of the section before that either. It is probably the Life from which the opening sentence was adapted, for it is hardly likely that the compiler took just the one sentence from this source and made no further use of it, and we shall not find another section that it is possible to attribute to it. The content of the present section sufficiently suits the promise of the opening sentence. The same source probably also supplied what follows the parent-lists, lines 27–32: the information about Melesigenes and the change of name due either to Homer's being given as a hostage by the Cyprians (presumably the explanation of Callicles) or to his becoming blind (Ephorus). And then the compiler himself adds the piece about the oracle given to Hadrian (lines 32–43).

§§ 4–14, lines 44–253. *Relationship of Homer and Hesiod; the contest; Hesiod's death*

Hesiod now comes back into view. *ἔνιοι μὲν οὖν αὐτὸν προγενέστερον Ἡσιόδου φασὶν εἶναι, τινὲς δὲ νεώτερον καὶ συγγενῇ. γενεαλογοῦσι δὲ οὕτως*. There follows a version of that genealogy, running from Apollo via Linus and Orpheus down to Homer and Hesiod, stretches of which in varying forms appear in several Lives, attributed to Stesimbrotus, Hellanicus, Pherecydes, Damastes, Ephorus, or Charax.<sup>1</sup> The *Certamen* agrees most closely with the version of the *Suda*, for which the authority quoted is Charax. Of the three sources we have postulated so far, only the Velleius–Proclus source, which decidedly made Homer earlier than Hesiod and denied that they were kinsmen (Proclus, lines 50–53 S.), seems to be ruled out.

The compiler now turns to Alcidas' narrative. This of course presupposes that Hesiod and Homer were contemporaries. He therefore begins *τινὲς δὲ συνακμάσαι φασὶν αὐτοὺς ὥστε καὶ ἀγωνίσασθαι ὁμοσε ἐν Αὐλίδι τῆς Βοιωτίας*. Alcidas takes us to § 14, line 239,<sup>2</sup> the point where Eratosthenes' account of Hesiod's death is added.

§§ 15–18, lines 254–338. *The rest of Homer's life*

In the last sections we have narrative about Homer, part of which comes from Alcidas (Homer's death: Michigan papyrus), but much of which must come from elsewhere. Homer goes round Greece reciting his poems, beginning

<sup>1</sup> Set out conveniently by Allen, *op. cit.*, facing p. 32. Cf. Rohde, *Rh. Mus.* xxxvi (1881), 385 ff. = *Kl. Schr.* i. 6 ff.

<sup>2</sup> On the way he reveals some ideas of his own about the poets' parentage which are

inconsistent with the information in §§ 1–4. Hesiod is son of Dios (156), as in the Ephorus–Charax stemma, but Homer is son of Meles (75, 151) and a mother who comes from Ios (59).

with the *Thebais* and *Epigoni*.<sup>1</sup> To the titles are appended, very oddly, details taken from a library catalogue: the length of each poem in lines (not, as usual, in books, perhaps because this would be inappropriate in the context) and the first line. The sons of Midas are so impressed by these compositions that they invite Homer to write an epitaph for their father, which he does. They reward him with a silver cup, which he dedicates to Apollo at Delphi, composing a suitable inscription. The story is parallel to that about Hesiod's tripod (invitation by sons of a dead king, prize, dedication, inscription), and may on the strength of this be attributed to Alcidamas, whose tendency to fit Homer and Hesiod into a similar story-pattern (oracle, death, epitaph) has already been noticed. The same story appears later in the Herodotean Life.

Homer next composes the *Odyssey* (12,000 lines), having already composed the *Iliad* (15,500 lines).—It is put in this odd way, I suppose, because Homer has already recited verses from the *Iliad* in the contest. But if Alcidamas had mentioned the composition of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in his narrative, he would surely have done it less awkwardly. Here the compiler seems to be at work.

Then a series of stops at different places.

*Athens*. Entertained by King Medon. Composes epigram 13 ἀνδρὸς μὲν στέφανος.<sup>2</sup>

*Corinth*. Recites poems and is greatly honoured.<sup>3</sup>

*Argos*. Recites lines from the Catalogue of Ships about Argos (560 ff.) and is greatly honoured: among other things, a sacrifice is to be sent to Chios every fifth year.<sup>4</sup>

*Delos*. Recites *Hymn to Apollo* (again identified by its first line). The Ionians make him a πολλῆς κουνός, and the hymn is inscribed on a plaque and dedicated in the temple of Artemis.

It is to be observed that none of these places is in Asia Minor. But there is no suggestion that Homer is not an Ionian (the Argive section indeed implies that he came from Chios, and so does the inclusion of the Delian Hymn). On the contrary, the point of the whole section is to account for certain references in Homer that seemed out of place in an Ionian poet, while fitting in the production of the known poems. The Herodotean Life shows a similar tendency, though it contains a much fuller collection of occasional poems, and gives a different account of Homer's movements: he never reaches mainland Greece, but falls ill on the way to Athens and has to stay on Ios.

It is hard to see why such an exercise should have interested Alcidamas, and

<sup>1</sup> He had done the *Margites* before the contest, line 55. In line 260, the words φασι γάρ τινες καὶ ταῦτα Ὀμήρου εἶναι are evidently interpolated; they cannot have been written by a man who has just stated as a fact that Homer did recite these among his poems.

<sup>2</sup> In the Herodotean Life and the *Suda*, this is composed at Samos.

<sup>3</sup> The explanation of this uneventful visit seems to be as follows. Aristarchus was troubled by Homer's use of Κόρινθος besides the 'older' name Ἐφύρη, and found it necessary to explain to his students that Homer used it ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου προσώπου, speaking in his own person (sch.<sup>A</sup> *Il.* 2. 570, cf. 6. 152, 210,

13. 301). Even Velleius thinks this worth saying, 1. 3. 3. Homer is therefore made to visit Corinth, in this account, simply to make sure that he is acquainted with the place.

<sup>4</sup> Homer's celebration of Ἀργεῖοι attracted attention early. Cleisthenes of Sicyon banned the recitation of Homer in Sicyon because of it (Hdt. 5. 67. 1). In the Herodotean Life § 28, line 378 Allen, before Homer sets sail from Ionia for the mainland, he notices that he has eulogized Argos frequently but not Athens, and therefore inserts a few passages in praise of Athens. Philochorus actually made Homer an Argive (328 F 209), probably because of the Argive references (Jacoby ad loc.).

other things militate against his being the source for this section: the awkward mention of the composition of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (above), the pinax-type descriptions of the poems, and the fact that it makes Homer a Chian, which Alcidas said he was not.<sup>1</sup> This conclusion has a satisfying consequence: all that is left to Alcidas, after the episode with the sons of Midas, is the final section about Homer's death, and this completes the parallel between Homer's history and Hesiod's. Each poet, after winning a prize from the sons of a dead king and dedicating it with an inscription, meets his death in a place foretold by an oracle and is buried with a suitable epitaph.

The rest comes from a Life, of the dogmatic Herodotean type, not of the sort that offers alternative possibilities, and therefore not the same as either of the sources used in §§ 2–3. Nor can it be identified with the Velleius-Proclus source in § 1, for this, since it denied that Homer was blind, must have denied that the Delian Hymn was by him.<sup>2</sup> It may be the same as the source used for the genealogy in § 4;<sup>3</sup> that must have given some account of Homer's origin, and the compiler seems to have used everything to hand. It is in favour of this hypothesis that just after § 4, at the point where the contest narrative is joined on, Homer is found going round reciting the *Margites*; it is because he is 'on tour' that he has the opportunity to visit Delphi. This detail resembles and supplements what we find in §§ 15–18, and appears to have come from the same source; it cannot well have come from Alcidas, who did not, so far as we can see, say what other poems Homer composed and on what occasions. The compiler seems to have done as follows. The two sources he was using at this point gave this information:

Life	Alcidas
Homer was a younger relative of Hesiod, and son of the river Meles. He went round reciting the <i>Margites</i> (in Asia Minor?), then the <i>Thebais</i> , <i>Epigoni</i> , etc.	Hesiod and Homer once met at Aulis, Homer having just been to Delphi to ask about his parentage. (Contest)

He reconciled them thus:

Some say Homer was a younger relative of Hesiod . . . Others say they were contemporary, and once met at Aulis. Homer was going round reciting the *Margites*, and came to Delphi, where he asked about his parentage . . . (Contest) . . . After his defeat, Homer went round reciting his poems, first the *Thebais* and *Epigoni*, etc.

The oratio obliqua in lines 54–62 is in the compiler's own words, as is shown by the late use of *πεπιτορασθαι* in the sense 'avoid'.

### Résumé

The sources of the *Certamen* can now be tentatively set out as follows.

A. Lines 1–2, 18–32      A Life of Homer.

<sup>1</sup> Above, p. 445 n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> The statement that it was foisted on him by Cynaethus (sch. Pind. *Nem.* 2. 1) may have originated from this or a related source.

<sup>3</sup> Unless it insisted that Homer was born in Chios—the genealogy implies birth at Smyrna.



- B. Lines 2-8                      A *communis locus*, originating in a work of literary history from the school of Aristarchus, used also by Velleius and Proclus.
- C. „ 8-17                      A fourth-century historian?
- D. „ 32-43                      Compiler's own knowledge.
- E. „ 44-56, 255-9, 275-321                      A Life of Homer.
- F. „ 54-239, 247-55, 260-74, 322-38                      Alcidas, *Museum*.
- G. „ 240-7                      Eratosthenes, *Hesiodus*.

B, C, D, and G are relatively unimportant; they have only supplied odd items. The main sources are three: Alcidas, and two separate Lives of Homer, one encyclopaedic, the other what is often called romance, but would be better termed imaginative reconstruction. There is nothing to suggest that a Life of Hesiod was used (unless Eratosthenes' poem is counted).

What was the compiler trying to achieve? His choice of sources suggests that his aim was to put together a life of Homer which combined the story of the contest (the chief feature of Alcidas' narrative, and one absent from the ordinary run of Homeric Lives) with other details that were offered by the Lives and not given by Alcidas. The use of Alcidas involved a certain amount of narrative about Hesiod, but the compiler makes no attempt to fill in the details of his life. In other respects too he fails to subordinate his material to any consistent plan. He throws together excerpts from contradictory sources without care for art or science. What title he gave to his creation, we do not know: if it was not as cumbrous as *περὶ Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου καὶ τοῦ γένους καὶ ἀγῶνος αὐτῶν*, then it was not as accurate.

#### Appendix: Hiatus

As the occurrence of hiatus has played a part in discussions of Alcidas' contribution to the *Certamen*, I have investigated its frequency in the prose parts of the various sections of the work. In the accompanying table, the letters A to G heading the vertical columns stand for the portions ascribed to different sources as analysed above; G is counted with D because the wording is not that of the source but the compiler's (unless we postulate an intermediary). The last column gives combined figures for all the sections except F = Alcidas. In counting the instances of hiatus I have included, but as separate figures, those after *καί* or the definite article and those at the end of a colon. (In determining what constitutes the end of a colon I have followed my own judgement.) The row labelled 'lines' gives the number of lines of prose in each section in Allen's text.

	A	B	C	DG	E	F	ABCDGE
Hiatus: after <i>καί</i> or article	..	2	..	2	8	20	12
at colon-end	3	..	1	1	3	7	8
other	5	1	1	6	12	15	25
Lines	17	6	9	14	32	82	78

The portions of text represented in the first four columns are too short for the figures to be of much significance, though the variations are marked. It is of more interest to compare E and F. Hiatus of the kinds more freely admitted

in formal prose occurs with very similar frequency in both; other hiatus much less in F than in E. This will be clearer if the figures are reduced to a mean frequency per 100 lines:

	E	F
After καί or article	25.0	24.4
At end of colon	9.4	8.5
Other	37.5	18.3

The combined figures for ABCDGE resemble those for E, except that hiatus after καί or the article is found less than in the pure narrative sections.

The figures suggest that Alcidas, though not as strict in the genial narrative of the *Museum* as in *Soph.*, did admit comparatively little serious hiatus. Some or all of the apparent examples may have arisen through changes of word order and other accidents of the transmission. I have not found any of them difficult to eliminate.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I will mention only two places where a conjecture may be a positive improvement: § 14, line 228 ὁ γὰρ τόπος οὗτος ἅπας ἐκαλείτο Διὸς Νεμείου [ιερὸν]. § 6, lines 64–66 πάντας

τοὺς [ἐπισήμους ἄνδρας] οὐ ῥώμη καὶ τάχει μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ σοφία (διαφέροντας) ἐπὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα . . . συνεκάλεσεν.