Phaedo’s Enslavement and Liberation

SLOBODAN DUŠANIĆ

Little is known of Phaedo the Elean’s life and writings.¹ The evidence is not only meagre and, in some points, contradictory; it is also complicated by textual uncertainties. A reexamination of two sets of controversial testimonies on Phaedo will not be, I hope, out of place in a volume dedicated to the great scholar who has done so much for our understanding of ancient philosophy and its creators.

I

According to the tradition best represented by Diogenes Laertius and the Suda article (Φ 154),² Phaedo came to Athens as a slave. He met Socrates there,³ was ransomed through Socrates’ help, and became a philosopher.⁴

Diog. Laert. 2. 105 (cf. 2. 31): Φαίδων Ἡλείος, τῶν εὐπατριδῶν, συνεάλω τῇ πατρίδι καὶ ἡναγκάσθη στήναι ἐπὶ οἰκήματος· ἀλλὰ τῷ θόριον προστίθηκε μετείχε Σωκράτους, ἐὼς αὐτὸν λυτρώσασθαι τοὺς περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην ἢ Κρίτωνα προύτρεψε· καὶ τοῦτεύθεν ἐλευθερίως ἐφιλοσόφει.

Ἑλείος Ἡ Μήλιος Grote

Suda s.v. Φαίδων: ... τοῦτον συνεβή πρῶτον αἰχμάλωτον ὕπο Ἰνδῶν ληφθῆναι, εἶτα πραθείς παρνοβοσκῷ τινὶ προέστη ὕπ’ αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἐταίρισιν ἐν Ἀθηναῖς. ἐντυχὼν δὲ Σωκράτει ἐξηγουμένῳ ἡράσθη τῶν


² For the rest of the evidence, see Giannantoni (previous note) I 148–50.

³ The brothel element of the story is best rejected as a moralistic embroidery: McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 14–17.

⁴ Here, as well as in section II below, I reproduce only those items of the apparatus criticus for Diog. Laert. 2. 105 and the Suda Φ 154 which are indispensable to the argument of the present article.
If we are to believe Plato’s *Phaedo* (cf. 89b), the eponym of the dialogue, though adult, was still young at the time of the death of Socrates. This in turn well accords with the notes just quoted from Diogenes and the *Suda* implying that the event which cost Phaedo his liberty formed part of an inter-state war (*συνάλω τῇ πατρίδι; αὐξμάλωτον ὑπὸ οἰκικὴν ληφθήναι*); namely, the Spartan–Elean hostilities of 402–400 B.C. offer, chronologically, quite a likely context for Phaedo’s misfortune. The attempts of a number of modern students of Phaedo to attribute his enslavement to the Athenian operations in the territory of Elis in 431 B.C. (Thuc. 2. 25. 3–5), or the Athenian conquest of Melos in 416 B.C. (this latter combination, in a wholly improbable manner, also makes Phaedo a Melian instead of an Elean), may be dismissed as presupposing a birth-date for him which would be too early to be reconciled with Plato’s indications, obviously trustworthy here. What is more, within the whole period of Socrates’ activity—and all our sources credit Socrates with the conversion of Phaedo into a philosopher—there was no episode in the history of Elis (exterior and interior alike) as dramatic as the 402–400 war. Having defeated the Eleans at that time, Sparta overthrew their ancestral democracy and introduced some other measures deeply resented by the Elean patriots; those measures alone could justify Diogenes’ use of the strong expression, “Phaedo . . . was captured together with his fatherland.” It seems that the confiscation of the anti-Laconian families’ goods went together with the violent discontinuity in the Elean politico-constitutional situation in 400

---

5 The point is disputed—see e.g. H. Dörrie, *Kleine Pauly* IV (1972) 691 f.; Rossetti (above, note 1) 122 f.; Giannantoni (above, note 1) III 105, 107—but certain, practically speaking. Von Fritz (above, note 1) 1538; McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 2 n. 7, 14 n. 65.


7 Thus, e.g., L. Preller, *Rh. Mus.* 4 (1846) 391–95 (with some hesitation); Zeller (above, note 1) 275 n. 2; von Fritz (above, note 1) 1538; J. Humbert, *Socrate et les petits Socratiques* (Paris 1967) 278; McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 13–18.

8 Rossetti (above, note 1) 125 f. Cf. Preller (previous note) 393.


B.C.\footnote{11} If Phaedo’s origin (τῶν ἔναρτησιῶν) was among the nobles who wanted an Elis independent of Sparta—many indications recommend that conjecture\footnote{12}—he too must have been a victim of such a confiscation, which would provide a plausible explanation of the fact that the financial support of Socrates’ friends and/or acquaintances was needed for his ransom.\footnote{13}

On the other hand, recent scholarship is inclined to broaden its scepticism as to the value of the tradition analyzed in the first section of the present paper. Disagreements concerning the date and circumstances of Phaedo’s enslavement tend to be replaced by suggestions that his “slave story” should be discarded \textit{in toto}. It has been regarded as a fabrication conforming with something that has been described as a \textit{locus communis} of the philosophers’ \textit{Lives} (the servitude of Plato, Diogenes the Cynic, and some others).\footnote{14} Two details have been insisted upon in this connection: The fall of Elis itself in 400 B.C. does not seem to have been accompanied by any enslavement of its citizens,\footnote{15} and (in G. Giannantoni’s opinion) the entire account of Phaedo’s losing his freedom “è chiaramente romanzesco, come prova anche la variante che leggiamo in Suida, e cioè che Fedone fu catturato ὑπὸ ἵνα ὀνομάζον . . .”\footnote{16} In an able study, though, E. I. McQueen and C. J. Rowe have shown that, on general grounds, the war aspect of Phaedo’s biography in Diogenes and the lexicographer is “likely to contain a core of fact.”\footnote{17} It may be added that, at least in the case of Plato, the evidence of the philosopher’s temporary \textit{status servilis}—though smacking of a topos and eventually adapted to the fictional framework of a topos—does repose on historical truth.\footnote{18} As to the modalities and whereabouts of Phaedo’s

\begin{flushright}
\footnote{12} Dušanić (above, note 10) 84 and n. 30; Dušanić (previous note) 327 f.
\footnote{13} For a different explanation of that fact, McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 14 and 16 n. 79. Let us note, in support of what is said on Phaedo’s origin in the \textit{Suda}, that he had more than one aristocratic friend in Athens—Simmias and Cebes, for instance (regarding their social background, see, e.g., Xen. \textit{Mem.} 1. 2. 48).
\footnote{14} Giannantoni (above, note 1) III 107–09, with refs. to the works by W. Croener, F. Wehrli, and J. Humbert; cf. also Dörrie (above, note 5). The (lost) essay of Hermippus, \textit{Περὶ τῶν διαστρεπάντων ἐν παιδείᾳ δούλων}, is usually mentioned to illustrate the popularity of the topos.
\footnote{15} Xen. \textit{Hell.} 3. 2. 30 f.; Diod. 14. 34. Cf. Grote and Montuori (above, note 9); McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 13 n. 60.
\footnote{16} Giannantoni (above, note 1) III 107 f.
\footnote{17} McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 17 f., with the following comment: “Given the existence of the Spartan–Elean war [of 402–400 B.C.] . . ., Athens’ involvement in that war, and the fact that Phaedo the Elean was well-known as a follower of the Athenian Socrates, it is entirely credible, first, that Phaedo originally came to Athens as a prisoner-of-war; secondly, that Socrates was somehow responsible for his regaining his freedom; and thirdly that it was also because of Socrates that he turned to philosophy. If these things are indeed true, then we have an attractive explanation of Plato’s choice of Phaedo as his narrator for the dialogue; if none of them is true, then no such explanation is available.”
\end{flushright}
capture, McQueen and Rowe have persuasively reaffirmed the possibility that the future Socratic was caught by the invading army somewhere in the outlying parts of the Elean territory, in the course of fights preceding (not necessarily immediately) the capitulation of the city in 400 B.C. Phaedo would have been on garrison duty at the place and moment of his imprisonment, which would mean that he was some 18–20 years old. Plato’s indications in the Phaedo concerning the eponym’s age in 399 B.C. would square with such a reconstruction of events and their chronology.

The problem of the ὲπὸ ἵνδον has remained unsolved, however. Despite modern contentions to the contrary, that variant cannot be defended as based upon a romantic literary invention. For the attentive reader of a developed romance (a short lexicographical note presents of course a different case; cf. below, notes 47–48) the “Indians” would have been difficult—impossible indeed—to insert logically into the context of an episode recounting Phaedo’s troubles in a war or quasi-war situation. To judge from the whole of the biographical tradition on Phaedo, that context must have been narrow, in both time (the future Socratic was liberated when still a young man) and space (the scene of his complete career was between the Peloponnese and Athens). An episode confronting him with the “Indian” captors (not thinkers!) would have appeared bizarre to the point of spoiling the artistic effects of the entire story. If the simple invention, not the correction, of a corrupt ethnic were in question, even the writer of a piece of very naive fictional literature, and ready at that to transform the transmitted war details (αἰχμάλωτον ... ὅποθηναι) into something tolerably similar but more picturesque, would have invoked (Mediterranean) pirates rather than the “Indians.” Pirates figure in the analogous anecdotes about Plato and Diogenes the Cynic, which fact has possibly inspired the conjecture ληστῶν in the editio Porti. The phrase ὲπὸ ἵνδον must consequently reflect an original corruption, as the authors of emendations quoted in the apparatus have already supposed. But neither Portus’ proposal nor those of the other editors and commentators appear attractive.

19 With good reason, McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 14 with n. 66 have pointed out the warfare of 401 (summer) in this connection. We are informed that Athenian soldiers accompanied the Spartan army then (Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 25, of Agis’ expedition); on the other hand, the Athenian participation in the campaigns of 402 and 400 B.C. is not attested. See also below, notes 29 and 35.
20 Agis’ operations of 401 resulted in massive enslavements: Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 26.
21 McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 14 n. 65. Cf. Zeller (above, note 1) 275 n. 2 and von Fritz (above, note 1) 1538.
22 Hellenistic and later authors make Greek philosophers and lawgivers travel to India and meet various sages there. No need to say that such cases are far from constituting parallels for Phaedo’s enslavement, though, paradoxically, they seem to have indirectly inspired the controversial reading in the Suda Φ 154 (below, text and note 47).
24 Also von Fritz (above, note 1) 1538, and some others.
enough from the palaeographer’s point of view;\(^{25}\) A. von Gutschmid’s υπό Ἀρκάδων also has the disadvantage of not giving the υπό in the elided form. Little wonder then that Hesychius reproduces υπό Ἴνδων and that the main editors of the Suda retain it without obelizing it.

The controversial reading in the Suda should be corrected, I think, to ὅντ’ ὑπονυτίων. The error seems to have come into being in two phases. First, through scribal hapigraphy, one of the two successive ΠΟ of the ΥΠΟΠΟΥΝΤΙΩΝ has been eliminated. Second, a copyist has tried to emend the unintelligible\(^{26}\) ΥΠΟΥΝΤΙΩΝ by making two interconnected assumptions, faulty but pardonable: (a) that the omicron (formerly the ethnic’s initial) belonged to the preposition and (b) that the following Y stood for I, and NT\(^{27}\) for ΝΔ; both the “ultraclásical” spellings are common in later Greek.\(^{28}\) The first phase probably presupposes the use, on the part of the scribe responsible for the hapigraphy, of an early manuscript (the *scriptura continua*; \(?\) the absence of the accent in υπό and the breathing in ὅπτ’); the date of the second phase would have been comparatively late, to judge from the confusion of NT and ΝΔ that it implies.

Now, it is easy enough to imagine “Opuntians” as Phaedo’s captors in the war of 402–400 B.C.—to be exact, at the time of the expedition led by the Spartan king Pausanias into the eastern part of the Elean territory (warm season, 401?).\(^{29}\) Pausanias’ army advanced through Acroreia, the land of

---

\(^{25}\) Palaeographically, Wesseling’s emendation Στνδων seems less difficult than those proposed by Portus, Menagius, Preller, or Gutschmid but, geographically and historically, the Sindians (subjects of the Bosporan kings) had nothing to do with Elis and its neighbourhood. Wesseling’s tentative explanation of his proposal, quoted in Bernhardy’s apparatus, is not convincing: “... *Inorum* importuna mentio, neque commoda *Sindorum*, nisi si iuvenis ab hostibus captus in horum dein piratarum rapaces captus est, in domo sua eversus necis momento.” Note that our sources (K. Kretschmer, *RE* III A (1927) 226–28) know nothing about the Sindians’ piracy.

\(^{26}\) The “Opuntians” were a solution hard to find, though cases similar to the hapigraphy postulated here must have been frequent enough (cf. e.g. *Syll.*\(^{3}\) 47 [Meiggs–Lewis, *GHII* 20], line 11 [of the Locrian Opus]: ΛΠΟΝΤΙΟΝ = ὅντ’ ὦ<νο>υτίων). Namely, Opus Acroiae was scarcely known in antiquity; on the other hand, the copyist had little reason to associate the Locrian Opuntians, unlike the Indians (below, notes 47–48), with the context.

\(^{27}\) The disappearance of the following iota may have been the result of either a phonetic (a synizesis of *-iων*) or a graphic (the copyist had before his eyes the abbreviation ΥΠΟΥΝΤΙΩΝ?) phenomenon.


\(^{29}\) The problem of the relationship between (Xenophon’s account of) the second campaign of Agis and (Diodorus’ of) the campaign attributed to Pausanias may be solved in one of three ways (cf. McQueen and Rowe [above, note 1] 5 n. 22): The historians describe two different events from two different years (according to that hypothesis, Pausanias’ expedition should be put in 402 B.C.), or two different but approximately contemporaneous events, or only one event (i.e. Agis’ expedition related by Diodorus with an important variation concerning the name of the king and the direction of his attack). For several reasons, I prefer to follow J. Hatzfeld, *REA* 35 (1933) 401, 406 f., and opt for the second solution: Sparta launched two

88

Elis' perioeci near the Arcadian frontier.\textsuperscript{30} Among the little poleis of that region there was one by the name of Opus (the ethnic: 'Οπούντιοι),\textsuperscript{31} which, like all or almost all of Acroreia, was brought over to the invader's side.\textsuperscript{32} To demonstrate their loyalty to their new ally Lacedaemon,\textsuperscript{33} the inhabitants of Opus Acroriae would have been able to capture Phaedo while serving—according to the supposition cited above (text and notes 19–21)—as a peripolos, to quote an Attic term, in the vicinity of their city or, rather, in the city itself.\textsuperscript{34} Such an action by the Opuntians would appear all the more natural if Phaedo's family was already known for its anti-Laconian attitude. The simplest explanation of Phaedo's further fate would be that the Arcroelian Opuntians delivered him to Pausanias; after the king's dividing up the booty he fell to the share of the Athenians whose contingent(s) strengthened the Spartan troops in 401.\textsuperscript{35} This opened the way for Phaedo's coming to Athens and, eventually, his acquaintance with Socrates. What is known about, or might be plausibly deduced from, the

expeditions against Elis in the warm season of 401, Agis' from the south (Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 25 ff.) and Pausanias' from the east (Diod. 14. 17. 6 ff.).


\textsuperscript{31} Ernst Meyer, RE XVII (1939) 818 f. (the site of Gartsiko?). The ethnic: Strab. 9. 4. 2 and Steph. Byz. s.v. Όποιες/Όποιοι.

\textsuperscript{32} Diod. 14. 17. 8 (transl. C. H. Oldfather, LCL): "Pausanias, then, entered Elis by way of Arcadia and straightway took the outpost of Lasion at the first assault; then, leading his army through Acroreia, he won to his side the four cities of Thraestus, Halium, Eupagium, and Opus." "Eupagium" has been frequently emended to "Epitalium," but that emendation should not be retained.

\textsuperscript{33} It is probable that the Opuntians, like the majority of Elis' perioeci in general, had found the leadership of Elis hard to bear (cf. Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 23, 25, 30); at any event, the Spartans gave Acroreia a sort of independence in 401 and it preserved that status till 371 B.C. (Siewert [above, note 30]). But the Opuntians' changing sides in 401 may have been partly inspired by their wish to escape from the punishment which normally befell a city resisting the besieger. Even the enslavement of Phaedo may have been instrumental to the same or similar purpose; to cite a number of parallels close in time, see Diod. 14. 14–15 (on Dionysius I and the betrayals, well rewarded, in Sicilian cities) and the accounts of the surrender of the Byzantines in 409 B.C. (Xen. Hell. 1. 3. 14–22, Diod. 13. 66–67, Plut. Alc. 31).

\textsuperscript{34} The site of Gartsiko (above, note 31) has considerable remains of a fortification.

\textsuperscript{35} It was normal practice to divide booty, slaves included, among the contingents of an allied army that came from various states (cf. e.g. Xen. Hell. 7. 4. 27). In 401, Agis' army certainly included some Athenians (above, note 19) and Pausanias' very probably did (Diod. 14. 17. 7 [Oldfather's transl.]: "(Pausanias) was accompanied by many soldiers also from practically all the allies except the Boeotians and Corinthians"; Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 25 suggests that "from practically all the allies" includes the Athenians too). Phaedo may have been immediately sold to an (Athenian) slave merchant—such merchants used to follow their compatriots in war expeditions (P. Ducrey, Le traitement des prisoniers de guerre dans la Grèce antique [Paris 1968] 237).
history of Acroeria during Socrates’ lifetime excludes, practically speaking, any other occasion for Phaedo’s capture ὑπ’ ὃποινιῶν.

The reconstruction of events leading to Phaedo’s enslavement as delineated above has the advantage of corresponding to an emendation of the Suda’s ὑπὸ ἵνδων which—aside from the problem of the possible influence of the Zopyrus on the birth of that corrupt reading (below, notes 47–48)—does not seem to contradict the basic demands of textual criticism. That reconstruction is also in harmony with historical evidence. Two points deserve to be underlined here. If captured as early as the summer (autumn) of 401, Phaedo had enough time to get closely acquainted with Socrates and Socrates’ circle before the fatal trial of spring 399;36 everything that is recorded about the Elean’s life proves that he was intimately connected with them. If, according to the new emendation of the Suda text, the capture occurred in a garrison of Acroeria which included the peripoloi, a series of particulars which are otherwise difficult to explain combines to produce a verisimilar picture of Phaedo’s rôle in the military developments of 401.37

Certainly, an additional point of interest of the present note is found in the support it gives to the conjecture that Phaedo’s (eupatrid) family did not approve of Sparta’s domination over Elis and, it might be imagined, the Peloponnese as a whole.

II

The politico-chronological enigma of Phaedo’s enslavement has one more facet; it concerns the person or persons who, at Socrates’ instigation, helped Phaedo regain his liberty. Of them, Diogenes mentions (at 2. 105) τοῦς περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην ἢ Κρίτωνα and (at 2. 31) Crito alone; the Suda Ἀλκιβιάδην; Gellius, Cebes the Socratic.38 If the Suda is followed, Phaedo could not have been liberated as late as the end of the century, for Alcibiades was already dead in 404 B.C. (Crito, Cebes, and some of Alcibiades’ friends, however, outlived Socrates for certain).39 Actually, the testimony of the Suda (Socrates) πείθει Ἀλκιβιάδην πρίσσοθαι οὖτον [i.e. Phaedo]) would have suggested that a probable terminus post quem non for Phaedo’s ransom should be put in 407 B.C., when Alcibiades left Athens,

36 The scholars who are inclined to put the beginning of the Spartan–Elean war after 402 B.C. or, in any case, to date Phaedo’s enslavement to 400/399 B.C. or a later year are unable to explain the evidence of Phaedo’s close friendship with Socrates. Cf. Humbert (above, note 7) 277 f.; Rossetti (above, note 1) 123 f.
37 Cf. above, text and notes 19–21, 33–35.
38 Gell. NA 2. 18. 4: “Eum (sc. Phaedonem) Cebes Socraticus hortante Socrate emisse dicitur habuisseque in philosophiae disciplinis.”
39 McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 17 n. 82 are undoubtedly right in excluding the possibility that the Suda refers here to Alcibiades’ son of the same name.
never to return. On the other hand, if the whole story of Phaedo’s servitude is viewed as pure invention, the liberators’ names cited in our sources must reflect an effort of the forger’s (or forgers’) imagination too. To understand the whole problem better, it may prove useful to consult the two extant catalogues of Phaedo’s writings:

Diog. Laert. 2. 105: ... διαλόγους δὲ συνέγραψε (sc. Phaedo) γνησίους μὲν Ζώπυρον, Σίμωνα, καὶ δισταζόμενον Νικίαν, Μήδιον, οὖς φασὶ τινὲς Αισχίνου, οἱ δὲ Πολυαινοῦ. ‘Αντίμαχον ἢ Πρασβύτας· καὶ οὕτως διστάζεταιε σκυτικοῦς λόγους· καὶ τούτους τινὲς Αισχίνοις φασίν.

Mηδιον] Μηδειον Croenert, Μηδειον Menagius | Πολυαινοι | Πλεισταινοι Croenert | Σκυτικοις Meibomius et al.

Suda s.v. Φαίδων: ... διάλογοι δὲ αὐτὸν Ζώπυρον, Μηδιον, Σίμων, Αντίμαχος ἢ Πρασβύτης, Νικίας, Σιμίας, Αλκιβιάδης, Κριτόλαος.

Mηδιον] Μηδειον Preller

The longer of the two, the Suda’s list, also seems the more instructive. It may be inferred from it that Phaedo had a special interest in the personages of Alcibiades and Simmias. As is well known, the latter was an intimate friend of Cebes. Crito, on the other hand, was remembered in Socratic tradition for his readiness to succour the Master, as well as the other members of the circle, with money whenever there was need. If accepted as reliable, these facts would tend to corroborate the evidence about the liberation of Phaedo through the financial aid of Crito, Cebes, and Alcibiades or a group of Alcibiades’ partisans (to adopt Diogenès’ τοὺς περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην ἢ Κρίτωνα as the better variant—one compatible with the dating of Phaedo’s capture in 401 B.C.—than the Suda’s Ἀλκιβιάδην). The circumstance that, according to our sources, three or more men were believed to have participated in Phaedo’s liberation has nothing suspect in it. All of them were close to Socrates and a conciliatory approach to the diverging evidence would have been in order: For obvious material reasons, several people were able to unite in contributing the means for Phaedo’s ransom.

40 Giannantoni (above, note 1) III 106; cf. Grote (above, note 9); Rossetti (above, note 1) 126.
41 Diog. Laert. 2. 20 f., 121, Plat. Apol. 38b and Phaedo 115d, Xen. Mem. 2. 9, etc.
42 With McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 14 f., I translate Diogenès’ testimony, "(Socrates) impelled Alcibiades’ associates or Crito to ransom him" (it can be deduced from Diog. Laert. 2. 31 that τοὺς περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην ἢ Κρίτωνα does not refer to Κρίτωνα in addition to Ἀλκιβιάδην; after all, a group of “Crito’s associates” would have been socially improbable). To my mind, Diogenès’ "or" implies that he combines here two traditions from two different sources: One (citing “Alcibiades’ associates”) was common to Diogenes himself and the source of Suda Φ 154; the other (citing Crito) went back to a biography of Crito and is recorded at 2. 31 and 105 (besides the first-mentioned tradition). Gellius’ reference to Cebes as Phaedo’s liberator (deriving in
A number of uncertainties remain, however. Diogenes—otherwise critical in judging the authenticity of dialogues ascribed to Phaedo—does not cite the *Alcibiades* or the *Simmias*. Are the corresponding entries in the *Suda* trustworthy or, perhaps, have they been fabricated with regard to the names, just mentioned, of two of Phaedo’s liberators (Clinias’ son, Cebe)? Conversely, there is a possibility that our sources’ references to Alcibiades, Crito, and Cebe as the financiers of Phaedo’s liberation derive, in the final analysis, from the forger’s illegitimate extension of the genuine data about the literary and social history of Socrates’ school—in other words, from the facts that Phaedo composed the dialogues *Alcibiades* and *Simmias* (works under such titles were also written by some Socratics who had never been slaves) and that Crito’s real behaviour gave rise to various anecdotes on his willingness to help. In that case, too, we should have been denied independent support of the liberation story. Furthermore, are we to suppose that an ancient or medieval reader with sufficient knowledge of Phaedo’s times was able to “correct” the already invented τείχετι Ἀλκιβιάδην to a (προτρέψει) τούς περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην to spare himself the chronological contradiction (Alcibiades died in 404 B.C.; Phaedo lost his freedom some three years later)? This would make the version in the *Suda* older than the version in Diogenes, though both would reflect a historically irrelevant reinterpretation of the indications provided by the title (and content?) of an essay of Phaedo’s.

In my opinion, there is no compelling reason to doubt the veracity of either side of the Phaedo tradition examined in these pages. Alcibiades was very probably spoken of in the *Zopyrus*, the *Nicias*, and the *Simon* (three works cited by both the lists) within dialogue contexts much earlier than the end of the fifth century. It is difficult, therefore, to question the historicity of Phaedo’s *Alcibiades*—one of many essays of that name written by Socrates’ pupils—still more to see in it a fabrication reflecting only the aftermath of the Elean–Spartan war. Diogenes’ omission of the *Alcibiades* from his catalogue of Phaedo’s literary legacy is best put down to the ultracritical attitude of Diogenes’ source, an attitude which was obviously influenced by the parallel existence of several Socratics’ writings bearing the same title. A defence along analogous lines holds true for the

---

43 On the *Zopyrus* and the *Simon*, see Rossetti (above, note 1) 136–53, Giannantoni (above, note 1) III 110–16. With good reason, the latter scholar rejects R. Hirzel’s conjecture that the *Nicias* attributed to Phaedo must have been, in reality, a work of Pasiphon.

44 The majority of the Socratic dialogues (now lost) whose names are cited in Diogenes and the *Suda* should not be taken for complete fabrications; cf. Rossetti (above, note 1) 80 f. Their titles as well as their (rare) fragments attest to their authors’ intimate knowledge of the historical themes discussed in the fourth century B.C. (cf. e.g. Phaedo’s *Medius* or *Antimachus*); so they were either genuine products of the decades following 399 B.C. or preserved some elements of the originals. For a somewhat different view, C. W. Müller, *Die Kurzdialoge der Appendix Platonica* (Munich 1975) 18 f. n. 4, 320 ff.
Simmias too, and we should insist upon the value of the conciliatory approach mentioned above. The names of Phaedo’s liberators and the titles of his dialogues do not depend upon each other for their authority; rather, both should be studied as products of the same historical reality.

From that point of view, Diogenes’ "(Socrates) impelled Alcibiades’ associates or Crito to ransom him (sc. Phaedo)" must be preferred to the Suda’s "(Socrates) persuaded Alcibiades to ransom him (sc. Phaedo)," and not only because of considerations of chronology. The Suda article Φ 154 reveals certain disquieting signs of the redactor’s, or his source’s, tendency to simplify, modernize, and improve upon the transmitted evidence. The article omits the caveats (adduced by Diogenes) concerning the genuineness of some of Phaedo’s dialogues. It offers what is evidently a lectio facilior for the subtitle of the Antimachus. If I am not wrong in reconstructing the way the variant ἀπὸ Ἰνδῶν came into being, the redactor or his source did not hesitate to propose bold emendations of the text which had become hard to understand. The "(Socrates) persuaded Alcibiades" seems to belong to the same group of secondary changes in peius. As a corollary to the emendation ἀπὸ Ἰνδῶν itself, it has eliminated both the name of Crito and the turn τοῦς περί from the developed phrase in the original—or, if the original did not refer to Crito, it has eliminated this latter element only. To be exact, the emendation of ΥΠΟΥΝΤΙΩΝ to ἀπὸ Ἰνδῶν and the simplification of the developed τοῦς περί Ἀλκιβιάδην (+ Ἡ Κρίττονα;) formula we know from Diogenes will have gone together as parts of the same (superficial) attempt at interpretation. For we are entitled to suppose that, in the redactor’s picture of Phaedo’s fate, these "Indians" were expected to be (indirectly) approached by Alcibiades without any help from Alcibiades’ Athenian friends. That impression of a special link existing between the "Indians" and the son of Clinias was presumably formed from Phaedo’s dialogue Zopyrus, whose eponym, an Oriental—an Indian, according to a later version of the dialogue story—was Alcibiades’

45 Aeschines Socraticus was also credited with a dialogue named after a Pythagorean (the Telauges; cf. H. Dittmar, Aischines von Sphettos: Studien zur Litteraturgeschichte der Sokratiker [Berlin 1912] 213–44). His Phaedo (Suda s.v.) resembles Phaedo’s Simmias as a work dedicated, to judge from its title, to a fellow-member of the Socratic circle. Cf. Diog. Laert. 2. 108 for Euclides’ Aeschines and Crito.

46 Cf. above, note 42.

47 Probably in reference to Phaedo’s dialogue of that name (cf. Giannantoni [above, note 1] III 114 f.), Aristotle (fr. 27 R3 ap. Diog. Laert. 2. 45) speaks, without citing his name, of a "magus from Syria" who came to Athens to converse with Socrates (and Alcibiades; cf. Cic. De fato 10). After Alexander the Great, the tradition about a "magus from Syria" was likely to be transformed into the tradition about a "sage from India" (cf. e.g. Diog. Laert. 9. 61 and 63, and the articles on Apollonius of Tyana, Democritus, and Calanus in the Suda; on the traffic between India and Syria in Hellenistic times, W. W. Tam, The Greeks in Bactria and India [Cambridge 1951] 361 ff. et passim). Actually, the anonymous Indian whom Aristoxenus (ap. Euseb. PE 11. 3) has meet Socrates in Athens seems to have been Zopyrus himself, an alter ego of the man from Syria mentioned by Aristotle. That identification follows from a number of common points linking Aristoxenus’ and Aristotle’s notes, as well as these two with the rest
interlocutor, perhaps even former paedagogue. In the reasoning which we are inclined to attribute to our encyclopaedist or his source, the mysterious Indians who caught Phaedo were likely to have been spoken to by another Indian, Zopyrus, and this latter by his associate Alcibiades; Crito or Alcibiades' political friends were superfluous in the whole matter.

If this explanation of the relationship between the corresponding notes in Diogenes and the Suda is accepted, we have two independent testimonies (for the Suda Φ 154, which otherwise contains some good evidence that is not in the Phaedo chapter of Diogenes, should be understood, loco retractato, [Σωκράτης] πειθεὶς ἑτοιμὸς περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην πρίασθαι [Φαίδωνος]) on the rôle of Alcibiades’ followers in the ransom of the young Elean. Equally important, the political history and prosopographical indications concur in supporting these testimonies.

Earlier scholarship, though, was sceptical about the possibility that Phaedo had been bought by men describable as "Alcibiades’ group." McQueen and Rowe have justly remarked that "it is doubtful whether such a group would have been identifiable so long after [Alcibiades’] death."49 True, the author of a recent study on Athens after the Peloponnesian War has expressed (without citing Suda Φ 154) a somewhat different opinion: "Although dead by 403, Alcibiades had made associations that continued to influence politics afterwards" (he is thinking of Axiocbus, Adeimantus, and Thrasybulus of Steiria in particular).50 But that influence, in the purely Athenian framework, could not have borne the label of membership in a (formerly) Alcibiadean faction, even if Alcibiades were a less controversial figure. Party memories did not last long in Athens; Alcibiades was absent from his city after 415 (save for a brief interval in 408/7), and the process of his virtual disappearance (in the sense of a party leader) from the local Realpolitik must have begun much earlier than his death in 404 B.C. It seems significant, in the Socratic context, that the voluminous fourth-century literature dealing with the trial of 399 B.C. never introduces the

of the extant tradition on Phaedo’s Zopyrus (and Antisthenes’ Physiognomicae?); to quote one example only, Aristotle’s τὰ τε ἀλλὰ καταγγέλειν (cf. K. Ziegler, REX A [1972] 768) recalls, on the one hand, Socrates’ vita revealed by Zopyrus (according to Cicero, De fato 10) and, on the other, Socrates’ tendency to concentrate on τὰ ἄνθρωπονα instead of τὰ θεῖα, a tendency criticized by Aristoxenus’ Indian. The parallels of Diog. Laec. 9. 61 and 63 and of the Suda article on Apollonius of Tyana (Apollonius’ letters ... φιλοσόφους, Ἱππείος, Δελφοίς, Ἰνδοῖς ... ὑπὲρ θεῶν etc.; his visit to the Brahmans; his prophetic power compared with Socrates’) show that the compilers of the late lexica and related texts were in a position to read about India in contexts dealing with philosophy, Elis, and Socrates, a circumstance which would facilitate their decision to correct (erroneously) ΥΠΟΥΡΓΙΩΝ to ὑπὸ Ἰνδῶν.

48 The possibility of a (mis)identification of the dialogue’s eponym with the Thracian slave of Pericles who became Alcibiades’ paedagogue (cf. ps.-Plat. Alc. I 122b) should not be excluded (Rossetti [above, note 1] 145).

49 McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 17 n. 82.

problem of "Alcibiades' group" in the complex of Socrates' political responsibilities; both the accusations and apologies concentrate on Alcibiades and Critias as individuals.

Alcibiades' ties with foreign states and politicians were another matter—especially in the Peloponnese. His anti-Laonian line after c. 420 B.C. made him very popular in Argos, Mantinea, and Elis itself. Part of that popularity was bound to outlast him. His allies and relatives inherited it, according to a well-known pattern of Greek nepotism. (One example of such a widespread practice will suffice: Thucydides records that, in 428 B.C., "the Athenians ... sent out ... a fleet of thirty ships round the Peloponnese. This fleet was under the command of Phormio's son Asopius, the Acarnanians having requested that the commander sent out to them should be either a son or a relation of Phormio." Thanks to his victories in and around Acarnania in 432 and the following years, Phormio had become so respected in the country that "a son or a relation of his" was needed to replace him, after his death in 429/8 B.C., as the leader of the Attico-Acarnanian joint actions; and the memory of Phormio's excellent admiralship was not lost in the Acarnania of the fourth century.) It was natural then that Socrates should ask certain former friends of Alcibiades to help Phaedo; a group of "Alcibiades' associates" must have preserved its operative identity precisely with regard to the Attico-Elean collaboration. If we assume that Alcibiades was really in contact with Phaedo's family—which the Elean's aristocratic background and presumably anti-Laconian orientation make probable—the complementary conjecture becomes inevitable: Both the political interest (Elis was a rich and influential polis) and moral obligations of these "Alcibiades' associates" demanded that they ransom Phaedo.

We might perhaps identify some of these people. According to the rules of the Athenian party stage, their connections with Alcibiades did not necessarily imply that they were on good, or even neutral, terms with each other.

First, Thrasybulus of Steiria. An opponent of oligarchy, especially its radical forms, Thrasybulus attached himself to Alcibiades in 411 B.C. to support him "tenaciously and loyally until [Alcibiades'] death." In 404/3, Thrasybulus received, through Lysias' agency, two talents from


52 Thuc. 3. 7 (transl. R. Warner, Penguin Classics).

53 PA 14958. In an Atticophile family of Acamania, the admiral's name appears in at least two generations (Phormio senior fl. c. 400 B.C.; his grandson fl. c. 338/7 B.C.), IG II2 237, lines 15 ff.; cf. M. J. Osborne, Naturalization in Athens III-IV (Brussels 1983) 44.

54 Strauss (above, note 50) 15 ff.

55 Strauss (above, note 50) 92 f. et passim.

Thrasydaeus, the champion of Elis' independence.57 The purpose of the gift was to help the men of Phyle overthrow the regime of the Thirty; all four notables involved—Alcibiades, Thrasybulus, Thrasydaeus, Lysias—were enemies, as well as victims, of the Lysandrian Sparta and its allies. We are entitled to surmise that Lysias, the guest-friend of Thrasydaeus, was in a position to inform the Elean democrats not only of the political schemes of Thrasybulus but also of the sincerity of Thrasybulus' friendship for Alcibiades.

Second, Andocides the rhetor. There is no explicit evidence regarding his personal relations with Alcibiades, but a number of indications suggest that they were politically close in the second phase of the Peloponnesian War.58 If the De reeditu is dated at the time of Alcibiades' return to Athens (408/7 B.C.), these indications would gain considerable strength. Andocides spent some years in Elis before 404/3; “when Thrasybulus and his band returned, he also returned to the city.”59 His political option (antioligarchical after 411), his choice of his post-407 place of exile (an Elis hostile to Sparta), and the timing of his last reappearance in Athens—all that reminds us of the contact between Thrasydaeus and Thrasybulus referred to by the Vita Lysiae of pseudo-Plutarch.

Third, Conon of Rhamnus. The so-called Chreocopidae forgery attests to the newly-formed alliance of Alcibiades, Conon, and Callias of Alopece60—an important fact which tends to be neglected by modern historians of the domestic affairs of post-Periclean Athens.61 The alliance is datable to 408/7; in the Peloponnese, it pursued a policy which, though not anti-Laconian, tried to reconcile Sparta with the democratic regimes in Argos, Elis, and elsewhere.62 Conon with his son Timotheus and his political partners continued the same line, if increasingly firm to Sparta; the events of the Corinthian War and its aftermath are illustrative.63 A point of similarity between Andocides and Conon deserves to be underlined here.

57 On his rôle in the war of 402–400, Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 27 ff.
58 Notably, both of them had sided with the fleet at Samos and pursued an antiextremist line (against the radical oligarchs and the radical democrats alike) after that. Alcibiades, Andocides and Andocides' relative Critias (who was, as is well known, Alcibiades' supporter and distant cousin) in the Hermocopiadea affair: And. 1. 13, 15, 47 et passim.
59 Ps.-Plut. Mor. 835a (transl. H. N. Fowler, LCL); cf. ps.-Lys. 6. 6 (“in the Peloponnese”). The evidence on Andocides' stay in Elis has been questioned by some students of the orator, e.g. G. Dalmea (in the Budé edition of Andocides [Paris 1930] 134, ad ps.-Plut. loc. cit.), without adequate reasons.
60 Plut. Sol. 15. 7; cf. J. K. Davies, Athenian Propertied Families, 600–300 B.C. (Oxford 1971) 12, 255, and 506. All three men were relatives, though distant; see Davies' Table I and IG II 2 3769 (+ 3688, and Davies' comments, p. 512). Cf. also the syngeenia linking Conon's son Timotheus to Plato (FGrHist 328 F 223), another member of the old nobility.
61 Who are therefore inclined to see in Conon a rival, and/or in Callias a constant enemy, of Alcibiades (e.g. Strauss [above, note 50] passim).
62 Dušanić (above, note 10) 84 n. 28; idem, History and Politics in Plato's "Laws" (Belgrade 1990; in Serbian with English summary) 96–105, 365 f. (esp. 99 f., with nn. 55–57).
63 Dušanić (above, note 10) 82–85.
Fear of Sparta and the Athenian oligarchs made Andocides combine the Cyprian Salamis and Elis as the places of refuge.64 We are tempted to surmise that Evagoras’ influence was considerable in Elis, and that Conon—himself a famous guest of the king in the period after 405 B.C.—was instrumental in reinforcing the Elean-Cypriote connections.65 True, absent from Athens at the (putative) moment of Phaedo’s liberation c. 400 B.C., he could not have been, in person, a member of the group defined as oi περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην by Diogenes Laertius. But his own brother was there, doubtless benevolent to the appeal of Socrates.66

If the foregoing observations on two points in Phaedo’s biography are not off the mark, they could help us analyze the little that has remained of Phaedo’s philosophical production. The fragments of the Zopyrus and the Simon, as well as some of the titles of Phaedo’s works which are completely lost now (Nicias, Alcibiades, Medius, Antimachus), seem to betray his interest in the politico-historical and/or politico-prosopographical aspects of ethical issues.67 With his own experience in mind (the 402–400 hostilities were largely a matter of plunder;68 he himself was sold into slavery?), he would have condemned every Greek war of the V–IV centuries as a manifestation of the instincts of gain (e.g. in the Antimachus). The policy of Lacedaemon, both greedy and over-militant in the years 404–371, must have been judged by him with special severity. A reflection of those messages of Phaedo is attributable to Plato’s dialogue of the same name.69 Let us signal, in conclusion, two details only. The setting of the Phaedo indirectly criticizes the aggressive attitude of Sparta towards Philius at the end of the 380s.70 The statement of Socrates, “all wars are undertaken for

64 Before and after 411 B.C. he spent several years in Cyprus (ps.-Lys. 6. 6 f. and 26–28, And. 1. 4, ps.-Plut. Mor. 834e–f; cf. Dalmedya [above, note 59] x with n. 2). Significantly, his stay at Evagoras’ court (discontinued owing to a personal conflict) belonged for the most part to 411–408 B.C. (ps.-Lys. 6. 28), i.e. the period which immediately preceded his coming to Elis (if we put aside the short interval of his return to Athens in ?408/7). Both in Salamis and in Elis, Andocides probably had influential philoi and xenoi (cf. 1. 145).
65 Cf. e.g. Isocr. 9. 52 ff.; D. M. Lewis and R. S. Stroud, Hesperia 48 (1979) 190 f.
66 Davies (above, note 60) 507. That (anonymous) son of Timotheus (?) was on good terms with Conon, to judge from the fact that his own son served as Conon’s quartermaster-general in Cyprus c. 389 B.C. (Lys. 19. 40).
68 Cf. Xen. Hell. 3. 2. 26 f.
69 For a previous “attempt to understand the reason or reasons (if any) why Plato chose to cast Phaedo of Elis as narrator for the dialogue which goes by his name,” see McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 1–4, 17 f. (above, note 17).
70 No doubt, the problem of the Lacedaemonians’ aggressiveness towards the Greek world presented a unity from the point of view of Plato, Phaedo, and many other Socrates, though manifested in various forms and various events. Of the latter, a dialogue by Phaedo will have concentrated on the Elean–Spartan war of 402–400 B.C.; Plato’s Symposium and Phaedo dealt with the misfortunes of Mantinea and Philius, respectively (the 380s). McQueen and Rowe (above, note 1) 2 and 3 n. 12 came near to this point.
the acquisition of wealth” (66c), clearly has topical facets that allude to Phaedo’s fate.\footnote{71 I intend to discuss this in the forthcoming book referred to above, note 67.}

\textit{University of Belgrade}