

terms. Badiou is right to point out that the nominal pair of virtual and actual 'exhausts the deployment of univocal Being' (CB p. 65; p. 43). Two names are required in order to 'test that the ontological univocity designated by the pair proceeds from a single one of these names'. But on his reading the actual is reduced to being nothing more than the 'function of its virtuality' (ibid.). Badiou has successfully drawn our attention to the importance of a renewed thinking of the One in Deleuze; what he neglects, however, is the unequivocal commitment to pluralism. It is not that Badiou simply downplays this commitment to pluralism in Deleuze; it is rather that he fails to comprehend it and fails precisely because of the way in which he has configured the virtual in Deleuze's thinking and transformed it into a power of eminence (the pluralism Deleuze seeks can only be incoherently established on the basis of a univocity of the actual). We agree with Badiou: Deleuze is a thinker of the One. But he is also a pluralist and an immanently qualified one. There are good reasons for positively hesitating in describing Deleuze as a Platonist of the virtual.

Socraticorum Maximus: Simon the Shoemaker and the Problem of Socrates

JOHN SELLARS

Xenophon: *Greet Simon the shoemaker and praise him, because he continues to devote himself to the teachings of Socrates and uses neither his poverty nor his trade as a pretext for not doing philosophy.*

Aristippus: *Simon the shoemaker [...] someone who is greater in wisdom than anyone ever was or will be.*¹

The name 'Simon the shoemaker' is not one immediately familiar to specialists in ancient philosophy, let alone to students of philosophy in general.² This may well be due, in part, to the tendency of many scholars

* My title is a variation upon Aulus Gellius's description of Epictetus as *Stoicorum maximus*, the greatest of the Stoics (*Noctes Atticae* 1.2.6).

** Abbreviations: CAG = *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, 23 vols & 3 suppl. (Berlin: Reimer, 1882-1909); OCD = *Oxford Classical Dictionary*; OCT = *Oxford Classical Texts*; SSR = *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae*, ed. G. Giannantoni, 4 vols (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1990); SVF = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, ed. H. von Arnim, 4 vols (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903-24).

¹ Both of these passages are quoted in full in the Appendix.

² The only extended treatment in English is R. F. Hock, 'Simon the Shoemaker as an Ideal Cynic', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 17 (1976), 41-53. This study is exemplary but little known; C. H. Kahn, for instance, is unaware of its existence when he discusses Simon in *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue: The Philosophical Use of a Literary Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). R. S. Brumbaugh's 'Simon and Socrates', *Ancient Philosophy* 11 (1991), 151-52, although useful, is only a short notice primarily concerned with the recent archaeological discoveries and does not mention Hock either. Note also R. Goulet, 'Trois

both past and present to deny his historical reality altogether.³ Ancient sources refer to a Simon who, it is said, was an associate of Socrates and who ran a shoe shop on the edge of the Athenian Agora where Socrates used to come to engage in philosophical discussions with Simon while he worked.⁴ However, the fact that neither Plato nor Xenophon mention Simon has often been cited as an argument against his very existence.⁵ Moreover, it is reported that the Socratic philosopher Phaedo wrote a dialogue entitled *Simon*,⁶ and thus it has been suggested that the later 'Simon legend' derived ultimately from a literary character created by Phaedo.⁷

The situation has somewhat changed since the discovery of the remains of a shop near the Tholos on the south-west edge of the Agora, the floor scattered with hob-nails, containing a base from a pot with 'Simon's' (ΣΙΜΟΝΟΣ) inscribed upon it.⁸ Archaeologists commenting

Cordonniers Philosophes', in M. Joyal, ed., *Studies in Plato and the Platonic Tradition: Essays Presented to John Whittaker* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), pp. 119-25; H. Hobein, 'Σίμων (no. 6)', *Paulys Realencyclopädie*, Band III A 1 (1927), cols 163-73; and a handful of earlier works (up to 1814) listed in A. Patzer, *Bibliographia Socratica* (Freiburg & Munich: Alber, 1985), nos 327, 1951-1953.

³ See e.g. E. Zeller, *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, trans. O. J. Reichel (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1868), p. 210: "He is probably altogether an imaginary person"; W. D. Ross in *OCD* (2nd edn 1970): "His very existence as a real personage is not quite certain"; Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, p. 10 n. 18: "I can see no good reason to believe in his historical reality".

⁴ All of the ancient *testimonia* are now gathered together in *SSR* VI B 87-93 (although see the further references in Goulet, 'Trois Cordonniers Philosophes'). I supply translations in the Appendix.

⁵ See e.g. Zeller, *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, p. 210 n. 5, and Ross in *OCD* (2nd edn 1970).

⁶ See Diogenes Laertius 2.105 and *Suda* s.v. Φαίδων (both *SSR* III A 8). Note also the reference to Phaedo's portrait of Simon in *Socraticorum Epistulae* 13.1 (= *SSR* IV A 224 = VI B 92, in the Appendix).

⁷ See e.g. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, p. 10, following U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, 'Phaidon von Elis', *Hermes* 14 (1879), 187-93; repr. in his *Kleine Schriften III* (Berlin: Akademie, 1969), pp. 41-48.

⁸ See D. B. Thompson, 'The House of Simon the Shoemaker', *Archaeology* 13 (1960), 234-240; H. A. Thompson & R. E. Wycherley, *The Agora of Athens: The History, Shape, and Uses of an Ancient City Center*, 'The Athenian Agora: Results of Excavations Conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens' Volume XIV (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1972), pp. 173-74 & pl. 88; J. M. Camp, *The Athenian Agora: Excavations in the Heart of Classical Athens* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986; rev. edn 1992), pp. 145-47. Note also the 'Excavations of the Athenian Agora Picture Books', esp. no. 12, D. B.

upon this discovery have been keen to identify its owner with the Simon mentioned in the literary sources as a companion of Socrates,⁹ but scholars primarily concerned with ancient philosophy have tended to remain doubtful.¹⁰

Simon's reputation relies principally upon the claim made by Diogenes Laertius that he was the first to write 'Socratic dialogues' (Σωκρατικοὶ λόγοι).¹¹ Diogenes reports that these were also known as 'shoemaker's dialogues' (σκυτικὸὶ λόγοι) or simply 'shoemaker's' (σκυτικούς).¹² These, Diogenes says, were more or less notes of actual

Thompson, *An Ancient Shopping Center: The Athenian Agora* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies in Athens, rev. edn 1993), and no. 17, M. L. Lang, *Socrates in the Agora* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies in Athens, 1978).

⁹ See the works listed in the previous note. In the light of these finds note also S. Hornblower's revision of Ross's assessment in *OCD* (3rd edn 1996): "He is never mentioned by Plato or Xenophon, but his existence has now been confirmed by the discovery of [...] Simon's cobbler shop". As for the silence of Plato and Xenophon, Thompson, 'The House of Simon the Shoemaker', pp. 239-40, offers an explanation. She dates the shoemaking activity in the Athenian workshop to c. 450-410 BC and Simon's cup to c. 450-425 BC, suggesting c. 420-415 BC as the probable time of Simon's death. While Socrates' pupils who knew Simon – Antisthenes, Alcibiades, and Phaedrus – were all born c. 450 BC, Plato and Xenophon were both not born until c. 430. If Simon died around 420 then it is unlikely that either Plato or Xenophon would have known him personally.

¹⁰ See e.g. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, p. 10, and D. Clay, 'The Origins of the Socratic Dialogue', in P. A. Vander Waerdt, ed., *The Socratic Movement* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 23-47, who, although apparently convinced in the body of his text, writes in a note that the connection between these finds and the Simon associated with Socrates is "made at best out of a gossamer web of hope" (p. 32). A more positive assessment is made by Brumbaugh, 'Simon and Socrates'.

¹¹ See Diogenes Laertius 2.123 (= *SSR* VI B 87, in the Appendix). Kahn doubts the historical reality of Simon, p. 10, and suggests an otherwise unknown Alexamenos of Teos as the creator of the Socratic dialogue, p. 1, citing a fragment from Aristotle's *De Poetis* (Athenaeus 505c = fr. 72 Rose³ in Ross, *Fragmenta Selecta* (OCT), p. 69; see also Diogenes Laertius 3.48). However this passage does *not* say that Alexamenos invented the *Socratic* dialogue but simply that he wrote *imitative* dialogues before the Socratic dialogues and before Plato.

¹² See Diogenes Laertius 2.122-23 (= *SSR* VI B 87, in the Appendix), simply 'σκυτικούς', and 2.105 (= *SSR* III A 8), 'σκυτικούς λόγους' (attributed to Aeschines and, implicitly, Phaedo). In his Loeb edition Hicks translates σκυτικούς as 'leathern' while Brumbaugh, 'Simon and Socrates', p. 151, offers 'the leather dialogues'. Clay, 'The Origins of the Socratic Dialogue', p. 32, suggests 'Cobbler's Talk' or 'Conversations at the Cobbler's Shop'. However, I suggest that simply 'shoemaker's dialogues' might be more appropriate.

conversations with Socrates rather than literary compositions. A total of thirty-three are named and it is reported that they all fitted into a single volume or roll (βιβλίον). It has been noted that for this to be possible each one would have been equivalent to just under the length of two Stephanus pages of Plato, making each one shorter than one of the typical sections of the Socratic *Memorabilia* of Xenophon.¹³ As with Simon himself, the reality of these lost works has also been doubted,¹⁴ but the lack of any order in Diogenes' list and the repetition of some titles points against it being a later fabrication.¹⁵

Xenophon reports that because youths were not allowed to enter the Agora they used to gather in workshops surrounding the Agora and Socrates used to frequent these shops in order to converse with them.¹⁶ Shops such as Simon's appear to have functioned as informal classrooms for Socrates. Euthydemus, Phaedrus, and Alcibiades are all named by the ancient sources as regular visitors.¹⁷ It is also tempting to speculate that Socrates enjoyed the company of Simon because, as a craftsman (τεχνίτης), he was one of the few individuals that Socrates could find who possessed some form of secure knowledge and expertise (τέχνη). Simon's mastery of the art of shoemaking would have been just the sort of expertise that, in the *Apology*, Socrates held up as the only example of genuine knowledge that he could find.¹⁸ Thus Simon would have been a living example of a form of knowledge analogous to the form of

¹³ See Brumbaugh, 'Simon and Socrates', pp. 151-52.

¹⁴ See e.g. Zeller, *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, p. 210 n. 5, and G. Grote, *Plato, and the Other Companions of Sokrates*, 3 vols (London: Murray, 2nd edn 1867), vol. 3, p. 470, n. 'k'.

¹⁵ See again Brumbaugh, 'Simon and Socrates', pp. 151-52.

¹⁶ See Xenophon *Memorabilia* 4.2.1: "So first of all, realising that because of his youth Euthydemus did not yet go into the Agora if he wanted to conduct any business, but took up his position in a saddler's shop close by, Socrates went to the shop himself with some of his friends" (trans. Tredennick). For 'saddler's shop' (ἡνιοποιεῖον) one might read 'any shop engaged in leather working', from which it is only short step to 'shoemaker's workshop'. Indeed, Clay, p. 32, suggests this is a reference to a cobbler's shop. Lang thinks it "most probable" that this is a reference to Simon. Note also *Memorabilia* 3.10.1 where Socrates is presented in philosophical discussion in a painter's workshop.

¹⁷ All three are named in *Socraticorum Epistulae* 13.1 (= *SSR* IV A 224, in the Appendix). For Euthydemus see Xenophon in the previous note and for Alcibiades and shoemakers see Aelian *Varia Historia* 2.1 (= *SSR* I C 33).

¹⁸ See Plato *Apologia* 22c-e.

knowledge that he himself was searching for, namely the art (τέχνη) of taking care of one's soul (ἐπιμελεῖσθαι τῆς ψυχῆς).¹⁹

These few remarks constitute probably all that it is possible to say about Simon. He is an interesting and sadly neglected associate of Socrates but does not appear to be of any philosophical significance himself. However, for a number of later philosophers the name 'Simon the shoemaker' came to be associated with a certain way of life, a specifically philosophical way of life. For these later philosophers, Simon's way of life was considered to be exemplary of what it meant to be a follower of Socrates.²⁰ By examining the ancient traditions surrounding Simon, then, it might be possible to learn something about the nature of Socrates' philosophical project. What follows is offered as a contribution to the project of uncovering the philosophy of the historical Socrates, or at least how that philosophy was understood by some of his immediate followers, in particular the Cynics.²¹ In the next section I shall consider Simon's role as a Cynic role model. Then, in the following section, I shall suggest how this Cynic appropriation of Simon might contribute to the debate surrounding what has come to be known as 'the problem of Socrates'.²²

¹⁹ See *ibid.* 30a-b. In the Platonic dialogues the example of shoemaker (σκυτοτόμος) often appears as an example of an expert (τεχνίτης); see e.g. *Protagoras* 319d, *Gorgias* 447d, *Republic* 333a, 397e, 443c, *Theaetetus* 146d; note also Xenophon *Memorabilia* 4.2.22. That Socrates constantly used the example of a shoemaker is stated explicitly by Callicles in *Gorgias* 491a and Alcibiades in *Symposium* 221e.

²⁰ See for example the letter attributed to Xenophon in the *Socraticorum Epistulae* (18.2 = *SSR* VI B 91, in the Appendix).

²¹ The fragments of the Cynics are also collected together in *SSR*, Part V. No anthology in English exists but note the collection translated into French by L. Paquet, *Les Cyniques grecs: Fragments et témoignages*, Choix, Traduction, Introduction et Notes, Avant-propos par Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1992). For a general survey of the Cynics see D. R. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism: From Diogenes to the 6th Century AD* (London: Methuen, 1937; repr. Bristol Classical Press, 1998). The most important recent work in English can be found in R. B. Branham & M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, eds, *The Cynics: The Cynic Movement in Antiquity and its Legacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

²² This is simply the problem of trying to recover the historical Socrates from the various ancient sources and, in particular, the problem of distinguishing between Socratic and Platonic ideas as they are expressed by Plato's literary character 'Socrates'. For a brief overview and further references see my 'The Problem of Socrates', *Pli* 10 (2000), 267-275.

1. Simon the Cynic Role Model

In a text entitled *That the Philosopher Ought to Converse with Rulers* Plutarch follows the example of Plato and suggests that by associating with men of power a philosopher may be able to influence legislation and the administration of justice. By doing this, he suggests, it will be possible for philosophy to have a direct impact upon the world. However, Plutarch reports that many contemporary philosophers would reject such a course of action. Instead he suggests that a more common thought in the minds of his philosophical contemporaries is the desire to be transformed into Simon the shoemaker; 'Let me become Simon the shoemaker so that I might converse with philosophers such as Socrates'.²³

Simon's status as an exemplar of a life away from the world of politics can also be seen in an anecdote preserved by Diogenes Laertius in which he is said to have rejected an offer of money from Pericles who offered Simon a position as his 'court philosopher'. Instead Simon is said to have preferred to hold on to his independence and freedom of speech (παρρησία).²⁴ In this Simon may be seen to follow the example of Socrates who is reported to have rejected similar offers from a number of rulers.²⁵

Both Socrates and Simon, then, rejected life at court in favour of the cobbler's workshop. Socrates was not the only philosopher to spend his days in conversation with a shoemaker. Inspired by his example, a number of later philosophers, especially Cynics, started a tradition of associating with shoemakers.²⁶ Of particular importance here is a passage deriving from the Stoic Zeno's collection of anecdotes about his Cynic teacher Crates.²⁷ I quote the passage in full:

²³ See Plutarch *Maxime cum Principibus Philosopho esse Disserendum* 776b (= SSR VI B 90). This is a paraphrase; the entire passage is translated in the Appendix.

²⁴ Diogenes Laertius 2.123 (= SSR VI B 87, in the Appendix).

²⁵ See e.g. Diogenes Laertius 2.25 (= SSR I D 1).

²⁶ For a detailed account see Hock, 'Simon the Shoemaker as an Ideal Cynic', pp. 46-48. Beyond the example of Crates and Philiscus (to be discussed shortly), another pairing of Cynic philosopher and shoemaker can be found in Lucian's *Cataplus* ('The Downward Journey'), § 14 onwards. Hock presents this as evidence for the existence of an established literary convention of joining Cynics and shoemakers.

²⁷ Zeno is said to have produced a collection of anecdotes (Χρηϊαί) about Crates; see Diogenes Laertius 6.91 (= SVF 1.272 = SSR V H 40).

Zeno said that Crates was sitting in a shoemaker's shop and reading aloud Aristotle's *Protrepticus* which he had written for Themison, the Cyprian king. In it he said that no one had more advantages (ἀγαθὰ) for being a philosopher, for he had great wealth so that he could spend money on this activity and still have his reputation (δόξαν) intact. And Zeno said that while Crates was reading, the shoemaker was attentive but all the while kept on with his stitching. And Crates said, "It seems to me, Philiscus, that I should write a *Protrepticus* for you, since I see that you have more advantages for being a philosopher than the man for whom Aristotle wrote".²⁸

Three points need to be noted here. The first is that, following the example of Socrates, the Cynic Crates spent his time engaged in philosophical conversations in a cobbler's workshop. The second is the reference to Aristotle's *Protrepticus* which informs us that Aristotle thought that the king Themison was in an ideal position to engage in philosophy and that Aristotle sought to befriend the king by dedicating this work to him. The third, and perhaps most important, point is that Crates and his shoemaker friend Philiscus were discussing this text by Aristotle with reference to the question concerning the ideal conditions in which one might pursue philosophy.

The contrast between the behaviour of Crates and the advice of Aristotle is striking. While Aristotle holds up the life of the king as ideal for the practice of philosophy and consequently associates with such individuals, Crates associates with a humble shoemaker, whom he, in turn, may well have thought had a way of life ideal for pursuing

²⁸ Teles *apud* Stobaeus *Anthologium* 4.32.21 (= fr. IV B, in O. Hense, *Teletis Reliquiae* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2nd edn 1909), p. 46.6-14). Text and translation in E. N. O'Neil, *Teles: The Cynic Teacher* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), pp. 48-51. I follow O'Neil's translation, slightly modified. This anecdote is reported by Zeno and is thus SVF 1.273. It contains an anecdote about Crates and is thus SSR V H 42. It also includes a reference to Aristotle's *Protrepticus* and is thus Aristotle fr. 50 Rose³ in Ross, *Fragmenta Selecta* (OCT), pp. 26-27. It is cited and translated by Dudley, *A History of Cynicism*, p. 45 (but incorrectly referenced) and Hock, 'Simon the Shoemaker as an Ideal Cynic', p. 47. It is reported in the context of a discussion about whether philosophers should associate with rulers. This is similar to that of Plutarch's reference to Simon, but Teles and Plutarch stand on opposing sides of the debate.

philosophy.²⁹ The precedents are obvious: Aristotle follows the example of Plato (with Dionysius) while Crates follows the example of Socrates (with Simon). While Aristotle courts men of power, Socrates, Simon, and Crates reject such a life, preferring instead to spend their time in private, and thus uncensored, conversation. This clearly reflects the contrasting attitudes towards external goods held by Aristotle and the Cynics. For Aristotle the successful philosophical life requires not just excellence (ἀρετή) but also certain external goods such as wealth and social standing. The Cynics, on the other hand, affirm that excellence (ἀρετή) is itself enough to ensure a good life (εὐδαιμονία), a life that for them requires nothing more than the strength of a Socrates (Σωκρατικῆς ἰσχύος).³⁰

This debate concerning with whom the philosopher should associate is developed in a series of letters that purport to be by a number of the Socratic philosophers, the *Socraticorum Epistulae*.³¹ In a correspondence between Antisthenes and Aristippus the question of whether the philosopher should associate with rulers is vigorously debated.³² Moreover, Simon himself appears in these letters, first as a topic of discussion, and later as a participant in the correspondence, exemplifying the Cynic position argued for by Antisthenes. Antisthenes opens the debate by attacking Aristippus for courting the ruler Dionysius:

It is not right for a philosopher to associate with tyrants and to devote himself to Sicilian tables. Rather, he should live in his own country and strive for self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκων).³³

²⁹ For Aristotle see A.-H. Chroust, 'What Prompted Aristotle to Address the Protrepticus to Themison?', *Hermes* 94 (1966), 202-07. Hock, 'Simon the Shoemaker as an Ideal Cynic', p. 47, suggests that Crates' decision to associate with a shoemaker was a conscious act of protest against Aristotle's behaviour. More likely is that it was conscious emulation of Socrates.

³⁰ See Diogenes Laertius 6.11 (= *SSR* V A 134), a phrase attributed to Antisthenes.

³¹ These letters are generally agreed to be spurious. Text and translation in A. J. Malherbe, *The Cynic Epistles: A Study Edition* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977). Translations from the letters follow those in this edition (nos 1-25 are by S. Stowers), although occasionally modified.

³² See esp. *Socraticorum Epistulae* 8 & 9. Antisthenes and Aristippus were both companions of Socrates. The former is often presented as a link between Socrates and the Cynics; the latter was the founder of the Cyrenaic school.

³³ *Socraticorum Epistulae* 8 (= *SSR* V A 206).

As the correspondence continues it becomes clear that Antisthenes' model for the life of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) is Simon. The reply from Aristippus, supposedly written from the court of Dionysius, is scathing and ironic. He opens the letter by admitting his 'wretchedness':

How could we not be wretched (κακοδαμονεῖν) since we live with a tyrant, and daily eat and drink extravagantly, and are anointed with one of the sweetest-smelling perfumes, and drag about long Tarentine cloaks? And no one will free me from this cruelty (ὀμότητος) of Dionysius [...]. Now, moreover, the evil (κακὸν) has become more terrible since he has given me three Sicilian women of exquisite beauty and a large amount of money.³⁴

There appears to be little comparison between the unwashed and barefoot life of Antisthenes and that enjoyed by Aristippus. As Aristippus puts it a little later in the same letter, Antisthenes is welcome to his "same filthy cloak summer and winter, as is fitting for a free man living democratically in Athens".³⁵ Aristippus admits that he has "no desire to suffer hunger or cold, or to be held in ill repute or to grow a long beard".³⁶ However, as Hock notes, Aristippus may well have traded his freedom of speech (παρρησία) for his food and wine, beautiful women and money.³⁷ For Antisthenes, such a trade would have been unacceptable.

As the debate continues Simon himself is drawn into the correspondence. It is immediately clear which side of the debate he supports, saying in a letter to Aristippus that he is happy to cut leather straps "for admonishing foolish men who think that they are living according to the teaching of Socrates when they are living in great luxury".³⁸ In his reply to Simon, Aristippus draws attention to the irony of the situation in which the barefooted Antisthenes who exhorts the youth to follow his simple shoeless way of life spends his time in the

³⁴ *Socraticorum Epistulae* 9.1 (= *SSR* IV A 222).

³⁵ *Ibid.* 9.2.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 9.3.

³⁷ See Hock, 'Simon the Shoemaker as an Ideal Cynic', pp. 45-46, who surveys a number of passages in Diogenes Laertius in which philosophers are shown in conflict with rulers due to their outspokenness (παρρησία), often endangering their lives.

³⁸ *Socraticorum Epistulae* 12 (= *SSR* III A 16, full text in the Appendix).

company of a shoemaker.³⁹ In this Antisthenes was, of course, following the example of Socrates himself.⁴⁰

For some unknown reason, then, there developed a tradition involving shoeless Cynic philosophers spending their time in the company of shoemakers. Yet perhaps this is not as odd as it might at first appear. Whether it was between Socrates and Simon or Crates and Philiscus, one can see that such a relationship would have been one free from any ulterior motive, existing purely for the mutual benefit of philosophical discussion. Socrates, well known for his barefoot lifestyle, would have at last found someone to talk with in the environs of the Agora who was not intent upon selling him anything.

2. Simon the Ideal Socratic

So far I have surveyed the ancient sources for Simon and outlined his role in what appears to have been a primarily Cynic debate concerning whether philosophers should associate with rulers.⁴¹ As we have seen, their response to this question was an emphatic 'no'; instead philosophers should associate with shoemakers.

What I take to be the philosophical significance of Simon and his later role as a Cynic role model is his significance for our understanding of the philosophy of Socrates. For the Cynics, the figure of Simon became so important because they held him to be the true heir to Socrates.⁴² Simon's life of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) and freedom of speech (παρρησία) embodied what the Cynics took to be the core elements of Socrates' philosophical way of life. These two notions – self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) and freedom of speech (παρρησία) – are both fairly common Cynic ideas and both are key to understanding the significance later attached to Simon.

³⁹ See *Socraticorum Epistulae* 13.2 (= SSR IV A 224, full text in the Appendix).

⁴⁰ See e.g. Plato *Phaedrus* 229a, *Symposium* 174a. In Aelian *Varia Historia* 4.11 (= SSR V B 256) Diogenes the Cynic is reported to have commented that Socrates occasionally wore sandals. It is unclear whether this is to be taken as a criticism of creeping decadence or a justification for occasional indulgence.

⁴¹ To a certain extent I have thus far simply re-traced the ground already covered by Hock. I make no apology for this given the general lack of familiarity with either Simon or Hock's study. In the following sections I go beyond his account of Simon as an ideal Cynic by considering the significance of this for the problem of Socrates.

⁴² See e.g. *Socraticorum Epistulae* 18.2 (= SSR VI B 91, in the Appendix).

Central to the Cynic notion of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) is the rejection of dependence upon external goods and circumstances.⁴³ For the Cynics, all that is essential to live well is an excellent mental state (ἀρετή). In order to overcome such dependence they engaged in a form of philosophical training or *ascēsis* (ἄσκησις),⁴⁴ but this was in no way 'ascetic' in the later, primarily Christian, sense of the word.⁴⁵ Instead it was directed towards the cultivation of well-being or happiness (εὐδαιμονία). Thus when Diogenes engaged in his practice of hugging statues in the middle of winter, his aim was to train himself to become indifferent to the cold.⁴⁶ With such indifference achieved, he would no longer have needed to concern himself with extra clothing, heating, and all of the other various expenses winter can bring. Of course, total self-sufficiency is impossible so Cynic αὐτάρκεια became the task of reducing one's needs to a bare minimum. As we have already seen in the *Socraticorum Epistulae*, Simon is said to have exhibited this Cynic trait, reducing his material needs to a minimum and providing for those left by way of his shoemaking. The Cynics took Simon's αὐτάρκεια to be something that he had learned from Socrates and it is something attributed to Socrates by Xenophon.⁴⁷

The ideal of holding onto one's freedom of speech, frankness, or outspokenness (παρρησία) was another key Cynic idea.⁴⁸ It is perhaps most clearly illustrated in those anecdotes that bring together Diogenes the Cynic and Alexander the Great. When asked by the then ruler of the known world what he would like above all else, Diogenes replied 'for you to get out of my light'.⁴⁹ As we have already noted, in Diogenes

⁴³ See e.g. Diogenes Laertius 6.11, 6.78. For further discussion see A. N. M. Rich, 'The Cynic Conception of αὐτάρκεια', *Mnemosyne* 4th series 9 (1956), 23-29, and M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, *L'ascèse cynique: Un commentaire de Diogène Laërce VI 70-71*, *Histoire des doctrines de l'Antiquité classique* 10 (Paris: Vrin, 1986), pp. 38-40. Note also the text by Teles entitled *On Self-Sufficiency* (Περὶ αὐτάρκειας) in Hense, *Teletis Reliquiae*, pp. 5-20, and O'Neil, *Teles*, pp. 6-19.

⁴⁴ For a thorough treatment of Cynic ἄσκησις see Goulet-Cazé, *L'ascèse cynique*.

⁴⁵ Pace Rich, 'The Cynic Conception of αὐτάρκεια', p. 23, who characterises Cynic αὐτάρκεια as "a stern renunciation of the world".

⁴⁶ See Diogenes Laertius 6.23 (= SSR V B 174).

⁴⁷ See e.g. Xenophon *Memorabilia* 1.2.14, 1.3.5-8, 4.7.1.

⁴⁸ This topic fascinated Foucault in his final lectures on Socrates and the Cynics. See T. Flynn, 'Foucault as Parrhesiast: His Last Lecture Course at the Collège de France', in J. Bernauer & D. Rasmussen, eds, *The Final Foucault* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), pp. 102-118.

⁴⁹ See e.g. Diogenes Laertius 6.38 (= SSR V B 33); with further references to Diogenes and Alexander in SSR V B 31-49.

Laertius's biography Simon is reported to have rejected Pericles' offer of a position as a court philosopher by saying that he would not accept money if it meant he had to give up his freedom of speech (παρρησία).⁵⁰

These two Cynic ideals are of course closely inter-connected with one another. Only those who have achieved self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) can guarantee their freedom of speech (παρρησία), for only those who are not dependent upon others for their material needs are free to offend and abuse whomsoever they please. Thus Aristippus – as he is portrayed in the *Socraticorum Epistulae* at least – may well have been forced by the circumstances in which he found himself to remain silent in front of Dionysius precisely because he was dependent upon him for his luxurious lifestyle.

3. Concluding Remarks

As we have seen, the Cynics held Simon's quiet independent life of making shoes and engaging in private conversation with unwashed and barefoot philosophers to be an ideal way of life. They attributed to Simon two qualities that they thought marked out the ideal philosopher, namely self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) and freedom of speech (παρρησία). At the same time they held Simon to be the most authentic follower of Socrates. The figure of Simon is important for the Cynics, then, because he forms a bridge between their own philosophy and that of Socrates. If Simon is the most authentic Socratic and his life is marked by the qualities of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) and freedom of speech (παρρησία), then these qualities may well have marked the life of Socrates himself. This is the implicit argument in the Cynic literary tradition that grew up around the name of Simon. In short, the Simon tradition attempts to draw one towards the conclusion that it was in fact Socrates who was 'the first dog'.⁵¹

It is of course readily acknowledged that the Cynics were followers of Socrates but this is often qualified by drawing attention to the ways in which they pushed Socrates' sober and sensible philosophy to an extreme.⁵² Plato's characterisation of Diogenes as a 'Socrates gone mad'

⁵⁰ Diogenes Laertius 2.123 (= SSR VI B 87, in the Appendix).

⁵¹ I refer to Goulet-Cazé's 'Who Was the First Dog?', in Branham & Goulet-Cazé, eds, *The Cynics*, pp. 414-15, which deals the question of who should be credited as the founder of the Cynic movement.

⁵² See e.g. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism*, p. 27.

(Σωκράτης μαινόμενος) could well still serve as a summary of the prevailing consensus.⁵³ What the tradition surrounding Simon proposes is that the specifically Cynic qualities of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) and freedom of speech (παρρησία) were not extreme exaggerations of Socrates' philosophy but rather faithful expressions of it.⁵⁴ This question concerning who has the greatest claim to be called the true heir of Socrates is one of the explicit themes of the *Socraticorum Epistulae*, with Aristippus claiming that he – and not Antisthenes – is the genuine steward of the Socratic teachings (λόγων ἐπιμελητὴν τῶν Σωκρατικῶν).⁵⁵ It is within this context that Simon is brought into the correspondence as a Cynic counter example. It is clear, then, that the Cynic tradition surrounding Simon was directly connected with what has come to be known as 'the problem of Socrates'.

In order to test the validity of this Cynic claim that Simon was the most orthodox follower of Socrates it would be necessary to consider all of the surviving sources for Socrates. Although it is not possible to do this here we can at least note a couple of Socratic *testimonia*. In Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, for example, one can find a description of Socrates' way of life that clearly displays the quality of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια).⁵⁶ Here Socrates is presented as someone who has reduced his needs to a minimum so that he needs little to satisfy them and as someone who ate and drank only according to his needs, both common Cynic characteristics. The quality of freedom of speech or frankness (παρρησία) is also credited to Socrates in Plato's *Laches* and can be seen throughout Socrates' defence speech in Plato's *Apology*.⁵⁷ Although it would, of course, be necessary to consider a large number of texts in some detail, hopefully one can at least see that the ancient tradition surrounding Simon the shoemaker forms an interesting yet neglected strand in the ancient sources for the philosophy of Socrates.

⁵³ See Diogenes Laertius 6.54; also Aelian *Varia Historia* 14.33 (both SSR V B 59).

⁵⁴ For further discussion of the Socratic-Cynic genealogy see in particular two studies by A. A. Long: 'The Socratic Tradition: Diogenes, Crates, and Hellenistic Ethics', in Branham & Goulet-Cazé, eds, *The Cynics*, pp. 28-46, and 'Socrates in Hellenistic Philosophy', *Classical Quarterly* 38 (1988), 150-71. Note also the same author's contribution to K. Algra et al., eds, *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), entitled 'The Socratic Legacy'.

⁵⁵ *Socraticorum Epistulae* 9.1 (= SSR IV A 222).

⁵⁶ See Xenophon *Memorabilia* 1.3.5-8; note also the explicit references to his αὐτάρκεια at 1.2.14 and 4.7.1.

⁵⁷ See Plato *Laches* 188e-189a.

Appendix: Ancient Sources Relating to Simon

The ancient evidence for Simon can now be found collected together in *SSR* VI B 87-93.⁵⁸ For the sake of convenience here are translations of all of these *testimonia*.

87. Diogenes Laertius 2.122-24

[2.122] Simon the Athenian was a shoemaker.⁵⁹ When Socrates came to his workshop and began to converse, he used to make notes of all that he could remember. And this is why people apply the term 'shoemaker's' to his dialogues.⁶⁰ There are thirty-three which circulate in one volume:⁶¹

- On the Gods
- On the Good
- On the Beautiful
- What is the Beautiful
- On the Just; I and II
- On Virtue, that it cannot be taught

⁵⁸ Further references to Simon not in *SSR* can be found in a number of the Aristotelian commentators. Hock notes one such reference in Ammonius *In De Interpretatione* (Busse, p. 205.4-7, *CAG* 4.5) which Goulet, 'Trois Cordonniers Philosophes', p. 123 n.15, supplements with others in *Anonymi in Sophisticos Elenchos* (Hayduck, p. 11.14-17, *CAG* 23.4), David *Prolegomena* (Busse, p. 42.27-32, *CAG* 18.2), Philoponus *In Analytica Posteriora* (Wallies, p. 350.31-33, *CAG* 13.3), and Ps.-Alexander (= Micheal of Ephesus) *In Sophisticos Elenchos* (Wallies, p. 40.22-27, *CAG* 2.3). In *De Interpretatione* 20b35-36, 21a14-15 and *Sophistici Elenchi* 177b14-15, Aristotle uses the example of a shoemaker when discussing predicates ('if someone is good and a shoemaker it does not follow that he is a good shoemaker') and these commentators identify this as a reference to Simon. See Goulet, pp. 122-23 for further discussion. Goulet also draws attention to a reference to a shoemaker called 'Heron' in Aelius Theon *Progymnasmata* which, in the light of an alternative reading in an Armenian manuscript, may plausibly be amended to 'Simon'. See the new Budé edition by M. Patillon & G. Bolognesi (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1997), p. 77.

⁵⁹ For Diogenes Laertius I have consulted Hick's Loeb translation and the translation into French with notes in *Diogène Laërce, Vies et Doctrines des Philosophes Illustres*, Traduction française sous la direction de Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2nd edn 1999), pp. 335-37 & 365.

⁶⁰ Note the attribution of 'shoemaker's dialogues' (σκηναϊκούς λόγους) to Aeschines, and by implication Phaedo, at Diogenes Laertius 2.105 (= *SSR* III A 8).

⁶¹ The list in Hick's Loeb text gives 31 titles. One of these is in two books and another in three, making a total of 34 dialogues. Giannantoni's text in *SSR* omits two of these titles, giving a total of 32. One of these may have been omitted by mistake; restoring this would give us the stated total of 33.

- On Courage; I, II, and III
 - On Law
 - On Demagogy
 - On Honour
 - On Poetry
 - On Good Passions
 - [On Love]⁶²
 - On Philosophy
 - On Knowledge
 - On Music
 - [On Poetry]⁶³
 - [2.123] What is the Beautiful
 - On Teaching
 - On the Art of Conversation
 - On Judging
 - On Being
 - On Number
 - On Care
 - On Work
 - On Greed
 - On Pretentiousness
 - On the Beautiful
- Others are:
- On Deliberation
 - On Reason, or On Expediency
 - On Doing III

He was the first, they say, who wrote Socratic dialogues. When Pericles promised to support him and urged him to come to him, he said not if he was to be paid in return for his freedom of speech (παρρησίαν).

[2.124] There was another Simon, who wrote treatises on rhetoric; another who was a physician in the time of Seleucus Nicanor; and one who was a sculptor.

88. *Suda* s.v. Σωκράτης (= *SSR* I D 2 & I H 7)

Socrates [...] produced a number of philosophers: Plato [...] also Crito and Simon.⁶⁴

⁶² In Hicks Loeb edition and Goulet-Cazé but not *SSR*.

⁶³ In Hicks Loeb edition but not *SSR* and bracketed by Goulet-Cazé, following its omission in Long's OCT edition.

89. Synesius Dion 14 (= SSR III A 18)

But both Glaucou and Kritias were discussing in agreement with him [Socrates]; but nor did Simon the shoemaker think it right to agree with Socrates in everything, but he studied the meaning of his every word.

90. Plutarch Maxime cum Principibus esse Disserendum 776b

What does an attentive man say who needs philosophy? "Let me change from Pericles or Cato and become Simon the shoemaker or Dionysius the schoolteacher, in order that you might sit down and converse with me as Socrates did with them".⁶⁵

91. Socraticorum Epistulae 18.2

'Xenophon to the Friends of Socrates':⁶⁶ [...] Greet Simon the shoemaker and praise him, because he continues to devote himself to the teachings of Socrates and uses neither his poverty nor his trade as a pretext for not doing philosophy, as certain others do who do not want to understand fully or to admire Socrates' teachings and their contents.

92. Socraticorum Epistulae 9.4, 11, 13 (= SSR IV A 222-24)

[9.4] 'Aristippus to Antisthenes': [...] With regard to the other things, go to Simon the shoemaker, in whom you have someone who is greater in wisdom than anyone ever was or will be, and converse with him.

[11] 'Aristippus to Aeschines': The young Locrian men about whom you wrote to me will be released from prison and will not die, nor will they lose any of their money, though they came close to dying. Do not tell Antisthenes that I have saved the friends. For he does not like to have tyrants for friends, but he rather seeks out the barley meal sellers and

⁶⁴ The bulk of this text is omitted because it is not relevant here. Simon's name comes towards the end of a lengthy list of disciples of Socrates. The entire passage is translated in J. Ferguson, *Socrates: A Source Book* (London: Macmillan for The Open University Press, 1970), pp. 322-23.

⁶⁵ The text of this passage contains a number of disputed readings. See Hock, 'Simon the Shoemaker as an Ideal Cynic', p. 44 n. 18. I take the 'you' in "in order that you might sit down and converse with me" to refer to a personification of Philosophy. Fowler's Loeb translation ends with "as Socrates did with Pericles". As Hock notes, this must be wrong. The context suggests that ἐκεῖνοις (in SSR) or ἐκείνῳ (in Fowler) refers to Simon and/or Dionysius.

⁶⁶ All translations of the *Socraticorum Epistulae* follow those in Malherbe (nos 1-25 are by S. Stowers), occasionally modified.

tavern keepers who sell barley meal and wine honestly in Athens, and who rent out thick tunics when the winds blow, and he courts Simon.

[13.1] 'Aristippus to Simon': I do not ridicule you, but rather Phaedo, when he said that you are more excellent and wiser than Prodicus of Ceos, who said that you refuted him with regard to his *Encomium to Heracles*. No, I do admire and praise you, since, though you are but a shoemaker, you are filled with wisdom and used to persuade Socrates and the most handsome and noble youths to sit with you; youths such as Alcibiades, son of Clinias, Phaedrus the Myrrhinean, and Euthydemus, son of Glaucou. Also, of the men of public affairs, Epicrates, Sacesphorus, Euryptolemus, and others. I also think that Pericles, son of Xanthippus, was with you when he did not have to carry out the duties of a general or there was not a war going on at the time. And now we know what sort of person you are, for Antisthenes visits you. And you can also practice philosophy in Syracuse, for leather thongs and straps are valued here. [13.2] Don't you know that I, who wear shoes, will constantly make your trade into something to be admired? But as for that barefoot Antisthenes, what else has he done than to make you idle and without an income, since he persuades the youth and indeed all the Athenians to go barefoot? See, then, how much of a friend I am, one who is content with leisure and pleasure. And though you admit that Prodicus argues reasonably, you do not realise the consequences for yourself. Otherwise, you would admire me and ridicule those who have long beards and staffs for their boasting, who are dirty, louse-ridden and have long fingernails like wild animals and give advice that is contrary to your craft.

93. Socraticorum Epistulae 12 (= SSR III A 16)

'Simon to Aristippus': I hear that you ridicule our wisdom in the presence of Dionysius. I admit that I am a shoemaker and that I do work of that nature, and in like manner I would, if it were necessary, cut straps once more for the purpose of admonishing foolish men who think that they are living according to the teaching of Socrates when they are living in great luxury. Antisthenes shall be the chastiser of your foolish jests. For you are writing him letters which make fun of our way of life. But let what I have said to you in jest suffice. At any rate, remember hunger and thirst, for these are worth much to those who pursue self-control.