

William O'Neill

Proclus: Alcibiades I

Second Edition

PROCLUS: ALCIBIADES I
A TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

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by

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SECOND EDITION



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PREFACE

This translation and commentary is based on the Critical Text and Indices of Proclus: Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato, Amsterdam 1954, by L. G. Westerink. Index II has been of great help in the translation, and the commentary is much indebted to the critical apparatus. Dr. Westerink has also been kind enough to forward his views on the relatively few problems which the Greek text has presented.

A further debt is owed to the review of Dr. Westerink's text by Prof. E. R. Dodds in *GNOMON* 1955 p. 164-7, chiefly for some references and some emendations to the Greek text. W. R. M. Lamb's Loeb translation of Alcibiades I has helped considerably in construing the lemmata, which Signor Antonio Carlini has found to have been inserted by a later hand from a Plato MSS. of the W family. Evidence for this is their discrepancy with the text as read in the main body of the commentary (cf. *Studi Classici e Orientali*, vol. x, Pisa 1961).

On the personal side, the whole work has received the benefit of constant advice from Prof. A. H. Armstrong. It was he who first suggested the undertaking, and he has been kind enough to read through the translation and commentary, making many corrections and helpful suggestions. In particular I owe him the parallels with Plotinus and thanks for a Socratic patience in my more obtuse moments. To Prof. E. R. Dodds I am grateful for many corrections in the translation and some suggestions in the notes. The many remaining defects must be laid at my own door.

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February 1964

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work has been to present a fairly readable and reasonably accurate translation of Proclus' Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato, together with an adequate commentary that will prove intelligible to English readers. The Alcibiades was regarded by the Platonic School as the dialogue which served as the most fitting introduction to Plato's thought, and was therefore the subject of several commentaries. However Proclus does not confine himself to the text: rather he makes it the basis for a brief but comprehensive survey of later Neoplatonism that serves as a suitable introduction to the subject.

Background references to Neoplatonic Theology have been drawn mainly from the edition of the Elements of Theology by Prof. E. R. Dodds, and not from the Platonic Theology. The latter work presents a highly complicated theological scheme, available only in the text of Aemilius Portus 1618 (although a text, translation and commentary of Book II has been prepared by H. D. Saffrey, who is working in conjunction with L. G. Westerink on a complete text of the Platonic Theology); whereas the former gives a concise exposition together with a very helpful translation and commentary. In addition frequent reference has been made to the commentaries on the Timaeus, Republic and Cratylus, in the Teubner editions, and some use has been made of the commentaries on Aristotle by Alexander of Aphrodisias.

Proclus is always concerned with harmonising his Neoplatonism with what he regarded as two sources of divine revelation – the Chaldaean Oracles and the teachings of the Orphics. In addition to the references to Kroll: *Oracula Chaldaica*, special use has been made of Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy by Hans Lewy; and for the Orphics, Orpheus and Greek Religion by W. K. C. Guthrie has been utilised to supplement Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta*.

Questions of Logic are often raised throughout the commentary, and in his analyses of them Proclus reveals himself as a faithful follower of Aristotle, whose works are often quoted almost verbatim. There is also a fondness for parallels from ancient medicine and rites of initiation.

From a study of this commentary Proclus emerges as perhaps a somewhat more readable author than has generally been allowed: perhaps too as a somewhat more original thinker than his critics have considered, although his debt to Iamblichus and Syrianus is hard to assess. On several occasions he is at variance with Plotinus, and does not hesitate to depart from his interpretations. Certainly the differences between early and later Neoplatonism are well illustrated, as also the fallacy of regarding the school started by Plotinus as merely descending progressively with each of his followers into more and more over-elaboration and arid commentary.

Finally it is hoped that this translation and commentary may prove some inducement to those beginners wishing to acquaint themselves with later Neoplatonism in a form more narrative than that of the *Elements of Theology* and less involved than that of the *Platonic Theology*.

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PROCLUS THE SUCCESSOR
ON THE FIRST ALCIBIADES OF PLATO

- <1> The most valid and surest starting-point for the dialogues of Plato, and, practically for the whole of philosophical consideration, is, in our opinion, the discerning of our own being. If this is correctly posited, we shall in every way, I think, be able more accurately to understand both the good that is appropriate to us and the evil that fights against it. Of the things that are, as it is natural for each one to differ in being, so also their perfection varies in different cases, according to their descent in the scale of being. Either both being and the good proceed
- <2> from the same hearth and primal spring, as Aristotle¹ asserts, in which case individual objects must receive their limit of perfection according to the measure of their being; or the good has come to things from one source, higher and more holy, and being and existence from another, in which case, as each one shares in being more dimly or more clearly, so also it will participate in the good, the primary beings in a greater and more perfect good, those that are assigned to an intermediate position, according to their own station, in a secondary good, and the lowest beings in a lowest good. How could beings admit of any other condition, under the guidance of the gods and providence, than arrangement in the scale of the good according to worth? For it is not the case that while Intellect guides beings to their rank and provides each with their appropriate measure of being, the Good, which in itself is superior to the Intellect, communicates itself to beings and showers them with goods in a disorderly manner, and either bestows a share in the same goodness on things differing in being (I mean, for
- <3> instance, causes and effects), or apportions the perfections of both the more primal and the subsequent to objects the same in regard to their being. "It neither was nor is lawful," says Timaeus,² "for the highest

¹ cf. Ar. Eth. Nic. 1096a23 "good" has as many senses as "being" (Ross)

² cf. Timaeus 30 a-b.

good to effect anything other than the supremely beautiful and proportioned." But the same good is not supremely proportioned to primary and secondary beings, nor perfection, varied according to being, to similar beings; but, as the Athenian stranger ³ observes, the equality that assigns the unequal to the unequal, a greater portion to the greater, and a lesser to the less, is the most harmonious and best of all. Now according to this equality the good varies in different beings, and the natural good therein doubtless corresponds to the nature of each. Therefore the perfection of intellect is in eternity, but of soul in time; the soul's good is according to intellect but the body's according to nature; again the perfection of gods differs from that of angels and spirits, ⁴ which in turn differs from that of individual souls. Whoever thinks that, in these cases, although their being differs, their perfection is the same, misses the truth in beings; "since their race is never the <4> same," as Homer ⁵ declares, either "of gods and men" or of the classes between these and both the extremes.

If this has been rightly assumed, it is surely necessary, in the case of each class of beings, to ascertain their being before their perfection; for perfection is not of itself, but of the being by which it is participated. This, then, must first be considered e.g. whether it is one of the undivided beings ⁶ or of those ⁷ divided in association with bodies or of those ⁸ in middle rank; whether it is of those that are eternal ⁹ or

³ cf. Laws 757a "for when equality is given to unequal things, the resultant will be unequal, unless due measure is applied" (Loeb).

⁴ Between gods and men lie intermediate beings of three kinds, angels, spirits and heroes. cf. p. 32.

⁵ cf. Homer, Iliad V 440-42.

⁶ cf. El. Theol. p. 115, 22: "the primary participant of the supra-existential henads will be undivided Being." *ibid.* p. 151, 1: "Every intelligence is an indivisible existence."

⁷ cf. *ibid.* p. 167, 6-13: "For such principles (i.e. those divided in association with bodies) are wholly inseparable from their substrates; they are partitioned together with partitioned bulk, and falling away from their own nature, which is without parts, they are infected with corporeal extension; if they be of the order of vital principles, they belong as life principles not to themselves but to their participants; if they be of the order of Being and the Forms, they belong as forms not to themselves but to that which they inform."

⁸ cf. *ibid.* p. 167, 1: "Every soul is intermediate between the indivisible principles and those which are divided in association with bodies." cf. also Timaeus 35a and Taylor's commentary ad loc: Plot. Enneads IV, 1.

⁹ cf. *ibid.* p. 147, 32: "Every intelligence has its existence, its potency and its activity in eternity."

those ¹⁰ that subsist for all time or those ¹¹ that come to be in some portion of time; and whether it is of those that are simple ¹² and established prior to all composition, or of those ¹³ that are composite indeed, but forever composed "in indissoluble bonds," ¹⁴ or of those that can be resolved again into the elements from which they were composed. If in this manner we consider each one, we shall be able to perceive of whatever nature its good happens to be. Again it is clear that for those who have been allocated undivided being their good is eternal, but for those who have been allocated divided being, their good is naturally within time and involved in change, while for those that lie intermediate, according to the measure of their existence so is their perfection considered, requiring time, but of the first order ¹⁵ and able to measure out incorporeal cycles.¹⁶

Hence we should reckon this to be the most valid starting-point both for all philosophy and for the system of Plato, namely, as we said, the clear and unadulterated knowledge of ourselves determined in
 <5> scientific terms and "securely established by causal reasoning."¹⁷ From what other source indeed, should one begin one's own purification and perfection than from where the god at Delphi exhorted us? For as the public notice warned those entering the precincts of the Eleusinian

¹⁰ cf. *ibid.* p. 153, 34: "as with existences, so in the gradations of activity there is an intermediate degree between any activity which is eternal and one which is complete in a certain time, namely the activity which has its completion in the whole of time."

¹¹ cf. *ibid.* p. 53, 22: "it is impossible to attach directly to the eternal things which come-to-be in a part of time (since the latter are doubly distinguished from the former, both as things in process from things which are and as dated from perpetual existences)."

¹² cf. in *Tim.* III p. 328, 25: "But whereas the intelligence is simpler (than the rational soul) by way of superiority, the irrational part is so by way of inferiority."

¹³ cf. *El. Theol.* p. 113, 33: "the composite is dependent if not upon things external to it, at least upon its own elements."

¹⁴ cf. *Timaeus* 43a, a reference to the mode of composition of the young gods, a mode which also applies to the world-soul and individual souls.

¹⁵ cf. p. 237, 7-13.

¹⁶ cp. *Timaeus* 43a "the cycles of the immortal soul." The preceding paragraph has described a) undivided, simple, eternal existences of the order of intellect b) an intermediate class, composite but indissoluble and enduring for all time; such are souls with their endless cycles c) existences which are divided in association with bodies, composite and subject to dissolution, that come to be in a portion of time.

¹⁷ A reminiscence of *Meno* 98a3 (E. R. Dodds: *Gnomon* 1955 p. 167) cf. the note in R. S. Bluck's edition.

Mysteries not to pass within the inner shrine if they were profane and uninitiated, so also the inscription "Know Thyself" on the front of the Delphi sanctuary indicated the manner, I presume, of ascent to the divine and the most effective path towards purification, practically stating clearly to those able to understand, that he who has attained the knowledge of himself, by beginning at the beginning, can be united with the god who is the revealer of the whole truth and guide of the purgative life, but he who does not know who he is, being uninitiated and profane ¹⁸ is unfit to partake of the providence of Apollo.

Let this then be the start of philosophy, and of the teaching of Plato viz. the knowledge of ourselves. For I think it befits the familiar friend ¹⁹ of Apollo to begin the perfection of the imperfect from the same starting-point as the god himself bids. Since Socrates also, who asserts that he is the "fellow-slave of the swans" ²⁰ and has no less than they received the gift of prophecy from the god, is said to have begun <6> his impulse towards philosophy by coming upon the Pythian inscription and considering it to be the bidding, as it were, of Apollo himself. We also then, obedient to god, must start from there; and we must enquire in which dialogue especially Plato has this aim in mind, viz. the consideration of our being, in order that therefrom we may make our very first start upon the works of Plato. Now could we name any other prior to the Alcibiades and the conversation of Socrates related therein? Where else shall we say that the nature of our being is similarly demonstrated; or enquiry made into man and his nature; or the meaning of the Delphic inscription thoroughly investigated? Or how, before this, could we examine anything else, either of the things that are or come to be when we have heard Socrates himself say: "It seems ridiculous to me to consider the properties of other beings, when I do not know myself?" ²¹ Nothing is nearer to us than our selves; if then we do not perceive what is nearest, what means is there of ascertaining the more remote, and what is naturally perceived through our agency? But if you reflect that not only does this subject receive considerable elucidation in this dialogue but also that this is the first conversation that Socrates initiates with Alcibiades and that it is he himself who says that the beginnings of perfection depend on the consideration of ourselves, you will no longer doubt that all who are anxious for per-

¹⁸ cp. *Phaedo* 69c.

¹⁹ i.e. Plato cf. *Diog. Laert.* III, 45.

²⁰ cf. *Phaedo* 85b.

²¹ cf. *Phaedrus* 229e.

fection must begin from here. Each one of us and of mankind in general
 <7> is more or less clearly subject to the very same misfortunes as the son of
 Kleinias. Held bound by the forgetfulness incident to generation and
 sidetracked by the disorder of the irrational forms of life, we do not
 know ourselves, and we think we know many things of which we are
 unaware, by reason of the innate notions present in us according to our
 being; ²² we stand in need of the same assistance, in order both to keep
 ourselves from excessive conceit and to light upon the care appropriate
 to us.

Well, it has already been observed that the knowledge of ourselves
 must precede all other enquiries and practically the whole of philosophical
 study. But perhaps someone might reproach us for so casual an
 assertion that this is the object of the Alcibiades, since accounts by
 many other famous commentators have described its purpose, some one
 way, some another. Nevertheless I would be ashamed of myself, if,
 while discerning that the supreme subject in the dialogue, which
 requires greater scientific knowledge and embraces all the problems, is
 the disclosure of the nature of our being, and that this extends through
 all the main sections of the work, I were to make the secondary, less
 important and more particular aspects objects of the aforesaid compo-
 sition. For neither is it appropriate to refer the purpose of the dialogue
 to Alcibiades alone, as some have supposed (since scientific consider-
 <8> ation views what is general and extends to all similar states); nor to put
 forward the tools of philosophical discussion as aims of the conversation
 e.g. exhortation, elicitation or refutation, but to observe to what end
 these tend; nor, standing aside from the considerations in hand, to
 transfer the enquiry to other forms of being, divine or spirit-like, in no
 way appropriate to us (for the object must be proper to the first
 beginnings of philosophical consideration, since Socrates says that this
 is the first time he has approached the youth); nor to devise some
 altogether different and adventitious purpose for the dialogue, casting
 aside that to which Socrates himself bears witness. If the knowledge of
 ourselves must precede all other considerations, how could there be any
 other end of this first conversation more to the point than the know-
 ledge of ourselves?

Exhortations therefore and dissuasions, refutation, elicitation, praise
 and blame, fulfil the function of indispensable means; for without these

²² cf. *El. Theol. props.* 194–5 & notes.

it is not possible to know oneself: exhortation is needed towards what is really good, and dissuasion from what is really evil: elicitation for the advancement of unperverted notions, and refutation for purification from twofold ignorance: ²³ praise to make those undergoing perfection
 <9> feel at home, and blame to benefit them and cure their bad habits. As, therefore, in the mystic rites ²⁴ there are preliminary cleansings, sprinklings with lustral water and purifications which are practice for secret rites and communion with the divine, so also the work of philosophical perfection seems to me to purge and prepare those on the path towards it for their self-knowledge, and the intuitive consideration of our being. Hence this and no other is the object of the dialogue; but of the matters demonstrated therein, some precede, and others are consequent upon this purpose, as conclusions implicit in this end. The removal of twofold ignorance and the exhortation and suchlike come first, and then follows the demonstration of virtue and happiness and the condemnation of the many crafts as not knowing either themselves or what belongs to them or absolutely anything at all, and such material of this nature as is offered in additional evidence at the end of the dialogue. But the chief purpose and principal object of the whole conversation is the consideration of our being.

Even if one should say that the purpose of the dialogue is the care of ourselves and the knowledge thereof, although his assertion is correct, let him note that it is appropriate that this should accrue to us as an end and as the benefit that results from what is demonstrated,
 <10> but the object of enquiry and the purpose of the syllogisms is a problem, ²⁵ viz. the knowledge of ourselves. For it is one thing to know the aim of the dialogue, and another the good that derives from such a purpose. Admittedly, as we have said elsewhere about the dialogues, each one must possess what the whole cosmos possesses; ²⁶ and an analogous

²³ cf. Proleg. Phil. Plat. p. 211, 3-5 Hermann: "Simple ignorance is when one is unaware of the essence and knows that one is unaware: twofold ignorance is when one is both unaware of the essence and does not recognise this unawareness."

²⁴ A reference to contemporary theurgy cf. note on p. 39, 16.

²⁵ The sense of the word "problem" here seems to be "a subject for intellectual enquiry." cf. Proleg. Phil. Plat. p. 212, 33-8 Hermann: "It is natural for the problem to be compared to the Intellect; for just as the Intellect is undivided, and is apprehended like a center-spot, while around the Intellect are the processes of discursive reasoning like a circumference unfolding around its center, so it is with the problem, and around it the demonstrations are unfolded like a circumference, desiring to seek out the answer that is emitted by it." cf. p. 34 Wk.

²⁶ cf. Proleg. Phil. Plat. p. 210, 21-6 Hermann: "Now since we have learned that the dialogue is a cosmos and the cosmos a dialogue, we shall find as many

part must be assigned therein to the good, part to the intellect, part to the soul, part to the form and part to the underlying nature itself. Let it then be stated that in this work proportionate to the good is conformity to the divine²⁷ through the care of ourselves, to the intellect the knowledge of ourselves, to the soul the wealth of demonstrations leading us to this conclusion, and practically the whole syllogistic part of the dialogue; for the form there remains the style of the diction and the interweaving of the figures of speech, and of the literary forms, and what else belongs to stylistic ability; and for the matter the persons and the time and what is called by some the plot. Now these exist in every dialogue, but as regards the question under discussion, the object of this work is the knowledge of our being, and we are lovers of this knowledge in order that we may attain our own perfection. As among the causative principles themselves the intellect depends on the good, so likewise in this matter, the object of enquiry in the dialogue is closely united with the purpose of the conversation; and the purpose is just such as we have said.

- <11> Let so much be placed on record by us in regard to the purpose, since we have already shown that the beginning of our perfection must be the pure knowledge of ourselves. This dialogue is the beginning of all philosophy, as indeed is the knowledge of ourselves; and for this reason scattered throughout it is the exposition of many considerations of logic, the elucidation of many points of ethics and such matters as contribute to our general investigation concerning happiness, and the outline of many doctrines leading us to the study of natural phenomena or even to the truth concerning divine matters themselves, in order that as it were in outline in this dialogue the one, common and complete plan of all philosophy may be comprised, being revealed through our

constituents of the dialogues as of the cosmos. Now in the universal cosmos there are matter, form, nature that implants form in matter, soul, intellect and divinity; and in the dialogue analogous to matter are the characters, the time and the place . . . to form the style . . . to soul the demonstrations . . . and to intellect the subject of enquiry. There is another way also of showing how the constituents of the dialogue are analogous to those in the cosmos. There are six causes in the case of each thing that comes into being, the material, formal, efficient, final, exemplary and instrumental. Analogous to the material are the characters, the time and the place, to the formal the style, to the efficient the soul, to the instrumental the demonstrations, to the exemplary the subjects of enquiry, to the final the good." (*ibid.* p. 211, 33-4, p. 212, 20-35). cf. also p. xxxii & xxxv Wk.

²⁷ cp. Theaetetus 176b.

actual first turning towards ourselves. It seems to me that this is why the divine Iamblichus²⁸ gives it the first position among the ten dialogues in which he considers the whole of Plato's philosophy is embraced, their whole subsequent development having been, as it were, anticipated in this seed. But which are the ten and how they should be arranged and how they are summarised in the two subsequent²⁹ to them, we have elaborated principally in other writings.

Well, since this has been fairly dealt with, we must now speak about <12> the division of the dialogue. There are some who, making the division according to the form of expression, have divided it into praise and blame, exhortation and dissuasion, and elicitation, saying that the philosopher needs praise in order to familiarise the youth, and blame to cleanse him from excessive conceit; exhortation in order to arouse him to communion with virtue, dissuasion to turn him away from becoming like the common run of demagogues and from emulation of those with great power in the state; and elicitation in order to entice him to the consideration of the nature of man and the care appropriate to this kind of nature. In dividing the dialogue into these divisions "they are to some extent correct, but not as much as they think";³⁰ they linger over "matters at a third remove from the truth";³¹ labour over the last details, and they grasp the means, but fail to realise the articulation of the subject-matter.

Others again, more pretentious than the former, bypass the various forms of expression, rise to the level of the discursive and demonstra-

²⁸ cf. *Proleg. Phil. Plat.* p. 219. 24–9 Hermann: "We relate what the divine Iamblichus did. Now he divided all the dialogues into twelve, some of which he termed physical, and others theological; again he reduced the twelve to two, the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*, the *Timaeus* as head of the physical and the *Parmenides* as head of the theological dialogues." Ten dialogues are then given in the following order: first the *Alcibiades* (because therein we learn the knowledge of ourselves) and last the *Philebus* (because its subject is the Good); in between come the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Cratylus*, *Theaetetus*, *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, (*Timaeus* and *Parmenides*). The probable inclusion of the *Sophist* and the *Statesman* brings the number up to twelve. cf. p. xxxii, xxxvii–viii and 46–8 Wk.

²⁹ The "subsequent two" seem to be the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*, which summarise all the other dialogues under the respective headings of natural philosophy and theology.

³⁰ cf. *Resp.* I 329e.

³¹ cf. *Resp.* X 597e & 602c.

tive ³² aspects of the dialogue, and claim to undertake its division from that point of view. They proceed to count off the parts: first comes the syllogism in which Socrates shows that Alcibiades does not know what is just; second that which declares the many not to be serious teachers of the just; third, in turn, that which concludes that, in matters which <13> involve question and answer, the speaker is the man who answers, and not the questioner; fourth, in which it is shown to require the same knowledge to convince one and many; fifth that which infers that what is just is profitable; sixth, another, connected with this, which concludes that only what is noble is good; seventh that which proves that by twofold ignorance Alcibiades knows neither himself nor public affairs; eighth that which convicts him of not even having considered who are his real opponents; ninth, that which reveals him as completely unaware of the manner of correct treatment; and tenth in addition to these that in which Socrates elucidates our being, the triple distinctions within it and the kind of treatment appropriate thereto. Now we shall praise those who hold this opinion as more discerning than the preceding and having come nearer the subject-matter, but not even these shall we say are yet making a substantial division, but belong to the second rank and are not entirely free of lingering over means.

Now that method of dividing the dialogue seems to me the most perfect of all which the philosopher Iamblichus approved, viz. that which starts from the subject-matter itself and includes under three heads ³³ the whole arrangement of the work, referring to these both the syllogistic enquiries and the stylistic treatment. For the secondary and instrumental must always adhere to the primary and principal parts <14> and be treated so as to harmonise with them. Now how do we say the dialogue is divided into its immediate and principal parts? Its object is to reveal the being of man and turn each one of us towards ourselves, away from the impulse that regards externals and concern for others' affairs, and this must necessarily come about by our cleansing the reason from its obstacles and what interrupts its return upon itself, and by disciplining the irrational part and recalling it to its perfection according to reason. First therefore comes one section that takes away

³² cf. *Proleg. Phil. Plat.* p. 213, 18–21: “But not even as resulting from the philosophical discussion and the syllogisms should we make our divisions, as some who divide the *Alcibiades* into the ten syllogisms that are embodied in it.”

³³ cf. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 11, 7–8: “But as regards its division into headings or parts, you must realise that the dialogue is divided into three: refutation, exhortation and elicitation.”

ignorance from the reason and removes the obstacles to knowledge therein due to birth by numerous syllogisms of various kinds; next after this is placed a part of the dialogue, which proves that we must not be content with physical advantages and so fall short of practices that accord with perfect virtue; and third after these is the part that provides the recollection of our true being and the discovery of the correct treatment, and brings a fitting end to the whole theme of the discussions. These, then, are the three parts of the present dialogue; everything else is admitted for their sake and as contributing towards them, both the demonstrative portions and the aspects appropriate to expression. For each of the syllogisms will be seen as referring us to this one end, the consideration of our substance and the knowledge of ourselves. If you are willing to review each one by itself and examine its meaning, you will find them all referring back to this one starting-point.

- <15> Now the first syllogism, which demonstrates the unawareness of what is just that we all possess from our youth, alleges no other cause than our ignorance of ourselves; for although we possess the innate notions of what is just in accordance with our being, we do not revert to ourselves, nor recover an articulate knowledge thereof; which is the reason for our conceit of knowledge and the refutations to which we become liable because of that conceit. The second, which decries the common mass of mankind, as not being arbiter of what is just, withdraws us from all multiplicity and the life that tends to opinion, and elevates each individual to the one rational principle and the one knowledge that exists substantially in the soul itself. The third, which demonstrates that the respondent is the speaker, reveals the self-movement of the soul, and shows that the realization of innate notions and the actual process of learning is a matter of recollection; it does nothing other than turn the aspirant to perfection back upon himself.
- <16> The fourth, in which Socrates concludes that it requires the same knowledge to persuade one or many, shows the nature of perfection and the form of activity that does not go outside itself, but is intelligently turned back upon itself; filling everything, it is yet undiminished and equally present to one and to many, neither divided among its participants nor altered by them, but remaining one and the same in itself, and from itself perfecting the rest. Next the fifth, which proves that what is just is advantageous, places the advantage of the individual in the soul, in which also resides the just, and persuades us to seek our being nowhere else than in the soul, where the good is coexistent

with the just; for our advantage lies nowhere else than our substance. The sixth, concluding that the beautiful is the same as the good, withdraws us from the appearances of beauty, and raising up the soul to intelligent, rational and scientific beauty itself, prepares it to revert upon itself and consider these objects within itself, but not in what lies <17> outside it. The seventh clears away every obstacle of twofold ignorance to self-knowledge and all that withdraws us from advertence to ourselves, by casting out excessive conceit, and shows that this is the greatest of evils – the ignorance of ourselves. Concomitantly the greatest and most perfect of goods is revealed as possessing its subsistence in the knowledge of ourselves. The eighth syllogism reveals to Alcibiades his true rivals, and this too contributes to the whole object, since we are unaware of ourselves as regards either the function of the soul or the body or our external function; to prevent him, then, in complete ignorance of himself and of how he has been worsted by all his rivals, from unwittingly falling among the greatest misfortunes, this syllogism is also, I think, necessary to the whole purpose of the dialogue. The ninth, in which Alcibiades is shown to be unaware of the manner of our self-care, makes it clear that the surest foundation of the knowledge of this is the discernment of our being. On the latter depends the determination of correct treatment, or rather, it is determined according to actual knowledge. For everything self-moved perfects itself by turning towards itself; ³⁴ and the man who has got to know <18> himself at the same time comprehends within himself his own treatment but the man who is unaware of himself is ignorant as to the manner of his care. Tenth, then, to crown all, is the syllogism which, showing that man has his substantial nature in the soul, immediately reveals the nature of our being and affords us a most complete knowledge of self-activated life, demonstratively comprising in one proof both our substance and our perfection. If then we should say both that each of the syllogisms in the dialogue and all together lead us round to the knowledge of ourselves, we should presumably hit upon the intention of Plato.

“O son of Kleinias, I think you are astonished that although I was the first to become your lover, while the rest have ceased to be so, I alone do not depart.” 103 A.

The introductions ³⁵ to the dialogues of Plato accord with their overall

³⁴ cf. El. Theol. prop. 17 & notes.

³⁵ Proclus seems to state that Plato's introductions should be viewed neither as totally fictitious nor as mere historical narrative, but as something in between,

aims and have not been invented by Plato for the sake of dramatic charm (for this manner of composition is far beneath the exalted mind of the philosopher) nor do they aim at mere accurate narrative, as some have considered; for it is neither plausible nor at all possible that every event or saying in the order in which they happen should be selected
 <19> with a view to the single end aimed at by the works of Plato; but, as is the opinion of our guides and has been fairly considered by us elsewhere, these circumstances depend on the general purpose of the dialogues: on the one hand the subject matter in fact or word is adapted to the immediate aim, while on the other hand what is wanting to the completion of the topic under discussion is supplied; but all together, as in an initiation, have reference to the overall achievement of the objects of enquiry. This, then, in my opinion, is the view which Plato offers us in this dialogue and I think he neatly shows through the very first verbal encounter the whole object of the composition.

Its purpose, as we have said, is to declare our nature, to compass by the scientific and irrefutable principles of philosophical consideration the whole being in accord with which each man is defined, and through demonstrative methods of enquiry to reveal the meaning of that famous Delphic precept "Know Thyself." Now the very introduction turns the youth towards himself, makes him scrutinise his pre-existing notions, and along with the reversion upon himself elevates him to the vantage-point of Socratic knowledge. For the examination of the reason why Socrates alone of his lovers has not ceased from his love, but both began before the rest and when they have stopped does not
 <20> depart, renders him a spectator of the whole life of Socrates. Now there are three kinds of reversion: everything that reverts either reverts to what is inferior to itself by falling away from its own perfection, or is elevated to what is superior through its own life and natural activity, or reverts

in part adapting what actually took place or was said, and in part supplying any deficiencies in the consideration of the subject under discussion, while viewed as a whole they obviously contribute to the main purpose of the dialogue. cp. In *Parm.* p. 658, 32–659, 10 Cousin: "The ancients held divergent views about Plato's introductions. Some never even got as far as examining them, on the ground that true lovers of his doctrine must come already informed of them. Some read them in no ordinary manner, but referred their usefulness to the outline of appropriate topics and taught their disposition in relation to the objects of enquiry in the dialogues. Others again claimed that even the introductions lead commentators to the nature of the subject-matter. Following their lead, we shall make a guiding principle of the opening of the introduction that leads to the subject-matter in hand."

upon itself according to the knowledge³⁶ that is co-ordinate with itself, and the middle form of movement.³⁷ But reversion to the inferior is a misfortune of the soul that has "shed its wings"³⁸ and fallen into forgetfulness both of itself and at the same time of what precedes it; whereas reversion both upon self and upon the superior³⁹ principle occurs not only in souls but also among the divine⁴⁰ beings themselves, as Parmenides⁴¹ informs us, positing two kinds of reversion, and showing how on the one hand the divine is turned back upon itself and exists in itself, and how on the other hand it reverts to what precedes it, in which respect it is both embraced within another and united with the superior grade of being. Wherefore Socrates observes at the end of the dialogue, that the man who has reverted to and become a spectator of himself will thereby also behold all the divine, <21> and through reversion to himself like some step leading upwards will be translated to the vantage-point of the divine and so turn towards the elevation of himself to the superior principle. Making this clear, then, from the introduction, the discussion on the one hand leads Alcibiades round from the life that tends outward to the investigation of himself, and on the other calls him up from the consideration of himself to the love of Socratic knowledge. For to long to learn the reasons for Socrates' behaviour is to become a lover of the knowledge pre-existent in him.

This, then, seems to me the first point that Plato makes in the introduction to those with the capacity to listen to him. Second, an

³⁶ cf. prop. 83 in El. Theol. "All that is capable of self-knowledge is capable of every form of self-reversion."

³⁷ cf. El. Theol. prop. 14 & notes, and p. 17, 16-8: "For since there are things extrinsically moved it follows that there is also something unmoved, and an intermediate existence which is self-moved."

³⁸ cf. Phaedrus 246c-249c, esp. 248c.

³⁹ cf. El. Theol. p. 139, 31-2: "anything which reverts may revert either upon itself or upon the superior principle."

⁴⁰ cf. *ibid.* prop. 153 & notes and p. 135, 38-40: "For if every principle, in so far as it is perfect, is reverted upon its proper origin, then the cause of all the divine reversion has the office of making perfect the order of gods."

⁴¹ cf. Parmen. 145 b-e, esp. ad fin. "Hence, as a whole the one is in something else; as the totality of its own parts it is within itself, and the necessary result is that the one is both in itself and in another"; cf. also Procl. Theol. Plat. p. 327 para. 4: "This aspect of being in another is superior to being within itself, if, according to the arrangement of Parmenides himself, in so far as it is a whole, the aspect of being in another is appropriate to a thing; but in so far as it is composed of parts, the aspect of being within itself."

additional point, to wit: that the serious philosopher everywhere puts forward knowledge consonant with existing common knowledge, and neither preconceives stable, definite and inflexible knowledge with regard to the possible and that which shows different tendencies at different times, nor entertains uncertain, indeterminate and unstable notions concerning what is necessary and always the same; but, as Socrates himself in the Republic ⁴² distinguished, he considers all the intelligibles conjointly with a simple, uniform and intelligent knowledge, examines the intermediate notions of reality by the scientific and discursive exposition and composition of ideas, duly discerns all objects of sense by perception at "third remove from the truth" ⁴³ <22> attaining its appropriate objects of knowledge through sense-organs, and finally ascertains the chance conjectural images of sense things by the power of conjecture. Furthermore Timaeus, ⁴⁴ dividing modes of knowledge in proportion to being, bids us judge the things that are with "intelligence" and "reason," and those that are not but "come to be and pass away" by "opinion" and "sense-perception"; and affirms the accounts of the things that really are to be irrefutable and fixed, but of those that have not a similar nature but are carried about in the midst of process to be conjectural, and, as he himself, I think, says, to have a share of "contingency"; for in every case the accounts are representative of the realities they serve to "explain." Thirdly, Socrates in the Cratylus ⁴⁵ says that the names applied to eternal beings more nearly attain the nature of the realities, but those applied to what comes to be and passes away undergo many forms of change and have a large share of arbitrary determination because of the unstable tendencies of their underlying subjects. If, then, the knowledge of what is ever the same and of the contingent differs, if their accounts involve very great variation and their appropriate names differ, is there any cause for <23> wonder if Socrates, here speaking of something unstable and liable to change, has employed the phrase "I think," indicating the easily changing nature of the object of knowledge, but not convicting Socrates' knowledge of indeterminacy, mixture with ignorance, or uncertainty? For it is necessary, as we have said above, in matters of opinion and conjecture to express one's notions as conjectural, but in matters intelligible and scientific to employ irrefutable formulae, as

⁴² cf. Resp. VI 509d-511e.

⁴³ cf. Resp. X 597e.

⁴⁴ cf. Timaeus 28a, 29b-c & Taylor's commentary ad loc.

⁴⁵ cf. Cratylus 397b; cp. Procl. in Crat. p. 4, 11-14, p. 72, cxxiii.

knowing the truth. No one, says Aristotle,⁴⁶ would listen either to a geometer speaking persuasively or to an orator professing to demonstrate. So that neither the conjectural speaker about what is necessary nor the rigid speaker about what is conjectural would ever be an intelligent commentator on their subject-matter. Now for this reason the phrase "I think" is a necessary addition by Socrates; but you might say that the ambitious nature of the young man is also hinted at. All youth is given to controversy and contention; to avoid, then, provoking the kind of life natural to youth to contention against himself by earnestly insisting right from the start, Socrates approaches him with caution, showing some restraint in his conversation about him, and puts forward the assertions by way of conjecture, not strong affirmation. For it is necessary so to approach him at first that he will bear to listen, and calming the emulation within his soul will partake of
 <24> the discourse proceeding from the mouth of moderation. This also might be added to what has been said, that the Socratic disposition is moderate and open and far removed from boasting. Since, then, Socrates is represented as saying on his own behalf that he seems to be a cause of wonder to the young man both on account of his love and of his constant silence in the past, the phrase "I think" is opportunely inserted by him, and neither merely for the sake of grace and comeliness of style nor because of any doubtful weight attached to Socratic knowledge; for it befits one who makes such statements about himself to speak with restraint rather than insistence.

Futhermore, the very beginning of the discussion, calling the young man by his father's name, is fittingly adapted both to the character and to the subject matter. For the paternal appellation renders the character (seeing that it is ambitious) more accommodating to Socrates, since Kleinias had gained high repute at the battle of Coronea; and those who are born of famous fathers prefer to be named there from rather than from themselves, for the latter form of appellation is common and applies to mankind in general, but the former is a select distinction. Further, the memory of his father affords considerable
 <25> encouragement to the pursuit of virtue. For it is unworthy to bring shame on the repute of one's fathers, and while holding on to their name and the manner of address derived from them, to have no regard for resemblance in virtue. Futhermore the reference to the father who

⁴⁶ cf. *Eth. Nic.* 1094b, 26 (E. R. Dodds: *Gnomon* 1955, p. 167).

generates ^{47*} the apparent and externally added man is a symbol of the recall of souls to their true father. Socrates makes use of these words according to the custom of the Pythagoreans, ⁴⁸ considering that they contribute to the salvation of the soul, since those famous men also practised what was revealed in secret through the medium of symbols, and closely guarded the appearance of the latter as representing the meaning of the former. Socrates, then, knowing this in the same manner as the Pythagoreans, calls the young man by his father's name, because he considers this sort of appellation a symbol of the turning around of souls to their invisible causes. If, further, this manner of addressing persons is Homeric, in this way also it would be fitting, since it is put forward by descent, according to the common custom of the Greeks; for Homer ⁴⁹ says "naming each man by his father, honouring all." This kind of conversation is familiarising, courteous and indicative of friendliness.

Furthermore we assert that this is especially suitable to discourses about love, as the divine Iamblichus says; for the paternal appellation indicates the manliness of true love, its awakening from matter and its <26> efficacy. In general, too, since the whole order of love proceeds from the intelligible father ("In all things," as the oracles ⁵⁰ say, the father "has sown the fire-laden bond of love," in order that the whole world may be held together by the indissoluble bonds of friendship, as Plato's *Timaeus* ⁵¹ says), for this reason, loving conversation establishes as the beginning of familiarity the friendliness aroused in the beloved by the mention of his father. For the mention of his father stirs up affection for Socrates in the young man, and this in turn stimulates association with Socrates, which indeed was Socrates' purpose and the

⁴⁸ For examples of symbolic phrases employed by the Pythagoreans, cf. Aristotle: *Select Fragments*, p. 135, nos. 6 & 7, Ross; Iamblichus: *Protrepticus*, c. 21, *De Vit. Pyth.* c. 103, 105, 186, 227.

⁴⁹ cf. Homer, *Iliad* X, 68-9.

⁵⁰ cf. Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 25: "For the Paternal, Self-begotten Intellect, thinking of works, sowed into all the fire-laden bond of love"; cf. also Hans Lewy: *Chaldaean Oracles & Theurgy* pp. 126-9, 345-53 on the subject of Eros as a binding cosmic power.

⁵¹ cf. *Timaeus* 32c; "... the body of the universe was brought into being, coming into concord by means of proportion, and from these it acquired Friendship so that coming into unity with itself it became indissoluble by any other save him who bound it together." (Cornford).

^{47*} Reading E. R. Dodds' suggested emendation γεννητήν (*Gnomon* '55 p. 166).

reason for his starting the present conversation. It seems to me, further, that the form of the discussion is most suited to the business of love. For it is the property of divine lovers to turn, recall and rally the beloved to himself; since, positively instituting a middle rank between divine beauty and those who have need of their forethought, these persons, inasmuch as they model themselves on the divine love, gather unto and unite with themselves the lives of their loved ones, and lead them up with themselves to intelligible beauty, “pouring,” as Socrates in the *Phaedrus* ⁵² says “into their souls” whatever they “draw” from <27> that source. If, then, the lover is inspired by love, he would be the sort of person who turns back and recalls noble natures to the good, like love itself. Socrates, indicating as much by this first appellation, arouses the mind of the beloved towards attachment to true beauty, stirs up his inward admiration of the life of philosophy, and leads him round to the fulfilment of true love. Socrates illustrates this kind of life especially in this dialogue. He makes his beginning therefrom, and advances the perfection of the young man to the point where he renders him a lover of provision for self, which indeed is a principal benefit of love, and through practically all the main sections he always carefully observes what is appropriate to the life of love.

Now these sciences which Socrates evidently ascribes to himself are threefold, viz. those of philosophical discussion, elicitation and love. You will find the genre of philosophical discussion in this dialogue illustrated through the subject-matter itself, and everywhere you may detect the peculiar trait of elicitation contained in Socrates’ arguments, but in a special sense the activities of the science of love prevail <28> throughout the whole composition. Even when eliciting Socrates preserves what is appropriate to love, and when using philosophical argument he does not depart from the particular character of discourses on love. As in the *Theaetetus* ⁵³ he is skilled in eliciting, is characterised chiefly by this quality, and therefore proceeds as far as the cleansing away of the false opinions of Theaetetus, but thereafter lets him go as now being capable of discerning the truth by himself, which indeed is the function of the science of elicitation, as Socrates himself observes in that work; so in this dialogue he primarily demonstrates the science of love and practises in a loving manner both philosophical argument and elicitation. For everywhere Socrates pronounces the discourses

⁵² cf. *Phaedrus* 253a.

⁵³ cf. *Theaetetus* 210c.

in a manner suited to the characters in question; and as in the godhead all goods preexist in the form of the One, but different individuals enjoy different goods according to the natural capacity of each, so also Socrates embraces all the forms of knowledge within himself, but uses now one now another, adjusting his own activity to the requirements of the recipients; one he elevates through the science of love, another he stirs up through the art of elicitation to recollection of the eternal notions of the soul, and a third he brings round by the path of dialectic to the consideration of reality. He unites different individuals to different objects, some to essential beauty, others to the

<29> very first wisdom, and others to the Good; through love we are elevated to the beautiful, through elicitation each one of us is revealed to be wise about subjects in which he is unlearned, by realizing the innate notions within himself concerning reality, and through the art of dialectic lies the way up even as far as the Good, says Socrates in the Republic,⁵⁴ “for those who love to contemplate the truth.” According, then, to the measure of suitability that each person possesses, so he is perfected by Socrates and elevated to the divine according to his own rank. “The whole godhead is beautiful, wise and good,” as is said in the Phaedrus;⁵⁵ to such heights, then, lies the ascent, and through such means comes salvation to souls. “On such is the winged nature of the soul fed and watered, but through what is base and evil and contrary to the former, it both wastes and perishes utterly,” as Socrates himself observes in that work. Hence it is through love that perfection comes, in the present work, to those that possess this nature (in view of his possession thereof, Alcibiades seemed to be worthy of love to Socrates): the union is made with the divine beauty, and through that results intimacy with the entire divinity. Further, the elicitation by Socrates and the work of philosophical discussion lead the soul of the young man round to this end; for, as we said, it is love that

<30> is realized here, but the other kinds of science assist such a purpose. Therefore both the introduction to the conversation and the conclusion are full of the science of love, and all that lies between affords very considerable indication of the setting of Socrates’ activity according to this genre.

Now let our examination of these matters pertaining to the consideration of style proceed thus far, but thenceforward turning to the actual

⁵⁴ cf. Resp. VII 532a–b.

⁵⁵ cf. Phaedrus 246d–e.

investigation of the subject-matter, let us consider how far love is appropriate to the present discussion. As the individual natures of different gods have revealed themselves as differing, some producing⁵⁶ the Universe and constituting the form of beings and their orderly arrangement, others bestowers⁵⁷ of life and generators of its various kinds, others guardians⁵⁸ ever maintaining undefiled the unchangeable order and indissoluble coherence of things, others again in charge of some other function and preserving the universe through the communication of themselves, so also the whole order of love is for all beings the cause of reversion to the divine beauty, on the one hand elevating to, uniting with and establishing in it all that is secondary, and on the other filling therefrom what lies subsequent to itself and radiating the communications of divine light that proceed from it. Doubtless for this reason the account in the Banquet⁵⁹ called love “a mighty spirit,” as primarily displaying in itself this power of intermediacy, since^{60*} there is a medium between everything that reverts and the cause of reversion
 <31> and object of appetency to secondary beings. The whole series⁶¹ of love, then, produced from the cause of beauty, gathers all things towards it, recalls them to participation therein, and has set up a procession midway between the object of love and the beings elevated through love; for this reason it has pre-established in itself the pattern of the whole order of spirits, possessing that intermediacy among the gods that the spirits have been allotted “between” the affairs of “gods and mortals.”⁶² Since the whole series of love⁶³ subsists among the gods according to this individual nature, let us perceive its one-like and hidden summit ineffably established among the very first orders of the

⁵⁶ cf. El. Theol. prop. 157 & note on props 151–9, esp. p. 138, 7–9: “Every productive cause presides over the bestowal of Form upon things composite, the assignment of their stations, and their numerical distinction as individuals.”

⁵⁷ cf. El. Theol. prop. 155 & note; cp. notes on 68, 5 & 52, 8.

⁵⁸ cf. *ibid.* prop. 154 & note, prop. 156 & note.

⁵⁹ cf. Symposium 202d.

⁶¹ cf. El. Theol. p. 25, 5: “A series or order is a unity, in that the entire sequence derives from the monad its declension into plurality.” (Dodds). cf. also notes on prop. 21, p. 208.

⁶² cf. Symposium 202d–e.

⁶³ Here, and in the following lines cp. El. Theol. prop. 148 “Every divine order has an internal unity of threefold origin, from its highest, its mean, and its last term.” cf. also the notes on p. 52 of the text.

^{60*} Reading *ὑπάρχοντος μέσου* (NMR). The addition of *γὰρ* in MR seems an attempt to indicate that *παντὸς . . . μέσου* is a distinct causal clause in the genitive absolute.

gods and united to the most primary intelligible beauty apart from all beings; let us consider thoroughly its intermediate procession that shines forth in the gods that precede the world, manifesting itself first of all intelligently, in the second rank possessing an authoritative character, and at the end of the whole orderly arrangement unconditionally established above all the intra-mundane; again let us observe its third descent, splitting up into manifold divisions in regard to the world, producing from itself many orders and functions and distributing them among the different portions of the universe. After the unitary <32> and primary principle of love and the triple and self-perfecting substance thereof appears the manifold mass of loves, whence the choirs of angels ⁶⁴ are filled with their share of love, the bands of spirits through the fullness imparted by this god accompany the gods in their ascent to intelligible beauty, the armies of heroes revel with the spirits and angels because of their share in the beautiful, and practically everything is aroused, re-kindled and warmed around "the effluence of beauty." ⁶⁵ Furthermore, men's souls receive a share of such inspiration, through intimacy with the god are moved ⁶⁶ with regard to the

⁶⁴ For the division of intermediate beings into angels, spirits and heroes and the origin of the doctrine cf. *El. Theol.* p. 295; and for a more specific description of their particular functions cf. esp. *Procl. in Tim.* III p. 165, 11-166, 3: ... "For this reason there is also a triad which unites us to the gods, which proceeds on an analogy with the three original causes, although Plato is accustomed to call the whole of it spirit. The division of angels preserves an analogy with the first intelligible that appears from the ineffable and hidden spring of reality, and therefore it manifests the gods and proclaims their secret identity. The division of spirits preserves an analogy with unbounded life, therefore proceeds everywhere in multiple ranks and assumes many forms and shapes. The division of heroes preserves an analogy with intellect and reversion, and therefore it presides over purification and bestows a life of great achievement and exaltation. Further, the division of angels proceeds by way of the intelligent life of the demiurge, and therefore it is itself essentially intelligent; it interprets and transmits the divine mind to secondary beings. The division of spirits proceeds by way of the providence of the demiurge for the universe: it regulates the nature and rightly complements the disposition of the whole world. The division of heroes proceeds by way of reflexive forethought for all these things: therefore this kind is exalted, elevates souls and imparts vigour. Such being these three kinds, they are attached to the gods, the first kind (to the supercelestial gods, the second) to the celestial, and the latter to the overseers of process; and there is about each god his own appropriate numbers of angels, heroes and spirits" ... cf. also *Procl. in Crat.* p. 75, 9-76, 19 Pasquali, and Hans Lewy *op. cit.* cap. V "Chaldaean Demonology."

⁶⁵ cf. *Phaedrus* 251b.

⁶⁶ cp. *Plot. VI*, 7, 22, 8-10: "Then the soul receiving into itself the effluence from (the Good) is stirred, dances wildly and is filled with frenzy and becomes love."

beautiful, and descend ⁶⁷ to the region of coming-to-be for the benefit of less perfect souls and out of forethought for those in need of salvation. For the gods and their followers “abiding in their own characters” ⁶⁸ benefit and turn back to themselves all that is secondary, and men’s souls descending ⁶⁹ and laying hold on process imitate the providence of the gods, which has the form of goodness. As, then, other souls established according to another god visit without defilement the region of mortals and the souls that move about therein, – some help <33> the less perfect through prophecy, others through mystic rites and others through divine medicine – so also the souls that have chosen the life of love are moved by the god who is the “guardian of beautiful youths” ⁷⁰ to the care of noble natures, and from apparent beauty they are elevated to the divine, taking up with them their darlings, and turning both themselves and their beloved towards beauty itself. This is just what divine love primarily accomplishes in the intelligible world, both uniting itself to the object of love and elevating to it what shares in the influence that emanates from it and implanting in all a single bond and one indissoluble friendship with each other and with essential beauty. Now the souls that are possessed by love and share in the inspiration therefrom, using apparent beauty with vehicle ⁷¹ undefiled, are turned towards intelligible beauty and set that end to their activity; “kindling a light” ⁷² for less perfect souls they elevate these also to the divine and dance with them about the one source of all beauty. Those, again, that have fallen away from the gift of love on account of bad nourishment, but have been allotted a loving nature and fall upon the images of what is beautiful on account of ignorance of true beauty,

⁶⁷ For the noble purpose of the soul’s descent cp. Plot. I, 1, 12, 21–8; *ibid.* IV, 3, 17 and Porphy. De Abst. IV, 18 ad init.

⁶⁸ cf. Timaeus 42e.

⁶⁹ cf. El. Theol. prop. 206; “Every particular soul can descend into temporal process and ascend from process to Being an infinite number of times” and notes, where Prof. Dodds refers to Procl. in Tim. III p. 324, 4–7: “We must ask this very question from the beginning, why the soul descends into bodies. Because it wishes to imitate the providential activity of the gods, and on this account it lays aside contemplation and proceeds to birth.”

⁷⁰ cf. Phaedrus 265c.

⁷¹ vehicle: i.e. a first body, immediately informed by the soul. cf. El. Theol. props. 196, 207–9 & notes pp. 304–9, also Appendix II p. 313–21 for a description of the origins and development of this doctrine. cf. further: *Réflexions sur l’OXHMA dans les Eléments de Théologie de Proclus*, par Mr. Jean Trouillard, in *Rev. des Etudes Grecques* Vol. 70, no. 329–30, 1957; Lewy *op. cit.* c. III sect. I “The vehicle of the soul” and notes 6, 7, 26–7, 30.

⁷² cf. Timaeus 39b.

<34> embrace material and individual examples of beauty and are distraught at these, “unaware of the experience they have undergone”;⁷³ they withdraw from all that is divine and are carried down to the godless and obscure element of matter; though seeming to hasten towards union with the beautiful like the souls that are perfect lovers, yet, unawares, instead of union they tend towards the dispersion of their life and “the sea of dissimilarity,”⁷⁴ and instead of the true and really existent beauty are united with ugliness itself and the shapelessness of matter. For where is it possible for material things to pass through⁷⁵ each other, or where is apparent beauty pure and unadulterated, when it is commingled with matter and filled to the full with underlying shapelessness?

Now since we have distinguished from one another the divers orders of love, the souls that genuinely participate in it and those that pervert the gift therefrom (for the “emanation of intelligence produces roguery,” says Plotinus,⁷⁶ and mistaken participation in wisdom gives rise to the sophistry of this world, so that the illumination of love when it meets with a bad receptacle brings about a life that is tyrannical and in-
<35> temperate) – since then we have distinguished these, come let us run through the actual words of Plato and discern the mutual differences of the lovers which Socrates outlines for us in the very first phrases, and let us observe which is the divine lover and the nature of his provision for the beloved, and which is the “vulgar”⁷⁷ lover and the attendant of the multitude within the soul. Now the common and coarse lover admires and pursues the beloved and is distraught about him, but the true lover is a cause of admiration to the beloved and arouses him to amazement in all kinds of ways at the life that is in him; and this reasonably. For the inferior sort admits that he depends on his darling and says he has need of him, but the other is self-sufficient and full of power and offers communication of his personal goods to the souls of the beloved. Secondly, the inspired lover watches over the beloved from his

⁷³ cf. *Phaedrus* 250a.

⁷⁴ cf. *Statesman* 273d.

⁷⁵ There is no communication between one material thing and another, but the immaterial can communicate itself to the material (e.g. the creator of the universe Procl. in *Tim.* I p. 365, 26–366, 7: the work of divine providence in this dialogue p. 54, 10, and of spiritual illumination p. 80, 10). Interpenetration of bodies was a stoic tenet (cf. *SVF* II 467 etc.)

⁷⁶ cf. *Enneads* II, 3, 11.

⁷⁷ cf. *Symposium* 183d.

swaddling clothes and approaches him after the cessation of the bloom of youth, now that he has rest from bodily disturbances; for he is a lover not of the body but of the soul, and when the body has ceased from its full bloom the beauty of the soul shines out. The vulgar lover, however, reaches after the bloom of the beloved like fruit, and neither before nor after is he busied about him, but as soon as the bloom of youth has ceased he is rid of his darling and behaves in a manner to be expected in view of his personal principles; for being a lover of the body he proportions his love to the fair flower of apparent beauty. Thirdly, the one is stable and always the same “as being welded to a stable
 <36> condition,”⁷⁸ but the other is swift to change, and when present coarse, but fickle and easily inclined to forsake his darling; for, likened to the beloved through love involved in matter, he naturally becomes unstable and easily inclined to change his intimate relationship with his darling. A fourth element in the difference between the two men may be observed, that the one, even when present to the beloved, is in some way separated from him, neither touching nor associating nor speaking with him at all, when there is no opportunity for benefiting the soul, but the other loves to be united with him by the senses and troubles him with varying moods and by contriving all sorts of pretexts for conversation with him. Fifth, from the text itself you can gather that the divine lover is spoken of as one and “first” and “only,” as being akin to the One and the Good and as reaching up to the simple and one-like exemplar of beautiful things, but the vulgar sort as “common” and “a random heap”;⁷⁹ for to call the lovers of images “others,” but the inspired lover “first” and “only,” exposes the indeterminate, divided and completely disintegrated life of the former, and extols the divine virtue of the latter, far as it is from the multiplicity of matter and transcending all the emotions incident to generation. On the basis of these words one could name numerous other points that separate
 <37> these lovers from each other. Socrates still does not scorn to call even the many “lovers,” since it has not yet been decided what man truly is and where Alcibiades is to place him. For then necessarily Socrates would be seen as the only lover of Alcibiades, but the others as loving what belongs to Alcibiades; and, since they carry around an imaginary love, as being busied with images, neglectful of souls and completely unaware of the real Alcibiades; then therefore he will expose their hypocrisy as regards love and that, quite missing the true inspiration of

⁷⁸ cf. *ibid.* 183e.

⁷⁹ cf. Phaedrus 253e.

love, they have substituted the image thereof and in this respect are entangled in the mere appearance of beauty. For every order of love is ranked together with a corresponding beauty, and as divine love is referred to divine beauty, so also imaginary love hastens to lay hold of similar beauty: this is all that it can see, and in regard to the divine it is like one who is completely blind. “For in the case of the many, the eyes of the soul are unable to endure gazing at the truth,”⁸⁰ says the Eleatic stranger.

So much then for this topic. If, further, Socrates begins before the
 <38> others, extends his provision for the youth as long as they do, and when they have ceased, himself does not depart, through this sort of life I think it is clear both that everywhere the more exemplary and more perfect comprehensively includes the activities of semblances, and that no one possesses the inferior to whom the more perfect does not impart a share in itself long beforehand; it is clear also that in every order of being the One includes the Others, operating before them, with them and after them. Straightway, then, the discourse has assigned the superiority that befits the One to the inspired lover, summoning him “alone” and “first” to provide for the less perfect, but the position of the multitude that is in every way divided it has given over to the many lovers. As the One operates both before the others and with them and after them, if it is lawful to speak of it,⁸¹ so also the divine lover is both concerned for the beloved before the vulgar sort: along with them does not cease from forethought for him (then indeed especially he expends care, lest the beloved unawares entrust himself to the materialised and vulgar semblance of love), and when they have grown quite weary, because the wearisome disposition of matter has entered into
 <39> them, he is present to the beloved, now become calm after dispersing the coarse multitude and eradicating the associations that tended towards the debasing and material kind of life. Then indeed he is apt for communion with the inspired lover and for shared and harmonious activity with him, but while the former are still present his measure of unsuitability is extreme. If I am to speak my own opinion, it seems to me that this bears an amazing resemblance to the rites of the mysteries.⁸²

⁸⁰ cf. Sophist 254a–b.

⁸¹ on the impropriety of speaking of the ineffable first principle as if it came down to the level of the inferior cf. p. 181, 11, where the reference is to the Good.

⁸² cp. pp. 9, 2; 61, 10 & 142, 4–7. The reference appears to be to the Chaldaean mysteries in which Proclus himself was initiated, although Lewy *op. cit.* p. 238

Everywhere something of the less perfect assumes the character of the more perfect, diverts to itself the souls that have not yet been set right and keeps them away from the better things. As in the intelligent considerations of philosophy obstacles are raised by the sophist's way of life and the association with it that drags away the less perfect from the consideration of reality to the appearance that corresponds to coming-to-be and passing-away, so also in the elevation to divine love the multitude of common lovers becomes an obstacle by assuming the character of the true lover and dragging down the soul of the youth from the Olympian good things on high to the dark things of earth. In the same way, in the holiest of the mysteries the visitation of the god is preceded by assaults and apparitions of certain spirits of the nether <40> world, confounding the initiates, tearing them away from pure goods and inviting them to matter. Therefore the gods exhort us not to look upon them before we have been strengthened by the powers derived from the mystic rites: "For thou must not look upon them before thy body has been initiated." On this account the oracles ⁸³ add that "by charming souls they are ever leading them away from the mysteries." Like the nether spirits the vulgar lovers surrounding the youth lead him away from the ascent to the divine and render him unsuited for communion with the inspired lover. As in the ritual the divine is manifested after the purging away of all such spirit-like influence as leads souls down to matter, so also the divine lover is revealed after the flight of the many lovers concerned with temporal process and he imparts to the beloved a share in his own communing. So quite simply Socrates seems to me to occupy the place of a good spirit towards Alcibiades, to keep an eye on him from his youth, like that spirit, to guard him, oversee all his activities, and watch over his words and deeds. As the good spirit, even before our fathers do, begins to take forethought for us and along with our fathers is set over us as a guide <41> of our whole life and after our deliverance from this world takes care of our journey before the judges ("Each one" says Socrates "is led by the spirit who has watched over him during life"), ⁸⁴ in the same manner Socrates both anticipates all the other relatives and friends of the young man in his forethought for him and along with many lovers also

and note 41 seems to disagree with Lobeck (*Aglaophamus* Vol. I, sect. 15, pp. 111-23) and incline to favour Eleusis.

⁸³ cf. Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 55; Lewy *op. cit.* p. 227 note 1, p. 264, note 15.

⁸⁴ cf. *Phaedo* 107d.

bestows his care upon him and when the others have left off in person frequents and associates with him and recalls the beloved to justice as a whole and the real goods of the soul. Furthermore, as the good spirit attends us for the most part invisibly, bestowing unawares his forethought upon us, silently present and secretly correcting our lives, so also Socrates attends his darling in silence, and though making provision for him, not yet does he bestow upon him a share in his intercourse. Just as the good spirit reveals himself to those who possess the utmost suitability, utters something to them and communes in words, the way I imagine Socrates himself enjoyed the presence of the spirit and seemed to hear a certain voice,⁸⁵ so also the divine lover gives a share in his conversation to the beloved and summons him to
 <42> intercourse through discussion only at the very moment when he has beheld the life within him loosened from the "throttling spirits"⁸⁶ of matter, rid of the thronging mob of lovers, and master over the pursuits of earth and underworld. For these events are evidence of the affinity within him to the beautiful.

Socrates, then, approaches at this moment when he has seen the beloved aroused in a special way to the reception of intercourse with him. In fact Socrates makes this quite clear: "You wonder" he observes, "what I am about and how it is I remain when the other lovers have fled." But wonder is the "beginning of philosophy," as he remarks in the Theaetetus,⁸⁷ and for this reason "Iris" is called the daughter of "Wonder" according to the old saying. Now if he approaches the youth just at the time when he wonders at the life of the philosopher and seeks after the causes of his sort of affairs, he would have a starting-
 <43> point for the impulse towards philosophy: the deliverance from vulgar lovers and the excitement with regard to philosophy somehow coincide. For the souls that have been purified from the evils crowded around

⁸⁵ cf. Phaedrus 242c; Plutarch, De Genio Socratis § 20.

⁸⁶ cf. Kroll De Orac. Chald. p. 62, n. 1; Lewy, *op. cit.* p. 298 n. 151, where the following references are indicated: Procl. in Remp. II, p. 150, 24 . . . "are dragged down by material natures and by the punishing *throttling spirits* that lead into darkness"; in Eucl. p. 20, 25 . . . "the bonds of process and the *throttling spirits* of matter"; and cp. in Crat. p. 76, 13.

⁸⁷ cf. Theaetetus 155d "This sense of wonder is the mark of the philosopher. Philosophy indeed has no other origin, and he was a good genealogist who made Iris the daughter of Thaumias". (Cornford). cf. also Hesiod: Theognis 237, 265-6, 780-1; and Ol. in Alc. p. 24, 21-25, 7. Iris was the messenger of the gods, and the rainbow. Her father was son of Sea and Land, and her mother (Electra) daughter of Ocean.

them from birth render themselves ready for participation in divine goods. Consider also according to the following analogy the nature of the position that Alcibiades occupies with regard to his lovers, and how this contributes to the consideration of the matter in hand. Socrates, as being an inspired lover and elevated to intelligible beauty itself, has established himself as corresponding to the intellect of the soul, for what else is it that is united to the intelligible than intellect and all that possesses intelligent life? But the diverse and vulgar class of lovers, carried along with sense and imagination and given over to the "manyheaded beast" ⁸⁸ of the soul, bears the impress of the corresponding way of life, in accord with which it characterises its own manner of living; for every soul is that portion by which it lives and it defines itself there by. Somehow between these is Alcibiades, rent asunder from beneath by the passionate lovers and drawn down to the worse part, but from above aided by the one individual Socrates and preserved and provided for by him, lest he suffer anything at the hands of the lovers surrounding him. According to the analogy of the extremes we must relate Alcibiades to the rational soul, to which are still attached the emotions and the irrational powers, as it were plotting against the life of reason and like the Titans ⁸⁹ attempting to rend it, but the intellect, like Athene, is set above, keeping it from sinking in the scale and tending to implication <44> in matter. For it is the function of Athena to preserve life undivided, "for which reason Pallas Athene is called Saviour"; ⁹⁰ but of the Titans to divide it and to entice it to the process of coming-to-be. As the intellect does not always reveal itself to souls, but only when they have got rid of "the thronging mob that has grown upon them latterly" as a result of birth, as Timaeus ⁹¹ says, so also Socrates gives a share of his

⁸⁸ cf. Resp. IX 588c.

⁸⁹ Dionysus was born of Zeus by Persephone and torn into seven pieces by the Titans, partly because they envied his birth from Zeus, and partly at the instigation of Hera; but Athene preserved his heart intact. The heart represents the undivided Nous, and the seven-fold rending the divisions of the soul in Timaeus 35b-c (cf. Taylor ad loc.). cf. Kern: Orph. Fgm. 210; Clem. Alex. Protrep. II, 18, 1; Procli Hymni ed. Vogt VII, 11-15 & notes; Procl. in Tim. I p. 168, 15-17; Ol. in Phaed. p. 111 20-25 Norvin; I. M. Linforth: The Arts of Orpheus p. 307 "Myth of the Dismemberment of Dionysus"; W. K. C. Guthrie: Greeks and their Gods (1949) p. 320, Orpheus and Greek Religion p. 82-3, 107-26 & Appendix I.

⁹⁰ There seems to be no early mention of a cult of Athene as "Saviour", but the epithet is used of her in a dedicatory epigram by Antipater of Thessalonica (Anth. Pal. VI, 10), as A. J. Festugiere notes in "Le Dieu Cosmique" p. 316.

⁹¹ cf. Timaeus 42c.

own intercourse to the youth precisely when, freed from the many lovers that have latterly surrounded him with their toils, he has leisure for philosophy and those who can lead him to it. As, too, the intellect is always active in our regard and ever bestows the light of intelligence, both before we incline to irrationality and when we live with the emotions and after these have been stilled by us, but we are not always conscious of it except when, freed from the many waves of temporal process,⁹² we anchor our lives amid some calm (for then intellect is revealed to us and as it were speaks to us, then what was formerly silent and quietly present gives us a share of its utterance), so also the divine lover is both present to the beloved before the many lovers <45> and with them and after them, but in silence and quiet and forethought alone; but when they have left off he gives a share of conversation to the beloved, offers him mutual intercourse and reveals his identity and that his love is provident, of the form of the good and elevating, not like that of those many lovers, divided, deficient, implicated in matter and concerned with mere images. It is possible, then, for one who likes to contemplate such considerations to proceed on this analogy, and again it is possible through the analogy we mentioned before, by likening Socrates to a good spirit, the vulgar lovers to the nether spirits concerned with matter, and to the initiate and the young man who flees from the debasing tribe of spirits, attaches himself to the good spirit and hands over to him the complete guidance of his life. If one should combine both points of view, then think of Alcibiades as twofold, both as a soul simply and as a soul using a body. For these two are not the same: likewise neither the steersman and the man in himself nor the driver and the subject;⁹³ and in general the unparticipated⁹⁴ is other

⁹² For this expression cp. *Procl. Hymni I*, 20 & notes, Vogt; *Porph. Vit. Plot.* 22, 25 & 31-5; *Plot. V*, 1, 2, 15; *Numenius test.* 45, Leemans.

⁹³ The distinction here seems to lie between the man in himself and some particular function he fulfils, typified by the steersman and the charioteer. The latter were stock examples (cp. *Aristot. Top.* 105a 13-16), and in particular the steersman was used by Plato and the Platonists to describe the function of *Nous* in the soul (*Phaedrus* 247c) or of the soul in the body (cf. *Alex. Aphrod. De Anim.* *Brunns* p. 15, 9-10, p. 20, 26-9). The term "subject" is used to refer to the individual man as that which underlies some quality. cf. *Alex. Aphrod. in Metaph.* p. 523, 25-8 Hayduck: "It has been observed that the term subject has two senses, either as this individual being, as for instance the living organism - Socrates, Plato or this horse - underlies the qualities of white and hot and suchlike, or as the matter which underlies act and form." Soul is not the same as soul using a body: neither is man in himself and man in his function as steersman, nor the underlying subject and the quality of being a charioteer. Soul using a body is merely soul as fulfilling a temporary function: it is not soul

than the participated, what is by itself is other than what is observed along with another and the transcendent differs from what has received its rank in conjunction with some other. Now since Alcibiades is understood in two ways, both as a soul and as a soul using a body, in so far as he is a soul, Socrates preserves the analogy of the intellect towards him, but in so far as he is a soul using a body, that of
 <46> the good spirit; and the same person is a spirit as regards man, and intellect as regards soul. For when we think of the intermediacy of spirits, we are considering it as between gods and men, but when we assign intellect the highest position we are making soul depend upon it and the body on the soul. You have the one distinction in the Banquet,⁹⁵ for I think he says there that the sphere of the spirit is midway between gods and men; and the other in the Timaeus,⁹⁶ for the soul subsists midway between intellect and body. The same person then is spirit and intellect, intellect as attached to soul, but spirit as attached to soul-in-man. Hence when the enquiry centres around the nature of man, no mention will be made of intellect, but Socrates will remind the youth of the providence of the spirit, sometimes calling it a "spirit" and other times "a god." However, the reason for this will be stated more clearly hereafter.

Once again from the beginning let us raise the question what is the reason for Alcibiades' "wonder" at Socrates' earnestness and attention in his regard and the endurance of his love when the rest have ceased, and how Socrates guesses the mind of the young man. We assert that the less perfect among men are accustomed to measure the efforts of souls and their activities by the duration and not the perfection of their activity. Do we not perceive the many calling one who has spent rather a long time in the company of teachers a skilled craftsman or an expert in those matters on which he happens to have spent this time? Yet

in its essential nature. cf. *Simpl. De An.* p. 17, 35 ff: "Again, the steersman, although possessing activities inseparable from the ship, seems to be separable in essence, because as a man he was separable, possessing other activities too, that were separable"; Avicenna, *Kitab al-shifa* Bk. VI of the Physics, Sect. I: "This is why the body is included in the definition of the soul, as, for example, building is included in the definition of the builder, although it is not included in his definition in so far as he is man." (I owe these two quotations to F. Rahman: *Avicenna's Psychology* pp. 8-9).

⁹⁴ cf. *El. Theol.* props 23-4 & notes for the relation between the participated and the unparticipated.

⁹⁵ cf. *Symposium* 202d-e.

⁹⁶ cf. *Timaeus* 35a.

there is nothing surprising in a man of better disposition requiring less
 <47> time and trouble to achieve self-perfection. Nevertheless those who are
 unable to judge of form in itself and habit of mind think that time has
 been given them by nature as an adequate criterion. Now since the
 many are accustomed to judge each circumstance after this fashion, it
 was to be expected that Alcibiades too should wonder at Socrates' love
 because he had remained earnest in Alcibiades' regard for a longer time
 than the other lovers, and at what was his object; and that Socrates,
 knowing the youthful characteristics of his nature, should have aimed
 at the wonder within him, although it was for other reasons that he had
 devoted himself in the first place to provision concerning him, and
 maintained the constancy of the character of love, and had never in the
 past nor now departed from his love. Now, on the contrary, he begins
 to reveal himself to the beloved.

Let us next investigate the reason why, while the intemperate man
 would never think himself worthy of the epithet "moderate," nor indeed
 the unjust man nor the coward of the appellation "brave" and "just"
 respectively, yet those who are vulgar in their love-affairs and have
 failed to attain the right method of carrying out this pursuit want to be
 <48> called lovers and to share the same name as those inspired in their love,
 although they have not shared the same purpose but are even of an
 opposite disposition to them. The one sort elevate their beloved to the
 divine, clear, and one-like, but the others drag their souls down to the
 godless, dark and fragmentary. Now perhaps we could reasonably meet
 this enquiry by saying that the end of the intemperate and the moderate
 man is not the same, but as their habits, so also their ends completely
 differ; whereas all lovers have the same end, viz. familiarisation
 with the beautiful, but forgetfulness and ignorance of what is primarily
 beautiful make the inferior lovers rush down and concern themselves
 with the kind of beauty that is implicated in matter. As therefore even
 the lowest beauty has the same name as the primarily beautiful
 although it has degenerated from its own nature (for beauty lies in
 form, but this is commingled with the formless and the ugly), so also
 the lowest of lovers claims the same name as the first since he is on the
 same level as the lowest beauty. Moreover, in another way also you may
 see a not unnatural association of names between these two. The
 moderate and the intemperate man have completely opposed habits
 and act accordingly, but all lovers, in so far as they are enthusiastic
 have suffered somewhat the same experience, although some are

distinguished according to the superior kind of enthusiasm, others according to the inferior. For one kind of enthusiasm is superior to moderation,⁹⁷ but the other falls short of it. In so far therefore as each
 <49> set is disposed to enthusiasm about the beautiful, they share the same name, but the varied manner of their enthusiasm and the difference in the sort of beauty renders some divinely inspired, others vulgar lovers. In the third place, we assert that what is more divine, through abundance of power, regulates its inferior derivations and gives to them too some reflected semblance of its own specific nature. Now moderation cannot do this for intemperance, but the inspired friendship of love, since it is more divine than moderation, gives something even to its image and transmits to it a faint trace, which is why it is called an image. In this respect, then, it receives a share in the same name; for everywhere images desire to share the same appellation as their exemplars. Let such be our reply to this enquiry.

It has already been said that the real lover is the divinely inspired, as Socrates himself will observe when he has proceeded in his argument, proving himself the only lover of Alcibiades on account of his zeal for the true Alcibiades. For he is a lover of the soul, but the others did not even pretend this, "and it was after all over a phantom" (as the poet⁹⁸ says) "that they were rending one another"; and so, once they have seen the phantom of beauty beginning to fade, they are off. To put it
 <50> more accurately than this, right from the first syllables Socrates shows himself to be the only lover of Alcibiades. If he began before the rest, obviously at that time he was the only lover; and if when they have stopped he still honours the beloved, now also he would be the only lover; but if, even when they were present the manner of his love was different, and while they were a nuisance to the young man he like some guardian spirit of his or a god made provision for him from without, then also he was clearly the only lover. The reason for this is that every transcendent in each grade of beings is alone, even if there be a multitude subsequent to it; for this multitude, if it possesses any good, has obtained it on account of the unification of the transcendent, but if anything be put in the same rank as another, this can neither be nor be said to be alone. Therefore Socrates is the only lover as transcending the multitude of common lovers, for they have neither the same rank with him nor any relation, on account of their

⁹⁷ cf. *Phaedrus* 244d.

⁹⁸ cf. *Homer, Iliad* V 451-2.

dissimilarity to him. So that even at the present moment Socrates is hereby proved to be the only lover of Alcibiades, and he will be seen as such shortly afterwards, by the young man, when the latter has observed both himself and what belongs to him.⁹⁹ For then he will be able to discern what is the exemplar, and what the image; what is fabrication and what is genuine in love; who is the pseudonymous lover adorned by another's name and who befits the god after whom he is called. Let so much be said on this topic.

Now if you please let us return to the subject of love and touch on <51> the more secret doctrines about it. This god one should not think to rank either among the first of the things that are or the last; he is not among the first because the object of love is beyond love, and he would not rightly be ranked among the last because what loves participates in love. One must establish him mid-way between the object of love and lovers: he must be posterior to the beautiful but precede the rest. Where then did he first subsist and how does he go forth to all things and along with what monads¹⁰⁰ did he leap forth¹⁰¹ into being? Now there are three substantial natures among the intelligible and hidden gods,¹⁰² and the first is characterised by the good ("intelligently perceiving the Good itself, where lies the paternal monad" says the oracle),¹⁰³ the second by wisdom where lies the first intelligent perception and the third by beauty, where lies the most beautiful of the intelligibles, as is the account of Timaeus;¹⁰⁴ three monads subsist in accordance with these intelligible causes, causally and unitarily existing in the intelligibles, but first revealed in the "unutterable"¹⁰⁵ order of the gods, viz. "faith" and "truth" and "love":¹⁰⁶ the

⁹⁹ i.e. His soul, as distinct from his body, at Alc. 129e-131a.

¹⁰⁰ For the function of monads cf. El. Theol. prop. 21 & notes.

¹⁰¹ A Chaldaean expression. cf. p. 65, 6; p. 66, 8.

¹⁰² cf. El. Theol. prop. 162 & notes: "All those henads which illuminate true being are hidden and intelligible: hidden as conjoined with the One, intelligible as participated by Being . . . the gods who illuminate true Being are intelligible, because true Being is a divine and unparticipated Intelligible which subsists prior to the intelligence." cf. also Procl. in Crat. p. 32, 21-9.

¹⁰³ cf. Kroll: De Orac. Chald. p. 15; Lewy *op. cit.* p. 80 & note 52: "Intellect, Will and Power constitute, as the immediate faculties of the Father, the 'Paternal Monad.'"

¹⁰⁴ cf. Timaeus 30d.

¹⁰⁵ cf. Kroll: De Orac. Chald. pp. 26 & 40: "The Iynges are thought by the Father, and think themselves As they are moved to thought by the unutterable Will"; cf. also Lewy *op. cit.* p. 132-4 & notes 249, 255: the "unutterable" Iynges

first founding the universe and establishing it in the good, the second <52> revealing the knowledge that lies in all beings, the third turning back everything and uniting it to the nature of the beautiful. This triad proceeds thenceforward to all the divine orders and radiates to all union with the intelligible; it reveals itself differently according to different orders, combining its own functions with the individual characters of the gods. Sometimes, as we said, it is present in a manner unspeakable,¹⁰⁷ unknowable and unitary, sometimes as holding¹⁰⁸ and binding together, sometimes as perfective¹⁰⁹ and formative;¹¹⁰ sometimes

Chaldaic divinities equated with the first order of the "Intelligible and Intelligent Gods." cp. Procl. in Crat. p. 67, 18-20; p. 74, 20-27.

¹⁰⁶ "faith" and "truth" and "love": cp. Procl. Theol. Plat. I p. 61-3 and in Tim. III p. 212, 21-3, where "hope" is added; also Porph. ad Marc. 24: "Let four principles especially be grasped concerning God: faith, truth, love, hope." But Porphyry's explanation of the terms refers to subjective attitudes on the part of the believer, not to metaphysical entities.

For the Chaldaic meaning of the triad cf. Lewy *op. cit.* pp. 144-8: he refers love to the intelligible world, as its primary quality, truth to the sun, as the abode of the oracular Apollo, faith to the material world, and the whole triad to the "rulers" of the three worlds. Different again is the Pauline triad, "faith", hope, charity (cf. *ibid.* note 289), which seems to be unrelated to the Chaldaean and Neoplatonic triads.

In his commentary on the Gorgias (493c) E. R. Dodds notes that "faith" was one of the great Pythagorean virtues, attached as a description to the Decad (Philolaos ap. Theol. Arith. p. 81, 15-17 de Falco). Plato uses the term not only in relation to the world of sense objects, but also of belief in relation to the existence of gods (Laws 966c). P. Henry (Entret. sur L'Ant. Class. vol. V p. 233-4) notes Atticus' use of the terms "faith" and "hope" in a religious sense e.g. ap. Euseb. Prep. Evan. XV, 5. "Faith" seems to acquire connotations of a higher trust or belief in Iamblichus e.g. Protrepticus, p. 101, 17 & 28; De Comm. Math. Scient. p. 55, 19, p. 74, 11.

The Neoplatonic interpretation of the triad definitely puts "faith" superior to "knowledge" (on the level of truth) and "love." cp. Lewy *op. cit. ibid.* note 291 (h).

¹⁰⁷ cf. El. Theol. p. 141-3: "All deity is in itself unspeakable and unknowable, being of like nature with the unspeakable One."

¹⁰⁸ The "holding and binding" gods form the middle rank of the Intelligible and Intelligent gods, and are also known as the "protective" gods. Their function is to conserve things in their proper perfection. cf. El. Theol. prop. 154 & notes; Procl. in Crat. p. 63, 7-16, p. 65, 3-5, p. 111, 26-112, 4; in Tim. I p. 156, 5-7, II p. 272, 29-273, 9. cp. also p. 30, 11-12.

¹⁰⁹ The "perfective" gods have the function of turning things back towards their source and so ensuring their perfection. cf. El. Theol. prop. 153 & notes; Procl. in Crat. p. 65, 5-7, p. 112, 1-4.

¹¹⁰ i.e. assuming some explicit form or shape because of the imperfection of our nature. cf. Procl. in Remp. I p. 39, 28-40, 4: "So every god is without shape, even though he be beheld with a shape; for the shape is not in him but from him, since the beholder cannot behold the shapeless without a shape, but sees it according to his own nature with a shape." cf. also Procl. in Crat. p. 31, 8-17.

intelligently ¹¹¹ and paternally, ¹¹² sometimes as imparting movement and life ¹¹³ and productively; ¹¹⁴ sometimes sovereignly and assimilatively, ¹¹⁵ sometimes freely ¹¹⁶ and purely, ¹¹⁷ sometimes in multiplication and division.¹¹⁸ From above, then, love ranges from the intelligibles to the intra-mundane making everything revert to the divine beauty, truth illuminating the universe with knowledge, and faith establishing each reality in the good. "For everything," says the <53> oracle "is governed and exists in these three"; and for this reason

¹¹¹ cf. El. Theol. props. 139 & 163, esp. p. 122, 29-32: "So divinity exists on the level of body, soul and intellect. And it is clear that all these things are divine by participation; for that which is primarily divine subsists among the henads."

¹¹² cf. El. Theol. prop. 151: "All that is paternal in the gods is of primal operation and stands in the position of the Good at the head of the several divine ranks" etc. *ibid.* prop. 157: "It is the function of all paternal causes to bestow being on all things and originate the substantive existence of all that is." cf. also Procl. in Crat. p. 48, 1-4: "The paternal cause begins from above, from the intelligible and hidden gods . . . and proceeds through all the intelligent gods to the creative order."

¹¹³ cf. Procl. in Crat. p. 81, 2-15 esp; ". . . The life-giving spring of Rhea, from which is generated all life, both divine, intelligent, soulful and intramundane for this goddess moves all things according to the measures of divine movements"

¹¹⁴ cf. Procl. in Crat. p. 21, 13-17: "If anyone were to term the actual productive and generative powers of the gods, which they project into the world, arts that are creative, intelligent, generative and perfective, we would not reject such terminology."

¹¹⁵ cf. Procl. in Tim. II p. 273, 18-9 "the sovereign series; for this is assimilative of secondary things to the unitary first principles."

¹¹⁶ cf. Procl. in Crat. p. 74, 20-2: "And so in our myth in the Phaedrus we have portrayed the liberated gods, the supramundane rulers of the universe, as 'driving a winged chariot.'" cp. *ibid.* p. 78, 4-8. cf. also the Platonic Theology p. 389, 4-9: "And so the sovereign gods have been allocated the highest rank among them (i.e. the supramundane gods), and the position of transcendent cause of subsequent processions, but the liberated gods have been allocated the second rank, subordinate to the sovereign but superior to the intramundane gods."

¹¹⁷ cf. Procl. in Crat. p. 51, 18-20: "So he (i.e. Kronos) is a pure intellect as giving subsistence to the undefiled rank, and as guide of the whole intelligent order."

¹¹⁸ cf. Procl. in Crat. p. 58, 17-8: "Our soul comes to know the undivided and unitary quality of the activity of the gods in a divided and multiple manner." cf. also Procl. in Tim. I p. 184, 10-14: "For there is both in heaven and everywhere, a power of separation and union, and nothing is without a share in it, but it exists among the superior beings neither in division nor multiplicity but gathered into one and with one impulse" . . . For the whole passage covered in notes 107-118, and the scheme of participation implied by the various sets of adverbs, cf. El. Theol. notes on props. 151-9, 162-5.

the gods advise the theurgists¹¹⁹ to unite themselves to god through this triad. Now the intelligibles on account of their unutterable union have no need of the mediation of love; but where there exists both unification and separation of beings, there too love appears as medium; it binds together what is divided, unites what precedes and is subsequent to it, makes the secondary revert to the primary and elevates and perfects the less perfect. In the same way the divine lover, imitating the particular god by whom he is inspired, detaches and leads upwards those of noble nature, perfects the imperfect and causes those in need of salvation to find the mark. But the other sort does quite the opposite: he drags souls down to the depths¹²⁰ of matter, turns them away from the divine, carries them towards the regions of error and ignorance and fills the soul of the beloved full of all sorts of images, committing himself not to the "divine fire"¹²¹ but to the heat involved in matter and producing generation and to the darkness of matter.

"And that the others became a nuisance to you through their converse, whereas I did not even address you for all those years." 103 A

The more accurate accounts say that there are two principal elements in divine and spiritual providence towards the secondary beings: (1) that it passes through all things from the top to the bottom, leaving
 <54> nothing, not even the least, without a share in itself, and (2) it neither admits into itself any thing it controls nor is infected with its character nor is confused therewith. It is not mixed up with the objects of its provision just because it preserves and arranges everything (for it is not the nature of the divine or spiritual to experience the emotions of individual souls), nor does it leave any of the inferior beings without

¹¹⁹ For a brief note on Theurgy and its connexion with Iamblichus and the Chaldaean Oracles cf. *El. Theol.* intro. p. xx, xxii-iii, and index s.v., and for a fuller explanation cf. "Theurgy" in "The Greeks and the Irrational" by E. R. Dodds pp. 283 ff. cf. also the detailed treatment in Hans Lewy *op. cit.* # 3 "Theurgical Elevation," # 4 "The Magical Ritual of the Chaldaeans," and Excursus IV "The meaning and history of the terms "theurgist and theurgy".

¹²⁰ This is a Chaldaean term. cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 304, note 173; p. 296-7, notes 143 & 147.

¹²¹ On divine fire, cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 168-76; p. 60, note 7. cf. also Kroll *De Orac. Chald.* p. 53. cp. *Procl. in Tim.* III, p. 300, 16-19 . . . "But to my mind the science of purification makes the greatest contribution, since through the divine fire it removes all the stains that result from coming-to-be, as the oracles teach us."

order or arrangement because of its distinct superiority over all that is secondary, but ^{122*} it both disposes everything duly and transcends what it disposes; at the same time it has the character of the good and remains undefiled, it arranges the universe yet has no relation to what is arranged by it, it passes through everything and mingles with nothing. This spiritual and divine providence, then, Plato clearly attributes to the beneficent forethought of Socrates for the less perfect, both maintaining its vigilance and stability (as regards the beloved) and its full use of any opportunity for zeal, and at the same time its detached, unadulterated and undefiled character and its refusal to touch what belongs to him.¹²³ So the fact that he began to love “first” and “when the others ^{124*} had ceased did not depart” is sufficient indication to us of Socrates’ care and guard over the young man’s life, but the fact that although present and an adherent of his he “did not even address” him – let this be evidence to you of his detached and unen-
 <55> tangled solicitude for his inferior. For the first relationship of man to man is to speak to him; so the failure to have even this communication with the object of his provision reveals him as completely transcendent and unrelated to his inferior. So at the same time he is both present to him and not present, he both loves and remains detached, observes him from all angles yet in no respect puts himself in the same class. Now if their behaviour assumes this form even in the case of divine men, what must we say about the gods themselves or the good spirits? Surely, that while present to all they yet transcend everything, and having filled everything with themselves they nevertheless do not blend with anything, and while pervading every place nowhere have they situated their own life. What should we say about the gods who are said to be in love with their own offspring, as the coiners of legends represent Zeus in regard to Persephone ¹²⁵ or Aphrodite ¹²⁶ herself?

¹²³ i.e. to touch Alcibiades physically. cf. Alc. 131c.

¹²⁵ cf. Kern Orph. frg. 153: “For Orpheus your poet says that Zeus slew his own father Kronos and took his own mother Rhea, and from them was born Persephone. Zeus defiled her too . . .” cf. *ibid.* 195 . . . “And so they say that the Maiden was violated by Zeus, but carried off by Pluto . . .”

¹²⁶ cf. Plot. Enn. III, V, 8, ll. 14–23: “Zeus then is the Intellectual Principle. Aphrodite, his daughter, issue of him, dwelling with him, will be Soul, her very name Aphrodite indicating the beauty and gleam and innocence and delicate grace of the Soul. And if we take the male gods to represent the Intellectual Powers and the female gods to be their souls – to every Intellectual Principle

^{122*} Omitting διὰ ταῦτα as a dittography.

^{124*} Using ἄλλων, the corrected reading of M.

Surely that such a love is provident and preservative of the beloved, able to perfect and maintain them? Surely, that is detached and unmixed, of the form of the good and undefiled? What origin do we ascribe to this characteristic of love in the souls of men, unless it previously pre-exists in the gods themselves? For all that is good and makes for salvation in souls has its cause determined by the gods: and for this reason Plato ¹²⁷ says that the exemplars of all the virtues and bodily goods pre-exist in the divine world e.g. health, strength, justice, moderation. How much more shall we suppose that the primary cause <56> of love lies among the gods, “given by a gift divine,” as Socrates himself says in the *Phaedrus*? ¹²⁸ So gods too love gods, the superior their inferiors providentially, and the inferior their superiors, reflexively.

Such then is the immediate teaching to be derived from the aforesaid words. But further let us arrive at a greater perception of the reason for Socrates’ silence, and observe that among the gods the unspeakable precedes what may be spoken, the unutterable what may be uttered, what is kept silent that which comes about through the medium of words and voices.¹²⁹ So because Socrates has perfectly assimilated himself to the divine he begins his provision for the beloved in silence, since this very quality of unutterableness is proper to love itself there first of all, as we said, where it establishes its subsistence in the silent rank of the gods. There was a need, then, for the divinely inspired lover to entrust his care concerning the beloved to “the god-nourishing silence” ¹³⁰ before communion in words; for so he would appear much like his own god and would be turning the young man to wonder at his silence.

its companion Soul – we are forced, thus also, to make Aphrodite the Soul of Zeus; and the identification is confirmed by Priests and Theologians who consider Aphrodite and Hera one and the same and call Aphrodite’s star (“Venus”) the star of Hera.” (McKenna)

¹²⁷ cf. *Laws* I 631b–c, which appears to be apposite.

¹²⁸ cf. *Phaedrus* 244a: “But in reality the greatest of benefits comes to us through madness, when it is given by a gift divine.”

¹²⁹ cp. notes 105, 107 & *Procl.* in *Crat.* p. 29, 22ff., p. 31, 24ff., p. 32, 18ff.

¹³⁰ cf. Kroll de *Orac. Chald.* p. 16, where he quotes *Procl.* in *Crat.* p. 63, 21–6: “For the *Timaeus* (37d) characterised eternity particularly by its abiding in the one that precedes it and by its establishment at the summit of the intelligibles, and Socrates characterised the heavens by their looking at what lies above (*Crat.* 396b–c), namely the place above the heavens and all that is embraced by the “god-nourishing silence” of the fathers.” cf. also *Procl.* in *Tim.* II, p. 92, 6–9; *Lewy op. cit.* p. 160 and note 353 – the abode of the supreme god is “silence” described as “god-nourishing” because “every divine intelligence intuits the father” and “the intelligible is nourishment for the intelligent.”

Such, then, is Socrates; but of what sort are the vulgar lovers? “They mobbed you,” he says. Now what is the mob? That it is a multitude, is clear to anyone, but an indeterminate, confused and
 <57> disorderly multitude, since it is not like the chorus nor like the people. The people is a multitude united to itself, but the mob is an incoherent multitude, and for this reason, when speaking of constitutions, they say that ochlocracy is different from democracy;¹³¹ for the one is disorderly, lawless and discordant, the other drawn up under the laws. It is clear, then, that mobbing is evidence of a slovenly, confused way of life that drags down the beloved to the materialised, fragmentary and “manifold”¹³² kind of variety of the emotions. Timaeus¹³³ too called all forms of irrational behaviour a mob, as being indeterminate in themselves, discordant and disorderly – “the thronging mob that had later grown upon it, composed of fire and earth and air and water.” As therefore the term “others”¹³⁴ revealed their discordance and incoherent way of life, so also the term “mobbing” indicates to the young man the insulting treatment he has received at their hands, and that they were debasing him to some fragmented and material kind of
 <58> living. Not only then were they so disposed towards one another, dividedly and discordantly, but they also filled the young man with this sort of vice, acting clean contrary to the function of love. Love “empties out estrangement and fills up with intimacy,” as Plato’s Agathon¹³⁵ observes, but they were both full of division and discord among themselves, because they were “others,” and they extended this estrangement of theirs to the beloved; for to everyone turbulence is by nature strange and painful.

Such then is the common lover; and it is a very great eulogy upon the character of Alcibiades that only as far as conversation did he admit the company of the other lovers and he gratified their excitement about him only so much: he considered it troublesome and distasteful, nevertheless permitted it and shared in conversation with the vulgar lovers, but not in touching or drinking parties or the other evils that invited him to bad living. Herein especially we see what was the

¹³¹ cf. Plutarch: *Moralia* 826f.

¹³² cp. Phaedrus 238a.

¹³³ cf. Timaeus 42c.

¹³⁴ On this use of the term “others” cf. Jean Trouillard: “Sur un pluriel de Plotin et de Proclus” in *Bulletin de l’Assoc. Guill. Budé* 1958 No. 2 pp. 88–91, where he compares Procl. in Tim. I, p. 375, 28.

¹³⁵ cf. *Sympos.* 197d.

difference between the character of Alcibiades and that of others of the same age. As we train ourselves in regard to pleasure and pain, not fleeing from these emotions nor remaining completely without experience of them, but assuming a middle position in their regard and overcoming their excess and disorderliness, so also in matters of love the
 <59> greatest training ground for integral virtue, in the case of those with noble natures, is the company of vulgar lovers; for to rise superior to annoyance at their hands and overcome the folly of their nature shows a strength that despises flattery and life according to pleasure. Alcibiades, having proved himself such, naturally seemed to be worthy of love to Socrates, since he had shaken off the passionate flood of lovers at such an age, and wondered at Socrates' love. As then the Athenian stranger ¹³⁶ introduces youth to strong drink, contriving this as practice for the young against their emotions, and sets over them a magistrate as judge of the movements within them, so also Socrates has as it were set himself as a magistrate over the young man, arbiter of the intoxication that accords with his age and judge both of him, of his emotions and of the lovers that live in accordance with these. Since he has beheld him master over all these and "surpassing in pride of spirit" their ignoble, deceitful and hollow lives, he summons him to communion with himself, and shows him what is the genuine art of love, what is the benefit that derives from it and what is the goal of activity in accordance with virtue.¹³⁷

"The reason for this has not been something human, but a certain spiritual opposition, about whose power you will hear later." 103 A.

<60> Socrates proved a source of wonder to the youth through the aforementioned words and because of the stability of his love, his purity of life and his detached forethought in his regard. What could be more divine in the life of men than these aspects that show forth the wonder of actual divine providence towards secondary beings? For its capacity to range through everything and at the same time not depart from itself, and while present to all, be established solely in itself is the most paradoxical of the doctrines concerning providence. So how can the revelation that human life is capable of such activity, at the same time detached from and in relationship with the objects of its providence

¹³⁶ cf. Laws I 648c–650b, II 671a–e.

¹³⁷ cf. Ar. Eth. Nic. 1098a16: "The good for man turns out to be an activity of soul in accordance with virtue."

and “abiding in its customary state,” ¹³⁸ fail to be altogether worthy of wonder? Socrates astounds Alcibiades still further by making the cause of human pursuits depend on the spiritual, in order that he may appear wonderful to him not only as a man, but also as acting in accordance with a spirit and possessing something superior to human virtue viz. spiritual inspiration. Socrates’ love, therefore, is far from being like that
 <61> of the other lovers; for they were dragging Alcibiades down to irrationality and matter, but Socrates lifts him up, even through these first words alone, to reason and spirit. Such is divine love, elevating beneficent, bestowing perfection, cause of intelligence and of life according thereto. “A better help than love towards philosophy,” Diotima ¹³⁹ says “it is not easy to find,” as he himself instructs us elsewhere. Already then Socrates is revealed as someone inspired by a spirit, arousing greater astonishment in Alcibiades and multiplying his wonder as regards philosophy. It is natural for Socrates to do this; for everywhere similar occasions of amazement attract us to affinity with the good. As in the holiest of the mysteries certain awe-inspiring events precede the performance of the rites, submitting the soul to the divinity, either through what is said or what is shown, so also on the threshold of philosophy his guide arouses towards himself wonder and
 <62> astonishment in the youth, in order that the discussion as it proceeds may act upon him and entice him to the life of philosophy. This should especially be done in the case of those who are full of high-spirit and arrogance; for such pride is correct in dealing with the mob, but in dealing with men of serious worth it is an obstacle to help from them. In order then that Alcibiades, after mastering his many lovers, should not presume likewise to despise Socrates, right from the start Socrates reveals himself to Alcibiades as someone worthy of wonder by reason of his earnestness, silence and life according to the spirit. Two of these qualities have been mentioned by him before, one that he is a lover of much longer standing than those divers and many lovers, and second that heretofore he maintained silence in his regard. The reason for this second quality he refers to the good spirit; “the reason for this,” he says, “viz. my not even speaking to you” is “a certain spiritual opposition.” Yet the good spirit is also entirely responsible for his love; for he would not thus have pursued the life of love in the best possible way had he not made both the choice and the earnest following thereof in accordance with the spirit, but since to have loved the youth

¹³⁸ cf. *Timaeus* 42e.

¹³⁹ cf. *Sympos.* 212b.

and taken pains in his regard is the function of forethought for the less perfect, but to watch over him ^{140*} in a detached, pure and transcendent manner is a quality too spiritual for human ways of living, for this reason he has referred the cause of this alone to the good <63> spirit. For to perfect the inferior and provide for the lesser belongs even to souls as souls, since their descent was occasioned by forethought for things involved in process and by care for mortals; but to admit into one nothing from those one controls nor be mixed up with one's inferiors but order them detachedly is proper to gods and good spirits, and when it belongs to human souls also, it does so by the gift of some god or spirit. For this, then, he held the good spirit responsible, viz. the transcendence of his care for Alcibiades; for silence is a sign of equilibrium, of the cessation of outward-tending activities, and indicates a life unrelated to the inferior.

Furthermore the mention of the spirit accords with the essential nature and power of love; since the same man is concerned with love and spirit. For the lover, if he be inspired, enjoys close union with the spirit, through whom he is united with the gods, and receives his very inspiration through means of the spirit (for the goods of the gods have come to men through the medium of the spirits, according to the <64> account of Diotima); ¹⁴¹ and again the spiritual man is a lover: for how does he enjoy the benefit of the spirit, if he has not united himself to it and shared his life with its functions? What effects this bond of union between the inferior and the superior if not love? For this god the Oracles ¹⁴² call "the binding guide of all things," and not, "binding together some and not others"; he it is, then, who unites us with the care of the spirits. Furthermore love itself is "a mighty spirit," as Diotima ¹⁴³ says, in so far as everywhere it fulfils the mean role between the objects of love and those hastening towards them through love. The object of love holds the first position, what loves it the last, and

¹⁴¹ cf. Sympos. 202e–203a.

¹⁴² cf. Kroll *De Orac. Chald.* p. 26, Lewy *op. cit.* p. 179–80, note 8; p. 128, note 239; p. 132, note 250. Lyd. *De Mens.* 4, 20: "The oracle refers to the soul as a god-like triad. For the same Chaldaean says: Having mingled the spark of the soul with two like-minded faculties / With god-like intellect and will, (the Father) added to them as a third chaste Love / The Binder of all things and their sublime guide." (Lewy).

¹⁴³ cf. Sympos. 202d.

^{140*} Reading Cousin's conjecture $\alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omega}$.

love fills the middle between the two, uniting and binding with each other the desired object and what desires it and filling the weaker from the stronger; among the intelligible and hidden gods it makes the intelligible Intellect one with the primary and hidden beauty according to a certain mode of life ¹⁴⁴ superior to intellectual perception (and therefore the Greek theologian ¹⁴⁵ terms such love blind:

<65> “Cherishing in his heart blind swift Love”), while among the beings outside the intelligibles it irradiates an indissoluble common bond to those undergoing perfection from it. The bond is union, but with greater distinction, and so the Oracles ¹⁴⁶ have termed the fire of this love binding:

“who first leapt forth from Intellect, clothing his binding fire in the fire (of Intellect).”

For, proceeding from the intelligible Intellect, it combines all the secondary beings both with each other and with the former. It unites, then, both all the gods with the intelligible beauty and the spirits with the gods and us with the spirits and the gods, subsisting primarily among the gods, secondarily among the spirits, and among individual souls according to a sort of third procession from the principles: among the gods in a manner beyond essence (for the whole class of gods is such), among the spirits essentially and among souls by irradiation. This triple rank is like the threefold ¹⁴⁷ function of Intellect. For the unparticipated intellect, transcending all the particular classes, differs from the participated, in which the souls of the gods share as being superior and different again is the intellect which derives from the latter and comes to be in souls, indeed is the perfection of souls themselves. You have these three divisions of Intellect indicated in the *Timaeus*. We must then take love among the gods as analogous to the unparticipated ¹⁴⁸ intellect, since it transcends all that are inspired and

¹⁴⁴ i.e. the intelligible intellect is united to the primary and hidden beauty through Life, the middle principle of the second hypostasis, which was distinguished by the later Neo-platonists into the triad Being-Life-Intellect. cf. note 152.

¹⁴⁵ cf. Orph. Fgm. 82 Kern, and esp. Procl. in *Tim.* II p. 85, 16-31.

¹⁴⁶ cf. Kroll *De Orac. Chald.* p. 25; Lewy *op. cit.* p. 127-8 and notes 233-6.

¹⁴⁷ cf. *El. Theol. prop.* 166 & notes.

¹⁴⁸ cf. *Timaeus* 39e: “So as intellect discerns the quality and quantity of the forms that exist in the Living Creature that truly is, such quality and quantity of forms he thought this world should also possess”; and Taylor’s note ad loc. cf. also Procl. in *Tim.* III p. 101, 24-9: “The Intellect that is creator is not in the participated class, in order that it may be creator of the whole universe and be

<66> illuminated by it: love among spirits as analogous to the participated,¹⁴⁹ for this is essential and self-complete like the participated intellect and immediately ruling over souls: and clearly the third kind of love, which subsists in souls by irradiation, as analogous to the intellect as a state of mind.¹⁵⁰ I think it reasonable that love is considered as corresponding to this distinction of intellect, because it has its primary and hidden subsistence in the intelligible intellect; for if it "leapt forth" therefrom it is causally established therein. Also I think that Plato too, finding this same god termed "love" and a "mighty spirit" in the works of Orpheus,¹⁵¹ loved such praise of love. For speaking about the

able to look towards the Absolute Living Creature; but although it is unparticipated, it is a really intelligent intellect, and through its simple intuition is united to the intelligible, while through its variegated intuition it hastens toward the generation of secondary beings."

¹⁴⁹ cf. Timaeus 30b: "He found . . . moreover that intellect apart from soul cannot be present in anything. In virtue of this reasoning, when he framed the universe, he fashioned intellect within soul, and soul within body." (Cornford). cf. also Procl. in Tim. I p. 406: "We must first see which is this intellect, and whether it is substantial, situated above the soul, or whether it is some intelligent condition of it, and we must reckon that it is substantial, both by analogy – for as intellect is to soul, so soul is to body. But the soul does not belong to the body as a state of it, so neither intellect to soul – and by the final cause; for Plato says that the soul is constituted on account of intellect, and not vice-versa; but if the soul is on account of intellect, and intellect is that on account of which, then intellect is not a state; for nowhere is being constituted on account of a state. And thirdly because the creator establishes this intellect, but the intellect by way of a state is established by the soul according to the movement of the circle of the same around the intelligible object, as Plato himself will observe."

¹⁵⁰ cf. Timaeus 37c: "But whenever discourse is concerned with the rational, and the circle of the Same, running smoothly, declares it, the result must be intellect and knowledge." (Cornford). cf. also Procl. in Tim. II p. 313, 1–3: "Intellect is threefold: first divine, such as the creative intellect, secondly participated by soul, but substantial and independent, thirdly intellect as a state, on account of which the soul is intelligent." *ibid.* l. 24: "It would be more in harmony with the text to consider this intellect as a state in the soul itself." *ibid.* p. 314, 2–5: "It would not be prior to the soul, but a state of it, like knowledge; and therefore Plato says it comes to be in the soul like knowledge, opinion and belief." cf. also Taylor's notes on Timaeus 37c.

¹⁵¹ cf. Orph. Fgm. 83, 74 & 170 Kern, and esp. Procl. in Tim. I p. 433, 26–434, 17: "But why has he described the Living Creature as the fairest of the objects of intellect (Timaeus 30d), although it is at the limit of the intelligibles? Surely because, although there are intelligible grades prior to it, what is fairest is subordinate to these; for they do not participate in beauty, but there is within them the cause that produces beauty, the very first beauty and fairness. So on this level fairness is intelligently disclosed by Orpheus, viz. as beauty already proceeds among the primary intelligibles in a unified and immediate manner, Phanes is called "a very beautiful god" (or "son of very beautiful Ether") and "dainty Love," because this god is the first to be filled with the hidden and

intelligible intellect the theologian mentions “dainty Love and bold Counsel,” and again “whom a mighty spirit bestrode and blew upon
 <67> their footsteps”; and concerning the intelligent and unparticipated intellect “and Counsel, first begetter, and much delighting Love” ¹⁵² and again

“One power, one spirit came to be, mighty, ruler of all.”

Naturally therefore Diotima also calls it “a mighty spirit” ¹⁵³ and Socrates combines with the discourse about love and the objects of love the exposition concerning the spirit and the spiritual cause. As the whole spiritual sphere depends on the mediacy of love, so also the account of the spiritual accompanies that of love and is akin to it. Love lies in the middle between loved object and lover, and spirit between god and man: on account of this intermediacy they have acquired a very full communion with each other, according to which Socrates in pursuing the account thereof, began with love and ended with the account of the spiritual. He is at the same time a lover and a spirit-like man: he governs the activity of love according to the will of the spirit, and he invites the inspiration of the spirit by his earnestness in regard to the art of love.

So much then for what we had to say on this subject; next we must talk about the spirits in themselves, further about those that have
 <68> become our common guardians, and thirdly about the spirit of Socrates.

ineffable fairness. Therefore he is called fairest, being the very first of the participants, even if all the intelligibles are unified one with another; for we must not divide them from one another in the manner of the intelligent orders, but contemplate their one and undivided unification.

Now this is a fair opinion. But the most essential point is that Plato described the Living Creature as fairest, not of all the objects of intellect absolutely, but only of living beings; for, comparing the absolute with the more partial living beings, he described it as the fairest of all the intelligible living beings; so that if there is anything superior to the nature of a living being this has no relation to the present discussion. Now there must of necessity be some such thing, because being is simpler than the nature of living being, and so is absolute beauty, and this is why it is found even in non-living beings.”

¹⁵² cf. Kern: Orph. fgm. 168, 6 & 9, where the lines quoted form part of an Orphic hymn to Zeus; fgm. 169, 1 & 4, where in slightly altered form they occur in a quotation from Syrianus of the same hymn. For the respective functions of “Counsel” and “Love,” cf. Guthrie: *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (1952) pp. 79–83 & 95–107, where he deals with their place in Orphic Religion under their Greek names of Metis and Eros. It was part of Proclus’ task to conflate Orphic teachings and Chaldaean Oracles with Neoplatonism, and an interesting comparison of the three systems is provided by Hans Lewy *op. cit.* Excursus VII.

¹⁵³ cf. Sympos. 202d.

Our enquiries must always start from the more general and from this proceed as far as the individual: this is both natural and more suited to scientific knowledge. The spirits, receiving their primary substance from the life-giving goddess¹⁵⁴ and flowing therefrom as if from a spring, have been allotted an essential nature of the order of soul, more intelligent in those superior and more perfect in existence, inferior and more like reason in the midmost and those assigned the second rank: variegated, more unreasoning and involved in matter in the third kind, who make up the end of the spiritual order. Since they have established themselves on such a level of reality, they are classed together with the gods inasmuch as they have been assigned the function of service and assistance towards them, in one class with the unattached gods who govern the universe prior to the world, in another with the intra-mundane gods, who immediately rule over the portions of the cosmos. The one division of them is according to the twelve gods¹⁵⁵ above the heavens, and the other according to all the individual characters of the gods in the world; since every intra-mundane god rules over some order of spirits, on which he immediately bestows his own function, the creative god the function of creation, the unchangeable god the function of purity, the perfective god the function of

<69> perfecting. About each of the gods is an untold multitude of spirits, priding themselves on the same names as the gods who govern them; for they rejoice in being called "Apollon" and "Zeus" and "Hermes" because they represent the peculiar characteristics of their own gods. It remains after this that even mortal things partake of the divine emanations; in this manner animals and plants are created, bearing the images of different gods; and the spirits supply these with the reflections of their own rulers immediately, but ultimately the gods who transcend the spirits from above. On this account the last and the first entities are in sympathy: there are reflections of the first in the last, the causes of the last are precontained in the first, and the middle classes of

¹⁵⁴ The life-giving goddess is principally Rhea (cf. Guthrie: *Orpheus & Greek Religion*, pp. 81-2, 117), and secondarily her daughter Persephone, who is referred to as such e.g. Procl. in Remp. II p. 185, 6-12 ... "Pluto and the life-giving goddess who reigns with him"). Rhea was equated with Demeter (cf. Guthrie p. 133-5, Procl. in Crat. p. 80, 10-13; p. 90, 28ff.). For the derivation of the spirits from Rhea as the source of the order of soul, cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 83-5, esp. note 66.

¹⁵⁵ These twelve supercelestial gods seems to originate from the Phaedrus 247a & c, and to be identified here with the "liberated" or "unattached" gods. cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 137 note 267 & p. 158-9.

spirits complete the universe and bind and hold together its association, sharing in the gods and shared in by mortals. So if one were to assert that the creator ¹⁵⁶ of the universe has fixed the centre of the arrangement of the whole world among the spirits, he would not miss the truth concerning them; since Diotima ¹⁵⁷ also has assigned them this rank that binds together divine and mortal, transmits the streams ¹⁵⁸ <70> from above, elevates all secondary beings to the gods, and completes the whole by the continuity of the medium. We shall not, then, admit the opinion of those ¹⁵⁹ who assert that the spirits are souls of men who have exchanged their life here: we must not account what is spiritual by relation the same as what is spiritual by essential nature nor constitute the everlasting medium of all the intramundane from a life that undergoes many changes of form. For the spiritual guard that holds together the universe has ever stood the same. “But there is no fixed place of soul” as Socrates observes in the Republic, ¹⁶⁰ “since it adopts different kinds of life at different times.” Neither shall we praise those who make some of the gods spirits, as, for example, the planetary gods, like Amelius; but we shall follow Plato, ¹⁶¹ who asserts that the gods are rulers of the universe, and who subordinates to them the bands of spirits, and at all points we shall maintain the account of Diotima, ¹⁶² which assigns to the spirit a middle rank between all the divine and the mortal.

¹⁵⁶ cp. Procl. in Tim. I, p. 311, 2–4 . . . “The creator of the universe is the limit of the intelligences, established in the intelligible but filled with a power by which he brings forth the universe; he turns all things back to himself.”

¹⁵⁷ cf. Sympos. 202d–e: “Love . . . is a mighty spirit . . . which interprets and transmits messages to gods from men and to men from gods . . . being in the midst of both it completes them, so that the universe is bound together in the parts of itself.”

¹⁵⁸ This is a Chaldaean term denoting the Forms which spring from the First Intellect. cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 10, note 26, p. 13, p. 113–14, note 192.

¹⁵⁹ cf. Eurip. Alcestis 1002–3: “She died on behalf of her husband, But now she is a blessed spirit.” cf. also Plat. Crat. 398b, where Socrates, quoting Hesiod and other poets, observes that: “When a good man dies . . . he becomes a spirit.” Chrysippus frg. II 812 von Arnim, esp. ad fin.: “If therefore souls endure, they become the same as spirits.”

Max. Tyr. IX 6b: “The body is corrupted and descends into the depth, but the soul swims clear on its own, and maintains and establishes itself. Such a soul is now called a spirit, a creature of the upper air, a migrant thither from the earth.”

¹⁶⁰ cf. Resp. X 618b: “But in none of these lives was there anything to determine the condition of soul, because the soul must needs change its character according as it chooses one life or another.” (Cornford).

¹⁶¹ cf. Polit. 271d.

¹⁶² cf. Sympos. 202d–e.

- <71> Now such in general is the conception we should entertain concerning the whole order of spirits; ¹⁶³ next we must speak in particular of those that have become our guardians. Of these spirits, ¹⁶⁴ stationed in the middle rank, as we said, the foremost and highest are divine spirits and often appear as gods on account of their exceeding likeness to the gods; for generally speaking the highest in every rank preserves the form of what precedes it. The highest Intellect ¹⁶⁵ is thereby a god, and the supreme soul intelligent; and so the supreme class of spirits, as being immediately next to the gods, is of the form of the One and divine. Next after these are spirits partaking of intelligent characteristics and presiding over elevation and descent, and in general manifesting and giving out to the universe the creation of the gods. Third are those that distribute the productions of divine souls to secondary beings, and that complete the bond of union between the former and those that receive
- <72> the effluences therefrom. Fourth come those that transmit the active influences of complete natures to what is generated and perishable, and that infuse into partial natures life, order, creative principles and the manifold perfection of mortal things. Fifth are those of the bodily kind, which bind together the extremes that exist in bodies; for how shall everlasting bodies associate with perishable bodies, how shall creative agents associate with their end products, except through this medium? This it is which rules over corporeal goods and makes provision for all advantages on the level of nature. Now sixth, after these, come the spirits concerned with matter, which maintain the influences that have come to matter from the heavenly ¹⁶⁶ matter above, ever guarding it and watching over the illusory representation of the forms therein. Spirits, then, are "many and of all kinds," as Diotima ¹⁶⁷ observes, and the highest unite the souls that proceed from the father to the gods that are their own rulers.¹⁶⁸ For each god, as we have said, rules

¹⁶³ For a fivefold cosmic division of the spirits in Proclus cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 268 note 34, where he quotes in Tim. I p. 137, 3ff; III p. 108, 2ff.

¹⁶⁴ cp. Olymp. in Alc. p. 17, 10-19, 10.

¹⁶⁵ cp. Procl. in Tim. I p. 415, 27-9: "For the highest intellect is not that which intuit and produces, but that which intuit only, and is on that account a pure intellect."

¹⁶⁶ cf. Olymp. in Alc. p. 19, 8-10: "Matter is threefold: one heavenly, which forms the substrate of the seven spheres, next starry, which forms the substrate of the stars, and third earthly, which is called the "abyss," because it is lowest and in a fluid state." cp. Plot. II, 1, 3; II, 9, 3; II, 4, 4-5.

¹⁶⁷ cf. Sympos. 203a.

¹⁶⁸ For the account from here on until p. 73, 8 cf. Olymp. in Alc. p. 20, 2-14; in Phaed. p. 40, 26-41, 5. cf. also Procl. in Remp. II p. 271, 6-272, 18; in Tim. III p. 276, 22-277, 7: p. 279, 6-280, 8.

primarily over spirits, and next over individual souls; some of the latter, as Timaeus ¹⁶⁹ says, the creator sowed in the sun, some in the moon, and some in the other gods. The divine ^{170*} spirits, then, are those which are guardians of souls according to their essential nature and unite them to their appropriate rulers; and every soul, even if it accompanies its own god, requires such a spirit. But the second class of spirits watch over the ascents ¹⁷¹ and descents of souls, and from among <73> these are the choices made by the majority of souls; since the most perfect souls, who associate with birth without defilement, as they choose the manner of life appropriate to their own god, so also they live according to the divine spirit, who also when they abode on high united them to the appropriate god; and for this reason the Egyptian marvelled at Plotinus as possessing a divine spirit. The souls, then, that live after a manner that returns to their origin ¹⁷² have the same spirit on high and in this world, but for the less perfect the spirit that corresponds ¹⁷³ to the way of life they have set before them differs from the spirit who accords with their essential nature.

Should we be correct in putting forward this opinion, no one would accept the view of those ¹⁷⁴ who make the rational soul our guardian spirit; for spirit is different from man, as both Diotima ¹⁷⁵ observes when she places the spirits midway between gods and men and Socrates points out by contrasting the spiritual with the human (for he says

¹⁶⁹ cf. Timaeus 42d and Taylor's commentary ad loc.

¹⁷¹ cp. Procl. in Tim. I p. 54, 4-7: "For the Zeus of the heavens established the gods in heaven and spirits that lead up individual souls, while others lead them down to birth, in order that the universe may never be devoid of descents and ascents of souls."

¹⁷² cf. El. Theol. prop. 199 & notes; also Hermias in Phaedr. p. 168, 16-18 Couvreur: "The soul that is to be reinstated must choose a philosopher's life, in order that thus it may be led back; and this is the life that tends to restore it. If the soul lives it after the manner of a lover of wisdom, when it has left this life, it only remains for it to be led back upwards."

¹⁷³ cp. Procl. in Tim. I p. 140, 9-10: "Individual souls at different times choose different lives: some choose the lives that are appropriate to their own particular gods, but others choose different kinds through forgetfulness of their own."

¹⁷⁴ cf. Democritus B 171: "Happiness dwells neither in flocks nor in gold; soul is the dwelling-place of spirit."

cf. also Xenocrates ap. Alex. Aphr. in Ar. Top. II, 6, 112a32: "If the soul of each individual is a spirit, as Xenocrates holds, then happiness would consist in a good state of soul."

¹⁷⁵ cf. Sympos. 202d-e.

^{170*} Reading the adjective θεῖοι (E. R. Dodds: GNOMON '55 p. 166).

"no human cause, but a certain spiritual opposition)", but man is a soul using a body, as will be shown. Spirit, then, is not the same as the rational soul. However, this too is clear, that Plato himself in the *Timaeus* ¹⁷⁶ says that reason has come to dwell in us as guardian spirit of the living organism; ¹⁷⁷ but this is true only as far as analogy will go, since what is spirit by essential nature, by analogy and by <74> relationship, differs in each case. Often what lies immediately superior, and has been assigned the position of a guardian spirit as regards its inferior, people are accustomed actually to call a spirit; as indeed in the writings of Orpheus, ¹⁷⁸ Zeus, I think, says to his own father Kronos; "Raise up our race, O glorious spirit."

Plato himself in the *Timaeus* ¹⁷⁹ called the gods who immediately regulate birth "spirits"; "but to speak of the rest of the spirits and to ascertain their origin is beyond us." Now the spirit-by-analogy is such, i.e. it makes immediate provision for each individual, whether it be a god or one of those beings stationed beneath the gods; but the spirit-by-relation would be termed one who through likeness to the class of spirits exercised activities too wonderful to be human and made his whole life dependent on the spirits (in this way I think that Socrates in the *Republic* ¹⁸⁰ called those who had led a good life and "removed to a better lot and holier place," spirits); on the other hand, the spirit-by-essential-nature is not called a spirit because of its relationship to secondary beings, nor because of its resembling something else, but has received this specific character of itself, and is defined within the limits <75> of a certain substantial existence, appropriate faculties and special methods of activity. In any case in the *Timaeus* the rational soul was called spirit of the living organism; but we are looking for the guardian spirit of man, and not of the living organism: that which watches over the rational soul itself, but not its instrument, and which leads the soul before the judges after the dissolution of the living organism, as Socrates observes in the *Phaedo*, ¹⁸¹ when the living organism exists no longer,

¹⁷⁶ cf. *Timaeus* 90a: "As regards the most sovereign form of soul in us we must bear in mind that God has given it to each one of us as a spirit." cf. Taylor's commentary ad loc. and cp. *Plut. De Genio Socrat.* 59re.

¹⁷⁷ In what follows down to p. 75, cf. *Olymp. in Alc.* p. 15, 6-16, 6.

¹⁷⁸ cf. *Orph. Fgm.* 155 Kern, who quotes *Procl. in Crat.* p. 27, 21ff: "For almighty Cronos from above bestows the principles of intelligent intuitions upon the creator and oversees the whole work of creation; and therefore Zeus calls him a spirit in the writings of Orpheus . . .

¹⁷⁹ cf. *Timaeus* 40d

¹⁸⁰ cf. *Resp.* V 468e-469b and cp. *Crat.* 398c.

¹⁸¹ cf. *Phaedo* 107d.

but "the spirit, the one that has been his guardian during life, leads each individual" before the judge. If the spirit has watched during life over the same individual that it is now said to lead after death, then obviously it is guardian of the man and not of the living organism only, and governing from above, watches over the whole constitution of our being.

But not even if some ¹⁸² should lay aside the rational soul and assert that spirit is what is active in the soul, e.g. reason in those that live according to reason, temper in the mettlesome, nor again if some should posit what lies immediately superior to the motive force of our life, e.g. reason in the case of the mettlesome and temper in the case of those who live according to sense desire, not even these seem to me to get at the truth of the matter. For in the first place to make guardian spirits parts of souls is excessively to admire the life of men and take no account of Socrates in the Republic ¹⁸³ when he ranks the race of heroes and men after gods and spirits and reproves the poets because they <76> introduce in their poems heroes "no better than men," but involved in similar emotions. He who censures such views would be very far from positing the spirits, who are superior to the heroes, as being the same as the parts and faculties of the soul; since it follows from this view that what is superior in point of being becomes an essential part of what lies inferior. Secondly, the changes of life will introduce many kinds of variation in the (guardian) spirits, since the money-loving way of life often changes to the ambitious, this to the life of correct opinion, and this to the life of scientific knowledge; hence (guardian) spirits will also vary, since the operative portion of the soul varies. Whether therefore this itself is (guardian) spirit or what precedes it in rank, the (guardian) spirits will change along with the change in man's way of life and within one lifetime the same man will have many (guardian) spirits, which is absolutely impossible; for a soul never changes the guardianship of the spirit during one lifetime, but he who acts as helmsman to us is the same from birth until the journey before the judges, as Socrates observes in the *Phaedo*.¹⁸⁴

Further, those ¹⁸⁵ who equate the individual intellect with the guardian spirit of man seem to me badly to confuse the specific

¹⁸² The following lines are a specific reply to the views of Plotinus in *Enneads* III, 4, 3. cf. the introduction in Brehier's edition.

¹⁸³ cf. *Resp.* III, 391d.

¹⁸⁴ cf. *Phaedo* 107d.

¹⁸⁵ E. R. Dodds (*GNOMON* '55 p. 167) notes that reference is here made to

character of intellect with the substantial reality of spirit. For all the spirits subsist on the level of souls and are secondary to the divine souls; but the rank of intellect is other than that of souls and they have received neither the same essential nature nor faculty nor activity. Further, on this point, it should also be observed that souls enjoy intellect only when <77> they turn towards it, receive the light therefrom, and unite their own activity with it; but we receive of the care of the (guardian) spirit as regards our whole existence and way of life, in all the decisions of fate ¹⁸⁶ and the provisions of universal providence.¹⁸⁷ For he who guides aright our whole life, fulfilling both the choices we have made before our birth, the gifts of fate and of the gods who guide it, and further bestowing in due measure the illuminations of providence, such is our guardian spirit. As souls we are dependent upon the intellect alone, but as souls using a body we are in need of the guardian spirit. So Plato ¹⁸⁸ calls the intellect “helmsman of the soul” (for he says “visible only to the intellect, helmsman of the soul), but the spirit of men “guardian” and “overseer.” Nor would anyone, upon accurate examination, find any other single providence governing our affairs so closely as that of the (guardian) spirits. For intellect, as we said, is participated by the rational soul, but not by the body, and nature by the body but not by the discursive reason, and further, the rational soul rules temper and <78> sense-desire but not chance incidences. The guardian spirit alone moves, controls and orders all our affairs, since it perfects the reason, moderates the emotions, infuses nature, maintains the body, supplies accidentals, fulfils the decrees of fate and bestows the gifts of providence; and this one being is ruler of all that lies in us and concerns us, steering our whole life.

Stoic views and quotes Dio Chrys. 4, 80: “The individual intellect of each person is the spirit of the man who possesses it”; also Marc. Aur. 5, 27: “. . . The spirit which Zeus has given to each man as his guardian and guide, a splinter of his own being, is each man’s intellect and reason.”

¹⁸⁶ Proclus seems to disagree with the Stoic idea of fate as “concatenation of causes” and to revert to the view of Plato as he sees it in *Timaeus* 41e: “. . . he showed them the nature of the universe, and told them the laws of fate.” (cf. Cornford’s commentary). Fate is equated with nature. (cf. Procl. in *Tim.* III p. 272, 5–275, 23). cf. also Alex. Aphro. on Fate p. 169, 18–20 Bruns. On the relations between providence and fate cf. Procl. *De Prov. et Fato* 7–8 Boese.

¹⁸⁷ cp. Procl. in *Tim.* I p. 371, 4–7: “For since (god) was good, he wished to make all things good, but since he wished he so made and reduced the universe to order; for his providence depends upon his will and his will upon his goodness.”

¹⁸⁸ cf. Phaedrus 247c & 265c.

As regards our guardian spirits this is enough for our present purpose; but let us go through the third in order of our projected enquiries and bring to a conclusion our third account, concerning the guardian spirit of Socrates. Three main points are made about it: one, that is not only a spirit, but also a god. Further on in this dialogue, he states clearly “My guardian is better than your uncle Pericles, O Alcibiades: he is a god, who would not allow me to converse with you.” He calls the same being, then, spirit and god; for what was the subject of a previous remark “a spiritual opposition, whose force you will learn of later,” he now terms a god, since this it is which supplies the <79> reason for his silence in the past. Furthermore, he provides clearer indications of its rank in the *Apology*,¹⁸⁹ and reveals that it has been allotted a godlike pre-eminence within the spirit nature. This is just what we said before, that the (guardian) spirits of godlike souls who have chosen an intelligent and elevating life are of a certain godlike number superior to the whole class of spirits and participating primarily in the gods. For as there is spirit on the level of gods, so there is god on the level of spirits. But whereas in the former case the substance is divine and the analogy spiritual, on the level of the spirits, on the contrary, the specific character is spiritual, and analogy indicates the divine likeness of the essential nature; for because of their superiority over the rest of the spirits, they often appear even as gods. Naturally, then, Socrates calls his own guardian spirit a god, because it was one of the foremost and highest spirits; and for this reason he was completely perfect, since he was governed by such a guardian and adjusted himself to such a guide and protector of his life.

So far our account has given evidence of one such singular characteristic in the case of Socrates’ guardian spirit: the second is that he was aware of a voice proceeding therefrom. In fact this is mentioned by him both in the *Theages* and in the *Phaedrus*: “And this is a voice,” “the sign from the spirit-nature,” he says in the *Theages*;¹⁹⁰ and again in the *Phaedrus*,¹⁹¹ “My good friend, when I was about to cross the river, the spiritual sign that usually happens to me became operative;

¹⁸⁹ cf. *Apol.* 31d: “something divine and spirit-like happens to me.”

¹⁹⁰ cf. *Theages* 128d: “There is something that has accompanied me by divine dispensation, starting from my childhood; it is a voice, which, when it occurs, always indicates to me avoidance of what I am about to do, but never encouragement.”

¹⁹¹ cf. *Phaedrus* 242b–c.

always it stops me from what I intend to do; and also I thought I heard a voice therefrom, which would not let me depart as being
 <80> guilty of some offence against the divinity." Now what does Socrates mean by these words, and what is the voice through which he says the guardian spirit indicates to him his wishes? We must reply, that Socrates previously in his own mind and knowledge of reality enjoyed the inspiration of the spirit arousing him to divine love, and that in a secondary way with reference to the affairs of life it set right and regulated his provision for the less perfect; as regards the actual operation of the spirit he received the light proceeding therefrom not merely in the discursive reason or the powers of conjecture, but also in the vehicle ¹⁹² of the soul, the spirit-like irradiation passing suddenly through all the levels of his life and even arousing sense-perception. For it is clear that although the activity of the spirit is the same, reason enjoys its gift in one way, imagination in another, sensation in yet another, and each of the elements within us reacts and is moved individually by the spirit. It was not from without, then, in the manner of an impression, that the voice ¹⁹³ impinged upon Socrates, but the inspiration from within, ranging through the whole of the soul and penetrating as far as the organs of sense-perception, finally became a voice, recognised by inner awareness rather than perception; for such are the illuminations of the good spirits and of the gods.

Next after this, let us examine the third characteristic of the guardian spirit of Socrates; he says "it never impels, but always deters." This
 <81> again is to be referred to the life led by Socrates; for it is not something common to our guardian spirits but peculiar to the care of Socrates. We declare, then, that the good character of Socrates' way of life, his courtesy, humanity and "unreserved" ¹⁹⁴ nature, as I think he himself says, had no need of encouragement from the guardian spirit as regards the communication of benefits, for he started out of his own accord and made himself readily available to all comers for the purpose of associating in the best way of life. But since many of those who approached him were unsuited to participation in the pursuits of

¹⁹² For this reference to the vehicle of the nutritive and sensitive soul cf. *El. Theol.* pp. 315-16; *Aristot. De Gen. Anim.* 736b37-737a1 and Appendix B in the Loeb edition.

¹⁹³ On the voice that Socrates heard and its nature cf. esp. *De Genio Socr.* 588b-e (i.e. *Plut. Moral. VII* pp. 448-51 Loeb).

¹⁹⁴ cf. *Euthyphro* 3d: "But I fear lest out of love for men I appear to them to pour myself out unreservedly to every man, not only without pay, but even glad to offer some, if anyone be willing to hear me."

virtue and the knowledge of universal reality, the good guardian spirit restrained him from exercising his forethought in regard to such <82> characters, as if some good charioteer should check, only so far as was necessary, from its onrush, a horse of good natural ability for racing, and give it no further incitement, since it was of itself aroused to movement and required not "the charioteer's goad" but his bridle. Now since Socrates possessed this quality of liberality as regards good services to those who approached him (someone ¹⁹⁵ says "to invite Socrates to discussion is to invite horsemen to the open plain"), he naturally required one who would deter rather than impel him. The unsuitability of those who approach for the most part escapes human reason and requires the discernment of the spirit, and the distinguishing of opportune moments can be suggested to us accurately by this means alone; men also have devised certain methods and techniques for this purpose, but even so the resultant apprehension is obscure and falls very far short of the indications given by the good spirits. Since therefore human reason is all at sea as regards these matters, naturally Socrates required deterring only in the case of his inopportune impulses, since he was of his own accord stirred towards good objects. This much, then, is true concerning the fact that Socrates' guardian spirit never impelled, but always deterred him. But, to speak more fully, we should add that among the spirits some have received an undefiled faculty of purification, others a generative, others a perfective, others a creative function, and in general they are divided according to the individual characteristics of their gods and the powers ¹⁹⁶ under which they are stationed; further, that according to their own substance they each assist the subjects of their forethought (towards the life of happiness), some inciting them towards care of the less perfect, others restraining them from business and outward-tending activity. It seems, then, that the guardian spirit of Socrates, possessing this sort of individual character, I mean one that is purificatory and productive of an <83> undefiled life, and ranked under that power of Apollo ¹⁹⁷ which governs

¹⁹⁵ cf. Theat. 183d.

¹⁹⁶ cf. El. Theol. prop. 140; *ibid.* p. 129, 5-8: "the distinctive character of the divine powers, radiating downwards, is found in every kind, since each thing obtains from its own immediate cause the distinctive character in virtue of which that cause received its being."

¹⁹⁷ cf. Procl. in Crat. p. 100, 27-101, 3: "For everywhere Apollo unifies the multitude and gathers it into one: he uniformly prepossesses every kind of purification, cleansing the whole heavens and birth and all intramundane forms of life; he separates individual souls from the crass layers of matter."

simply the whole of purification, restrains Socrates from relationship with the many and the life that extends towards multiplicity, leads him round to the inner portion of the soul and to activity undefiled by contact with the less perfect, and for this reason "never impels but ever deters him." For what else is "to deter" than to restrain him from the many activities that tend towards externals? Of which individual characteristic is this the work other than the purificatory? It seems to me that just as Orpheus¹⁹⁸ sets the Apollonian monad over king Dionysos, deterring him from proceeding towards the multitude of the Titans and from rising up from his royal throne, and guarding him undefiled in a state of unity, so also the guardian spirit of Socrates leads him round to intelligent contemplation, but restrains him from associations with the many. For the guardian spirit is analogous to Apollo, being a follower of his, and Socrates' reason to Dionysos, since the intellect within us is a product¹⁹⁹ of the power of this god.

So much is to be observed on this subject: it remains to be said just why Socrates says not that the spirit nature itself will later become known to the young man, but its power. For he speaks in this manner: "whose
<84> power you will learn of later." We must first observe, as the divine Iamblichus says, that it is most difficult for us, unless we have completely cleansed the intellect of the soul, to contemplate the substance of the spirits and in general of the superior beings, inasmuch as it is not easy for everyone to perceive the essential nature even of the soul (Timaeus²⁰⁰ alone revealed the whole of its essential nature: "for to declare its nature requires an altogether, utterly divine and lengthy disquisition," as I think Socrates observes in the Phaedrus);²⁰¹ but it is easier both to perceive and to elucidate their faculties. For from the activities, of which the faculties are immediately mothers, we have a perception of the spirits themselves; since faculty is midway between essence and activity, produced from the essence and generating the activity. Secondly we must observe that in another way also power is very much akin to the spirits. Everywhere power has been allotted the middle place: among the intelligibles it unites the Father and the

¹⁹⁸ cf. Kern: Orph. fgm. 211.

¹⁹⁹ Dionysos is equated with the intramundane "nous" (cf. Kern: Orph. fgm. 199) and so "nous" in us is a product of his power.

²⁰⁰ cf. Timaeus 34b-36d for a description of the formation of the world-soul and Taylor's commentary ad loc.

²⁰¹ cf. Phaedrus 246a.

Intellect “for power is with him but intellect proceeds from him”: ²⁰² but among the intelligent beings it unites activities with essences, for the activity is a product of the faculty, and the essence produces the faculties from itself. Further the classes superior to us, midway between the gods and ourselves, are appropriately signified through faculty as everywhere occupying a middle rank. For true being and real existence is on the level of the gods, faculty the servant of the gods on the level of the spirits, and the activity and creation of the gods, externally proceeding through faculty, is on our level. Thirdly, then, he fittingly sings the praises of the power of the spirits to the young man. For Alcibiades was a lover of power. So already Socrates practically states clearly that true power resides among the spirits, but not in ruling over <85> a crowd of contemptible little men, and that the high-minded man should be a lover of the former kind of power, but not of the apparent variety. The latter is commingled with weakness (what possesses power among the things involved in matter, when matter is powerlessness itself?), but the former pre-exists pure and efficacious before the powers that are the cause of wonder among us. A fourth explanation is that the mention of power accords with the aim of the dialogue. For the knowledge of ourselves is midway between the knowledge of things divine and of the life that tends towards externals, hence the ascent to more divine activity occurs via this means, the knowledge of ourselves; but power is appropriate to the mean, and the middle kind of life is produced from power, as indeed the primary from existence, and the third from the mixture.²⁰³ So appropriately in this way, too, Socrates asserts that the whole of the spirit-nature will become known to us from power.

“But now, since it no longer opposes, accordingly I have approached you: and I have fair hopes that it will make no further opposition for the future.” 103 A–B

²⁰² cf. Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 13–14, where he quotes *Plat. Theol.* p. 365, 1: “For the Father is primary ruler everywhere, power comes in the middle, and intellect completes the limit of the triad”; also Damascius I p. 108, 17: “. . . the three principles, intellect and power and Father, or substance and power of the substance and intellectual perception of the power.” By equating Chaldaean Oracles with Neoplatonism, Proclus arrives at: 1) essence, substance, Father 2) life, power 3) intellect, activity. cf. also esp. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 78–9 & note 47; c. II, sect. 6 & note 184.

²⁰³ i.e. the compound nature of man (soul and body), which proceeds from existence via faculty into external operation.

On this topic it is customary to enquire how the guardian spirit came to allow Socrates to associate with Alcibiades at all, since he was to receive no benefit therefrom; for pointless activity is appropriate neither to spirit-natures nor to serious-minded men, seeing that not even Nature ²⁰⁴ admits of it, although Nature is of itself irrational. How then did it happen either that the guardian spirit gave permission or that Socrates following the guardian spirit approached the young man, whom he in no way benefited from the discussion? Who was it, <86> they say, who burlesqued the Mysteries in the house of Polytion? Who was it who proposed the voyage to Sicily? Who was it who made his native land a scene of devastation and persuaded the Spartans to fortify Decelea against it? Who was it who was cause to the Athenians of those great and tragic misfortunes, of which the histories ²⁰⁵ are full? This and suchlike is the common talk of the condemners of these words, who consider this inspiration by the spirit an empty imagining. To meet these objections some assert that Alcibiades would have done greater evils even than those mentioned, had he not shared the company of Socrates, like some spell that wards off evil; since on this account he did not indulge in *every* variety of evil, and was responsible for fewer disasters to his native land. But this style of reply seems to me absurd, for the aim of the provision made by the guardian spirit is not the lessening of evil but the bestowal of good, nor was this the work of Socrates, to reduce baseness to a small compass, but to eradicate it from those who associated with him, and in its place to introduce good into their souls. Perhaps then what Xenophon ²⁰⁶ says is true, that Alcibiades as long as he was with Socrates was not the cause of any <87> evil to anyone, but when he left his association with Socrates, he was corrupted by wealth and luxury and in view of this committed such great wrongs? Or rather this is true, but it does not go as far as revealing the reason why the guardian spirit permitted Socrates to converse with him; at any rate the spirit-nature was not unaware that he would be corrupted and as time went by would break out into wantonness and would be a traitor to his country. But some say in reply that the undetermined tendency of our personal initiative is not clear even to the spirit; for being unstable and liable to change both for the worse and for the better, it is difficult even for the spirits themselves to ascertain. To me this view is insufferable, but nevertheless it is

²⁰⁴ cf. Aristot. De Caelo 271a33: "God and Nature do nothing in vain."

²⁰⁵ cf. Plut. Alc. 17, 19, 23.

²⁰⁶ cf. Xen. Memor. 1, 2, 24–5.

advanced by some. For is it not absurd to define the differences of knowledge by the nature of the objects known, and not on the contrary to distinguish them by the distinctions of knowledge? And (would it not be reasonable) to affirm that what is essentially eternal and divine also knows all things in a divine manner, but what is human in a human manner, and that the undivided already indivisibly contains even the divided, the eternal, in a manner beyond time, even the temporal, and the rational reasonably even the irrational? It is clear from this that both gods and spirits will know both the indeterminate determinately and the unstable stably and firmly. And do we not observe that many things unable to come to the knowledge of beings inferior to us are easily known to us? It is not natural for irrational beings to perceive the nature of universals, but we can gather it. Why then do we continue to wonder if the beings superior to us have sure cognition of those matters of which we entertain stray notions? Our weakness is no criterion of their strength, just as the irrationality of beings inferior to

<88> our nature does not constitute a refutation of reason in us and our process of thought. Surely it is completely absurd that foreknowledge of the future should be conjectural and not subsist stable, determinate and unambiguous in any order of reality? Nowhere does nature start from the imperfect, or from what is not simply pure, or confused with opposites; but the conjecture of the future in some way partakes of ignorance and is not perfect knowledge. Where then is the absolute knowledge of the future, and where is its pure state, from which the secondary form, that aims at the primary, has received its subsistence?

Now since all such replies are evidently unsound and easy to refute, we assert, following both the divine Iamblichus and our guide,²⁰⁷ that these three points especially must be maintained in the solution of the present difficulty; (1) the appropriateness of the spirit in permitting the association, (2) the fittingness of Socrates both in his previous eagerness to make provision for Alcibiades and in having now met him (3) the benefit of the young man. We must show him to have profited from this association, since not to have become worse is not enough. One might

<89> derive the benefit of not being made worse even from association with a villain,^{208*} but surely it would befit the earnest man to improve those who associate with him. Well, then, that the young man has been

²⁰⁷ i.e. Syrianus.

^{208*} Reading Dr. Westerink's suggested emendation ὁ τῷ μοχθηρῷ <συνὼν κερδαῖνοι ἄν>, τὸ μὴ χεῖρων.

rendered nobler (to begin from the less perfect) is made clear by Plato's Banquet,²⁰⁹ where Alcibiades, even though drunk, is represented as marvelling at "the arguments in philosophy" as efficacious and laying hold of souls that excel in natural disposition "more fiercely than an adder," swearing that he condemns both himself and his ignorance of himself, whenever he hears Socrates conversing, and wonders greatly at "the inward images" of his virtues as worthy of respect and honour, but considers himself wretched because of his state of soul. Helped by Socrates in these respects I think he received no small addition towards the perfection of the advantages of nature. Although some things were done by him amiss, let us blame the lack of perfection and complete correction of his way of life. For we did not say that the association with Socrates made him into a serious-minded man, but that he had the benefit of speaking^{210*} with him. Granted that as regards the present life no good befell him because of the <90> association, yet at any rate it surely proved of some use towards the future. As it is, probably, reared under a bad form of government, he was unable to derive complete benefit from the discussions, since many were the forces pulling him the other way; but once he has satisfied the capricious impulses of the soul and reached a calm free from such evils, when at leisure he brings up such discussions, he sees the difference between his own life and philosophic counsel. Similarly Socrates in the Republic²¹¹ observes of Thrasymachus that "although for the present you are not convinced by me, yet it will prove to be of some use for your future life." It is no cause for wonder that the guardian spirit, having regard for the whole cycle²¹² of souls, should permit Socrates to converse. Just as we should not presume to refer the chastisements which the guardian spirits apply to one life alone, but to the whole cycle, in the same way we must refer the benefits held out to us by them and their services to the whole outcome of the cycle. Our superiors are not short-sighted, like us men, but since they observe all our lives and our entire cycles, out of regard for them they do much to us that appears to the many not to fit in with one particular life; and so they wonder whether such gifts are made by the favour of a spirit. Further

²⁰⁹ cf. Sympos. 218a, 215e-216b, 216e-217a, 222a.

²¹¹ cf. Resp. VI 498c-d.

²¹² cf. El. Theol. prop. 199 & notes.

^{210*} τοῦ λέγειν is hardly satisfactory as an emendation, but something like it seems to fit the sense. cp. p. 90, 2-3 ἀπόνασθαι τῶν λόγων.

in regard to this subject of enquiry, we must observe that both the spirits and serious-minded men act on their own account and on account of the good in them and do whatever they do for the end which both classes have set over their lives; the spirits offer gifts of good things ungrudgingly, and the others are eager to benefit their <91> associates. As the sun ²¹³ releases its light not dividedly but upon all who can enjoy it, and he who can share in it (and all things share the sun, or at any rate what does not share it is excluded from so doing on account of its own weakness), so also since the good spirits and the men classed with them are ever bestowing good things, the lack of a disposition to receive them is a condition occasioned in others by their own lack of suitability. Even if, then, the guardian spirit foresaw that the young man would not be persuaded, yet in view of his own goodness he activated Socrates by not always deterring him from association with Alcibiades; and the latter too was helped by the guardian spirit, but of his own choice fell away from his aid. For the Pythian god ²¹⁴ who warned Laius "not to sow a furrow of children, in despite of the gods," ²¹⁵ also certainly foreknew that Laius would not obey, but, because he was good, offered him the better choice of life; and Laius did not go astray because of him, but fell among his subsequent misfortunes on account of his own folly. So Socrates also achieved what was fitting; for all the actions of the serious-minded man have reference to this: ^{216*} if he has acted, then, beneficently and in a divine manner, he achieves his end in his activity, even if that in him which admits of external activity also has not been perfected.^{217*} <92> Such in my opinion are the views expressed by commentators to solve the difficulty, which accord both with Plato and the actual facts.

Next let us examine what is meant by "I have approached." We observe that everywhere the more divine seem to approach the less perfect, not relinquishing their own abode but remaining in themselves

²¹³ For the simile of the sun cp. Plotinus: *De Voluntaria Morte* apud Eliam (after *Enneads* I, 9 Henry & Schwyzer).

²¹⁴ The prophecy of Apollo to Laius became a current argument in the discussion of philosophers on fate and necessity. cf. Alex. Aphr. *De Fato* p. 202, 8-25 Bruns; Oenomaus ap. Euseb. *Prep. Ev.* VI, 7, 22-5.

²¹⁵ cf. Eurip. *Phoen.* 18.

^{216*} Reading αὐτὸν, in view of such Stoic passages as SVF III, no. 2, as a neuter with enclitic ν to avoid hiatus.

^{217*} Retaining the reading of N, and taking the clause as referring to Socrates. cf. the use of ἐνδέχεται III, 1 in L. & S.

and seeming to approach on account of the suitability of the participant: both in invocations and visions the divine somehow seems to approach us, although it is we who reach up towards it. It might be said too that Socrates approaches evident beauty as an image of intelligible beauty; for he is a worshipper of the whole series of beauty, and as those who are skilled in theurgy reverence even the images of the gods evident to our senses, so also the perfect lover pursues even the image of divine beauty that has proceeded to the lowest levels, as depending therefrom. He approaches Alcibiades, then, because he holds the position of an image, for we are said to approach images.

Further, the term "of fair hope" endears him to the young man in an admirable way (for to term help given to Alcibiades fair hope on his own part is surely altogether endearing), and in general it involves the whole matter of hope (which requires conjecture), from the nature of the subject matter for the sake of which the discourse takes place;²¹⁸
 <93> for it is not clear whether the guardian spirit will allow Socrates to approach Alcibiades again on account of the subject's instability. The ambiguity, then, derives from there, but the "fair" and the good from the earnestness of Socrates and the goodness of the guardian spirit, so that to sum up, the term "fair hope" derives the "fair" from the virtue of those exercising forethought, but owing to the changeable nature of the object of forethought, is indicative of uncertainty.

But in general from what cause did Socrates come to the hope that the guardian spirit "would not oppose him for the future?" Surely when in the first place it did not oppose him, but permitted his association with the young man, he thought that it would continue to permit him for the future? For to allow him at all is evidence that Alcibiades was not altogether disinclined to good offices on Socrates' part. So the more the young man advanced as a result of philosophical discussion, the more Socrates considered the guardian spirit would assist him towards his love. It seems to me that Socrates also used it as an encouragement of the person loved. That he should consider Socrates always to converse with him by favour of the guardian spirit made him more vigorous towards the pursuit of virtue; for the discourses of Socrates were made with this exhortation in view. So this was devised by Socrates as the greatest incentive to exhortation, viz, the will of the guardian spirit, since all of us men are by nature convinced that life

²¹⁸ At the beginning of the dialogue, two things are as yet uncertain: a) objectively, what is the nature of man? b) subjectively, will Alcibiades be persuaded by Socrates' arguments?

according to the spirit is blessed and happy.²¹⁹ For the class of spirits exists near the gods and is of the utmost service to souls for the divine life; through it lies the ascent to and union with the gods.

<94> “Well during this time I have been on the look out and have formed a fairly good idea of what your relations with your lovers were; for although they have been many and of high resolve, there is none that has not been defeated by your pride and taken to flight”
103 B

Socrates saw in Alcibiades many remarkable natural tokens of his suitability towards virtue. His outward beauty and height were signs of his enterprising, exalted and conspicuous pre-eminence of soul; and to their appearance nature which creates the body attached certain tokens, which Socrates observed and judged the youth to be worthy of attention. This was originally a custom of the Pythagoreans,²²⁰ to discern through bodily signs, in those that approached them, their fitness for the better life, since nature that fashions bodies to souls subjects them as suitable instruments to the latter and proffers likenesses of souls in bodies, through which those who are quick to perceive these things can discern the individual characteristics of souls. So, as I said, Socrates saw many of the natural advantages of Alcibiades
<95> through the body; and, further, he judged him to be even more perfect by observing him in his deeds and in his life, and like the good spirit becoming arbiter both of his words and deeds, how he behaves in private life and how in his associations with others, and whether he approves the pursuits of virtue and turns his back on those of vice, or gives in to the pleasure-loving tendency of the soul, inclines to the worse and is enslaved by the emotions. So observing all this closely and examining it well, he found Alcibiades unenslaved by the entire number of his lovers, unconquered by the money-loving way of live, maintaining a lofty frame of mind and with a small opinion of all things human; and having beheld this, he thus gives him a share in his own counsels, purifying his ideas, perfecting his natural virtues, and elevating him to solicitude for the life that is really free. Reasonably then he says that he made a practice of studying and observing him in times previous. For the lover must begin with knowledge and so end in making provision for the beloved; he is like the statesman, and it is

²¹⁹ cp. Diog. Laert. VII, 88 (SVF III, 4): “In this the virtue of the happy man and his prosperous course of life consists, when everything is done according to the harmony of each man’s spirit with the will of the regulator of the universe.”

²²⁰ cf. Iambl. Vit. Pyth. 17, 71.

abundantly clear that the latter too starts with consideration and examination, and then in this way arranges the whole constitution, manifesting the conclusions of his consideration in his works. In the same way, then, the lover also first gets to know the nature of the object of his love, and then in this way gives it the benefit of his forethought. Now if this object of knowledge were immaterial, pure and stable, he would surely have said that the knowledge ²²¹ of it also was firm and indubitable; but since, completely to the contrary, it is indeterminate, imperfect and potential only, he adds to the observation the term "almost," as not implying complete accuracy. For as those who are skilled in argument say, though one should employ countless necessary <96> premisses and add only one that is possible, the conclusion at any rate is assimilated to the worse case; in the same way also if the object of knowledge has within it any admixture of material and unstable substance, it renders the knowledge of it indeterminate and ambiguous. For the knowledge of things that are not stable and ever the same is not safe from being questioned, but such things are grasped with difficulty by conjecture; and such is natural virtue, since everywhere the imperfect, as being akin to matter, is very liable to change. At any rate you would say that moral virtue had more firmness and stability than natural; and civic virtue more than moral, since it actually exists in conjunction with exact knowledge; and surely the more we pass over to the ascending scale and loftier form of virtues, the more we arrive at irrefutable notions concerning them.^{221a} The reason is that we become nearer to intelligent being, with which resides stability, determinateness, and a condition that is ever the same. The "almost," then, seems to me to indicate the dimness of the natural virtues; being lowest, far from intellect, commingled with matter and imperfect, they possess an element that is difficult to ascertain, conjectural and incapable of being grasped by the irrefutable reasonings of the soul. Again, let the expression "having formed a good idea" be a revelation of the intensive test to which Socrates put both the words and actions of the young man, but it also indicates knowledge of the inferior, that looks to what lies <97> beneath and extends to the external. It differs from "being on the look-out for" in so far as the latter involves a detailed description that scrutinises by means of all the words and deeds, but the former is a

²²¹ Contrast this view of knowledge (which concurs with *Timaeus* 29b-c) with that expressed p. 87, 10-11.

^{221a} For the ascending scale of virtues cf. Plot. I, 2, 1-3. Porphyry adds "theoric" and "paradeigmatic," Iamblichus also "hieratic" virtues.

conclusion from this detailed description that already infers the general suitability of the young man, for such is the sense of the expression “I have formed a good idea.” Again you can understand from this how he has come to call assembled knowledge, as bearing an image of intellect, “forming an idea,” but the detailed inquiry that takes place in time he has termed by a name appropriate to soul; for “being on the look out for” is a movement of the soul, as the Athenian stranger ²²² says.

So much, then, as regards Socrates; but why is Alcibiades worthy of admiration and not unsuited to receive attention? Because, I shall assert, he has shaken off the common and vulgar lover; “Although they have been many,” he observes (this shows the excess of their quantity), “and of high resolve” (this in turn is indicative of their quality), “you have made them all runaways.” It is clear that in their case the high resolve is not genuine but merely apparent. Where could there be high resolve without practical wisdom and knowledge? Where could there be practical wisdom, if sense-desire holds sway? But since in their eagerness to capture the beloved some brought him horses, others hunting-dogs, and others some other gift, trying to win him over and flattering him, and despised what he already possessed, <98> they are called persons of high resolve; and as people are called lovers, although they have fallen away from true love, so also they are called persons of high resolve, although bereft of genuine high resolve. So naturally Alcibiades “overcame by pride” all such persons, since he possessed a nature more haughty and grand, and made them “runaways” since they could not endure his excessive pride. It seems to me that Socrates invests the vulgar lovers with this name, first, in order greatly to increase the young man’s contempt for them, as it were ascribing to him certain powers of generalship over them; next, in order to reveal their way of life as characterised by the lowest portion of the soul (since cowardice is most akin to sense-desire, so those who love on account of sense-desire and its goad are runaways), and thirdly, this is a sort of eulogy upon those who are genuinely worth loving, because they are unlovable to the common mass and the ignoble. At any rate the Heracles of Antisthenes says of some youth brought up by Cheiron “for he is tall and beautiful and in the bloom of youth, no <99> cowardly lover would have loved him.” Such then is Alcibiades also

²²² cf. Laws X, 896e.

shown to be from the aforesaid words: to despise those unworthy of love but admire the one worthy is evidence in him of great kinship with the beautiful and predisposition towards virtue. Perhaps someone would also want to learn why grand and lofty purposes move divine lovers and seem to be worthy of esteem. Well it must be observed that such characters seem to possess an affinity with the divine beauty itself. To despise what lies at hand as illusory and worth nothing and to seek after something else superior to this, something great and wonderful and surpassing the common variety is a clear sign of the travail of souls in regard to beauty itself. This was indicated by the Socrates of the Republic,²²³ when he said that in the choices of lives the authoritative, lofty and high-minded was a characteristic of the souls descending from heaven; for they still bear an imprint of life there and for this reason run after power and despise all else as insignificant and worth nothing. This condition, when carefully trained, is the beginning of <100> salvation for souls. For to consider human affairs trifling and disregard present circumstances as vulgar, cheap and not worth serious consideration, and to seek after the kind of life in heaven that transcends the multitude and cannot be revealed to the common mass is sufficient provision for the pursuit of virtue.

“But I wish to examine in detail the reason why you scorn them. You say you need no man’s help in anything; for your possessions are so great, beginning from the body and ending with the soul, that you lack nothing.” 104 A.

Although the youth, on account of a certain conceit and arrogance, despised the many lovers about him, nevertheless Socrates refers this contempt to the reason, at the same time urging him to live according to reason, and, because of the life according to reason, to shake off the multitude of random individuals, in order that we may escape the emotions by reason and not exchange one set of emotions for another. It is no cause for wonder that even Alcibiades should despise them in accordance with reason. For reason may be understood in several ways: the scientific reason differs from the opinionative reason. There is nothing, then, to prevent his acting according to true and unperverted opinion and so preserving himself from contamination with vulgar lovers. So there is not only praise of the young man, but also exhortation

²²³ cf. Resp. X, 619b-d.

to goodness of life; for not to appear worse than the estimate formed of us by the rest of men is sufficient reason to arouse us to attention towards ourselves. But why, you might say, does Socrates condescend to praise the young man? Since one should neither praise a person to
 <101> his face (for such action is sycophantic), nor a youth (for this produces conceit), nor one who is loved (for this is an obstacle to persuading the beloved to attend to him); but Socrates at any rate proposes to praise both one who is loved and who is young and who is present to hear his praises. Well we must observe that all this discourse seems to be praise of the young man and is apparently eulogistic, but it is rather, a concealed and disguised accusation. Such a manner of discourse was required, first because natural virtue is like that, a sort of illusion produced by nature, imperfect, and simply speaking neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy, but somehow sharing in both, and reasonably so; for in so far as it is a kind of virtue and an ultimate trace of the genuine virtue, it has something praiseworthy, but in so far as it is imperfect, involved in matter and of the form of the body, so far is it blameworthy. At any rate the manner of the discourse has imitated the particular character of natural virtue, with an appearance that is eulogistic, as with the praiseworthy facet thereof but with its hidden side the opposite, as with the blameworthy facet of natural virtue. Secondly Socrates takes both into account, both the endearment of the beloved (for what other than this is the main purpose of the lover?) and the avoidance of increasing his conceit and rendering him unsuitable for virtue. This illusion of praise, then, endears him by its appearance, but humbles him by its hidden accusation.

If ever a public speaker or historian stylised his account, Plato did
 <102> here; it is possible, by a close examination of each observation to show that the conviction of ignorance co-exists with the eulogy, and that there is shown in the young man a natural predisposition towards the beautiful, but that this is incoherent and inarticulate and falls short of true virtue. Further, for another reason also, Socrates apparently gives praise, but covertly makes a reproach. Previous to undiluted refutations he puts forward a brand that is mixed with praise, gradually accustoming the youth to endure arguments that refute him. He begins, then, with what are dressed up as eulogies, in this manner accommodating the argument, in order that he may persuade Alcibiades to listen graciously even to his more out-of-place sayings and in order that his hearer may admit the observation "for you are dwelling in the most abysmal ignorance." Such kind of argument, then, becomes endurable

through the present deliberate blending. Well, in what manner are our observations present in the aforesaid words, and how are fair words commingled with refutation? First of all the phrase “Of no one, you say,” taking this verb “you say” by way of appendage, alienates the argument from Socrates, and refers all that will be said to Alcibiades himself. This practically says clearly, “you are without need,” as you say, not I, and “these things belong to you” in your opinion, not mine. The youth then, is a praiser in his own regard, thereby indulging in a vulgar practice. The reason for this is twofold ignorance; for being ignorant in his own regard, he does not know his own misfortune, but thinks himself happy and self-sufficient. Secondly the fact of his <103> exaggeration is a further very considerable charge against the speaker; for “to need no one’s help in any matter” does not have regard for human nature and the weakness of our race and pays no attention to the saying “the penalty for light and fleeting words is very heavy, for over all such affairs Retribution, the messenger of Justice, has been appointed overseer.”²²⁴ He should not, then, have been high-minded to such an extent as to overshoot the bounds of human nature. Thirdly, the assertion that his “possessions are great,” reveals him as one who is embellished with an acquired greatness, but not with the proper and natural greatness of souls. For all merely apparent power possesses its greatness in pure fancy, but greatness that is really sublime and great and pre-eminent resides in the very life of the soul; and this is of one kind and simple, not pluralised, and it is natural, not a presence induced from without. Fourthly the statement that his “goods begin from the body and end with the soul” shows plainly their unsound and imaginary character, and exposes one who supposes he is happy and considers that the source of the goods appropriate to him begins from the body. For such a man puts the necessities of life before the things we ought to choose and the subsequent before the antecedent. At any rate as the Athenian stranger²²⁵ says, what concerns the soul is divine, but mortal matters are human, and the former it befits to rule, but the latter to comply with the former. Alcibiades, on the contrary, asserts that his happiness begins from what concerns the body: he is far, therefore, from being happy and in want of nothing.

Now these are the reasons why I say that Socrates appears to bestow <104> praise, but in reality confutes the ignorance of the young man; but in

²²⁴ cf. Laws IV, 717d.

²²⁵ cf. Laws I, 631b–d.

general this question must be asked, on the basis of what notion did Alcibiades posit this want of nothing as an element of the happy life? We must reply that self-sufficiency exists primarily among the gods themselves; for the gods are good, they are excellences beyond being and full sums of all beings, ²²⁶ through whom self-sufficiency comes to all others, both to intellects, divine souls, spirits, and ourselves; and other things are self-sufficient by participation, but gods by their substantial existence. For this reason, then, the common and unperverted notion characterises happiness by self-sufficiency; ²²⁷ for the sources of goodness are also the sources of self-sufficiency. Again you see herein how Alcibiades is correct according to the major, but deceived according to the minor premiss. He reasons thus: "I am happy because of my body, family, friends and wealth; but the happy man is in want of nothing; therefore," he says "I am in want of nothing." Well, that the happy man is in want of nothing is true, but that Alcibiades is happy is false; the conclusion, then, is false on account of the minor. So you will find both the lover of pleasure and the lover of money deceived on this account; the one posits pleasure, the other money as the good, but that every good is desirable is the common premiss of both of them. To put it briefly they each posit their major premisses by realizing them from common notions and the faculty of reason, but they put forward the minors from imagination, sense perception and the irrational emotions. So in the latter they differ from each other, but in the former they are of one mind; for the emotions are the cause to souls of division and discord; since they are like the Titans ²²⁸ and tear and <105> rend asunder the intellect within us; but reason (and the realization thereof) is common to all, and on this account is "a godsend to be shared by all," ²²⁹ to give this phrase a moral interpretation.

"For in the first place you think you are very tall and beautiful; and it is clear for everyone to see that in this you do not lie; next that you come from one of the finest-spirited families in your own city, which is the greatest of the Greek cities, and there on your father's side you have very many friends and relations of the best sort, who would be of service to you in any need, and on your mother's side your connexions are no whit inferior nor less numer-

²²⁶ cf. *El. Theol. props.* 119-20.

²²⁷ cf. *ibid.* props. 9, 10, 127 & notes.

²²⁸ cf. note 89.

²²⁹ The Greek expression means "halves!" or "shares!", since Hermes was the god of unexpected finds, and it was used when two or more persons came upon the same windfall. cf. *Ar. Rhet.* 1401a21; *Theoph. Charact.* XXX, 9.

ous. But you think you possess a greater power than all I have mentioned in Pericles, the son of Xanthippus, whom your father left as guardian to you and your brother; who not only can do what he likes in this city, but in all Greece and in many great foreign nations. I will add also that you come from wealthy people; but you seem to me to be arrogant on this account least of all." 104 A-C

The detailed account of the young man's fancies makes the apparent
 <106> praise more obvious, but the refutation more striking; for the genuine good seems to be one, as having come from the One and bearing some trace of its proper origin; but what are now put forward as goods are retailed in a confused mass and have no reference to unity. How, then, could these be causes of self-sufficiency, when they need some other being to arrange them in relation to each other and unify them? Again self-sufficiency is observed within the actual subject of happiness; for to suffice for oneself means not to receive in anything from outside; but Alcibiades plainly appears as looking towards anything rather than himself. He looks towards his body, family, friends and Pericles, and places in these his hopes of happiness, but he does not revert upon himself or observe his own soul; so that he could not be self-sufficient; for he is not content with himself but with other things that lie outside him; and the man who was "in need of no one" is revealed as having many needs. Again you see in view of what cause the young man's soul has suffered this misfortune; on account of the inclination towards the body it judges even its own good in a bodily manner. For intellect in and of itself possesses the intellectual good, and therefore it is really self-sufficient; but all body acquires its good, as also its being, from another, for it is its peculiar nature to be moved by another. So the soul, too, that is assimilated to intellect seeks the good in itself and is
 <107> genuinely self-sufficient; but the soul that resembles the body undergoes the experience of bodies and conceives that its good lies in things other than itself, either money or friends or honours or other such objects, so as to possess the appearance of self-sufficiency, but not the reality. For what does not suffice for itself but is dependent upon others, and those unstable and of every variety, could not be of a self-sufficient nature.

Futhermore, let us take a look at each of the words. The phrase "you think" is added among the words set out above as an adequate refutation of a false assumption. For what else is indicated by this addition than that you think it, but this is not so? There is present also a note of

boastfulness and vulgarity in that Alcibiades is himself the proclaimer of his happiness and the subject of the proclamation, himself the praiser and the praised.

Again is it not ignorant to think of the "beauty" and "size" of the body as contributing towards self-sufficiency? For these attributes do not reside in Alcibiades but in what belongs to him. How then, since self-sufficiency resides within him can things that are not within him help to establish complete self-sufficiency? It is just as if someone asserted that the varying conditions of a shadow contributed to the good of a body of which it is the shadow.

Indeed the fact that the good spoken of is "clear for all to see" reveals it as altogether contemptible. For the true good is unknown to the many, is evident only to the possessors of real knowledge, and is to be apprehended by intellection, but not by sense-perception; for every object of sense-perception has obtained its subsistence in movement, but a fundamental principle of the good in its relations with all other beings is the difficulty of moving or changing it.

Again he did not say that "you speak the truth" in thinking that you <108> are very tall and beautiful, but that "you do not lie." For the attainment of truth applies above all to immaterial objects of knowledge, but not being deceived to objects of sense-perception, especially when forms dominate matter, since matter is "the veritable lie" and "the really non-existent," as the inspired commentators ²³⁰ on Plato are accustomed to assert.

Besides, to begin the seeming eulogies from the body is an adequate exposure of the ignorance of one who is high-minded on that account; he puts the last thing first and introduces the subsequent as antecedent. At the same time it is clear from this that the prime cause of conceit, delusion and deceit to souls is the body and matter and the fanciful illusion of forms in regard to the latter. We dash after them as if they were genuine, admire them as real and vaunt ourselves upon them as upon unalloyed examples of good, allowing ourselves to be deceived by them. Therefore the first purification takes place from these bodily representations to which the soul is first enslaved when it descends to the world of process and mortal nature.

²³⁰ For the two expressions in Plato cf. *Resp.* II 382a-b, *Sophist* 254d; and in his commentators cf. *Alex. Aphr.* in *Met.* p. 672, 30: "Matter is in itself being, but non-being on account of the privation within it"; and esp. *Plot.* II, 5, 5, 22-4: "So (matter) is actually a mirage, actually a lie; and what is actually a lie is identical with the veritable lie, and this is the really non-existent."

Now furthermore, his nobility of birth both "on his father's" and "on his mother's side" and his circle of "friends and relations" are not goods of the soul itself, but are observed in connection with the outward man, and belong to many even of those without a serious moral character; but nothing is really good which is common to the many, but only what is peculiar to those of good character. Not even in these advantages, then, has Alcibiades yet attained happiness, in addition to the fact that it is absurd for the happy man to stand in need of so many friends and relations and have his happiness subsist in relation-
 <109> ships with, and the lives of, others. But if he thinks to have his friends as "servants" of his needs, all the same he too is likewise their servant; for friends have the same relationship with each other; he cannot therefore, be happy, since he is the servant of others. Further, friendship is between good men of serious purpose, but among villains moral character is not in evidence; the reason is that both friendship and the good have come from the One, and from a single cause. To each being the source of good is also the source of unity, and the source of unity is also the source of good. So that if Alcibiades is good, he could share in friendship with others like him but if he is not good, he has no part in true friendship.

In addition to this, the power and the guardianship of "Pericles" deprive him of self-sufficiency and a life that is in want of nothing, and make his affairs depend upon the political power of another; but this is neither conducive to happiness nor blessed. For if Pericles should decide to relinquish his provision for him, Alcibiades is bereft of his happiness. But genuine happiness does not have its principles situated in things external to us, but within us; so that even if Pericles possesses power of supreme greatness among Greeks and foreigners, Alcibiades has not thereby yet attained happiness. And if not even he who has such great power is happy, how could he become responsible for the happiness of another?

<110> There remains the consideration of wealth, which Socrates admitted as if by way of addition. For it is a marked characteristic of cheap and ignoble souls to judge of happiness from wealth and abundance of resources; and for this reason the meaner and more materially-minded souls are overcome by the passion of love for money. But Socrates has the custom of ascribing to the persons undergoing perfection at his hands those excellences which he desires them to strive after, as if they had already attained them, thereby challenging them not to appear

worse than his estimate of them. So in these words he has borne witness to Alcibiades as "least of all vaunting himself" on account of money. This is also evident from history. They ²³¹ say that when he was still a boy and learned that the Athenians were deliberating about financial provision, he freely contributed ten talents to the state, and further, ²³² to one of his lovers who sold his land for one hundred drachmas he contrived a donation of ten talents from those who took out the contract for the public revenues. At any rate Plato seems especially to ascribe this characteristic of despising money to those of a noble nature. In the *Theaetetus*, ²³³ in addition to the other excellences, he ascribes this one also to the young man: in the *Republic* ²³⁴ he said that this also was an element in the philosopher's nature viz: the quality of contempt <111> for money. For suitability towards virtue is set against excitement in regard to money; since he who genuinely lays hold on virtue must despise the body, how much more must he who depends on the goods of the soul disdain what pertains to the body!

So much then for our observations upon the intermingling of confutations amid these eulogies. But beginning again from the beginning let us state on the basis of what notion souls vaunt themselves upon these objects viz: beauty and size of body, noble birth, friendship and political power. For these are merely images proffered to souls of the genuine goods, images which the wise despise but the witless persistently cling to. We state then that beauty ²³⁵ and greatness are revealed among the most primary ranks of the gods, the former making all that is divine lovable and desirable to secondary beings, the latter making it pre-eminent over the universe and transcendent above its own products: the former being akin to limit as form of forms and as blooming above all the intelligible forms, the latter to the unlimited in respect of being uncomprehended and embracing and controlling all things; and so Diotima ²³⁶ has assigned the primary worth to beauty, the secondary to greatness; for what is lovable is the beautiful, "but <112> love which primarily depends on beauty is "a great spirit." They proceed, then, from above, from the most primary principles through all the intermediate orders as far as the visible world and render this "the

²³¹ cf. *Plut. Alc.* 10.

²³² cf. *Ibid.* 5.

²³³ cf. *Theaetetus* 144d.

²³⁴ cf. *Resp.* VI, 485e.

²³⁵ On the precise nature of beauty cp. *Plot.* I, 6; V, 5, 8, 12; VI, 7, 33.

²³⁶ cf. *Sympos.* 202d, 204c.

greatest and most beautiful of the visible gods," as Timaeus ²³⁷ says. Souls, therefore, preconceiving according to their innate notions that such qualities shine forth in the sphere of the divine, marvel at the beauty and stature in mortal bodies, as possessing the outward appearance of those ultimate realities; but through ignorance of those genuine realities they remain amid these mere appearances and admire them alone. Secondly, nobility of birth exists primarily among the gods themselves; for what subsists as a result of the higher causes is superior in class to the products of secondary beings. Homer ²³⁸ too, I think, shows this when he represents Hera as saying to Zeus:

"my birth is from the same source as thine,

And crooked-counselling Kronos begat me as the eldest of his
children."

You observe that she lays claim to excellence of birth and on that account desires to possess equal rule over the world with Zeus. According to this notion you would say too that the rational soul within us is of nobler origin than the irrational, because the one was given subsistence by the first creator, but the other was introduced by the young gods.²³⁹ Of such nobility of birth, that according to natural succession is a mere image, concentrating whereon souls are filled with an empty arrogance, not recognising this very saying in the Theaetetus ²⁴⁰ that there is nothing surprising if "one who prides himself on a list of twenty-five ancestors" should in the course of unlimited generations be, more remotely, descended from slaves. All such matters admit of many variations; but the stable and eternal nobility of birth in souls depends upon the gods around whom they have been sown,²⁴¹ and upon the divine powers underneath which they have been ranked; for those are nobler by birth who are followers ²⁴² of the more exalted gods and are attached to greater powers according to their apportionment in the universe.²⁴³ I say the same in regard to states. For difference in allotment extends from above and as far as souls; we say that some gods are of the empyrean,²⁴⁴ some of the ether, some of the heavens, and some of the earth,²⁴⁴ and of souls that some are of the sphere of the

²³⁷ cf. Tim. 92c.

²³⁸ cf. Iliad IV, 58-9.

²³⁹ cf. Tim. 34b-36d; 41b-43a.

²⁴⁰ cf. Theaet. 174e-175b.

²⁴¹ cf. Tim. 41e & 42d. cp. infra p. 114, 5-7.

²⁴² cf. El. Theol. prop. 185 & notes.

²⁴³ cf. Phaedrus 252c-253c.

²⁴⁴ This list seems to give well-known epithets of the gods, rather than

sun, some of the sphere of Hermes, and some of the sphere of the moon.²⁴⁵ Such an apportionment of souls, according to place, is really worth being proud of; but the discrimination that has regard to the city-states of our world and the places on the earth is absurd and the cause of conceit in souls. Again, true friendship is both of the gods themselves and of the classes superior to us and has also come down as far as souls that are good; but seeming friendship that arises by way of emotion bears an appearance of the true, and this misleads souls and accustoms them to vaunt themselves thereupon. It is necessary to realise that although friendship is a thing to be revered and honoured, yet it requires a life that is divine and intelligent; since it subsists primarily among the gods and intelligent life and the intelligible god of Empedocles,²⁴⁶ whom he is accustomed to term a "sphere." Well, for what reason

precise geographical divisions. Proclus gives a different arrangement in *Tim.* I p. 137, 1-4: "For the universe is one and subsists in five parts; it is divided by appropriate conformations and presiding gods – of the heavens, empyrean, air, water and earth." This seems to equate the heavens with the "fifth body" or ether of Aristotle, and the four elements follow. Olympiodorus seems to have a similar order. In *Alc.* p. 17, 1-3, he expressly says of the vehicle of the soul: "It is of the same substance as the heavenly bodies, i.e. composed of the fifth body"; and *ibid.* p. 19, 12-15 he observes: "Of the gods, some are supramundane, to which our souls are attached, but nothing corporeal. Others are intramundane, to which bodies alone are attached. Of the intramundane some are of the heavens, others of the ether or fire, others of air, water, earth, and some beneath the earth." Here again we seem to have the heavens as the "fifth body," followed by the four elements (ether being equated with fire) with gods of the nether region tacked on. Similar lists are found in *Phaed.* p. 189, 17-20; p. 230, 27-32 Norvin. For a further discussion, cf. appendix, cp. *Iambl. de Myst.* p. 262, 9-12; p. 33, 7-8 Parthey.

²⁴⁵ cf. *Procl. in Tim.* III p. 276, 22-30: "First of all, then, the sowing of the vehicles not only reveals the soul as intramundane, but also subjects its whole constitution to this particular leader; for it is one thing to be intramundane, and another to be in the train of the moon or Hermes, the latter being a more particular form of life. When mounted on its vehicle, the individual soul becomes a citizen of the cosmic soul, but when sown along with its vehicle, it becomes a citizen of the revolution of the moon or the sun or some other heavenly body (cf. *Tim.* 41e); cf. also *Procl. in Tim.* I p. 111, 3-9: "On this account the souls that are sown around the stars that are their consorts receive from their actual leaders a certain individuality in their way of life, so as to be not only a soul but also this particular individual soul, related e.g. to Ares or Zeus or the moon; for whether the god be unchanging or creative or life-giving (cf. p. 30, 8-11 & notes 56-8), some reflection of the individuality of the guardian deity has come down to all the souls that are subordinated to it."

²⁴⁶ cf. esp. *Emped. frg. B 29* Diels, apud *Simplic. in Phys.* p. 1123, 44-1124, 2: "For this philosopher supposed . . . as productive cause of the intelligible world, Friendship, which makes the Sphere through unification, whom he also calls a god . . ."

does the fact of Pericles' guardianship deceive the young man? For
 <114> what other reason than that it gives an illusory representation of the
 excellence of the good spirits who are essentially set over us, and of the
 functions which have been allotted to them in the world, and because
 the more perfect souls are placed under the more powerful spirits,
 and are preserved by them and given due direction, but the less perfect
 are subject to the inferior spirits? For as they were sown around the
 gods according to their worth, so also they were placed under the spirits
 according to their suitability; and as "the creator and father" ²⁴⁷ set
 the gods as leaders, so also he set the spirits as guardians over souls.
 Therefore Socrates, when he has proceeded a little will call the spirit
 that watches over him his "guardian," practically telling the young
 man openly that this is our true guardian, cause to us of happiness
 through the power that belongs to him, but not Pericles, nor any other
 human being either.

So much we had to say on this subject. But that Alcibiades was tall
 and beautiful ²⁴⁸ is revealed by the fact that he was called the universal
 beloved of all Greece, by Antisthenes' saying that unless Achilles was
 like him he was not, after all, really beautiful, and by the fact that the
 statues of Hermes were fashioned after his likeness; ²⁴⁹ and in general
 history provides much material of this nature. Furthermore it is also
 <115> clear that he was nobly-born, according to natural nobility of birth. On
 his father's side he was descended from Ajax, and on his mother's from
 Alcmaeon.²⁵⁰ Moreover that Pericles was a potentate is evidenced by
 Thucydides ²⁵¹ when he says that his form of government was "nomi-
 nally a democracy, but in fact the domination of one man." For which
 reason there was competition even on the part of Alcibiades towards
 him; for Pericles aroused his ambition by reducing Euboea, settling
 cleruchs in Samos, sailing round Naxos and the Chersonesus, and
 building the walls. All these are apparent goods, but the cause of even
 greater calamities to those who possess them without prudence and
 virtue as a whole.

²⁴⁷ cf. Tim. 41a.

²⁴⁸ cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 28, 17-29, 11. The source may be a life by Satyrus, concerning Alcibiades and his beauty, quoted in Athenaeus 534bff (E. R. Dodds, Gnomon 1955, p. 167).

²⁴⁹ cf. Aristaenetus Ep. I, 11, also Clem. Alex. Protrept. IV, 53, 6: "Even the stone-masons made their statues of Hermes at Athens resemble Alcibiades."

²⁵⁰ cf. Plut. Alc. 1.

²⁵¹ cf. Thucyd. II, 65, 9: "It became nominally a democracy, but in fact rule by the foremost individual."

"In all these respects you by your boasting have overpowered your lovers, and they being inferior, were overcome; and this has not escaped you. For this reason I am well aware that you wonder for what purpose I do not give up my love and possessed by what hope I remain when the rest have fled." 104 C.

Again through these words it should become clear to us how the inspired lover is completely different from the common and vulgar lovers. The latter, priding themselves on small matters, have been overpowered by the young man, vanquished by more refined emotions; for they were, as he himself says, "inferior," starting from below and as it were from matter, and striving to drag the young man down to it; but the former showed plainly the emptiness of his vaunting, reducing all this apparent high-mindedness to the lowest form of ignorance and the <116> lack of knowledge of oneself. The difference between them is adequately shown by the fact that the one set are termed "runaways" as being emotional, ignoble and cowardly lovers, but the other does not relinquish his love, but is "courageous and earnest" ²⁵² and really akin to his god. That this has happened is reasonable. For the soul is midway between intellect and bodily nature; and when it regards intellect and what is beautiful there, its love is stable as being united through similarity to the immovable and unchangeable, for intellect has both its being and its activity fixed in eternity; but when it regards bodies and the beauty therein, its love becomes externally moved and changes along with its object, for such is the body, I mean externally moved and easily changed. Holding a midway position, then, and of its own motion tending towards both, at one time it becomes like the unmoved and ever the same, at another like the externally moved wandering amid all kinds of change. Reasonably, then, the inspired lover, who reaches up towards the stable and fixed kind of beauty hardly relinquishes his love; for he lays no claim to bodily flux; but the earthborn and materially-minded lover is full of the wandering changes of the world of process. For which reason he too is fickle and changeable, since the reason for his love is changeable beauty; and it is never lawful for effects to escape from their causes and rise superior to the nature <117> of the latter. Since, then, even when causes are ordered, their effects spring forth in disorder, and their products are in movement when they are stable, indeterminate though they are determined,

²⁵² cf. *Sympos.* 203d.

what should one say about these very effects whose causes even are disordered, changeable and indeterminate? Surely that they are much more carried away into indeterminacy and change of all kinds? If therefore beauty that is sensibly perceived and involved in matter is liable to change and mobility, what should one say of the love that is implanted in souls as a result of it? Now this could not be otherwise. For the same reason we must observe that divine love is an activity, wanton love a passivity; the one is co-ordinate with intellect and divine beauty, the other with bodies; and the aspect of activity is appropriate to immaterial forms, but of passivity to those involved in matter, since to act is characteristic of incorporeal beings, but to be acted upon of bodies. These loves, then, are opposed to each other, since one is stable, the other changeable, one active, the other passive, one immaterial, the other material, one inspired, the other "wanton."

It was thus I think, that Socrates termed it in the *Phaedrus*,²⁵³ and the oracles call it "a stifling of true love."²⁵⁴ Now what is the reason for the opposition between these loves? The descent in the scale of things. Procession, beginning from on high, ceases when it has got as far as those things which can both change and make to subsist along with
 <118> themselves some sort of aberration. Take what is just, for instance:²⁵⁵ in the one case it is primarily just, the absolute just, not just by participation: in the next case there is that which primarily and always participates in the preceding; then there is that which sometimes participates in it, but at other times falls away from participation. It was neither fitting that the absolute just should rule in sterility, giving nothing a share in its own specific nature (none of the primary existents is like that, but sterility is appropriate to matter alone as the lowest of beings) nor that, when participated by others, it should be primarily participated by intermittent participants (for what is composite and changeable is completely alien to what is simple and

²⁵³ cf. *Phaedr.* 254e.

²⁵⁴ cf. Kroll: *Orac. Chald.* p. 26, Lewy *op. cit.* p. 264-5 & note 17, where they quote Procl. in *Remp.* I p. 176, 22-6: "(Socrates), after reviling wanton love, and what the gods have termed "a stifling of true love," confesses his error, in so far as, instead of the consideration of the divine and elevating love of souls, he has been concerned with its lowest and materialised image"; cf. also *ibid.* II p. 347, 6-11: "And therefore the oracles bid us expand ourselves through the freedom of our way of life, but not to cramp our style by drawing upon ourselves "a stifling of true love" instead of extending to the whole universe; for those who are stifled narrow the entrances through which we partake of the cosmic breath."

²⁵⁵ For this scheme of participation cf. *El. Theol.* prop. 63 & notes.

unchanging and requires some middle link to be united to it), nor that, when participated by beings capable of constant irradiation, it should bring the gift of itself to a halt at this point; in order that the end term might not be that which is always attached to the first principles. We must, then, look upon the absolute just in three ways, and not only that, but also all the other forms, the absolute beautiful, the equal, the similar, each one of the others, and call some absolute, some participants and discern the by-products among those third from the truth. Nothing can subsist parallel either to the simple beings or to the constant participants; in the one case simplicity, in the other case perpetuity of participation prevents parallel existence. The inferior, ²⁵⁶ then, must come into parallel existence with the third class, the intermittent participants, the unjust with the just at this level, the ugly. <119> with the beautiful, the unequal with the equal. In this way then, love is threefold, one absolute and primary, one perpetually participated and one intermittently participated. So alongside this third kind of love wanton love has come to subsist, and therefore it is opposed to it, sets opposite ends, employs different aims and sets its roots in opposing ways of life.

So much for this subject. But what of the phrase "and this has not escaped you?" Does not Socrates turn the young man back to the examination of the movements within him, and show himself not only an inspired lover but also a seer and man of insight, in so far as he has uncovered Alcibiades' whole way of life and as it were opened up the emotions that lie within him, like the clever doctors who try minor surgery before applying remedies, in order to ascertain the natural constitution of the patient; opening up ulcers in order to bring out the troublesome matter and render the body in a fit state for cure?

Moreover the statement that "I am well aware that you wonder for what purpose I do not relinquish my love" surely links the end of his speech with the beginning, and offers an indication of the intelligent knowledge of Socrates? Surely, too, this manner of explanation is suited to love that turns all things back to their first principle? Surely, also, it is most appropriate both to the nature and the arrangement of the subject-matter if everything both proceeds from the first beginning and

²⁵⁶ For a parallel derivation of falsehood from truth cf. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 32, 7-11. cp. also *Simplic. de Caelo* p. 429, 35: ... "the contrary to nature is an offshoot and by-product of what is natural."

is turned back towards it? Be no longer surprised, then, if we should say that the man of real knowledge likens his statements to the subject-matter "of which they are explanatory."²⁵⁷ For this Socrates has made sufficiently plain to us through this passage.

<120> If he said previously "I think you are amazed," but now "I am well aware that you are amazed," in every way I think this would be appropriate to a man of real knowledge, before the discovery of the causes to enter into conversation rather cautiously, but after their discovery and their exposition's gradually coming to light, more confidently; so Socrates before he had established through his discourse that he was a source of amazement to the young man, employed the phrase "I think," but after the explanations in the above-mentioned passages, the words "I am well aware that." For the cause of wonder has now become recognisable.

"Perhaps, Socrates, you are not aware that you have only just forestalled me. For I surely intended to approach you first and ask this question, for what possible purpose and with what hope in view you are always pestering me, taking great care to be present wherever I may be; for indeed I do wonder what on earth you are up to, and I would very gladly learn" 104 C-D.

The statement of that son of Asclepius, Hippocrates,²⁵⁸ that "In therapy the mind is the vital point," if true anywhere, is absolutely true in the case of the curing of souls. The imparting of learning, if accomplished at the right moment, and purification of life, if its application is timely, afford to the recipients thereof a benefit many
<121> times greater. Just as the gods, by assigning to souls in a due order remedies for their faults and fruits in due season, benefit them, so also godlike men subordinately aim at the right moment and beneficence towards the less perfect according thereto: the gods intelligently and divinely determining the measure of right time, men seeking to find it by scientific knowledge, and others again making their quest thereof

²⁵⁷ cf. Tim. 29b.

²⁵⁸ cf. perhaps Hippocr. De Morbis I, 5: "The vital point is when the patient is suffering from the sort of illness which, if a remedy is applied before the life passes away, receives a cure from the reception thereof at the vital moment." cp. Ol. in Alc. p. 39, 6-9, in Phaed. p. 56, 7-8. cf. also Phaedrus 270c-d. esp. "If Hippocrates the Asclepiad is to be trusted, one cannot know the nature of the body either except by this form of enquiry" (i.e. into the soul as well as the body).

by the inspiration of their guardian spirit. Communion with good spirits is of great weight to souls involved in process towards the unmistakable discernment of the right moment; and therefore Socrates also, in this matter stirred by the guardian spirit and led by love itself, has discovered this as the best possible moment for beneficence to his beloved. For as place is determined by nature in a manner appropriate to each body so also different portions of time are suited to different activities; and as there are certain cycles of the whole universe responsible for the fruitfulness and sterility of both living organisms and plants,²⁵⁹ so also individual activities have different times suited to their accomplishment. Such time is the right moment for each activity as supplying the good and the ultimate purpose to the doers and to what is actually being done. Therefore the Pythagoreans²⁶⁰ called the first cause, source of the good to all, "right moment," since it bestows on all their fulfillment. Now the opportune manner in which, at this juncture, the association of Socrates reaches its fulfillment has been <122> made clear by the young man himself, when he says "you have only just forestalled me"; for I too, he says, was hastening to approach you and enter conversation on this subject. All beings are united with one another in this manner, and for everything everywhere there is brought about a communion of goods, the perfective causes ready to communicate, and the destined participants aroused to participation, the former proffering their perfective potency and the latter having already assumed their receptive potency of suitability. Potency is twofold, one active, and one passive: the former is the mother of activity, the latter the means of reception of perfection. On one side the future agent must be full to overflowing and so prepared for activity that, although the destined recipient is not present, it is itself at full strength and stimulated to communication, and on the other side the subject to be acted upon must be eager for participation and apply itself to the perfective power, and if that be not present, through the most eminent suitability be aroused towards participation. Causes are twofold, some unmoved and ever present to all, others moved and sometimes approaching the subjects that undergo perfection but at others times withdrawing therefrom. The intelligible causes are present everywhere alike, ever and in the same way irradiating all

²⁵⁹ cf. Resp. VIII 546a-b & Adam's commentary Appendix I, Part ii, sect. 2.

²⁶⁰ cf. Aristot. Metaph. 985b 23-30; Alex. Aphr. in Metaph. p. 38, 8-39, 3 (also found in Ross: Select Frag. of Aristot. p. 138); and Iambl. De Vita Pyth. sect. 180-3.

with their communications, but the sensible causes can both be present to and absent from their participants (as indeed the sun sometimes is present and fills with light, but at other times is absent). Now when the <123> suitability of the intended participant lies towards one of the unmoved causes, as soon as this obtains, the communication of the agent is effected (for in these cases communication is prevented only by the unsuitability of the recipients, since the intended sources of communication at any rate are always giving and are everywhere alike; so what has become suitable participates thenceforward immediately in the cause); but when the suitability lies towards one of the moved causes, often the intended recipient is suitable, but the intended source of communication is absent; for this latter must come to be within the ^{261*} same place since it requires spatial position for its communication. Well then, as we were saying, these two prerequisites are necessary in all communications of goods, the perfective power of the intended giver, and the utmost suitability of the intended recipient, and in some way the perfection of the giver must coincide with the suitability of the recipient, and along with this concurrence the agent must surpass the patient in essential being; further the concurrence must not be fortuitous (for it does not come about as a result of causes that are disordered and uncoordinate, like chance coincidences), but sometimes it happens by nature, sometimes by intelligence, and sometimes it is effected by the causality of a spirit, sometimes by a god. This, then, may be observed in the case of this present association; there is in Socrates a perfection of love and true knowledge possessing a ready beneficence towards his beloved, and there is in Alcibiades a suitability for perfection. Which is the reason why he says "you have only just forestalled <124> me," as if he himself, of his own accord, were already stirred towards Socrates. Socrates approaches the young man (since he was a subject liable to be moved) and they concur with each other, both the divine lover, in possession of himself and his provision for his beloved, and the beloved arousing himself to communion with his lover, and guide of this concurrence is the good spirit, who determined for Socrates the precise moment of association. Due season begins on high with the divine and proceeds as far as the lowest limits, and that determined by the gods differs from that of the spirits, from that of fate and from that of chance; ²⁶² "chance and due season," Plato says, "govern all the affairs

²⁶² cf. Procl. in Remp. II p. 5, 19-21: "For chance fulfils the assignments of

^{261*} Reading <τφ> as Dr. Westerink suggests.

of men.” Again, because everywhere the perfecter takes the initiative in the communication of goods and in some way arouses the potential to participation, for this reason he says that “you only just forestalled me.” As long as the future recipient is unsuitable, there is a great difference between them; but when it becomes suitable, the perfecter only just forestalls the recipient for the reason we have mentioned; but when they are now united with each other they have so close a mutual union that both the agent is somehow observed in the patient and the patient in the agent. For which reason indeed some, ²⁶³ beholding this communion in the creation of the universe, have said that matter acts upon itself and perfects itself by its own arrangement, and they have made the productive cause something implicated in matter, failing to distinguish either the patient from the agent or the agent from the patient. ²⁶⁴

<125> So much we had to say, starting from the passage under consideration, about the opportune timing of the association. Through this the young man seems to me to admire above all these two qualities in Socrates, his goodness of will and his power of provision; which qualities indeed are conspicuous in the most primary causes of reality, are especially displayed in the creative order, and initiate the whole world-order. “For god,” he says, ²⁶⁵ “having willed all things to be good,

the universe to us, harmonising our affairs with such and such cycles of the universe according to our due, whether these be better or worse.” cf. also *ibid.* p. 298, 9–299, 28. Our guardian spirit guides us according to the kind of life we have chosen, chance according to the external events assigned to us in the particular cycle in which our life occurs. Both are subject to divine providence, as the text from Plato (*Laws* IV, 709b) indicates: “God guides everything, and in co-operation with God chance and due season govern all the affairs of men.” cp. p. 78, 1–5.

²⁶³ The reference seems to be to Stoic views on matter and on quality, which they regard as somehow inherent in matter. cf. Sext. *adv. Math.* X, 312: “So the Stoics supposed that the birth of the universe was from one unqualified body; for according to them the principle of reality is unqualified and completely transmutable matter, and when this changes there come into being the four elements, fire and air, water and earth.” cp. Plot. II, 4, 1, 6–15; VI, 1, 29.

²⁶⁴ “Agent” and “patient” are Stoic terms. cf. Diog. Laert. VII, 134: “They hold that there are two principles of the universe, the one active and the other passive. Now the passive principle is unqualified substance i.e. matter; but the active principle is the reason within it i.e. God, for he is eternal and fashions each several thing throughout the whole of matter.”

²⁶⁵ cf. Tim. 30a: “Desiring, then, that all things should be good and, so far as might be, nothing imperfect, God took over all that was visible – not at rest, but in discordant and disorderly movement – and reduced it from disorder to order, since he considered that order was in every way the better.” (Cornford).

according to his power set the world in order," by his will tendering the good to the whole universe, and by his power prevailing over all things and everywhere extending his own creations. Socrates, therefore, faithfully reproducing these characteristics, set an ungrudging will and power over his perfection of inferiors, everywhere present to his beloved and leading him from disorder to order. Now the young man wonders at this, "what on earth is its meaning," and how Socrates is everywhere earnestly and providently (for this is the meaning of "taking great care") to hand. If what "was in discordant and disorderly movement"²⁶⁵ could say something to the creator, it would have uttered these same words: "in truth I wonder at your beneficent will and power that have reached as far as my level, are everywhere present to me and from all <126> sides arrange me in orderly fashion." This spirit-like and divine characteristic, then, and this similarity with the realities that have filled all things with themselves, he ascribes to Socrates, viz: the leaving of no suitable time or place void of provision for the beloved. Therefore reasonably Alcibiades complained that "he really wondered" at him and one should not merely "think" this, as Socrates said, but be convinced of it.

Again, the phrase "perhaps you are not aware" both imitates the beginning of Socrates' words and indicates the submission in the young man towards the guide of their association. While the word "perhaps" resembles the phrase "I think you are in a state of wonder," the words "you are not aware" fall short of the real knowledge of Socrates; for he knew that he had aroused wonder in the young man.

His "having in mind to approach" him makes it perfectly clear that our union with the divinely-inspired lover lies through intellect, as indeed with the vulgar lover through the emotions. Intellect leads the soul to god, but emotion to matter.

The phrase "what on earth is your intention" seems to indicate that the essentially good, which is also the object of the will, is unknown and inaccessible to the eyes of the many; but what seems to be good is present for all to see. Wherefore the purpose of Socrates is not clear to the young man, but the good in Alcibiades was said by Socrates to be "clear to everyone."

The phrase "you pester me" is not the same as the aforementioned <127> "they proved troublesome to you": but, as the divine Iamblichus says, is equivalent to "you reduce me to perplexity, trying to find the reason and the purpose of your silence and earnest accompaniment." For perplexity is truly a kind of chaining of the soul that is at a loss, a prevention of activity, and a sort of distress.

The mention of "gladly wishing to learn" reveals the now present influence of love returned; since for the worse to revert to the better and grasp at association therewith is a sort of start, and, as it were, enkindling of love returned. Again you observe that while associating with the vulgar lovers, Alcibiades was not said to enjoy their company, but "they proved troublesome" to him, yet he approaches Socrates with pleasure. This I think indicates that the life which inclines towards matter is distressed and grieved on account of the obstacles it meets therefrom, but that which is elevated to intellect is filled with gladness; the obstacles to life have come to souls from matter, but ease and facility therein from intellect and gods; for there lies "ease of living,"²⁶⁶ with the gods.

"Well it is reasonable to suppose that you will listen to me eagerly, if, as you say, you are keen to know what I have under consideration; do I speak to one who will listen and endure to hear me out? Certainly: speak on. Watch out then; for it would not be surprising if, as I was reluctant to begin, so I should be reluctant to stop. My good
<128> friend, speak on: for I will listen. Speak I must then." 104 D-E.

The assumptions of arguments should everywhere be as brief and as simple as possible; ²⁶⁷ for the more they are of this nature, the nearer, they come to what is called the knowledge that makes no assumptions.²⁶⁸ Consider therefore how Socrates perfectly observes this requirement. While desiring to win over and perfect the young man, he requires neither lengthy preambles, like the orators, nor many and various presuppositions, but demands only this much, for the present that Alcibiades will listen to the discourse he is going to pronounce, and a little later that he will also reply to the questions; such knowledge of the subject-matter and such powers of argument does he show himself to possess: and with these concessions alone he will accomplish his purpose. Well why, you might ask, is listening the only thing required before an account is rendered? Because, I shall observe, it is through listening that Alcibiades must be stimulated to reply and gather ammunition for correct observations, to some extent on his own part, as it were producing from the first subjects of discussion incontrovertible replies to the arguments. Such is one line of thought we derive from the aforesaid words. Secondly we observe that by deferring and

²⁶⁶ cf. Homer, *Iliad* VI, 138; *Odyssey* IV, 805.

²⁶⁷ cf. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 40, 18-41, 5.

²⁶⁸ cp. *Resp.* VI, 510b & 511b.

delaying his discourse Socrates makes of the young man a very earnest audience and increases in him the love of discussion. For when asked Socrates did not immediately reply to the question nor did he say with what purpose or possessed by what hope he endured, but first he demanded of Alcibiades his agreement to listen; and when the latter insisted and urged him to speak, even so he did not speak but added something else: "Watch out then: for it would not be surprising . . ." <129> And when Alcibiades even more earnestly invited him to speak: "My good friend, speak on, for I will listen," even now he does not speak but observes "Speak I must, then," and the subsequent preamble to the discussion affords sufficient prelude to the answers, warming up the young man to listen to what will be said.

So much on this topic. Of the particular points, the sentence "if, as you say, you are keen" was not said in ignorance of the young man's eagerness, but is, as it were, a sort of recognition and corroboration thereof, rendering him more confident and more attentive to the discussions.

But the sentence "Do I speak to one who will listen and endure to hear me out?" was put forward by way of question, arousing his reason to the reception of the arguments through the faculty of hearing, and through assiduity restraining the mobility of the irrational and its fickle impulse.

The reply "Certainly: speak on" is divided between agreement and invitation; for what is about to participate must both subject itself to the bestower of perfection and summon his power to this sort of communion.

The phrase "Watch out then" in some sense turns the young man back upon himself and prepares him to use intelligence and reason when engaged in listening, and practically quotes that saying "having perceived your true self, be clothed therein," in this way also perfecting his suitability.^{269*}

^{269*} Dr. Westerink convincingly restores this passage in the text by recognising a quotation from the Oracles that occurs in Proclus: *De Providentia* c. 35, 16-17 Boese "te ipsum videns verere," where the Vatican MSS has a marginal note *ἐνδυθι* (p. 269 Boese), and he compares the use of the same verb in the Alcibiades commentary p. 301, 12. By supplying <μετά> after *χρησθαι*, and reading the final word as the middle voice present participle i.e. *τελειούμενον*, one arrives at the following text: *Καὶ <τὸ> "ὅρα δὴ" πῶς πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐπιστρέφει τὸν νεανίαν καὶ κατασκευάζει νῶ καὶ λόγῳ χρησθαι <μετά> τῆς ἀκροάσεως, καὶ μόνον οὐκ ἐκεῖνο λέγον τὸ "σαυτὸν ἰδὼν ἐνδυθι," καὶ διὰ τοῦτου τὴν ἐπιτηδεύουσα αὐτοῦ τελειούμενον.* cf. *Mnemos. S. IV. vol. XV*², 1962 p. 163-4.

The phrase “my good friend, speak on” makes Socrates an object of desire to the young man, and turns the lover into the beloved; for the good is the object of desire and love leads lovers towards the good, according to the account of Diotima.²⁷⁰ Now why did he address
 <130> Socrates as “good”? Surely he uttered this word because he marvelled at Socrates’ spirit-like and divine powers; for providence, steadfastness and the work of perfection belong to goodness.

Well finally what is the meaning of the preceding remark “for it would not be surprising if, as I was reluctant to begin, so I should be reluctant to stop?” Surely it contains in brief the cause of the young man’s questioning; for by this means Socrates stimulated discussion as he proceeded viz: because he was slow to begin. The true lover must exercise both faculties, criticism of and sympathy with the objects of his love. Judgment without fellow-feeling banishes love and leads it away to some other kind of life, while sympathy bereft of judgement attaches the soul to the worse. The lover requires neither a life that is completely detached nor a relationship involved in matter, but a sort of detached relationship, that he may both provide for the less perfect, yet not sink downwards in their regard. Since therefore these are both elements of true and divine love, I mean judgment and sympathy, judgment in regard to the beloved is the cause of Socrates’ reluctance to begin (for the examination of a person’s ability and character requires time), and sympathy of his reluctance to stop; on account of such reasons he does not relinquish love nor love’s arguments. Further-
 <131> more, in another sense, we state that this is also everywhere observed in regard to the providence of the gods and the good spirits viz. slowness to begin and slowness to stop. In fact, while many persons commit many errors, their punishment is slow to begin, and once begun endures for a very long time indeed, and while many perform many good actions, their recompense from providence is slow to begin and extends as far as possible. So also Socrates, emulating the divine, is both slow to begin the discussion and continues benefiting the young man as long as possible; the unsuitability of the subject is responsible for the slowness to start and the superabundance of Socrates’ capability and the ungrudgingness of his beneficence for the reluctance to cease. It is not therefore surprising if, having been slow to start, he should be slow to finish; for he is inspired from above, and accommodates his personal activity to what is needful and opportune. In Socrates’ case it

²⁷⁰ cf. *Sympos.* 204e–206a.

is especially true that "due season rested upon his lips"; ²⁷¹ since he laid down both the beginnings, ends and middle portions of his conversations in accordance with the good.

"Now it is difficult for a lover to approach a man who is not overcome by lovers, but nevertheless I must have the courage to say my mind." 104. E

This prelude to the discussion is concise and compressed, embracing in the briefest possible words the reasons for the whole conversation. <132> Alcibiades, although he has vanquished many other lovers, is still imperfect, not discerning the nature of love nor comprehending its different orders nor the way in which what is contrary to nature differs from what is in accord with it. Therefore he requires perfecting by Socrates: for neither, if wholly perfect, would he require one to guide him, nor, if unsuited to divine love would he be receptive of help. Now if he had been overcome by the multitude of lovers, he would stand revealed as fallen away from all suitability, whereas if he had clearly distinguished notions of the respective loves, viz. divinely inspired and wanton, he would already be completely perfect; but as it is, not knowing the latter, but having escaped the former, he is suitable for the reception of true knowledge. Socrates at any rate is full of the good and the beautiful and offers the young man communication in the virtues; he descends, as it were, to activity in relation to another, and proceeds from his inner life to a movement lower in the scale of being; for this reason he terms this procession "daring," ²⁷² after the manner of the Pythagoreans, and manifests his forethought for the young man; he unfolds the whole purpose of his personal way of life and the loving <133> aim on account of which he does not relinquish his love. Now since Alcibiades is "not overcome by lovers" and since "it is difficult" even

²⁷¹ E. R. Dodds (GNOMON '55 p. 167) notes that this comic trimeter is probably merely an echo from some later poet of Eupolis' line: "A sort of persuasion sat upon his lips" (frg. 94, 5 Kock).

²⁷² This appears to be a neo-pythagorean term. cf. Pherecydes of Syros fr. B14 (which Diels notes is probably not genuine): "The followers of Pherecydes too, called the dyad "daring" (apud Laur. Lyd. Mens. II, 7). cf. also Theol. Arith. p. 9, 5-7 De Falco: "For the dyad was the first to separate itself from the monad, whence it is called "daring"; for the monad signifies unification, but the dyad by slipping in indicates separation." cf. further Ol. in Alc. p. 48 16-18: "He appropriately calls the procession to secondary beings "daring"; for so the Pythagoreans termed the dyad, as having first dared to separate itself from the monad." cp. Plut. Is. & Os. 381f.

for his true lover "to approach" him, because he has not yet distinguished the kinds of love, he stands revealed as fulfilling an intermediate function and possessing natural virtues, but employing inarticulate notions; for such is natural virtue, since it "has only an imperfect view (of the good) and an incomplete morality," according to the divine Plotinus.²⁷³ But because Socrates "ventures to declare his own mind," he descends to an activity inferior to that which abides within him; since for divine lovers, to turn towards the inferior is at any rate venturesome; but nevertheless Socrates does descend, in order that like Hercules he may lead up his beloved from Hades, ²⁷⁴ and persuade him to withdraw from the life of appearance and revert to the life that is intelligent and divine, from which he will come to know both himself and the divine, which transcends all beings and is their pre-existent cause.

"For if, Alcibiades, I saw you satisfied with the things I have just now detailed and thinking you should live out your life in their midst, I would long ago have given up my love, or so I persuade myself." 104 E.

In these words Socrates clearly shows whose character is worthy of love. As in the Republic ²⁷⁵ he has given us an account of the elements of the philosopher's character, so also herein he seems to me to be relating certain elements in the character of one worthy of love. These elements are twofold, some visible and others invisible, some made <134> apparent in relation to the body, but others movements observed within the inmost soul: some the gift of fate and nature, such as beauty and stature, others the seeds of divine providence instilled in souls with a view to their salvation, as for instance the quality of leadership, the quality of command and the kind of life that is elevated to the heights. Now as regards the endowments of nature and of fate Alcibiades has risen superior to the multitude of lovers, for on account of his arrogance in their regard he scorned their discordant and disorderly importunity; but as regards the making of provision and the movements within the soul he is overcome by Socrates, since by their means he is persuaded by him that he (Socrates) is "more than anything

²⁷³ cf. Plot, I, 3, 6 for a brief account of natural virtue and its relation to true virtue.

²⁷⁴ cf. Diod. IV, 26; Apollod. II, 5, 12 for the rescue of Theseus from Hades by Herakles.

²⁷⁵ cf. Resp. VI 484a-487a.

else worthy” of his earnest attention. Herein is demonstrated how great is the superiority of the inspired over the common lover. The latter is deficient even in the advantages of nature; but these are secondary to movements of the soul; and the latter are perfected only by the inspired lover. “Much more, then,” the geometers would say, would vulgar love be said to be inferior to divine. Well then, as we were saying, Socrates begins the discussion both convinced in himself that he is of the utmost worth to his beloved, and attempting to persuade Alcibiades that this is so, straight out, as the saying in the *Timaeus* ²⁷⁶ has it, persuading “necessity by means of intellect” to follow “what is <135> best” and to make the genuine good the guardian of one’s life. Now why on earth is this an element of the character worth loving viz: the refusal to be content with things present and abide in them, and the constant search for what is better than the present? Because, I shall observe, this is characteristic of a soul which disdains what is vulgar, is convinced of its worthlessness and yearns to behold, I presume, only what is great and of value, “not realising what has come over it,” ²⁷⁷ but in accordance with its innate notions picturing to itself some other, genuine greatness and sublimity. “Every soul,” says Plato, ²⁷⁸ “has by nature beheld the ultimate realities.” So in the other world it has seen what is of real value, the powers of leadership and rule established among the gods themselves, and having seen, it is astounded at them and retains within itself some faint echoes thereof; but, again, on account of its forgetfulness and unawareness it does not know what it is that it admires and the kind of notions in view of which it reaches after power, greatness and rule, or pleasure or wealth. But the man of true knowledge, who has both considered the realities and the imperfection of Alcibiades’ natural character, shows him what is genuine power, reveals in what kind of life the qualities of rule and leadership are observed and perfects the imperfect movement of his soul. ²⁷⁹ For in general we shall observe, if you like, a threefold life among souls: one according to stable activity amid primary principles, a second according to the activity that proceeds therefrom, and a third

²⁷⁶ cf. *Tim.* 48a, and for the nature of “necessity” in this context cf. both Taylor’s and Cornford’s commentaries ad loc. It seems to be very near “the material cause” of things, and in the context of the Alcibiades would refer to the natural character and talents of Alcibiades himself.

²⁷⁷ cf. *Phaedr.* 250a.

²⁷⁸ cf. *ibid.* 249e.

²⁷⁹ cp. *Protag.* 352b: “The masses think of knowledge after this fashion, that it has no qualities of power, leadership or rule.”

according to the activity that reverts back to the originals. We assert that when souls abide with the gods they act intelligently and enjoy both the will of the gods, which is of the form of the good, and their <136> uncontaminated giving; but proceeding therefrom through the imagination and a certain indeterminate motion, they encounter images of the realities of the other world and appearances in place of what is genuine, and beholding the representations and images of the realities become all excited about them; though they long for what they have seen, yet they are led away instead to what they do not long for; but reverting in themselves to the primary principles, they change back again from the representations to the original exemplars. Herein they require intelligence and reason; for the way back is through knowledge, and it is reason that crosses over to intellect from sense-perception and imagination. Now different souls are akin to different sights, and for this reason some run after some images, and some run after others, since they favour the images and shadows of what they have seen in the other world. But as many as have become "followers" of mighty Zeus and used to accompany him who holds the leader's rank among the twelve rulers of the universe, in accordance with the specific nature "of their own god," yearn after the "leader's" kind of life even when they have come here.²⁸⁰ They are unaware of what is genuinely so, but they pursue authority and power in the world of appearances. If they chance upon learned guides, this sort of predisposition ends in salvation and upward ascent for them; but if they abide among mere images, they become ambitious and passionately excited concerning the <137> appearances of power and fill their lives with tyrannies and suchlike evils.

So much one may observe in regard to souls, how this quality of leadership and enterprise makes them worthy of love, and for what sort of reason. I think one may mention too the well-known account which Socrates relates in the Republic ²⁸¹ about the souls descending from heaven viz. that all such especially run after power and hunt after the lives of rulers and leaders. For having accompanied the gods of heaven and beheld their powers that rule over the universe and their kingdoms which range from on high to the lowest and the series upheld by them, they also desire a similar life and want to rule over the largest possible number: to excel the rest of men, as the gods

²⁸⁰ References are to *Phaedr.* 252c, 246e-247a, 252e-253a.

²⁸¹ cf. *Resp.* X 619b-d.

do the world of process, and to govern the affairs of the universe, as the gods govern all that lies inferior to them; in their yearning for this, they jump at tyrannies, positions of power and honours, and some choose a life of ambition, others a life of one-man rule. Now Socrates knows that this love of authority and honour belongs to those souls which once <138> shared the company of heaven and have come from there to the region about the earth. Therefore in this passage he says to the young man that "he would have long ago given up his love," if he saw him content with things present. For this is a sign of a small-minded and ignoble nature and of one that has arrived from the parts somewhere underneath the earth and for this reason is satisfied with the present, but does not look up to the universal or the pre-eminent nor through great achievement attain qualities worthy of love.

In the third place let it be observed that after the constitution which is in accord with reason comes the honour-regarding and timocratic form of government; for the latter arises immediately after the former and the departure from the best form of life proceeds to this kind first, as Socrates observes in the Republic,²⁸² and on the way back is purified from this last of all. Therefore Plato²⁸³ called love of honour the "last garment of the soul." Disdain of wealth and contempt of pleasure are also qualities of the more moderate souls, but many even of those considered powerful characters succumb before honour, reputation and power. As, then, we ascend and cast off the emotions and the garments²⁸⁴ which we have acquired in our descent, the last garment to be cast off is that of ambition, that being made "naked,"²⁸⁵

²⁸² cf. Resp. VIII, 545a-550b.

²⁸³ cf. Plat. apud Athenaeum XI 507d: "Last of all we cast off the garment of reputation in death itself, in wills, funeral processions and tombs." cp. Milton: Lycidas: "Fame is the spur . . . that last infirmity of noble mind."

²⁸⁴ For the various vestures acquired by the vehicle of the soul in its descent cf. El. Theol. prop. 209 and notes pp. 306-8. Proclus describes the acquisition of successive garments, positing both an imperishable "vehicle" attached to the rational soul, and a perishable "vehicle" attached to the irrational soul, in Tim. III p. 297, 21-298, 2: "The souls as they descend to earth acquire from the elements differing garments, of air, water and earth, until finally they enter into this thick mass; for how, without any medium, were they to pass from the immaterial vehicles to this body? So before they descend to it they have their irrational life and its vehicle prepared from the simple elements, and from these they have put on a "throng," so called as being alien to the connatural vehicle of the soul, composed of all sorts of garments, and a burden to souls."

²⁸⁵ cf. Kroll: De Orac. Chald. p. 52 where he quotes Procl. in Crat. p. 88, 3-5: "For the divine is not accessible to mortals who think bodily thoughts / But only to those who naked hasten upwards towards the heights." cf. also Lewy *op.*

<139> as the oracle says, we may establish ourselves near to god, after becoming pure and undefiled reason, leaving behind all the emotions in the region of earth, which is the place assigned to them, and assimilating ourselves completely to the divine life. Now if the first descent of souls is the life that loves honour, clearly this desire is not characteristic of those who have fallen to the depths, but of those who haunt the doorway of reason. Precisely on this account Socrates has considered such a character to be worthy of love, as being superior to the world of process and more akin to reason; for our spirited appetite is nearer to reason than our sense appetite. For these reasons, then, Socrates considered the life that is eager for rule and honour to be worthy of loving care.

From this it is clear that the genuine lover of any person must both know the nature of the soul and have examined the different choices of life: he must be a trustworthy judge of images and able to discern what the realities are of which each image possesses the appearances, and by what paths each soul is by nature suited to attain its appropriate end. For unless a man has envisaged these matters accurately, he fails to attain the benefits that flow from the inspiration of love. This, then, is to be derived as a corollary from the aforesaid words.

The phrase "so I persuade myself," seems to me to show clearly that the divinely-inspired lover, if he sees the beloved suited for conversion to intellect, helps him, in so far as he is able; but if he finds him small-minded and ignoble and concerned with things below, he turns back to himself and looks towards himself alone, taking refuge in the proverbial <140> "I saved myself."²⁸⁶ For the persuasion and self-directed activity are an indication of this knowledge.

"But as it is I will put before you personally a different set of considerations by which you will realise that I have continuously turned my mind towards you." 105 A.

It was on account of these considerations especially that Alcibiades seemed to Socrates to be worthy of serious attention and not merely

cit. p. 170-1, notes 395-6, where he compares Plot. I, 6, 7 and Gorgias 524d-525a; and Proclus: *De Mal. Subs.* 24, 29-31 Boese: "We must therefore cast off the garments we have donned by our descent, and naked journey from this world to that."

²⁸⁶ cf. Archilochus frg. 6 Diehl, where the reading varies between "I saved myself" and "I saved my soul."

on account of his natural endowments, concerning which the multitude of lovers had become so excited. The divinely-inspired friend begins his judgment from within; since he brings perfection primarily to the soul, and as it were from this control-point ²⁸⁷ guides the whole life of the beloved. One must point out that previously when he called the activity of soul on the young man's part conceit, he termed his own movement a consideration saying in regard to Alcibiades: "for you think you are," but in regard to himself "what I have under consideration" but now, since he has called the movements in Alcibiades "considerations," he establishes his own way of life entirely on the level of intellect: "by which you will realise," he says, "that I have continuously turned my mind towards you"; for intellect is immediately superior to discursive reason, and reason to opinion and imagination. The lover, then, must pay heed to any one fine point in the beloved in order that he may be both more perfect and immediately superior. In this way one would lead upwards, the other be led upwards, and the former would exercise forethought with some fellow-feeling. For what is completely uncoordinated has no communion with its inferior, but love finds its subsistence among those who are able to

<141> commune with each other, since it itself is perfected through the likeness of the inferior to the superior, through the uniting of the less perfect with the more perfect and through the reversion of what is made complete to the causes of completion. Furthermore, through these same words Socrates both rallies Alcibiades to himself and to forethought for his own person, and at the same time makes him a spectator of his own soul and the movements within it, purifying him from sense-perception, imagination and excessive conceit in external matters, turning him to the life within, and inducing him to become acquainted with the movements within him and examine the end they have in view and the manner of bringing them to perfection.

If some should assert that Socrates added the phrase "before you personally" because what he was about to say would be misleading and liable to misrepresentation on the part of the many, they would be making allegations unworthy of him; rather it should be said that he is indicating just what the purpose of the dialogue envisages, that the person of Alcibiades is the soul. For the words "considerations" and "before you personally" place Alcibiades in the category of rational

²⁸⁷ cf. Critias 109c.

life and intimate that he is simply a soul, essentially transcending the other forms of life.

"For it seems to me that if some god should say to you "Alcibiades are you willing to live if you retain what you now possess, or do you prefer immediately to die unless you are allowed to make greater acquisitions?", you would choose to die." 105 A.

- <142> Just as in the tragedies the poets often introduce certain "deos ex machina" to set the present state of affairs aright, so also Socrates seems to me in these words, by presenting as it were, a godlike apparition ²⁸⁸ before the eyes of the young man, to unfold his whole mind in his presence. As in the mysteries, shewings of secret apparitions and secret signs ²⁸⁹ that startle the would-be initiates render them more disposed ²⁹⁰ and more sympathetic to the whole ceremony of initiation, so also the present speech, taking the divine as its starting-point, and setting a god over their converse, turns the young man more forcibly to himself. Further, Socrates seems to do this for another reason too. Since he is about to reveal all the inner movements and processes of thought in the young man, to avoid, should it so happen, his denying that he had ever thought anything of the sort, he anticipates and obviates the denial by setting a god over their discussion. For we all naturally declare our thoughts to the gods, and our emotions and desires, since we are convinced by incontrovertible preconceptions ²⁹¹ that what is divine knows all things, even the invisible movements of our souls. If you like, say this also that through these words Socrates intends to attach the young man to himself, "by showing that he is of supreme value" to him, and that he could never become master of his
- <143> personal objects of desire without Socrates; but all union and association that is brought about according to the dictates of reason requires the presence of God. For what is the unifying force among things, or that which brings together what is divided, other than the divine? On these accounts then, the presence of god and this form of interrogation have been devised by Socrates. Furthermore this proposition always seems to me to present a certain likeness of what takes place in

²⁸⁸ cp. Phaedr. 250b-c.

²⁸⁹ cp. Kern: Orph. Frg. 31, 23; Plut. Consol. ad Uxor. 611d: "... and the secret signs of the Dionysian mysteries, the knowledge of which we who participate therein share with each other."

²⁹⁰ cp. Aristot. frg. 15 (On Philosophy) Ross: "... those who are being initiated should not learn anything but experience it and be conditioned i.e. become disposed."

²⁹¹ The terminology is rather Epicurean, cp. Ep. ad Menoec. 123-4 Bailey.

the world. The gods offer lives to souls, and when they have chosen, allot what is suitable to those lives; so autonomy is embraced in the midst of providence, and stimulated and delimited thereby, occupies the middle position. This has been clearly described in the Republic.²⁹² There the spokesman offers lives to souls, “taking the lots from the knees of Lachesis,” and shouting in their midst “Souls short-lived”: the offer comes via the medium of the spokesman from Lachesis, but the choice from what is offered is the responsibility of the souls themselves. Now here let the god who questions the young man be thought of as parallel to Lachesis, next Socrates who reveals the interrogation by the god as parallel to the spokesman; and as parallel to the souls who make the choice, the young man whose choice Socrates has anticipated. For there too the spokesman, prejudging in himself all the choices of the souls, so casts the lots upon them, and what seems <144> to be an uncertain and indeterminate affair, has been prejudged according to one standard and in a stable and orderly manner among the higher and more perfect powers.

So much, then, Plato shows us clearly from these words; but we would make other similar deductions therefrom, by way of corollary. First that to be evil is in every way worse than not being at all; now it was in accordance with this notion that Alcibiades preferred not to live at all rather than fail to attain a life of great achievement. Second that the separation of soul from body delivers it from the vexation incurred in this mortal dwelling place and from the obstacles that here arise to the attainment of one’s appropriate end. Thirdly that the desires of souls make the greatest contribution to their lives; we do not resemble beings fashioned from without, but from our own selves effect the choices according to which we live our lives.

<145> “But as it is I will tell you in what hopes you live. You think that if you come speedily before the people of Athens – and this will be within a very few days – when you come forward, to ^{293*} show the Athenians that you are worthy of honour as neither Pericles was nor anyone ever before, and that when you have made this clear, you will become the greatest man in the city, and if you are the greatest man here, you will also be greatest among the rest of the Greeks, and not

²⁹² cf. Resp. X 617d–e and references in Loeb edition.

^{293*} The lemma and T read the aorist middle infinitive, while B reads the future middle infinitive, confirmed by Proclus in the body of the text at p. 146, 19. This is evidence that the lemmata were inserted by a later hand.

only among the Greeks, but also among those of other races, who live on the same continent as we do." 105 A-B.

It is immediately evident by these words how great a difference there was between Alcibiades and the divine Socrates, since the one required to know of him "with what hope in mind he remained when the rest of the lovers had fled away," but the other says he will himself reveal all
 <146> Alcibiades' hopes. You may derive therefrom a consideration that is admirable, viz: that the superior powers everywhere in a simple manner comprehend the inferior, but the lower are not made equal to the power of the higher; the knowledge of the more primary powers closely embraces the activities of the secondary, but the notions of inferior beings cannot grasp the universal activity of the superior. Furthermore the appearance before the people in such haste and before mature development reveals the unsteadiness and popular aim of Alcibiades' impulse. For someone in that state of soul ignorantly to enter the ranks of the popular leaders "within a very few days" is surely unreasonable and an error of bad judgment. At the same time Socrates has revealed Alcibiades' age by saying "and this will be within a very few days" (for they were allowed to speak in the assembly after reaching man's estate at about their twentieth year) and criticised the folly of his impulsiveness; for he should not have awaited the time of his coming of age but the acquisition of knowledge and deliverance from ignorance. Furthermore the end in view is consonant with such an appearance and display of impulse; it looks neither to the good nor the preservation of the state but to honour and personal power. Socrates does not say: "you will counsel the Athenians concerning some good," but "you will show that you are worthy of honour"; this shows the love of honour, but not the exercise of forethought. Further I say that the rivalry with
 <147> Pericles reveals the characteristic of those who live according to the emotions. They begin their opposition with those who are nearest to them, making no account of relationship and kinship, but even lying in wait for them, if they see in their possession what they themselves desire. At the same time is it clear that the good for which Alcibiades has shown such eagerness is divisible; otherwise he would not now be fighting about it with others. For goods that are indivisible can be present to more than one person at the same time, and no one has a lesser share in their regard on account of possession by others, but divisible goods accrue to their owners at the expense of the rest. That Pericles was the most conspicuous of the leaders of the people is what

history relates. In his life he was different from the many, and as Plato himself relates in the *Phaedrus*,²⁹⁴ being of a noble nature and having studied under Anaxagoras, filled with high resolve from his love of wisdom, he was more accomplished than the other orators; if, further, when ascending the rostrum, he used to say to himself "You rule over Greeks, you rule over Athenians, you rule over free people," clearly, by these tokens also, he had set before himself aims of popular leadership more refined than most. In vying with this man, his kinsman and guardian, one who had become such through the love of wisdom, surely Alcibiades is senseless, ignorant and uneducated; and if he contends not only with Pericles but also with his forebears, surely the emotion of ambition within him is insatiable? He takes no notice of those well-known words of the moderate Odysseus:²⁹⁵

"I would not care to vie with the men of yore".

Generally speaking each of the emotions has no limit or measure, not being controlled by reason; for reason is limit, but emotion is irrational and indeterminate. Furthermore, the desire for power, extending^{296*} from the city to Greece, from Greece to Europe, and from Europe to Asia and the whole of mankind, seems to do nothing other than demonstrate the lack of moderation in the life that loves to rule. As the love of honour does not limit its pre-eminence to Pericles, but vies with all those of previous generations alike, so also the love of rule ever looks down on the race that is near at hand, chooses something more comprehensive than this, and so proceeds to infinity.

Next let us once again enucleate the notions on account of which the young man built up such dreams. It has been said already that he aims at a certain end, but falls short of it through want of knowledge. Well, in pursuing all that is held in honour, he is at any rate striving after the divine; for the divine is primarily held in honour, and secondly the well-ordered soul, as the Athenian stranger²⁹⁷ says, but of what is evil nothing is held in honour; but unawareness of what is really held in honour makes him concern himself with what is apparent and unstable. It is therefore the task of knowledge to indicate what is true honour and in what grade of being the honorable is to be found. Again, the desire

²⁹⁴ cf. *Phaedr.* 269e-270a.

²⁹⁵ cf. *Homer: Odyssey VIII*, 223.

²⁹⁷ cf. *Laws V* 726a-727a.

^{296*} Reading the nominative case, with Creuzer.

to surpass all men in honour stimulates him, because he yearns for the sort of rank that belongs to a spirit, which transcends the whole way of life involved in process, and having regard to that he considers as trivial the honours that concern the rest of men. Furthermore the desire to hold sway over all men and the transfer from more partial powers to the more universal and comprehensive is typical of one who looks to the unattached class of gods that holds authority over all the intramundane and extends its influences over everything in the world. For there is <149> “the mighty leader Zeus ordering and caring for all things,” as the Socrates of the *Phaedrus* ²⁹⁸ observes. So he who is “Zeus-like and authoritative by nature,” ²⁹⁹ through his desire for what is universal and entire, has no regard for the opportunities of power that are at any time ready to hand, but yearns for the more universal, and ends by striving to join with the gods in the regulation of the whole world; such was his worth, since he was a “follower of Zeus.” ³⁰⁰ The transfer from lesser to greater powers is characteristic of a soul that is eager to regulate the whole world; if knowledge prevails the end of such a soul is salvation, but without it the end is ruin both for those who have these desires and for the rest of men.

“And if again the same god should say to you that you must hold power here in Europe, but you will not be allowed to cross over to Asia nor apply yourself to matters there, as before, it does not seem to me that you would be willing to live even on these terms alone, unless you can fill practically the whole of human habitation with your name and power; and I think you consider that nobody worth reckoning has lived apart from Cyrus and Xerxes.” 105 B-C

The same god is supposed in order that the controlling factor of the unlimited tendency that is ever being multiplied in accordance with the <150> desires of Alcibiades may remain the same throughout and that over the entire range of our choices there may be one overseer and one power referring our one life to one end. To limit one's love of rule neither to Europe nor to the region of Asia, but to strive for power over all men is a sign of unlimited desire, but also of a grand conception and mental anguish that has regard to the truly exalted and divine which has filled all men with itself, is continuously present to all things and holds power over all that lies within the world. The desire “to fill all mankind with

²⁹⁸ cf. *Phaedr.* 246e.

²⁹⁹ cf. *ibid.* 252e

³⁰⁰ cf. *ibid.* 252c.

one's name" bears a surprising resemblance to this. The secret names of the gods have filled the whole world,³⁰¹ as the theurgists say; and not only this world, but also all the powers³⁰² above it; since the "mediating name that leaps into boundless worlds" has received this function. The gods, then, have filled the whole world both with themselves and their own names; having contemplated which before their birth, and yearning to resemble the gods, but not knowing the manner of achieving this, souls become lovers of command and long for the mere representations of those realities, and to fill the whole race of men with their name and power. So the conceptions of such souls are grand and admirable, but their translations into practice are petty, ignoble and illusory, pursued without true knowledge; their notions are in character, but their actions out of it, the former the stirrings of birth-pangs in keeping with nature, the latter the products of oblivion and unawareness.

What significance does Socrates here attach to "Cyrus" and "Xerxes"? Surely, since Cyrus established a monarchy that was humane and
 <151> provident, but Xerxes one that was insolent and wanton (and therefore the one was called "father" by his subjects, but the other, not content with his possessions went on to attack the inhabitants of Greece),³⁰³ it was by way of pointing out the young man's uncritical judgment in their regard, since he admired both alike on account of their power, that Socrates mentioned them. The lover of honour in itself does not distinguish the kinds of honour, and the lover of command does not care about the differences between rulers, but wherever rule exists, and in whose hands, he considers it admirable.

³⁰¹ This line is a paraphrase of the Chaldaean verse: "For the Paternal Intellect has sown symbols throughout the world." The "secret names" are the "thoughts" of the Father – cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 191-2, notes 55-6.

³⁰² These are the mediating powers of the order of Iynges, who are equated with the first rank of the "intelligent and intelligible gods," the first gods whose names are made known to us. (cf. Lewy p. 132-7 & note 252). The Iynges are described as "ferry-men" (*ibid.* note 254) i.e. mediators of messages. "Their sublime name leaps in tireless revolution / Into the worlds (i.e. the spheres of the planets) / At the mighty command of the Father." (*ibid.* note 256). They play an active cosmic role in maintaining the movements of the planets and the Chaldaean threefold division of worlds, acting as containing forces of these otherwise "boundless" worlds. (*ibid.* p. 128) cf. for the whole passage Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 40, 43-4. By the secret names, watchwords or symbols that are assigned to different spheres of the universe the theurgist and the initiate soul communicate with the cosmic and supramundane powers.

³⁰³ cf. Herod. III, 89; Diod. Sic. IV, 30, 2.

"Now I am well aware that you entertain this hope and I'm not guessing. So perhaps you may say, as one who knows I am speaking the truth: "Well Socrates, what has this got to do with the reason for your not forsaking me, which you said you were going to tell me?" In fact, I will tell you, dear son of Kleinias and Demomene. It is impossible for you to accomplish all these intentions without me; so great is the power which I think I hold over you and your affairs." 105 C-D.

Who is the educator and who the educated may be rightly perceived <152> from these words. It is the part of the educator accurately to discern the aptitudes of those he educates and pursue his care for them in accordance therewith. Each individual is not to be brought up in the same way, but he who has the natural aptitude to be a philosopher differently from the person inclined to love or music,³⁰⁴ and he who, through the picturing of heavenly ease, is wildly excited to pleasure, must be brought up differently from one who, through the desire for self-sufficiency, yearns for the acquisition of money, and differently again from one who, because of the notion of divine power, is carried away under the influence of the mere appearances of power. For everywhere mere representations clothed in the likeness of their archetypes lead senseless souls astray; whereas they should rise up therefrom and pass over to those true and genuine realities. Such was the method of Socrates' teaching, to elevate each individual to his appropriate object of desire, and to show the lover of pleasure where pure pleasure, unmixed with pain, exists (clearly this is preferable to the pursuer of pleasure, instead of pleasure mixed up with its opposite);³⁰⁵ to show the lover of money where real self-sufficiency, completely free from need, exists (this is in every way more worthy of diligent search on the part of one who yearns for self-sufficiency and flies from want); and to show the lover of command where power and rule exist and what is the nature of the authoritative form of life free from all enslavement (this would be more honourable in his eyes than authority commingled with what should be shunned). Now power, self-sufficiency and pleasure are not concerned with things involved in matter; matter is weakness and <153> poverty and cause of decay and pain, and it is clear that, if anywhere, the former exist in what is immaterial and separable. So those are the

³⁰⁴ cp. *Phaedr.* 248d.

³⁰⁵ cf. *Phileb.* 52b-c where the pleasures of learning are described as unmixed with pain.

realities we must love, and to them we must make our way up. Now the educator must apply his training after this fashion, offering salvation to everyone on the basis of the natural aptitudes in each individual; while he who is receiving education should entrust himself to the educator and gently be led round to the truth, withdrawing from mere representations, reaching upwards from the "underground cave" ³⁰⁶ towards the light and the real being that is everywhere unmixed ^{307*} with its opposite, and having cast aside what is divisible and representational, making the universal and undivided the complete object of his striving. The universal good, as the Socrates of the *Philebus* ³⁰⁸ observes, is neither merely the object of desire, nor merely complete and self-sufficient nor merely competent and able to complete other beings, but it possesses all these attributes combined, viz: completeness, competence, desirability; it raises everything to itself, is filled with itself, and bestows the good upon all. However the many have only a partial grasp thereof, and some, seeing only its desirability, pursue pleasure, which is but a shadow of the object of desire in the world of reality, others seeing only its completeness, direct their enthusiasm to money, since therein lies the image of self-sufficiency; others again, inclining towards the aspect of competence, are wildly excited about positions of power, for power is an unstable representation of competence. To lay aside, then, these divided apprehensions of the good, to look to its universal nature and be elevated to its all-perfect completeness is a fine way to withdraw the recipients of training from wasting time on mere representations.

So this is the correct rule of education appropriate to both educator and educated; and therefore Socrates in this present conversation clearly sets before the young man the attainment of his appropriate end through true knowledge. Power controlled by the reasoning of true knowledge is the cause of great good and combines with the competent the complete and the desirable, but without knowledge it is to be shunned rather than preferred, it lacks perfection and stands in need of an element to preserve it, since it destroys its possessor. It is true,

³⁰⁶ cf. *Resp.* VII 532b.

³⁰⁸ cf. *Philebus* 20c-d, 22b, 67a where "The Good" is described as "complete, competent, the object of choice and desire." *Ol. in Alc.* p. 42, 18-43, 3 distinguishes the senses of "complete" and "competent": "complete and competent are not the same; complete is merely that which has no need of another, but competent not only has no need but also is able to impart to others."

^{307*} Reading τὴν ἀμειγῆ, as Dr. Westerink suggests.

then, that Socrates has a very great influence over the affairs of Alcibiades; for what is perfective and salvific has the greatest power over those in the process of perfection and salvation, since everything reaches out towards its preserver. But perhaps someone, in opposition to us, might say that Alcibiades, through these words, is being made desirous of rule by Socrates; one should completely eliminate the passion from him, instead of multiplying it by holding out such hopes. Well, to the maker of this accusation we reply that the emotions of the sort of character that is hard and resistant are by way of being earth-bound and immersed in matter, that is, practically all of them, but especially those of the spirited appetite; for the character that loves honour and command is ready to oppose the efforts of the would-be
 <155> educator. He who acts as guide in the matter of education must therefore gradually lead these emotions round to the straight path and gently assuage them, just as good doctors moderate inflammatory diseases by means of a diet, but do not immediately attempt to expel the troublesome humours; ³⁰⁹ if this is so, Socrates acts rightly in not opposing the young man's passion immediately at the beginning of the discussion, but in transferring his desire from power to the knowledge that will make use of power. For there is nothing more powerful than knowledge resident in the soul, as he observes elsewhere.³¹⁰ This affords us the power of distinguishing both what is really good and what is evil, and the person who has acquired knowledge is not easily deceived by mere representations, but can turn his regard towards the realities themselves, rid of these illusions.

So much for this topic; but let us once more enquire into the former question, whether Socrates is not engaging in a rash venture, by promising that he is able to provide such benefits; for this undertaking is not in keeping with Socrates' character. To this in turn we must reply that big talk is appropriate for the philosopher when it is in season. So in the Theaetetus ³¹¹ he says "no god is ill-disposed towards men, neither do I do anything of the sort out of ill-nature; but it is in no way lawful for me either to concur with falsehood or suppress the truth"; this manner of treatment for his patient suited the performer of the rôle of midwife, ³¹² the judge between fruitful and empty words, in order

³⁰⁹ cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 54, 10-15; Hippoc. Aph. I 22, Humours c. 6 (Loeb).

³¹⁰ cf. Protag. 352b-d; Resp. V 477d.

³¹¹ cf. Theaetet. 151d.

³¹² cf. *ibid.* 157d.

<156> that he might effect something through his function. Again, in the Apology, ³¹³ he says that "it does not accord with right that a better man should be injured by a worse," and "the latter can slay the former, but not harm him"; since, once more, it is fitting that in the midst of danger he should appear high-minded in his attitude to life. Here his converse is with a beloved who is a lover of honour and command, one who has already scorned the rest of his lovers; so he approaches him with resolution and outspokenness, subjecting him to his own arguments, and thus he makes the power so much desired by Alcibiades depend on his personal power. You observe how safe Socrates is, even in this; he did not say that "with my aid you will assuredly attain your purpose," but that "without me you could not attain it." For no one could attain power without knowledge, since power is a good, and good things we acquire in conjunction with knowledge. But though knowledge be present, there is nothing surprising in absence of power; since its presence requires both the agreement of the universe ³¹⁴ and the good fortune that governs such matters.

So much we had to say about the whole of the passage in question; now let us run through the points of detail. The expression "I am well aware, and I'm not guessing" is perforce added after the arguments and reminders; for having on many points given an example of his knowledge, ^{315*} he reasonably makes confident affirmations for the future.

The phrase "as one who knows I am speaking the truth" turns Alcibiades towards himself again and makes him a spectator of his own thoughts.

The appellation "O dear son" involves an opportune application of <157> attentiveness; Socrates wishes to endear Alcibiades and attach him to himself, that through the desire for power he may become a lover of the perfect knowledge in him.

Again, calling him by the name of both his parents embraces his

³¹³ cf. Apol. 30c-d.

³¹⁴ For the expression cp. Diog. Laert. VII, 140 (SVF II no. 543): "The world has no empty space within it, but forms one united whole. This is a necessary result of the sympathy and tension which binds together things in heaven and earth." (Loeb) cp. also Plot. II, 3, 7 16-19: "All things must be joined to one another; not only must there be in each individual thing what has been well termed 'a single, united breath of life', but before them, and still more, in the All." (Armstrong).

^{315*} Reading *ἐπιστήμονα*, as Dr. Westerink suggests.

whole life and accommodates it to Socrates for the soul also has as it were a double aspect, one male, one female. By naming both his parents at the same time Socrates indicates to him that neither his mother's nor his father's kinsfolk or friends contribute to the attainment of this desire of his, but he alone can bring Alcibiades' wishes to fulfilment, in conjunction with the good spirit.

The phrase "over you and your affairs" again defines Alcibiades by his soul: it calls "affairs" his outward proceeding activities, the leadership of the state and the attainment of power, but as his own person it posits the soul and the perfection that lies therein.

<158> "This is the reason, I think, why the god has long refused to allow me to converse with you, and I was waiting for the time when he would allow me. For just as you have hopes of making it clear in the city that you are of the utmost worth to it, and once you have shown this, of immediately possessing unlimited power, so I too hope to possess the greatest power with you once I have shown that I am of more worth to you than anyone else and that neither guardian nor any other helper is competent to hand over to you the power you desire except me, with the help of the god, however." 105 D-E.

I have related in the prologue ³¹⁶ to the dialogue who the god spoken of here is and for what sort of reason he is so named. But let it be observed now also that the divine spirits who have received the topmost rank among the spirits and are filled immediately from above with the divine light are sometimes called spirits, sometimes gods; for they hold the rank of gods in regard to the rest of the order. We said that there is a difference between the spirit on the level of the gods, and the god or spirit pure and simple. The foremost among the gods are beyond analogy with the spirits: it is only at the close of the intelligibles that the pre-eminence of the spirits in relation to the rest of the gods first stands revealed. But the spirits of second and third rank, since they subsist in the peculiar nature of spirits, are called spirits only. However the highest spirits, at any rate, are called both gods and spirits, since they are spirits by essential nature but gods by participation. Again, some of the gods, beginning from the intelligent, are called spirits, since they are gods in their substance, but spirits by analogy. Now for this reason the same being whom Socrates previously termed a spirit, in

³¹⁶ cf. above p. 72, 12-74, 9.

the present passage he calls a god; since he is one of the divine spirits, as has been said before.³¹⁷ Nor would we reject the reasoning of one who should assert that because the spirits depend on the gods and what happens to us is brought about in accordance with their joint provision, <159> both the spirit and the divine order appear to occupy the same sphere. The divine order is not in conflict with the spirit-order nor is the providence of the good spirits divorced from the will of the gods, since not even the activity of good men is withdrawn from the divine largesse; it is in accordance with god that both the spirit and the good man make their gifts. Here again you have a clear picture of the series of beneficent causes. Socrates looks towards the spirit and the spirit's forethought, and the spirit towards the god whose follower he is; Socrates is united to the divine order via the spirit-order, and he too exercises all his activity in accordance with god, since the spirit reveals to him the divine will.

Such, then, is the analogy with the higher causes; again, by another parallel, as Alcibiades is to Socrates, so is the mass of the Athenians to Alcibiades. "For as you" he observes, "expect to hold the greatest power in the state, so do I over you." One must attach the mass to a single unit stationed in the same rank, and the unit so stationed to the transcendent, since every procession of reality is accomplished after this fashion.³¹⁸ In both the analogies, then, Socrates is the medium between two terms, himself dependent upon a spirit and a god, while attaching to himself both his beloved and the mass of the Athenians, and thus he becomes responsible to all, even the inferior, for participation in the divine. Some elements are poles apart viz. the multitude and the divine, while others fill up what lies between them. For instance, if you wish to speak of this in relation to a single soul, <160> understand the multitude as the sense appetite (this is "like the people in a city," observes the Athenian stranger,³¹⁹ and in general "the many-headed wild beast," as the Socrates of the Republic³²⁰ remarks) Alcibiades as the spirited element (there lies the love of honour, since its desire is for personal power) and Socrates as the reason (herein lies knowledge; so it is as it were the good spirit of Alcibiades, since

³¹⁷ cf. above p. 78, 10-79, 14.

³¹⁸ cf. *El. Theol. props* 21, 141 & notes.

³¹⁹ cf. *Laws* III 689b.

³²⁰ cf. *Resp.* IX 588c.

Timaeus ³²¹ calls the reason the guardian spirit of the faculties in the soul) and above the reason the good spirit which moves Socrates towards the good, and above the latter the god upon whom the spirit depends and in relation to whom it possesses its subsistence. Reasonably, then, Socrates, as being in the position immediately superior to the young man, assert that he personally will be the cause of good to him, with the help of the god, however.

Furthermore, one should again note herein, how Socrates has proceeded in order. Previous to these words he says that he exercises forethought for Alcibiades ("by which you will realise that I have continuously had you in mind"); through the medium of these words he asserts that he personally will transmit this power to him; and at the <161> end of these words he has revealed to the young man the providence of the god also. Both intellect and power have received their procession primarily from god, but universal power proceeds immediately from him, while intellect is at third remove from god; ³²² therefore the man who lacks perfection participates first in intellect, then in power, then in god who bestows the former two. So if Socrates "has applied his intellect," he is endowed with intellect; if he is the cause of "power" to others, he is possessed of power; if he does everything "with the help of god," he is divinely inspired. However the young man could not comprehend all these things at once, and so Socrates revealed them to him successively. At the same time it is clear from this how participations commence from the inferior, and how reversions take place to what is proximate first, and then in due course to the causes that are more godlike.

"Now when you were younger and not yet filled with such great hopes, the god did not allow me to converse with you, in order that my conversation might not be fruitless; but now he has allowed me, since now you are disposed to hear me." 105-106 A.

Now Socrates explains the words mentioned in the prologue, "whose power you will learn of later"; for really this is all a hymn in praise of the providence of the guardian spirit. Beneficently at one time to restrain the impulse of Socrates, but at another time to permit it reveals the power of its forethought; and its appellation "god" is <162> evidence of its supreme rank in the class of spirits. Note once again the

³²¹ cp. p. 73,9-10 and note 159, and cf. Tim. 90a & c with Taylor's commentary ad loc., where he traces some of the origins of the doctrine and subsequent references.

³²² cf. note 202.

due measure in Socrates' guidance; previously he called it a guardian spirit, but now also a god. For to those who are being led on the upward path first there is revealed the characteristic nature of the spirits, later also their participation in the divine substance. But why "did the god not permit Socrates to converse before Alcibiades was filled with such great hopes?" Surely because when they are children human beings cannot yet live their life in the pursuit of honour, but rather in accordance with sense-desire, just as they cannot live by mental images ³²³ either, but rather in accordance with sense-perception; at that time they are further removed from reason. But as they proceed in age those who possess a more elevated nature somehow rise superior to the tumult of the world of process and transfer to the more refined emotions; then indeed they can be more easily ordered by reason and become obedient to knowledge. Therefore, when Alcibiades was a boy, it was not possible to speak to him about these subjects, but when he has reached this age, it is the opportune moment to apply such arguments to him. But why has the explanation "in order that my conversation might not be fruitless," been adduced as a reason? Surely because both "nature and god do nothing in vain," as Aristotle says; and not only this, but neither is god responsible for vain activity on the part of another, as Socrates now observes. As he is not the cause of evil, since he is good, so

³²³ Proclus seems to use the term "phantasia" in two senses 1) as intermediate between reason and sense-perception 2) as on the level of sense-perception. Here it seems to have the former sense cp. p. 80, 12-13; p. 199, 7-8. cf. also Procl. in Tim. I p. 352, 16-18: "The same thing is known by God in a unity, by intellect comprehensively, by reason universally, by imagination formatively, and by sense-perception receptively." Proclus even describes it as a kind of intuitive perception analogous to intellect and intellectual perception. cf. in Crat. p. 76, 26-7: "The imagination is an intellect that is formative but not pure"; in Remp. I p. 235, 18-19: "The imagination, being an intuitive perception that creates forms, yearns to be a knowledge of certain intelligible objects."

Contrast Plato's description of "phantasia" as "a blend of perception and judgment" at Sophist 264b, where he seems to be using the word of "appearing" in indistinct sense-perception. (cf. Cornford's notes ad loc.).

It was Aristotle who seems to have given "phantasia" the fixed meaning of being the faculty of imaging or imagining. (cf. De Anima 428a25-429a2 and Ross and Hicks ad loc). He does distinguish two kinds of "phantasia" at De Motu Anim. 702a19: "Imagining comes about either through thought or sensation"; and at De Anim. 433b28: "All imagination is either calculative or sensitive." (Ross).

A similar distinction is found among the Stoics (SVF II no. 61): "According to them some presentations (phantasiai) are sensible. others not: sensible are those conveyed through one or more sense-organs; non-sensible are those received through the mind e.g. of incorporeal beings and all else grasped by the reason." (Diocles Magnes ap. Diog. Laert. VII, 51).

neither is he the cause of what is vain, since he is the purpose of all things; rather it is the aimless, indeterminate and purposeless which is the cause of what is vain. And what should we say, seeing that many of the things that seem to take place in vain in the case of partial causes, on account of the divine cause, do not do so? How then could god allow
 <163> any purposeless activity? And yet the god who leads round to good on each occasion what is contrary to our preferences naturally did not allow even Socrates to act, when in fact he was going to act in vain. But what do we mean by the god "allowing"? Surely his not restraining Socrates' enthusiasm and forethought for the young man. By which fact it is clear that it is not necessarily required ^{324*} that the guardian spirit should stir us to action; but when our purpose accords with the good, even his not deterring nor preventing us is an indication that the action is appropriate for us. Therefore Socrates, when prevented, obeyed his guardian spirit, but when the latter ceased his opposition, considering that converse with his beloved was permitted him, he duly approached him with confidence. We too, in our actions should observe such due measure of piety. We must neither resist the dissuasions of the good spirits nor like the superstitious sit idly waiting on every occasion for their impulse, but having set before us a good purpose and rational process we must engage in action.

"You seem much stranger to me now, Socrates, when you have begun to speak, than when you followed me in silence; and yet even then you were very strange to look at. Well you have apparently decided whether I have such purposes in mind or not, and if I deny it, it will avail nothing to persuade you otherwise. So be it; but if in fact I have had these purposes very much in mind, how shall I achieve them through your agency, and how would they fail to be realised without your aid? Can you tell me?" 106 A.

<164> This was the effect Socrates intended to produce through the previous words, viz: to arouse the young man to wonder and astonishment, in order that by means of this wonder he might turn his beloved to himself and persuade him to cling to his providence as to "a safe mooring," ³²⁵ and neither through vain conceit despise his words as he did the common lovers, nor through excess of desire demand honour

³²⁵ For the expression cp. Laws X 893b and Procl. in Remp. II p. 188 2-3.

^{324*} Reading the passive ἀπαιτεῖται, as Dr. Westerink suggests.

from him, like the honours from the rest of men, nor in general vie with him for the first place, as with his guardian Pericles. On this account both the mention of the god and the indication of the guardian spirit and the philosophical use of paradox have been devised by Socrates, astounding Alcibiades from every angle not by means of material and external objects as the other lovers tried to win him over through money and horses and hunting dogs, but through philosophy, through guardian spirits, through gods, which indeed both astounded him on account of their not being known to him, and on account of their immateriality proved more effective. For everything implicated in matter is feeble and weak but the more a thing is separable from matter the less susceptible it is to outside influences and the more effective. So Socrates has exceeded even the boast of the Stoics ³²⁶ herein. For what other conclusion may be drawn from what he has said than that the <165> good man alone is ruler, he alone wields power, he alone is king, alone is leader of all, alone is free, and everything which belongs to the gods belongs to good men. "For the possessions of friends are held in common"; ³²⁷ if then all belongs to the gods, all belongs also to good men. It was for this reason he promised to transmit the power "with the help of god" and to make Alcibiades a ruler with power over everything, by giving him a share of the knowledge of how to rule. As we call a craftsman not one who possesses the tools of the craftsman, but one who has acquired this skill, so also we call both ruler and king one who possesses the knowledge of how to rule, but not one who has power over many. The power that is evident to the senses is a tool, but what employs it is the trained habit of mind; and without this one could never be a ruler or a king.

Now at the present moment he has aroused Alcibiades to greater wonder; for he says "you now appear to me more worthy of wonder than when you followed in silence." Both when silent, then, and when giving utterance, the good man is worthy of wonder in the eyes of those who have a kindred nature; but the evil man is not such: when silent, he is full of concealed malice: when giving utterance, disgusting. It seems, then, that the young man, astounded on both accounts, both at Socrates' silence and his words, positively regards him as a guardian

³²⁶ cf. SVF III. p. 158-9, Ol. in Alc. p. 55, 23-56, 3.

³²⁷ cp. Eur. Orest. 735; Porph. Vit. Pyth. 33: "He had an exceeding love of friends, being the first to have declared that the possessions of friends are held in common and that a friend is another self."

spirit. To follow about in silence is characteristic of a guardian spirit, since they are accustomed to call the good spirit our "fellow-traveller"^{327a} and they say that he accompanies us from divine impulse; again it <166> befits those beings that are superior to us that one who has given utterance should appear even more worthy of wonder. The more we become consciously aware of the influence of the superior beings the more we stand in amazement at them. For instance, although the saviour Asclepius even now gives us health and ever preserves us and possesses in himself activities more divine than those which proceed externally, nevertheless we praise him more when we are favoured with an epiphany; for we desire our living organism to share in the perception of the god's giving. In this way the young man seems to me to say that Socrates is now more worthy of wonder; now he is consciously aware of him: previously he noticed him in mere silent attendance. Both when silent, then, the wise man is worthy of wonder, as most resembling the hidden and unknowable ³²⁸ class of the gods, and when giving utterance he is even more worthy of wonder, as likening himself to the revelatory ³²⁹ element of the divine. Indeed all the divine is such; in all its functions it appears worthy of wonder, both when becoming known and remaining unknown; just as the godless and obscure, the more it becomes known, the more readily it is despised.

Such then is Socrates, and in short he has already appeared to the young man to be possessed of the greatest power; for he has aroused him to astonishment and wonder in his own regard. But the nature of Alcibiades is also revealed thereby: he is of a gifted and at the same time steady disposition, neither admitting falsehood into his life nor openly admitting that he is ambitious and a lover of power. Some such <167> experience befell Charmides ³³⁰ in the dialogue of the same name. When questioned on the subject of moderation he says that he is at a loss to find the reply: "If I assert that I am moderate, my speech will be

^{327a} cp. *Phaedo* 108c.

³²⁸ cf. *El. Theol. prop.* 162.

³²⁹ cf. *El. Theol. prop.* 125 & notes; *Procl. in Crat.* p. 97, 28-98, 1: "The prophetic (activity of the gods seems to be more prevalent) in the heavens; for there especially the revelatory power of the god (Apollo) shines forth, revealing the intelligible goods to the heavenly bodies"; and *Procl. in Remp.* II p. 153, 23-5: "Other (souls) are revelatory of the divine prophecy i.e. such as are devoted to the orders that are revelatory of the truth which resides secretly among the gods." The term "revelatory" is applied to Intellect and the Angels as well as to the gods.

³³⁰ cf. *Charm.* 158c-d.

vulgar, and if I say that I am not, I shall be my own accuser." Such then has been the experience of Alcibiades in the words under discussion: if he admitted that he loved power he would be accusing himself of ambition, and if he did not admit it, he would be lying. Beset by these difficulties he discovered a way out through his ingenuity. He puts his point not as a categorical statement, but as a hypothesis, nor does he quote only the affirmative, but also the negative. He says: "You have apparently decided whether I have such purposes in mind or not." Again, by passing from these words to the subject-matter, you can see that the more perfect causes are free from all privation, but the inferior are implicated in non-being: the former are established on the level of form, but the latter sink even to privation. Yet Socrates at any rate simply and firmly asserted that "these are your purposes", – the one half of the contradictory proposition; but Alcibiades tends in both directions, and that by way of assumption: "You have apparently decided whether I have such purposes in mind or not and if I deny it, it will be no help to me towards persuading you otherwise." This is reasonable: for the superior admits nothing into itself from its inferiors, just as heaven experiences nothing as a result of the change in things beneath the moon, nor the unmoved cause as a result of the movement of things intramundane, nor in general things eternal as a result of what is active in time. In general too that which necessarily knows everything does not undergo change according to the nature of the object known,³³¹ if it be contingent. According to this reasoning Alcibiades
 <168> has no effect on Socrates by his personal denial, nor through his concealment does he confute Socrates' sure knowledge; since, having agreed by presupposition with these assertions, viz: that he has these purposes in mind, and at the same time wondering at Socrates' promise, he requires him to state "how these things will come about through his agency, and how without his assistance they could not come to pass." The words "can you tell me?" were uttered in complete astonishment, as if they reduced Alcibiades to utter dumfoundedness. He has regard only for external power and thinks he will hear of supplies of money, a multitude of men and naval preparations. However Socrates cared for none of this, but for knowledge; for one should not desire the means in preference to the destined user thereof. This too seems to me to coincide with the whole aim of the dialogue; if the user is other than the instrument, and all is in the user, but not in the instrument, then the

³³¹ cp. p. 87, 10-17.

whole of man is in the soul, but the body is subject to the soul from without, as an instrument. It is therefore characteristic of the same attitude both to place supreme power in the hands of the knowledge that employs it and to show that our being lies in the soul; but to make all else, as instruments, dependent upon these.

Furthermore, ³²² the young man quite wonderfully thought of the phrase "through you." Having heard Socrates say "I will transmit to you the power which you desire, with the god's help however," he is aware that it is appropriate to assign the primary efficient cause to the divine, and the instrumental to Socrates. The producer is cause as that by which, but the instrument as that through which; just as the end is usually called that on account of which, but the exemplar that in view <169> of which; the form that in accordance with which, but the material cause, as Aristotle ³³³ has it, that out of which, or as Timaeus ³³⁴ asserts, that in which. It is appropriate, then, to call the instrument a cause, as being that through which. Now Socrates also, being an instrument of the divine, possesses the relationship of "that through which," and with reason the young man utters the words "will accrue to me through you" and "could not come to pass without you." For instruments have the nature of indispensable means in relation to what is taking place, since the principal causes are other viz: final, exemplary and efficient.

"Are you asking whether I have some long account to give, such as you are accustomed to hear? Mine is not such, but I think I could prove to you that this is so, if you were willing to oblige me in just one small thing." "If the service you mention is not something difficult, I am willing." "Does it seem difficult to reply to what is asked?" "No." "Well, answer." "Ask." "So I am asking these questions of you as one who has in mind what I say you have in mind?" "So be it, if you wish, in order that I may know what it is you will say." 106 B-C.

In this passage Socrates is determining the mode of the discussion, of what nature it ought to be, whether oratorical, popular and persuasive <170> or dialectical, accurate and critical. The young man expected to hear prologue, peroration and reasoned main arguments, since he was

³²² For what follows cp. *Ol.* in *Alc.* p. 59, 22-60, 12.

³³³ cf. *Aristot. Metaph.* 1013a24-6, *Phys.* 194b23-6.

³³⁴ cf. *Tim.* 49e-51b and the commentaries of Taylor & Cornford.

brought up on speeches of this kind; but Socrates leads him to philosophical argument and the brief procedure of the scrutiny of his convictions. This manner of discussion, viz. the dialectical, since it is accomplished by question and answer, in the first place renders the hearer more attentive, compelling him to follow closely the questions, instead of shrugging off the influence of the speaker and turning the mind to other things; which is just what happens to those who listen to oratorical speeches, since they pay no attention to them, but for the most part they dismiss them from their minds, and turn their thoughts to other things.³³⁵ Secondly it is most stimulating to the faculty of inquiry, inducing the listener himself to search out the appropriate answers both by applying him to the questions and by turning his attention towards himself, away from considerations that tend towards the external world. Thirdly it also contributes very greatly to purification; it makes the individual who entertains false opinions personally refute himself, disagree with himself, and by fighting against himself discern the ugliness of deceit and reach out after true knowledge. For refutation is a syllogism which proves the contradictory conclusion; ³³⁶ this is a purging from erroneous opinions, since he who undergoes refutation becomes an accuser of his own ignorance. Fourthly it contributes considerably towards recollection on our part; for to discern the truth in oneself, oneself to be the person who asserts it, to turn one's attention to oneself and consider the object of knowledge within oneself, truly shows that acts of learning are acts of recollection.

<171> In the case of oratorical speeches knowledge is induced in us from without: it is extraneous and adventitious; but in dialectical conversations we ourselves realize the truth. "If" says he "one asks the right questions, those who are questioned state everything of their own accord"; ³³⁷ and so learning is recollection. For these and several other reasons, then, Socrates approves the dialectical method of conversation as being most useful to us for the purpose of attention, enquiry, purification and recollection.

But do not be surprised if Socrates asserts that "it is a small matter to answer the questions put." It seems to require a wise man to answer as one ought; but when the questioner is skilled and the respondent makes his replies by way of elicitation, the whole work belongs to the question-

³³⁵ cf. *Sympos.* 215d.

³³⁶ cf. *Aristot. An. Pr.* 66b11 & cp. *Soph. Elench.* 165a2: "Refutation is a syllogism involving contradiction of the conclusion."

³³⁷ cf. *Phaedo* 73a.

er. If you wish to make a division, you would assert that replies to argumentative and sophistical individuals require greater knowledge, in order that we may not be deceived by them unawares, but replies to those engaged in eliciting knowledge and arousing the intellect within us depend on the questioner and require little effort on our part; since if they guide us aright the replies are in every way easy. This feature of discussions resembles the nature of things. Therein also, when the causes are maleficent, the subject requires great strength to resist being affected; but when the causes are beneficent, what strength it has it has <172> from them and the whole work depends on the agents from whom both strength and perfection flow to the subjects. Therefore both statements are true – both that to answer rightly requires a wise speaker and that this is not difficult for Alcibiades on account of the elicitation by Socrates. So that even in this present case reply is the work of a wise man, I mean Socrates, since he is the cause of the reply. This also in my opinion is appropriate to the communing of lovers. It very clearly shows that in some way both the lover is in the beloved and the beloved in the lover; since as considered in Alcibiades Socrates directs his replies, and as become part of Socrates Alcibiades gives correct answers.

Let so much be said in general about this passage. Of the individual words, the phrase “such as indeed you are accustomed to hear” reveals the irrationality of listening to such speeches; such is the nature of custom and what is inspired from without, since we form customs through the irrational.

The phrase “just one small thing” is contradistinguished against the multitude and length of oratorical speeches.

Again, the verb “to render a service” shows how the questioning here is a process of perfecting proceeding from the questioner to the respondent, and how knowledge has everywhere been allotted the authoritative rank of master, but the imperfect condition of those without knowledge has been allocated the rank of servant. This is the good for it, viz. being of such a nature to be subordinated to the superior and receive the completion that flows therefrom. Again Alcibiades, who uses all his best friends as servants, is shown forth herein as now the servant of Socrates; as if he who desires power over all men holds his <173> hopes of personal dominion in relation to the power of Socrates.

The sentence ³³⁸ “if the service you mention is not something

³³⁸ cf. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 61, 18–23.

difficult" was said in some sense by way of excuse both on account of the greatness of the undertaking (for this gave him the suspicion that it might be hard to prove) and on account of his own capacity (for not everyone can endure every kind of service, but some kinds are enduring while others are hard to manage.)

The question "does it seem difficult to reply?" introduces the second of the assumptions we mentioned. Previously he requested Alcibiades to "wait and listen," but now also to reply. Now just on hearing Socrates, he wondered at him, but upon answering, he will see both his own and Socrates' self as they are.

The question "So I am asking of one who has these things in mind?" comes from Socrates as confirming the assumptions of the future discussions. For demonstrations must proceed from agreed principles; at the same time Socrates induces definition into the unsureness of the young man's consent, form into what is commingled with privation, and definite and indubitable knowledge into what is indeterminate.

There remains the reply of Alcibiades, who agrees to a greater degree than previously, but is not even now completely free from concealment. The phrases "if you wish" and "in order that I may know what it is you will say" clearly reveal that once again he only grants this by way of supposition and so engages in discussion. He desires to become acquainted with the promises of Socrates and on this account he does not give a complete denial, and yet he is ashamed of making so great an admission against himself.

<174> "Come now: you intend, as I say, to come forward and give counsel to the Athenians within a short space of time." 106 C.

The purpose of the whole of the immediately subsequent discussion is the cleansing of our minds from two-fold ignorance and the removal of the obstacles to the recovery of true knowledge. It is impossible for the imperfect to attain their own perfection, unless they have first travelled via the path of personal purification from their impediments, since purification everywhere has this function. But the true cleansing of the soul is threefold: one through the art of initiation concerning which the Socrates of the *Phaedrus* ³³⁹ speaks, the other through philosophy, about which much is said in the *Phaedo* ³⁴⁰ (therein prudence and each of the other virtues is termed "a sort of purification"); and the third through this science of philosophical discussion

³³⁹ cf. *Phaedr.* 244d-e, 250b-c.

³⁴⁰ cf. *Phaedo* 69b-c.

which induces contradiction, exposes the disagreement of opinions and delivers us from twofold ignorance. Purification, then, being threefold, it is in accordance with the third kind that Socrates here handles Alcibiades. For to those suffering from twofold ignorance benefit comes through this sort of purification; they bring arguments into mutual conflict and refute the weakness of their own arguments through the very opinions they have themselves posited. For this reason Socrates says nothing of the truths as yet, until he removes the opinions that prevent the soul from grasping the truth. This process renders us more
 <175> moderate and well-ordered, and less unpleasant and vulgar towards those in our company on account of our conceit; at the same time more prepared for knowledge (for simple ignorance is in some way between knowledge and twofold ignorance: the immediate shifting away from knowledge is to simple ignorance, and the proximate ascent from simple ignorance is to knowledge); and at the same time withdraws us from opinion that tends toward externals, turns the soul towards itself, renders it able to criticise its own opinions, able to remove the obstacles to knowledge and to fill up deficiencies; further it affords stability and permanence to the benefit from the discussions that are to take place. For as a body, when it is troubled by strange humours, often spoils its food, and turns the benefit therefrom into harm, so also a soul, when it is disquieted through false conceit and receives the benefit imparted by knowledge in a manner conformable to its own condition, makes this a basis for even greater delusion and deceit. The purification, then, that precedes all discussion is undertaken for this reason and resembles the purifications of initiatory rites, which, prior to sacred activities, cleanse us from all the defilements which we contract from birth and prepare us for participation in the divine. This takes place according to the method of dialectical inquiry which induces us to contradiction, exposes the deceit that darkens our minds, and proceeds via the more well-known and general premisses to indisputable conclusions, taking
 <176> the major premisses from common notions, and positing the minor by agreement with the respondent: it unites the extremes with each other via the middle terms;³⁴¹ as much as is denied of the major terms, it

³⁴¹ cf. Aristot. *An. Pr.* 25b32-9: "Now when three terms are so related to one another that the last is wholly contained in the middle and the middle is wholly contained in or excluded from the first, the extremes must admit of perfect syllogism. By "middle term" I mean that which both is contained in another and contains in itself, and which is also by position the middle; by "extremes" a) that which is contained in another, and b) that in which another is contained." (Loeb). cf. Ross' commentary ad loc.

denies of the minor, while, as much as belongs to the predicates, it postulates as belonging to the subjects.³⁴²

Now how does Socrates, in the present exposition of his argument, preserve all these considerations? Well, his aim is to show up Alcibiades as knowing nothing of the matters which he thinks he knows, and concerning which he professes that he will give counsel to the Athenians. First is shown what are the attributes of the good counsellor: as, for instance, that “every good counsellor knows the subject concerning which he offers counsel, and knows it better than the counselled. Neither will he presume, while knowing less, to give counsel to those who have a better knowledge of what will be to their benefit – since such behaviour is madness: nor, while possessing a like knowledge, does he give counsel to those who have similar knowledge, on those subjects in which they possess this similar knowledge – since the undertaking is superfluous and pointless. It remains therefore, that the counsellor has a greater knowledge of what will be beneficial than those who are to partake of his judgment and enjoy his counsel. But everyone who has knowledge of any subject, regained ³⁴³ this knowledge either through learning or discovery; since there is no other way left for the acquisition of wisdom, but we must either learn or discover what we do not know, either by reverting to ourselves and discovering the truth on our own account or by being stimulated and aided by others towards the recovery of knowledge. The good counsellor, then, since he possesses knowledge in whatever matters the counselled are ignorant, has either <177> learned or discovered what he knows.” Men have discovered much, as, for instance, those who first turned their attention to certain elements in certain activities of craft or in certain investigations of knowledge; and we admire them for their inventiveness and intuitive perceptions; and others get to know much through learning, when aided by others more perfect than themselves. The stronger natural characters behold the truth of themselves and are more ingenious “being saved through their own strength”, ³⁴⁴ as the oracle says, while the weaker characters need in addition both instruction and reminders from others who possess perfection in those aspects in which they lack it. Let us add to this

³⁴² cf. Aristot. Cat. 1b10–12.

³⁴³ cf. Meno 85d: “And the spontaneous recovery of knowledge that is in him is recollection, isn’t it?” cf. also Phaedo 75e.

³⁴⁴ i.e. the intelligent power of the soul freed from matter. cf. Kroll: De Orac. Chald. p. 52, Lewy *op. cit.* p. 194 note 67, p. 203 note 114, where they quote Procl. in Remp. II p. 112, 21: “... possessing a soul that despises the body and of a condition to glance upwards even “of its own strength,” as the oracle says...”

syllogism another which runs as follows. "Everyone who has learned or discovered has previously made inquiries or consulted teachers; for enquiry must precede discovery, instruction learning, since discovery is a pursuit and a finding of the object of search, while learning is a participation in perfection proceeding from the teacher. If then the good counsellor has either learned or discovered the matters in which he offers counsel, and everyone who has either learned or discovered anything has either made inquiries or frequented teachers, surely every good counsellor must know the matters in which he offers counsel either through inquiry or through instruction from others." Now let us consider a third syllogism by the addition of another premiss, as follows. "Everyone who has enquired after any subject or consulted teachers about anything can name a time in which he once considered that he
 <178> did not possess this knowledge; and the reason is that men both hasten to make enquiry when they advert to their own ignorance and frequent the doors of teachers when they are not confident of being sufficient unto themselves for the removal of ignorance; there is then a certain time prior both to enquiry and instruction, in which they considered themselves ignorant precisely of those matters which they have enquired after and learned. If then the good counsellor has come to know the subjects concerning which he offers counsel either by inquiry or instruction, and there was a time when the inquirer or instructed thought himself ignorant thereof, surely it remains that the good counsellor can name some time in which he thought himself ignorant of those subjects concerning which he is a good counsellor." Now these three syllogisms have been posited by means of the fewest possible consecutive premisses; but if it is necessary in addition to make one composite syllogism from all the premisses, let us pronounce it thus in due order according to the so-called composite form, made up of firsts overlapping firsts ³⁴⁵ (for they are in the first figure); well then, let it be stated in order, as follows. "Every good counsellor knows the subjects concerning which he offers counsel: everyone who knows the subjects concerning which he offers counsel, knows them either by learning or discovery: everyone who has learned or discovered has either approached teachers or enquired of himself: everyone who has approached teachers or enquired of himself could name a time in which he thought himself ignorant of the subjects concerning which he offers

³⁴⁵ i.e. a series of major premisses strung together from a number of syllogisms, all of which are in the first figure. First figure syllogisms are considered by Aristotle in *An. Pr.* 25b26-26b33.

counsel." With this syllogism one must combine the minor premisses, both with each of the simple syllogisms individually, and together with them all: for instance "but in fact Alcibiades has neither made enquiry nor received instruction, therefore he is not a good counsellor"; and you make the same kind of combination.³⁴⁶ Again: "but in fact Alcibiades cannot name a time in which he thought himself ignorant, therefore he is not a good counsellor."

<179> Now we, by adding the minor premiss in each syllogism have come to the same conclusion; but Socrates, by applying the negative to one alone and that the most important of the premisses, has destroyed all the minor premisses. If Alcibiades cannot name a time in which he thought himself ignorant of the subjects concerning which he offers counsel, then he neither made inquiry nor approached teachers; but if he neither made inquiry nor associated with any teachers, he neither learned nor discovered; but if he neither learned nor discovered, he does not know; and if he does not know, he is not a good counsellor on those matters in which he cannot name a time when he thought himself ignorant. You see how, if the argument is put forward in this manner, at one time we progress by composition, at another by resolution, making our affirmations compositely but our negations by resolution. These two, composition and resolution, are completely suited to the nature of the soul, which descends from the more to the less perfect by the composition of innate notions and the addition of certain alien garments,³⁴⁷ until it is fenced^{348*} about by this heavy, rigid bondage, but ascends through the loosening and removal of what is in no way appropriate to it, until, become "naked"³⁴⁹ in accordance with the oracle, it is united even to the immaterial forms which possess separate existence. For this reason the syllogism by means of affirmatives proceeds from the more to the less perfect, but that by means of negations vice-versa. For to be a good counsellor is more perfect than the knowledge contained therein alone; the latter (viz. knowledge) induces solely a participation in intellect, but the former (viz. goodness) a participation in the most primary principle also. Again to know is

³⁴⁶ Just as the major premisses have been combined above, so one can combine the minor premisses also.

³⁴⁷ cf. note 284.

³⁴⁹ cf. note 285.

^{348*} Dr. Westerink now retains the reading of N and cps. in Remp. II, p. 281, 2; Theol. Plat. p. 207, 12.

surely nobler than to learn and to discover; for the former (*viz.* knowledge) is proposed as an end, but learning and discovery are paths to the acquisition of knowledge; but paths are necessarily imperfect as still partaking of the privation that is contrary to the end. Further, this learning and discovery is nobler than enquiry and instruction; the latter are for the sake of the former; but the former, although they are movements towards knowledge, are yet in some sense ends of the latter. Again, to enquire and to have received instruction are superior in worth to ignorance; the former are starting-points for the acquisition of knowledge, but ignorance on the contrary is a falling away therefrom. If, then, these statements of ours have been correct, the affirmative syllogism proceeds from the more to the less perfect, and therefore resembles a descent, but the negative moving towards the more perfect resembles an ascent. Again the one, by the natural arrangement of the subject matter, does not do away with the superior states, while the other, by the disposition contrary to nature, overthrows the greater premisses by the lesser; ³⁵⁰ but by both dispositions ³⁵¹ *viz.* according to the kind of construction and according to the subject matter, there is <181> an appropriateness to our human condition. Let so much be said by way of preliminary about the syllogisms: it remains for us, after expounding the diction, to consider the subject-matter.

“Come now, you intend, as I assert, to come forward and counsel the Athenians very shortly; now if as you were about to ascend the rostrum, I should take hold of you and ask: “Alcibiades, upon what subject do the Athenians intend to deliberate, that you rise up to offer advice? Is it a subject upon which you know better than they?” What would you reply?” “I would say, presumably, “upon which I know better than they.” “Since you are a good counsellor upon those subjects you happen to know.” “Certainly.” 106. C-D.

³⁵⁰ The positive syllogism (p. 178, 15-19) starts with the state of the good counsellor who knows his subject, and runs through the successive steps that lead thereto, in descending order. The negative syllogism (p. 179, 4-8), by denying the lowest step in the series that leads towards knowledge, denies also all the subsequent higher steps. *cp.* Denys L'Aréopagite: *La Hiérarchie Céleste* (Sources Chrétiennes) p. xxv-vi.

³⁵¹ Understanding this word (“*diathesei*”) from the preceding clause. This seems to give a just tolerable sense. The form of construction (by ascent or descent) resembles the ups and downs of the soul, and the subject matter describes the psychological process of the acquisition of knowledge.

The good from above, in so far as it is established beyond the intellectual level of reality, if it is lawful to speak of it in this way, proceeds down to the lowest level, and illuminates all things and conserves them, arranges them and turns them back to itself; primarily it is present to the things that really are, secondly to divine souls, by a third expression of its reality to the superior orders,³⁵² and after this to our souls, and indeed to animals and plants and all bodies, and to the very sediment³⁵³ of all reality, formless³⁵⁴ matter. But rather, it secretly and ineffably, prior to all orders, irradiates everything with its own gift, and they partake of the good differently according to their own rank, and as is <182> the nature of each, some less and some more clearly, some more unitarily and some more dividedly, some eternally, but others subject to change. Things that are more divine, as they possess being undivided, so also they possess the good unified and undivided; but those that have proceeded further from the first principles have secured their good in observable difference and division, and therefore such entities require assembling into a unity and mutual agreement, in order that, since each one does not possess self-sufficiency, which is a constituent of the good, it may fill the gap in its nature by mutual association and combination, and again that it may relieve the weakness and deficiency, caused by division, through concordance, and recall it to strength and perfection. It is on account of such reasoning that men who are in themselves weak come together and deliberate in common concerning their interests, reassembling the divided intellect and, as it were, hastening to kindle one blaze from many sparks, and contributing the partial good of each individual to the common welfare. This is the reason why cities have constructed certain public buildings for deliberation. But since different individuals partake of the good in varying measures, one more and one less, and one has received an intellect that is a more perfect judge of what is good, another a less perfect (for it is intellect that is able to contemplate the good), someone is born among the many with a mind that transcends the mass, with a

³⁵² i.e. the orders of reality that are nearer to the Good e.g. the spirits and those souls that are less than divine but superior to the human soul. cf. *El. Theol.* prop. 12, l. 15: "For by the very term "superior" we mean that which in greater measure partakes of good."

³⁵³ The term originates from *Phaedo* 109c2, and is used by Plotinus e.g. at *Enn.* II, 3, 17 l. 24. For its original use in relation to matter cf. *Lewy op. cit.* p. 384, note 275. On matter in general and its characteristics cf. *ibid.* note 274, c. 5 sect. 3, c. 6 sect. 11; and *El. Theol.* p. 231, 275.

³⁵⁴ cf. *Tim.* 50c-51a & Cornford's commentary; *Lewy* p. 296, note 141.

greater participation in the good and having filled his soul with intellect, who also thinks fit to be a counsellor to the many, gathering
 <183> together the good that is dispersed among them, joining their division into association and restoring what is deficient to a condition of self-sufficiency. How could the multitude of itself ever attain the common good unless grouped together about one element in it that is best? For this is observable in every order of being, that the multitude everywhere becomes assimilated to the one, and through the one that is of like nature to it reaches upwards towards transcendent unification. So the multitude of those who deliberate, eager to grasp the good, attains its end through the medium of the counsellor. For the one that is of the same rank with them is the counsellor, who has received this name as being responsible to those in deliberation for the conclusion arrived at and the union of opinion. As both unification and the good have come to all beings from one primary principle, so also the same individual extends to men both communion of intellect and communication of goods; and as the primary good is productive of intellect so also the counsellor is bestower of wisdom upon those in deliberation. With reason, therefore, ancient report has described "counsel as a sacred matter"; ³⁵⁵ for it is divinely inspired, and aims at the good, and
 <184> like it arranges what lies inferior to it. Therefore those ³⁵⁶ who distinguish the deliberative form of oratory from both the declamatory and the forensic by the good certainly in my opinion hit the truth. The deliberative has as its end the good, the declamatory looks toward what is honourable, while the forensic aims at what is just. Now the forensic depends on Soul, wherein resides what is just and all proportions and division in substance: the declamatory on Intellect wherein shines forth the true beauty: and the deliberative on the Good, since what is advantageous is surely also of the order of the Good. Now the end both for those who deliberate and the counsellor, is the Good; and the counsellor has a complete share in all the constituents of the communication of the Good. He must possess a purpose that has to the greatest degree the form of the good, a knowledge that is most complete and a power of extreme vigour, in order that he may both strive towards his own particular end, and attain it through knowledge, and make his own decision clear to those who consult him; and through his purpose, that has the form of the good, he must be assimilated to the divine, through knowledge to what is intelligent, and through power to

³⁵⁵ cf. Theag. 122b.

³⁵⁶ cf. Aristot. Rhet. 1358b7-25.

souls. For goodness lies primarily among gods, knowledge in the intelligent grade of being, and the faculty of reason entirely in souls; for reason is the offspring of soul, and likewise the whole faculty of discussion. Of these three qualities which the counsellor must possess, Socrates in the present passage choose out one, viz. knowledge, and in this respect he shows that Alcibiades is not a good counsellor, since he lacks knowledge, although it is necessary for a counsellor to be knowledgeable on the subjects concerning which he offers advice, and not merely to possess a knowledge of the expedient, but one that is greater and more perfect than that of those who are to partake of his
 <185> counsel. He takes this one constituent of a counsellor first, viz. knowledge, in order that, if the young man be shown to possess this knowledge, he will stand revealed as a good counsellor, at least as far as knowledge is concerned, but if he fails utterly in this, he must be completely bereft of the pre-eminence of a counsellor. It follows thereon, surely, that coming events be judged by knowledge and that each person is good in those spheres wherein he possesses practical wisdom and bad in those spheres wherein he possesses the contrary folly. Let no one assert that herein Socrates does not draw a correct distinction, on the grounds that counsellors need not only knowledge but also harmony of the emotions; nor that the virtues are not simply branches of knowledge, because they require also the conformity of the irrational faculties. For all the virtues depend upon practical wisdom as their leader, find their substance in relation to it and receive their impulse therefrom; further, to distinguish both good and evil is the task of the practical wisdom alone, as Socrates himself shows in both the Charmides³⁵⁷ and the Meno.³⁵⁸ If, then, the counsellor is an examiner of what is good and evil, beneficial and harmful, reasonably Socrates has referred the whole of his preparation to practical wisdom. So much for the subject matter.

The handling of the discussion is also worthy of admiration, so great is its clarity, forcefulness and knowledgeability. For the phrase "as I assert" elevates the concealment and indeterminacy of the young man to the appropriate level of decisiveness, practically stating clearly that to the wise the state of mind of the many is well-known and nothing in their inferiors escapes them, whatever it may be.

<186> The phrase "within a short time" is pointed; if he is jumping into

³⁵⁷ cf. Charm. 174a-d.

³⁵⁸ cf. Meno 88b-d.

political affairs when not yet twenty, surely he is indulging a senseless impulse?

To bring before his eyes, as if upon the stage of the assembly, the people and the actual rostrum with Alcibiades hastening to seize the position of counsellor and himself taking hold of him and as it were applying reason as a bridle to his onrush, presents a very vivid picture, and at the same time makes it clear that one should do nothing without examination, nor before enquiring into one's own knowledge rush to correct others. Let reason, then, be the guide of our actions and moderate ambitions, and may it lead unreflecting impulse to testing and judgment: saying farewell to the rostrum and the people let us set in order the populace within us: cutting out the tumult of the emotions let us listen to the counsels of the Intellect (for it is the true counsellor of souls), and reverting thereto let us search out the Good. For it is through Intellect that even souls behold the Good, but the state of mind that is on the one hand filled with ignorance and on the other disturbed by the emotions can provide neither itself nor others with the Good.

- <187> "Surely you know only what you have learned from others or have found out for yourself? "What else indeed?" "Is it possible, then, that you could ever have learned or discovered anything without either wishing to learn or to make personal enquiry?" "No, it not possible." "Well, then, would you have been willing to enquire after or learn what you thought you knew?" "Certainly not." "Was there a time when you thought yourself ignorant of what you now happen to know?" "Necessarily" 106. D-E.

Plato posits these two paths towards all knowledge, learning and discovery, as being appropriate to our souls. Now neither do the classes superior to our soul attain their own perfection through learning or discovery, since they are always united with their objects of knowledge and never withdraw therefrom nor become deficient in the knowledge appropriate to them; nor are the inferior and so-called irrational beings by nature such as to absorb mental learning, or of themselves to discover any aspect of reality: for they do not perceive any aspect of the truth, either. But the soul of man, which possesses innate in itself every notion, and has preconceived all knowledge, but is prevented by birth from the contemplation of what it possesses, requires both learning and discovery, in order that through learning it may stimulate its intellectual perceptions of itself, and through

discovery may find itself and the fullness of the notions innate therein. These are the gifts of gods who benefit it in its fallen state and recall it to the life of the intellect, both coming from the order of Hermes, but one in so far as this god is son of Maia, ³⁵⁹ daughter of Atlas, the other <188> in so far as he is messenger of Zeus. By revealing "the Will of the Father" ³⁶⁰ he bestows learning upon souls; but in so far as he proceeds from Maia, with whom inquiry lies hid, he bestows discovery upon his fosterlings.³⁶¹ When learning proceeds from above from the superior powers to souls, it is superior to discovery; when, however, it proceeds from those on the same level as ourselves, as, for instance, when men arouse our faculty of knowledge, it is inferior to discovery. Discovery, then, lies in the middle, appropriate to the self-moving part of the soul; since chiefly through it our spontaneous life and activity become evident; but learning faces both ways, in its superior aspect satiating the soul from causes more divine than it, and in its inferior aspect stimulating the faculty of life externally from causes that lie outside our being. But sufficient evidence that a certain knowledge of reality is engendered within us by the superior powers, is afforded by the visions and guidances of the gods, which manifest the order of the universe to souls, pioneer the journey towards the intelligible, and "kindle the fires" ³⁶² that lead upward.

Well, so much we had to say as regards learning and discovery. But enquiry and instruction are of necessity chiefly concerned with simple ignorance. Neither those who know still seek the truth, since they have reached the limit of investigation by their knowledge, nor those who <189> are in the grip of twofold ignorance: "For this is twofold ignorance to be neither honourable nor good nor wise and yet to consider oneself adequate," says the account of Diotima.³⁶³ The reason is that although souls descend to birth filled essentially with knowledge, yet as a result

³⁵⁹ Maia, mother of Hermes by Zeus and daughter of Atlas, is considered as "foster-mother," "midwife" and "nurse." Hermes was messenger of the gods, especially Zeus and "guide of souls" (cf. *Odyss.* XXIV, 1 ff).

³⁶⁰ cf. Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 62, Lewy *op. cit.* p. 79-80, esp. note 49: "The action of the transcendent God is thought, consequently the first entity that issues from him in His Intellect. His Will acts in harmony with this entity; for his volition is thought, and His thought is action."

³⁶¹ cp. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 63, 14-19.

³⁶² cf. Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 53 where he quotes Th. Pl. p. 118, 11: "Maturing the birth-pangs of souls and kindling the fire within them." Fire purifies and uplifts, being the lightest element and akin to the divine fire, of which the soul contains a spark. It is identified with the sun and its rays cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 171-4, notes 397-8; c. 3, sect. 2 & 3, esp. p. 197 note 84.

³⁶³ cf. *Sympos.* 204a.

of birth, they contract forgetfulness; and by possessing the innate ideas of reality as it were pulsating within them, they have notions about them, but overcome by the draught of oblivion they are unable to articulate their own notions and reduce them to knowledge. Therefore they carry them around as it were swooning and scarcely breathing, and for this reason they acquire twofold ignorance, under the impression that through such notions they possess knowledge, but really in a state of ignorance on account of their forgetfulness;³⁶⁴ and hence comes deceit and the illusion of knowledge. So the man who is doubly ignorant is as far from enquiry into reality as the man of knowledge. To seek wisdom is characteristic neither of the wise nor of the person who suffers from twofold ignorance, but evidently of the man who is in the state of simple ignorance. In this respect the doubly ignorant resembles the wise as matter resembles god, by the likeness of dissimilarity, as someone correctly observes.³⁶⁵ As matter is devoid of form, so is god; further, each is boundless and unknowable, since one is everything in a superior sense, and the other is everything in the <190> inferior sense; so also both the man of knowledge and the doubly ignorant inquire after nothing, but the one because he is wise and, as it were, "resource,"³⁶⁶ the other because he has grasped not even the first principles of enquiry, on account of the falsehood that surrounds him. But the man of simple ignorance is somehow midway between the man of knowledge and the person who has doubled the deceit within himself. For, simply by knowing and reverting to himself he is superior to the man who is completely ignorant of himself, but in so far as, in regarding himself, he beholds not knowledge, but ignorance, he is inferior to the man of knowledge. Of these three one is totally devoid of reversion to himself: another both reverts and having reverted finds within himself virtues and sciences like radiant images of the gods;³⁶⁷ and the third does revert, but sees within himself lack of learning and knowledge and so is reduced to the first beginnings of both learning and discovery, either by investigating himself and his own riches, which he

³⁶⁴ cp. p. 7, 5-6.

³⁶⁵ cp. Procl. in Remp. II p. 369, 4-6: "Perhaps we should observe that in the case of such a characteristic there is a dissimilar likeness towards justice, as is customarily said of matter and the first principle." *ibid.* p. 375, 24-7: "There is also a fifth element, which we should rank close to simple non-being, matter that is dissimilarly alike to the first principle, because it is as inferior to every form as the first principle is superior."

³⁶⁶ cf. Sympos. 203b and p. 236, 4-10.

³⁶⁷ cp. p. 89, 9-10 & note 209.

possesses but is unaware of, or by approaching instructors and being guided thereby. To put it simply, the soul, in regard to knowledge, resembles intellect, by its activity comprehending the object of knowledge, as the intellect comprehends the intelligible; but in regard to twofold ignorance it resembles matter; the latter possesses all things in mere appearance, but in truth nothing, and has the conceit of being
 <191> endowed with order, but has not escaped from disorder; so also the person who is doubly ignorant thinks he knows what he does not know, and carries around with him an appearance of wisdom in those subjects of which he is ignorant. So much for these matters.

When Socrates says that "there was a time when we thought ourselves ignorant of what we now know," certain persons consider that this statement is in conflict with what is written in the *Phaedo*,³⁶⁸ in which, when discussing the view that learning is recollection, he shows that although we possess the knowledge of what is equitable and just and honourable and of each of the forms we could not name a time at which we acquired it. In reply to this objection one must state that the knowledge of souls is twofold, one inarticulate and by mere notion,
 <192> the other articulate, scientific and indubitable. "For," as he himself somewhere³⁶⁹ observes, "it is as if we had learned everything in a dream, only to be unaware of this in our waking hours," possessing in our essential being the innate notions of things and as it were exhaling the scent of their knowledge, but not possessing them by actual realization. There is therefore no time which precedes the notion of the forms established within us by our existence (since we have apprehended it from eternity,) but we can give a time to the acquisition of knowledge by the realization and articulation of innate notions. I know that I learned the definition of the form of the circle at some one point of time, and of the form of justice at some other, and so for each of the realities, the knowledge of which we possess in actuality. When we recollect something, we do not at the same time recall when we learned it, but there is necessarily some definite time of recollection.

"But in fact I myself know pretty well what you have learned: if however anything has escaped me, please tell me. You have learned, as far as I remember, letters, and how to play the lyre and wrestle: for you refused to learn the pipe. This is what you know, unless you

³⁶⁸ cf. *Phaedo* 75c-e.

³⁶⁹ cf. *Statesman* 277d.

have learned something somewhere without my noticing it: and I think this was not by going out of doors either by night or by day." "Certainly I have been to no other teachers than these." 106. E.

It was necessary for Socrates to enumerate the subjects which Alcibiades has learned. Since it has already been conceded that one must <193> teach and counsel others on those subjects in regard to which one possesses knowledge and in which one is more knowledgeable than those receiving instruction and counsel, it was necessary first of all to disclose the kinds of knowledge which Alcibiades imbibed from his youth, in order that we may understand in what subjects he is better than others and which individuals he would surpass in what branches of learning; in these he is in fact a trustworthy counsellor. On this account it was necessary, as I have said, to enumerate the Attic subjects of education in which Alcibiades took part; it also affords ornament and grace to the discourse in order that the laying down of dry philosophical considerations may not make the reader weary. There is also an element of usefulness for the coming refutation: for Socrates begins with what the young man knows and ends with what he does not know, in order that Alcibiades having tested the criteria of knowledge in the case of subjects that are known, for instance that one must learn or discover and previous to this enquire or receive instruction and that prior to this there has existed the time of ignorance, so also, on being demanded the same requirements in the case of subjects that are not known he may admit refutation. What kinds of learning, what kinds of discovery have transmitted to you the knowledge of what is just? What kinds of enquiry, what sort of masters pioneered your learning or discovery? At what time did you consider yourself ignorant of what is just? As in the case of wrestling, so also on the question of what is just and what is advantageous, the knowledge thereof must at the same time introduce all these factors.

Furthermore it is obvious that these three subjects, "letters and lyre-playing and wrestling" ³⁷⁰ somehow contribute to political virtue in <194> general. Under unperverted constitutions ³⁷¹ the children are educated by means of physical training, music and mathematics, in order that by

³⁷⁰ cp. *Ol. vit. Plat. p. 191*, 28-34 Hermann: "The children at Athens were educated in these three subjects viz. letters, music and wrestling, but not without further purpose. They were taught letters in order to regulate the reason within them, music in order to tame the temper, wrestling and physical training in order to strengthen the languidity of sense desire."

³⁷¹ cf. esp. *Resp. III 410b-411a*.

physical training they may strengthen the weakness of the sensitive appetite, recall what is soft to vigour (since this sense-appetite is nearest to the body, and, as it were deadened by matter, it requires something to strengthen and arouse it); and that through music they may relax the tension and fierceness of the temper and make it harmonious and well-attuned, since temper is the tension of the soul. Neither physical training alone suffices for education (since this by itself, separated from music, renders the dispositions of those who take part unduly fierce, contentious and intense) nor music alone without physical training (since those who cultivate music alone make their way of life effeminate and become rather soft); but, as in a lyre, there must be neither tension alone nor relaxation, but the whole soul must be attuned to itself by a combination of intensity and relaxation in education. These practices set in order and train the irrational elements in the young; but mathematics and the art of philosophical discussion stimulate and elevate our reason. For the "eye of the soul," ³⁷² blinded and submerged by a multitude of pursuits, is rekindled by these means <195> and reverts to itself and to the knowledge of itself. By such food, then, the reason within us is nourished and thereby ascends to intellect, as Socrates taught in the work referred to above. All these are subjects related to Hermes; this god is patron of physical training (on this account they used to set up statues of Hermes in the wrestling schools) and of music (for which reason he is honoured in heaven as god of the lyre) ³⁷³ and of mathematics (since they trace back to him the discovery of geometry and arithmetic and all such subjects) ³⁷⁴ and of philosophical discussion (for this god is discoverer of all reason, since he it is "who devised speech," as we have learned in the *Cratylus*.) ³⁷⁵ Since he

³⁷² cf. *Resp.* VII 533d: "When the eye of the soul is sunk in a veritable slough of barbarous ignorance, this method (of philosophical discussion) gently draws it forth and guides it upwards (Cornford: who refers to *Resp.* II 363d). cf. also notes on this passage in the Loeb edition. Burial in mud as a punishment of the uninitiated is referred to in Kern: *Orph. Frg.* 235 and Guthrie: *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (1952) pp. 158-162.

cf. also *Resp.* VII 527d-e: "True it is quite hard to realise that every soul possesses an organ better worth saving than a thousand eyes, because it is our only means of seeing the truth; and that when its light is dimmed or extinguished by other interests, these studies will purify the hearth and rekindle the sacred fire." (Cornford).

³⁷³ cf. *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 11. 39-61.

³⁷⁴ cf. *Phaedr.* 274c-d: "He it was that invented number and calculation, geometry and astronomy, not to speak of draughts and dice, and above all writing"; and *Hermias* in *Phaedr.* p. 255, 1-8 Couvreur.

³⁷⁵ cf. *Crat.* 407e-408b.

presides over all education, he is naturally our guide, leading the way for us to the intelligible, leading the soul up from this mortal place, directing the various companies of souls, dispersing their slumber and oblivion and acting as bestower of recollection, the purpose of which is the pure intellection of what is divine. Under correct forms of government, the education of pupils is prescribed, subject to the guardians of the laws, by means of these subjects of instruction, as we have said. But in Athens certain mere forms thereof were preserved; letters aimed at instruction in dialectic, lyre-playing at instruction in music and wrestling at instruction in physical training, through which means youths of noble birth were educated. On this account Socrates says that <196> Alcibiades learned these subjects, because he received the education appropriate to youths of noble birth. This is consonant with the order of the universe.³⁷⁶ Our earliest age gives us a special share in the creativity of the moon, ³⁷⁷ since at that time we live according to the functions of growth and vegetative life: our second age in the creativity of Hermes, when youths take thought for letters and lyre-playing and wrestling: the third age in the creativity of Aphrodite, when they begin to produce semen and to arouse the child-producing faculties of nature: the fourth age in the creativity of the sun, ³⁷⁸ when youth comes to its full flower and shows forth the perfection of the whole age-range, since it has attained the mid-point between coming to be and passing away, for such is the position assigned to man's prime: the fifth age in the creativity of Ares, during which men grasp especially at positions of power and pre-eminence over others: the sixth in the creativity of Zeus, during which men think fit to devote themselves to practical wisdom and the life of action and politics; and the seventh in the creativity of Kronos, ³⁷⁹ during which it is natural for men to

³⁷⁶ For the following section cf. F. Cumont: *Astrology & Religion among the Greeks & Romans* pp. 119-121; Macrobius: *In somn. Scip.* I, 11, 12, where the descent of the soul involves the reverse process.

³⁷⁷ To the moon was attributed the function of producing life. cf. Iamblichus: *Procl. in Tim.* III p. 65, 17-20: "Observing that the moon is first assigned to the region about the earth, as exercising the role of nature and of mother in regard to generation (for everything turns with her, and increases if she increases, diminishes if she diminishes)."

³⁷⁸ cp. Julian: *Hymn to King Helios* 139c: "The midmost perfection of King Helios is of the form of the One, situated amid the intelligent gods."

³⁷⁹ cf. Proclus: *in Crat.* p. 28, 18-21: "For King Kronos employs all the products of Zeus with transcendent pre-eminence, and proffers the upward path to individual souls through the medium of their imagery."

withdraw and separate ³⁸⁰ themselves from the world of process and come round to something different viz. the incorporeal way of life. We have made all these distinctions to prove that both letters and the education of youths as a whole are dependent on the series of Hermes.

<197> It is worth noticing why Alcibiades declined the pipe although even pipe-playing is a form of music. Now certain authors ³⁸¹ have already observed that since Alcibiades was a dandy from his youth he did not apply himself to playing the pipe, because he wished to avoid the disfigurement in the face and the rest of the body as a whole which results from blowing into the pipes; for the use of such instruments has an ungraceful appearance. But this explanation is in general a precipitate condemnation of Alcibiades as guilty of a passion for elegance and fails to observe that it is a common practice for all who are nobly born to avoid the pipe. It is more fair to say that correct forms of government abandoned the practice of pipe-playing; ³⁸² and therefore Plato does not accept it either. The reason is the intricacy of this instrument, I mean the pipe, which has proved to involve a technique which is not to be preferred; since the instruments which admit of all the modes and the use of many notes "are imitations of the pipes"; ³⁸³ for each finger-hole of the pipes emits at least three notes, so they say, and if the side-holes are opened, even more. We must not admit into education every kind of music, but only as much of it as is simple. Furthermore some of these musical instruments are soothing, some exciting, the former

<198> suited to rest, the latter to motion. Now the soothing instruments are very effective in education, reducing our disposition to order, restraining the turbulence of youth and persuading our excitedness to a state of tranquillity and moderation, but the exciting instruments are most suited to inspiration. For this reason the pipe is useful both in the mysteries and rites of initiation. They employ its stimulus to arouse the mind to the divine: for it is necessary to calm the irrational, but to stir up the reason. Therefore, when imparting education they use the soothing instruments, but when initiating, the exciting; for what is trained is the

³⁸⁰ For this notion of retirement and devotion to a higher life cf. A. J. Festugière: *Personal Religion among the Greeks* c. 4, where he quotes Plot. I, 1, 12, 18-20; II, 3, 9, 19-30.

³⁸¹ cf. Plut. Alcib. 2.

³⁸² cf. Aristot. Pol. 1341a5-b9.

³⁸³ cf. Resp. III 399c-d and Kathleen Schlesinger: *The Greek Aulos* (pp. 72-4, 151 & 194), to which the translation of these lines is much indebted. The Greeks played both single and double aulos, and regarded the instrument as the origin of octave-scales.

irrational element, but what is initiated and inspired is the reason. So much for the subject of pipe-playing.

One would also gather from this passage that Socrates maintained the position of a good spirit in his provision concerning Alcibiades. The fact that the latter "never escaped his notice either by day or by night" when leaving home is truly characteristic of a guardian spirit. For as the latter watches over both our visible and invisible activities, so also Socrates guarded and watched both the daily and nightly exits of his beloved, like a good spirit, as we have said. So without qualification Alcibiades could say to Socrates the words of Homer which Odysseus addresses to our mistress Athena viz: "nor do my movements escape <199> thee." ³⁸⁴ For to be everywhere at every moment beside him and to anticipate all his comings and goings is characteristic of a certain spirit-like and divine guard and watch. Furthermore to preconceive all his subjects of study and all his knowledge—certainly this also affords proof of the same pre-eminence. Everywhere what is more perfect embraces in a unified manner the knowledge of inferiors, and in a mode superior to that of the less perfect. What sense perception ascertains in a manner immersed in matter, exists in a more immaterial manner in the imagination; and what opinion knows without cause, scientific knowledge knows with its cause. So everywhere the superior realities, by a certain transcendent preeminence, possess in advance all the knowledge that resides in the inferior beings. Furthermore the fact that nothing relating to the young man has escaped Socrates whether it concern his preparation of soul or his suitability of character or what fortune has bestowed on him, is surely characteristic of a guardian spirit; since nothing relative to us escapes the notice of the spirit who is set over us, no movement of the soul, no function of nature, no fortuitous change, but he watches over and governs all things unitarily: just so Socrates, after complete inspection of his beloved, beginning from the soul itself, applies aid to him and as it were from the stern ³⁸⁵ directs and perfects him.

"Will you, then, arise to counsel the Athenians, when they deliberate on the question of letters, as to how they should write them correctly?" 107 A.

³⁸⁴ cf. Homer *Iliad* X, 279-80.

³⁸⁵ cp. p. 140, 9 & p. 281, 18, and cf. Critias 109c where the gods are described as guiding mankind by the steering-oar of persuasion. Hence the expression "from the stern," where the steering-oar was located.

<200> The discussion proceeds in due order. Having mutually agreed, on the one hand what qualities should belong to good counsellors viz. that they should possess a knowledge and understanding of the subjects upon which they offer advice which is more perfect than that of the counselled, and on the other, what subjects Alcibiades has become acquainted with and studied viz. letters, lyre-playing and wrestling, on this basis Socrates shows that on the one hand the subjects which Alcibiades has studied are of no use to the Athenians, since they do not deliberate thereon; and, on the other hand, as regards the matters on which the Athenians do deliberate, Alcibiades, being ignorant thereof, is not a good counsellor, since the good counsellor possesses a knowledge which surpasses that of the many, but Alcibiades is no different from the mass in the matters upon which the Athenians deliberate. He is of use, then, neither in the subjects which he knows, nor in the matters which they require, for differing reasons: in the latter case through ignorance, and in the former through the uselessness of his subjects of learning for their deliberations. Now this is the drift of the argument, but it proceeds disjunctively. Assuming that some subjects Alcibiades both knows and thinks he knows, such as letters, lyre-playing and wrestling, while others he neither knows nor thinks he knows, such as the arts of building, divination, and medicine, and yet others he does not know, but nevertheless thinks he knows when he does not, such as what is just and what is expedient, concerning which deceit and twofold ignorance come into play, Socrates shows that as regards the first subjects Alcibiades would not counsel the Athenians (since they do not deliberate thereon) and as regards the second will give place to those who know, I mean doctors and builders and seers, while as regards the third, if he consents to offer counsel, he will do so from principles of which he is ignorant and to the accompaniment of want of knowledge; but it is

<201> already laid down that the good counsellor is knowledgeable upon the subjects concerning which he offers good counsel. You observe that this division has once more fallen in to that of knowledge, simple ignorance and twofold ignorance, and is irrefragable, because it has been derived from contradictory propositions.³⁸⁶ For either we do know or we don't and if we don't know, either we think we do or we don't. If we do know we possess knowledge; and if we neither know nor think we do, simple ignorance; but if we don't know and think we

³⁸⁶ cf. Aristot. de Interpr. 17a 33–5: “And let this be what is meant by contradictories viz. the opposing affirmation and negation.” cf. also 17b 16–20, 18a 8–9.

do, we are doubly ignorant. So much for the layout of the argument in question.

Of the premisses which make up the syllogism, some have been adopted by way of induction,³⁸⁷ e.g. those which through particular branches of knowledge substantiate the universal that all counsel is the business of one who knows (both the seer in matters of divination and the doctor in matters of medicine are good counsellors and knowledgeable persons), others lend ornament to the discourse through their variety, for instance the same proof through confirmation by word and confirmation by deed, and yet others are devised in combination by way of encouragement ("whether he be lofty in stature, noble or of low birth" each man will be a worthy counsellor upon those subjects in which he is knowledgeable). As a result of these elements, the dialogue brings in simultaneously force in philosophical argument, grace in conversation and variety in exhortation; and receives a full complement of all the merits both of style and thought.

<202> Furthermore, it is worth examining the manner of the questions;³⁸⁸ Socrates does not ask whether Alcibiades will advise on the question of whether the art of lyre-playing or wrestling should exist in the state, but how men would write and how they would wrestle. The statesman will advise about particular arts, only^{389*} by referring their good to the state and examining their usefulness,³⁹⁰ but their usages and the calculations that relate thereto he will leave to the experts in each particular art. As in the whole of this universe all the ends of the beings which have been assigned a position therein combine to serve the end of the universe (both divine and mortal living beings have all received subsistence in order that the universe may be perfect, as Timaeus³⁹¹ observes), so also under correct forms of government all the ends of the crafts and the usefulness that derives therefrom are co-ordinated to serve the end of the community. With this aim in view the good counsellor will make proposals about the particular arts, which should

³⁸⁷ cf. Aristot. *Top.* 105a 13-15: "Induction is the progress from particulars to the universal."

³⁸⁸ cp. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 64, 23-65, 10.

³⁸⁹ cf. Aristot. *Eth. Nic.* 1094a28: "Such appears to be the art of statesmanship; for it is this which prescribes what branches of knowledge should exist in the state, and what particular branch each class of citizens should learn and to what extent."

³⁹¹ cf. *Tim.* 92c.

^{389*} Retaining $\omega\delta$ and reading $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda'\eta$ in place of $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha}$, as E. R. Dodds suggests (*Gnomon* '55, p. 165).

be adopted and which not, and for what reasons; but how each should be pursued and its particular activities he will leave to the experts to say. Consequently he will advise whether there should be divination or
 <203> or not, but he will refuse to divine; and he will know whether the state should admit the art of medicine or not, but he will make the doctor adviser on the practice of medicine; and the same for building and each of the other crafts. As a natural consequence each craftsman, while possessed of sagacity in one thing, is devoid of wisdom in everything else, since he has no training therein, but the statesman is sagacious in respect of everything; for he has attached the ends of the other arts to himself, leaving it to them to discover the means to the end. As therefore what exists in a condition of process is not free from limitation, since each individual possesses being in accordance with one form, but the intelligible is all things (since it possesses the causes even of the objects of sense perception), so also the particular craftsman is in numerous respects devoid of wisdom, and wise in only one respect, but the statesman is wise in a perfect sense; for he knows both his own appropriate end and those of others and co-ordinates all the other arts towards the single life of the city.

“Well, when the Athenians deliberate how they should write letters correctly, will you then stand up to advise them?” “Certainly not I.” “Or about striking notes on the lyre?” “Not at all.” “Nor in fact is it their custom to deliberate about falls in wrestling in the assembly.” “No indeed.” “Well when they are deliberating on what subject? Not at any rate when it’s about building, I presume.”
 <204> “Surely not.” “Since a builder will give better advice than you on this subject.” “Yes.” “Nor when they deliberate about divination.” “No.” “Since, once more, a seer will give better advice on this matter than you, whether he be small or large in stature, whether he be handsome or ugly, and even whether he be of noble or low birth.” “Agreed.” “For I think that on each subject counsel is the prerogative of one who knows, not of one who is rich.” “Agreed.” “And whether their adviser be rich or poor will make no difference to the Athenians when they deliberate about the health of the citizens, but they require of their counsellor that he be a doctor.”
 107 A–C.

You observe how cautiously he poses this questions; he says, “how they should write” and “about strokes on the lyre” and “about falls in wrestling” in which matters not even the statesman puts himself in the

rank of counsellor. He does no injustice to Alcibiades by putting forward the premisses in this fashion; since (there seems to be a considerable lacuna at this point, since the text resumes with commentary on 108 C–D i.e. the Muses) the heavens being full of concord ³⁹² and rhythmical order in their movements, next all the classes superior to us, these also enjoying the harmony that proceeds <205> therefrom, and after them the life of man both inducing concord in our dispositions and receiving therefrom the entire condition of harmoniousness and good order: and their gift has descended as far as the irrational animals and plants, since these also have received a share in harmony in accordance with their nature. They hold together and perfect virtually all things in the world and make them harmonise both with each other and with the universe; they make the body accord with the intellect through the medium of the soul, the world of becoming with the revolution of the Same through the medium of the revolution of the Other, ³⁹³ and earth with fire through the intermediary connecting bonds; ³⁹⁴ further, in addition to this, they regulate each soul by harmonic ratios, ³⁹⁵ confine each body within definite proportions, and perfect each movement within due measure. So the habit of music in us is a gift of the Muses, but only a very faint image of them; nevertheless it has received its name therefrom, and from it the activity derives, and possesses the name of perfection; for always, along with participation in being, secondary realities assume fellowship in name with the higher causes. So here we have shown, first that the habits of skill and knowledge within us have gods as their guardians and primary sources; secondly that, along with being, names also are bestowed on representations by their exemplars; thirdly, whatever is spoken of as derived from something else involves these three requirements, participation in being, fellowship in name,

³⁹² There is a reference to the harmony of the heavens in Resp. X 617b (Cornford) and Aristotle refers to this Pythagorean theory in *De Caelo* 290b 12–15: “These results clear up another point, namely that the theory that music is produced by their movements, because the sounds they make are harmonious, although ingeniously and brilliantly formulated by its authors, does not contain the truth.” (Guthrie).

³⁹³ cf. Tim. 35a, 36c–d and the commentaries of Taylor and Cornford. The circle of the Same is the outer sphere of the fixed stars, the circle of the Other is divided into the orbits of the seven planets, and to it the world of process (beneath the moon) is subject.

³⁹⁴ i.e. air and water. cf. Tim. 31b–32b.

³⁹⁵ cf. esp. Aristot. *de Anim.* 406b26–407a2 and cp. Procl. in Remp. I p. 212, 20–213, 19; *ibid.* II p. 49, 9–50, 7.

<206> and change in the last syllable. So “music” would be spoken of as derived from “the Muses,” and “musically” as derived from music.

In addition let us consider the praise of the young man accorded by Socrates in unison with his previous remarks. He has previously observed that “fair discourse would befit you too, I think”, and when Alcibiades has given an answer that strikes the right note and is free from error, Socrates interjects the expression “well said,” which comes just about to the same thing as the word “fairly” and surely fairness if anything, is appropriate to the Muses. For the musical character is also a devotee of the fair, and has this in common with the lover; and in general harmony and symmetry in every respect subsist in conjunction with fairness, as do disproportion and discord with ugliness.

“Come now, as regards being at war and being at peace, what do you call the “better” in this sphere? Just as previously in each case you said what was “better,” viz. the more musical, and in the other matter the more athletic; try to say herein also, what is the “better.”” “But I am not quite able to do so.” 108 D–E.

<207> After providing the young man with sufficient guidance from examples, for the perception of what is “better” in activities, Socrates asks him what is the common end of both war and peace, at which the good counsellor and the possessor of statesmanlike knowledge must aim. There is some common end to both of these, having regard to which we scrutinise the activities that concern them as to whether they attain the end appropriate thereto or not. Now the counsellor must know what this is. For generally speaking unawareness of the final cause in each case renders even the discernment of the rest of the causes unprofitable, because the most primary, principal and authoritative cause is the final, since by reason thereof producers produce and products are produced. Therefore Timaeus calls the final cause the best, and fit to be named by “men of wisdom.”³⁹⁶ So now Socrates asks the young man who professes to be a good counsellor in these matters what is the aim of the statesman when he offers advice concerning war and peace. But Alcibiades is revealed as being ignorant thereof, and therefore he clearly does not possess the necessary qualifications of a would-be-counsellor, since he is lacking in knowledge. But it is laid down and already agreed that on each subject right counsel is the prerogative

³⁹⁶ cf. Tim. 29e–30a.

of the man of knowledge. So much for the intention behind the words in question.

<208> As regards the diction one should observe that the word “Come” repeated by Socrates is most appropriate to our soul’s knowledge; since it is in movement and does not subsist all at once and without change, like the stable and enduring activity of the intellect.

The phrase “just as previously in each case” refers to the ensemble of the divisions of music viz. song, melody and step. In each of these cases we use the word “musically” to indicate what is preferable. Since both chorally, harmoniously and rhythmically mean musically.

The reply “I am not quite able to do so” is in some manner the utterance of one who is sinking into despair. Alcibiades did not consider it disgraceful to be unaware of what was “better” in singing and lyre playing and stepping but to be completely ignorant of what was “better” in war and peace, the very subjects in which he claims to be a counsellor, he considered shameful, with which fact Socrates immediately goes on to reproach him.

“But surely this is shameful: since if someone should hear you discoursing and offering advice about food, to the effect that this food is better than that, and at this time and in this quantity, and should then ask “what do you mean by better, Alcibiades?” on this subject you could answer “the more health-giving,” although you do not pretend to be a physician; but as regards the subject on which you claim to be knowledgeable and rise up to give counsel as one who knows, if, when questioned thereon, you cannot reply, as it seems, are you not ashamed, or will it not appear shameful?”

<209> “Absolutely.” 108 E–109 A.

Previous to this the words of Socrates kept the refutation hidden, leading Alcibiades on only as far as mere indication goes; but now Socrates begins as it were to strip him bare and approaches the young man more forcibly, by arguing from the less important case; he openly calls the matter “shameful” and heightens the reproach through the comparison with foodstuffs. Now the balance of the argument is admirable, first making the refutation through mere indication, but now stripping Alcibiades bare, and yet doing it sparingly; for Socrates does not himself declare that this ^{397*} ignorance on the part of the

397* Reading τοῦτο τοῦ νεανίσκου ἀγνόημα.

young man is shameful, but by questioning him makes him his own accuser. Further, he mingles elicitation with refutation with the double purpose of purifying his beloved by refutation and rendering him more resourceful in reply by elicitation. Moreover the avoidance of an over-close review of the grounds of refutation makes them more moderate. Socrates says simply that it is shameful to be unaware of what is better in war and peace, and does not add the consequences, viz. how, then, does Alcibiades assert that he is a good counsellor on war and peace, when he does not know the purpose of war? Again the fact of showing the shamefulness of ignorance by the juxtaposition of knowledge of another subject made the censure endurable. “It is shameful” says Socrates “to have something to say about the aims of <210> medicine, but nothing about the aims of statesmanship.” By such means Socrates has rendered the element of refutation in these words more moderate; but he seems to me to bring the reproach of shame upon Alcibiades on many counts. First, that whereas there is a twofold evil in the soul, according to the division he himself made in the Sophist,³⁹⁸ one arising through the ignorance of the reason, the other through the discord of the irrational with the reason, such discord is a sickness of the soul, but ignorance a deformity. Because the reason holds the position of form in the soul taken as a whole, on this account the evil of the reason is ugliness in the soul, just as its excellence is beauty. Ignorance arises on account of the predominance of irrationality, but knowledge on account of the rule of reason; and the beauty of the soul is perceived when the reason prevails, the ugliness when it is overruled and exhibits in its appropriate activities disproportion, deviation and failure to attain the end. Now if this is true, all ignorance and want of knowledge in the soul renders it ugly. So first on this account Socrates said that it was shameful not to know the purpose of war and peace; secondly because nothing strikes an ambitious youth more forcibly than the reproach of something shameful. For Alcibiades looks on ill-repute with apprehension, and would endure anything rather than shame and condemnation; and what need is there of words, seeing that he often admits real evil that he may not endure apparent <211> shame? In this way also, by aiming at his natural disposition, Socrates submits him to disproof by means of the reproach of shamefulness. If, further, he prides himself on his bodily beauty, his conceit is purged

³⁹⁸ cf. Sophist 227d–228e.

away by showing that he is ugly in what is of greater value, viz. the soul, and that apparent beauty is vain if the soul is ugly.³⁹⁹

For these reasons, then, Socrates cast the reproach of shameful-ness at him; and in every way it is clear that the argument is made in a forcible manner by proceeding from the less to the more important case. For if we can say something on subjects concerning which we make less professions of knowledge, it is shameful to be unable to say anything about matters which we claim to know. You see how Socrates has demonstrated herein that what is shameful finds its way in through conceit. The words “concerning which you profess to be knowledgeable” and next “and rise up to give counsel as one who knows” reveal Alcibiades’ conceit as cause of shameful-ness, since conceit, by inducing twofold ignorance, multiplies the shame of the soul.

<212> “Consider now and strive to say to what end tends the “better” both in being at peace and being at war with those with whom one should.” “But even by considering I cannot perceive it.” “Don’t you know, when we make war, what treatment it is of which we accuse each other as we go to war, and what name we give to it?” “Yes I do; that we are being beguiled or constrained or despoiled in some matter.” “Stop; how do we undergo each of these experiences? Try to say what is the difference in manner.” “By manner, Socrates, do you mean justly or unjustly?” “That’s just it.” “Indeed this makes all the difference in the world.” 109 A–B

The previous argument, as we observed, already in some manner laid bare the refutative character of the discussion, and removed the youth more forcibly from the realms of false conceit; but the present exchanges, after purification, arouse him to a desire for knowledge. Now that the obstacles have been removed the soul must approach the consideration of the subject-matter. The knowledge of the truth is inherent within us, but we are prevented from grasping it on account of the obstacles raised by the conditions incident to generation, I mean forgetfulness and conceit and false imaginings and immoderate desires; but when these have been taken away, it remains for us to revert to ourselves. So after the purification from vain conceit, Socrates exhorts the young man to consider and bestir himself to grasp the object of enquiry with more assiduous attention and a greater readiness. But

³⁹⁹ Note that the preceding lines play upon the double sense of the Greek word “*aischros*” which means both “physically ugly” and “morally shameful.”

since the young man is still labouring over the discovery of the purpose of war, Socrates pursues the argument from the point of view of
 <213> opposites, and again elicits knowledge from him; and he now grasps the object of enquiry. Now what is the method of enquiry? When, says Socrates, we make war, we do so by charging our enemies with undergoing some experience at their hands. Well, what does this mean? Obviously that we say that we are being wronged. If, then, we make war when we are wronged, the purpose of war is to secure justice; and if this is so, the giver of right counsel concerning war must know the nature of what is just. However, this subject is for hereafter; but our present purpose concerns the fact that he discovered what is just through injustice. As the diseases of the body reduce us to the need for medicine in order that we may attain health, so also the injustices of others give rise to warlike preparations, that we may not lose our share of what is just. This is the purpose of war, as health of medicine. You observe how, in the quest for the purpose of war, which the good counsellor must establish, the argument unearthed this question of what is just. For the aims of soldier, general and statesman all differ. The one may be wants to become richer through spoils, the other looks toward victory and strives to gain this for the citizens, but the third considers only what is just and stirs up war only so far as he thinks the enemy are doing wrong. Therefore he will first resort to oratory, striving to put a stop to the wrong-doers through timely persuasion,
 <214> and then to the art of generalship, inducing moderation by force of arms in those whom he has not won over by words. So in this way Nestor, the statesman of the Greeks, first made representation to the Trojans on behalf of Helen through the medium of speakers; ⁴⁰⁰ but afterwards, when he failed to persuade them he attacked them with generals and warlike activities. For this reason too, the Socrates of the Republic ⁴⁰¹ deems that a city should possess only as much power as is sufficient to save both it and its neighbours from suffering mutual wrong, since the purpose of war is what is just and not victory nor gathering of spoils nor anything else of this kind. Now the whole argument arrives at this conclusion; but at the present moment Socrates, nursing the young man by leading him to the object of enquiry from the opposite quality asks what are the accusations which make us resort to war and arms. But the young man reacts in exactly the same way as Theaetetus: ⁴⁰² in

⁴⁰⁰ cf. *Iliad* III 203–224.

⁴⁰¹ cf. perhaps *Resp.* V 469d, 471b

⁴⁰² cf. *Theaet.* 146d.

answer to a single question he gives a multiple instead of a single, a rather partial instead of a total reply and even this is susceptible of opposites viz. right-doing and wrong-doing and does not indicate actions that are altogether wrong. For "we go to war because we are victims of deceit or force or deprivation," but these things could happen with justice, too. Since he who deceives a fool that he may not do harm, does what is just, as also he who constrains his child that he may not through lack of self-control do something shameful; and he who constrains a sick person to submit to some remedy for his health's sake, <215> acts rightly, as also he who robs a madman of his deposit, if the thing deposited was a sword. Now he has not yet answered Socrates' question. Socrates seeks to hear grounds of accusation, but these actions not only sometimes escape being grounds of accusation, but are even praiseworthy. Rightly, therefore, Socrates asked "how it is that we experience each of these kinds of treatment" when we go to war. For none of them is simple, but it is possible to be subjected to each of them in a just or an unjust manner. For some actions immediately involve quality i.e. desirability or undesirability, but others in themselves admit both of good and bad performance. "Every action" he says, "is like this: in itself it is neither honourable nor dishonourable."⁴⁰³ Among such actions are deceit, constraint and deprivation; but adultery and patricide though actions, are not isolated, but already associated with a shameful quality.⁴⁰⁴ Now here too there is a difference between right or wrong deceit, right or wrong constraint, and the same for deprivation. The Stoics forthwith condemn all such actions as shameful: according to them it is possible neither to deceive nor constrain nor deprive with justice, but each of these activities proceeds from an ugly disposition and is unjust. But the ancients posit all such actions as indifferent and capable of opposites, and if performed in one manner as just, in another manner as <216> unjust. I think that Homer⁴⁰⁵ shows this when he says that Autolycus, the descendant of Hermes, was graced with the arts of thieving and swearing, although it is never possible to be graced by a shameful action, nor that one who is of an unjust disposition should be related to the gods. In general this is the view of practically all the ancients and custom accords with their opinion. We praise the person who does not

⁴⁰³ cf. *Sympos.* 180e.

⁴⁰⁴ cp. *Aristot. Eth. Nic.* 1107a8-11: "But not every action . . . admits of a mean; for some have names that already imply badness e.g. . . . adultery, theft, murder." (Ross).

⁴⁰⁵ cf. *Od.* XIX 394-6.

return the madman his sword, who deceives the enemy when his native land is in danger, who constrains his friends not to commit some impious act, and we call each of these actions just and right. Now these actions, viz. deceit, constraint and deprivation occasion numerous wars among men, both private and public, but they are more partial aspects than the general purpose of war. Deceit occurs chiefly on the level of reason, constraint on the level of temper and deprivation on the level of desire; for naturally it is the money-loving instinct that suffers deprivation, the lust for power that suffers constraint, and that which is especially receptive of knowledge that is the victim of deceit; but justice is a virtue of the whole soul, and injustice an evil of the whole triple division thereof. So just and unjust are more universal than these three modes of treatment, and the young man was not right to fall away from the knowledge of the more universal and descend to these particulars.

If it is possible, as we have said, to perform each of these actions well or badly, it is clear therefrom that the good is superior both to knowledge and choice and relation to other things. If the good were knowledge, deceit, which is the opposite of knowledge, would never partake <217> of the good; if it had to do with choice, then what is done contrary to our choice or by constraint would never be a good for those who underwent such treatment; and if it were personal ownership, then it would never be possible to be deprived of one's personal belongings for a good purpose. But as it is it seems that all these, i.e. personal ownership, choice and knowledge, are inferior to the good. Since it would not be present in their antitheses if any of them were the primary good; neither is there any share of warmth in what is cold nor of white in what is black.

The above is to be derived like a geometrical corollary from the discussion; but the statement that the just manner “differs wholly and totally” from the unjust reveals their complete contrast. For all things are divided by the whole and the total,⁴⁰⁶ since their combination subsists according to the whole, but their differentiation according to the total;⁴⁰⁷ and therefore in the case of quantity, its continuity is a

⁴⁰⁶ For a discussion of the difference between the “whole” and the “total” cf. Theaet. 204a–205a and Aristot. Met. 1023b12–1024a10.

⁴⁰⁷ Perhaps a reference to the “combination” and “differentiation” of the early cosmologists e.g. Anaxagoras (Aristot. Met. 984a13–16), Empedocles (*ibid.* 8–11), Democritus and Leucippus (de Gen. & Corrupt. 315b6–9).

whole, but its distinction into parts a total.⁴⁰⁸ So in the case of all beings when they wish to indicate a difference in what they are dealing with, they are accustomed to use this manner of speaking, viz. that they differ wholly and totally.

<218> “Well then, against whom will you advise the Athenians to make war, against those who act rightly or wrongly?” “This is a tricky question you ask, since even if someone thinks it necessary to make war on those who are acting rightly, he would not admit it.” “For this is not lawful, so it seems.” “Certainly not.” “Nor does it seem honourable. So you also will speak with these notions of justice in view?” “Necessarily.” “Then to repeat the question I was asking you just now, is the “better” as regards making or not making war, with whom and when one should or should not, anything other than the more just? “That is what it seems.” 109 B-C.

Socrates’ question was necessary to discover what is the statesman’s aim according to the advice of Alcibiades. Since it is clear that should he advise the Athenians to make war against those who act rightly, then he is making the purpose of war injustice and a fearful aggression against the rest of men; but if against those who are not just, then he is positing what is just as the limit and measure of war. But the young man, in reply to this question, speaks as one who is neither altogether past blushing nor completely knowledgeable.

<219> For the latter never thinks of making war on those who act rightly nor puts it forward in words, while the former both has it in mind and dares to say it on account of a certain dire shamelessness. At any rate Thrasymachus in the Republic⁴⁰⁹ was not ashamed to make many such remarks. Alcibiades, then, is midway between these two, and does not altogether deny thinking of injustice, while saying that to admit it is shameful. So he is on the level of ambition, and utters the arguments neither of sense-desire nor of the superior soul: as snatching after victory and power he does not distinguish the just from the unjust enemy, but as aiming at public reputation he considers that to admit this is shameful; except that by putting forward the argument as an hypothesis he leaves himself a way out of it. For he did not say “I think

⁴⁰⁸ cp. Aristot. Cat. 4b20-22: “Quantity is either discrete or continuous.” Quantity as a continuum is a whole without actual relation of part to part: as discrete it is a totality made up of interrelated parts. cp. Ol. in Alc. p. 85, 6-10.

⁴⁰⁹ cf. Resp. I 348b-349d.

one should make war on those who act rightly, nevertheless I am ashamed to admit it," but "even if one should think this, yet he would shun the ill-repute that lies in admitting it to others."

Socrates, therefore, observing that Alcibiades accepts justice as preferable to injustice on account of the opinion of the many, refers the opinion to knowledge. He attaches what is just to what is lawful and honourable and names what is unjust by the negation of both these qualities: "For such action" he observes, "is neither lawful nor honourable." Here again it is possible to observe demonstration intermingled with philosophical discussion. The common man would say that what is unjust is unlawful and dishonourable, having in mind human law and what is honourable by common opinion; and the man of knowledge would admit the same statement according to demonstrative principles. Since in their causes justice depends on good order (I refer to justice within this world), what is just is lawful and honourable by participation in good order, which possesses in itself both goodness and law. Again, since the justice which is prior to this world is attendant upon
 <220> Zeus, for law is the "assessor" of Zeus, as Orpheus ⁴¹⁰ says (and therefore the Athenian stranger ⁴¹¹ called justice the "vindicator of the divine law"), so also what is just here below is lawful. It was, then, in a manner appropriate to their principles that Socrates posited the just as being lawful, even as Justice has been said to be the "vindicator of law." The judge looks to the lawgiver and the art of judging depends on the art of law-giving, precisely because their causes have been allotted this order. In proportion then as the justice prior to the world is to law, so also is justice within the world to good order, the art of judging to that of lawgiving, and what is just to what is lawful. Always the inferiors partake of the superior and a series proceeds from each of the two causes as far as their lowest participants. Therefore the just is both lawful and honourable and better, and that seems to bring in the good. Since it is lawful, it is at home with the intelligent orders – that is the position of law, "on the level of Kronos," as is written in the Gorgias; ⁴¹² and in general it is observed elsewhere, ⁴¹³ that law is

⁴¹⁰ cf. Kern: Orph. Fgm. 158, 160, and cp. Sophocles O.C. 1381–2, Ps.-Demosth. Against Aristogeiton a c. 11, Plot. V, 8, 4, 40–43 and *Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique* V p. 317–18.

⁴¹¹ cf. Laws IV 716a: "Attendant upon him (i.e. Zeus) is Justice as avenger of those who fall away from the divine law."

⁴¹² cf. Gorgias 523a.

⁴¹³ cf. Laws IV 714a.

<1><22> “regulation by the intellect.” Since it is beautiful, it participates in the intelligibles also – for there lies the primary beauty, which proceeds therefrom to all things. Since it is better, it is good and participates in the cause that is prior to the intelligibles – for the better and the preferable and all suchlike belong to the series of the Good. To sum up, then, it has been observed that in the consideration of whether to make war or not the counsellor must look toward what is just, since that is the criterion for this choice. Even as war and peace in the material world beneath the moon receive their due measure and their good from the justice that obtains in the heavens, so also the question of whether to make war or not is to be decided by us on the grounds of what is just. If war arises on account of injustices, the purpose of war is what is just, and not victory, as some think. “There have been many Pyrrhic victories,” as the Athenian stranger ⁴¹⁴ says somewhere, but on every occasion what is just is of benefit to those who observe it; the mere victor does not yet ennoble the vanquished, but the man who aims at what is just is both himself in a good situation and improves his enemies.⁴¹⁵ So this is the purpose of war, viz. what is just; let the limit of those who make war be justice, but let those who are at peace observe another, greater and more perfect good, viz. friendship and unity. This is the aim of virtue as a whole, so the Pythagoreans ⁴¹⁶ assert and also Aristotle ⁴¹⁷ who rightly observed that “when all people <222> are friends we have no need of justice,” and “mine” and “thine” are annulled, but “when everyone is just we still have need of friendship” to unite us. That wrong-doing is the beginning of wars is shown, I think by the war that exists between qualities implicated in matter. The hot fights against the cold, ⁴¹⁸ not when one is in one place, the other elsewhere, but only when the one wishes to take possession of the receptacle of the other. The latter also requires the underlying subject and fights against the external intruder who attempts to eject it from its native place. Therefore although creative principles in Nature come together without friction, since each is in itself, yet the principles implicated in matter, not being able to subsist apart therefrom, are at

⁴¹⁴ For the expression “Cadmeian victory” cf. Laws 641c, Herod. I, 66: for the thought cp. Plut. Moral. 10a, 488a: for explanations of its origin cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 74, 2 schol. & notes.

⁴¹⁵ cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 74, 3–7.

⁴¹⁶ cf. Iambl. Vit. Pyth. 33, esp. sect. 240.

⁴¹⁷ cf. Aristot. Eth. Nic. 1155a26–9.

⁴¹⁸ cp. Anaximander fgm A9 Diels.

variance with each other concerning the common receptacle which cannot admit into itself both the opposing principles without admixture.

Now so far Socrates has inferred that Alcibiades knows what is just. If he offers advice on war and peace, and every counsellor on these topics will deliver his opinions with regard to what is just, then Alcibiades will know what is just, and with this as his aim will advise the Athenians whether they should make war or remain at peace. For both points have been proved: both that what is better in war or peace is the more just and that on every topic the giver of advice considers what is better, e.g. on the question of food, the more healthy, of lyre-playing the more musical, of wrestling the more athletic. Two explanations are given of what is better, one derived from skill and the <223> other from purpose: we name instruments and materials after their end, calling medicine, food and exercise “more healthy,” but activities from skill, saying that this movement or this song is more athletic or musical than that. Well now, since what is better in war is the more just, whence shall we say that this derives its name? Surely we shall say that this has received its appellation from the science of statesmanship as a whole. The latter is justice, as the Socrates of the Republic ⁴¹⁹ has made plain by describing statesmanship as justice in a city, and justice as statesmanship subsisting in the divisions of the soul. Now if statesmanship is the same as justice, then we reasonably assert that what is just is an activity named after it, and we so term what is better in the counsels of statesmanship. As the “better” in wrestling was the more athletic, taking its name from the whole field of athletics, so the “better” in war is the more just, deriving its appellation from the whole field of statesmanship.

“Come now, my dear Alcibiades, has it escaped you that you do not know this, or have you, without my knowledge, been taking lessons and consulting some instructor, who has taught you to distinguish between what is more just and what is more unjust? Who is this? Tell me too, so that you may introduce me to him as a pupil.” “You are joking, Socrates.” 109 D.

<224> The descent of the soul into the body has separated it from the divine causes which filled it with intelligence and power and purity, and has united it with nature that produces generation and with

⁴¹⁹ cf. Resp. II 368e, also IV 434c–435c, 443c–444a.

things implicated in matter which fill it with forgetfulness and error and ignorance. As it descended it received from the universe the accretions of many forms of life and divers vestures ⁴²⁰ which drag it down into this mortal constitution and obstruct the contemplation of the realities. Now the soul that is to be correctly brought away from this world to that ever wakeful level of being must regulate the secondary and tertiary functions that are attached to it as “the shells and sea-weed to the sea-god Glaucus,” ⁴²¹ must prevent the impulses that proceed outward from it, and recall the genuine realities and the divine being which was the origin of its descent and should be the goal towards which our whole life hastens. Now the elements within us that require perfection are the irrational, which is capable of being regulated and trained through habits, and the faculty of choice, which must be restrained from the irrational appetites and implication therewith, <225> and in addition our cognitive faculty, which requires recollection of the realities; since what is recalled to mind, what is trained through habit, and what becomes more moderate through admonition and instruction all differ. Training must be in accordance with these three elements, and first of all perfect us through correctness of habit, then through admonition and words of instruction, and thirdly it must through recollection arouse the notions innate within us and enucleate the knowledge that is essentially present to souls. So many then are the kinds, and such is the order of perfection that is set before the souls that sink into bodies. Such being the case, the third element achieves perfection through learning and discovery, since there is in us no other method of acquiring knowledge than learning or discovery. For the soul is essentially self-moved, but through association with the body has in some way become liable to motion from without: as it has bestowed on the body the ultimate image of self-motion, so also, on account of its relationship thereto, it has received in turn an appearance of motion from without. So on account of its faculty of self-movement the soul is resourceful, inventive and productive of notions and knowledge; but on account of the imprint of motion from without it sometimes requires stimulation from external agencies, since the more perfect souls are more inventive, while the less perfect stand in greater need of help from without. Some have greater self-movement and are less filled with <226> inferior being, while others have less self-movement and have become

⁴²⁰ cf. note 284.

⁴²¹ cf. Resp. X 611c–d, and note in Loeb edition.

more subject to the influence of bodily nature; but nevertheless the latter also, as they proceed in perfection, are aroused from the body, gather their faculties in separation from matter, and become more productive and inventive of that in regard to which they were formerly unproductive and resourceless on account of the idleness that has come upon them from matter, the want of life and the torpor resultant on birth.

So, guarding the middle position of the rational soul,⁴²² we give this explanation of the causes both of the less and the more perfect states within it, and such, we say, are the ways to their perfection. Neither will we entertain the opinions of those⁴²³ who say that the soul, by entering a moist body and being obstructed thereby, is at first foolish, but when again the moisture evaporates through the natural heat and becomes more commensurate, the soul revives its sagacity, since this method of perfection is bodily and entangled in matter and makes the perfection of the soul consequent upon the composition of the body,
 <227> although the soul possesses its substance prior to the elements and prior to the whole process of birth and is a form of life free from admixture with the body and Nature. Nor will we admit the views of those⁴²⁴ who assert that the soul is a part of the divine being, and that the part is like to the whole and always perfect, and that the disturbance of the emotions is concerned with the living organism, since those who hold these views make the soul ever perfect, ever wise and never in need of recollection, ever free from emotions and never corrupted. Yet Timaeus asserts that our being does not in any way derive its substance from the primary orders, like the souls superior to us, but from the “secondary and

⁴²² cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 82, 7–9: “This reveals the intermediate nature of the essence of our soul; for it is neither always imperfect, as when discovering, nor always perfect, as when learning.”

⁴²³ cp. Tim. 44b1–2 with Taylor’s note, and cf. Procl. in Tim. III p. 348, 3–350, 8, esp. 349, 21–5: “. . . Galen would say: the powers of the soul follow the blendings of the body, and while the latter is moist, unstable and variously fluid, the soul is witless and unstable, but when the body is established in due proportion, the soul is straightened out and becomes sensible.” (cf. Galen: Scripta Minora II 42, 3–44, 9 Muller). cf. also Heracleit. (p. 205–6 Kirk & Raven), Diog. Apoll. A 19 (Diels II 56, 24).

⁴²⁴ cf. Plot. I, 1, 9 e.g. 1–3: “The nature of the soul in us will then be such that it is removed from any cause of the evils which man performs or endures; for they are concerned only with the living organism . . .”; *ibid.* 23–6: “Thus in spite of all, the soul is at peace as to itself and within itself: all the changes and all the turmoil we experience are the issue of what is subjoined to the soul.” cp. IV, 8, 8, 1–3.

tertiary''; ⁴²⁵ and the Socrates of the *Phaedrus* ⁴²⁶ says that our faculties are mingled with the opposite of good and are filled with strife against each other, and on this account sometimes the better prevail, sometimes the worse. And why waste words, seeing that the same speaker observes that even the charioteer is corrupted: "wherein, through the fault of the charioteer, many souls are lamed, and many have much of their wings broken." ⁴²⁷ Yet what is nobler within us than the power of the charioteer? This it is which recalls things divine and uses the secondary and tertiary faculties as means towards recollection, and this is clearly stated in the *Phaedrus*.⁴²⁸ However, as we were saying, we must guard the due limits of the soul and neither transfer to it accounts of perfection derived from corporeal substances nor devolve upon it those derived from the divine, in order that we may be <228> expounders of Plato and not adjust the sayings of the Philosopher according to our own private notions. Since therefore the soul is at one time imperfect and again made perfect, is in a state of oblivion and again recollects, it is clear that time also contributes to its perfection. How could it change from folly to sense and in general from vice to virtue, unless it made these changes during the course of time? For all change has a temporal subsistence.

Let so much be said in general concerning the perfection of souls, and let us extract therefrom at least this much, viz. that he who knows what is just must have passed from ignorance to the knowledge thereof, and must neither always possess the notion of what is just ready to hand, like the beings which are superior to us (since we are born imperfect at first), nor must this notion have been acquired by us on account of changes in the body and the knowledge thereof. For our being is not corporeal, nor does it receive subsistence from the material orders. It remains therefore that learning or discovery precedes knowledge. So naturally the young man is required to declare who was responsible for his learning and from what source he came to the knowledge of what is just, if indeed he has done so, since, as has been often observed, learning itself must precede knowledge instilled by another, and the instructor precede learning. For learning is a process and every process requires a moving cause. There is need then of the instructor also, since he is the cause of learning.

⁴²⁵ cf. *Tim.* 41d.

⁴²⁶ cf. *Phaedr.* 246a–b.

⁴²⁷ cf. *ibid.* 248b.

⁴²⁸ cf. *ibid.* 249c; 253c–256e.

This is very obviously true; it is also possible to observe in these words the right note struck by Socrates' questioning and the quality of mitigating his refutations. First, by addressing the subject of disproof as "dear" he anticipates the wound by his affection and at the same time shows that for him a purpose of purification is friendship, because
 <229> "no god is ill-disposed to men, therefore neither do I do anything of this sort out of ill-humour," as he has observed in the *Theaetetus*,⁴²⁹ and because among the gods the agent of purification extends its operation to the imperfect out of goodness, not out of estrangement towards them. Secondly he has not introduced his disproof with a negative, saying "But in fact you do not know what is just, since you neither learned nor discovered it"; but by questioning Alcibiades he makes him discover his own error and applies a form of interrogation that strikes the right note: "Have you without my knowledge learned the nature of what is just? And who is this instructor of yours?" Thirdly he puts himself on the same level as the young man, as if he too were unaware of what is just. "Tell me," he says "the teacher of this subject, in order that you may introduce me to him as a pupil." Now through this putting himself on the same level he softens down the impact of the refutation, mitigates its force and makes the unpleasantness endurable.

So much for the style of address: of the individual phrases the expression "have you unawares?" is appropriate to one who has no knowledge of himself: for everywhere that which escapes our notice is cause of ignorance; at the same time this too is clear, that ignorance occurs through forgetfulness.

The question "or have you been learning without my knowledge?" brings the argument round to the impossible, since it has already been said that "neither by night nor by day" did Alcibiades visit anywhere without Socrates' knowledge. Just as, therefore, our thoughts cannot escape the notice of our good spirit, so also no movement of the young
 <230> man can escape Socrates, since he has fathomed all his inner movements both discursive and appetitive.

The phrase "consulting some instructor" indicates the turning of those who are to be perfected towards the person who is going to perfect them. The soul does not resemble the body, by receiving influences only from without, but also arouses itself towards what is perfect and approaches what is able to give it completion.

Now the expression to "distinguish between what is more just and

⁴²⁹ cf. *Theaet.* 151d.

what is more unjust” indicates that the knowledge of opposites is the same and that he who can discern the one is also a good judge of the other. It indicates also that these (I mean what is just and unjust) are indeterminately shared in a greater or less degree by the beings of this world, and only the account given by scientific knowledge discerns the difference in the share. For Socrates did not say “who taught you what is just and unjust” but “what is more just and what is more unjust,” a phrase which introduces greater and less degree.

The clause “that you may introduce me to him as a pupil” should not be thought of as mere irony, but also as the truth, since Socrates would not have shunned listening to a man of true knowledge. As things divine, although of the same rank, are united with and fill each other in the manner of the form of the good, so also men of knowledge, although <231> they possess the same state of mind, are yet through likeness united to each other and rejoice in mutual regard.

The closing phrase of the young man “you are joking Socrates” indicates the frame of mind of one who is already conscious of Socrates’ power and knowledge. He thinks that Socrates, though requiring nothing and possessed of knowledge, pretends to be in need of a teacher, in order to show up his poverty and want of resource on the question of what is just and unjust. And this accords with reality: as god creates all things without division, but matter receives them into itself in a divided manner, as god acts in eternity, but we participate in time, so also while Socrates says everything beneficently and truthfully, the young man takes his words in a different sense and thinks he is joking and casting reproaches because of his being at a loss, when Socrates is not really speaking for this reason.

“No, by the god of friendship common to you and to me, whom I would be least likely to forswear; but if you can, say who it is.” “What if I cannot say? Don’t you think there is any other way of my knowing about what is just and unjust?” “Yes, you might find it out.” “But you don’t think I could find out?” “Certainly, if you made enquiry.” “Then don’t you think I might enquire?” “Yes, if you thought you didn’t know.” “Well wasn’t there a time when I thought so?” “Well said: now can you name this time when you did not think you knew what is just and unjust? Come, was it last year when you were making enquiry and didn’t think you knew? Or did you think you knew? Answer the truth, in order that our <232> conversation may not be pointless.” “Well I did think I knew.”

"And was it not so three, four and five years ago?" "It was." "But before that you were a child – isn't that so?" "Yes." "But I'm sure that you thought you knew then." "How so?" "I often heard you as a child, at your teacher's and elsewhere, when you were playing dice or some other game, in no doubt about what was just and unjust, but saying very loudly and confidently about one or other of the boys that he was a rogue and a cheat and that he was cheating you by not telling the truth." 109 D-110 B.

Socrates removes all suspicion on the part of the young man which he thinks would cause him to be rather annoyed at what was said to him and rather hostile towards Socrates, that he may both graciously admit the confutations and in general look upon all the activity proceeding from Socrates towards him as paternal. For in no other way could the less perfect receive help from outside except by feeling confident that what offers perfection is well-disposed towards it. By this means, as I said, he removes the occasions of annoyance, like a good surgeon excising from the young man's soul the obstacles to cure. This removal takes place by means of friendship, identity, communion. As we expel cold by heat and in general opposites by opposites, so we heal harsh <233> words, which are the cause of difference, through words of affection and friendship. From what source then do these benefits accrue to souls, viz. friendship and unity? From the gods, just as the emotions and discord derive from matter. So Socrates calls the god of friendship who is their common guardian to witness his words and purpose, considering, as a man of knowledge, that union extends to all beings from god, and, as a lover, from the god of friendship. But who is this god of friendship? We may say that men usually apply this title to Zeus, since, as he is called god of strangers and suppliants, so also he is called god of friendship; and presumably it is reasonable to make the reference to Zeus, as exhorting one ^{430*} who has preferred an authoritarian kind of life to follow in attendance upon Zeus. We may also say that Love is the god of friendship, since Love, being "guardian of beautiful youths," is the cause of friendship, as Socrates himself observes in the *Phaedrus*.⁴³¹ But it is better to combine both accounts, for love is contained within Zeus, since:

⁴³¹ cf. *Phaedrus* 265c.

^{430*} Reading τὸν with N.

"Counsel is first begetter and much-delighting Love," and Love both proceeds from Zeus and co-exists primarily with Zeus among the intelligibles; for in the world above is "all-seeing Zeus" and "delicate <234> Love," as Orpheus says.⁴³² They are therefore related to, or rather united with, each other, and each of them is concerned with friendship. Socrates refers the young man as a leader to Zeus, but as his beloved to Love: his activity is twofold, both as a philosopher and at the same time as a lover; in the one capacity he strives upward towards Zeus, in the other towards Love.

So let us understand the god of friendship after this fashion. Now let us not think of Socrates as saying "whom I would be least likely to forswear" in the sense that "perhaps I might forswear myself in the case of other gods, but never in the case of the god of friendship," since we have learned in the *Gorgias* ⁴³³ and the *Philebus* ⁴³⁴ of Socrates' carefulness as regards both oaths and the actual orders of gods. The distinction is not in relation to other gods (for there is a single piety that unites us with them all), but to the young man who is listening; he would least of all forswear the god of friendship in his converse with Alcibiades, least of all the god of strangers in his converse with a stranger, least of all the god of suppliants in his converse with a suppliant. The "least" applies to each of the sworn statements, but changes in relation to the different hearers of such statements according to their differing conditions. So when one's conversation is with someone loved one should least of all forswear the god of friendship; if an oath is a sort of safeguard, maintenance and surety descending from the divine upon the person who swears it, and the lover wishes to unite the beloved to himself through friendship, he should least of all forswear the god of friendship, in order that from all sides he may be maintained and fortified by him along with his beloved and that the god may secure the bond of their friendship.

<235> For these reasons, then, Socrates swears by the god of friendship; but the young man, unable to name an instructor in the knowledge of

⁴³² cf. note 152a and Kern: *Orph. Fgm.* 83, 170 and *Procl. in Tim.* I p. 336, 5-16.

⁴³³ E. R. Dodds (*GNOMON* '55 p. 167) points out that the reference is to *Gorgias* 466e (cf. his commentary *ad loc.*) and compares *Ol. in Gorg.* p. 81 22-3 Norvin: "When about to swear he did not complete his oath, but broke off, thus teaching us that we must form the habit of restraining oaths."

⁴³⁴ cf. *Phileb.* 12b-c.

what is just, and then seeing that Socrates' distinction is inescapable, takes refuge in discovery; and thereupon Socrates ascribes to him a great natural ability and productive faculty by observing "and you would certainly have found out, had you made enquiry." Now he makes the failure to possess teachers evidence of not having learned, and in the *Laches* ⁴³⁵ and the *Gorgias* ⁴³⁶ this is brought forward as evidence of not having learned. The reason is that man's soul is yoked to a body and lives a common life with the body: it is obstructed thereby and requires outside powers to arouse it. The imperfect intellect is guided by the perfect, just as imperfect Nature is actually being brought to perfection by the activity of the perfect. Now a soul, looking at another soul, perceives the knowledge of itself in the kindred being and so turns deficiency into perfection and ignorance into knowledge, since it still has need thereof. There are many objects of knowledge whose highest causes and principles we must necessarily have received; and in addition to these, matters beyond the essence of the soul require a guide for us to contemplate them, since we spontaneously possess impulses to enquire after them.^{437*} So to have acquired teachers is <236> evidence of learning, but enquiry precedes discovery. Enquiry awakens the eye of the soul and bares it to the vision of the truth. The more inquisitive, therefore, are better at solutions to problems, since asking the right questions is the cause of facility in solution. The poverty within us is cause of our lack of resource, and love arouses us to the search for perfect knowledge; but resource lies in the being and intelligent substance of the soul, since it is the son of Counsel.⁴³⁸ Our substance proceeds from above, from the divine intellect, but what is potential within us is the poverty and indeterminacy of life. Now when we are aroused to the love of the knowledge of ourselves, we behold the resource within us and the whole ordering of the soul. There are these two ways to learning and discovery, the one enquiry and the other

⁴³⁵ cf. *Laches* 186a–e.

⁴³⁶ cf. *Gorgias* 514c.

⁴³⁸ cf. *Sympos.* 203b–c; *Plot.* III, 5, 8 & 9.

^{437*} Omitting καὶ before ὑποδέξασθαι, and filling the lacuna with ψυχῆς. The sense will then be that if a soul requires a kindred soul to achieve its perfection as soul, much more will it require a guide to contemplate what is beyond its essential being. In the former case it needs only to make explicit what is already innate within it; in the latter it needs to follow its impulses to reach out beyond its own being.

instruction. Therefore some ⁴³⁹ of Plato's commentators have divided the dialogues into instructive and enquiring, taking this as the starting point for their division. Now in turn the argument goes back from discovery to simple ignorance, since no one would set out to enquire after what he thinks he knows. So simple ignorance must give rise to enquiry, because enquiry is a seeking after knowledge in matters of which we think ourselves ignorant. But from simple ignorance we must ascertain the time when we thought we did not know. And for this reason Socrates requests Alcibiades to name a time when he thought he <237> did not know, since, as we have observed before, all such changes must be measured by time. Therefore the godlike Aristotle ⁴⁴⁰ here at least admits movement in the soul and temporal change. It is surely obvious to anyone that the soul which associates with a body and changes from evil to virtue requires time, although actually some ⁴⁴¹ persons assert that the soul is by itself and does not require time in its activity, but on the contrary it produces time. However, I think this requires some explanation. Time is twofold, one sort that comes into being with the natural life and corporeal movement of the universe, the other that pervades incorporeal life. Now the latter both measures the cycles of the divine souls and perfects the separable activities of our own; but the former, the kind that is co-extensive with the life according to Nature,

⁴³⁹ cf. Albinus: Eis. 3: "At this juncture we must learn that ultimately there are two typical forms of dialogue, expository and investigatory: the former adapted towards instruction, action and demonstration of the truth, the latter towards verbal exercise, argument and refutation of falsehood. The former has an objective reference, the latter a personal reference."
cf. also Diog. Laert. III, 49.

⁴⁴⁰ cf. Aristot. de Anim. 406b24–407a34. He rejects the view of the soul expressed by Plato in the Timaeus (35a–37d) and maintains: "for, probably not only is it false that the essence of soul is correctly described by those who say that it is what moves (or is capable of moving), itself but it is an impossibility that movement should even be an attribute of it." (405b33–406a). The most he will admit is an "incidental" movement due to bodily sensation: "If the soul is moved, the most probable view is that what moves it is sensible things." (406b10). Even thought and learning are not changes within the soul, but within the man to whom the soul belongs: "It is probably better to avoid saying that the soul pities or learns or thinks, but rather to say that it is the man who does this with his soul. What we mean is not that the movement is in the soul, but that sometimes it terminates in the soul and sometimes starts from it, sensation e.g. coming from without inwards, and reminiscence starting from the soul and terminating in the movements, actual or residual, in the sense organs." (408b13–18) – Oxford trans.

⁴⁴¹ cf. Plot. III, 7, 11–12: time is engendered within the soul by its movement away from the purely intelligible: it is annihilated when the soul returns to the intelligible world.

measures our life with a body, but in no way the life of the soul in so far as it lives by itself. Let such be our observations on the subject-matter.⁴⁴²

Now as regards the diction, the question “don’t you think I could find out?” is typical of one who has complete confidence in his natural ability and considers that this is sufficient. Therefore Socrates does not destroy this confidence of his, since those who are perfect are not destructive but perfective of the fitness of those who are of good disposition.

<238> The expression “well said” once again brings Alcibiades round to a well-put refutation. One could have stated it by saying: “there was no time in which you were possessed of simple ignorance, but you always thought you knew what you did not.” But Socrates did not say this, rather “examine your life and tell me the year in which you thought you did not know”; by employing analysis from the present into the past, he calls Alcibiades’ attention to the fact that he never thought himself ignorant of what is just.

The command “answer the truth” was a reasonable addition by Socrates. When he was discussing universal notions, he used knowledge alone for the purpose of grasping the truth, but since the enquiry now concerns Alcibiades in person and his interior dispositions, he requires true statements on his part, to achieve agreement.

The clause “in order that our conversation may not be pointless,” shows, I think, that even syllogisms, when derived from false premisses, are to some extent pointless, and also that good men should do nothing pointless. Just as “neither god nor nature are said to do anything in vain,”⁴⁴³ so neither the good man, for he lives both according to nature and to god. Perhaps it may show also that one of the favours bestowed by elicitation is the truth and the discrimination between what is true and false. So the person undergoing the process of elicitation must not tell lies to the person conducting it. In addition it is indicated that one must lie neither to one’s fellow nor to one’s better, for even when a superior lies to his inferiors, he proffers the lie as a matter of necessity, and not as a matter of choice.

The phrase “at your teachers” and “elsewhere” and “when you <239> were playing dice or some other game,” makes a division of places

⁴⁴² For further elaborations cf. “Time and Eternity in Proclus” in *Phronesis* vol. vii, no. 2.

⁴⁴³ cf. Aristot. *De Caelo* 271a33, and for the preceding thought *Ol. in Alc.* p. 89, 13–23.

and games, not without point, but in order to indicate that Socrates was present to him both in every place and when engaging in every boyish activity. Alcibiades was said ⁴⁴⁴ to be so keen about games that once when someone was driving a waggon at him as he was playing dice, he threw himself in front of it, in order that it might not run over the dice and scatter them. Socrates shows up his excessiveness even at this time by saying: “you very loudly and confidently used to shout about one or other of the boys that he was a cheat.” Both shouting and unhesitatingness are signs of keenness at play.

The expression “a rogue and a cheat” bears witness to the sharpness of the youth, since the rejection of cheating from childhood, and the consideration of it as vice in the soul, is adequate evidence of a good natural disposition.

“Well what was I to do, Socrates, when someone was cheating me?” “If you were then ignorant whether you were being cheated or not, why do you ask what you should do? “No I certainly was not ignorant, but clearly knew that I was being cheated.” “Even when a child, so it seems, you thought you knew what is just and unjust?” “Yes, and I did know.” “At what time did you discover this? Surely not while you thought you knew?” “Surely not.” “When then, did you consider that you did not know? Reflect – I don’t think you’ll find such a time.” “No Socrates, I at least cannot name it.” “So you don’t know it by discovery.” “Well, I certainly don’t seem to.” “Just now you said you didn’t know it by learning either; but if you neither discovered nor learned it, how and from what source do you come to know it?” 110 B–D.

In this passage the young man has clearly admitted that he is of the opinion that he possesses the knowledge of what is just. Therefore Socrates asks him once more when he learned or discovered it, since it is not when a person thinks he knows that he turns to the pursuit of the object of knowledge. Constrained by this argument, the young man admits that he knows neither by learning nor discovery and therefore he cannot name a time when he was ignorant, after which he either enquired after or was taught what is just. I think this clearly shows which is the knowledge that precedes all time in us, and which is the knowledge that accrues in time.⁴⁴⁵ Socrates, considering only knowledge in act, enquires, what was the time before this; but Alcibiades,

⁴⁴⁴ cf. Plut. Alcib. 2.

⁴⁴⁵ cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 82, 10–21.

possessing knowledge in essence, on account of which he thinks he knows what he doesn't, cannot name a time of his participation therein, since we possess it from eternity. So that if the one speaks about one kind of knowledge, and the other about another, both their statements are true, both that time precedes knowledge and the impossibility of naming a time before its presence. There is no time that precedes imperfect knowledge, but there is a time that precedes knowledge in act and in its perfection. This neither disagrees with what is said in the <241> Phaedo, ⁴⁴⁶ nor has Alcibiades altogether fallen away from the truth of the matter. So much for this subject.

It is further worth pointing out that the young man always swears by the great Zeus. Both in the preceding passage and in this one, he twice employed the words: "No, by Zeus, I was not unaware," and again "No, by Zeus, Socrates, I at least cannot name it." It seems that, being authoritative by nature, he naturally tends towards this god, and in his desire for power, sublimity and greatness raises himself towards the greatest, most sublime and most powerful of the gods.

Now once again Socrates' tact is admirable. After the refutation he does not reproach Alcibiades with his ignorance but concluding that he has neither learned nor discovered asks "how and from what source do you know?" This contributes both towards the process of elicitation and towards timely healing, in order that Alcibiades may be, as it were, his own disprover. As the gods both purify and benefit us through the medium of our own persons, and in general move us as beings who are self-moved, so also Socrates has devised a method of disproof whereby the person who is refuted will seem to be his own refuter and the subject of elicitation operates upon himself.

<242> "Well perhaps I didn't answer you correctly when I said that I knew by having found out for myself. But it was something like this: I think I learned like all the others." "We have returned to the same question – from whom? Please tell me." "From the many." 110 D–E.

Learning is twofold – sometimes it descends from the superior causes to inferiors (in this way the creator in the Timaeus ⁴⁴⁷ says to the young gods "what I now indicate to you by word, do you learn)," sometimes again it is aroused by outside causes (in this way we are accustomed to choose certain persons as teachers), while discovery is situated between these two (since it is inferior to the knowledge instilled in the soul by

⁴⁴⁶ cf. Phaedo 75c–d.

⁴⁴⁷ cf. Tim. 41b.

the gods, but more perfect than recollection aroused by others from outside). Now as regards the superior form of learning Alcibiades has no notion, except that regarding the essential knowledge that is immanent within us, and which is instilled by the gods, he thinks he has an accurate knowledge even of what is just. Coming to discovery, which holds the middle position in the middle of the soul, Alcibiades after being shaken by the argument and shown that he neither made enquiry nor can name a time of ignorance (ignorance must precede enquiry), now in turn has recourse to the secondary form of learning, and, at a <243> loss for the true teacher of what is just, viz. the man who really knows, takes refuge in the multitude and the unstable way of life of the many, and establishes this as his guide to the knowledge of what is just. Hereupon, Socrates, like some Hercules cutting off the heads of the Hydra, shows that none of the multitude is worthy of credit as regards the knowledge of what is just and unjust. Now this argument seems to contribute less to the purification of the young man, but if anyone considers it accurately, he will discover that it too aims at the same end. In the first place the young man, being ambitious, had been attached to the opinion of the many and had set an exceeding value on it; so Socrates shows that the opinion of the many is without authority both for the judgment and discernment of affairs; the person who aims at what is noble must not rely thereon. Secondly, the multitude is responsible for false notions, since it produces within us from our youth evil imaginings and variegated emotions. We must, therefore, straighten out our scientific reason, which has been distorted by association with the many, heal what has become involved in emotion and cleanse away <244> what has become full of impurity; in this manner we would become fit for the recovery of knowledge. Thirdly, there is in each of us “a certain many-headed wild beast,” as Socrates himself has observed,⁴⁴⁸ which is analogous to the multitude; this is just like the people in a city, the variegated, irrational and material form of the soul, which is the most pedestrian part of us. The present argument exhorts us to withdraw from our boundless sense-appetite, to remove from our lives the multitude and the populace within us as not being a trustworthy judge of the nature of things nor in short capable of any true knowledge. For nothing irrational is by nature such as to partake of knowledge, let alone the most deficient of things irrational, which by possessing multiplicity is at strife within itself and fights against itself. Fourthly,

⁴⁴⁸ cf. Resp. IX 588c.

in addition to the above, we say that the present argument claims not <245> to admit into the intelligent life of true knowledge any withdrawal, retreat or difference from the one nor any form of division, but rather to reject all that as alien to intellect and union with the divine. For we must shun not only the external multitude, but also that within the soul itself, nor even this alone, but we must get rid of any form of it whatsoever.

Beginning from below we must shun the multitude of men who “rush in herds,” as the oracle ⁴⁴⁹ says, and must not share either their lives or their opinions. We must shun the many forms of appetite, which divide us in association with the body, and make us dash at various external objects at different times, sometimes at irrational pleasures, other times at indeterminate and mutually conflicting activities, since these fill us with regret and misery. We must flee our connatural senses that beguile the reason, since these too are many in kind, experience different sense objects at different times, and say nothing sound nor accurate, as, I think, Socrates himself observes.⁴⁵⁰ We must shun the operations of the imagination as involving sensible forms and division, and as introducing an unlimited amount of variegation, not permitting us to <246> withdraw to the undivided and immaterial, but, even as we strive to grasp being of this nature, dragging us down to emotional intuition.^{451*} We must fly from opinions; these are varied, indefinite, tend outwards, are commingled with the imagination and sense perception, and are not free from contrariety. For I think that opinions too conflict within us, as do mental images and sensations. Shunning all these divided and variegated forms of life, let us revert to true knowledge itself, and there let us gather the multitude of our considerations into a unity, let us embrace the multitude of particular branches of knowledge with one bond of union. For there is neither conflict nor opposition between one kind of knowledge and another, but the secondary branches always subserve those that precede them and derive their

⁴⁴⁹ cf. Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 59; Lewy *op. cit.* p. 212 and note 143.

⁴⁵⁰ cf. *Phaedr.* 242e, *Phaedo* 69b–c, *Crat.* 440c.

^{451*} One could read οἴησιν in place of νόησιν, since the ν is a likely ditto-graphy, as Dr. Westerink and E. R. Dodds suggest (*Gnomon* '55, p. 166). However, Proclus does use νόησιν in an analogous and attenuated sense e.g. p. 275, 10 and in *Remp.* I, p. 235, 18–19: καὶ ἡ μὲν φαντασία νόησις οὕσα μορφωτικὴ νοητῶν ἐθέλει γνῶσις εἶναι τινων, which seems a parallel case to the present context.

particular bases therefrom. Nevertheless one must at this juncture turn oneself away from the many forms to the one form of knowledge, that is primary and requires no assumptions, and elevate all the others to it. After knowledge and exercise therein, we must lay aside syntheses and divisions and the many forms of transition,⁴⁵² and transfer the soul to the life of intelligence and simple intuitions. For scientific knowledge is not the highest of the forms of knowing, but rather the intellect that precedes it – I do not mean the intellect that <247> transcends the soul, but the actual irradiation therefrom that reaches the soul, in regard to which Aristotle⁴⁵³ observes that it is intellect by which we ascertain the definitions, and Timaeus⁴⁵⁴ that it comes to be in no other receptacle than in the soul. Ascending to this intellect, let us, in conjunction with it, contemplate intelligible being, by means of simple and undivided intuitions beholding the simple, unmoved and undivided classes of being. After the highly valued intellect one must awaken the very summit of the soul's substance in respect of which we are one and by which the multiplicity within us is made one. As, by means of the aforesaid intellect, we participate in Intellect, so also we participate in the primary principle, from which unification comes to all beings, by means of the unitary portion and as it were "bloom" of our being, by which chiefly we are united to the divine. Everywhere "like may be grasped by like,"⁴⁵⁵ what is ascertainable by knowledge, what is intelligible, by intellect, and the most unitary levels of being by the unitary portion of the soul. This last is the most sublime of our activities: by this we become divinely inspired, fleeing from all multiplicity, converging upon our actual unification, becoming one, and operating after the manner of the One. Socrates is preparing <248> this blessed way of life for us, when he exhorts us nowhere to admit the multitude from without. Furthermore, we must also shun the multiplicity connatural to us, in order that we may ascend and attain to the "bloom of the intellect"⁴⁵⁶ and our very substance.

⁴⁵² For this sense of the word as a passing from point to point in the process of knowledge cp. *El. Theol.* p. 148, 20 & notes on prop. 170, also prop. 211.

⁴⁵³ cf. *Aristot. Eth. Nic.* 1142a25–6: "Intuitive reason is of the definitions, for which no account can be given."

⁴⁵⁴ cf. *Tim.* 30b: "... intelligence cannot be present in anything apart from soul." (Cornford).

⁴⁵⁵ cf. *Aristot. De Anim.* 405b15: "Like, they say, is known by like," but the origin of the saying seems to go back to Homer and the Pre-Socratics.

⁴⁵⁶ cf. Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 11 & 27, and for a translation and commentary on the relevant verses cf. Lewy *op. cit.* p. 165–9, also p. 99–100 and note 138.

So, if you wish to travel by the various ways of knowing, you will see that Socrates' exhortation is correct; but if you should also wish to follow the argument according to the actual objects of knowledge, flee all the objects of sense (since they are dispersed and divided and not subject to accurate apprehension) and lift yourself up away from these to incorporeal being. Every object of sense possesses a unity which is merely adventitious, it is dissipated by its very nature, and is filled with indeterminacy; therefore its good is divided, acquired from without, separated from itself, and finds its subsistence in some foreign abode. Ascending there and arriving among the incorporeal beings, you will see that order of souls which exists above bodies, self-moved and self-activated and possessing its subsistence in and of itself, but nevertheless plurified and already possessed of the stamp of "the being which is divisible in association with bodies":⁴⁵⁷ you will behold multitudinous relationships of ratios, proportions, connecting bonds, wholes, parts, circles of the soul and "a variety of powers":⁴⁵⁸ their perfection <249> not eternal nor all abiding together, but unrolled in time and subsisting in phases – for such is the nature of the soul. After the multiplicity in souls lift⁴⁵⁹ yourself up to Intellect and the realms of intelligence in order that you may grasp the unification of things: become a spectator of that grade of being and behold it abiding in eternity, behold a life that teems,⁴⁶⁰ an intelligence that is tireless and in no respect failing in life, neither requiring time nor cycles for its perfection. Having seen this and beheld how superior it is to souls, examine whether there be any multiplicity therein, whether intellect, being one, is also all-complete, or whether, being in the form of the one, it is also in the form of the many. Having ascertained and been initiated into the knowledge of the intelligent multiplicity that is undivided and unified, proceed in turn to another principle, and prior to the intelligent forms of being considers their henads⁴⁶¹ and the unity that transcends the totalities.⁴⁶² When you have arrived there, you will have left behind all multiplicity, you will have ascended to the very source of the Good.

⁴⁵⁷ cf. Tim. 35a–37c for this description of the nature of the soul.

⁴⁵⁸ cf. Plot. IV, 4, 36, 9.

⁴⁵⁹ For the process of ascent cp. Plot. V, 1, 3 & V, 8, 3 ad init.

⁴⁶⁰ cp. Plot. VI, 7, 12, 20–23: "To ask how those forms of life come to be There is simply asking how that heaven came to be; it is asking whence comes life, whence the All-Life, whence the All-Soul, whence collective Intellect: and the answer is that There no indigence or impotence can exist but all must be teeming, seething, with life." (McKenna).

⁴⁶¹ cf. El. Theol. props. 113–165 and notes p. 257–83.

⁴⁶² cf. El. Theol. prop. 100 and notes on props. 67–9.

You see how the aforesaid discourse affords us no small help, by exhorting us to withdraw from multiplicity and how it contributes to
 <250> the whole salvation of the soul, if we reflect upon the multiplicity that pervades all being. So the separation of ourselves from the multitude, both that which lies without, that within the appetites of the soul, and that which lies in the indeterminate movements of conjecture, indicates to us the finest basis for perfection. From this it is clear that souls do not amass knowledge from objects of sense-perception, nor do they discover what is whole and one from things partial and divided, but they realize their learning as it were from within and amend the imperfection of sense phenomena. We must not think that things nowhere and in no wise realities are principal causes of the knowledge in souls, nor value things ambiguous, in mutual conflict and lacking these innate notions, above the knowledge that is ever consistent with itself, nor posit things subject to variegated change as the source of things established in one notion, nor things indeterminate as the source of determinate intelligence. We must not then receive the truth of eternal matters from the many nor the discernment of universals from the objects of sense-perception nor our judgment of what is good from the irrational, but the soul, of its own motion, must within itself seek both the true and the good and the eternal notions of reality. For its essence is full of these notions, but is obscured as a result of the forgetfulness incident to generation, and the soul looks elsewhere in its search
 <251> for truth, although it possesses the latter of its essence and looks out for the good in other things, neglecting itself. From this source, then, there comes to us the beginning of our self-knowledge. If we were to look away to the multitude of men, we should never see their one form, overshadowed as it would be by the multiplicity, division, separation and manifold change in the participants; but if we revert to ourselves, there we will behold both the one notion and the one nature of man in all its purity. Reasonably, then, Socrates from afar restrains the soul that is to attain the knowledge of the true nature of man from looking away to the multitude, and first clears away the opinions that stand in the way of such consideration. The multitude stands in the way of our reversion to ourselves and of the knowledge of our one form, for the very reason that variety obscures the one, otherness the same and unlikeness the like in the case of beings that are implicated in matter. On this level forms are not unconfused, nor the superior free from admixture with the inferior. Those who wish to perceive each individual
 <252> good within themselves should reject what is alien thereto.

Let such be our observations about the whole syllogism now that we have securely established the benefit therefrom that reaches through all things; it remains to consider Plato's words. There is a name given by the logicians to the action of those who have agreed with the premisses from the beginning, but after the conclusion and the syllogism go back and oppose one of the agreed premisses, and this they call "retraction." Now this is what Alcibiades does at this juncture, since he retracts one of the original premisses in his efforts to escape refutation, and, because his previous agreement that he had neither learned nor discovered what is just saw him forced by the argument into complete ignorance of what is just, he now retracts the statement that he did not learn, avers that he has come to the knowledge of what is just through learning and was wrong in his original denial viz. that he did not learn; as teachers of this learning he puts forward the many. Being at a loss for the guidance of the One, he tends towards the multitude and to this refers the knowledge of himself. It seems that the young man advocates this opinion, viz. that the many are teachers of what is just, <253> because he has been misled probably by arguments of the sophists in current circulation. At any rate, in the Protagoras,⁴⁶³ the sophist is represented by Plato as saying: "But as things are, Socrates, you are spoilt, because all men are teachers of virtue, in so far as each is able, but you don't think there are any: just as if you were to enquire^{464*} who is a teacher of Greek – none would be apparent." Such is the argument of Protagoras – the same as the young man employs at this juncture. For he asserts "from the many, Socrates, I learned what is just, just as I learned from them how to speak Greek." So in turn, another method of purification is introduced, shielding youth from association with sophists as being an obstacle to the acquisition of knowledge and as drawing us away from the truth and producing error within us through many reports of all kinds. Sophistry, then, is on a level with the multitude and the life of the multitude: it aims at deceit^{465*} and appearances and recoils from the Truth and the One.

"It isn't with good teachers that you take refuge when you have recourse to the many." "Why, aren't they competent to teach?" Well, at any rate not how or how not to play draughts,

⁴⁶³ cf. Protag. 327e–328a.

^{464*} The text of this quotation as it stands is hardly intelligible, and is clearly a corruption of the Platonic text, which is here translated.

^{465*} Dr. Westerink's correction seems somewhat more probable than the reading of N.

and yet I think this a more trifling matter than what is just. Come now, don't you agree?" "Yes." "Then if they are unable to teach what is less significant, can they teach what is more serious?" 110 E.

- <254> The discourse as it proceeds, will indicate what is the criterion of men of knowledge and how, according to this criterion, the many are not worthy teachers of the nature of what is just, but the present argument put forward by Socrates is very persuasive, on account of its clarity, and true, if one follows it out correctly. What precisely does he say? The many are unable to teach one how to play draughts, a matter of less significance than what is just; then how are those who cannot teach what is of less moment good teachers of what is more important, and how will those who cannot judge correctly matters easy to know be able to teach what is more difficult and harder to understand? Now the point of this argument is clear, but the consequences seem to be absurd. For the person ignorant of inferior matters is not thereby proved devoid of the knowledge of superior affairs. In fact Hippocrates was capable of teaching the art of medicine but not of building, although the latter is less important than medicine: Socrates himself rendered his associates skilled in argument, and transmitted this knowledge, but he did not make them draught-players, although draughts are less important than philosophical argument. So, as I observed, the proposition seems not to be true but merely persuasive; however if one examines it fairly, it will appear as being completely true. For the argument took the example of draught-playing not only as being of less importance than what is just, but also as being more akin to the many and an object of their enthusiasm, since the senseless multitude of the populace dash after such pursuits and spend their time on them. One must then, supply this in thought to the proposition and it will be indubitable. If the many are unable to teach the matters of less moment in which they engage, to which they are addicted and with which they
<255> are familiar, neither could they teach the matters of greater importance of which they have less experience and with which they are less familiar.⁴⁶⁶

In this way I think that the sense hits the truth of the actual facts; but it seems that the young man, as if refuting the plausibility of the argument brings up the subsequent arguments, which show that the

⁴⁶⁶ On the preceding passage cf. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 91, 14–92, 1.

many can teach other matters too which are not less important than playing draughts, since he is unaware that any disordered multitude is incapable of receiving true knowledge. For this reason too it is impossible to find a good and worthy democracy, because each form of government must achieve excellence when the ruling element therein possesses the appropriate knowledge; but the ruling element in democracies is the people, and the people are not disposed to retain knowledge nor to live thereby, so that no democracy could ever be worthwhile. Looking at the universe one must observe that its most unified elements possess intellect and wisdom, but the partial, varying and disordered elements <256> are bereft of true learning and knowledge. Rightly, therefore, the noble Heracleitus curses the multitude as being without intelligence or reason. “Where,” he says “is their intelligence or wit? They believe the bards of the people and as their teacher employ the crowd, not knowing that the many are evil, but few are good.” Such are the words of Heracleitus ^{467*} – and therefore the Sillographer ⁴⁶⁸ called him “a reviler of the mob.”

One should not be surprised if, while stating that what is in accordance with nature is more extensive than what is contrary to it, and that the latter is constrained within a small compass, we assert that the majority of men lack knowledge and are evil, and that the knowledgeable are very few. For life in conjunction with the body is not natural to souls, nor the life that produces generation, but on the contrary the life which is separate, immaterial and incorporeal is more appropriate to them. When they are in the world of process, they resemble those who spend their time in a plague-ridden spot, but when they are outside the world of process, just as Plato himself says, they resemble those who dwell in “a meadow.” ⁴⁶⁹ Just as therefore there is nothing surprising <257> in the fact that in places of pestilence more people suffer from disease than are in a natural state of health, so also it is no cause for surprise that in the world of process there are more souls that are depraved and in the grip of the emotions than otherwise. Indeed the contrary would be surprising – if any souls clothed in such bodies, encompassed in such bonds, and enmeshed in so much change, abstain and remain both pure

⁴⁶⁸ Timon of Phlius wrote satirical hexameters on the dogmatic philosophers. cf. Diog. Laert. IX, 6.

⁴⁶⁹ The “meadow” is the meeting place of souls coming up from earth and down from heaven – cf. esp. Resp. X 614e, 616b.

^{467*} The text translated is that of Diels.

and free from emotion. Looking at ^{470*} such souls and at one who lived a life that was immaterial among things implicated in matter, and undefiled among things mortal, a judge would, I think, say: – “Wonder possesses me how you have drunk this potion and no whit been charmed.” ⁴⁷¹ For truly oblivion, error and ignorance are like some use of drugs that drags souls down to the abode of dissimilarity. ⁴⁷² Why then be surprised if in their way of life there are many who are wolves, many who are swine and many who have put on the likeness of some other kind of irrational animal, ⁴⁷³ since the earthy regions are the residence of Circe ⁴⁷⁴ and many souls are ensnared by her draught on account of

⁴⁷¹ cf. *Odyssey* X, 326.

⁴⁷² cp. p. 34, 6 and *Statesman* 273d.

⁴⁷³ For the controversy on the question whether men's souls literally entered beasts, or merely metaphorically, cf. *Hermes* Dec. '57: *Kontroversen um die Seelenwanderung im kaiserzeitlichen Platonismus* by Heinrich Dorrie esp. p. 423–4, where it appears that the literal interpretation was accepted from Plato as far as Plotinus (cf. *Enn.* III, 4, 2) but rejected in favour of the metaphorical by Porphyry and Iamblichus, who made a firm distinction between the rational and irrational soul and refused to allow transmigration from one kind to the other. Proclus (cf. Dorrie p. 432) quotes the current opposing views in *Tim.* III p. 294, 22 ff. “It is customary to enquire what is meant by the descent of souls into irrational animals: some consider that the so-called bestial lives are mere assimilations of men to beasts (for it is not possible that a rational substance should become the soul of a beast), others even concede that this substance enters into irrational beings (for, they assert, all souls are the same in kind, so that these become wolves and leopards and jelly-fish).” Proclus then gives his own opinion, which is a compromise between the opposing views: “But the true account says that although the human soul enters into beasts, yet they retain their own appropriate life which the entered soul as it were transcends, while at the same time bound by affinity to it.” i.e. Proclus admits that man's soul can enter beasts, but it remains rational and transcendent, and the beasts retain their own life: man's soul does not actually inform the body of a beast. cp. in *Remp.* II p. 309, 28ff. “Let us state, then, that at any rate according to the opinion of Plato the soul transfers into irrational animals on account of similarity in way of life, a position which we too affirm, but not that the soul inhabits their bodies (for the differentiations in natural structure militate against such a reduced status) but solely by condition of life is tied to *their* soul which has animated its own body and has no additional need of the human soul.” So Proclus returns to Plato's view, but allows for the objections of Porphyry and Iamblichus by preserving the rationality of man's soul even when it is present in beasts.

⁴⁷⁴ cf. *Procl.* in *Crat.* p. 22, 8–10: “... Circe who contrives the whole of life in the region of the four elements, and at the same time makes the place beneath the moon harmonious with her spells.” cp. the position of Hecate as mistress of the evil demons, who inhabit the sublunar zone of Nature. These demons are likened to beasts of the earth who lure the soul to an “animal” life. cf. *Lewy op. cit.* c.v. *Chaldaean Demonology* esp. p. 263–5 and notes 12–19.

^{470*} Reading ἀφορῶν with E. R. Dodds (*Gnomon* '55 p. 166).

<258> their immoderate desire? Wonder rather at this – if any here are free from the influence of potion and charm and in their natures are followers of Hermes, ⁴⁷⁵ passing over to reason and knowledge. Just as we should not be surprised if we should see souls being punished in Tartarus (since that place was designed for them), so also if in the world of process the majority are subject to the emotions and devoid of understanding and knowledge; since the world of process requires such souls. As therefore in heaven they have all the form of the good, as in Tartarus they are all depraved, so in the world of process the majority are depraved, and the minority are good, since the world of process is near the worse end of the two extremes, not the better and more divine.

“Yes I think so: at any rate they can teach many other things of more importance than playing draughts.” “What sort of things?” “For instance I learned from them how to speak Greek; and I couldn’t say who was my teacher, but I go back to the same people who you deny are good teachers.” 110 E–111 A.

The young man has experienced the reaction described by us above, at one and the same time following the opinions of sophists and rejecting the argument put forward, as being persuasive but not true: he says that the many teach many other things more important than draughts, since they are teachers of how to speak Greek, which is superior to draughts. But speaking Greek is not something simple, but threefold.⁴⁷⁶ <259> One is to observe the Greek usage of names e.g. this thing is called “wood,” this “man,” this other “horse,” and so on for everything; another is to be accurate in the use of the Greek language and observe its correct form in pronunciation; and third is to assign the legitimate uses of terms that are naturally ⁴⁷⁷ appropriate to their subjects. Now

⁴⁷⁵ i.e. persons of reason. cp. p. 195, 8–10; Procl. in Tim. I p. 148, 5; and Galen: Protrep. 2–3, where Hermes is contrasted with the goddess of Chance.

⁴⁷⁶ cp. Schol. in Alc. p. 277, 32–7 Hermann.

⁴⁷⁷ The question whether language is natural or conventional is discussed by Jean Daniélou in *Rev. des Études Grecques* LXIX 1956 in an article entitled “Eunome l’Arien et l’Exégèse Néo-platonicienne du Cratyle,” esp. pp. 415, 422–3. In Plato’s *Cratylus*, Cratylus declares for nature: “There is a correctness of name that naturally belongs to each reality” (383a); Hermogenes for convention: “I cannot persuade myself that there is any other principle of correctness in name than convention and agreement” (384d). Socrates argues both cases.

Aristotle sides with convention: “A name is a sound having meaning established by convention alone . . . by convention because no name is established by nature.” (*De Int.* 16a20 & 28).

according to the first significance of speaking Greek even the many could be teachers, since they exhibit the customary usages in names according to common Greek practice; but not according to the second and third significances; the former is characteristic of the man who knows grammar, the latter of the philosopher and the man who has examined the nature of things. Thus we would be having ^{478*} recourse to the greater skill; and we do ^{479*} this whenever we find the understanding of the many too weak to grasp reality. Pythagoras, ⁴⁸⁰ too, said that "number was the wisest of all the things that are," and "second" in point of wisdom is "to assign" appropriate "names to things." Intellect is the first number, and after this comes the intelligent soul which contemplates the forms, but the One is prior both to soul and intellect, since it generates number.

So much for speaking Greek; those who give the many the credit for being teachers of what is just, as of speaking Greek, seem to me to state clearly that they consider what is just to be so by agreement, like names.
 <260> For the many are arbiters of names in general and of those in customary usage, but they cannot discern their appropriateness to their subjects. So these people think that what is just is so by agreement and on this account refer its teaching to the many, since what is by nature just is

Among earlier philosophers, Proclus finds Democritus on the side of Aristotle (in *Crat.* p. 6, 20-7, 17), Pythagoras on the side of nature (*ibid.* p. 6, 1-19), while among later philosophers both Epicurus (*ibid.* p. 7, 22-8, 7 and cp. *Ep. ad Her.* 75 & 76) and the Stoics are at least fundamentally on the side of nature (cf. *SVF* II no. 146).

Proclus agrees with Plato in representing Socrates as giving a compromise solution (in *Crat.* p. 4, 11-14, p. 8, 7-13). Basically and essentially names are natural, accidentally and materially conventional. This is much the same as the view of Epicurus.

Apart from the rational explanation of the origin of names, Proclus is influenced by Iamblichus (*De Myst. Aegypt.* VII, 4) and the Chaldaean Oracles to allow a higher, mystical origin of some of them (cf. Danielou p. 424-7). The "legislator" of *Cratylus* 389a is equated with "the universal creator" who is the "most primary bestower of names" (in *Crat.* p. 20, 1-4) and "assigns appropriate names to each thing" (*ibid.* p. 20, 25). In all there is a threefold origin of names: "Some names are sprung from the gods and have come down as far as soul, some are sprung from individual souls that are able to fashion them through intellect and knowledge, others again are constituted through the agency of the middle classes of beings; for certain individuals have encountered guardian spirits and angels and learned from them names more appropriate to things than the ones men have given them. (*ibid.* p. 20, 10-16). cp. *Iambl. Vit. Pyth.* 56.

⁴⁸⁰ cf. *Procl. in Crat.* p. 5, 27-6, 19; *Ol. in Alc.* p. 95, 9-15.

^{478*} Reading the optative ἀνατρέχοιμεν as E. R. Dodds suggests.

^{479*} Reading the present ποιοῦμεν as Dr. Westerink suggests.

clear only to those who know. We must reply that the many can ascertain this particular case of what is just by common report, just as they say the name that is given to this particular thing, but they could never know what is just in itself, nor the real legitimate use of the name.

“Well, my noble friend, the many are good teachers thereof and their teaching might rightly be praised. And why? Because in that regard they have the necessary qualifications of good teachers.” “What do you mean by this?” “Are you unaware that those who intend to teach any subject must themselves know it first? Is this not so?” “Certainly.” “And that those who know both agree with and do not differ from one another?” “Yes.” “But will you say that they know those matters upon which they differ?” “Certainly not.” “Then how could they be teachers thereof?” “By no means.” “Well then, do the many seem to you to differ about the nature of stone or wood? If you ask any of them, don’t they agree on the same answer, and make for the same objects when they want to pick up a stone or a piece of wood, and the same for all such objects? For by knowing how to speak Greek, I pretty well understand that this is what you mean. Isn’t that so?” “Yes.” “If then, as we said, they concur both with each other and privately in themselves on these answers, then states publicly do not dispute them in their relations with one another, some averring these answers and some others?” “No, they don’t.” “Naturally, then, they would be good teachers of these subjects.” “Yes.” III A–D.

Socrates accepts part of what is said and part rejects: first he perfects what is correctly observed, then through this refutes what is otherwise, since one should set right what is unknown from what is most familiar and the objects of enquiry from what is commonly agreed. Therefore Socrates both agrees with those who say that the many are teachers of how to speak Greek and adds evidence thereof: but from this very fact he again shows that the many could never teach justice. Now he says that the evidence for, or rather the criterion of, correct thinking, is the fact of their agreement about the subject with which this teaching is concerned. It has already been observed that whoever intends to teach on any subject must first have discerned the nature of the subject to be taught. If therefore anyone should possess in himself the knowledge of the subject which he intended to teach, such a one should be accepted as a teacher: but if he should not possess it, clearly he must not be accepted, since he is not an accurate teacher, and clearly he is not a man of

knowledge. Again what would be the evidence for knowledge or
 <262> ignorance? – the fact of their disagreement with each other. It is clear
 that, since they reach out towards the same object of knowledge, those
 who know do not differ or disagree among themselves when they are
 teaching the subject, some saying one thing, some another, about
 the same subject. The reason is that the subjects are established in
 their own nature and do not appear in one guise to some, in another
 guise to others; human knowing has determined modes of apprehension,
 while true knowledge has already grasped within itself the criteria of
 each thing's nature. If either, as Protagoras ⁴⁸¹ said, things were mere
 appearance, or there were no determinate judgment in us, ⁴⁸² there
 would be nothing to prevent all men possessing knowledge and yet
 disagreeing with one another, some grasping the objects of knowledge
 in one way and some in another. Now if this has been correctly argued,
 we must make disagreement a sign of ignorance, and agreement a sign
 of knowledge, since all those who know the truth do not disagree with
 each other about it. So the proposition arrived at is as follows: "If
 certain people know the truth, they do not disagree with each other."
 Then according to the so-called contradictory converse: "But if they
 disagree with each other, they do not know the truth, but either all or
 <263> some of them are ignorant thereof." Now the converse will be useful to
 Socrates later, when he passes on to what is just and argues about that;
 but at present he first shows in the case of speaking Greek that there is
 nothing surprising in the many being good teachers thereof. For "they
 possess the necessary qualifications of good teachers"; they must, then,
 know the subject about which they profess to teach. What is the proof
 of this? – that they do not disagree with each other. Now if the many
 disagree about what to call wood and man and stone, they will not all
 be accurate and irrefutable teachers even of speaking Greek; but if they
 agree with one another about this and each agrees with himself and the
 rest, they will, as regards speaking Greek, possess the state of mind
 appropriate to those who intend to teach any subject. Let a syllogism,
 then, be formed about speaking Greek, as follows: "The many agree

⁴⁸¹ cf. Theaet. 152a.

⁴⁸² cf. Philop. De Aet. Mundi 83, 12: "For thus unawares we shall be introducing the argument of Anaxagoras, who said that nothing possessed a determinate nature, but that everything had their being in relation to one another." *ibid.* p. 464, 3: "One of the friends of Protagoras might say that if such and such absurdities follow upon the hypothesis that nothing has a determinate nature, Protagoras would not have made this hypothesis, even though he appears to make it by the text of his saying."

with each other about the customary names given to things: those who agree with each other about the customary names given to things possess the knowledge of how to speak Greek: those who possess the knowledge of how to speak Greek are irrefutable teachers thereof: so the many are irrefutable teachers of how to speak Greek.” Now all concur with the shortest of the premisses, that the many agree with each other, since it is quite obvious that the many do not disagree with each other in
 <264> the use of names, and that he who has no disagreement with anyone about any subject is a good teacher thereof. But the middle term of both premisses seems to be false, since not in every case are those who agree with each other on any subject knowledgeable about the topic on which they have agreement. For at the present time the many agree that gods do not exist, but this has happened to them through lack of knowledge. In reply to this difficulty we must first observe that the bad man cannot agree with himself, since if he is evil he must be at strife with his own way of life; on account of his rational nature he must in some way see the truth, but on account of the emotions and imaginings implicated in matter he must be distracted towards ignorance and personal conflict; this is shown by his repentance once the emotions have abated and the discord to which he was previously subject unawares. The atheist and the incontinent, in their understanding, which is naturally akin to the divine, and belongs to the good part of the soul, utter words of moderation and things inspired by god, but in their sense desires and the movements of sense-images and shapes, their disposition is godless and incontinent, and in general, following the irrational soul, they bring in war upon themselves and commotion of all kinds. Every evil man is in discord with himself; if this is so, much more is he in discord with the rest of men. How could one agree with those outside oneself, if one were
 <265> in a state of strife within oneself? So all who are godless, incontinent or unjust are at variance with one another and could never be in accord since they are without knowledge.

So much then for the aforesaid objection; of the individual phrases the expression “my noble friend” is courteous, in so far as it softens the refutations, and, further, it in some way separates Alcibiades from the many. It indicates that he who thinks highly of his noble birth and has been granted a noble nature should not appear unworthy of his nature nor seek after the opinions of the many nor reckon himself with his inferiors, whom nature has granted him to excel.

The statement that the many are ignorant of “the subjects upon which they disagree” is the contradictory converse of the premiss which

says that those who know do not disagree with each other, and it helps Socrates in his next argument, through which he shows that the many are not good teachers of what is just, because they are not even knowledgeable thereof.

The phrase “to make for the same objects” makes the agreement complete. For it is possible both to hold the same views and not give the same objects pride of place, in the manner of those who disagree in practice; [it is possible also], starting from differing convictions to perform the same actions. [Now such individuals] in one respect agree, but in another do not; only those agree [completely who] possess the same
 <266> knowledge about the same things and pursue the same courses of action about the same [objects]. Therefore “to concur” [here] signifies agreement in word, but “to make for the same objects” agreement as regards the object of desire, which itself indeed also contributes [to agreement].

Furthermore the subsequent statement “For by knowing how to speak Greek, I pretty well understand that this is what you mean” is an indication that speaking Greek [is understood in more senses than one], and that only in one sense thereof are [the many good teachers] of speaking Greek.

The expression “both they in themselves” provides a solution [to the above-mentioned difficulty. For] in the case of those who know, agreement must begin from themselves; but no [evil person agrees with himself], so that neither could he agree with others, since he is at strife with himself.^{483*}

“So if we should wish to have anyone possess knowledge about them, we should be right in sending him for instruction to the many you speak of?” “Certainly.” “But what if we should wish to learn not only what sort of things are men or horses, but also which of them can race or not, would the many still be competent to teach this?” “Certainly not.” “Does the fact that they have no agreement with themselves about these subjects appear to you evidence that
 <267> they do not know it and are not good teachers thereof?” “It does.” “What if we should wish to know, not only what sort of things are men, but also what sort of men are healthy or diseased, would the many be competent teachers for us?” “Certainly not.” “If you saw them disagreeing, it would be evidence to you that they are bad teachers of this subject?” “It would.” III D–E.

^{483*} It is difficult to fill the many lacunae on this page with accuracy, but the sense must be such as Dr. Westerink’s conjectures suggest. The text has been translated as it stands in his edition.

Before turning to the proposed argument, Socrates shows in other cases how the many are not good teachers because they disagree with each other. As regards the names in customary usage they are competent to teach and do not disagree with each other, but as regards what can race and what can't, and again who are healthy and who diseased, it is not within the power of the many to teach, because they do not accord with each other thereon, but it is only within the power of horsemen and doctors, for these can discern these matters and do agree with each other. You see how Socrates has entrusted the names given to classes to the knowledge of the many, but what can and cannot race, and what is healthy or not is discerned by suitability only and is hard to ascertain since it is more remote than objects of sense and requires skilled knowledge. For although racing is an object apparent to the senses, yet racing qualities do not amount to anything specific, so that for this reason they are not apparent to the many, but rather their disagreement is evidence of their ignorance.

This again involves a considerable difficulty. If disagreement is evidence of ignorance, we shall state that the philosophers too are ignorant, for they also disagree with each other and reject each other's hypotheses, <268> some advocating one system, some another. This difficulty too must be solved in the same way as our predecessors did, by observing that disagreement is of two kinds: one of the ignorant fighting both against themselves and each other, the second of the ignorant differing with those who know and considering everyone ignorant in comparison with themselves. Now if the denial ⁴⁸⁴ be by way of contrariety, then we must say that they have no knowledge of the subject of their dispute, but if by way of contradiction then we must say that not all those who differ possess this knowledge, but some do and others don't.

⁴⁸⁴ These lines are very compressed, but perhaps some light is shed upon them by Aristot. *De Int.* 17b16–22.: "When their subject is one and the same, but of two propositions the affirmative clearly indicates in its terms that the subject is taken universally, the negative however that the subject is not universally taken, I call them contradictorily opposed. Examples are "every man is white," "not every man is white" and the like, or again we have "some men are white," to which "no man is white" is opposed in the manner of which I am speaking. Propositions are contrarily opposed when affirmative and negative alike are possessed of a universal character – the subject, that is, in both cases being marked as universally taken. Thus "every man is white" or "is just" is the contrary, not the contradictory, of "no man is white" or "is just"; (Loeb). These logical divisions refer to the two types of disagreement described in the previous sentence. In the first case none of those who disagree possesses knowledge – a contrary denial; in the second case, not all those who disagree possess knowledge – a contradictory denial.

We must also pay close attention to the accuracy of this premiss. For it is those who agree neither “with themselves” nor “with each other” whom he denies possess knowledge, and these are the ignorant since those who know agree with themselves, so that both forms of disagreement apply only to those who are ignorant, but in no way to those who know. But the knowledgeable do not disagree with the ignorant (since on the contrary they perfect and regulate them and recall them to their own condition); it is the ignorant who separate themselves from those who know; because of the disagreement within themselves, they differ even with their betters. So those who know and those who don’t do not even differ with each other, consequently the knowledgeable do not differ at all. The difficulty, then, is far from troubling genuine philosophers, since those who are united with each other through likeness and identity and who have received a knowledge that completely transcends the ignorant are at strife neither with themselves nor with the latter.

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“Well now, do you think the many agree with themselves or with each other about just men and affairs?” “By Zeus, not at all, Socrates.” “In fact, they differ chiefly on these points?” “Very much so.” “I don’t think you have ever seen or heard men so sharply divided about what is healthy or not, as on that account to fight and slay one another.” “Certainly not.” “But as regards what is just and unjust I know that even if you have not seen at least you have heard this from many people, including Homer, since you have heard both the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*.” “I’ve heard them all, I think, Socrates.” “Now these poems are about a difference of what is just and unjust?” “Yes.” “And it was on account of this difference that the battles and deaths occurred both between the Achaeans and the Trojans, and between the suitors of Penelope and Odysseus.” “That is true.” “And I suppose that in the case of the Athenians, Spartans and Boeotians who were killed at Tanagra and of those who later engaged at Coronea, when your father perished, the difference was on no other subject except to have brought about their combats and deaths in relation to what is just and unjust; [is this not so?]” “That is true.” “Shall we then say that these people have a knowledge of the questions on which they differ so violently that in their disputes they inflict on each other the worst of evils?” “Apparently not.” “Do you then refer to [teachers of this sort] whom you yourself admit to lack knowledge?” “It seems I do.” “[How then it is likely] that you

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should know what is just and unjust, when you are so far astray on the subject, [and evidently have neither learned] it from anyone nor discovered it for yourself?" "From what you say, it isn't likely."
 111 E–112 D.

The argument has reached its objective by showing that the many [are not] good teachers [of what is just], and it concludes in the following fashion: "The many are at strife with themselves and each other about what is just; those who are at strife with themselves and each other about what is just have no knowledge of what is just; those who have no knowledge of what is just are not good teachers of what is just; so the many are not good teachers of what is just." Now the other premisses Socrates has already made clear through what has been said before, and in these words he clarifies only the shortest – that which asserts that the many are at strife about what is just. For, he observes, not only do they differ about it, but "they are very sharply divided." Now what is the evidence for this excessiveness? The fact that many deaths and the overthrow of many cities have occurred on account of the differences about what is just.

<271> Now let us again consider what could be the reason why men, although in dispute with each other over what causes disease and health, nevertheless do not descend to the depths of evil, but when they are at strife over what is just and unjust, both inflict and endure such great evils. We must state as the first and most immediate cause the twofold ignorance that affords those who possess it the impression of knowledge. As regards what is health-giving we possess simple ignorance and we know that we don't know; even if we dispute for a little, we defer to the experts in such matters, but as regards what is just we consider ourselves knowledgeable because our soul possesses the innate notions thereof, and in view of this consideration we naturally do not wish to give up what is just. Here again we do not err according to the major premiss, but we do entertain false opinions according to the minor: we say that this is what is just and we are deceived and think we know when we don't. "What is just must not be relinquished" – this premiss is according to nature and correct. "Therefore this must not be relinquished" – this time there is distortion in the minor premiss. So we maintain it on account of twofold ignorance. Second to this we must observe that questions of health and disease involve only partial disputes and do not contribute to our life as a whole, whereas questions of what is just and unjust involve differences as regards our entire life,

so that naturally the latter inflame us more intensely in our disputes. Even if one should let the question of disease and health go, on the grounds that harm is incurred therefrom not as regards the most valuable part of us, yet we all by nature hold on to what is just and unjust, as possessing our entire substance therein. So we consider ourselves to become practically without substance, corpses, and non-existent, when we are deprived of what is just. Thirdly justice, as being <272> of a higher rank, is an offshoot of the gods and more intelligent (for justice in itself, moderation in itself and knowledge in itself exist in the first rank in the place above the heavens, whatever this is, and there the souls have beheld them "standing on their pedestals," according to what Socrates says in the *Phaedrus*);⁴⁸⁵ but health is an irradiation of the secondary substance of the gods, and therefore among us the medical art imitates the judicial, as is said in the *Gorgias*.⁴⁸⁶ Naturally, therefore, souls have a greater longing for what is just than for what is health-giving, and they do anything to attain the former, but as regards health and its opposite they disagree and are at strife with each other only to a small extent.⁴⁸⁷ So much for this difficulty.

Of the individual phrases, the expression "Well now" has the addition of the present time, because Alcibiades made the many of the present generation responsible for teaching what is just.

The phrase "men and affairs" affords him a notion of the rhetorical element of co-ordinates⁴⁸⁸ – justice, what is just, justly; it is divided into the state, the thing that participates therein, and the manner. Now the many dispute about just men in their judgments, but about just affairs both in their judgments and their actions.

The expression "By Zeus, not at all, Socrates" was uttered by the young man, not only as being an authoritative individual, but also as <273> elevating himself away from the dissension of the many to the cause of justice in its entirety.

⁴⁸⁵ cf. *Phaedr.* 247d, 254b.

⁴⁸⁶ cf. *Gorg.* 478d.

⁴⁸⁷ This passage seems to imply a hierarchy of forms. Proclus distinguishes between intelligible and intelligent forms, the former above the highest level of Nous, the latter verging towards the level of Soul. Only the supreme forms are intelligible: lesser forms are intelligent. The "place above the heavens" is the sphere of the intelligibles, and Beauty is made head of the intelligible forms as Form of forms (cf. p. 111, 14-15 and Procl. in *Crat.* p. 60, 26, p. 64, 8-10). For further description of the power of health cf. Procl. in *Tim.* II p. 63, 9-64, 9. For the intelligent forms cf. *El. Theol.* props 176-8, 194 & notes.

⁴⁸⁸ cf. *Aristot. Top.* 114a36-8: "All words which are in the same co-ordinate series are called co-ordinates, for example "justice," "just man," "just action" and "justly." (Loeb).

Furthermore, the mention of the "Iliad" and the Trojan War shows how old is the strife among men concerning what is just; so that Ilium was overthrown on that account and a very great part of the Greek race perished, and finally the expression "an Iliad of woes" ⁴⁸⁹ became a proverb for the greatest disasters. But how it is it that he previously assumed that Alcibiades learned only "letters, lyre-playing and wrestling," but now adds the works of Homer also? Surely that he was speaking about arts and sciences when he reduced Alcibiades' ^{490*} knowledge to these three heads, but he was not discussing ancient literature.

Further, the engagements "at Tanagra" and "at Coronea," were introduced as a reminder that the many sharply dispute over what is just, and not only foreigners, but even Greeks; ^{491*} and that it was no benefit to them to be of the same tongue, since this did not prevent their performing the uttermost evil because of their differences over what is just.

In addition the mention of Kleinias who perished at Coronea also ^{492*} presents the proof of men's deception about what is just. It practically states that "both your household and your kindred have suffered many evils on that account." So from this source he has strengthened his proof, by the mention of Kleinias. So much for the connection of the individual phrases.

<274> The citation of historical incidents embellishes the account and lends grace to the converse; it tones down the lack of graciousness in the exchange of question and answer. Furthermore the variation of the figures of speech relieves the tedium of the discourse, and with this device in mind Socrates fashioned his account. It would have been the right construction to say "nor that the difference which brought about their combats and deaths was on any other subject than what is just and unjust," but in fact he said "nor was the difference on any other subject except to have brought about their combats and deaths in relation to what is just and unjust." ^{493*}

Furthermore he concluded his disproof briefly: "so you neither learned nor discovered what is just: for the teachers whom you set

⁴⁸⁹ cf. Demosth. De Falsa Legat. # 148, ad fin.

^{490*} Reading ἐν αὐτῷ as Dr. Westerink suggests. cp. Ol. in Alc. p. 97, 19-23.

^{491*} Transposing "Ἑλλήνας . . . βαρβάρους" as Dr. Westerink proposes.

^{492*} Reading αὐτῇ as Dr. Westerink suggests.

^{493*} The slight difference in construction in Greek is hard to parallel in English without making it seem unnecessarily complicated.

before you cannot teach what is just, viz. the many; and the reason is that they don't even know it. The evidence for this is that they sharply disagree with each other about it, "so as to inflict the uttermost evils upon one another" on account of their differences on this subject." Those who know any subject must agree with each other thereon; and the reason for this postulate is first the determinate nature of the subject-matter and the sameness of the criteria of knowledge for all persons, as we have observed before. Secondly, that among the primary principles Intellect is united to itself and therefore all that participates in Intellect participates in the One. Now if knowledge is an irradiation of Intellect, and concordance an irradiation of the One (since it is a unification of discords), necessarily beings which share in the same knowledge must accord with each other, for disagreement and discord are a falling away from the One.

But what are we to say is the cause of the assumption by the many concerning the knowledge of what is just? On what grounds do they <275> think to teach what is just? It has been stated, I think aptly, by Aristotle ⁴⁹⁴ that there are four problems which occasion discussion and enquiry, whether a thing is, what it is, of what kind it is and why it is, and that he who intends to ascertain what it is must first know whether it is. Now before these four questions one must know what the thing signifies, for without the bare notion of it, we could not even ascertain whether it exists. So possessing the signification we might also ascertain unequivocally what it is if we encountered it, because we have the notion thereof. What it signifies, therefore, is different from what it is. The signification is an explanation of the thing with a view to some determinate intuition, but what it is an accurate apprehension of the nature of the thing in question. The many, then, teach what this and that sound signifies, as for instance what "man" or "horse" signifies; but what these things are they neither know nor teach. They know <276> neither of these things, man and horse, but ^{495*} confusing what a thing signifies with what it is, they think that by the bare notion of the thing they possess a scientific comprehension thereof, reducing these to the same thing.

⁴⁹⁴ cf. Aristot. An. Post. 89b24-5: "We ask four questions, the question of fact, the question of cause, the question of existence and the question of essence." cf. W. D. Ross An. Post. p. 609-10, where he points out that Aristotle probably means by "question of fact and question of cause" what Proclus here indicates by "what kind it is and why it is" i.e. whether a subject has a certain attribute and why it has it.

^{495*} Reading ὁμῶς in place of ὅμως.

"Notice again how you have not made a fair statement here, Alcibiades." "Which do you mean?" "In that you assert that I say this." "Well, is it you who say that I am ignorant about what is just and unjust?" "Not at all." "Well, is it I?" "Yes." "How then?" "Look at it this way and you will find out." 112E.

At the end of the previous discussion, the young man accepted the conclusion, and the ignorance of what is just and unjust which Socrates indicated, but he admitted it with an excuse and made Socrates, not himself and his own character responsible for the demonstrations. He said that he was ignorant of what is just and unjust according to the argument of Socrates, but not according to the truth (for this is what he hinted by adding the remark. "From what you say it isn't likely"). However, through this passage Socrates shows that even according to the judgment of Alcibiades himself, through the very terms by which he assented, he stands revealed as ignorant of what is just; that it is no one else who has applied this refutation but Alcibiades himself and that he must not transfer the responsibility for the proofs to Socrates, but consider his own answers the most valid bases for the conclusion. It is shown clearly that it is the respondent who states all the premisses <277> and conclusions, not the questioner; if therefore Socrates merely asked the aforementioned questions, but Alcibiades gave the replies, it was the latter who both stated the proofs and in person refuted himself and accused his own ignorance, but not Socrates.

To some it appears that the syllogism set before us for examination does not play a leading role in this dialogue, but is a refutation on a side-issue arriving at no conclusion as regards the objects of enquiry but merely attacking the above mentioned statement and proving it wrong. But if we should examine it not as a mere incidental, this argument too affords a wonderful service to the whole conversation. If it is the principal purpose of the dialogue to bring us back to the knowledge of ourselves and show that our being subsists in ideas and notions and realizes from itself all the forms of knowledge and ascertains within itself both all things divine and the patterns of nature, surely it contributes very greatly to this aim to show that each individual respondent is responsible to himself for all the arguments and conclusions and does not derive his knowledge from elsewhere as something alien and imported. He is not like a *tabula rasa* ⁴⁹⁶ receiving notions

⁴⁹⁶ cf. Aristot. *De Anim.* 429b31: "The intellect is in a sense whatever is intelligible, although actually it is nothing until it has thought; what it thinks

from without. Already, then, Alcibiades begins to make acquaintance with himself; previously he was unaware of himself as realising innate notions, but now he is aware of the fact, because he reverts towards himself, and learning his own activity and process of knowing he <278> becomes one with the object of knowledge; and the very manner of reversion in him leads the soul round to the consideration of its being. First, then, the soul must take cognizance of itself, then examine the faculties which it has received, next its being, finally how, starting from the less perfect it proceeds as far as the primary causes. As it is, then, it reverts through its activity to activity and through this to the source of activity (for at the same time the underlying subject is revealed as an existent productive of its own activities) and again through activity to faculty and through this again to being (since the faculties are nearer the essence), and finally it unites its activity to its very being and all things become one and concur with each other, both the being with the activity and the activity with the being, since the being becomes actively intelligent and the activity connatural with the being, according to its own perfection.

Now these observations are very germane to our purpose; but let it be observed in addition that since ignorance is in every person involuntary, and especially ignorance of ourselves and the most valuable elements in beings, the use of refutation, by setting the false opinions alongside the true and disclosing the disagreement of the former with themselves while exhibiting the agreement of the latter, seemed to the wise men of old a most efficacious method of dispelling this ignorance. Whenever the emotions are shown to be in conflict with the opinions, and in turn with each other, and in the same manner the opinions are revealed to be at strife, then especially the baseness of ignorance is shown up and the ignorant person himself makes out his own condition <279> and rejoices in being rid of such an evil. But whenever one is not only convicted of want of knowledge and learning in the most important matters, but also by one's own agency, then one loves and welcomes the conviction even more and multiplies the healing effect that accrues therefrom. As in the treatment of the body, the addition of greater

must be in it just as characters may be said to be on a writing-tablet on which as yet nothing actually stands written: this is exactly what happens with the intellect." Ross cites Theaetetus 191c8 ff for our earliest reference to the notion of a *tabula rasa*, and Hicks compares Alex. Aphr. *De Anim.* p. 84, 24–7, Prisc. *Lyd. Metaph.* in Theophrast. 35, 24–8.

pleasantness in the remedies renders their benefit greater, since bodily nature embraces them from all points of view, both on account of their pleasantness and their goodness, so also the refutation which, other things remaining I presume, equal, appears more pleasant to those who undergo it, renders the healing effect more complete, viz. that which is effected upon ourselves, since we are less disgruntled at being refuted by ourselves than by others. If therefore Socrates should demonstrate that it is the respondent in philosophical discussions who makes the statements, but not the questioner (the one who appears to refute), it becomes evident, I think, to anyone, that we are refuted by ourselves and do not have this done to us from without; so that the manner of this mode of healing is more endurable. The more familiar it is revealed to be, the more it diminishes what is grievous and painful about it and increases what is gentle and beneficial, since everything familiar is more efficacious as regards healing.

Thirdly, in turn, we observe that the irrational animals are among those beings that are “shepherded with a staff,”⁴⁹⁷ as are all those who await healing from outside causes, and wherever the leader leads there the led are led, bereft of the power of ruling and saving themselves; but the human soul, on account of its peculiar characteristic of spontaneity and self-movement is of such a nature as to be active in its own regard, move itself and provide itself with the good. Therefore self-inspired refutation has an affinity with the essence of the soul and doubtless the argument which shows that the respondent is the speaker is in accordance with our being and our activities. Our purification is not such as to accrue from without, but starts from the soul within, since all evil is from without and adventitious to the soul, but the good is from within; for the soul is by nature of the form of the good, and the more perfect it becomes, the more it recovers the life that is self-moved, as having become extrinsically moved on account of connexion with bodies and sympathy with them. On this account everything that it receives in from without remains situated outside it, e.g. images and objects of sense-perception, and only those things are within it such as are done to itself by itself and are realized by itself. So it is purified by itself, since the faculty of reason both starts from itself and ends with itself. Now if the respondent is refuted, and the person refuted is purified, but the person who is purified purifies himself according to the specific property of the soul’s essence, surely the respondent purifies

⁴⁹⁷ cf. Critias 109b and cp. Heracleitus fr. 11.

himself and rids himself of ignorance by applying the refutation to himself, and purifier and purified, refuter and refuted are one. We must not then be provoked by refutations or purifications, since we bring them on ourselves, and do not endure them at the hands of another.

Now further this argument, if adequately stressed, shows clearly that learning is recollection. The fact that respondents state everything of themselves is considerable evidence for the view that souls realize
 <281> innate notions of themselves and all they required was someone to arouse them: they are not *tabulae rasae* receiving impressions from without, but they are tablets ever inscribed and the writer is within, though not all souls are able to ascertain what is written nor even that there is any writing at all, since their eyes are bleared by the forgetfulness incident to generation and by the emotions that have rushed in upon them as a result of this. So all that is required is removal of the obstacles, but there is no need of external or adventitious knowledge, since they possess within themselves the doors ⁴⁹⁸ of truth which are choked up with forms terrestrial and immersed in matter. If, then, one should declare the matter accurately, souls are moved by external agencies, but determine of themselves their scientific replies and so spontaneously demonstrate the truth of Plato's ⁴⁹⁹ statement that the soul knows everything including itself and requires only an outside stimulus by means of scientific questions.

Further, in another way too, the present consideration is appropriate to Socrates. To purify the person in need of such aid through his own agency is the work of a spirit-like power, since the spirits do not operate upon us from without but as it were "guide us from within, from the stern"; ⁵⁰⁰ nor do they purify us as bodies that have a nature which is extrinsically moved, but heal us throughout as persons who
 <282> are self-moved. It is in this way that they confer upon us both participation in what is good and purification of the emotions. Socrates, then, established in the position of a good spirit, shows the spirit as bringing the refutation upon the young man through his own agency, since to situate the cause of the refutations in the respondent proves that purifier and purified are one, but really the cause of such purification is of the spirit-order. For these and many other reasons, then, we think

⁴⁹⁸ This phrase seems to refer to the internal entrances of the soul, as opposed to the senses.

⁴⁹⁹ cf. *Meno* 81c–e, *Phaedo* 72e–73b.

⁵⁰⁰ cf. *Critias* 109c.

that the proposition is of service to Socrates and not by the way, as some consider; and now, coming to the particular exchanges we shall see how true it is.

"If I should ask you which is the greater, one or two, will you say two?" "Yes." "By how much?" "By one." "Which of us then, states that two is greater than one by one." "I do." "Now was it not I who asked, but you who answered?" "Yes." "Then in this matter is it evident that I, the questioner make the statement or you the respondent?" "I do." "What if I were to ask what are the letters in "Socrates," and you were to name them, which of us would be making a statement?" "I would." "Come now, in one word say, when question and answer take place, who makes the statement, the questioner or the respondent?" "In my view, the respondent, Socrates." "Now have I not throughout the present argument been the questioner?" "Yes." "And you the respondent?" "Of course." "Well then, which of us has made the statements that have been uttered?" "Apparently, Socrates, from what we have agreed, it was I." 112E-113 B.

<283> Some questions are [enquiries], requiring more explanation for their answer than the conventional nod of assent or [dissent], while others are satisfied with a mere yes or no. Now if we enquire where Dion lives, we require of the speaker the statement "in the Lyceum," and yes and no are useless in answer to a question of this nature; but if we ask whether the soul is immortal or not, a mere nod of assent or dissent in answer to such a question is appropriate to indicate the intent of the reply. If we take enquiries, it necessarily appears that the respondent makes the statements, since the person who stated that Dion lives in the Lyceum is assuredly the respondent, and not the enquirer; for the one enquired in ignorance and the other replied from knowledge, and the statement belongs to the person who knows and declares, not to the one in ignorance. So Socrates especially in these cases persuades the young man that he himself made the statements. "By how much are two more than one?" and "What are the letters of Socrates?" require such answers, not conventional, but established by a statement. However if someone puts before us those questions in philosophical discussion which it is possible to dispose of by saying yes or no, or by merely nodding assent or dissent, it is harder to perceive that in such cases it is the respondent, not the questioner, who makes the statements. Again,

since some questions in philosophical discussion are elicitive, some contentious and some dubitative (for the more perfect elicits from the
 <284> less perfect by questioning; the person who requires knowledge shows he is in doubt by interrogating someone more knowledgeable; and he contends in debate who holds converse through question and answer with someone in a similar state of mind to himself), it is necessary, since questions in philosophical discussion are of three sorts, that according to each kind the respondent be the person who makes the statement. If the enquiry be made to one who is more knowledgeable, assuredly the person who makes the statement is the one who has imparted knowledge to the less perfect, since the former is the person who declares his opinion upon the subjects put forward by the latter.^{501*} If the person skilled in elicitation makes enquiry, again he who undergoes the process of elicitation surely produces the notions, since elicitation, according to what is written thereon in the *Theaetetus*,⁵⁰² does not itself engender the notions, but brings to the light the offspring of others and discerns the nature of what is produced. If, then, it is the less perfect who produces, but the producer is the person who brings forwards the notions, then he too would surely be the one who makes the statement, so that here also we shall assign the role of speaker to the respondent. Thirdly, in contentious questions, the syllogism must come about from material supplied by the respondent. For “a syllogism is a form of words in which, when certain things are posited, something other than what has been posited necessarily follows.”⁵⁰³ So it is obvious, to everyone, that the questioner puts forward one half of the contradictory⁵⁰⁴
 <285> proposition, but the respondent grants it, nor does he grant in every way just what the questioner has put forward. If the former puts the question in an affirmative form, but the other posits negatively then assuredly the statement does not derive from the question but from the latter’s deposition, and the argument is concluded on account of the answers, not the questions; for the latter were tentative, but agreed upon through the answer. It is evident, then, that here too the respondent is the speaker, since the person who posits and agrees upon both the premisses and the questions that are asked, in their entirety, is the respondent. So in each form of question it has become evident that the

⁵⁰² cf. *Theaetet.* 150b–d, 157c–d.

⁵⁰³ cf. *Aristot. An. Pr.* 24b19.

⁵⁰⁴ cf. *Aristot. De Int.* 17a33: “Let this be what we mean by a contradictory viz. the opposing affirmation and negation.”

^{501*} Reading Dr. Westerink’s suggested emendation of the text.

respondent is the speaker, but the manner of speaking differs, since he produces the notions sometimes by declaration, sometimes by generation and sometimes by deposition, but in any case everywhere he is the speaker, and not the questioner. In general, too, if the speaker is the person who makes the declaration, and the latter cannot be the same as the questioner (since the definitions of questioning and declaration are not the same) it remains that the respondent is the speaker. He who posits, makes a statement, he who declares, posits, and he who replies, declares. What, then, is the cause of some persons receiving the impression that the questioner is the speaker? Personally, I would say the fact that often the questioner puts the replies together and completes one whole syllogism from them. However, when he enquired, he differed from the respondent, but when he puts together, he concurs with the respondent, and so in effect seems to make the statement, <286> since he no longer enquires, but has become one with the respondent. For he lays down the premisses as being in some way pleasing to the latter and draws the conclusion in accordance with his opinion; and so we refer to the respondent when we say “so you have agreed on this point,” as assigning to him the role of both speaker and formulator, and not to ourselves. It is the role of the questioner in such discussions to make the respondent answer the questions rightly, not to answer them himself. Just as the cause of life to the body is not moved by the same movement as the body, so the person who prepares the respondent to speak does not himself say exactly the same as the respondent, but states it in the form of a question; and a syllogism arises, not from the questions, but from the answers. Naturally, then, Socrates observes that the respondent is the speaker. He does not here take the common sense of the word “to speak” which applies to all those who use the spoken word, such as those who summon, who pray, and who enquire, but only the sense which is peculiar to those who declare an opinion. In this case “speech” is equivalent to “declaratory speech.” So it is the truest of truths that the respondent “speaks”; since the respondent declares his opinion, and not the questioner.

<287> “It was said in regard to what is just and unjust that Alcibiades the fair, the son of Cleinias, did not know, but thought he did, and intends to enter the Assembly and offer advice to the Athenians upon matters of which he is ignorant – was that not so?” “Apparently.” “The saying of Euripides falls apt, Alcibiades – it seems very likely that you have heard this not from me but from yourself,

nor am I the author of this statement, but you, and you accuse me in vain. Yet what you say is also well said. For this is a mad scheme you have in mind, my dear friend, to teach what you do not know, when you have neglected to learn it." 113 B-C.

The members of the Stoa ⁵⁰⁵ are accustomed to observe, and rightly too, that the uneducated man blames others, and not himself, for his own misfortune; but the person who makes progress attributes to himself the responsibility for all his evil words or deeds, while the educated man blames neither himself nor others for his personal oversights, since he does not overlook anything that is required of him, but is himself a master at discovering what is appropriate. This is here clearly indicated to us in the case of Alcibiades: being in twofold ignorance he blamed not himself but Socrates for the refutations (the remark "From what you say I am ignorant" was of this nature, as has <288> been observed previously); but passing over to simple ignorance he blames himself for the inconsistency, and not his guide; and if ever he should become perfect and possessed of knowledge, he will blame neither himself nor anyone else. For there will be nothing in him discordant or inharmonious, but all the movements of his soul will be clear, distinct and intellectual. Discord within themselves naturally occurs in the case of the many, because they accept some things from sense-perception, some from imagination, and others from opinion, and again some from the temper, and others from sense-desire. Such emotions are aroused in men not merely as a result of intellectual opinions, as the members of the Stoa ⁵⁰⁶ declare, but on the contrary, on account of such emotions and appetites men change their opinions and adopt evil views in place of good. Now such individuals, admitting divers movements from many principles and powers and even inferior sources, are in a state of soul that is in doubt and discord, but the men of knowledge receive their knowing entire from the one principle which precedes them. Intellect bestows the principles upon them and the true

⁵⁰⁵ cf. Epictetus; *Manuale* 5: "To accuse others for one's own misfortunes is a sign of want of education; to accuse oneself shows that one's education has begun; to accuse neither oneself nor others shows that one's education is complete." (Matheson). cp. Ol. in Alc. p. 101, 7-12.

⁵⁰⁶ cf. *ibid.* "What disturbs men's minds is not events, but their judgments on events." cp. also Ol. in Alc. p. 96, 9-12: "... a way of life begets opinions and opinions beget a way of life. The man who thinks that pleasure is a good tries to enjoy pleasure and live according to it. Again the man who lives like a hedonist professes corresponding opinions viz. that pleasure is a good."

doctrines are products of Intellect; subsisting, then, with simplicity, and unitarily from a simple ^{507*} cause, all these opinions are in concord and agreement with one another. So here once more Alcibiades is revealed as at war with himself and under the impression that he knows what he does not and blaming others for the refutations for which he is personally responsible to himself, and in general out of accord with himself, because he withdrew from intellect and followed evil and unintelligent men, empty imaginings and strange conceits and in general persons who cling to external objects.

<289> There occur, on the part of Socrates, admirable refutations that are not altogether removed from gentleness thought tending to be rather drastic and cutting. Such measures are very timely in the present circumstances, since the young man is revealed as being completely ignorant of himself and of having heard this in some manner from himself, not from Socrates. It is after the conclusions that Socrates applies the full force of the refutations, but not before the demonstrations have taken place – as indeed he has done in the *Gorgias*; there too, after the inferences have been made, he casts the reproach: “And still continue to advance, because you will go on talking nonsense.” ⁵⁰⁸ One characteristic that the present refutations possess is that referred to viz. they are put forward after the demonstrations and aim at being opportune: secondly, they are accommodated to the subject of the refutation and their sharpness is chastened by familiarity. For the person refuted by others is both more pained and regretful, but the person refuted by himself is both less angered at the refutation and proceeds to the removal of the evil within him since he has an accuser of his emotional states who never leaves him. For treating the sharper
<290> kinds of refutation, this has been a common method handed down by the ancients viz. to ascribe rather pungent observations to other characters. So Homer ⁵⁰⁹ has referred to Peleus the criticism of Achilles, Demosthenes ⁵¹⁰ to the federation of the Greeks the blame directed against the Athenians, just as Plato ⁵¹¹ himself refers to the laws and to philosophy the reproaches against his hearers. For refuta-

⁵⁰⁸ cf. *Gorgias* 497a9. The last clause “because . . . nonsense” is omitted, transposed or altered by most editors of Plato. cf. note in E. R. Dodds: *Gorgias* p. 312.

⁵⁰⁹ cf. Homer: *Iliad* VII 124–131, IX 438–443.

⁵¹⁰ cf. Demosth. “Concerning the events in the Chersonesus” 34–7.

⁵¹¹ cf. *Crito* 50a–54c: *Gorgias* 482a–c.

^{507*} Retaining the reading of N, as E. R. Dodds suggests (*GNOMON* ’55 p. 166).

tions are diminished by in some way being transferred to others not present with us; but when it is not even someone else who refutes us but we ourselves, then the refutation seems much less painful to those who undergo it. Now this is what Socrates does: he lays upon Alcibiades the refutation of Alcibiades, relaxing the vehemence of the reproach by this means and revealing the strange guise of the inflicter as something familiar.

Let so much be said by way of general introduction concerning the words in question; but let us also examine the details and see how Socrates has in a wonderful fashion mingled the blame with praise and the refutations with healing treatment. The description “the fair, the son of Cleinias,” praises Alcibiades for his natural excellences, on which he greatly prided himself, but it also includes an indication that all such advantages apart from knowledge are imperfect, sterile and lacking in true goodness.

The phrase “that he did not know” indicates the absence of a great good viz. knowledge; and the words “but thought he did” add thereto a positive evil viz. excessive conceit and twofold ignorance; and the sentence “intends to enter the Assembly and offer advice to the
<291> Athenians upon matters of which he is ignorant” finally reveals the actual refutation. The argument, then, has proceeded in order and not haphazardly, showing that first he is not good, second he is evil, third he puts evil into operation. It seems to me that by depriving him of knowledge, Socrates shows Alcibiades to be bereft of perfection of soul – for knowledge is the good of the soul, as I think Timaeus ⁵¹² observes – and by the addition of conceit, to be bereft of perfection of intellect – for intellect both ascertains all things and knows itself thoroughly, but the conceited individual is both ignorant and unaware that he is so, and in both respects is in a state contrary to intellect. By the further addition of the words “and intends to offer advice upon matters of which he is ignorant” Socrates reveals him as having fallen away from divine goodness – since the latter imparts a share in what is good to others, but is responsible for no evil to beings, whereas Alcibiades is an evildoer and the destruction of those whom he counsels. Socrates, then, has revealed him as deserted by all the higher causes and for these reasons gone astray unawares.⁵¹³

⁵¹² cf. Timaeus 37c.

⁵¹³ cp. Ol. in Alc. p. 103, 9–16: “Alcibiades has fallen away from the three primary principles, Intellect, God and Soul: from Soul because he does not know,

Furthermore, the mention of Euripides eases the refutations and lends grace to the discourse by simultaneously referring the conclusion of what has been said to someone else and relaxing the precision of philosophical discussion. In some sense in this passage the limits of the use of poetry are shown; we must neither quote it excessively (since this is in bad taste) nor is it appropriate to drag it out at length (since in this way we spoil the literary form of the explanation we are giving), but rather we must make passing references to it and change it into something more like prose. We must please the reader with embellishment, but not depart from the literary form of the discourse in hand. Now this iambic line is from the *Hippolytus*; ⁵¹⁴ Phaedra is, I think, hinting to her nurse at her love, and intimating just who her beloved was: the nurse says “You mean Hippolytus,” as if at that moment she too had become aware of Phaedra’s passion, but Phaedra says “From thy lips, not mine you hear these words,” choosing neither to admit the charge against her nor by holding out against her love to deny it; contriving both to declare and keep secret her passion.

Now further, the phrase “but you accuse me in vain” turns away from Socrates the burden of the refutations and shows that every uneducated individual, in a manner aimless imperfect and thoughtless, transfers to someone else the reason for his own misfortune. What Socrates has said in the *Republic* about the person who chooses the life of a tyrant viz. that “he blames his guardian spirit and fortune instead of himself,” ⁵¹⁵ it is appropriate to state here also; there, the choice being offered as a result of the allotment of Lachesis, ⁵¹⁶ the souls made their selection and what followed thereupon was assigned to them from the universe; here the questions are put forward by Socrates but Alcibiades makes the choice, and the conclusions are derived from his replies. Just as the lover of the tyrannical sort of life foolishly blamed his guardian spirit and fortune for what followed, overlooking himself, so also Alcibiades vainly accuses Socrates, when he should make himself, not Socrates, responsible, for the conclusions.

but knowledge is characteristic of Soul: from Intellect because, not knowing, he thinks he knows, for reversion is characteristic of Intellect – the Intellect is analogous to a sphere that makes each point both a beginning and an end: from God because he is an evildoer – he is about to offer advice concerning matters of which he is ignorant, that he may encompass his listeners with evil, but God is characterised by goodness.” cp. also p. 125, 8–14.

⁵¹⁴ cf. Eurip. *Hippol.* 352.

⁵¹⁵ cf. *Resp.* 619c.

⁵¹⁶ cf. *Resp.* X 617e.

The adjacent phrase “what you say is well said” harmoniously blends praise with blame, and Socrates assigns the role of panegyrist to himself, but of critic to Alcibiades; at the same time since what is about to be said is rather vehement, this gentle observation in some sense precedes it and provides the discourse with a wonderful mixture. For the phrases “mad scheme,” “to teach what you do not know” and “your neglected to learn it” involve powerful refutation. These phrases, then, have been rendered less jarring by praise.

That ignorance is a “madness” of long duration,⁵¹⁷ especially the twofold variety, is surprising, but nevertheless very true. Just as the madman knows neither himself nor others, so also the doubly ignorant; and just as not even the presence of a doctor is of any use to madmen, so also the man of knowledge, if he should be in attendance, will be of no service to those possessing twofold ignorance. For they consider themselves no less knowledgeable than genuine men of knowledge, and, as the Athenian stranger⁵¹⁸ says, “their souls are on fire with pride,” considering themselves inferior to no one and presuming that they can do everything that men of knowledge can.

<294> “But I think Socrates, that the Athenians and the rest of the Greeks rarely deliberate as to what is more or less just, since they consider that this is obvious; so, leaving such topics, they investigate which actions will be to their advantage. I don’t think what is just and advantageous are the same thing, but it has profited many people to commit great injustices and I think others, who have done what is just have received no benefit.” 113 D.

The young man thinks to escape the refutations in the matter of what is just by switching the deliberations and counsels from that topic to what is advantageous, on the grounds that those who deliberate do not put forward their opinions about what is just but about what is advantageous, making the aim of their counsels the discovery of what is advantageous, not the knowledge of what is just. He practically states openly “what concern of mine is it to know what is just, when I

⁵¹⁷ cf. SVF III 662–4 esp. Stob. Ecl. II, 68, 18 W. “Further they say that every worthless individual is mad, since he is unaware both of himself and of what relates to him – which is precisely what madness is.”

⁵¹⁸ cf. Laws IV 716a: “... whoso . . . through this pride joined with youth and folly, is inflamed in soul with insolence, as if in no need of ruler or guide, but rather competent to guide others – such a person is deserted and abandoned by God . . .”

am not going to offer advice on this subject?" But he only seems to multiply his ignorance and render the refutations to which he is open more numerous. If what is just and advantageous are the same and he is unaware of what is just, then surely he is likewise unaware of what is advantageous: if neither of these is the same, he will be shown, through the same arguments, as unaware both of what is just and what is advantageous, so that this ignorance in their regard will be greater and more widespread. Now on what basis does the young man distinguish from each other what is just and advantageous? First, I should say, on
 <295> the basis of the forms of rhetoric, ⁵¹⁹ viz. the forensic, deliberative and declamatory.⁵²⁰ One sets as its aim what is just, the second what is advantageous, the third what is noble; now if these forms and their aims, differ, what is advantageous would not be the same as what is just. Secondly on the basis of the heads and purposes commonly mentioned among the orators ⁵²¹ – justice, they say, is one thing, custom another, advantage a third, and under some or all of these heads they undertake to set forth their subject matter. Often they say that the question of what is just is applicable, but the advantageous is irrelevant, and conversely, implying that these are distinct from each other. Now thirdly Alcibiades had come by such arguments from association with the sophists. The school of Thrasyarchus, Polus and Callicles asserted that injustice benefits the unjust. They approved of doing what one pleases, possession of great power and the exercise of absolute rule, and congratulated Archelaus who by means of the greatest acts of injustice had become ruler instead of slave.⁵²² From
 <296> these sources, then, Alcibiades had had it dinned into him that the just and advantageous are not the same. Now the above gentlemen distinguished these two considerations from each other, but Socrates solemnly cursed ⁵²³ those who first distinguished the just from the

⁵¹⁹ cf. Aristot. *Ars Rhet.* 1358b6–8, 20–29, and cp. p. 183, 18 ff.

⁵²⁰ cf. Hermog. *Stat.* I, 9: "For we learn the literary forms and styles presumably in order to employ the appropriate form of words in delivering our subject-matter, i.e. in order to handle the forensic, deliberative and declamatory each in its own manner, and each division of oratory as is suitably appropriate to its content."

⁵²¹ cf. *ibid.* VII: "The subject matter is divided into what is customary, just, advantageous, possible, probable or likely to happen." cp. Apsines *Ars Rhet.* 11: "First of all let us speak of purposes. These are the customary, just, advantageous, probable, possible"

⁵²² For Thrasyarchus cf. *Resp.* I 343c: Polus, cf. *Gorg.* 470d: Callicles *ibid.*, 492c: Archelaus *ibid.* 471a–d.

⁵²³ For Socrates' curse cf. SVF I no. 558 (Cleanthes).

advantageous. The reason is that this view confuses the whole of moral philosophy. For those who separate these aspects, happiness must be completed by external goods (in these what is advantageous often appears to be quite apart from what is just), but for those who unite both these aspects, the true good must be agreed to reside in the soul and our individuality referred thereto. Therefore Socrates considered this to be the basis both of the whole of philosophy concerning our end and of the knowledge of our individual self. But the Epicureans, those who identify life according to nature with the good life, e.g. the Stoics,⁵²⁴ and those who complete our good from the necessities of life, like the Peripatetics,⁵²⁵ are simply unable to preserve the identity of the just and the advantageous. Again those⁵²⁶ who make man an ensouled body or the composite of soul and body will not be able simply to demonstrate that the advantageous is in every respect identical with the just. A person unjustly avoids death and wounds in order to preserve the living organism, and in fact to seek preservation and the state appropriate to its nature is the good of the living organism; so that herein the advantageous differs from what is just. But those who place man's end in the soul without need of anything bodily and who <297> assert that man is a soul employing a body, agree that the just is identical with the advantageous; they situate both in the soul, distinguishing what happens to the instruments from those who use them.⁵²⁷

This will become more recognisable a little further on, but we must now examine the words of Alcibiades. "For they consider" he says "that these matters are obvious" (although they are at strife about them, and wars and battles and the overthrow of cities and private homes have taken and will take place on their account), but the object of enquiry for the counsellor is what is advantageous. Well, that counsellors busy themselves over what is advantageous is clear to everyone, but the counsellor who is a man of knowledge observes the advantage of the soul, and, considering it also to be just, does not separate these aspects from each other, but the perverted counsellor

⁵²⁴ cf. SVF III no. 17: "... if according to the Stoics to live according to nature is to live well, and to live well both according to them and Epicurus is to be happy, then to live according to nature is to be happy."

⁵²⁵ cf. Aristot. Eth. Nic. 1097b6–11, 1101a14–16, 1170b20–29.

⁵²⁶ cf. Alex. Aphro. De Anim. p. 14, 31–2 Bruns: "... but the ensouled body derives from the soul its differences in relation to other bodies."

⁵²⁷ For the whole of the preceding page cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 104, 23–105, 4 and for the arguments against Peripatetics, Epicureans and Stoics cf. Plot. I, 4, 1–4.

who seeks after the advantageous in externals often misses it and what is just as well. For the necessities of life often lead him astray as objects of choice, and the mere images of what is good as being really good. So, cleaving to these, he falls away both from what is just and what is truly advantageous, associating with faint shadows and images instead of the primary goods.

<298> “What then? Even if what is just is completely different from what is advantageous, surely you don’t in turn think that you know what is advantageous to men and why?” “Why not, Socrates? – unless you are going to ask me again from whom I learned it or how I found it out for myself.” “What a way to carry on! If you state something incorrect, and this can be shown by the same argument as before, you think you should hear something new, and fresh proofs, as if the previous one were worn out like old garments and you would no longer wear them, unless someone brings you clean and spotless evidence. But I, ignoring your anticipations of my argument, ^{528*} will none the less ask again from what source of learning you know what is advantageous, and who is your teacher thereof, and I ask all those former questions in one question. But it’s obvious that you will come to the same pass, and will be unable to show how you know what is advantageous either by discovery or by learning.” 113 D–114 A.

The young man switched the question from what is just to what is advantageous, but Socrates by employing the same questions, shows the latter to be no more discerned by the young man than the former. For one must not, in the course of different enquiries, depart from general outlines and common notions. Proofs which are derived from more general grounds advance us more surely to knowledge: so also refutations derived from common notions are effective towards our purification. It is easier to be cleansed through one very well known method from many false opinions than to require rather complicated means of cure, since even in cures of the body we choose the simpler and

^{528*} This seems a more accurate translation than “sallies in debate” (Loeb), especially in view of the sense of λόγου at p. 298, 1. At p. 301, 16–20 Proclus seems to interpret the phrase as expressing opposition between emotional impulses and the higher influences of providence etc. The verb προτρέχειν is used with a genitive in the metaphorical sense of “to outrun” e.g. Isocr. I, 41: πολλοῖς ἢ γλώττα προτρέχει τῆς διανοίας – a quotation from Chilon (Diog. Laert. I, 70), and πρόδρομος seems generally to have the sense of “outrunning.” Ol. in Alc. p. 107, 14–17 gives a different explanation.

more general remedies rather than the partial and multifarious. So Socrates, arguing from similar grounds shows up the young man as equally ignorant of what is advantageous; but Alcibiades himself anticipates the refutations of Socrates and foretells his methods of attack, at one and the same time showing his natural good sense as being not unaware that the common force of the arguments extends
 <299> also to all the matters of which we are in twofold ignorance, and demanding from Socrates further and more powerful assistance on the grounds that the previous aid is already in some way the subject of contempt on account of familiarity. Often bodily states also, when benefited two or three times by certain remedies are no longer helped by them again and require another, more powerful medicine. Undergoing the same experience, the young man in some way already disdains the aforesaid arguments and stirs his guide to other means of cleansing his ignorance that give him more appropriate treatment.

In general let so much be assumed by way of preliminary to the words in question; in particular the expression: “Even if what is just is completely different from what is advantageous” is pronounced by way of concession, to lead Alcibiades round to a complete conviction of ignorance. “For if the just differs from the advantageous, it will be no benefit to you, since, neither having learned nor discovered it, you don’t know what is advantageous; if the two are identical, through one and the same ignorance you are unaware of both. You will not then be of service to those who deliberate about what is advantageous, any more than to those who consider what is just.” For no one should attempt to offer counsel upon matters of which he is ignorant, nor is he of profit to those who consult him.

The clause “Unless you are going to ask me again from whom I learned or how I found out for myself” sets before us both the natural good sense and imperfection of the young man – he shows the former as realising that the force of the method of enquiry is of universal application, and the latter as making sport of the community and similarity of the arguments.

<300> The expression “What a way to carry on!” separates Socrates from the way of life that is natural to youth and which despises established notions, but seeks after novel and fresh opinions. All this happens to those who are filled with the process of coming-to-be, which is ever in a different state, and who rejoice in change, having no grasp on stable nature. Souls once and for all receive the impress of the forms of those things to which they unite themselves: when they are made like to

intellect they lay hold on the same and the unchanging both in their opinions and their lives, but when they cleave to process they forever pursue the novel and what appeals to youth, veer towards different opinions at different times, and are unperceptive of the ever constant notions of the soul.

Furthermore the phrase "worn-out garments" indicates the change that is appropriate to non-living and externally moved beings, but not <301> to the intrinsically-moved and spontaneous notions of the soul "Garments" would mean either actors' costumes or simply everything which we call "gear."

The statement "You would no longer wear them" implies a charge against the young man as being extravagant in his dress and, as Homer ⁵²⁹ says, making "changes of clothes" and everything else on account of luxury.

Now, further, the phrase "clean and spotless evidence" involves a metaphor from clothes, and indicates that the souls which are of a nobler nature, possessing a notion of the spotless purity of the gods and carrying it around in images, ⁵³⁰ lay hold of purity in appearance; ⁵³¹ since the being of the divine ⁵³² vestures is spotless and their purity free from matter: this purity souls must don by thoroughly cleansing their

⁵²⁹ cf. *Odyssey* VIII, 248-9.

⁵³⁰ i.e. the image of itself which the soul creates in the body by informing it. cf. *Ol. in Phaed.* p. 111, 4-13 Norvin, esp. 4-6: "the soul must first make an image of itself to subsist in the body - this is what is meant by ensouling the body - and secondly it must have affinity with this image by way of similarity of form." cp. *Procl. in Tim.* III p. 324, 28-9: p. 330, 19-24.

⁵³¹ cp. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 107, 7-13, esp. 8-10: "For possessing a notion of the garments within it, the luminous, elemental and shell-like, (the soul) desires through this externally apparent garb to possess in purity its internal garments." A reference is made in this quotation to the three vehicles, the luminous attached to the rational soul, the elemental attached to the irrational soul, and the shell-like attached to and perishing with the body. cf. *Procl. in Tim.* III, p. 285, 1-21 esp. 12-14: "There are then three vehicles, either simple and immaterial or simple and material or composite and material." The term "shell-like" seems first to occur in the *Phaedrus* 250c and *Philebus* 21c, and the expression "shell-like vehicle" seems to be used by Proclus and Olympiodorus as identical with the body, but perhaps especially in its vegetative and nutritive functions. This would give a threefold division of vehicles corresponding to the threefold Aristotelian division of soul into rational, sensitive and vegetative (*De Anim.* 413b11 ff.). cp. *Ol. in Phaed.* p. 77, 12-15 Norvin: "As informing the body and as an independent principle of movement (the rational soul) is master over it; for the other souls do not endow it with life, but are ways of its living: the irrational soul of the elemental, and the vegetative soul of the shell-like constituents." For the whole topic. cf. *El. Theol. props.* 209-10 & notes and Appendix II.

⁵³² Divine souls have only the luminous vehicle attached to them. cf. *El. Theol.* p. 319-20.

congenital vestures and preserving their garments spotless from birth, but not by considering all-important the cleanliness of exterior clothes.

Furthermore "the anticipations of the argument" signify the disordered impulses of imperfect souls contrary to the influences of providence, justice and purification. Such action is often taken by souls in the world when trying to avoid genuine purification.

The question which embraces all the previous arguments reveals the scientific and intelligent method pursued by Socrates, since established reasonings gather together what is wandering and embrace by unification all that is most liable to change.

Moreover Socrates makes the statement that Alcibiades "will come to the same pass," as one who has prior knowledge of the entire condition <302> of his mind and is unaware of nothing that concerns him, but thoroughly comprehends the principles, means and ends of his manner of life.

"Since you turn up your nose and would no longer taste of the same argument with pleasure, I pass over the question of whether you know what is advantageous to the Athenians or not. But why haven't you shown whether the just and the advantageous are identical or different? Run through the argument, if you like, questioning me as I questioned you but if not, on your own." "But I don't know whether I could run through it against you, Socrates." 114 A-B.

The before-mentioned manner of refutation through the common method of purifying anyone in twofold ignorance about any topic, revealed the young man as ignorant of what is advantageous as well as what is just, whether the former be different from or the same as the latter. But now Socrates refutes this opinion of his also, which distinguishes the just from the advantageous, and shows that they are the same and do not differ from each other. So he cleanses Alcibiades from a popular and destructive assumption, and unites the just with the advantageous, that he who is ignorant of the one may be shown to be likewise ignorant of the other.

This will be shown again at greater length; in the words under consideration, Socrates accuses the young man of "turning up his nose" on account of his notoriously expensive way of life, concerning which certain authors ⁵³³ have already written, making Alcibiades' daintiness their subject.

⁵³³ Athenaeus 534b-535e refers to a Life of Alcibiades by Satyrus: in Diog. Laert. II, 23, Aristippus mentions Alcibiades in a work "Concerning Ancient Luxury."

<303> In the words "why haven't you shown? If you like etc." Socrates shows that the questioner also provides proof, as we said the respondent did, and is demonstrative: both statements are true, the previous as well as the present. The respondent states the premisses, but the questioner draws the conclusion, so that the former declares information, but the latter shows proof, the former states the antecedent, but the latter what follows, and the former provides the matter, but the latter applies the form. When however, after all the premisses have been granted nothing further is concluded, the questioner is exposed to ridicule as having been unable to derive useful matter or use what was granted. But if some absurd conclusion is reached from false premisses, the respondent is responsible, because he assented to premisses of such a nature. I think this is why previously, when Socrates said that the respondent makes the statement, he added that "whenever question and answer occur," then the respondent makes the statement, since this happens only in the case of the premisses and not of the conclusion.⁵³⁴

Let us return to enquire why, when Alcibiades separated the just from the advantageous, Socrates did not first make the objection that both of these are the same, but used an indirect form of reply, allowing that they are very different, but enquiring from what source Alcibiades learned what is advantageous. This has long been a subject of enquiry among the orators, whether to employ objection or rejoinder; and they
<304> are found doing both, according as it profits the persuasiveness of their arguments.⁵³⁵ We assert that here Socrates is conscious that he must first rid the young man of twofold ignorance, and so subsequently impart to him a share in the knowledge of the matters in hand. Now he rids him of empty conceit by asking how he learned what is advantageous and from what source – by one and the same method he convicted him of ignorance both of what is just and advantageous – and he imparts to him the knowledge of these matters, by showing that the just is identical with the advantageous. Just as doctors first cleanse and then eject the noisome humour by the use of purgatives and so subsequently revive the bodily functions by diet, so also Socrates gets rid of twofold ignorance by way of rejoinder, but nourishes and makes whole by way of objection. Such is the nature of the argument that is composed of both these facets. The chief point, which he proves second, is the identity of the just and the advantageous; but even if they are different,

⁵³⁴ For this paragraph cp. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 99, 6–100, 2.

⁵³⁵ cf. *Hermog. De Invent.* III, 6.

Socrates enquires how, where and when Alcibiades of himself came to know what is advantageous, and this is the first question asked. This order has the advantage of starting from notions that are well-known and ending with the less known, since it happens that we have already used the same method in other cases. So he makes what is clear and general in his argument precede what is not yet apparent and particular. For this reason the refutation of ignorance concerning what is advantageous found its place before the knowledge that the advantageous and just are identical.

<305> Since the discourse was becoming tedious by travelling over the same arguments, Socrates escaped the tedium by covering them briefly and positing only the bare outlines. As a man of knowledge he did not decline to “repeat a sound argument”⁵³⁶ (for the counsel regarding the same subjects which the Socrates of the *Gorgias*⁵³⁷ handed on as befitting men of knowledge also applies here, viz. that they should make the same statements on the same topics), but as having to deal with a fastidious individual and inaccurate^{538*} sophist, he guarded against tedium.

Now what would you say is the reason why Socrates thinks that he personally should converse only by way of questioning but allows that the young man should do this and also give a running account? Well, one reason you could name is that he personally is confident in his knowledge of the subject-matter, and conscious of his own infallibility, but since the young man is lacking in the precision of philosophical discussion, he applies to him the test of questioning. Another reason is that, in order to make Alcibiades keener on the conversation, Socrates puts forward each kind of discourse offering him a choice, the one as being more familiar, the other as more scientific. Clever doctors often choose what is more pleasant in place of what appears to benefit, so bringing the natural instincts into play on their side. Now thirdly Socrates wants to rid him of this vain conceit he has about his ability to speak. As he has shown him bereft of knowledge, so also he reveals him as lacking in the ability to speak, that on both accounts he may stand revealed as unprepared for counsel and leadership of the people, since
<306> he was able neither to speak nor to think. To avoid, when bidden to ask questions, his making that former reply “Counsellors do not speak in

⁵³⁶ cf. *Gorgias* 498e and *Philebus* 60a.

⁵³⁷ cf. *Gorgias* 490e, 482a–c and *Sympos.* 221e.

^{538*} Reading ἀ[κριβῆ], a possible supplement for ἀ***.

this fashion” (i.e. in ignorance of the methods of questioning), as Alcibiades said when contending about what is just, Socrates offers him both methods of discussion, that he may stand revealed as ignorant of both, and what was said in the *Phaedrus* ⁵³⁹ may here again become apparent viz. that the individual not guided by philosophy, nor become knowledgeable of the nature of the subject matter is “not even competent to speak.”

For such reasons Socrates makes his offer; and the young man utters his reply as being conscious of the power of Socrates, but a reply that is redolent, nevertheless, of the spirit of rivalry. For the expression “to run through it against you” refers to Socrates as an antagonist, when Alcibiades should be so minded as if conversing with a father and a guardian. But such is the ambitious character all over - unduly involved in contentions, because it always employs the same terms and the like choice of conversation on the wrong subjects, at the wrong times, and in the wrong circumstances.

<307> “Well, my dear friend, consider me as assembly and people; even there, you know, you will have to persuade each individual – isn’t that so?” “Yes.” “So it is the function of the same person to be able to persuade both one man alone and many together concerning the matters he knows, just as the teacher of letters convinces both one and many, I presume, concerning letters?” “Yes.” “Then will the same person convince both one and many about number?” “Yes.” “And this will be the man of knowledge, the Arithmetician?” “(Of course).” “So you too can convince one person of the matters concerning which you are able to persuade many?” “Quite likely.” “And these are obviously matters which you know.” “Yes.” “Then the only difference between the orator in the midst of the people and one engaged in this sort of conversation is that the former persuades people of these matters in groups, the latter one by one?” “Very likely.” 114 B–D.

The account has contributed considerable powers of vivid description, bringing before us the assembly, the people, the rostrum and the giving of counsel, and so impelling the young man to speak. Socrates, practically says: “Consider this the people, and let this be taken as the Pnyx: let the rostrum lie before you, thus, and do you mount thereon

⁵³⁹ cf. *Phaedrus* 261a.

and urge concerning what is just and advantageous the view that they are not the same as each other.” All this is surely enough to stir and smite the true lover of the people. Again Socrates contributes variety to the philosophical discussion by employing, previous to the proofs which are the object of enquiry, other syllogisms varied according to their conclusions, and on this account principally he appears to some not to demonstrate some of the main points. However, as we said, each of the arguments contributes to the whole purpose and the same aim is set before the whole of the dialogue. Furthermore the argument now before us, by showing that it belongs to the same knowledge to persuade both one and many, ⁵⁴⁰ is as it were a hymn of praise to knowledge, showing the size and extent of its power in the case of each individual, and that imitating the Intellect it fills with knowing both each man singly and
 <308> all together; how it is undivided and, established in itself, perfects all that participate in it, and that it is an intelligent principle imparting of itself to all and to each one separately. This shows that our being is separate from the body and established in itself, inasmuch as knowledge, being our perfection, has been allotted such power. For the bodily powers diminish themselves in their communications, but knowledge, remaining one and the same, self-sufficient and undiminished, imparts of itself to one and many alike. So likewise the soul is present to the entire body and all its parts, even if one part shares in it in one way, another part in another way.

Now the argument, as we said, contributes to the whole process of discovery of our being and undertakes to show that this matter being threefold (1) he who persuades one, persuades many (2) he who persuades many, persuades one (3) the same person performs either office equally well, (these statements being convertible with each other) – the matter then being threefold it shows that the persuader of many can also persuade one, if he be a man of knowledge; the persuader of one can also persuade many – but not either alternative alone. This is above all true, if first of all we attribute to the persuader the knowledge of the subject which he undertakes to urge. For this very reason Socrates adds “and many together” not without qualification but “concerning the matters he knows”; and again in what follows “the same person will convince one and many about numbers, and this will be the man of knowledge, the arithmetician”; and towards the end of
 <309> his words: “So you too can convince one person of the matters con-

⁵⁴⁰ cp. Socrates’ observations on Rhetoric in *Phaedrus* 261a–e.

cerning which you are able to persuade many? And these are obviously matters which you know.” Everywhere then he makes this form of persuasion depend upon knowledge, and reasonably so, since the man of no knowledge could deceive at least some one individual, but to persuade by one faculty both one and many is the work of a man of knowledge.

Secondly, let us take as worthy of our attention the fact that the individual who is persuaded must be from among those many who have been persuaded together. For this reason Socrates observes that he both persuades people “in groups” and the groups “one by one”; so also at the very beginning of the conversation “even there, you know, you will have to persuade each individual” of the many. So the objectors should not say “Then how was Theophrastos unable to persuade the members of the Areopagus, although most convincing in his private conversations?”⁵⁴¹ For those privately convinced were not from among the unconvinced many, nor were they unconvinced upon matters in which Theophrastus was knowledgeable, but in which he was inexperienced. Nor should they retort “But how did Socrates fail to convince by his defence,” for he himself says clearly “I am defeated through lack of shamelessness” and “If I had held converse with you for a longer time, I would have convinced you of what I say.”⁵⁴² Let no one further say that the manner of persuasion is twofold, one <310> “creating belief,” which is appropriate to the holders of right opinion, the other “instructive” and appropriate to those who know, and that it is impossible to apply the persuasion of knowledge to the many. Now this is observed in the *Gorgias*,⁵⁴³ and rightly observed. But surely this division of Socrates is in no way opposed to the present demonstration, since this is the very first task assigned to those who know viz. to distinguish the right moments, characters and subject-matter, and to assign to all the appropriate kinds of discourse – to some the knowledgeable kinds, to others the opinionative. Different persons are convinced by different arguments: one man is unable to raise himself to the level of knowledge, but is content with correct opinions; another grasps, in addition, the more accurate methods of knowing. So the same person persuades one and many, but different people differently: the methods of persuasion will differ, but the faculty of persuasion is the

⁵⁴¹ cf. Aulus Gellius VIII, 9.

⁵⁴² cf. *Apol.* 38d: 37a–b.

⁵⁴³ cf. *Gorg.* 454e–455a.

same, and knowledge is the "creator" ⁵⁴⁴ of both kinds, since it uses them as the need arises. Reasonably, then, those ⁵⁴⁵ who are wise in matters divine associate Persuasion with the leader of the gods in <311> knowledge; through Persuasion he makes the whole world obedient and subject to the creator of the universe and elevates it towards the one father; and the creative "intellect itself controls necessity by persuading it to lead all things towards what is best." ⁵⁴⁶ If knowledge, then, is the creator of persuasion and the product of intellect, it is appropriate to both kinds of persuasion, and reasonably is said to preside over persuasion of both one and many. Since the young gods also are said "to obey the father," both each of them individually and all in common, and so to make provision for mortals. "Observing the father's agreement," he says, "they obeyed it." ⁵⁴⁷ Since persuasion is twofold, the man of knowledge will use either form but he will not exceed the bounds of exact knowledge.

"Come then, since it evidently belongs to the same person to persuade both many and one, practise upon me and try to show that sometimes what is just is not advantageous." "You are insolent, Socrates." "This time, I think, in my insolence, I am going to persuade you of the opposite of what you refuse to persuade me." "Say on, then." "Just answer what is asked." "No, rather you speak yourself." "Why, don't you want to be convinced as firmly as possible?" "By all means, surely." <312> "Then, if you assent that "this is so," would not you be most firmly convinced?" "I think so." "Answer then; and if you don't personally hear yourself assert that what is just is advantageous, don't take anyone else's word for it." "No, I won't, but I may as well answer, since I don't think any harm will come from it." "You are quite prophetic." 114 D-115 A.

The fourth syllogism has been proved, showing that the same person can persuade both one and many, if he be a man of knowledge. So it follows that Alcibiades, if he is knowledgeable about what is just and advantageous, can persuade Socrates about them. For surely it is not

⁵⁴⁴ cf. *ibid.* 453a.

⁵⁴⁵ cf. Kern: Orph. fgm 202, i.e. Procl. in Tim. II p. 63, 39-64, 7.

⁵⁴⁶ cf. Tim. 48a, Taylor's note on 47e4-5 and Cornford: Plato's Cosmology, pp. 159-177.

⁵⁴⁷ cf. Tim. 42e.

the case that he can persuade Socrates along with the others, but not by himself alone. In these words it is possible to discern the kindness of Socrates, in so far as he offers himself for practice to the young man; his freedom from arrogance, and likewise magnanimity, in so far as he does not disown the name of insolence; his knowledge of philosophical discussion, in so far as he does not admit long discourses, but at the present juncture proposes examination of the objects of enquiry by means of questions; and his capability, in so far as he undertakes to make the young man hear himself state that what is just is advantageous. What initiator could so prevail over the soul of the initiate? Or what wonder-worker has undertaken something so unexpected and achieved his end? But Socrates, if anyone, is skilled in philosophical discussion, and he establishes his very respondents in conversation as witnesses of their own statements.

Let so much be our general considerations concerning the words set out above; of the particular points, the exhortation to the young man to demonstrate the difference between what is just and advantageous in some way has as its purpose to train him for contests in discussion and for the whole art of words; since the assistance of this is needed for <313> those who intend to be good counsellors.

The designation of Socrates as “insolent” was made on account of his saying “practise upon me.” Alcibiades took his outspokenness for insolence, and makes his forceful refutation a sign of it. In the *Symposium* ⁵⁴⁸ too, Alcibiades speaks of him as clothed in the “skin of some insolent satyr,” who when opened up from within reveals “images” that cause wonder. For then already he was conscious to himself of Socrates’ knowledge.

The fact, too, that Socrates does not reject the name of “insolent” shows his lofty grandeur and contempt for everything inferior. The undertaking to prove the opposite of Alcibiades convictions does not reveal him as insolent in regard to others but as a contestant on behalf of the truth. For not to plead on behalf of justice when it is being maligned and torn apart from the advantageous and the good is not the genuine part of just men, as I think he himself says in the *Republic*.⁵⁴⁹

<314> In addition, the reason for Alcibiades’ attempt to escape the provision of replies lies in the third syllogism which proved that it is the

⁵⁴⁸ cf. *Sympos.* 221e–222a.

⁵⁴⁹ cf. *Resp.* II, 368b.

respondent who makes the statements. Since this has already been shown, Alcibiades does not want to lay himself open to refutation. From this position, Socrates, aiming at his benefit, leads him round again to the partnership of philosophical discussion, that he may become spectator of his own ignorance and witness of Socrates' knowledge.

Furthermore, the reciprocity of the terms in question involves very considerable argument. In reply to Alcibiades' statement that the just is other than the advantageous, Socrates not only shows that they are not other, but also the same. "For everything is in this relation to everything else; either it is different or the same or whole or part."⁵⁵⁰ But Socrates does not allow that the just and the advantageous are either different (since he unites them with each other) or whole or part distinct from the other. They are convertible and the advantageous is posited as just, but it is impossible for the part to be convertible with the whole. So in order that by denial of difference we should not understand the whole or the part, he at once shows the identity of the just and the advantageous.

Now further the statement "You are quite prophetic" is made because Alcibiades had foretold, by conjecture but not by knowledge "I don't think any harm will come from it." Prophetic persons are conjectural but not knowledgeable types of people, whereas those who are not only prophetic but also genuine prophets, are already knowledgeable and also possess something superior to man's knowledge. It is indicated also that the impulses and movements of more ingenuous souls are somehow stimulated by nobler causes, and therefore they perform much unexpected good, even though acting without knowledge.

<315> "Now tell me: you say that some just things are advantageous, but others are not?" "Yes." "Again some are noble, and some are not?" "What do you mean by this question?" "Has anyone ever appeared to you to do what is base but just?" "Not to me." "But everything just is also noble?" "Yes."
115. A.

The present enquiry concerning what is just and advantageous, whether they are the same or whether they are distinguished from

⁵⁵⁰ cf. Parm. 146b.

each other by difference of their presuppositions, contributes to our entire search for wisdom and lays hold of the whole truth of our subject matter.

The whole business of ethics and the discovery of man's end depend on this decision and the contemplation of our being becomes especially clear thereby. If the just is really the same as the advantageous and they are not distinguished from each other, then the good subsists in virtue alone and neither what are looked on as goods in relation to the body contribute anything to man's happiness, nor, much more, do things external to the body constitute complements of the good, but the one sole good is established unadulterated, pure and immaterial in souls themselves, and is completed neither by bodily nor external goods or evils. But if there is something just, as Alcibiades says, but unadvantageous, or again advantageous to us but unjust, then apparent goods are needed to complete the happy life, such as health and wealth. Men do much on their account, and pursuing the <316> good therein abandon the love of what is just. Those who despise bodily vigour and money-making for the sake of what is just seem to them indeed to perform what is just and praiseworthy in the eyes of the many, but not, however, advantageous, because they do not see the advantageous firmly established within, in the soul itself, but lying in matters externally dissipated, and necessary rather than good, inasmuch as they themselves prefer imagination and sense-perception to intellect and knowledge. Furthermore, if the just is identical with the advantageous, as Socrates says, then man's being is defined in relation to the soul itself, and the body is neither a part nor a complement of us. For if the body is the complement of man, then the good of the body will be among the goods of man, and what is noble will be profitless not only to the body, but also to the man. The advantages and disadvantages of the parts pass over into the nature of the whole, since the whole finds its being in the parts, but what happens to the instruments does not change the condition of those who employ them even if it often be an obstacle to their activities. So that if indeed the just is identical with the advantageous, where the just is, there also is the advantageous; but what is just lies in the soul, so that within the soul lies the advantageous also. Now further, where our good especially exists, there also we have our being. For it is not the case that our being lies in one thing and we are perfected in respect of another, but where man's form is, there also is his perfection. So man too lies within the soul. Each being has the good as its partner within itself, since even the most

<317> primary being subsists on account of and in relation to the good.⁵⁵¹ So for everything, where its being lies, there also lies its well-being; it is impossible for man to be body but to possess his perfection in something else outside the body, or to be the composite, but for man's good to be defined in relation to the soul alone. Now, further, the desire for the good preserves those who desire it. As Socrates in the Republic ⁵⁵² defined it, what preserves each thing is its good but what destroys it is its evil. So if possessing the good in our souls we also possess therein our being, we would naturally attain the good which we desire. If, however, the good were in relation to our soul, but our being in relation to the composite it must come about that we desire our own dissolution, if indeed the good is immaterial and outside the body. But no being seeks after its own dissolution, so that the person in doubt whether after all the just is advantageous does not say that our good lies in the soul. If it is in the soul, then man's being too is of the soul and neither a mixture of soul and body, nor bodily alone.

Well, these considerations have, I think, made it clear that the present enquiry contributes both to moral philosophy and the discovery of man's nature; that it provides admirable bases for theology too we might learn by remembering that the principle of what is just maintains the entire being of souls (for having come to subsist according to every form of proportion they were divided according to just measure, namely both according to their being and their faculties); ⁵⁵³ again the beautiful marks off their intelligent substance (for this reason intellect <318> is an object both of love and desire, as Aristotle ⁵⁵⁴ says; all that participates in intellect is beautiful, and though matter of itself is devoid of beauty because it is devoid of form, yet it both obtains a share in shape and form and receives reflections from the influence of beauty),

⁵⁵¹ cf. Epist. 2, 312e: "All things stand in relation to the King of all, all things are for His sake, and He is the cause of all that is beautiful." (Harward).

⁵⁵² cf. Resp. X, 608e.

⁵⁵³ cp. p. 184, 4–6 (which seems to substantiate the text as it stands). Proclus seems to argue that the soul is compounded by a balance of proportions – cp. Tim. 31c and Procl. In Tim. II, p. 19, 5–8: "Let us now speak about the three means from which Plato constitutes the soul, the arithmetical, the geometrical and the harmonic . . ." cf. also the blending of the soul in Timaeus 34c–37c (esp. 37a–b) and Procl. In Tim. II, p. 296–8, where the "faculties" referred to here are equated with the revolutions of the Same and the Other. cf. art. "Convergence des définitions de l'âme chez Proclus" by Jean Trouillard, in Rev. des Sciences Phil. et Théol. Jan. 1961 pp. 14–15.

⁵⁵⁴ cf. Aristot. Metaph. 1072a 26–8ff.

but the good delimits all divine being (for everything divine, in view of the divine reality itself, is good; if the gods are causes of beings, if they are higher than the totalities⁵⁵⁵ and if beings have come to subsist around them, they are essentially good and radiate the good to all beings).⁵⁵⁶ If the just is linked to the good via the beautiful, every order on the level of soul is united through the medium of the intelligent substances to the gods, so that incorporeal substance is one and of the form of the one and all converges towards the good; but division exists among the images, which cannot reproduce the primary causes in their unity. It is clear from this that the present demonstration contributes not a little towards our theology and towards practically the whole of philosophy.

Having set out the whole syllogism from the beginning, let us examine each of the premisses in themselves, and determine which are true opinions in their regard, and which mistaken, and in view of what causes those who hold the opposite opinion to Plato have as it were turned aside upon another course away from true knowledge about this subject. Now the general syllogism proving that the just is advantageous proceeds as follows: “everything just is noble, everything noble is good, so everything just is good; but the good is identical with the advantageous; so everything just is advantageous.”⁵⁵⁷ The syllogism is first in the first figure, embracing the minor terms within the major, and <319> showing that the major terms are convertible with the minor.⁵⁵⁸ Starting in turn from the good you will be able to draw the same conclusion: “everything good is noble, everything noble just, so everything good is just; but the advantageous is identical with the good: so everything advantageous is just.” The just, then, is identical with the advantageous. For neither the good of the soul, nor what is noble therein, consists in anything other than virtue, but the entire good is defined in relation to virtue, and what is good is precisely the same as what is noble, and both these are just. If a being be temperate or brave, it is just, on account of the reciprocal implication of the

⁵⁵⁵ cf. note 462.

⁵⁵⁶ cf. El. Theol. p. 109, 9–10: “... whilst they (the gods) radiate good to all existents in virtue of their very being, or rather their priority to Being.”

⁵⁵⁷ This view is also Stoic. cf. Diog. Laert. VII, 98: “They say that everything good is advantageous noble and just.”

⁵⁵⁸ cf. Aristot. An. Pr. 25b31: “When three terms are so related to one another that the last is wholly contained in the middle and the middle is wholly contained in or excluded from the first, the extremes must admit of perfect syllogism.” (Loeb). cf. *ibid.* 26b 27–34 where this is identified as a first figure syllogism.

virtues; ⁵⁵⁹ it is not possible to be temperate, but live unjustly, nor to be brave, but at any time to be void of justice, but the same kind of life comes to subsist as a result of all the virtues.

Now ⁵⁶⁰ among the first principles of reality, the Good transcends beauty and the beautiful lies superior to justice. The first is established in inaccessible heights above the intelligibles, whereas the second is situated secretly among the first of the intelligibles and more evidently at the lower limit of that order: the third appears unitarily in the most primary rank of intelligent beings, and assumes secondary manifestations at the end of the intelligent procession of the gods. Again the Good is on the level of gods, the beautiful on the level of intellects, the just on the level of souls. Consequently, the just is beautiful, but not everything beautiful is just: the cause of beauty subsists prior to the just; all the beautiful is good, but the source of the entire range of goods transcends in its simplicity all the beautiful; and the just is good, since it is united to the good through the medium of the beautiful, but the Good is beyond both. You will find this so, even if you regard the lowest levels of being: the material cause although it is good, is ugly and without beauty (for although it partakes of the One it has no share of form), and the object of sense perception possesses the impression of beauty but not of justice. The Socrates of the *Phaedrus*, ⁵⁶¹ observes: “There is no lustre in the images here below of justice and moderation: but, as it is, beauty alone has received this prerogative – to be most conspicuous and most lovable.” So where the just is, there also is the beautiful, and where the beautiful, there also the good, whether you want to consider the most primary principles, or their irradiations as far as the lowest levels. All things enjoy the good (since it is the principle of all things), but only those things enjoy the beautiful which partake of form, only those things enjoy the just which partake of soul. But at least in the midmost centre of all beings, such as the soul is, all <321> these are united to one another, the good, the beautiful, the just; its good is beautiful and just, its beauty good and just, its justice beautiful and good. This reasoning is true not only in the case of this triad, but also in the case of many others. For instance among the first principles

⁵⁵⁹ This is also a Stoic tenet. cf. SVF III nos. 295 – “They say that the virtues reciprocally imply one another and he who possesses one possesses all” – & 299. cp. Clem. Alex. St. II, 80 and Ol. in Alc. p. 214, 10–215, 1.

⁵⁶⁰ For the following section down to p. 322, 17 cp. Ol. in Alc. p. 109, 15–111, 2 and p. 126, 3–127, 3.

⁵⁶¹ cf. *Phaedrus* 250b, d.

Being is prior to Life and Life to Intellect; again among their effects not everything which partakes of being also partakes of life nor has everything living a share of intellect, whereas on the contrary, all intelligent things both live and are, and living things partake of being. Nevertheless, although such difference exists at the topmost level in regard to this triad, yet in the soul they are united to one another: being is both life and intellect, life intellect and being, intellect being and life. Therein lies a single simplicity, a single subsistence: neither living nor intelligence is adventitious, but the soul's intellect is living and existing, its life is intelligent in its being, and its being is intelligent and alive.⁵⁶² In every aspect the soul is all things and a unity derived from everything. Now in the same way its good excels in beauty and justice, its beauty is perfect and good and in every way just, and its justice is blended with the beautiful and the good: the underlying <322> subject is one but the notions differ. Remember this too: let us consider these three neither identical in notion nor differentiated in their subject: let us keep their notions different, but their subject one, because in fact everywhere as regards the activities of the soul these three subsist in conjunction with one another. Just as the notions of the virtues are different, but one subject partakes of them all, and it is not possible to partake of justice but have no part in moderation, nor to partake of these apart from the rest of the virtues, so also this triad is united with itself; everything good is also full both of the beautiful and the just, and each of the latter comes in along with the former. Therefore Socrates united the just with the good via the beautiful, since this is the medium and bond of union between them. "The fairest of bonds," says Timaeus⁵⁶³ "is that which unites as closely as possible both itself and whatever is combined with it." Much more, then, than any other bond, the beautiful is itself connective and unitive of these two, the just and the good.

Let so much be said by way of preface about the proof as a whole; but let us consider the truth in regard to each of the premisses in turn. Against the premiss which asserts that everything just is noble those of natural good parts would never object; but there have been and will <323> be Thrasymachuses and Callicleses, and a very numerous class of

⁵⁶² For Proclus Being-Life-Intellect are convertible terms only on the level of soul (cf. *El. Theol. prop.* 197): for Plotinus they are united in the second hypostasis. cf. *Plot.* V, 8, 4, 35-42: VI, 2, 8 & 21. cp. Jean Trouillard *art. cit.* p. 111, where he quotes Procl. in *Tim.* II, p. 166, 26-167, 1.

⁵⁶³ cf. *Timaeus* 31c.

“Centaurs and Satyrs” ⁵⁶⁴ besides, who say that justice is “a generous foolishness,” ⁵⁶⁵ and neither a noble nor a wise pursuit. Others, deferring to the opinion of the many agree that it is noble, but noble only by convention, not by nature. Polus of Acragas ⁵⁶⁶ and many others championed this opinion, saying that to wrong is by convention more shameful, but by nature more noble than to be wronged; they distinguished genuine convention from the nature of things and asserted that what was base and noble by convention differed from what was so by nature. Socrates took a stand against these opinions in the Republic ⁵⁶⁷ and showed that the just man is knowledgeable and not foolish, as they assert; he posited as a constituent of the man of knowledge “that he does not desire to get the better of his fellow but of his opposite” (the doctor too does not desire to have the advantage over doctors, but over those who are not doctors, since he would wish to say the same as doctors, seeing that it has already been shown that men of knowledge hold identical opinions upon identical topics; similarly also in the case of the arithmetician, the geometer and each man of knowledge); but the man of no knowledge wishes to get the better of all men alike, both his similars and dissimilars, since he does not possess within himself any discrimination between knowledge and the want of it. In general too, evil alone is opposed to good, but to evil both good and <324> evil; so evil is destructive of good and of the evil contrary to it. Now since these two constituents are posited, one knowledge, the other want of knowledge, does the just man not desire to have the advantage over his fellows, but only over his opposite, or over both alike? We observe that one who is just would not wish to have the advantage over just men, but only over the unjust. If he should desire to get the better of his fellows he would not be just. Just as equality exists among things equal but departs from [its own nature among things unequal, so also in the case of what is just]. Necessarily, then, the just man must in no way desire to get the better of his fellow, but only of his opposite. However this is what we posited as a constituent of knowledge; so the just man is knowledgeable. If this is so, justice is something noble, and noble by nature, since it accompanies knowledge, but not something base; and the just man is so on account of practical wisdom not foolish simplicity.

⁵⁶⁴ cf. Statesman 291a–c, 303c.

⁵⁶⁵ cf. Resp. I 348c (Thrasymachus).

⁵⁶⁶ cf. Gorg. 483a (Callicles defending Polus).

⁵⁶⁷ cf. Resp. I, 349b–350c, esp. 349c.

Now in this manner Socrates in the *Republic* refuted the decriers of justice; but in the syllogism he treats as identical the conventional and the natural, and shows that everywhere what is just is by nature noble, whether it is one individual who holds power or many,⁵⁶⁸ and that the just life is the most excellent and the best, whereas the unjust, completely to the contrary, is both the most shameful and the worst.

But if there be need of further proofs of this premiss, which declares that everything just is noble, come let us make it better understood by means of several philosophical arguments. Now since the soul is a multiplicity and part of it is primary, part middle and part end, when do we assert that justice arises therein? Is it when the middle or the end attempt to rule the better parts, or when the most primary part controls the middle and the middle the end? If it is when the inferior parts hold sway over the superior, the inferior would no longer be such by nature.

<325> Whatever is fitted to rule is by nature superior and more honoured. If then it is impossible for the same thing to be superior, yet inferior by nature, what is just in souls must be observed only when what is best in them rules over the whole life thereof, and the middle part, subject to the superior, controls the lowest level. Then each of the parts receives its due, one ruling, another keeping guard and the third serving the faculties of the superior part. So the just is distributive of what is fitting to each of the parts of the soul and cause of their minding their own business. Since [each part] has its due and [fulfils] its own function there is a good order and balance about the soul as a whole, since no part does any[thing contrary] to its own nature; but order and balance and concordance with nature is beautiful; so the just [is beautiful]. For the just is twofold; one concerned with contracts, which aims at arithmetical equality, the other concerned with distributions, which in

<326> every case requires geometrical equality. When making a contract we must aim at arithmetical equality to avoid wronging our partner in the contract by grasping more than our share, but the person distributing unequal amounts to unequal recipients, must assign them according to appropriate worth and preserve the geometrical proportion.⁵⁶⁹ As the characters differ, so the amounts distributed to them must possess worth relative to one another. So everything just is equal, as we have said, and everything equal is fair; the unequal is ugly

⁵⁶⁸ cf. *Resp.* IV, 445d–e: authority, whether vested in one or more persons, will, if it is just, respect the laws of the state.

⁵⁶⁹ cf. *Aristot. Eth. Nic.* 1131a24–1132a2.

and without proportion because it is out of accord; so everything just is fair.

Now thirdly we observe that physical beauty exists only when form prevails over matter; for matter is ugly and devoid of beauty, and form when overpowered by it is filled with ugliness and shapelessness and becomes as it were formless, being assimilated to the underlying nature. Now if in our soul the intelligence holds the position of form, and the irrational element that of matter (intellect and reason belong to the series of limit, whereas the irrational belongs to the series of the unlimited, for by nature it is without measure and indeterminate) beauty must of necessity be observed in the soul when the reason is in command and the irrational forms of life are controlled by reason and practical wisdom. However it is justice which gives command to reason, and subjection to the irrational; it assigns to each what is appropriate, <327> rule to the sovereign and slavery to the servant, since creation ⁵⁷⁰ has subjected the irrational to us and provided it as a sort of vehicle for the reason within us; so it is beneficial; ^{571*} and what is just is beautiful and cause of beauty to the soul.

Now fourthly the just is perfect and determinate since the unjust is indeterminate and imperfect: it proceeds towards the boundless and halts nowhere once it has slipped away beyond the limit of what is just. So what is just brings measure and limit to whatever it accrues to, and renders all things perfect. Such being its nature, it produces beauty in the soul, since the beautiful grows together with the perfect and the measured, because the ugly co-exists with the unmeasured and the indeterminate. So the just is at the same time perfect, measured, determined and beautiful, and these qualities are not distinct from one another by nature.

Fifthly let it be observed that the creator arranged this universe with justice; ⁵⁷² for he bound it together by “the fairest of bonds” and made it “indissoluble” through the power of “proportion,” which holds it together, and made it all “dear” to itself.^{573*} But what resembles “the universe the fairest of visible beings” is surely also itself beautiful; so

⁵⁷⁰ cf. *Timaeus* 69c and Taylor’s commentary on 69c3 and 7.

⁵⁷² cf. *Tim.* 31c, 32c, 92c and Taylor’s notes on 31c4, 32c2.

^{571*} Reading αὐτό, συμφέρον ἄρα. καὶ <τὸ> δίκαιον (E. R. Dodds *GNOMON* ’55 p. 166).

^{573*} Reading <πᾶν> παντί. (sc. ἐποίησε) (E. R. Dodds *GNOMON* ’55 p. 165).

the just by this argument too is beautiful and nowhere separated from the nature of the beautiful.⁵⁷⁴

Let this suffice as evidence that everything just is noble. The subsequent premiss to this, which states that everything noble is good, is put forward by Socrates but rejected by Alcibiades. The reason is that he has assumed what is noble to be so only by convention and not by nature; and for this reason he agreed that the just is noble (since <328> such is the opinion of the multitude) and separated the noble from the good. The one he considers to exist by opinion (since surely what is fitting and generally approved is noble), ⁵⁷⁵ but the other in genuine fact (since no one is of the opinion that the good is conventional). Now let us show that this premise too is in every way most true. It is obvious to everyone that the beautiful is lovable in its own nature, seeing that the lowest beauty such as is borne only as a reflection is an object of love and stirs souls [towards] it and astounds them by its appearance, bearing as it does the semblance of divine beauty. This is what the Socrates of the *Phaedrus* ⁵⁷⁶ says: "Beauty alone has received this privilege, to be most conspicuous and most lovable." Etymologically, whether it is called "beautiful" because it summons unto itself, or because it charms and beguiles whatever is able to gaze upon it, it is by nature an object of love; and for this reason love is said to lead the lover toward the beautiful. But everything lovable is desirable (since love is a powerful and intense desire for something, and everything that <329> loves desires something it lacks), and everything desirable is good, either as being a genuine or an apparant good. For many things which are not good are desirable, because they appear good to those who desire them. Now it has been clearly shown by Socrates in the *Meno* ⁵⁷⁷ that it is impossible for those who know the nature of evil to desire it. Everything desirable, then, is good; and if properly desirable, then properly good; but if it is only apparently desirable, then the good too will surely be of the same kind. Throughout, this must be added to each of the terms, viz. "apparent or genuine"; for if something is apparently beautiful, it is lovable, desirable and good conjointly with this sort of beauty, but if it is by nature beautiful, it is lovable, and good in like manner. Further, what could be the object of desire? That which is

⁵⁷⁴ We have already seen that justice is a proportion (p. 325, 13-326, 6), but the universe, which is excellently proportioned, is described as "the fairest of visible beings," so justice too must be beautiful.

⁵⁷⁵ Such seems to be the opinion of Epicurus. cf. fgm. 400 & 513 Usener.

⁵⁷⁶ cf. *Phaedr.* 250d.

⁵⁷⁷ cf. *Meno* 77b-78b.

evil? – But it is impossible for an evil that is recognised as such to become an object of desire to any being. All beings desire the good, and there is no desire for anything evil, nor even for something neither good nor evil – all such is done for some other reason and is not the purpose of anything, but everything desirable is an end. If anything evil is desirable, it has the appearance of being good, and likewise if anything at variance with the beautiful is desirable. Now if all the beautiful is lovable, all the lovable desirable and all the desirable good, then, all the beautiful is good. Conversely: all the good is desirable (this is self-evident), all the desirable is lovable (love and desire have the same object, but differ from each other in moderation or intensity of desire, since Socrates in the Symposium ⁵⁷⁸ raises love up to the good via the beautiful and says that the good, just like the beautiful, is the object of love); so if all the good is desirable, all the desirable lovable, and all
 <330> the lovable beautiful (since love is immediately of beauty) then all the good is beautiful.

Now let no one object that the good is beyond beauty, nor that the object of love is twofold, since our discourse is not about the primary principles, but about what is good and beautiful in us. In fact the good in us is at the same time desirable and lovable. It is through love, then, and an intense quest for it, that we acquire it, and if anyone is aware of his own feelings, he knows, I think, full well that this good provokes a love more piercing than the beautiful objects of sense-perception; good is also beautiful. For this reason lovers are exhorted, ⁵⁷⁹ after perceptible beauty, to lead their beloved to the beauty that lies in actions and “pursuits” and “knowledge” and virtue, and there to practise the erotic impulse of the soul, and so eventually reach up to intellect and the primary and divine beauty that exists there, obviously on the understanding that beauty exists also in what we call the good of the soul. For what is more beautiful in us than virtue or knowledge, and what is more ugly than their opposites?

<331> Let so much be observed concerning the most essential premisses that make up the present syllogism; now let us examine Plato’s actual text. First of all he lays down the respondent’s point of view (since this must be clear) and whether nothing just is advantageous or some just things are so, but others are not. It is clear that against one who makes a universal negative it is sufficient to prove a partial affirmative,

⁵⁷⁸ cf. *Sympos.* 206a.

⁵⁷⁹ cf. *ibid.* 210a–211c.

whereas against the advocate of a partial negative one must prove the universal affirmative. Which is in fact what Socrates will do, taking it that Alcibiades does not deny advantage universally to everything just, but only to some just things. Secondly to this, Socrates asks the minor premiss whether everything just is noble, Alcibiades grants this, since he thinks the just is something generally approved and fitting.

But when Socrates, after mentioning together things just and advantageous, interjected “Well, are some of them noble but others not?” Alcibiades was at a loss to know about what things Socrates was asking; but when the latter stated that he was asking about just things, Alcibiades agreed that everything just is noble. Now that these are taken as granted viz, both the problem and the minor premiss, Socrates proceeds to what follows.

“And what in turn of things noble? Are they all good, or are some good and others not?” “Personally, Socrates, I think some things noble are evil.” “And some things base are good?” “Yes.” “Is this the sort of thing you mean: for instance many men in wartime through helping a comrade or kinsman have received wounds and died, whereas those who have not helped when they should, have escaped safe and sound?” “Exactly.” “Now such help you call noble in so far as it attempts to save those whom it should; and this is courage, isn’t it?” “Yes.” “But it is evil in respect of the wounds and deaths: is this so?” “Yes.” “Then courage is one thing, death another?” “Certainly.” “So helping one’s friends is not noble and evil in the same respect.” “(Apparently not).” 115 A–C.

In ⁵⁸⁰ his desire to unite the just and the good via the noble, Socrates asked a second premiss, which states that everything noble is good; but the young man, considering that what is noble is so by convention, and tending to the opinions of the many, being, further, unaware of our true being and not distinguishing its instruments from its parts nor separating what makes it up from what renders service to it, does not concur with this premiss. Now he asserts that many men perform deeds that are noble and praiseworthy, but involve evil. Surely it was noble for Antilochus to help his father in danger and withstand the onset of

⁵⁸⁰ For the following paragraph cp. Ol. in Alc. p. 115, 5–14 esp.: “There are two antitheses: noble and base, good and evil. What is noble is opposed to what is base, and what is good to what is evil, but what is noble is not opposed to what is evil.”

Memnon? ⁵⁸¹ But surely it was an evil to die? So the same person at the same time performed a noble deed and came off badly. In reply to this statement by the young man, Socrates asked whether he admitted that the base could ever be good. Since there would have been nothing surprising in saying that everything base is evil, but that the class of things noble is divided, and some of them are good but others evil. Now Alcibiades agrees with this suggestion and posits that what is base can sometimes become a good thing to those who perform it; for instance if some men are saved by not helping their friends in danger, they have done what is base in disregarding their friends, but what is good for themselves in being saved and escaping either wounds or slaughter.

Against these positions assumed by the young man it is possible to observe that he is wrong in thinking death and wounds evils. For which <333> of these is an evil to us, if we have our substance in soul? What happens to the instruments does not alter the powers of those who use them; neither does the carpenter lose his craft because his saw is blunted, nor, if our happiness lay in carpentry, would we call unhappy one deprived of a saw. As the soul possesses its instrument, so also one could point out instruments of the body too, through which the body moves things external to it, and whose bad condition does not injure the well-being of the body. According to this parallel, the sufferings of the body do not transfer over to the soul, so that death, although an evil of the body, is not one of the soul. If, then, the nobility of the action lies in the soul, but its evil elsewhere, it has not yet been shown that the same thing is noble and evil. It is possible, again, to make a logical division and distinguish the essential from the incidental; Socrates, at any rate, chooses this method of solution as one more familiar to the young man. The deed of bravery is noble in itself, but evil, if at all, incidentally, because it has happened that one who plays the man is killed – let <334> death be, if you like, an evil. So a thing is not evil precisely in the respect that it is noble, but only incidentally. This is one manner of speech responsible for annoying sophistries, ⁵⁸² that people take the incidental as essential and do not distinguish these from each other according to the custom of philosophical discussion. So what is noble and what is evil differ, and the former is not evil in that respect by which it has been shown to be noble, but only incidentally on account of death. It is further possible to observe that ignorance of man's being

⁵⁸¹ cf. *Odyssey* IV, 187–8; Xenophon: *Cyneg.* I, 14; Pindar; *Pyth.* 6, 28–42.

⁵⁸² cf. Aristot. *De Soph. Elench.* 166b28–36.

is displayed by the person who distinguishes the good from the noble and posits the one in one place and the other in another: who confuses the good with the body, but refers the noble to the activity of the soul, and at the same time admits that the former is of principal importance, while the latter is subservient. But Socrates, at least, did not pursue the solution by this method, because he had not yet shown our being to be free from the body. So to a man who thought that the body forms an integral part of our being it was not yet possible to observe that death, whether or not it is an evil, must be distinguished from what happens to the real man, and one must not confusedly identify the good of the body with the good of the man nor refer the evil of the instrument to its user.

<335> “See then, if it is good at least in so far as it is noble, as in the present case. For you agree that help is something noble in respect of the courage shown; now consider this very thing courage, and say whether it is good or evil. Look at it this way: which would you like to happen to you good or evil?” “Good.” “Surely, above all, the greatest good, of which you would be least willing to be deprived?” “Surely.” “Well what do you say in regard to courage? At what price would you be willing to be deprived of it?” “I would not even choose to live, if that meant being a coward.” “So cowardice, in your opinion, is the worst of evils?” “It is.” “On a par with death, so it seems?” “Agreed.” “Now are not life and courage most opposed to death and cowardice?” “Yes.” “And most of all you would desire the former, but least of all the latter?” “Yes.” “Is this because you think the former the best, but the latter the worst?” “Certainly.” “So in so far as helping one’s friends in battle is noble, you have called it such in respect of the performance of good by courage?” “Apparently.” “But you have called it evil in respect of the working of evil by death?” “Yes.” “Now is this a fair way of describing each action: if in so far as it works evil, you call the action evil, then in so far as it works good, it must be called good?” “That seems right to me.”
115C–116 A.

As far as the preceding words Alcibiades opposed the premiss which stated that everything noble was good, but Socrates solved the difficulty by means of the essential and the incidental – a distinction which those who engage in philosophical discussion are wont to employ

<336> to solve many of their difficulties; consequently he now proves directly this premiss which seemed to be doubtful. He has already employed a prosyllogism⁵⁸³ proving beforehand the object of enquiry, and the prosyllogism is a first overlapping a first.⁵⁸⁴ It has the form of the first figure, and its mode has already been described: “everything noble is desirable, everything desirable is good, so everything noble is good.” Now if Socrates were putting forward the premisses in this fashion, his line of thought would be clear; but as it is he seems to take them up in a more particular manner, making his discourse on the question of bravery. The reason is that he wishes to derive the premisses from the life of the respondent; this process is elicitive and at the same time more effective for the amendment of the person who lacks perfection, whereas the former method is both more scientific and more in line with philosophical discussion.

Now if you care to follow the words closely, you will see that all the premisses are laid down. By asking Alcibiades whether he would choose to have good or evil, Socrates asks him the chief premiss, which states that the desirable is good. Nothing other is desirable than the good. Not evil, then, since this is shunned by all, and as soon as it is known for what it is, no being pursues it. But when it deceives under the appearance of good it becomes in turn desirable, so only the good is desirable. What else is there which we would choose to belong to us, for which we possess the desire or which is the object of our will? Again, by asking whether the greatest good is the most desirable Socrates adopts that premiss which declares that “the lovable is good.”

<337> For love is an intense desire, so that whether you take the good as desirable, or as lovable, you necessarily unite the beautiful with it. Now thirdly, assuming that Alcibiades would not endure to be bereft of

⁵⁸³ i.e. a syllogism, the conclusion of which forms the major premiss of another syllogism. It occurred on p. 329, 23–330, 1.

⁵⁸⁴ Alex. Aphr. provides a full explanation of this expression in *An. Pr.* p. 283, 3 ff. esp. 17–29 (cp. *SVF* II no. 257): “The “overlapping” and “overlapped” syllogisms would receive their name from premisses consecutively taken apart from their conclusions; “overlapped” are those whose conclusions are omitted, “overlapping” those whose major premiss is omitted. For the omitted conclusions of the overlapped syllogisms which are first in order, are the major premisses of the overlapping syllogisms which are second in order. e.g. A is predicated of all B, B of all C, C of all D, therefore A of all D. The first syllogism is overlapped, since its conclusion “therefore A is predicated of all C” is omitted; overlapping is the syllogism demonstrated from the omitted “A is predicated of all C” and “C is predicated of all D,” whose conclusion is “therefore A is predicated of all D.” Now in what we have been discussing both the overlapping and the overlapped syllogism are in the first figure.”

bravery, Socrates also posits that the noble is lovable and desirable. For it is granted that bravery is a noble thing; from which it is inferred that bravery and all such nobility is at the same time good. Socrates proves that bravery is something desirable and good from the contrary too, if cowardice is among the worst of evils, then bravery is one of the greatest of goods. So being a noble thing, it is also not any chance good, but the greatest. Now the good is united to the noble in another fashion also. If death is preferable to cowardice, to be a coward is to be in an evil state; since only an evil state, and nothing else, is more to be shunned than non-existence. But if non-existence is a lesser evil than being a coward, bravery is a greater good than life; for the greater good is opposed to the greater evil; so bravery is a greater good than life. But even if death is only an equal evil with cowardice, then their opposites, life and bravery, are equally good. So the good of bravery is not to be taken away on account of death; for it is an equal good with life, and not good on account of life, but on its own account. At any rate life is despised on account of the desire for bravery. It has been shown then, in the case of bravery, that the same thing is noble and good; but the premisses lay hid since Socrates by way of elicitation, but not of controversy, has framed his questions in a particular guise.

<338> "So in so far as it produces good, it is a noble thing, but in so far as it produces evil, it is base?" "Yes." "So by saying that helping one's friends in battle is noble, but evil, you are not saying anything other than if you called the help good, but evil." "I think what you say is true, Socrates." "So nothing noble, in so far as it is noble, is evil, and nothing base, in so far as it is base, is good." "Apparently so." 116. A-B.

The "of itself" has been rightly distinguished by Aristotle⁵⁸⁵ from the "in itself," and it has been observed that what belongs "of itself" need not belong primarily, but the "in itself," in addition to being present "of itself" to the underlying subjects, is also present to them primarily, that is to say it is co-extensive with them. For to derive from them and be established in them is the property of things pos-

⁵⁸⁵ Dr. Westerink notes: *idem* esse dicit Aristot. An. Post. 73b28-9: "The of itself and the in itself are the same." But Aristotle has previously distinguished them *ibid.* 73a34-b24, where "of itself" means "according to specific nature," while "in itself" means "precisely as itself, as this individual instance of a specific nature." cf. Ross ad loc. esp. on 73a34-b16 and 73b25-32.

sessing subsistence on an equal footing with the underlying subjects. Now Socrates, having proved in this passage that what is noble is good, lays stress on the argument and adds that it is good precisely as being noble, in order that he may show these two terms to be convertible with each other.⁵⁸⁶ And the young man concurs, since he has already got a notion of what is naturally noble, and has discovered that this is, at the same time, good; but there is room for reminding those who dispute the point. If the beautiful is cause of proportion to the soul, if it is on this account called beautiful, and if it enables the superior in us to rule over the inferior, if it perfects us and cleanses the soul of its <339> ugliness, in these very respects it is good; and as producing these effects, it is of the order of the good. It is not an incidental good, but is good precisely as beautiful. For if, as beautiful, it is proportioned so, as proportioned, it is good; for the good, too, is a proportion. Consequently the opposite, as ugly, is evil; since as ugly it is formless, indeterminate, unproportioned, and, as such, is evil. So clearly as ugly it is found to be evil. Reasonably, then, Socrates concludes that the noble and the good are identical, since it is good precisely as noble, and that the base and the evil are identical since precisely as base, it is evil; on these grounds it is inferred that one must not call the same thing noble and evil nor base and good. We may derive therefrom a proposition of logic, which Aristotle⁵⁸⁷ later employed, to the effect that if two terms, and their opposites, are convertible with each other, then the opposite of one of these two terms cannot be consistent with the other term. For if the noble and the good are convertible, and likewise their opposites, the evil and the base

⁵⁸⁶ For the previous section cf. *Ol. in Alc.* p. 118, 11–27.

⁵⁸⁷ cf. *Aristot. De Caelo* 281b25–282a25.

FRAGMENTS *

I.

Schol. in Alcib. p. 277, 1-7 Hermann. (p. 450 Greene)

107 E. In correcting Alcibiades, Socrates unobserved puts forward by way of example the art of physical training, which is divided into "grappling at arm's length and close wrestling." So also war and peace are different divisions of just action. Naturally Socrates puts forward the arts of physical training and music as being familiar to Alcibiades since he was brought up on them from childhood. And war resembles physical training, but peace resembles music.

2.

Schol. in Alcibiades. p. 277, 11-30. Hermann.

108 A. Consider the accuracy of the terms. "Gymnastically and musically," he says, reasonably naming the activities after the states. For names are either derived from the states and given to those who possess them, as for instance the healer is named after the healing skill; or from the activity, as when we say one who has produced a fine cure has acted curatively; or from the instrument, as when we call someone an opener of veins; or from the purpose, as when we call that food healthy which induces health. In this fashion Plato transmits to us imperceptibly along with the subject matter the occasions of similarity and related terms. Aristotle has benefited thereby and handed them on to us in simplified fashion stripped of their circumstances. The point

* The authenticity of these fragments is incontrovertible only in the case of nos. 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12. Nos. 5 & 7 are particularly dubious in style, and the rest are attributed to Proclus for negative rather than positive reasons. cf. Dr. Westerink's introduction to his edition p.x.

of similarity ¹ is as follows: as physical training is to wrestling and grappling at arm's length, so is music to singing and lyre-playing and rhythmic step. The point from related terms ² is this; as the adverb "gymnastically" is derived from the art of gymnastic, so the adverb "musically" is derived from the art of music. To be absolutely accurate first there is singing, which is of the tongue, then lyre-playing, which is of the hands, finally stepping, which is of the feet. There are three parts of music: song, melody, rhythmic step. Song is concerned with the long and short, melody with the high and low pitched, rhythmic step with the slow and quick.

3.

Olympiodorus in Alc. p. 126, 3-20 ³

116 B. "Whoever does nobly, fares well, doesn't he?" Socrates names the first premiss viz. "he who does noble deeds fares well." But we are not to suppose that because he identifies the just and the advantageous via the medium of the beautiful, he wants them to be absolutely the same (for the nature of the good and the beautiful differs: the good transcends the beautiful from above and reaches lower in the scale on account of matter, which, although ugly, participates in the good), but his opinion is that they are convertible as they exist in man, since they are convertible with their subject. Just as we say man is no different from the risible, not because he is the same but because the subject of man can in no way escape having the risible predicated of it, so also these qualities are convertible as they exist in man. It is clear, too, that Socrates is taking the just and the good that are in man, since previously he was talking about courage, to the effect that this is a good thing; and here too he says that those who do noble deeds fare well and on this account are happy and do good deeds, but to act

¹ cf. Aristot. Top. 108a7 ff: "Similarity should be observed both in things belonging to different classes – as A is to B, so is C to D e.g. as knowledge is to the object of knowledge, so is sense-perception to the object of sense perception; and as A is in B, so C is in D e.g. as sight is in the eye, so is the intuitive intellect in the soul We should also observe things in the same class, to see if they all have any same characteristic, e.g. man, horse and dog; for they are similar in so far as they have any same characteristic."

² cf. *ibid.* p. 114a27-114b5 e.g. "By related terms are meant such things as e.g. just acts and the just man in relation to justice Inflected forms are also considered related terms e.g. justly is related to justice And all words in the same series are called related terms e.g. justice, just man, just act, justly"

³ cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 127, 20-24.

and be happy and fare well belongs to souls. It is clear too that in the text Socrates says "By this argument at any rate, the noble and the good are the same" in the sense that "they are the same in their subject because the subject cannot but admit them." Such is the explanation of the philosopher Proclus.

4.

Olympiodorus in Alc. p. 135, 4-12.

118 C. "Except for a few and perhaps your guardian Pericles." We enquire how it is that Socrates praises Pericles here by calling him wise, but a little later runs him down by saying that he is no statesman, just as in the *Gorgias* ⁴ too he proves Pericles to be no statesman. Consequently he aroused Aristides ⁵ to dispute the matter, on account of what is said in the *Gorgias*. Now the philosopher Proclus observes that Socrates refutes Pericles as not being a man of true knowledge, but accepts him as a man of right opinions.

5.

Schol. in Alc. p. 279, 16-19 Hermann.

118 C. Pythocleides) was a musician, a teacher of stately music and a Pythagorean: his disciple was Agathocles, whose disciple was Lamprocles, whose disciple was Damon. Anaxagoras was a natural philosopher nicknamed "The Intellect," ⁶ because he was the first of all to set this as ruler over the universe.

6.

Schol. in Alcib. p. 279, 37-280, 8 Hermann.

118 E. Now he is paraphrasing that saying of Homer's: ⁷

"Are you so exceedingly foolish, O stranger, or light-headed, or do you wittingly let things go?"

⁴ cf. *Gorg.* 515c-516d.

⁵ cf. Aristides Rhetor (129-189 A.D.) *Oratio* 46 "Against Plato on Behalf of the Four (Miltiades, Themistocles, Pericles, Cimon): "It has occurred to me often to wonder at some things in the *Gorgias*, especially the accusation that Plato made against Miltiades, Themistocles, Pericles and Cimon, and that so casually and remissly that no one would even guess it before hearing out the dialogue." (Dindorf) vol. II p. 157, 5-7.

⁶ cf. *Plut. Per.* 4, 4.

⁷ cf. *Homer, Odyssey* IV, 371-2.

Everyone who does not learn either suffers this deficiency through nature's opposition, and such a person is "foolish" and "witless"; or he is able to learn but considers what is learned of no benefit and for this reason does not devote himself to it, and such a man is "light-headed" and "mad"; or else he considers what is learned beneficial, but is idle and lazy, and such a person is "wittingly remiss" and "inattentive."

7.

Schol. in Alcib. p. 279, 27-33 Hermann.

119 A. Zeno) the Eleatic, a disciple of Parmenides, a natural philosopher and genuine statesman; for which reason he is compared with Pericles, who is only apparently a statesman. A pupil of his was Pythodorus, who is thought worthy of mention in the Parmenides ⁸ as having communicated to Antiphon an account of that famous conversation. Cephalus of Clazomenae learned from Antiphon and became a teacher. Callias, an Athenian general, was also a famous statesman.

8.

Schol. in Procli comm. in Tim. I 463, 1-2 Diehl.

120 B. What the slavish hair is has been described by this philosopher in his writings on the Alcibiades.⁹

9.

Schol. in Alc. p. 280, 19-21 Hermann.

120 B. What involves learning) Our perfection is twofold, one of our rational part, which comes about through learning, the other of our

⁸ cf. Parm. 126a-c: "These gentlemen here (Adeimantus & Glaucon)" said I (Cephalus), "are fellow citizens of mine and very keen on philosophy: they have heard that this Antiphon was very familiar with Pythodorus, a companion of Zeno, and that he has heard the account of the conversations which Socrates, Zeno and Parmenides once held so often from Pythodorus that he can relate it from memory."

⁹ cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 148, 11-150, 2: "Still having the hair of a slave," the women would say: women have a saying with reference to those slaves who are freed and who remain in slavery viz. "You have slavish hair on your head i.e. You still have the hair of a slave!" For of old freemen and slaves had been distinguished both by their names and their hair: they were called Getai and Daoi and Phrygians, but now this has been voided. But instead of saying "on your head," Socrates says "You have slavish hair on your soul through lack of culture."

irrational part, which comes about through training in the better habits.

IO.

Olympiodorus in Alc. p. 156, 15-157, 5.

120 E. The philosopher Proclus raises the difficulty of why Socrates, although able to show that the Spartans are descended from Zeus through Heracles, does not do so, but shows their descent from Zeus by tracing them back to Perseus. His personal solution is that Socrates gave the primacy in honour to Perseus because he was winged. For each of them was born for the removal of evils, especially Heracles; and so Peisander describes him as "a most righteous slayer," because he carried out his slayings with the cleansing of evil in view; but such was Perseus also, and he had, in addition, the gift of being winged, as the comedy ¹⁰ and the Gorgon and the scimitar show.

II.

Olympiodorus in Alc. p. 203, 20-204, 12.

129 B. Come now let us discuss outside opinions ¹¹ of terms and enquire what, according to the Philosopher Proclus, is "IT" and "IT IN ITSELF," and on the other hand, what they are according to the philosopher Damascius. Well the philosopher Proclus ¹² says there are three things: "IT," the threefold division of the soul: "IT-IN-ITSELF" he calls the rational soul; and "EACH IT-IN-ITSELF," the individual.

¹⁰ cf. Aristoph. Thesm. 1098-1102.

¹¹ cf. Ol. in Alc. p. 4. 9-13; 209, 15-21; 209, 22-210, 16; 222, 4-14; and for Damascius' view, p. 204, 12-205, 7.

¹² Proclus refers to Alcibiades 129c-e and 130d in Remp. I p. 171, 23-172, 6. In terms somewhat different from the account of Olympiodorus, he calls IT-IN-ITSELF the intellectual soul, while IT is the whole soul in relation to the body as its instrument: "For come let us recall one point, if you will, and consider the words of Socrates in the Alcibiades (I 129c), in which he says that the user is one thing but the instrument another: the latter is assigned the position of a servant, whereas the former transcends the nature of the latter; and each one of us neither has his substance in the inferior portion nor is made up of both elements, I mean the instrument and the user, but is perfectly defined in relation to the user alone (130a-c). And therefore he shows that Alcibiades subsists according to the soul as transcending the bodily organs, and not the whole soul, but the intellectual soul, which he has given the following appellation in that passage (130d): IT-IN-ITSELF. For IT is the whole soul in relation to the oyster-like instrument, but this ESSENTIAL IT is that intelligent form of the soul."

For the text says that if we are to ascertain what IT-IN-ITSELF is, we must also learn what is EACH IT-IN-ITSELF, since it is not enough simply to ascertain man, but we must know also what the individual is, because the task in hand is to help Alcibiades to find out who he is – namely his soul; and actions are concerned with individual circumstances. And not only on this account, but also because the Peripatetic¹³ school was mistaken in regard to the individual thing, considering it to come about by a combination of accidentals. Consequently they define it as follows: “whose aggregation could never occur in any other case”; the Peripatetics made the superior from the inferior viz. the accidental.

12.

Olympiodorus in Alcib. p. 217, 23–218, 7.

133 A. Now since the conversation has turned to the images that appear in mirrors, we must not think as the philosopher Proclus thinks, that Plato is of the opinion that they are reflections. For these are Peripatetic¹⁴ and mechanical notions, to say that shadows occur on account of occultation by a body. Plato does not consider them to be fleeting, weak and feeble but wants them to be substantial because they arise by issuing forth from objects of sense-perception through effluences, as in the case of the eye.¹⁵ They crystallise in the mirror and so appear, and recognition in turn occurs through likeness; for the effluences resemble the objects of which they are effluences, and therefore what is crystal in form as it were beholds itself in the mirror through its own effluences.

¹³ cf. Porph. Isag. p. 7, 21–3 Busse: “So such things are called individuals because each one is composed of characteristics whose precise aggregation could never occur in any other case.”

¹⁴ cf. Aristot. Meteor. 373a35–b34: Alex. Aphr. in Meteor. p. 141, 3–144, 9 Hayduck: Ol. in Meteor. p. 209, 15–217, 19 Busse.

¹⁵ cf. Tim. 45b–46c, Taylor’s commentary p. 276–90 & Cornford: Plato’s Cosmology pp. 151–6. cp. Meno 76c–d & Sophist 266b–c.

APPENDIX

p. 113, 7–8:

These lines raise the whole question of how the Neoplatonists divided the gods according to the various worlds, what these worlds were, and how a certain confusion arose from the attempt to identify Platonic, Aristotelean and Chaldaean systems.

a) PLATONIC: in *Timaeus* 39e–40b, Plato distinguishes four classes of beings: i) the heavenly race of gods, whose substance is for the most part fire – hence the sphere of the fixed stars ii) birds of the air iii) the class of beings that live in water iv) the kind that go on dry land. At 58d, ether is mentioned as the higher and brighter air, cf. Taylor's commentary on these passages.

Epinomis 981c distinguishes five bodies: “So the bodies being five, we must name them as fire, water and thirdly air, earth fourth and ether fifth.” (Loeb). cf. also 984b–c. Ether is added as the abode of the spirits (984e). Hence in descending order we have the fiery sphere of the fixed stars or visible gods, the ether – abode of the spirits, the air – abode of the birds, the water – abode of the nymphs, and the earth – abode of mortals.

b) ARISTOTELEAN: *De Caelo* 269b 14–17, 270b 1–25 concludes from the perfect circular motion of the spheres that there is a fifth body, distinct in nature from the four elements. It is primary, and is given the name of “ether.” In *Physics* 212b 21–3, Aristotle makes “heaven” the outermost sphere of the fixed stars, encompassing “ether.” (cf. Lewy *op. cit.* c. II, notes 39, 129, 227).

c) STOIC: Zeno defines “heaven” as “the utmost limit of ether” (SVF I no. 115)

Fire is the predominant element. cf. Diog. Laert. VII, 137: "Highest of all, then, is fire, which is called ether, in which first of all the sphere of the fixed stars is generated, then that of the planets; after this air, then water, and as the foundation of all, earth which is at the middle of everything."

d) CHALDAEAN: "It would appear that the Chaldaeans distinguished between three concentric world-circles: the Empyrean viz. the Intelligible World, forming the outermost circle; the Ethereal World, comprising the zone of the fixed stars, as well as that of the planets; the so-called Hylic World, viz. the sublunar region including the earth" – Lewy *op. cit.* p. 137.

The source of the term "empyrean" is found in the Chaldaean description of the "Father," the ineffable supreme principle: "The Father is enthroned in solitary majesty above the starry spheres, in the intelligible world, which encloses the eight spheres (those of the seven planets and the zone of the fixed stars), and is composed of pure fire. Considered as the source of this spiritual substance, he is also called "First Transcendent Fire," "Holy Fire," "The Uniquely Transcendent". The "intelligible space" is named in the Oracles as the "Father's Depth" or "Silence" – Lewy *op. cit.* p. 77–8.

Confusion arises in the description of the world-divisions given by Neoplatonist authors on account of the conflation of the various systems. Lewy notes many of these confusions in c. II, notes 84, 218 & 270. cf. also Kroll: *De Orac. Chald.* p. 31–9.

Proclus refers to the Chaldaean system in *Tim.* II, 57, 10–12: "... one of those who start from foreign theosophy and divide everything into empyrean, ethereal and hylic, and call only what is evident to the senses hylic." The derivation of this triad of worlds from the Chaldaean verse: "(The Cosmic Soul) Entirely ensouling Light, Fire, Ether and Worlds," and the respective misinterpretations of Light by Proclus (in *Remp.* II p. 201, 10–202, 2) and Simplicius (in *Phys.* p. 612, 24–613, 5; 615, 25–616, 9; 617, 2–26) are dealt with by Lewy p. 88–9 & notes 83a & 84. Interpreting this verse of the Oracles, Lewy gives us a picture of the Cosmic Soul ensouling Aeon (=Light), Empyrean, Ether and Worlds (=zone of planets and terrestrial world). Note that the zone of planets belonged to ether in the above account by Lewy.

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ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA

This translation and commentary were completed and in the press before I became aware of an article by A. J. Festugière (*Modes de Composition des Commentaires de Proclus*: *Museum Helveticum* XX 1963 p. 77–100) that included some important observations on the meaning of τὰ πράγματα in the Alcibiades commentary (p. 82–3 note 7; p. 94–100). These were enough to show me the need to make a complete study of the use of τὰ πράγματα and to correct my translation where necessary. The following remarks are offered with due acknowledgement of several references already mentioned or elucidated by Fr. Festugière.

First, he has convinced me that his interpretation of 179, 11–180, 3 is substantially correct, and therefore at 180, 22 I would read with him τῇδε κατ' ἀμφοτέρω [τῇ] and translate 180, 20–181, 1 as follows: “Again the former, by not destroying the superior states, resembles the natural constitution of the realities, while the latter, in overthrowing the greater by the lesser, resembles the disposition contrary to nature; thus in both ways,³⁵¹ according to the form of construction and according to the realities, there is an appropriateness to our human condition.” Note 351 should be replaced thus: The constructions are composition or resolution. The realities refer to the descent and ascent of the soul. Both the constructions and the realities resemble our human condition. By composition we have acquired alien garments, only by resolution can we cast them off (cp. 138, 16–139, 3). By our descent into the body we have forgotten ourselves, only by ascent will we recover the truth (cp. 7, 1–8; 212, 11–15).

Secondly Fr. Festugière has given several examples of the theological use of τὰ πράγματα (the realities) with special exegesis of 30, 5–7 (p. 94–100). I wish to comment briefly on their contexts. At 24, 10 the opening words of the dialogue (‘O son of Kleinias’) are described as appropriate

τῷ τε προσώπῳ καὶ τοῖς πράγμασιν. There follows an explanation of their appropriateness to the character of Alcibiades, which terminates at 25, 18. Then Proclus stresses their fittingness for 'discourses about love' and refers to 'the whole order of love' and its procession 'from the intelligible father' (26, 2). So clearly τοῖς πράγμασιν looks forward to the treatment of the theology of love, and parallels the sense of τῶν πραγμάτων at 30, 6, which also preludes a description of 'the whole order of love' at 30, 14. In both cases the translation 'subject matter' should be corrected to 'realities', as also at 167, 10 where the phrase ἐκ τούτων ἐπὶ τὰ πράγματα μετιών introduces a comment on 'the more perfect causes' as typifying the activity of Socrates. At 231, 7 another theological aside is introduced by the words: καὶ ἔστι τοῦτο τοῖς πράγμασι σύμφωνον. The genuine nature of Socrates' question is misunderstood by Alcibiades, just as the undivided creation is received in a divided manner, and the eternal action of God is participated in time. A final reference at 319, 12 begins a paragraph relating the Good to the Beautiful, and the Beautiful to Justice, with the words: 'Ὁ μὲν οὖν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς τῶν πραγμάτων.

181, 1 has provided one example of τὰ πράγματα used of the realities of the soul. There are many other instances of its use as regards true knowledge of the forms, beginning with 13, 5-6. Here the seventh syllogism convicts Alcibiades of twofold ignorance both as regards himself and τὰ πράγματα (cp. 17, 1-6). It refers beyond the end of the present commentary, which breaks off with the consideration that only the noble is good, but if we look at Plato's dialogue, it is clear that in the succeeding section (116e-118b) Alcibiades is convicted by Socrates of twofold ignorance in regard to what is just, noble, good, advantageous, and this is probably what τὰ πράγματα indicates here, and so should be translated 'the realities' rather than 'public affairs' (cp. 189, 12-13; 299, 1-2; 302, 10-11; 304, 3-5).

135, 13-14 gives a description of Socrates as ὁ δὲ γε ἐπιστήμων, ὁ καὶ τὰ πράγματα ἐπεσκεμμένος. Every soul φύσει τεθέαται τὰ ὄντα (Phaedr. 249e) but has afterwards forgotten them. Only the man of true knowledge has made his way back to these 'realities'. But souls that leave the intelligible world encounter images of the realities there: τῶν ἐκεῖ πραγμάτων (136, 2), and become all excited at the sight of 'the images of the realities' (τὰ ἔδωλα τῶν πραγμάτων 136, 3-4). 181, 11-15 affords evidence that the gods do help us to learn and so recover the knowledge of the notions innate within us (187, 14-20). Knowledge imparted from above is superior to discovery (188, 3-4), and the visions

and guidances of the gods are sufficient evidence that some knowledge of the realities is engendered in us by the superior causes (καὶ παρὰ τῶν κρείττονων ἐγγίνεται τις ἡμῖν γνῶσις τῶν πραγμάτων 188, 11–12). Yet the souls that descend and come to birth imbibe forgetfulness, and so cannot articulate the innate notions of the realities (τοὺς λόγους τῶν πραγμάτων) that pulsate within them (189, 4–8). On account of these stifled innate notions, souls fall back into twofold ignorance (189, 8–13), thinking that they know when really they do not, and so end up as far from enquiry into the realities as the man of knowledge who does not need to enquire (ὁ μὲν τοίνυν ἀμαθαίνων διπλῇ πόρρῳ τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων ἐστὶ ζητήσεως . . .). In general I would prefer to translate: ‘the realities’ instead of the singular ‘reality’, particularly at 189, 6–7 where I take περὶ αὐτῶν to refer to τῶν πραγμάτων.

212, 10–11 tells us that once the obstacles have been removed, the soul must now approach the consideration of the realities (not: ‘subject matter’); whereas 242, 4–243, 6 considers the teaching capacity of the many, whom Alcibiades names as his source of learning in the lemma 110d–e. Learning is either from above or from below, with discovery in the middle position as at 187, 7–188, 11. Learning from the multitude is of the lower kind and could not impart a knowledge of what is just or unjust (cp. 244, 6–8). So Socrates shows (243, 10–12) that the opinion of the many has no authority in the judgment and discernment of the realities (not: ‘affairs’), which are indicated at 243, 3 (where Alcibiades takes the many as his guide to ‘the knowledge of what is just’) and at 243, 12 (One who aims at what is noble cannot rely on the opinion of the many). 248, 5–249, 14 describes the whole process of ascent to the One via the differing objects of knowledge. The reader is exhorted to rise up to the level of Intellect and the kingdoms of Intelligence in order to grasp the unification of the realities (‘things’ is too vague), which here seems to refer to the unity of forms on the intelligent level, but not to the highest unity (cp. 249, 12; 53, 2–4; 65, 2–4). 258, 15–260, 9 gives further commentary on the claims of the many to be teachers of what is just (cp. 22, 11–15; 242, 4–245, 5). Their capacity “to assign the authoritative usages of names that are naturally appropriate to the realities” (not: ‘their subjects’) is denied (259, 4–6); for this is the function only of the person who has examined the nature of the realities i.e. the philosopher (259, 10–11 cp. 135, 13–14), and the mind of the many is too weak to grasp the things that are (259, 12–13). The quotation from Pythagoras at 259, 14–15 is interpreted (*ibid.* 16–17) in the sense that

if Nous is the first number, then after this comes the intelligent soul that contemplates the forms, and to it is referred the function of 'positing names for things' i.e. the realities. A further comment at 260, 1-3 states that the many, though aware of the general usage of names, are unable to perceive their appropriateness to the realities (not: 'their subjects'); for "what is by nature just is clear only to those who know" (*ibid.* 5-6), and the many "could never know the Just-in-itself, nor the really authoritative usage of the name" (*ibid.* 8-9).

298, 10-299, 8 comments on the suitability of Socrates' applying to Alcibiades the same criteria of true knowledge concerning what is advantageous as concerning what is just. Alcibiades anticipates the argument and shows himself aware that it "extends to all the realities (not: 'matters') concerning which we are in twofold ignorance" (299, 1). This reference is picked up just after the next lemma at 302, 9-12: "All who are in twofold ignorance of any of the realities" (not: 'any topic') have the same method of refutation applied to them, and this has shown, in Alcibiades' case, his ignorance of what is advantageous as of what is just. 304, 2-5 takes up the same point, that twofold ignorance must first be cleansed away, before Alcibiades can share in the knowledge of the realities (not: 'matters in hand'). 305, 7-306, 7 discusses the reasons why Socrates offers Alcibiades both the method of question and answer and the option of continuous discourse in discussing whether the just and the advantageous are the same. One reason given in Socrates' confidence "in his knowledge of the realities" (not: 'subject matter'), in contrast with the inability even to speak of the non-philosopher who has no knowledge "of the nature of the realities" (not: 'subject matter') cf. 305, 10-11; 306, 6-7.

Such are the references to 'the realities' on the level of the forms, but there are further instances of τὰ πράγματα used as a general term to cover the whole scale of being. 2, 4-5 suggests that the good has come to things (τοῖς πράγμασιν) from one source, being and existence from another. Since Proclus reviews the whole scale of being from the highest to the lowest, and the corresponding degrees of goodness (cp. 3, 10-12), the sense of τοῖς πράγμασιν here must be general and so may be translated 'things'. 31, 8 refers to Symposium 202d-e in describing the position of the spirit-order. A glance at Plato's text shows that Socrates' discussion with Diotima centres first on the ontological position of Love as Daemon ('between mortal and immortal' 202d11; 'the whole spirit-order is between mortal and immortal' 202d13-e1) and only later on its function (202e2-7). So here πραγμάτων will mean

'things' or 'realities' (in a wide sense) rather than 'affairs'. 142-3 comments upon an imaginary question put to Alcibiades by one of the gods (Alc. 105a). This naturally leads to the observation that every rational association requires the presence of God, and gives rise to the theological question: 'For what is the unifying force among things (τῶν πραγμάτων) or that which brings together what has been divided, other than the divine?' (143, 1-2). The divine is that which imparts unity to 'things', understanding these as covering the whole range of being, as at 2, 5. 217, 9-15 forms a little comment on the words of the lemma: διαφέρει ὅλον τε καὶ πᾶν (109b). The phrase is blown up to cosmological dimensions and explained as a form of division that applies to πάντα τὰ πράγματα (217, 10). The sense of the term here may be gauged from the resumption at 217, 13: ἐν ἅπασιν οὖν τοῖς οὖσι. τὰ πράγματα refers to the whole range of beings.

The unqualified use of τὰ πράγματα has provided 5 theological and 4 general instances, with 16 references on the level of the forms; but there are qualified uses as well, or uses within a phrase, and the most obvious of these is ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων φύσις ('the nature of the realities'). The first instance (22, 11) gives a clear meaning from the context. Socrates in the *Cratylus* says that the names applied to things eternal more nearly attain 'the nature of the realities' (which are here obviously in the eternal order). This same theological sense reappears at 119, 19 where a remark of Socrates is praised both as appropriate to Love and as "most suited both to the nature and arrangement of the realities (not: 'subject matter'), since all things both proceed from and revert to the primary principle". Again at 171, 18 the sentence: "This feature of discussions resembles the nature of the realities" ('things' is too vague here) introduces a theological comparison: "For among them also . . ." (the activity of causes resembles the activity of the questioner in dialogue: if beneficent, the recipient follows easily the given lead; if maleficent, great powers of resistance are needed to avoid harm). A slight variation of the phrase at 180, 20-21 (τῇ κατὰ φύσιν ὑποστάσει τῶν πραγμάτων) indicates the descent from the more to the less perfect (180, 3-5 & 17-19). In addition to these theological references, already noted by Fr. Festugière (p. 99-100), some instances occur on the level of the forms. 244, 7-9 refers back to a passage already considered (242-3) and especially to 243, 5-6 where the whole multitude is pronounced untrustworthy concerning the knowledge of what is just or unjust. So here too we are warned not to admit 'the populace within us' as a trustworthy judge of the nature of the realities ('things' is too

vague) or as capable of receiving any true knowledge. 259, 10 and 306, 6–7 have been already mentioned as indicating the qualifications of the philosopher and man of knowledge. He must have examined ‘the nature of the realities’. 323 involves a discussion of whether what is just is also noble. Proclus quotes the dissenting views of Thrasymachus, Callicles and Polus of Acragas, who asserted that to wrong is by convention more base than to be wronged, but by nature more noble, and “separated Real Law from the nature of the realities” (so translate 323, 7–8). A place has been assigned to Law (219, 11–221, 9) among the intelligent orders (220, 13–16).

A further group of references concern the phrase ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀλήθεια. At 75, 11–16 in the middle of a long discussion concerning the position of the Daemon relative to the human soul, Proclus briefly mentions and rejects the view of Plotinus that the Daemon is the active element in the soul, and concludes with the observation: “Not even these seem to me to aim at the truth of the realities” (‘matter’ is too vague). Specifically the position of the human soul relative to the Daemon is in question. 240, 5–241, 2 concern Alcibiades’ claim always to have known what is just. In one sense this is incorrect, since Alcibiades has no clear and explicit knowledge of it. Yet in another sense he is right; he has retained some innate notion of what is just, though he is unable to articulate it, and so he has not altogether fallen away from the truth of the realities (not: ‘matter’), which here refer especially to the forms and our knowledge of them (cp. 7, 1–8; 15, 1–6; 135, 7–13; 189, 4–12; 192, 1–12; 212, 11–15; 250, 16–251, 2; 280, 19–281, 14).

254, 1–255, 3 comments on Socrates’ argument that if the many cannot teach draughts, a fortiori they cannot teach justice. As it stands the argument is persuasive only, since in fact persons may have superior knowledge without its including inferior. But if one takes draughts as typical of the pursuits in which the multitude engage and on which they spend their enthusiasm, then if they cannot teach even these, it follows strictly that they cannot teach justice, with which they have no such familiarity. Proclus sums up his argument at the beginning of the next paragraph: “Now in this way I think the sense acquires the truth of the realities (not: ‘actual facts’) i.e. it is no longer merely persuasive but completely true (cp. 254, 17–19). No particular realities are envisaged, and this usage parallels 92, 1–2 where Proclus concludes his views on why Socrates was permitted to associate with Alcibiades as follows: “Such in my opinion are the views expressed by

commentators to solve the difficulty, which accord both with Plato and the realities" (not: 'actual facts'). Any real truth must be established on the foundation of the 'other' world.

315, 5-8 states that the enquiry concerning the unity or diversity of the just and the advantageous contributes to our entire love of wisdom "and touches the whole truth of the realities" (not: 'our subject matter'). This is explained in the following paragraphs, which show how our decision concerning this problem affects our whole concept of ethics and of the nature of man (315, 8-317, 15), and how the principle of justice maintains souls in their position relative to the hierarchy of theology (317, 16-318, 15).

Qualified references to τὰ πράγματα involve either a partitive genitive or an adjective (an adverb may have the same function), and a range of meanings from the highest to the lowest. 49, 4 and 182, 2 mention 'the more divine among the realities'; 152, 21 'the things immersed in matter', with partitive genitives. 250, 14 gives 'the truth of eternal realities', 136, 2 'the realities of the other world'; 124, 2-3 classifies Alcibiades as 'among the things that are subject to movement' (cp. 116, 19; 117, 3; 122, 15-17; 125, 16; 198, 4) i.e. as on the level of the emotional soul (cp. 59, 10; 119, 7; 135, 16; 136, 1-2); 224, 3 has 'things implicated in matter'; 250, 6 'things partial and divided'; and 251, 14 again 'things implicated in matter'.

There are some instances where τὰ πράγματα has the general sense of things as objects of knowledge. At 21, 9 Proclus takes up a second point, namely that the mode of knowledge of the philosopher is proportioned to the object of knowledge, whether this be purely intelligible, food for discursive thought, or a mere matter of conjecture. He concludes by observing (22, 10) that 'in every case the accounts are representative of the "things" they serve to explain.' This general sense is continued at 23, 3-5, where a contrast is made between modes of expression in the case of 'objects of opinion and conjecture' and in the case of 'objects of intellect and knowledge'. No one who conjectures about what is necessary or speaks dogmatically of what is conjectural could ever be an intelligent exponent of 'reality' (rather than: 'their subject matter'), understanding 'reality' here in a broad sense, since it must include both the necessary and the conjectural (23, 11).

At 261, 6-266, 12 Proclus comments upon the reason why the many can be said to be good teachers of how to speak Greek: they agree upon the subject (πράγματος 261, 14) of their teaching. This agreement refers only to the first level of speaking Greek (258, 20-259, 3; 266, 5-8), and

is specified as saying the name that is given to this or that particular thing (τῷδε τῷ πράγματι 260, 7–8). The would-be teacher must have discerned the nature of the ‘subject’ to be taught (261, 15–16). Whatever ‘subject’ they are teaching, those who know agree, and do not say, some one thing, some another, about ‘the same subject’ (262, 1–4). The reason is that the ‘subjects’ (τὰ πράγματα) are established in their own nature, and do not appear differently to different persons (262, 4–5). 262, 8–9 refers to the doctrine of Protagoras that all things i.e. as subjects of knowledge are mere appearance. The text is corrupt, but has, I think, been correctly restored by Cousin who reads ἦ in place of εἰ in line 8, and by Westerink who suggests μὴ οὔσης in place of ἡ φύσις in line 9. Clearly in the latter reading the copyist has become confused by the doctrine attributed to both Anaxagoras and Protagoras (cf. note 482) that things have no determinate nature, and by the denial of this doctrine both at 262, 4 and at 274, 18–19, where Proclus refers back to this section as follows: “Those who know any subject must agree with each other thereon; and the reason for this postulate is first the determinate nature of the subjects (ἡ τε τῶν πραγμάτων φύσις ὁρισμένη) and the sameness of the criteria of knowledge for all persons, as we have observed before.” (not: ‘the subject-matter’). If things were mere appearance, we could all know yet differ (262, 8–11). So agreement is the sign of knowledge, and as regards speaking Greek the many are good teachers, because they know the ‘subject’ about which they undertake to teach (263, 5–6) i.e. they agree on what to call ‘man’, ‘wood’, ‘stone’ etc. So we may form a syllogism (263, 13–18) to the effect that the many agree with one another about the names given by custom to ‘things’ (τοῖς πράγμασι); but those who agree with one another about the customary names given to ‘things’ possess the knowledge of speaking Greek. Therefore. Only later does Socrates apply this form of argument to what is just (cp. 261, 11–12; 263, 1–3).

τὰ πράγματα can and does have the sense of ‘subject matter’. 11, 8–12, 14 concerns the division of the dialogue. Those who divide it ‘according to the manner of the diction’ are rejected as ‘lingering over matters at a third remove from the truth’, and so falling away from the articulation of the ‘substance’ or ‘subject matter.’ A second group concentrate on the syllogistic content of the dialogue, and these are praised as coming nearer to the ‘subject matter’, but rejected in their turn as not yet making a substantial division of the dialogue. Finally Iamblichus is praised (13, 16–14, 23) as having made the division of the dialogue ‘starting from the subject matter itself’ (13, 18), which is

declared to be the consideration of our substance and the knowledge of ourselves (14, 20–21). At 19, 4 *πραγμάτων* is qualified by *υποκειμένων* fairly obviously in the sense of ‘subject matter’; at 181, 3 we are invited to consider the ‘subject matter’ as opposed to the ‘diction’, and 185, 17 closes the consideration with: ‘So much for the subject matter’. The same contrast between ‘subject matter’ and ‘diction’ occurs at 237, 14–15. 310, 6–9 notes that in the persuasion of others the primary task assigned to those who know is to distinguish the opportune moments, the characters, the ‘subject matter’, and to assign the appropriate forms of discourse to all. There is something of the same contrast here between ‘subject matter’ and ‘diction’.

Under the common meaning ‘affairs’ or ‘matters’ there are several references. At 42, 13 Alcibiades is described as ‘wondering at the life of the philosopher, and seeking the causes of ‘his sort of behaviour’ (*τῶν κατ’ αὐτὸν πραγμάτων*). The phrase refers back to 42, 7–8 where Proclus quotes Alc. 104d4, with a slight change of person (*θαυμάζεις ὃ τι ποτέ ἐστι τὸ ἐμὸν πρᾶγμα*). The same expression occurs at 47, 7, and an explanation of what is meant by it is given e.g. at 46, 14–15, where Alcibiades wonders at Socrates’ seriousness, attention and the endurance of his love, and at 127, 1–2 where Iamblichus comments: “you reduce me to perplexity, seeking the cause and purpose of this silent, earnest accompaniment”. It is only later that Proclus comments on the lemma in question (104c–d) and relates at greater length what it is that Alcibiades admires in Socrates (cf. 125, 1–126, 6). Again there is a similar expression: *τῷ ὄντι θαυμάζει τὸ κατ’ αὐτόν*, to which no doubt we may mentally supply *πρᾶγμα* (126, 4) and translate: “really wondered at his behaviour”.

109, 13 gives a simple reference to the dependence of ‘the affairs’ of Alcibiades upon the power of Pericles, while 154, 10–11 refers back to the lemma at 105d4–5 and the power of Socrates over ‘the affairs’ of Alcibiades. 157, 10–14 pinpoints these ‘affairs’ as ‘outward proceeding activities’, ‘leadership of the state’, and ‘the attainment of power’. 267, 6–7 describes Socrates showing how ‘in other matters’ the many are not good teachers i.e. horse-racing and medicine (267, 10–14). Finally, 272, 16–20 refers to the beginning of the lemma at 269, 1–2 (Alc. 111e11–112a1) and the question as to whether the many agree ‘over just men and matters’. Proclus comments that the many disagree about just men in their judgments, but about just matters both in their judgments and actions. The just matter (*τὸ δίκαιον*) is that which partakes of justice (*τὸ μετέχον πρᾶγμα* 272, 18). One may add the

conjecture [πραγμάτων] at 266, 1: full agreement entails the same knowledge on the same subjects, and the pursuit of the same actions in the same matters.

To complete this account, a brief survey of the occurrences of the singular (πρᾶγμα) may be helpful. Two references concern Proclus' commentary upon the word εὐελπὺς (92, 18 & 19). The use of this term endears Socrates to Alcibiades, 'and in general it involves (for this use of ἔχει cp. 219, 22) the very reality of hope (αὐτὸ τὸ τῆς ἐλπίδος πρᾶγμα cp. 51, 15-16 and note 106) that requires conjecture (i.e. of the future cp. 88, 2-7) from the nature of the 'subject' (i.e. return to self, knowledge of self) on behalf of which the dialogue takes place'. Some instances (102, 20; 143, 20; 155, 14; 272, 18) have the general sense of 'thing' or 'matter' and hardly need further comment. Two references (42, 8; 47, 7) to Socrates' "behaviour" have already been noted, as have several instances of πρᾶγμα as general object of knowledge (261, 14 & 16; 262, 2 & 3 & 6) or concrete thing (260, 7). At 274, 24-276, 3 Proclus devotes a final paragraph to the explanation of why the many presume to know and teach what is just. We must have the bare notion of a 'thing' before we can know whether it exists. The signification is an unfolding of the 'thing' with some definite intuition in view; but 'what it is' is an accurate comprehension of the nature of the 'thing in question'. The many teach what this or that word signifies e.g. 'man', 'horse' but what these things are they neither know nor teach. They fail to distinguish signification from essence, the bare notion of the 'thing' from the comprehensive knowledge of it. In this group of references (275: 6, 9, 10; 276, 2) πρᾶγμα again has its general sense of 'thing' as object of knowledge.

Tentatively one ends up with a scheme something like this: τὰ πράγματα = the realities.

A. Unqualified

Theological: 24, 11; 30, 6; 167, 10; 231, 7; 319, 12.

Soul or Forms: 135, 13; 136, 3; 181, 1; 188, 10; 189, 6 & 13; 212, 11; 243, 11; 249, 4; 259, 5 & 15; 260, 2; 299, 1; 302, 11; 304, 5; 305, 11.

Universal: 2, 5; 31, 8; 143, 2; 217, 10.

Unspecified: 92, 1.

B. In Phrases

a) ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων φύσις = the nature of the realities.

Theological: 22, 11; 119, 19; 171, 18; 180, 20.

Forms: 244, 8; 259, 10; 306, 7; 323, 8.

General: 274, 19.

b) ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀλήθεια = the truth of the realities.

Soul or Forms: 75, 16; 241, 2; 255, 5; 315, 8.

C. Qualified

a) partitive genitive: 49, 4; 152, 21; 182, 2.

b) adjective or adverb: 124, 2; 136, 2; 224, 3; 250, 14; 251, 14.

II. Subject or Object of knowledge: 21, 9; 23, 3-5; 23, 11; 262, 4 & 8.

III. Subject Matter: 12, 13; 13, 12 & 18; 19, 4; 181, 3; 185, 17; 237, 14; 310, 8.

IV. Affairs or Matters: 42, 13; 109, 13; 154, 10; 157, 11; *266, 1; 267, 7; 272, 20.

V. Concrete things: 263, 14 & 15 cp. 260, 7.

In agreement with R. E. Allen (A Note on Alcibiades I 129b1: AJP LXXXIII 1962 187-90), probably the true meaning of αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό is 'the Self in itself'. So in fragment 11 and note 12, I would prefer to translate SELF in place of IT.

ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA 1971

I wish to thank those reviewers who since 1965 have taken the time and trouble to read the translation carefully and make constructive suggestions. Lack of space prevents individual acknowledgement, but I have included major corrections and suggestions in the following list (references throughout are to the paragraph and line of the translation).

p. 9, 5 'perfection': better 'initiation'.

p. 17, 11 'worsted by all': better 'thoroughly worsted'.

p. 21, 13 read 'knowledge on a level with the objects of knowledge under consideration'.

p. 23, 14 is better taken with a middle verb, so read 'that Socrates eyes with caution the ambitious nature of the young man'.

p. 26, 11 'business': better 'treatment'.

p. 37, 2-3 read 'and where to place Alcibiades in himself'. (cp. Alc. 129e-130e)

p. 38, 13 read 'if it is lawful to say so'.

p. 66, 12 'blew' was an effort to translate the reading of MR; the reading of N is a variant form of ἀέι 'always'.

- p. 94, 7–8 read 'to his outward appearance tokens of these qualities'.
- p. 95, 1 read 'even through the body; but he judged him more fully and more completely'.
- p. 97, 23 read 'and belittled their own possessions'.
- p. 101, 23 read 'If ever a public speaker or historian used figures of speech'.
- p. 107, 27 'in its relations with all other beings'; better 'in addition to all the others'.
- p. 126, 5 read 'Alcibiades added'.
- p. 163, 2 read 'what depends on our choices'.
- p. 201, 17 better read 'the same proof in the case of both verbal and manual accomplishments'.
- p. 209, 4–5 read 'but now Socrates begins to lay it bare'.
- p. 214, 20–21 read 'that he may not suffer harm'.
- p. 291, 15–17 alternatively read 'Through these words then Socrates has unobtrusively revealed him as deserted by the higher causes and gone astray'.
- Fr. 1, 1 read 'Socrates unobtrusively'.

There are two omissions in the text:

- p. 196, 2 after 'noble birth'. insert 'The well-born had to take part in these activities throughout the time of youth'.
- p. 232, 16 after 'towards it'. insert 'Thus also, to be able to give us a share in its benefits, the divine is an object of desire for us'.

Additions to the notes:

- note 15, cf. Procl. in Tim. II p. 289–92 and Comment. in Tim, ed. A. J. Festugière, vol. 3, p. 332–6 on 36e5.
- note 28, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. LVI.
- note 29, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 140, note 1 to p. 32, 14–18.
- p. 19, 18, cp. Théol. Plat. I p. 15, 21–16, 1.
- note 64, cp. also Plat. Theol. p. 352 para. 5 Portus.
- note 82: for further instances, which confirm Lewy's reference of these mysteries to Eleusis cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 155–6, note 1 to p. 96.
- note 89, cf. also Macrobian in Somn. Scip. I 12, 12 p. 136 Stahl (Columbia 1952).
- note 106, cf. also Théol. Plat. I p. 110, 6–16 and note 1 p. 159.
- notes 115–118: notes 115 and 116 give brief references to the functions of the ἡγεμονικοί and ἀπόλυτοι θεοί in other works of Proclus, including the Platonic Theology and the note by E. R. Dodds on El. Theol. props 162–5 already gives the reference for the ἀπόλυτοι

- θεοί to Plat. Theol. VI. Proclus refers briefly to their functions in the Alcibiades commentary at p. 68, 13-14 and p. 148, 25-6. A fuller appreciation of Plat. Theol. VI will be possible only upon the completion of the text, translation and notes of the Budé edition, but meanwhile there are some typical passages from it that refer in detail to the ἡγεμονικοὶ καὶ ἀπόλυτοι θεοί: p. 344, 11-27 Portus; 349, 31-43; 354, 2-12; 356, para. 5; 367, para. 5; 389, para. 1-2; 390, para. 5; 391, para. 4; 392, para. 4; 393, para. 5; 395, para. 1-2; 398, para. 4; 399, para. 4; 400, para. 1; 401, para. 1; 404, para. 1-2; 413, para. 2-3. cf. also Théol. Plat. I LXVII, p. 18, 3-5 and note 2, p. 25, 12-14, and Comment. in Tim. ed. A. J. Festugière vol. I p. 125 n. 3 on 21a9-b2.
- note 155, cf. Théol. Plat. I LXVII.
- note 202, cp. Théol. Plat. I p. 80, 20-23 and note 1.
- p. 104, 22: 'common notions' – for the use of this expression by Proclus and the history of its development cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 110, note 4.
- note 256, cp. Théol. Plat. I p. 84, 20-22 and note 4.
- p. 125, 2-9, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 148 note 1 to p. 71.
- note 302, cp. Théol. Plat. I p. 123, 1-6 and note 1.
- note 308, cp. Théol. Plat. I p. 101, 14-19 and notes 2-3.
- note 314, cp. Théol. Plat. I p. 66, 12-13 and note 1.
- note 323: the views of Proclus on 'phantasia' come very close to the usage of Plotinus cf. Enn. I 4, 10 I 20; IV, 3, 23 I 21-33; IV, 3, 30; IV, 4, 13 I 11-17 and notes Bréhier.
- note 365, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 144 note 2 to p. 57.
- note 376, cf. in Somn. Scip. I 12, 13-14 Stahl: M. A. Elferink, La descente de l'âme d'après Macrobe.
- note 377, cf. in Somn. Scip. I 11, 7 Stahl.
- note 406, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 139, note 2 to p. 27.
- note 411, cp. also Plat. Théol. p. 366, para. 2-3 Portus.
- p. 247, 7, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 93 note 1.
- p. 247, 7-19, cp. Procl. in Parm. VII, p. 59, 31ff. Klíbanksky.
- note 455, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 135 note 3 to p. 15.
- note 456, cf. Théol. Plat. I p. 15, 4 and note 1: Procl. in Parm VII p. 58, 20, p. 93 (note) Klíbanksky.
- note 494, cp. Augustine Confess. X, 10, 17, 1-2.
- p. 283, 3-8: the Dion of this passage seems to be merely an example and not the friend and pupil of Plato.
- note 526, cf. also De Anim. Libr. Mant. p. 115, 6 Bruns.

p. 328, 12: καλός (beautiful) is here etymologically related to the verbs καλεῖν (to summon) and κηλεῖν (to beguile).

Add to Bibliography:

Plato Latinus III: Procl. in Parm VII ed. R. Klibansky and C. Labowsky, London, Warburg Institute 1953.

Commentaire sur le Timée: trad. et notes par A. J. Festugière 5 vols. 1966-8.

Théologie Platonicienne I ed. H. D. Saffrey et L. G. Westerink, Paris, Budé 1968.

Add to Index:

sub 'Aristotle An. Post.' add '89b24-5: 494.

for 'Aristotle An. Pr. 25b31' read note '558'.

Addenda et corrigenda p. 246, add: 'The theological use of τὰ πράγματα to mean "the realities" is already apparent in Plato e.g. at Phaedo 66e1: αὐτῇ τῇ ψυχῇ θεατέον αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα, and yet there is no mention of this meaning in LSJ.

Some misunderstandings may be avoided if it is remembered that the aim of the commentary is conciseness, clarity and a limitation to explanations of points in the Alcibiades for beginners in Proclus who are English readers. It does not fall within its scope to attempt to explain the whole of Proclus or all his other works in relation to the Alcibiades. It tries to preserve an introductory character to his thought, in line with the purpose of the Alcibiades. It is now possible to evaluate more fairly the authenticity of the Platonic dialogue Alcibiades, and the history of its use as an introduction to Plato's thought, but a full treatment of this subject must wait until a second edition is published.