



Preface to the 1891 French Edition

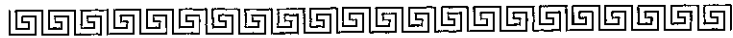
Prior to the reprint of 1862, *l'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola* was one of the most difficult books even to see, let alone to obtain. We knew of only a very small number of the two original editions, both dated 1652.¹ Four were in public libraries - in Dresden, in Grenoble, in the Bibliothèque Imperiale and in the British Museum. We have no information from Grenoble or Dresden, but the British Museum's copy has been lost,² and the copy in the Bibliothèque Imperiale has been placed in "Hell" - the most dreadful fate which can befall a book - where it cannot be read, examined, or even touched. M Micharda said once to enquirers: "We have only opened Hell to two people - to M Michelet, for his *Histoire de la Révolution*, and Doctor ****, for his *Etudes sur la folie*."^{3, 4}

¹*Alcibiade fanciullo a scola*, D.P.A., Oranges, Juann Wart, 1652, 8vo with 102 numbered pages, including three prefatory pages, and an unnumbered page at the end with four sonnets by M.V. The reprint of the same year, in 12mo, with two pages containing the sonnets by M.V. The letters D.P.A. appeared on the title page, attributing the work to Pierre Arétin, a century after his death.

²JCR: The British Library has a copy at the time of writing (July 2000).

³JCR: Studies of madness.

⁴We are certain of the name of M Michelet, but not that of the doctor. The odd thing about the manner of speech of the Bibliothèque Imperiale is its similarity to the kind of language churned out by the Révolution.



The reprint of 1862,⁵ of one hundred and two copies, was able to make this extraordinary book better known to bibliophiles who understood Italian, but the magistracy did not show itself disposed to extend to this language the indulgence shown to Latin. The reprinted *Alcibiade* was the subject of a condemnation imposed in May 1863.

Undaunted by this precedent, we have published a new edition intended, by the number of copies and the price - like the earlier reprint - for bibliophiles and scholars who, in our opinion and like philosophers and priests, are entitled to read everything. *Omnia pura puris.*⁶

This, we repeat, is our opinion, and it is a conviction so well founded that all the magistracies in the world will not shake it. Apart from anything else, it is noteworthy that shortly before the condemnation of the book two scholars made it the object of - or used it as the pretext for - two extremely interesting dissertations on the vice against Nature - and one can read these, just as one can read *Alcibiade*, without in the slightest degree turning into a pederast - or even a Tartuffe,⁷ or his sort.

The first of these dissertations, published anonymously under the title: *Un point curieux des*

⁵ Imp. Racon, 80pp.

⁶ JCR: To the pure all things are pure.

⁷ JCR: A dandy, from Molière's play of the same name.



mœurs de la Grèce,^{8, 9} was by M Octave Delepierre, Belgian author, literary scholar, and secretary of the legation of the consul-general of Belgium in London. *Curieux* is the right word! In his work, M Delepierre rebutted the strange opinion of the famous German archaeologist Welcker, who asserted "that pederasty in Greece served to strengthen the bonds of friendship, that this vice, indeed, was not the result of a deviant sensuality, but an elevated principle of the theory of beauty".¹⁰ We do not advise M Welcker, famous though he is, to cross the Rhine and publish a French translation of his dissertation, since he would risk presenting the spectacle of a worthy and learned man awaiting a fine or prison.

This same man also represented Sappho as a person of pure morals. We are, we see, dealing with a capricious scholar, one with a romantic and mystic spirit - a type common enough even in this country, where we have seen the rehabilitation of Marie Stuart, the madam of Longueville, of Marie Antoinette, and of other pitiable creatures. But, in his German fashion, Welcker roots his beliefs in an even more ancient and recondite cult; while M

⁸ JCR: A curious aspect of Greek morals.

⁹ Paris, J. Gay, 1861, 8vo; 245 copies printed.

¹⁰ *Sappho von einem herrschenden Vorurtheil befreit* (JCR: Sappho released from a dominant prejudice), 1861. Reprinted in the *Mélanges* edition, in 1855.



Cousin made the madam of Longueville into a 'landlady', he would never have made Sappho into an hotelier. To go back to *Alcibiade* - from the quotations included by the author in his dissertation, it was said that the author of this dialogue had treated the question of pederasty "according to the ideas of the most respected Greek philosophers".

The other dissertation was translated from the Italian of M Giamb. Baseggio by M Gustave Brunet, librarian of the city of Bordeaux, and accompanied by notes and a detailed bibliography.¹¹ It is of great interest in the information it provides about the author of *Alcibiade*, whose identity was unknown at the time. According to M Baseggio, he could only have been Ferrante Pallavicini, a member of l'Academia degl' Incogniti, and reputed author of *Suzanna*, *Taliclea*, *Rete di Vulcano*, *Corriere svaligiato*, *Divorzio celeste*, and *La Rettorica della Putane*. M Baseggio offers some compelling evidence, including the description of the beauty of

¹¹ Dissertation on *l'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola*, translated from the Italian of Giamb. Baseggio and accompanied by notes and accompanied by an appendix consisting of a French bibliography, Paris, J. Gay 1861. A total of 254 copies were printed; 8vo, 78pages. *Le Manuel de librairie* wrongly attributed to M Girol Adda the honour of having, in 1859, discovered that the author of *Alcibiade* was Ferrante Pallavicini. This honour reverted to M. Baseggio, who in 1850 published his *Disquisizione*, in a printing of only 25 copies.



Alcibiades as applied to women in *Suzanna* and *Taliclea*, also a passage relating to young boys in *Continuazione del Corriere*.

For information on Ferrante Pallavicini, we can consult Moreri, Bayle, Chauffepié and Prosper Marchand. This author, to some a libertarian and to others a libertine, was beheaded at Avignon in 1644, aged barely 26, a victim of the spite of the Barberini.¹² But his tragic end, says M Basseggio, did not prevent friends who were admirers of his works and faithful to his beliefs - Ureporio Leti among others - arranging reprints, in Geneva, of his most liberal works, those most hostile to Rome, works such as the *Corriere*, *Divorzio celeste*, *Rettorica della Putane*. And the format, the paper, and the typography of the first edition of *Alciabede* pointed to the Libraire Stoer, of Geneva. Admittedly, the book carried the date of 1652, and Léti did not go to Geneva until 1660, but dates are often altered in publications of this kind.

M Basseggio next enquires into the author's purpose in writing *Alcibiade*; his answer, based on a sentence in the Preface, is that Pallavicini was writing a satire directed at the educationalists who were then in public favour in Venice. But we have some difficulty in agreeing with the view that *Alcibiade* is a sustained piece of irony, such as those

¹² JCR: Pallavicini had dared to speak against the despotic Pope Urban VIII (Maffeo Barberini) and his family.



of which Swift has provided famous examples. The warmth, the passion, the conviction, that dominate the book from beginning to end seem to us quite foreign to a work of irony. A French erotic writer would write more coolly, more allusively - might indeed be shocked and repelled by such overt passion - but an Italian would show precisely this kind of warmth and enthusiasm. Pallavicini, however, although M Brunet has impugned his morals, cannot be any more supposed a pederast than Pidanzat de Mairobert can be considered a lesbian for *l'Apologie de la secte anandryne*, published in *l'Espion anglais*.¹³ It must be taken - and this seems to be M Octave Delepierre's implicit conclusion - that *Alcibiade* is the fantasy of a fine and free spirit immersed in classical study. Nor is there any doubt that the preface, and the sonnets at the beginning and end of the book, despite their accusations against the morals of schoolmasters, are of a purely literary character. At the time of Pallavicini, let it be said, a work of this kind from the pen of an Italian writer was no more extraordinary than an erotic romance from a 13th Century French writer. And if the author was also a pamphleteer, as was Pallavicini, he would flaunt precisely those elements which today would be

¹³ Or any of his collaborators, because *l'Apologie de la secte anandryne* appeared in *l'Espion anglais* after the tragic death of Pidanzat (March 1779). It was probably found among his papers.



hidden with great care. According to Vincent Placcuis, the friends of Ferrante denied that he was the author of *Diverzio celeste*, but had no difficulty in acknowledging that he was the author of *Rettorica della Putane*, "because", they said, "the morals of Italians accord well with one, and their superstition and their politics accord badly with the other."

We have said that M Gustave Brunet added an appendix to M Baseggio's dissertation. It dealt with several writings similar to *Alcibiade*, with works of Pallivicini and of his colleagues in the *l'Academia des Ingognitie*, with the legal status of the vice against Nature from antiquity to the present day, and ended with a list of more-or-less famous pederasts of more recent times. The list included both self-acknowledged and suspected pederasts. Among the first group were Théodore de Bèze and Louis XIII; among the second were Henry III, Lully, d'Assoucy, the Comte de Sintzendorff, the Marquis of Vilette, Piere-le-Grand and Frédéric II.¹⁴ The last and perhaps the only one of this group had gallantly acknowledged his vice: he confessed it

¹⁴ M.G. Brunet, writing of the 19th Century, was inhibited by discretion, otherwise he would have been able to double his list, going from the *Archi-Chancelier* Cambacères to the Marquis of Custine. And in the 16th Century lived the most famous of all, Shakespeare. See Book XV of his works, Edition François Hugo. The translator defends the writer in this sorry accusation, but does not exculpate him.



openly to his nephew in the chapter of his *Matinées* entitled: *Dans les plaisirs*.¹⁵

“Love is a god without mercy; when you resist the arrows that are thrown fair and square, he twists, turns round, throws them from this direction and that. Believe me, don’t have the vanity to think you will escape him; he will always catch you. Although I don’t complain of the trick he has played on me, I advise you not to follow my example; it could bring serious consequences because, in due course, all your governors and all your officers will recruit more for their own pleasures than for your glory, and, finally, your regiments will be like those of your Uncle Henry.”

Pederasty is like cholera, in that it appears sporadically almost everywhere, and from time to time breaks out more violently, in an epidemic. The fears of Frédéric II about the Prussian army could also apply to the French army of today which, over the past few years, sadly appears also to have some of the “regiments of Uncle Henry”. In the last session of the Senate, the outspoken Marquis de Boissy, without beating about the bush, expressed fears about the invasion of our regiments by “Arab morals”, and indeed, a terrible outbreak of pederasty seems today to be the only trophy of the

¹⁵ *Les Matinées du Roi de Prusse*, p 39 of the original edition of 1776.



war of Africa,¹⁶ just like smallpox was that of the Italian wars of the 16th Century, at least if one believes Voltaire's epigram about it, which begins: "*Quand le Français à tête folle...*"¹⁷

That was of course a long time ago and something different. But we read in the *Petite Revue* of 22 October 1864:

"*Escapees from Sodom*: We know that the biblical fire did not destroy all the inhabitants of that vile city. Spread now over all the earth, they have made Paris into a ruin; here, in particular, they are repeatedly the cause of some filthy discovery or another. In the past fifteen days we have seen too much of one affair of this kind, and the problem is now one of considerable proportions. M Gâstagnary has tried to speak of it in his chronicle of Parisian events in the *Progrès de Lyon*. We copy the reserve he had to adopt in referring to the matter, but it is not as recent as he believes. It dates back for several months; if we talk about it today, it

¹⁶ Aided by the rapid growth of a metropolis where all the vices boil as in a devil's cauldron, the pederastic vice is endemic in the East, and the Easterners peddle it as they peddle Mohammedism, by the injunction: *Cohibe intrare* (JCR: Conform who enter). We read in the personal correspondence of the Army in Egypt, "The Arabs and the Mamelouks have treated several of our prisoners in the way that Socrates, it is said, treated Alciabedes. They must submit, or die." (Letter from Jaubert to Général Bruix, p. 19 of the original Bibl. edition.) If we had correspondence from the time of the Crusades, it would doubtless tell the same tale.

¹⁷ JCR: 'When the thick-headed Frenchman...'



is because the affair has necessitated an enquiry among several corps of soldiers, and it has not been possible to cover the inquiry with silence, as the police manage to do in other similar cases.¹⁸

¹⁸ In 1864, the editor of the *Petit Revue* was M Loredan Larchey, the son of a general, and very *au fait*, in consequence, with the virtues and vices of soldiers; we can take the information as reliable.

The pederastic epidemic inflicted itself on us in the 17th Century, at the court of Louis XVI (see *La France devenue italienne* (France become Italian), a book that was reprinted following *l'Histoire amoureuse des Gaules*, by Bussy-Rabutin); and in the 17th Century, violently, at the decisive moment of the fall of the French monarchy.

If one believes Mirabeau on the subject, pederasty was always controlled: "The taste of pederasts, however little in vogue from the time of Henri III, under the reign of whom men mutually stimulated each other under the portals of the Louvre, has made considerable progress. We know that this city (Paris) is a police headquarters; in consequence, there are public places authorised for this purpose. The young men who are destined for the profession are carefully classified, because the regulatory system extends even to that. They are examined; those who are beautiful, rosy, well made, chubby, are reserved for the great lords, bishops and financiers, who pay very dearly for them. Those who are deprived of their testicles, or those who are said (because our language is more chaste than our morals), not to have weavers' weights, but who give and receive, form the second class; they are still expensive, because women can also use them while they serve men. Those who are not capable of erection because of overuse - whether or not they have all the organs necessary to please - make up the third class. But those who preside over these pleasures first confirm their impotence. In order to do so they are placed, naked, on a mattress whose lower half is open; two women caress them to the best of their ability, during which a third, with fresh nettles, knocks gently on the seat of their sexual desires. After a quarter of



"Several corps of soldiers! That is in all the documents - which also make it clear that the matter, referred to as 'The affair of the rue Marboeuf', and in which many important persons are said to be implicated, had not been referred to the Sixth Chamber. How can such a small number of magistrates deal with 'several corps of soldiers?' But what has happened to *cedant arma togae*?"¹⁹

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an hour of these attempts, a long unripe pear is introduced into the anus, causing a considerable irritation, and fine mustard of Caedebec is put on the rash induced by the nettles; the glans is also rubbed with camphor. Those who resist all these stimuli and give no sign of erection are engaged for one-third of pay only. (Erotika Biblion, chap Kadhésch. p. 93 et seq., Bruxelles, 1886, with notes by the Chevalier Pierrugues.) (JCR: This is probably nonsense from beginning to end, but the public was as credulous then on such matters as they are now.)

But this curse has never had the extent and the expansion and intensity which we witness in modern society, and where one can say that it has been democratised. See the *Etudes sur les attentats aux mœurs du Dr Tardieu*, 3rd Edition, Paris, 1859).

But let us cease to review these nauseating texts; let us go out and buy a bottle of disinfectant.

¹⁹ JCR: Let arms yield to the toga (i.e. the law). Cicero, *De Suis Temporibus*, bk III.



To the Reader

The philosophers of old, when they taught literature, proceeded by inculcating in their pupils all their knowledge through the cleft of their buttocks. They assured them that, by this method, they would become completely learned; that by this means, in due course, they would absorb all the knowledge of their masters.

Would that these vices had spent themselves in Grecian times! But instead, they have reached their climax in the schools of our time.

We have reached the point, indeed, where our schools can be considered a very theatre of infamy and shame, a repository of all the vices; our schoolmasters, alas, have continued with the ancient way of teaching their pupils. And if you have any knowledge of such things, you will often have heard how some schoolmasters, in their fiery haste to infuse knowledge into their pupils, have damaged their anuses.

So your reading of *Alcibiades* will teach you that, to render schoolboys perfect, we must remove them from these masters from Sodom - and from this happy vice.



To Schoolmasters

O schoolmasters evil, I know of your ploys,
And the tricks that you play on the prettiest boys,
Pretending that Latin, and spelling, and sums
Can proceed to their noodles by way of their bums.

It's only in assholes you venture to fit;
You never take pleasure in cunt, or in tit;
No woman can charm you, or give you delight,
But you fuck little schoolboys with all of your
 might.

Pederast scoundrels, with misery wail,
For all of your sins are set down in my tale;
Turn from your vices, repent of your tricks;
Put an end to your villainy - cut off your pricks!
So if some naughty urchin his bum should display,
You can only sigh sadly, and pass on your way.

M.V.



Editor's Note

This fragment fell by chance into my hands, and I have judged it of sufficient interest, dear reader, that I should bring it to your attention by printing it. You will learn from it to keep the most careful watch over your young sons in order to save them from the pernicious influence of evil schoolmasters, a detestable breed only too common at the present time.

I promise that I shall shortly publish the second part, which will appear under the title *The Triumph of Alcibiades*, a work which will stimulate even greater interest, since it comes from the pen of one of the wisest men in our country. Expect, then, that this will appear shortly, at which I hope to continue in your good graces.