



Andocides  
Complete Works

DELPHI  CLASSICS

Ancient Classics Series

*The Complete Works of*  
**ANDOCIDES**

(c. 440-c. 390 BC)



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Version 1

*The Complete Works of*  
**ANDOCIDES OF ATHENS**



*By Delphi Classics, 2023*

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## *Complete Works of Andocides*



First published in the United Kingdom in 2023 by Delphi Classics.

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ISBN: 978 1 80170 110 5

Delphi Classics

is an imprint of

Delphi Publishing Ltd

Hastings, East Sussex

United Kingdom

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## The Translations



*Ancient Athens — Andocides' birthplace*

## The Speeches



*Translated by K. J. Maidment, Loeb Classical Library, 1941*

Andocides was one of the ten Attic orators included in the “Alexandrian Canon” compiled by Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus of Samothrace in the third century BC. The son of Leogoras, Andocides was born in Athens in c. 440 BC and belonged to the ancient Eupatrid family of the Kerykes, who traced their lineage up to Odysseus and the god Hermes. During his youth, he was employed on various occasions as ambassador to Thessaly, Macedonia, Molossia, Thesprotia, Italy and Sicily. Although frequently attacked for his political opinions, Andocides maintained his ground until 415, when he became involved in the charge brought against Alcibiades for having profaned the mysteries and mutilated the Herms prior to the Athenian expedition against Sicily. It is likely that he was an accomplice in the latter of these crimes, which was believed to be a preliminary step towards overthrowing the democratic constitution, since the Herm standing close to his house was among the very few which had not been injured.

Andocides was seized and thrown into prison; he eventually recovered his freedom when he promised to become an informer and reveal the names of the real perpetrators of the crime. On the suggestion of one Charmides or Timaeus, he mentioned four, all of whom were put to death. He is also said to have denounced his own father on the charge of profaning the mysteries, but to have rescued him again in the hour of danger — a charge he would strenuously deny. As he was unable to clear himself from the charge, he was deprived of his rights as a citizen and left Athens.

He then traveled about in various parts of Greece and was chiefly concerned in commercial enterprise and in forming connections with powerful rulers. In 411 he returned to Athens on the establishment of the oligarchic government of the Four Hundred, hoping that the service he had rendered the Athenian ships at Samos would secure him a welcome reception. However, no sooner were the oligarchs informed of his return, than their leader Peisander had him seized for having ‘supported’ the party opposed to them at Samos. During his trial, Andocides, who perceived the vexation prevailing against him, leaped to the altar and assumed the attitude of a supplicant. This saved his life, but he was imprisoned. Soon afterwards, he was set free or escaped from prison.

Next, he went to Cyprus, where for a time he enjoyed the friendship of King Evagoras; but for some reason he disappointed his friend and was consigned to prison. Again he escaped, and after the restoration of democracy in Athens and the abolition of the Four Hundred, he ventured once more to Athens. As he was still suffering under a sentence of civil disenfranchisement, he endeavored through bribes to persuade the *prytaneis* to allow him to attend the assembly. The people, however, expelled him from the city in 411. It was on this occasion that he delivered the extant speech “On His Return”, in which he petitioned for permission to reside at Athens, but in vain. In his third exile, Andocides went to reside in Elis.

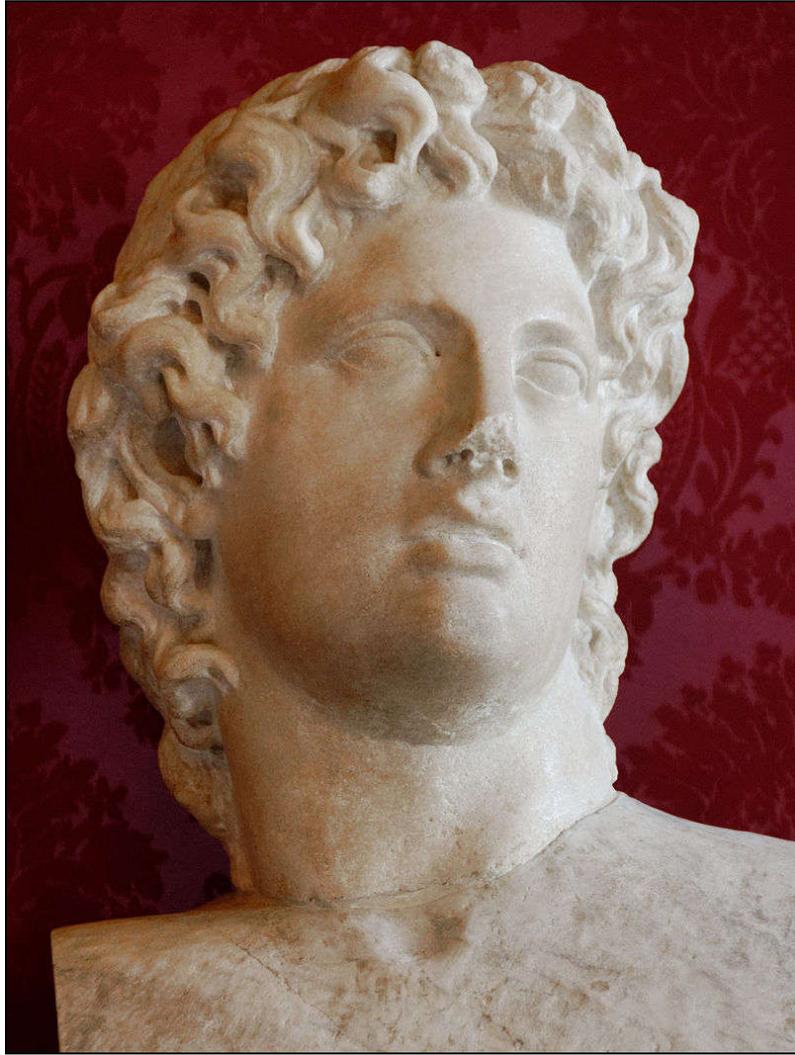
He remained in exile until after the overthrow of the tyranny of the Thirty by Thrasybulus, when the proclaimed amnesty allowed him to return to Athens, enjoy peace for the next three years and recover an influential position. According to Lysias, it was scarcely ten days after his return that he brought an accusation against

Archippus or Aristippus, which, however, he dropped on receiving a sum of money. During this time, Andocides became a member of the *boule*, in which he appears to have possessed great influence, as well as in the popular assembly.

Yet in 400, the diplomat Callias urged the necessity of preventing Andocides from attending the assembly, as he had never been formally freed from the civil disenfranchisement. Callias also charged him with violating the laws respecting the temple at Eleusis. The orator pleaded his case in "On the Mysteries", arguing that he had not been involved in the profanation of the mysteries or the mutilation of the herms, that he had not violated the laws of the temple at Eleusis, that he had received his citizenship back as a result of the amnesty; and that Callias was really motivated by a private dispute with Andocides over inheritance. He was duly acquitted. After this, he again enjoyed peace until 394, when he was sent as ambassador to Sparta regarding the peace to be concluded in consequence of Conon's victory off Cnidus. On his return, he was accused of illegal conduct during his embassy. Delivered in 393, the extant speech "On the Peace with Sparta" refers to this incident. This time, Andocides was found guilty and sent into exile for a fourth time. He never returned and seems to have died soon after this final blow to his fortunes.

As an orator Andocides does not appear to have been held in very high esteem by the ancients, as he is seldom mentioned, though Valerius Theon is said to have written a commentary on his orations. He was not reportedly trained in any of the sophistical schools of the time and he had probably developed his talents in the practical school of the popular assembly. Therefore, his orations reveal no especial mannerism and are, as Plutarch describes them, "simple and free from all rhetorical pomp and ornament".

Of the four extant speeches, the oration "Against Alcibiades" is doubted by some to be a work of Andocides. It was said to have been delivered by Andocides during the ostracism of 415. Some scholars ascribe this speech to Phaeax, who took part in the ostracism, according to Plutarch. Other scholars argue that it is a rhetorical exercise from the early fourth century BC, since formal speeches were not delivered during ostracisms and the accusation or defence of Alcibiades was a conventional rhetorical theme.



*“Alcibiades”, ideal male portrait. Roman copy after a Greek original of the Late Classical period*

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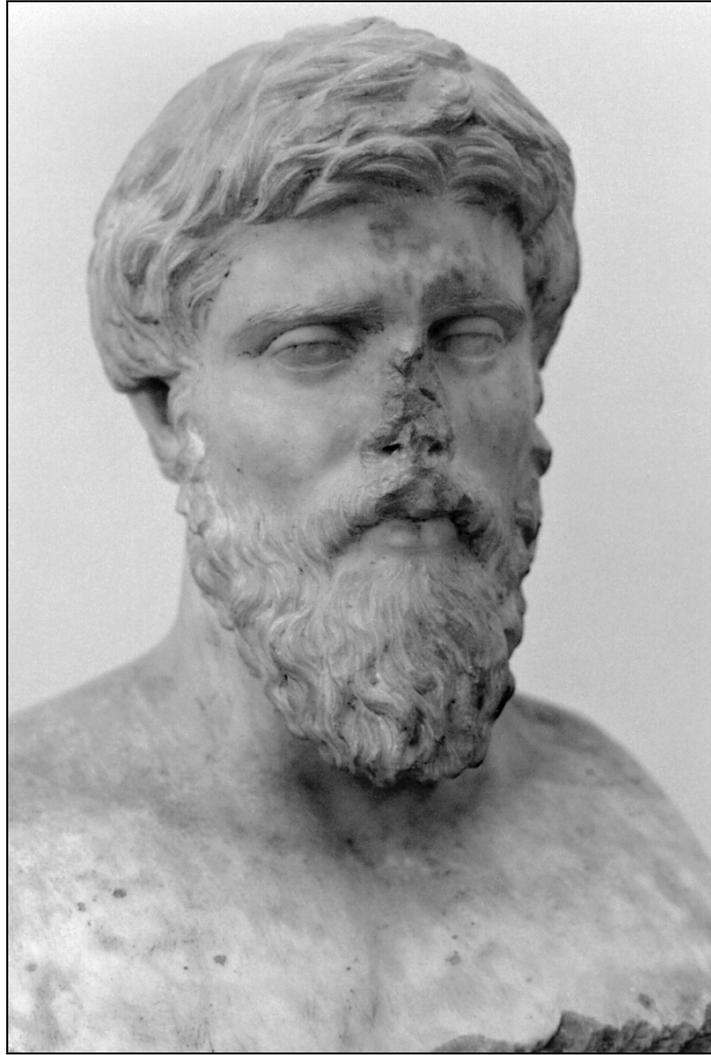
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Source text: Andocides. *Minor Attic Orators*, M.A. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. With thanks to the Pegasus Digital Library.



*Roman copy of a late fifth-century BC Athenian herma. Vandalising hermai was one of the crimes of which Andocides and Alcibiades were accused.*



*Assumed portrait of Plutarch, 2nd century BC, Archaeological Museum of Delphi*

## **On the Mysteries**

## INTRODUCTION



ANDOCIDES DELIVERED HIS speech *On The Mysteries* in the year 399 B.C. He was pleading for his life, but he had a sympathetic audience and the facts upon which the case against him rested were by now remote enough to be half-forgotten. Given the necessary self-assurance, it was not difficult to construct a plausible defence, and the jury welcomed it — the men of the restored democracy were little inclined to unearth buried scandals. Andocides' explanations were accepted without too close a scrutiny, and he was acquitted.

In order to understand the circumstances which led to his appearance in court, it is necessary to go back some sixteen years. In 415, when the Sicilian expedition was about to leave Peiraeus, a double scandal came to light, with momentous effects not only upon the success of the expedition itself but upon the fortunes of Athens at large during the next two or three years. A certain Pythonicus stated before the Assembly that Alcibiades, one of the generals in command of the forces about to sail for the West, had recently parodied the Eleusinian Mysteries with a party of friends; he produced an eyewitness to confirm his story. The result was a popular uproar; Athens was an enlightened city, but she was not prepared to see a cult which gave expression to her most intimate religious beliefs, exposed to deliberate ridicule. And the public indignation increased tenfold when it was further discovered that numbers of the stone images of Hermes scattered throughout Athens had been mutilated in a single night. A commission was hurriedly appointed to conduct an inquiry into both outrages, and rewards were offered for information.

The profanation of the Mysteries proved a simpler matter to investigate than the mutilation of the Hermae. Three informers came forward almost at once, each with a mock celebration to describe; the names of the offenders were obtained; and the few who had not already quitted the country were arrested and executed. Alcibiades, the first to be denounced, escaped; and Athens had many occasions for regretting it in the troubled years which followed.

One of the three informers mentioned, a metic named Teucus, also volunteered a statement with regard to the mutilation, and furnished the Council with a list of eighteen names. But almost immediately afterwards a certain Diocleides appeared with a much more elaborate story. Diocleides had, it seems, watched the criminals at work. There had been some three hundred in all, and as a preliminary he gave the names of forty-two. The result was a panic. An oligarchic plot was suspected, and precautions were hastily taken to prevent the possibility of an organized rising. Meanwhile the forty-two were arrested and thrown into prison.

Among them was Andocides, together with most of his family. Their situation looked desperate; and Andocides adopted the only course open to him in the circumstances. He knew what the truth was; so he offered to turn informer himself, on condition that he was guaranteed immunity. The offer was accepted; and he had little difficulty in proving Diocleides' story a fabrication. There were actually only twenty-two criminals in all; and eighteen of the twenty-two had been exposed by Teucus.

Andocides was safe once more, in virtue of the immunity granted him by the Council. That he had had some connexion with the outrage is clear even from his words in the present speech; from what he says elsewhere, and from the remarks of Thucydides, it is practically certain that he had taken an active part in it. But in spite of that, he was entitled to continue living in Athens under the protection of his ἄδεια.

This state of affairs did not last long, however. During that same year a decree was proposed and carried by Isotimides to the effect that anyone who had committed impiety and confessed to it should be debarred from the temples of Attica and the Athenian Agora, whether he had been accorded an immunity or not. That is to say, his ἄδεια was still to hold good, in that his life and property were assured to him; but the unexpiated defilement which lay upon him was to prevent him from participating in the political and religious life of the community.

The decree of Isotimides was clearly aimed at Andocides, and he found himself obliged to withdraw into exile. For over ten years he remained abroad, for the most part engaged in trade. Then, in 403, when the democracy was restored and a general amnesty proclaimed, he returned to Athens. He was accepted as a citizen without question, once more took up residence in the town-house of his family, and threw himself energetically into public life. But as time passed he made enemies. First he came into collision with a powerful syndicate of tax-farmers, headed by Agyrrhius, who had been drawing handsome profits until Andocides stepped in and outbid them for the contracts concerned; then he earned the hatred of a certain Cephisius, who like himself had returned under the amnesty — possibly Andocides was urging the recovery of monies which Cephisius was known to have embezzled some years previously — ; and finally he quarrelled with Callias, a distant relative of his by marriage and a member of what had once been one of the wealthiest families in Athens. This last feud came to a head when both Callias and Andocides claimed the right to one of the daughters of Andocides' uncle, Epilycus. Epilycus had died intestate; and according to law his daughters had now to be given in marriage to the nearest surviving male relative, provided that he was not within the prohibited degrees. Andocides was a cousin: Callias the grandfather. Callias was debarred from marrying either of the daughters himself; but he had a son for whom he thought the match would be eminently suitable.

There had been little love lost between Callias and Andocides even before this fresh dispute occurred; and when Andocides intimated that he was about to bring the case into court, Callias decided to act. It was the beginning of October, the time of the Great Eleusinia. Andocides, who was an initiate, attended the celebration as he had been in the habit of doing since his return. But no sooner were the ceremonies at Eleusis over than he found that an information had been lodged against him with the Basileus to the effect that he had taken part in rites from which he was automatically debarred by the decree of Isotimides. The information (ἔνδειξις) was due to Cephisius, who had received a thousand drachmae from Callias to bring the case, and with Cephisius were associated Agyrrhius and two others, Epichares and Meletus, both of whom had reasons for wishing Andocides out of the way.

To strengthen their position, the five went further. It was arranged that a suppliant's bough should be placed on the altar of the Eleusinium at Athens. Callias, acting in his official capacity as a member of the clan of the Heralds or Ceryces, would bring the matter to the notice of the Council, when it assembled there for its traditional meeting at the close of the Eleusinia; he would show that Andocides was responsible; and he would further declare that, according to Athenian religious law, the penalty for committing such an act during the festival was instant death.

The move proved unfortunate. On being questioned, Callias was unable to prove that Andocides was the offender; it was further pointed out that Callias was a Ceryx, not a Eumolpid, and had therefore no right to interpret the law; while in any event his interpretation was wrong — the penalty for the crime in question was not death, but a fine. Callias and Cephisius were thus forced to fall back upon their original ἔνδειξις

ἀσεβείας. This came before the Heliaea in due course; the jury was composed of initiates, and the Basileus presided.

We can gain a reasonably accurate idea of the line of attack chosen by the prosecution, partly from the reply of Andocides himself and partly from the *In Andocidem*, wrongly attributed to Lysias. In all probability this last was actually delivered at the trial, although as a δευτερολογία or supporting speech. The prosecution set out to prove two things: first, that Andocides had been genuinely guilty of impiety in 415, and was therefore liable to the penalties prescribed by the decree of Isotimides: secondly, that he was not entitled to protection under the amnesty of 403. With regard to their first point, they produced evidence to show that Andocides had been concerned not only in the mutilation of the Hermae, but in the profanation of the Mysteries as well; with regard to their second, they took the line that the amnesty was the result of an agreement between two specific parties, “ the men of the City “ and “ the men of Peiraeus,” and as such was intended to benefit them and them alone. Andocides had belonged to neither party; and he was not entitled to protection.

Andocides replies to each of these points in turn. He first shows that he had no connexion whatsoever with the profanation of the Mysteries, and next to none with the mutilation, and that therefore the decree of Isotimides had never affected him. This of course misrepresents the facts; had he not been guilty of impiety to at least some extent, he would have had no cause for withdrawing into exile after the passing of the decree. But luckily the prosecution had made the tactical error of introducing the profanation of the Mysteries, with which Andocides had in fact had nothing to do; and the refutation of their charges in this connexion gives him ample opportunity for thrusting other awkward facts into the background.

Next he turns to the question of the amnesty, a crucial one. It mattered little whether he could clear himself completely with regard to the events of 415, provided that he could convince the court that there were no legal grounds for proceeding against him in 399. The position is examined in §§ 70–91.

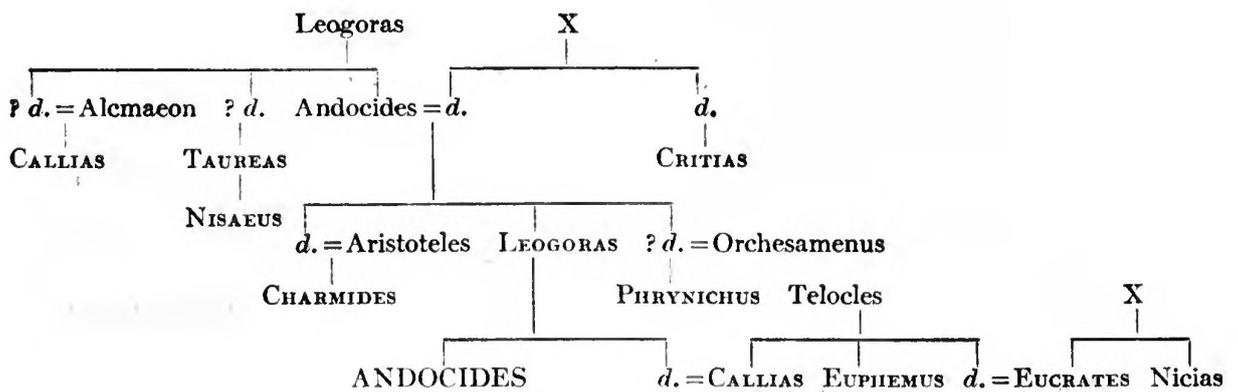
First comes a detailed analysis of the various forms which disfranchisement could take. It is then shown that citizens suffering from the disabilities in question were reinstated by the decree of Patrocleides, passed after the battle of Aegospotami in 405. Next we have the general restoration of exiles in 404 at Spartan dictation, followed by the repeal of all laws earlier than the archonship of Eucleides (July 403), and the drafting of a fresh code to meet present circumstances. Lastly there is the oath taken by the City-party and the Peiraeus-party to bury all differences.

Strictly speaking, none of these facts were relevant to Andocides’ case; and the prosecution had touched upon a very real weakness in his position when they maintained that the amnesty was limited in its application. Andocides had suffered disfranchisement (ἀτιμία) owing to the defilement incurred for an act of impiety; and in many respects his offence corresponded closely with homicide, which also brought defilement upon the guilty party. Now it is noteworthy that the decree of Patrocleides expressly excludes persons exiled for homicide in its definition of the classes of disfranchised citizens which it proposes to reinstate; it is concerned solely with state-debtors and political offenders. Similarly, the restoration of exiles in 404 was a purely political move, as was the revision of the legal code which followed. And the oath taken by the two parties, although sweeping in its terms, was intended primarily to effect a reunion between hitherto hostile factions within the state. The truth is that exiles like Andocides formed too limited a class to attract attention among the graver issues of the moment; and when a test-case such as the present came into court, there

were, properly speaking, no legal precedents for deciding it. It is true that a decree was hurried through the Assembly in 403 by Archinus, stating that the terms of the amnesty were to be so interpreted as to forbid the re-opening of civil actions decided previously, and thus a number of those prosecuted for crimes committed before 403 were enabled to claim protection; but there was still much room for doubt and perplexity. Everything must have depended upon individual cases and the personal likes and dislikes of jurors. In the present instance, Andocides, who had proved himself a useful member of the community since his return, found that the court was prepared to treat him generously. Its verdict was in his favour; and his opponents were forced to accept their defeat with such grace as they could. No further attempt was made to recall to the public mind the scandal of 415.

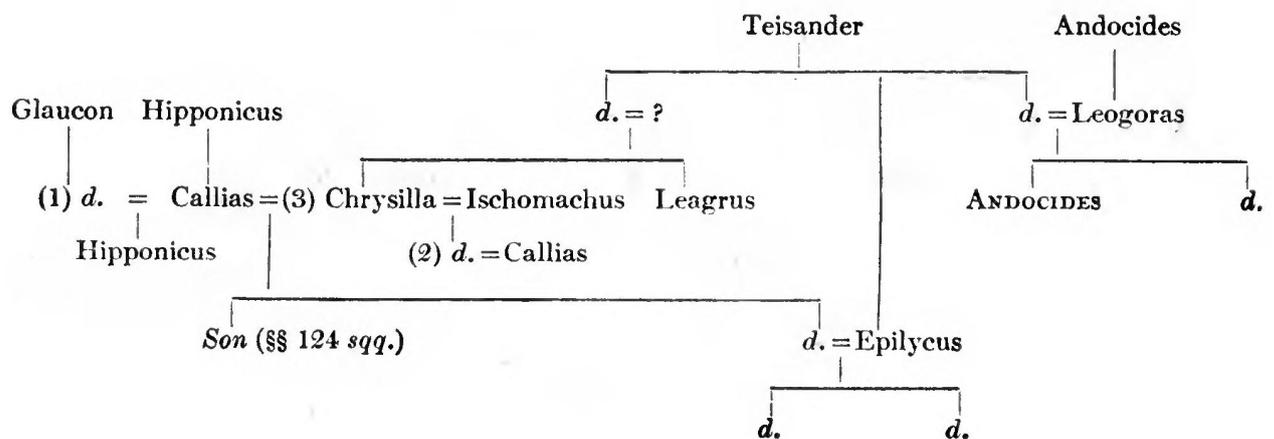
NOTE. — The accompanying tables show (I) those members of the family of Andocides whose names appeared among the forty-two given by Diocleides, (II) the connexion between the families of Callias, Andocides, and Epilycus.

I



The names of those who appeared on Diocleides' list of forty-two are printed in capitals. Doubtful relationships are queried.

II



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