THE CYCLIC POEMS AND THE HOMERIC QUESTION.

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Part I.

The Homeric question in its various aspects has created a wider controversy, and a more sustained interest, than probably any other literary problem, and it still remains a living and a burning issue. So much has been written upon it by so many ingenious inquirers, that it might be thought there was no room for fresh hypotheses or new departures in regard to it. I propose in the following paper to show that this is not so, and to show further that one particular vein of promising inquiry has not yet been exhausted. The subject I propose to consider in a somewhat new light is the relative connection and interdependence of the Cyclic poems and the Homeric ones; and I propose to conclude with the heterodox view, that the Homeric poems instead of being older than the more important of the Cyclic poems, are in fact younger. If this view should prove acceptable, I propose to follow this paper with another in which some of its important consequences may be pointed out.

It is now some years ago since my friend the Provost of Oriel read an admirable paper before the Hellenic Society, in which he for the first time sifted and settled the questions and difficulties connected with the text of the fragments of Proclus contained in the well-known Venetian codex, a text upon which our knowledge of the Cyclic poems so largely depends. It seems to me that his main conclusions on the subject are unanswerable.

There was, however, in his paper, one feature which seemed to me open to criticism and doubt, namely, the assignment of the various Cyclic poems to the various authors and poets, under whose names they have been so often quoted, as if the matter were either settled or

capable of settlement, and without a warning that these attributions are for the most part, if not entirely, illusory and void of any satisfactory evidence.

Upon this point I have always held a very sceptical attitude, but I should hardly have ventured to differ from such an authority on Homeric matters, if another scholar of corresponding reputation in Germany, namely Wilamovitz-Moellendorff, had not in his *Homerische Untersuchungen*, adopted this same sceptical attitude to the fullest extent.

I shall commence, therefore, by examining more in detail than has hitherto been done (at all events in this country), the question as to the authorship of the so-called Cyclic poems, by which I mean the epics dealing with the earliest heroic legends of Greece, from the earliest times to the return of Ulysses, and I shall reverse the usual practice in such inquiries, and begin with the latest writers who give us information on the subject, and work back to the earlier ones, and thus try to fix the earliest date or authority for any particular attribution. I must first, however, discuss a side issue.

Photius, a great and zealous churchman and statesman, was probably the most learned man of his time. He was Patriarch of Constantinople, with a break of ten years, (867–877), from 857 to 886 A.D. His most famous work was his Myriobiblon or Bibliotheca, in which he brought together, as in a commonplace book, abstracts or epitomes of two hundred and eighty works of various authors, many of which are now lost.

Among these, and numbered 239, are what he calls extracts (ἐκλογαί) from the grammatical Chrestomathy of Proclus. This title has given rise to some discussion. What we have in Photius are not in fact extracts at all, but an "epitome," and it has been argued that in them we have in fact extracts from the work of an epitomiser who had given a conspectus of the work of Proclus, and not actual extracts from the original work itself. It seems simpler to suppose that Photius uses the word "extracts" loosely, and that he was himself the epitomiser. Photius tells us that this work of Proclus was written in four books, and in it were discussed the methods and

forms of poetry and of rhetoric, two books being apparently devoted to each of these subjects.

The abstract given by Photius is limited, however, entirely to that portion dealing with the forms and examples of poetical composition, and in a series of paragraphs it defines after Proclus what was meant by hexameters, and notably by that form of poetry written in hexameters, in which the Greek *Epos* was preserved, the so-called epic poetry. In addition to this, he gives us paragraphs on elegiacs, on iambics, on hymns, pæans, dithyrambs, Adonidia, Parthenia, etc.

In regard to epic poetry, he tells us that Proclus gave an account of the five principal professors of the art, namely, Homer, Hesiod, Pisander, Panyasis and Antimachos, describing their country and works. He also wrote, he says, on *the Epics to which the name Cyclic was attached* and which, according to his report, gave an account of early doings, beginning with the making of heaven and earth, the story of the Giants with a hundred arms and the Cyclopes, and terminated with the return of Ulysses into Ithaca, and his murder by his son Telegonos. These Cyclic poems he says were esteemed not so much for their skilful composition, as for the orderly way in which they told their story.

In his original work Proclus gave the names and countries of those who in his view had written the poems, but this was apparently not copied out by Photius, who only tells us in regard to one of them, the Cypria, that according to Proclus it was attributed to more than one writer.

Who was the Proclus referred to by Photius? It was formerly thought that he was the Neo-Platonist who wrote so much on philosophy and mathematics in the middle of the fifth century A.D. This was the view of Clinton, and it is still the view of Wilamovitz-Moellendorff (*op. cit.*, 330–331). The latter prefers, he tells us, to follow the Byzantine tradition in the matter, and he accordingly relies upon Suidas and a scholiast to Gregory Nazianzen quoted by Michaelis. (*Græch. Bilderschr.*, 97.) Suidas, in reporting the life of Proclus the Philosopher, says that he wrote "a Chrestomathy in three books" (ed. Gaisford, II, 439). This, under any

circumstances, involves a mistake, since the Chrestomathy was in four books and not three; but as Suidas does not give the life of any of the poets abstracted and referred to by Proclus, except Arctinos, it is probable that he did not know his work at first hand. The notice in the Scholion just referred to, speaks of the Platonist Proclus having written a Chrestomathy on the Cyclic poets (see Migne, *Pat. Græc.*, XXXVI, 914).

This Byzantine tradition seems to me to be very weak evidence compared to that on the other side. The Chrestomathy of Proclus was clearly a school book, a manual for teaching ingenuous youth the history and peculiarities of different kinds of verse, and for describing the chief monuments of early Greek poetry with their authors. It is unlikely that a philosopher and original investigator and critic should have occupied himself with a manual of this kind.

Welcker has argued strongly against the identification of the Proclus of Photius with the Neo-Platonist of the name. He compares the fragments of the Chrestomathy with the writings of the latter and shows that they differ in style and in contents. (*Der Epische Cyclus*, 3–5.) He quotes Valesius (*de Crit.* 1–20) as having objected to the conclusions of Suidas, in identifying the author of the Chrestomathy with the Neo-Platonist, and himself identifies him with an older Proclus mentioned by Alexander of Aphrodisias in his *Aristoteles. Soph. Elen*, p. 46, together with the grammarian Athenæus. Boissonade in his *Sylloge Poetarum Græc.* also assigns the Chrestomathy to an older Proclus.

Welcker says that inasmuch as Alexander of Aphrodisias wrote at the beginning of the third century, it is very probable that the Proclus he refers to was the grammarian Eutychius Proclus of Sicca, who is mentioned by Julius Capitolinus (ch. 2) as the teacher of M. Antoninus. Trebellius Pollio, ch. 22, 313, mentions a Proclus "doctissimum sui temporis virum," and Casaubon and Fabricius both identified him with Eutychius Proclus. Lastly, Apuleius speaks of a Proclus who wrote upon Pindar (which the author of the Chrestomathy certainly did), and who could not have been the Neo-Platonist, since Apuleius flourished at the beginning of

the second century. On these grounds Welcker, as I think, conclusively argues, and his conclusions are accepted by Professor Jebb and Mr. Monro, that the author of the Chrestomathy was in fact Eutychius Proclus.

This is an important fact since it dates the Chrestomathy in the middle of the second century, instead of in the middle of the fifth. Proclus is of course the most important authority for the attribution of the various Cyclic poems to the poets generally associated with them, and it is important to fix his date. But, in surveying the authorities seriatim, we must put him aside for a while and go through them methodically, beginning, as is, I think, convenient, with the latest ones and working backwards. Following this plan we begin with the three Byzantine compilers and critics, Tzetzes, Eustathius and Suidas.

John Tzetzes wrote a work known as the Chiliarchs. He lived in the twelfth century and, *inter alia*, refers to the well-known "life of Homer," which he attributes, as others had done before him, to Herodotus, and which we shall discuss presently. In Chapter XIII, 637, of the Chiliarchs, he says: "The daughter (of Homer) Arsiphone whom Stasinos married. Stasinos, who wrote the Cyprian collections, which most people say were the work of Homer and were given to Stasinos together with money to form a dowry." He attributes the Cypria to Stasinos in other places (Chiliarchs, II, 710, and Tzetzes ad Lycophron, 511). The only part of this statement which is original and not traceable to an earlier source, as we shall see presently, is the reference to Arsiphone as the daughter of Homer whom Stasinos married. This is probably due to a mistaken reading of Suidas, in whose account of Homer she is made not his daughter but his wife. Suidas says that Homer married, in Chios, Arsiphone, the daughter of Gnotor of Cyme, by whom he had two sons and a daughter, whom the Cyprian Stasinos married. Proclus and Clement of Alexandria, had both long before attributed the Cypria to Stasinos, both giving alternative attributions; and they mention the gift of Homer to him. Aelian (*V. H.*, ix. 15) tells us that Pindar speaks of Homer having given the poem as a marriage

gift, but he says nothing of Stasinos. This reference to Pindar is to some lost ode, perhaps to one on Salamis (Welcker, I, 280).

In his commentary on Lycophron 1263, Tzetzes attributes the *Lesser Iliad* to Lesches, which is the common attribution. In the same work, 174 and 1024, he quotes Theopompos of Chios as his authority for attributing the Corinthiaca to *Eumelos*. The Corinthiaca, we shall see reason to conclude, was probably either the epic, otherwise known as the Europeia, or an epitome of it, and perhaps did not belong to the Cycle at all. Theopompos of Chios was born about 378 B.C. and ended his days in the time of Ptolemy. The words quoted from Theopompos by Tzetzes are also given by a scholiast on Pindar (Ol. XIII, 74), but without any mention of that historian.

According to another statement of Tzetzes, quoted by Bentley ad Mill, p. 54–63, *the Thebais and Epigoni* were the works of Homer, which was also, as we shall see, a widely held view. It would seem in fact that we owe no new fact whatever about the Cyclic poets to Tzetzes save the mistake about Homer's daughter.

Another famous Byzantine writer of the twelfth century was Eustathius, Archbishop of Thessalonica, a man of exceptional erudition and learning. He is of course more especially famous as the author of the well-known long and laborious commentary on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in which he brings together a great number of scholia of various grammarians whose works are lost.

In his notes on the *Odyssey*, λ p. 1684, he quotes two passages from the *Thebais* without giving any author's name.

In a note to *Iliad*, II, 118, he speaks of the Telegonia as the work of "the Cyrenaic poet," by whom he probably means Eugammon, to whom it had previously been attributed by Eusebius. Eustathius speaks of the author of the *Nostoi* as a Colophonian, by whom he perhaps means Antimachos.

The next person whom we turn to naturally for information on these matters is Suidas the author of the well-known Lexicon. Suidas probably flourished at the end of the tenth century and is frequently quoted by

Eustathius. It is a singular fact that he should have given us no biography of any of the Cyclic poets named by Proclus for the Troy legends except Arctinos, nor does he attribute any of the Cyclic poems to him, but merely says he was a poet and that according to Artemon of Clazomene in his book on Homer, he was a disciple of Homer. Wil.-Moell. says that the biography of Arctinos is the only life of a Cyclic poet given by Suidas, but this is not so. He also gives us a life of Stesichoros. Stesichoros, he tells us, was variously asserted to be the son of Euphorbos, or Euphemos, or of Euclid or of Hystes or of Hesiod, and sprang from Himera in Sicily, or according to others from Metauria, and he died at Catana and was buried near the gate called Stesichorea. He was born in Ol. XXXVII, and died in Olymp. LVI, and was a lyrical poet who wrote poems in the Doric dialect in twenty-six books. It is said, he adds, that his real name was Tisias, and that his name of Stesichoros was given him because he first instituted the chorus—(*vide sub voce*). But he says nothing of his having written a Cyclic poem. Suidas also gives us a short notice of Creophylos whom he calls the son of Astycles the Chian or Samian, and adds that some deemed him a son-in-law of Homer, others that he was his friend and received from him, when he was once his host, the poem entitled "the capture of Oechalia." This story is told also by Strabo (of Creophylos) and by other authorities of other poets. Suidas also speaks of the poets who wrote the *Nostoi* as having followed Homer.

The next writer we meet with on our subject in going backwards is Eusebius, the famous Bishop of Cæsarea, who flourished *circ.* 265–330 A.D. In his chronicle under the date Olymp. 44, *i.e.*, 761, he refers to *Eumelos* the poet, who, he says, composed the Bugonia, *i.e.*, a poem on Bees, and the Europeia; to *Arctinos* who composed the Æthiopis and the Iliu Persis, and to *Kinæthon* the Lacedemonian who wrote the Telegonia. Under Olympiad 30, 9, *i.e.*, 657 B.C., he speaks of Lesches the Lesbian, who wrote the *Lesser Iliad*, and under Olymp. 53, 3, *i.e.*, 566 B.C., he speaks of Eugammon of Cyrenaica as the author of the Telegonia. In regard to the first of these entries I do not know what Eusebius means by the

Bugonia. No other writer seems to mention it. In regard to the Europeia, the only other author known to me who assigns it to Eumelos is a scholiast to the *Iliad* who quotes Eumelos in reference to Lycurgus and Bacchus (see Clinton, *F.H.*, 1352). Eumelos, however, who is called the Corinthian and belonged to the family of the Bacchiadæ (see Pausanias, II, 1, 1), is made by Theopompus and others the author of the Corinthiaca, and it is possible, as I have previously suggested, that the Europeia and the Corinthiaca were different names for the same poem.

The statements of Eusebius that Arctinos wrote the Aethiopis and also the Iliu Persis and that Lesches the Lesbian wrote the *Lesser Iliad* are also made by Proclus, from whom he doubtless derived them, and we shall discuss them when we come to him. Eusebius' testimony about the Telegonia is very contradictory. He attributes it in fact to two different writers writing at two different dates two hundred years apart, namely, Kinæthon and Eugammon. In regard to Eugammon the statement that he was the author of the Telegonia had also been made previously by Proclus, who was no doubt his authority, but in regard to the statement about Kinæthon I can trace it to no other author than Eusebius himself. Wilamovitz-Moellendorff accounts for the fact that the poem was assigned to these two writers on the ground that they were both probably natives of Cyrene, where the poem may have been popular, but I cannot find any authority for connecting Kinæthon with Cyrene. Most writers make him a Lacedemonian, others as Hippostratos quoted by a scholiast to Pindar (N. II, 1) make him a native of Chios, others again associate him with Syracuse and Corinth, but none, so far as I know, with Cyrene. At all events, I know of no authority earlier than Eusebius for making him the writer of the Telegonia. Let us again move on. Athenæus was a native of Naupactis, and flourished at the end of the second and beginning of the third century A.D. He was a voracious reader, and it has been calculated that nearly 800 writers and 2,500 separate writings are referred to by him.

In one place he says the author of the Cyprian poem gives lists of the flowers used for garlands, adding

whether he was Hegesias or Stasinos or any one else. Demodamas, who was either a Halicarnassian or Milesian, says that the Cypria was the work of a native of Halicarnassus (XV, 31).

Again he speaks doubtfully thus, "The poet who wrote the Cypria whether he was a Cyprian or a man of the name of Stasinos or whatever his name may have been." (*Id.* VIII, 12.)

The alternative of Hegesias or Stasinos here given by Athenæus, who is clearly quite dubious about either of them, was doubtless taken from Proclus. The Halicarnassian suggestion is quite unique. Welcker called Demodamas "ein unbekannter Demodamas," I, 284. Elsewhere Athenæus says the Ligimios was written either by Hesiod or Cercops of Miletus. It is doubtful, however, whether the Ligimios was a Cyclic poem since it apparently dealt with the return of the Heraclidæ and the Cycle is supposed to conclude with the return of Ulysses.

Athenæus has also a paragraph about the Titanomachia, a poem surrounded by ambiguities. Eusebius, Prep. I, 10, p. 39, quoting Philo Byblos suggests that a Cyclic Theogonia existed apart from Hesiod's work of the name, and that with a Gigantomachia and a Titanomachia it was abstracted or put together from Hesiod's famous work. Of a separate Theogonia I do not know of any other evidence. A scholiast to Apollonius, I, 554, does mention, however, a Gigantomachia without naming any author. In regard to a Titanomachia the Borgian Iliac table refers a poem so called to the authorship of Telesis of Methymna, of whom I do not otherwise know anything. (Welcker, I, 205.)

The scholiast to Apollonius just cited, I, 1165, cites a quotation thus: "Eumelos in the Titanomachia." In addition to these notices Athenæus has two others, one direct and the other indirect. The direct one is as follows: "The writer of the Titanomachia, either Eumelos the Corinthian, or Arctinos, or whatever he may have been called." (Athenæus, VII, p. 277.) The indirect quotation does not mention the Titanomachia but in referring to a line which he quotes about Jupiter, which is doubtless derived from the Titanomachia, refers

to Eumelos the Corinthian, or Arctinos (*id.* I, 22). No works under the names of Titanomachia or Gigantomachia are quoted, so far as I know, by Pausanias or Strabo or any earlier writer, and I cannot help thinking that they were really sections of the Theogony of Hesiod which had got detached, one of which was, in the fashion of the grammarians, attributed by Athenæus and so far as we know by him alone to Arctinos.

The Titanomachia is also attributed to Eumelos by Eudokia (pp. 20 and 91).

Clement of Alexandria flourished in the reign of the Emperor Severus 193–211 A.D. Among his most famous works was the so-called Stromata. In this work he quotes Stasinos as the author of the Cypria (*Strom.*, VI, 625). He also attributes the epic Herakleia to Herodotus (*Strom.*, I, 306), in both of which he agrees with Proclus, who makes a similar statement about the Herakleia in his notice of Hesiod (opp. 41). Clement also attributes the poem known as Οἰχαλίας ἅλωσις to Creophylos as Proclus does (*Vit. Hom.*, 466). He also tells us elsewhere that Eugammon incorporated a whole poem of Musæus, *i.e.*, the Thesprotis, in the Telegonia. Clement apparently quotes this on the authority of Aristobulos.

In going backwards, we now reach the period when Pausanias flourished, namely, about the year 175 A.D. Pausanias has many references to the Cyclic poets, most of them being anonymous, showing that he did not know who their authors were. In regard to others, however, his statements are more specific but they are also very difficult to believe. Speaking of the Naupactika, or Naupaktia, he says: "As to those verses which the Greeks call Naupaktia they are usually attributed to a Milesian, but Charon the son of Pythes (who is a person unknown to me altogether . . .) says that they were composed by the Naupaktian Carcinos, and this is our opinion on the subject. For how can it be reasonably supposed that verses upon women composed by a Milesian should be called Naupaktian" (*op. cit.*, X, 38). Suidas names three writers called Carcinos, one of whom is a doubtful person, but we know of no Carcinos of Naupaktia, two were Athenians and the third of Agri-

gentum. The scholiast to Apollonius, II, 299, says, "But they say that Neoptolemus was the writer of the Naupaktia," upon which Clinton, *F.H.* 349 note, suggests as very probable that the Milesian referred to by Pausanias was called Neoptolemus. Fick (*Hesiod's Gedichte*, etc.) suggests on the other hand that he may have been Cercops of Miletus, for which he gives no adequate reason. Charon, son of Pythes, is called Charon Lampsakenos by Suidas. The only Neoptolemus I can find is a comic actor flourishing B.C. 336.

For an epic called Minyas, Pausanias is apparently our only authority. He quotes it in several places—IV, 33; IX, 54; X, 28 and 31. In IV, 33, he says, "Prodicos of Phocæa (if he is the author of the verses Minyas) writes, etc." The philosopher Prodicos of Ceos flourished in the latter part of the fifth century B.C., but I do not know anything of a Phocaian of the name. Prodicos of Ceos was a philosopher and not a poet, and Pausanias was evidently quite sceptical about him. In regard to the Atthis, *i.e.*, the poem on Attica, Pausanias attributes it to Hegesinos, and says he himself had not read the compositions of Hegesinos which were not extant when he was born. But Calippos the Corinthian, in his history of the Orchomenians, cited some verses of Hegesinos, and Pausanias tells us that the verses he himself cites, he took from Calippos (*op. cit.*, IX, 29).

Calippos of Corinth was a stoic philosopher and a pupil of Zeno and not an historian, and we have no other notice anywhere of his having written on Orchomenos.

Pausanias attributes the Cypria to Lesches, *vide* X, 26; III, 16; XIV, 2; X, 31, 1.

In regard to the Iliu Persis or capture of Troy, Pausanias writes, "Lesches Pyrrhæus the son of Æschylenus in his poem on the destruction of Troy, says," etc. (*op. cit.*, X, 25). It has been argued by Heyne and others, as I think conclusively, that Pausanias was here really referring to *a portion* of the *Little Iliad*, and that he gives the name of Iliu Persis to the latter part of the poem of that name (Clinton, *F.H.*, I, 356 note).

It would seem, says Clinton, that Pausanias merely called this part of the poem Ἰλίου πέρσις as he had just before called a part of the *Odyssey*, Μελανθοῦς λοιδορία,

and as particular parts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were named from their subjects.

Pausanias attributes to Stesichoros a poem on the Iliu Persis (*op. cit.*, X, 26 and 27). The Iliac table also attributes the same poem to the same person, probably following Pausanias, but in either case the position seems quite untenable since Stesichoros was a Lyric and not an Epic poet. Of him we have several other notices, none of which attribute to him one of the Cyclic poems.

Pausanias quotes more than one of the Cyclic poems anonymously, and he tells us expressly of Eumelos that the so-called προσόδιον was deemed his only genuine poem, IV, 4.

Closely associated in their testimony with Pausanias are the so-called Iliac tables which agree with him in an especial manner in the attributions of two of the Cyclic poems. These tables have been found at Rome and in other parts of Italy, and there can be very little doubt they were used as a kind of school-book or illustrated manual of the early legends.

Jahn and Michælis, apparently on the ground that the so-called Megarian bowls contain representations in relief taken from the heroic legends, and whose date we can approximately fix, date the Iliac tables from about the Christian era.

I think on the contrary that they are much more probably products of the second century A.D., when the Greek renaissance, the result of the taste of Hadrian and his successors, made the early history of Greek literature the object of close study.

The Capitoline table, which is the best preserved, claims to be the work of a certain Theodoros. Whether he was the sculptor or only the grammarian who furnished the designs, we do not know.

What is remarkable about this table is that while in it the Æthiopis is made the work of Arctinos, which as we shall see was the view also of Proclus; the Iliu Persis is made the work of the lyrical poet Stesichoros, a conclusion otherwise dependent on the authority of Pausanias alone, and the *Lesser Iliad* is assigned to Lesches the Pyrrheian, which is the appellation he bears in

Pausanias. Other tables have representations of scenes from the Thebais, the Argonautica, etc.

Another work, which dates from the period of the Flavian Emperors, is the so-called Certamen or contest between Homer and Hesiod, in which the Emperor Hadrian is especially mentioned. From this period also probably date the various lives of Homer which are extant, except those in Plutarch. In regard to one of them, the most famous of all, there has been a recent monograph, published in Germany, of more than usual value. This is the life usually attributed to Herodotus.

The dissertation in question is by Joannes Schmidt and was published in the second volume of the *Dissertationes Philologiæ*, 97–219. He has examined the authorship of the so-called Herodotian life of Homer at great length and with great skill, and has shown that on no ground can it be attributed to the Father of history. It is first assigned to him by Stephen of Byzantium, then by Suidas, Eustathius, and Tzetzes. If such a life by Herodotus had existed it would assuredly have been referred to and quoted by much earlier writers. Its language is not consistent with such an origin and differs greatly from the Ionic speech of Herodotus. Many phrases in it are not only not those of Herodotus, but are rude and illiterate, and it contains a number of statements quite inconsistent with an early age (*op. cit.*, 205). On the contrary it has the appearance of a work written by a Roman who was not thoroughly versed in Greek. Schmidt attributes it to some writer of the age of Hadrian, and suggests that it was probably written by Hermogenes of Smyrna, a doctor quoted by Galen, who, besides books on Medicine, is said to have written these works *περὶ Ζμύρνης ἀβ*, *περὶ τῆς Ὁμήρου σοφίας ἀχαι πατρὶδος ἀ.*

In "the Certamen" there is a story that the *Lesser Iliad* was composed by Homer himself while he was living with Thestorides, and that afterwards the latter published it as his own, which story as we have seen was also told of Stasinos and of Creophylos.

Let us now turn to Proclus whom we have dated about the year 140 A.D.

The Chrestomathy of Proclus is lost, but fortunately a very valuable fragment of it has been preserved in a

Codex at Venice, which also contains the most valuable scholia which have survived upon the text of Homer. This fragment when complete apparently contained the life of Homer as compiled by Proclus and an abstract of the various Cyclic poems dealing with the Troy legend. The leaves have been disarranged and one at least containing Proclus' account of the Cypria has been lost, but the chief contents of it, as Mr. Monro has shown (see *Journal Hell. Studies*, Vols. IV and V, see also *Hermes*, Vol. XIX), have been preserved in four other MSS., and the narrative they contain is just long enough to have filled up another leaf in the Venice Codex. Mr. Monro has further shown that the extract from Proclus originally contained in the Venice MS. can thus be recovered almost intact. The copies of the Cypria fragment are apparently not quite perfect and do not give us the names of the author or authors as these were given in the original work of Proclus. For this information we must turn to the statement of Photius in his Bibliotheca to which reference has already been made.

The extracts from Proclus contained in the Venice MS. when it was intact and perfect comprised the following subjects :—

I. A life of Homer.

II. Abstracts of the Cyclic poems, namely :—

a. The *Cypria* in eleven books attributed to several authors.

b. The *Iliad* of Homer (of this the title only is given).

c. The *Æthiopis* of Arctinos of Miletus in five books.

d. The Little *Iliad* by Lesches of Mitylene in four books.

e. The *Sack of Ilium* Ἰλίου πέρσις by Arctinos in two books.

f. The *Nostoi* by Hagias of Troezen in five books.

g. The *Odyssey* (of this the name only is given).

h. The *Telegonia* by Eugammon of Cyrene in two books.

In regard to the *Cypria*, Photius, who singles out for special notice this single poem which oddly enough has

disappeared from the Venice MS. (among the Cyclics), tells us that Proclus stated how some referred the poem to Stasinos the Cyprian, others to Hegesias the Salaminian, others to Homer who gave it to Stasinos on behalf of his daughter.

Wilamovitz-Moellendorff has apparently misunderstood the facts about this last statement, and suggests that Photius derived it not from Proclus but from Athenæus, whereas Photius is quite precise in what he says, and there can be little doubt the statement was made by Proclus himself.

It is on the contrary very probable, if not certain, that Athenæus copied his statement, which is not precisely that of Photius, from Proclus. Athenæus says: "The man who wrote the Cypria, Hegesias or Stasinos, makes mention of στεφανωτικῶν," chaplets of flowers (XV, 682). The statement about the authorship of the Cypria is otherwise an epitome of that reported by Photius, and it would hardly have occurred to Wilamovitz-Moellendorff to make it the source of Photius' statement but for the fact that he had already identified Proclus with the Neo-Platonist of the fifth century, who could not of course have been the source of statements made by Athenæus in the second century.

Arctinos fills a prominent position in the account of Proclus, for he attributes two of the Cyclic poems to him. He is the first writer, as far as I know, to attribute to him a Cyclic poem at all. Arctinos is quite unknown to and unmentioned by Strabo and Pausanias, nor do we read of him until the time of Dionysios of Halicarnassos, who speaks of him as a very early poet. The *Æthiopis*, which is assigned to him by Proclus and by the Iliac table, is quoted anonymously by Pausanias, and it seems to me that the statement that Arctinos was the author of the Æthiopis is an invention of Proclus.

I know of no authority except Proclus, who was copied by Eusebius, for assigning the Iliu Persis to Arctinos. The statement of Proclus is probably based on a mistake of a Homeric scholiast, *Schol. ad Il.* λ 515, on Podalirius and Machaon. The latter has given an extract (see the fragment in Clinton, *F.H.*, I, 357 note), professedly from the Iliu Persis in which the death of Ajax is mentioned, but

the death of Ajax, as we know from a scholiast to Pindar's *4th Isthmian Ode*, was described in the Æthiopis. It has been accordingly with great probability treated as a mistaken quotation from the Æthiopis, which was very generally assigned to Arctinos. In it according to a scholiast in Pindar's *Isth.* IV, 58, the death of Ajax was described, and it had nothing to do with the "Iliu Persis." At all events I can see no adequate reason whatever for treating Arctinos as the author of this poem; nor do I know of any authority for doing so earlier than Proclus.

The "Nostoi" or the *Return*, is a Cyclic poem attributed by Proclus to Agias of Troezen. Pausanias speaks of as anonymous "the verses which are called Nostoi," "the poem called Nostoi," X, 28 and 30. While he cites the "Nostoi" thus anonymously, he mentions Agias of Troezen, and refers to him for a saga which forms no part of the ancient Troy stories at all, but deals with the doings of Hercules and Theseus (see *Pausanias*, I, 2). This seems to me very conclusive that in his mind the "Nostoi" and Agias of Troezen had nothing to do with each other, nor do we know any other authority than Proclus for connecting them.

One important witness on the subject of one of the Cyclic poems is Lysimachos, the scholiast to the Troades of Euripides, 821. He was a distinguished grammarian of Alexandria. We do not know his exact date but merely that he flourished after Mnaseas, who lived about 140 B.C.

He tells us that the *Lesser Iliad* was assigned by some to Thestorides of Phokaia, that Hellanicos assigned it to Kinæthon of Lakedæmon, while others attributed it to Diodoros of Erythræ.

The attribution to Thestorides is apparently his own idea. In the statement in the pseudo-Herodotian life of Homer already quoted, it is the *Lesser Iliad* which is assigned to the same poet.

In regard to the statement about Hellanicos it has been generally supposed that the historian Hellanicos of Lesbos is meant, and so Monro, Wil.-Moellendorff, Robert, and others have understood it, but such an attribution seems highly improbable. I believe rather

that the reference is to Hellanicos the Grammarian, who is quoted in certain scholia to the *Iliad* as ε 269, ο″ 651, τ 90 (see Clinton, *F.H.*, I, 381).

Diodoros of Erythræ is placed by Clinton in 765 B.C., but he gives no reason or authority. No other author assigns a Cyclic poem to him.

Strabo for the most part treats and cites the Cyclic poems as anonymous. He has, however, a curious statement as to the epic known as "The Taking of Oechalia." He says, XIV, ch. 1, Creophylos was a native of Samos, who it is said once entertained Homer as his guest and received in return his poem entitled "The Taking of Oechalia." Callimachos, on the contrary, intimates in an epigram that it was the composition of Creophylos, but ascribed to Homer on account of his hospitable entertainment by Creophylos. The epigram is as follows:—

"I am the work of the Samian, who once entertained in his house as a guest the divine Homer, I grieve for the sufferings of Eurytos, and mourn for the yellow-haired Ioleia. I am called Homer's writing. O Jupiter, how glorious this for Creophylos" (*Ep.* 6). Some say that he was Homer's master; according to others it was not Creophylos but Aristeas of Proconnesos (*Strabo, loc. cit.*). Eurytium was called in ancient times Oechalia, and Creophylos in his Heracleia agrees with this account of the Euboeienses (*Pausanias*, IV, 2). It has been suggested by the critics that Heracleia is another name for the Oechalia. Pausanias no doubt here means the work generally cited as the Oechalia.

This exhausts the later materials for discussing the Cyclic poets, except the scholiasts or grammarians whom we cannot expressly date, but whom we have no reason to put at an early time. The result is very striking. Not only are the authorities for assigning the Cyclic poets to particular writers all very late, but there is no consistency of any kind among them. The following table represent some of the results so far as I have been able to reach them.

Theopompos of Chios was the first to assign the Korinthiæa to Eumelos.

Strabo assigns the "Oechalia" to Creophylos (?)

Proclus the Grammarian 140 A.D. is the first to assign the Cypria to Hegesias, in which he is followed by Athenæus.

Proclus is also the first who assigned the Iliu Persis to Arctinos, and is followed by Eusebius.

Proclus is the first to assign the Cypria to Stasinos.

Proclus was the first to assign the Telegonia to Eugammon.

Proclus is the first to assign the Nostoi to Augeas of Troezen.

Proclus is the first to assign the Herakleia to Herodotus.

Proclus is the first who assigns the Æthiopis to Arctinos.

Proclus is the first to assign the Lesser Iliad to Lesches.

Pausanias and the Iliac Table are the first to attribute the Iliu Persis to Stesichoros.

Pausanias is the first and only authority who assigns the Minyas to Prodicos the Phocæan.

Pausanias and the Scholiast to Apollonius II, 299, are the first to assign the Naupaktia to Neoptolemos the Milesian.

Athenæus is the first to assign the Titanomachia to Eumelos the Corinthian.

Athenæus first attributes the same poem to Arctinos.

Eusebius is the first who assigned the Telegonia to Kinæthon the Lacedemonian.

Eusebius is the first who assigned the Æthiopis to Arctinos and the Europeia to Eumelos.

Eustathios was the first to assign the Nostoi to a Colophonian, *i.e.*, probably to Antimachos.

Demodamas of Halicarnassos was the first to assign the Cypria to a Halicarnassian.

The Borgian Iliac table first attributed the Oedipodia to Kinæthon.

This does not mean that the writers mentioned were the originators of the various attributions, but only that they are the first whose names we know who thus attributed them. It is in fact very probable that the attributions in question were made as hypotheses by

the different grammarians who wrote commentaries or notes on the poems after the Alexandrian critics began their work, and to whom anything anonymous was very distasteful. They ingenuously deduced from the principal parts played in the poems by different localities that they were closely associated one with one place and another with another. Hence the names they acquired, such as the Cypria, the Corinthiaca, the Naupaktia, the Æthiopis, etc. From this it was an easy passage to assign them to the earliest poets, whose names were known in those localities.

That this was the process is shown by the uncertainties which most of the authorities confess to, some of them assigning the same poem to several alternative writers. Thus Proclus and others assigning one poem both to Stasinos and Arctinos; Eusebius giving the Telegonia at one time to Kinæthon and at another to Eugammon; Pausanias using sceptical doubts about more than one of the authors he quotes, etc., etc.

On the other hand we have the same poem given to different writers by different authorities, *e.g.*, the Iliu Persis given to Arctinos, Lesches, Augeas and Stesichoros, etc.

The same fact comes out, as Wil.-Moellendorff points out, when we find some writers assigning not one epic only to one writer, but several, which were distributed by other writers among other poets thus, Kinæthon has been made the author of the Oedipodia, which has been attributed to him in an inscription (Heeren in *Bibl. der Alter Liter. und Kunst*, IV, 5), the Telegonia, the *Lesser Iliad*, the Herakleia (the Herakleia is sometimes thought to have been the same as the Oedipodia) and genealogies; Eumelos has been made the author of the Titanomachia, the Bugonia, Europeia, Corinthiaca and possibly also the Nostoi. To Stesichoros the Europeia, Iliu Persis, Nostoi and Oresteia have been assigned beside other poems. To Arctinos the Æthiopis, the Iliu Persis, etc.

Again it has been overlooked by these ingenious writers that the various epics which they have distributed among different writers were in several cases not substantive poems but parts of a whole, just as the

Diomedeia or the Austeia or the Achilleis are of the *Iliad*. The war of the Epigoni was a mere appendix to the Thebais and the Oedipodia, and the Alkmaeonis were doubtless portions of the same Theban epic. The Palamedeia mentioned by Mnaseas the scholar of Aristophanes, was probably, as Wil.-Moellendorff urges, a part of the Cypria. The Nostoi, the Telegonia, and the Thresprotis are probably all parts of one epic. Whichever way we approach the problem we shall come to the conclusion that there is no authority that is of the slightest value for assigning the Cyclic poems to special authors, and that the practice was a very late one.

The evidence here collected goes to show that the assignment of the various Cyclic poems to various authors is in fact a purely arbitrary expedient of the grammarians and others, to whom it was an effort of ingenious sophistry to father these anonymous poems upon plausible authors. In no case, apparently, is there any early authority for such assignment, and we can in some cases see how the process was arranged, namely, by distributing the poems among different localities dependent on the homeland of the particular hero or god or goddess more especially honoured in it, and then associating the poem with some poet whose native land had thus been discriminated. Thus the Cypria containing so much about Aphrodite was assigned to a Cyprian poet, etc., and inasmuch as the grammarians differed as to the importance of these poets or the probability of their having written a particular poem, they chose one or other out of the local list of writers. I know of no other authority for the process, and I think it a pity that in some works of very high character, both English and foreign, this method should have been more or less countenanced and that the various poems should have been attributed to Arctinos or Lesches or Stesichoros, etc., as if there were anything more to be said in favour of such a conclusion than there is for the geography of *Alice in Wonderland*. It is better I think to refer to the poems by the names they generally go by, than by any reference to their supposed authors.

It does not seem to have occurred to some of these authorities that the Cyclic poems are not in essence

detached and separate pieces, but form sections of a continuous drama or of two or three dramas, and there is complete continuity between their subjects. It does not seem to have occurred to those who have made them substantive and separate poems how incredible it is that a number of poets belonging to different periods and different countries should have so accommodated themselves thus to each other and to their subject as to frame among them a dramatic whole covering the whole heroic period of Greek romantic legend. The thing is too absurd directly we face it in this way, apart altogether from the complete break-down in the evidence of individual authorship.

This involves our considering the poems of the Epic Cycle as anonymous, and so they were deemed by many of the older writers of antiquity, but not by the oldest, nor yet by some of the later ones. To them almost every one of these poems was supposed to be the handiwork of Homer himself.

The oldest Homeric citation we know is that of Callinos, as given by Pausanias, and he says of "the War of the Epigoni," *i.e.*, the Thebais, "this is the war which is celebrated in verse. Callinos mentioning these verses says they were composed by Homer, and many people are of the same opinion" (*Pausanias*, IX, 9). Callinos is placed by Clinton in 736–712 B.C., but probably flourished in the seventh century B.C.

In the middle of the seventh century B.C., Simonides cites a verse of the Margites and attributes it to the poet of Chios, *i.e.*, to Homer.

In the first half of the sixth century, Stesichoros cites Homer as the author of the Ἄδλα ἐπὶ Πελιμα. What is meant by this is not known, but it was clearly not the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Pindar (*vide* frag. 189, Boeck) apparently says that Homer gave his daughter the Cypria as a marriage portion.

Herodotus speaks doubtfully of the opinion (which must have been generally held to justify his expression of scepticism) that the Cypria and the Epigoni were written by Homer. He tells us elsewhere that Kleisthenes of Sikyon forbade Homer to recite because he had

belauded Argos and the Argives, and he drove out Adrastos (Vol. V, 67). Welcker suggests that this is a reference to the Thebais in which Wil.-Moell. agrees.

Plato quotes as from Homer, two verses which the scholiast says are from the Cypria.

The life of Homer once attributed to Herodotus makes Homer the author of the *Lesser Iliad.*

Antigonus of Carystos cites the Thebais as Homer's.

Suidas, under the heading Homer, says that among the poems which had been attributed to him were the *Amazonica, The Lesser Iliad, The Nostoi, The Epichlides, The Ethiopactus* (*i.e.*, *Ethiopis*), etc.

The fact is that in early times, as Wil.-Moellendorff strongly urges, Homer's name stood generically for Epic poetry generally.

Presently there came a sceptical turn. The first trace of this we find in Herodotus, where he questions the Cypria and the Epigoni (by which latter he probably means the whole Thebais) having been written by Homer.

We next find Aristotle distinguishing the author of the Cypria and *Lesser Iliad* from Homer.

The grammarian cited by Cramer (*Anecd. Ox.* 4, 375), puts the Cypria together with the Margites among the pseudo-Homeric poems (Welcker, I, 280, note 74). Presently doubts began to arise, even about one of the two great epics, and the Homeric authorship of the *Odyssey* was questioned.

But this was all later. What we must continually remember is that to a man writing before the middle of the fifth century B.C., probably the whole of the Cyclic poems (and it must be remembered that both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are made Cyclic poems by Proclus) were "Homer." He stood sponsor for them all.

How does this conclusion affect "the Homeric question," that famous polemic which, since the days when Wolff published his *Prolegomena*, has exercised so many skilful pens and so many learned thoughts? It seems to me that it affects it in a very material way. Let us first, however, realise how the question at present stands, and here I must be pardoned some elementary statements.

It is generally agreed, I think, that the two great

epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in their present shape are entirely foreign in their origin to Continental Greece.

The tradition that the poems were brought into Continental Greece from the outside is virtually unanimous, but it diverges into two forms. One of them, which has very little or no external evidence to support it is apparently due to Spartan jealousy of Athens. This is found first in the statement of Herakleides Ponticus, a pupil of Plato's, to the effect that the poetry of Homer was first brought to the Peloponnesus by Lycurgos who obtained it from the descendants of Creophylos (Polit, fr. 2). This story is repeated by Plutarch in his life of Lycurgos, but must be allowed to be purely mythical.

Tradition combines with internal evidence to fix upon Ionia and Aeolis and their islands as the original homeland of these epics in their present form.

Smyrna especially claimed to be Homer's birthplace. Pindar and Scylax both make him a Smyrnean. He is so made by the Thasian Stesimbrotos, who busied himself with Homeric matters (Busolt, 1, 136 note). "There," says Strabo, " was the Homereion, a quadrangular portico with a temple of Homer, and a statue. For the Smyrnæans above all others claim for their city that it was the birthplace of Homer, and they have a sort of brass money called Homereion" (XIV, ch. 1). In one of the lives of the poet he is made the son of Meles, the river that flows by Smyrna. Pausanias (VII, 5) tells us that by the river Meles they point out the cavern where Homer composed his poem. Close by is the island of Chios which also claimed Homer as a native. The Chiotes quoted, as a proof, the existence among them of a clan or family of the Homeridæ who are mentioned by Pindar (*id.*) and are connected with Chios by Acusilaos and Hellanicos as quoted by Harpocrates *sub voc.* Ὁμηρίδαι.

Colophon according to others was the birthplace of Homer—Strabo (*id.*). Simonides, the oldest author who mentions Homer, makes him a Chiote; so does the very ancient "Hymn to Apollo" (172), so do Acusilaos Hellanikos and Thucydides.

Cyrene in Æolis was another town which also raised

pretensions to the same distinction. This view had the support of Ephoros and the pseudo-Herodotean and Plutarchian lives of Homer. At Cyrene the name Homer is said to have meant the blind (*Vit. Homer*, II, 2). Aristotle claimed him for the island of Ios, and Pausanias tells us that on the base of a statue at Delphi, Ios was called his mother's country where he wished to be buried, and the Ietæ, he tells us, showed the tomb of Homer and also the tomb of Clymene who they say was his mother (*op. cit.*, X, 2–24). These are not the only places which claimed Homer for themselves but they are the ones supported by the most genuine tradition, and whatever we may hold about the personality of Homer it points to the poems which were most closely associated with his name having arisen there.

This is confirmed by two other facts, first the dialect in which they are written which is the Old Ionic, of which the New Ionic of Herodotus and the Attic are varieties. Mr. Monro points out a number of points to which he says many others might be added, making it clear that the Homeric and the Attic dialects are separated by differences which affect the whole structure of the language, and that many Homeric forms are absent from the later Ionic and Attic which are found in Æolic and other dialects (Monro, *En. Britt.*, art. "Homer," 113–114).

Second, the question of the Æolic influence upon the Homeric dialect has been discussed with great acuteness recently in Germany and notably by Fick, *Homerische Ilias*, Gottingen, 1886, and Hinrich in *Sittl. und der Homer, Æolismus*, Berlin, 1884, and they have shown that these Æolic elements are not to be explained by a mere development of the language but are distinctly due to Æolic influence, and Fick goes so far as to argue that the two poems as we have them are really largely translations by Ionians of primitive Æolic poems.

Busolt, whose views are generally sane and moderate, summing up the controversy, says the strong Æolic element in the Ionic language of the Epos cannot be explained by a mixture, but only by the fact that the Æolians cultivated epic poetry before the Ionians, and that the latter took over with the poetry not merely

the ideas but a large number of words and expressions (see P. Cauer, *Pr. Jahr*, Bd. 67, s. 257). The present form of the poems is due to their having been recited and recorded by Ionic poets, and is best explained by the fact that the poems originated in a district where the Ionians and Æolians lived side by side, and where the latter were partially displaced by the former, namely, in the neighbourhood of Smyrna and Chios (Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte*, Zweite Auflage, 1, 135).

In further support of this view, Busolt quotes a number of Homeric touches showing local colour, thus his comparison of the warriors coming out of their ships on the Scamandrian Plain to the swarms of birds, wild geese, cranes, and swans in the Asian meadows by the Caystros flying hither and thither, joying in their plumage and making loud cries (*Iliad*, II, 459 ff.), and his reference to the famous carved figure at Sipylos which still survives (*id.*, XXIV, 615), etc. He attributes his references to the sun setting over the sea and to the sea-beach itself (*Iliad*, XXIII, 227; XXIV, 13) to his having lived in Chios.

It is hardly necessary to press the matter further. If this be the direct evidence in regard to the original homeland of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* having been in Asia Minor, the evidence, on the other hand, that as they now stand these poems were not native Attic productions but imported thither, is just as consistent. The only person who makes Homer an Athenian is the Alexandrian grammarian Aristarchos, a very late and for this purpose worthless authority, being completely at issue with all other authorities.

On the other hand we have an early tradition embodied in the Platonic dialogue *Hipparchos*, which if not written by Plato is an early document, to the effect that the poems we are discussing were introduced into Attica by Hipparchos himself, and the recitation of them was made part of the ritual of the great Panathenaic festival by him.

The introduction of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into Attica during the domination of the Pisistratidæ is attested by another tradition. This is no doubt, however, directly supported by only late writers, namely, Cicero and Pausanias.

Cicero says: "Quis doctior eisdem temporibus illis, aut cujus eloquentia litteris instructior fuisse traditur quam Pisistrati? Qui primus Homeri libros confusos antea, sic disposuisse dicitur ut nunc habemus?" (*Cic. De Orat.*, III, 34). Pausanias, in speaking of the change of the name Donussa to Gonoessa, says that the Sicyonians reported that the name of the city was changed through ignorance either by Pisistratos when he collected into one regular poem the verses of Homer, which were scattered in different places and mentioned in various writings, or by some of his associates (VII, 26).

Again, Dieuchedas of Megara is reported to have maintained that the verses in the catalogue (*Iliad*, II, 546–556) were interpolated by Pisistratos.

The statements of Cicero and Pausanias, which are in very close agreement, were probably, according to the conjecture of Wolff, derived from an epigram preserved in two of the Homeric lives, and which is said to have been inscribed on the statue of Pisistratos at Athens. In it Pisistratos is made to say of himself that he collected Homer who was formerly sung in fragments, "for the golden poet was a citizen of ours, since we Athenians founded Smyrna" (see Monro, *En. Britt.*, XII, 116).

These traditions which in various and therefore independent ways connect the Pisistratidæ with the first introduction of the Homeric poems, properly so-called into Attica, are confirmed by such other evidence as we can procure.

It is hardly to be doubted that it was Pisistratos and his family who gave Athene her dominant position in the worship at Athens where previously Poseidon had filled the principal place. Nor is there any good reason to doubt that the festival of the great Panathenæa was either started by the Pisistratidæ or given a great impulse by them, and that its ceremonial and ritual were fixed in their time. In regard to this we have some very consistent evidence.

If the principal ceremonial and ritual of the Panathenæa were fixed by the Pisistratidæ, it seems natural to conclude that its most prominent feature, namely, the recital of the Homeric poems, was, as the tradition reports, also introduced and fixed by them.

The Platonic dialogue *Hipparchos* already cited, tells us that Hipparchos, son of Pisistratos, not only introduced the Homeric poems we are discussing into Athens, but obliged the rhapsodists at the Panathenæa to follow the order of the text "as they still do," instead of reciting portions chosen at will (Monro, *op. cit.*, 116). The orators, Lycurgos and Isocrates, refer to this law without attributing it to any author. Lycurgos appeals to the law as an especial glory of Athens.

Diogenes Laertius, who also refers to the enactment, assigns it to the father of Athenian law, namely, Solon, who lived before the Panathenæa were organized.

The evidence seems to be very strong that this law, about which no doubt can exist, was really the product of the Pisistratidæ who first organized the Panathenæa.

It would seem further, that at first and probably for a long time, the recital of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* was confined and limited to the great festival. This is surmised by Mr. Monro from the phrase in which Lycurgos, the orator, refers to the law about the recital of the poems at the Panathenæa as a special glory to Athens (*op. cit.*, 120), but it seems to me to be absolutely proved by two other circumstances, first that the Tragedians drew so little, if at all, from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* for their inspiration. The fact was noticed long ago by Paley, who based an elaborate argument upon it that these poems must have become generally known and popular in Athens after the time of the great tragedians. Second, the same thing is attested by the paintings on the early black and red vases in which the subjects taken from the two famous poems are so very few compared with those taken from the Cyclic poets.

All this seems to be quite consistent, only with the conclusion that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as we have them were foreign to the soil of Continental Greece in primitive times and only imported there from Aeolis or Ionia at a comparatively late date by the Pisistratidæ, the friends of Polycrates of Samos, who for a while held the Thalassocracy of the Ægean. This date again synchronises with that of the tradition that the poems were first written down under the same auspices. It is only when works are written down that emendators and corrupters begin their

task; the first interpolators of the Homeric poems are assigned to the same age of the Pisistratidæ. It was then the Greeks, so far as we know, first had *a written literature*. The knowledge of letters for other purposes, was doubtless considerably older, but for a written literature the view is assuredly sound which makes it synchronise with this period shortly after which the first prose compositions begin.

The conclusion that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were first imported from Aeolis into Attica in the sixth century B.C., does not of course mean that there were no poems dealing with the portion of the Troy story told in them known on the mainland of Greece before that date, and *Homeric* in the sense in which the word *Homeric* is used by the earlier writers, namely, as inclusive of the whole Cycle.

The Cyclic poems must have existed there, and been very widely spread, long before the time of Pisistratos, or the great tragedians would not have used their stories as they did, nor would the earlier potters, who ornament their vases with black figures on a red ground, have also gone to them for their subjects. These early sagas cannot have been in prose, for their incidents are manifold and complicated, and it is perfectly obvious that they were poems recited by rhapsodists, just as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were, and they probably covered the incidents reported in those two great epics as they did the other sagas of the Romantic Greek cycle.

What I wish especially to urge (against the commonly received view) is that these old compositions, which existed in different parts of the mainland of Greece, were no others than the Cyclic poems themselves. The fragments of them which remain to us prove incontestably that they are very old, not only in their imagery and style, but in the presence of the digamma in more than one of them as a necessary condition of their reading rhythmically.

The view, so far as I know almost universally held, is that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are much older than any of the Cyclic poems. I contend on the contrary that they are younger than the oldest of the latter. They presuppose the latter. They are full of allusions and of

paraphrases which suppose in the hearer or the reader a knowledge of them and their contents, and the stories to which they relate. This has struck myself from the very first time I looked at them, but the same view has been arrived at by much better judges than I am, although they have not drawn the same inference. Butcher and Lang, in their most delightful translation of the *Odyssey*, say quite truly, "By the time the *Odyssey* was composed, it is certain that a poet had before him a well-arranged mass of legends and traditions from which he might select his materials. The author of the *Iliad* has an extremely full and curiously consistent knowledge of the local traditions of Greece, the memories which were cherished by Thebans, Pylians, people of Mycenæ, of Argos, and so on. Both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* assume this knowledge in the hearers of the poems, and take for granted some acquaintance with other legends" (*op. cit.*, 3rd ed., Fick, XII). This could not be said better, but it seems to me to involve the conclusion that the author or authors of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* had before him or them the long legend which was told by the rhapsodists about the great days of old, and which was cut up by them or their successors into a number of sections, fitting on to each other or slightly overlapping, which we call the Cyclic poems. Not short songs or lyrics as Wolff and others seem to imply but as true epics as our Mediæval Romances. These poems do not, it seems to me, presuppose any acquaintance with the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* as some have urged. What there is common to the latter and the Cyclic poems is a proof of their derivation from the Cyclics which they presuppose at every turn.

The only argument I have seen for placing the two great poems before the Cyclic series beside the voice of later Greek antiquity, which very naturally wished to place its "Bible" at the beginning of things, is the artistic finish and completeness of the poems compared with the comparatively rude, inartistic character of the Cyclic Epics. This very fact seems to me a most potent piece of evidence the other way. The best example I can suggest for comparison is our own noble epic which passes under the name of Malory, the last and the

richest vintage of its kind of our middle age. It would, it seems to me, be as inconsequent to place this very artistic poem before the older and ruder poems and tales which it followed and idealized and put into fine shape without much altering their substance as to put the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* before the *Cypria*, the *Aethiopis* and the *Thebais*, whose stories they quote from or tell again in a more delicate and finished style. Homer was in fact the Malory of the Greek Epos, only instead of glorifying the whole long story of Troy, he glorified only a portion of it.

The Aeolic or Ionic poet who wrote the divine drama of the *Iliad* was assuredly no prentice hand, but a supreme master of everything that is excellent in poetry. How he got his materials together we don't know. What we do know and wonder at is that he, a Smyrnean or Chiote, did not write about the legends of Ionia or of Æolis beyond the Ægean, but about the legends of Argos and Thebes and Thessaly. Did he travel hither and thither throughout Continental Greece to collect his materials where they were alone at home? If so why should these strange tales of foreign heroes have been of interest at Smyrna and Chios and Cyrene? Were they not rather the common stock of traditions which the old Æolian race possessed while it was still intact and unbroken, and which its bards had sung about as our bards had long been singing about Arthur and Merlin before a finished artist took up the work and gave it the touches of a master hand? The great Aeolic singer or singers probably put them into their present shape to be recited at some annual Pan-Aeolic or Pan-Ionian festival in Asia Minor as they afterwards were at the Panathenæa. A primitive Malory or Tennyson who reset the primitive Greek *Idylls of the Kings.*