Ancient Commentators on Aristotle

GENERAL EDITORS: RICHARD SORABJI AND MICHAEL GRIFFIN

Olympiodorus: On Plato First Alcibiades 10–28

Translated by
Michael Griffin

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On Plato

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Preface

This volume completes the translation of Olympiodorus *On Plato* First Alcibiades, which began with the Life of Plato and Lectures 1–9 (Griffin 2014d). Where possible, I have attempted to maintain a fair degree of consistency across the two translations, and the Indices printed here refer to both volumes together. The Introduction printed with this volume is intended to complement, rather than duplicate, the Introduction to Lectures 1–9, but it can also stand alone as an introduction to Olympiodorus and the subject of these lectures.

I would like to express my particular gratitude to the funders, editors, and readers named in the Acknowledgements above, and to Richard Sorabji for consistent encouragement and constructive criticism throughout this project. I am also glad to register a special debt of gratitude to Robert B. Todd, under whose kind and patient supervision I ventured to translate my first pages of Olympiodorus during my last undergraduate year at the University of British Columbia. I am also grateful to Dirk Baltzly for his helpful review of the hardback edition of this volume in Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews (2017.02.07), thanks to which I have been able to make several minor corrections to the text on p. 184.

The volume's remaining defects, of course, remain entirely my own responsibility.

M.J.G.

Conventions

[. . .] Square brackets enclose words or phrases that have been added to the translation for purposes of clarity.

<. . .> Angle brackets enclose conjectures to the Greek and Latin text, i.e. additions to the transmitted text deriving from parallel sources and editorial conjecture, and transposition of words and phrases. Accompanying notes provide further details.

(. . .) Round brackets, besides being used for ordinary parentheses, contain transliterated Greek words.

Abbreviations

Alc. = Plato(?), *First Alcibiades*

Anon. Prol. = L.G. Westerink, *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy.* Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1962; reprinted Westbury: Prometheus Trust, 2010

DL = Diogenes Laertius

El. Theol. = E.R. Dodds, *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Enn. = Plotinus, *Enneads*

Herm. = Hermias

in Alc. = *Commentary on the Alcibiades*

in Gorg. = *Commentary on the Gorgias*

LS = A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers.* 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

LSJ = H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Olymp. = Olympiodorus

Plot. = Plotinus

Proleg. Log. = Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena to Aristotelian Logic*

Sorabji 2004 = R.R.K. Sorabji, *The Philosophy of the Commentators 200–600 AD. A Sourcebook*. Vol. 1: *Psychology (With Ethics and Religion*). Vol. 2: *Physics*. Vol. 3: *Logic and Metaphysics*. London: Duckworth, 2004.

SVF = H.F.A. von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*. 4 vols. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1964.

For all other ancient works standard abbreviations are used.

The chapter and line number references for Olympiodorus *On the Gorgias* follow the edition of Westerink (1970). Those for Olympiodorus *On the Phaedo* follow the edition of Westerink (1976).

Introduction[1]

1. Olympiodorus' life and society

Olympiodorus (*c.* AD 500–after 565)[2] was likely born into a traditionally 'Hellenic' family[3] in Alexandria on the cusp of the sixth century AD. He lived through a period of substantial upheaval in the social and intellectual life of the eastern Roman empire, witnessing the exile of his Athenian peers Simplicius (*c.* AD 490–560) and Damascius (*c.* AD 460–after 532), the confiscation of their property (cf. Olymp. *in Alc.* 141,1–3), and the implementation of 'a machinery … to wipe out paganism on a broad scale' across the empire (cf. *Codex Justinianus* 1.11.9–10).[4] In a colourful (and perhaps autobiographical) metaphor, Olympiodorus took shelter in the 'fortress' of his profession (*in Gorg.* 45.2,32–36; cf. *Rep. 6,* 496C–E), where he would have been surrounded by an active, tight-knit, and fairly tolerant intellectual community, and thrived well into the second half of the sixth century.[5]

Olympiodorus took over Alexandria's public chair in philosophy from Ammonius (*c.* 435/45–517/26), probably indirectly.[6] Ammonius' commanding presence on the intellectual scene is illustrated by several of his contemporaries' determination to chip away at the edifice of his reputation.[7] His influence looms large in Olympiodorus' surviving course on the *Gorgias*, which may have been delivered in Olympiodorus' youth: these lectures are full of anecdotes about his teacher,[8] reflecting the threads of oral tradition that surrounded the Alexandrian school.[9] Perhaps later in life, Olympiodorus had an opportunity to study the works of Proclus (AD 412–485)[10] and Damascius[11] of Athens more closely: at any rate, both of them play a central role in his (probably later) commentary on the *Alcibiades.* Olympiodorus praises Proclus as a wise philosopher and a meticulous textual interpreter (e.g., *in Alc.* 205,1), describes himself as Proclus' 'advocate' (*hêmas tôi Proklôi sunêgorountas*, 5,17), and

consistently emulates him: virtually every philosophically substantial point in Olympiodorus' commentary on the *Alcibiades* is indebted to Proclus' magisterial commentary on the same dialogue (where we can compare them: Proclus' commentary is only partially extant).[12] Most of the other substantial arguments are indebted to Damascius, and Olympiodorus' own voice shines through most clearly in his attempts to moderate their apparent disagreements (e.g., *in Alc.* 5,17–6,1).

Olympiodorus was, like many good teachers, a capable moderator. His lectures reveal a staunchly 'Hellenic' professor striving to be sensitive to the faiths of a predominantly Christian[13] student body (*in Gorg.* 4.3, 47.1, 47.5), speaking with a certain aloofness about the 'common practice' of the majority religion (e.g. *in Alc.* 21,11) while taking pains to avoid criticising it directly.[14] This approach to the religious divisions of his city, coupled with Olympiodorus' enthusiasm for reconciling his predecessors and contemporaries, has sometimes invited the reasonable accusation that Olympiodorus displays less of a cogent philosophy and more of a pliable 'teaching routine'.[15] That criticism arguably overlooks Olympiodorus' own 'metaphilosophical' principles about what philosophy is, and how it ought to be practised.

On Olympiodorus' view, philosophy is a sort of governing craft,[16] distinguished from oratory, medicine, and other crafts by its subject (the *psukhê*, or 'soul'), and especially by its unique goal:[17] to 'make people good' (*in Alc.* 140,18–22; cf. *in Gorg.* 54.2).[18] But the Olympiodorean philosopher is also distinguished by his approach to disagreement. Like his contemporary Simplicius,[19] Olympiodorus maintains that it is diagnostic of philosophical expertise to 'track down', below the surface of an apparent or *verbal* (*kata lexin*) disagreement, the seed of a consensus on the *spirit* (*nous*) of the issue at hand. He applies this technique selectively to the 'harmony' of Plato and Aristotle,[20] and it also evidently grounds his conciliatory approach to Christianity: Hellenes use different names and symbols to speak of the same things that Christians do,[21] as for that matter do Egyptians[22] and Chaldaeans, and it's the philosopher's job to sort out with rigour what they really (and jointly) *mean* by those symbols. This task demands more than exegetical flexibility; the underlying framework or 'translation layer' has to be clear and consistent,[23] and is meant to capture the deeper framework of 'common concepts' (*koinai ennoiai*) that the philosopher excavates from different opinions and points

of view, seeking the bedrock of a fundamental conceptual consensus.[24] Olympiodorus might have considered his appearance of 'pliability' to be symptomatic of an underlying consistency, rather than muddle-headedness.

Olympiodorus was not only a philosopher: he was also sensitive to his role as a representative of Hellenic *paideia*, the webwork of later ancient higher education.[25] As a professional Hellenist, his practice resembles that of a legal scholar who has to make coherent sense of a large body of case law, none of which he is authorised to expunge. As Harold Tarrant has put it, Olympiodorus was a 'classicist':[26] he adduces and interprets evidence from a dizzying array of poets, doctors, tragedians, orators, historians, second sophistic critics, and anecdote-hawkers to appeal to an audience that has already enjoyed Greek literature and rhetoric as an aperitif, and is 'thirsty'[27] for the inspired heights of philosophy. And because he offers community courses which are virtually 'without prerequisites' (for the sixth-century freshman from Constantinople), Olympiodorus is often obligated to translate the nested intricacies of Proclus and Damascius for a more or less uninitiated audience. The resulting introduction to Neoplatonic thought can be unusually accessible to the modern reader, compared to more technical treatises of the period.

Olympiodorus produced a wide range of lectures, a substantial number of which have survived (see Appendix for a list of works). He may have been the last professor of philosophy in Alexandria without a commitment to Christianity, at least in name. Several of his pupils, active in the later sixth and early seventh centuries, had Christian names (if the attributions to 'Elias' and 'David' are reliable);[28] but their philosophy remained mainly independent, and they continued to promote Olympiodorus' positions on questions such as the eternity of the world.[29] Stephanus[30] recognises the authority of Christian doctrine, but does not refute traditional pagan positions such as the eternity of the world, the rationality of the heavens, and the existence of the human soul before birth.[31] The pupils of Olympiodorus, and of John Philoponus,[32] probably continued the school's pedagogical tradition at least into the seventh century. Copies of the school's lectures and commentaries resurface at Constantinople in the 'philosophical collection' of the tenth century, including the single manuscript that preserved Olympiodorus' Platonic lectures (Marc. gr. 196). Many would reach Italy in the fifteenth century with Basilius Bessarion to contribute to the Western renaissance of Neoplatonism.

2. Philosophical excellence and the philosophical curriculum

On Olympiodorus' view, the goal of human life is 'excellence' or 'virtue' (*aretê*)[33] culminating in 'likeness to god' (*homoiôsis tôi theôi*: cf. Plato, *Theaetetus* 176B).[34] Excellence is sufficient for well-being (*eudaimonia*) and constitutes 'the good life' (see *in Alc.* 105,2–3). This notion did not originate with Olympiodorus, or with Neoplatonism; it was a familiar perspective in classical and Hellenistic literature and rhetoric, as well as a recurring Leitmotif of philosophy after Socrates.[35] But in the wake of contributions by Plotinus (AD 204/5–270), Porphyry (*c.* AD 234–*c.* 305), and Iamblichus (*c.* AD 240–325), later Neoplatonists traced the acquisition of excellence as a hierarchical path, the so-called 'ladder of virtues' (*scala virtutum*).[36] Olympiodorus and his contemporaries could build on a long tradition of attempts to chart this hierarchy, relying on an established Neoplatonic exegesis of both Plato and Aristotle.[37] The resulting picture of the path, which is briskly outlined by Olympiodorus (*in Phaed.* 8.2,1–20) and by Damascius (*in Phaed.* 1.138), is a commonplace of fifth- and sixth-century pagan Neoplatonism, and a natural extension of the 'hierarchy' of *aretê* promoted by Hellenic *paideia*.[38]

Pre-philosophical excellence: (1) natural and (2) habituated

Intuitively, each of us *appears* to be a singular moral agent, possessing synchronic and diachronic unity, and acting for reasons upon which we have consciously reflected:[39] in fact, there seems to be nothing more obvious than this.[40] In the case of most of us, however, this is an illusion.[41] According to the later Neoplatonists who shaped Olympiodorus' thought about the self, such as Proclus, we find in ourselves a moral and psychological plurality, governed by unreflective habits and appetites, and comparable to a city ruled by a mob, or a many-headed beast. For instance, Proclus describes our initial condition as follows (adopting the city-soul analogy of Plato, *Republic* 2, 368D–369A):

> [T]he multitude … produces within us from our childhood defective imaginings and various affections. . . [T]here is in each of us 'a certain many-headed wild beast' [i.e. appetites (*epithumiai*) that are often contradictory], as Socrates himself has observed [*Rep*. 9, 588C], which is analogous to the multitude; and this is just like the people (*dêmos*) in a city, the various,

> non-rational and enmattered form of the soul, which is the most pedestrian part of us. The present argument [of Socrates in *Alc*. 110D–E] exhorts us to withdraw from our boundless appetite (*epithumia*), to remove from our lives the multitude and the people (*dêmos*) within us as not being a trustworthy judge of the nature of things nor in short capable of any true knowledge. For nothing non-rational is by nature such as to partake of knowledge, let alone the most deficient of non-rational things, which by possessing multiplicity is at strife within itself and fights against itself . . .
>
> (Proclus, *in Alc*. 243,13–244,11, translation lightly adapted from O'Neill 1971)

Under ordinary circumstances, then, 'we' are really complex networks of mostly unconscious, non-rational behaviours and rules of thumb learned by habit (*êthos*)[42] and imitation (*mimêsis*)[43] from our community, constrained by our natural instincts and capacities (*phusis*),[44] which are themselves at least partly the outcomes of a genetic lottery.[45] If an agent's instincts and habits happen to yield beneficial results for the agent or their communities, however, the agent might reasonably be said, in some *loose* sense, to possess *excellence* or *virtue* (*aretê*). This kind of quasi-excellence is called by the Neoplatonists **(1) natural excellence** (***phusikê aretê***)[46] when it arises from inborn instincts and abilities, or **(2) habituated excellence** (***êthikê aretê***)[47] when it arises from learned habits and behaviours that conform to the socially endorsed 'cardinal virtues' of wisdom (*sophia*), fairness or justice (*dikaiosunê*), courage (*andreia*), and self-control (*sophrosunê*).[48]

But these 'natural' and 'habituated' traits seem dissatisfying as exhibits of excellence or virtue (*aretê*). First and foremost, they appear to be morally arbitrary, because they are automatic: their possessors have no genuine agency in their cultivation or expression, and this is no way to live a truly good or meaningful life. As the Socrates of Plato's *Apology* would put it, such an 'unexamined life' is 'not worth living'.[49] Moreover, a life of this kind is likely to do harm, because in this condition, we are governed by 'double ignorance' (*diplê amathiâ*), the usual state of an interlocutor before an encounter with Socrates:[50] we think we know what we do not know, and act accordingly out of overconfidence, causing substantial risks to ourselves and the people around us (a central theme of *Alc.* 133C–135E, on Olympiodorus' view: see Lecture 28, below).

For Olympiodorus, this sort of unexamined life is fundamentally a *non-rational* life, lived by non-rational agents.[51] (One way of understanding 'non-rational', or *alogos*, in this context is that such agents are unable to give a satisfactory account, or *logos,* of their reasons for acting when pressed by a good dialectician. In fact, the Socrates of Plato's *Apology* has yet to meet a single person who *can* give such an account;[52] accordingly, the subsequent Socratic tradition concluded succinctly that 'everyone is mad').[53] Whereas today we might analyse our 'non-rational' behaviour by identifying clusters of unconscious cognitive biases, the Platonists interpret our 'habitual' behaviour against the backdrop of Plato's description of the tripartite soul in *Republic* 4.[54] According to Plato, human psychology involves three fundamental clusters of motivation:[55] (a) the dictates of **reason** or rationality (*logos*), (b) the drive for social **status** and the supporting 'spirited emotions' of pride and anger (*thumos*),[56] and (c) the push and pull of our sometimes contradictory **appetites** (*epithumia*) and aversions. The habitual life is lived chiefly according to the latter two, non-rational clusters of motivation, namely spirited-emotion and appetite. Among the psychological 'constitutions' discussed by Plato in *Republic* 8–9, we usually live under the inner crowd rule of appetitive direct democracy or a spirited timocracy. Under such inward constitutions, we might *appear* to have rational reasons for acting, but these reasons will not stand up to Socratic cross-examination (*elenkhos*); they are, in effect, confabulation.

The two 'pre-philosophical' grades of excellence just discussed – natural and habituative – share a common feature: they tend toward plurality and incoherence. Through external and internal influences, such as the pressure to conform or obey authority,[57] we seem to continually run the risk of *further* losing coherence (cf. Proclus *in Alc.* 56–58) – a collapse of identity that Olympiodorus colourfully describes as being 'turned into a wild beast' (*in Alc.* 216,4), playing at once on the Platonic image of an inner 'beast' comprised of our diverse appetites, and the Homeric image of Circe's transformation of Odysseus' men into pigs (*Od.* 10). On the other hand, we also have the potential to change and pursue unity, especially with the help of Socrates (Olymp. *in Alc.* 216,4) or a philosophical educator like him,[58] who is able to 'refute' what is accidental to us, 'exhort' us to self-discovery and self-care, and like a 'midwife', draw our authentic identity and unity out of us.[59] To find our unity is to find our good (Proclus, *El. Theol.* 9, 13, *in Alc.* 1,3–3,2), and to escape from the

rending force of multiplicity is to escape our danger (*in Alc.* 6,12–17,8; 43,7–44,11). This is the goal of the following, 'philosophical' grades of excellence, which are the products of conscious, reflective reasoning.

Philosophical excellence: (3) civic, (4) purificatory, (5) contemplative

Olympiodorus and his contemporaries offer the following alternative: a person who has already formed good habits[60] might choose to study philosophy, get to grips with the instrument of reason,[61] use reason to cultivate self-knowledge, and thereby discover how to practise self-cultivation.[62] For there is an authentic unity *deeper* than the habitual, plural, accidental and externally informed identity that we have just acknowledged. This authentic unity is genuinely what 'we' are (cf. Plotinus *Enn.* 1.1.10,7–8), or should be, and if we can discover it, we can then put it into practice in the particular moments of choice and action that constitute our lived experience (Olymp. *in Alc.* 204,3–10). In order to do this, the student must (a) first undergo a process of 'cross-examination' or 'refutation' (*elenkhos*), which leads to a recognition of the patterns of stimulus and response that are currently guides to one's behaviour (which will typically fall under the categories of spirited emotion or appetite), and then (b) actively restructure these inward clusters of motivation in such a way that all three work together in harmony, with pride and appetite included at the table under the overarching jurisdiction of reason (cf. *Republic* 4, 443C–E):

> Justice isn't concerned with 'doing one's own work' externally, but with what is inside, what is truly oneself and one's own. One who is just . . . puts himself in order, is his own friend, and harmonises the three parts of himself [*logos, thumos, epithumia*] like three limiting notes in a musical scale—high, low, and middle. He binds together those parts and any others there may be in between, and from having been many things he becomes entirely one, moderate and harmonious. Only then does he act. And when he does anything, whether acquiring wealth, taking care of his body, engaging in politics, or in private business—in all of these, he believes that the action is just and beautiful that preserves this inner harmony and helps achieve it, and calls it so, and regards as wisdom the knowledge that oversees such actions.
>
> (Plato, *Republic* 4, 443C–E, tr. Grube/Reeve in Cooper 1997)

Later Neoplatonists describe this stage as **(3) 'civic' or 'constitutional' excellence (*politikê aretê*)**, because it entails, or just *is*, the successful analysis and management of the inner 'city' or 'state' (*polis*) of the soul,[63] with its three 'classes' of reason (*logos*), spirited-emotion (*thumos*), and appetite (*epithumia*). From Plato's *Republic* (in Greek entitled *Politeia*, which literally means *Constitution*), the Neoplatonists adopted the view that the four traditional cardinal virtues or excellences may also describe a *constitution* (*politeia*) of the person's soul, in which (a) reason (*logos*) is **wise**, (b) all three aspects of the soul are 'doing their own work', i.e., behaving with **justice**, which entails that non-rational motivation is constrained, but not eradicated, by reason (as described above, 443C–E), (c) spirited-emotion (*thumos*) is **courageous**, and (d) appetite (*epithumia*) is managed by **self-control**. The person who manifests these virtues is the 'civically excellent' person; in virtue of this inward organisation, they are also an outwardly 'good person' (*êthikos*), and identical with the person who will manage a household (*oikonomikos*) or state (*politikos*) virtuously and without undue self-interest.[64]

Next comes a thoroughgoing 'liberation'[65] of the reasoning person or soul (*logikê psukhê*) from motivations and experiences that are not susceptible to rational analysis (*alogos*): Olympiodorus describes this liberation as **(4) 'purificatory' excellence (*kathartikê aretê*)**. This accomplishment, he maintains, issues in a new kind of observational or contemplative activity: the liberated reason is free to contemplate (*theôrein*) its own internal structure, in an inwardly directed 'reversion' (*epistrophê*) that illuminates the architecture of the 'intelligible world' within. This contemplation of the mind's structure *by* the mind reveals certain eternal, non-contingent facts and structuring principles, the Platonic Forms or Ideas, which structure all beings' soul and form. This contemplation, when realised, constitutes **(5) 'contemplative' excellence (*theôrêtikê aretê*)**; assimilating Aristotle's views on the value and happiness of the contemplative life in *Nic. Eth.* 10.6–8 with Plato's comments on the contemplation of aesthetic Forms like Beauty (*Symposium* 210E) and Goodness (*Republic* 5–6, *Philebus*), the Neoplatonists interpret this contemplation as the height of philosophical happiness, well-being, or flourishing (*eudaimonia*). What is contemplated here is a much higher grade of unity.

But there is at least one (and possibly two) further stages to come beyond philosophy. Thus Olympiodorus writes (*in Alc.* 172,5–12):

> '[S]elf-knowledge' is said in many ways (*pollakhôs*): it is possible to know oneself with respect to one's external [possessions]; and of course it is possible to know oneself with respect to one's body; and it is possible to know oneself as a civic or social person (*politikôs*), when one knows oneself in the tripartition of one's soul;[66] and it is possible to know oneself as a purificatory person (*kathartikôs*), when one knows oneself in the act of liberation from the affections (*pathê*); and it is possible to know oneself as a contemplative person (*theôrêtikôs*), when a person contemplates himself as liberated (*heauton . . . theasêtai*); it is possible to know oneself theologically (*theologikôs*), when a person knows himself according to his paradigmatic Form (*idea*); and it is possible to know oneself as an inspired person (*enthousiastikôs*), when a person knows himself as a unity (*kata to hen*) and, thus bonded to his proper god (*oikeios theos*),[67] acts with inspiration (*enthousiâi*).

Excellence beyond philosophy: (6) exemplary and (7) inspired

Olympiodorus maintains that it is possible to achieve a kind of excellence that lies 'beyond' philosophy, in the sense that it lies above and beyond the kind of rational reflection that characterises civic, purificatory, and contemplative excellence. This is so-called 'theurgic' practice, which Olympiodorus ordinarily refers to as **'inspired' excellence (*enthousiastikê aretê*)**, or simply as 'inspiration' (*enthousiasmos*). In Damascius, excellence beyond philosophy is analyzed into two parts: **(6) paradigmatic and (7) hieratic excellence**; and this distinction seems to be employed by Olympiodorus at 172,5–12 above, with 'theological' used as the label for 'paradigmatic' excellence, and 'inspired' as the label for 'hieratic' excellence.[68] In characterising this 'grade', Olympiodorus is frequently indebted to Socrates' depiction of 'divine madness' (*mania*) in Plato's *Phaedrus* (244A–245C), and to his predecessors.

Theurgy could have an outward, ritual dimension and goal,[69] but primarily worked to heal the practitioner's soul and uncloud its inner sight (Iamblichus *On the Mysteries* 1.11–12). For Olympiodorus, a person may experience a kind of 'union' and 'identification' (*henôsis*) with divine individuals (*henades*) or gods (*theoi*) who also represent one's truest or most authentic self, the union that (for later ancient Platonists) Plato indicated when he spoke of 'likeness to god' (*homoiôsis tôi theôi, Theaetetus* 176B), and which Plotinus describes as both oneself and another, for example, in *Enn.* 6.9.9–10:

> [9,56–60] There one can see both him and oneself as it is right to see: the self glorified, full of intelligible light – but rather itself pure light – weightless, floating free, having become – but rather, being – a god; set on fire then, but the fire seems to go out if one is weighed down again. . . . [10,19–21] [H]ow could one announce that as 'another' when he did not see, there when he had the vision, *another*, but one with himself? (Tr. Armstrong 1988)

Olympiodorus suggests that this unity can be experienced as episodes of 'inspiration' (*enthousiasmois*) (e.g., *in Alc.* 184,22). Plato sometimes depicts such 'inspirations' in the dialogues, on Olympiodorus' view: Olympiodorus even suggests that they are a primary attraction of the dialogues.[70] An important result of this mode of 'excellence' or union with divinity and unity, the goal of the philosophical life, is surprisingly down-to-earth – what we might describe as an 'authentic' life (for the practical orientation, see also *in Phaed.* 8.4):

> Well then, they say that those who live according to their own essence (*kat' ousian*) – that is, as they were born to live (*pephukasi*) – have the divine daimon allotted to them, and for this reason we can see that these people are held in high esteem in whatever walk of life they pursue (*epitêdeuein*). Now to live 'according to essence' is to choose the life that befits the chain from which one is suspended: for example, [to live] the warrior's life, if [one is suspended] from the [chain] of Ares; or the life of words and ideas (*logikos*), if from that of Hermes; or the healing and prophetic life, if from that of Apollo; or quite simply, as we said earlier, to live just as one was *born* to live. But if someone sets before himself a life that is not according to his essence, but some other life that differs from this, and focuses in his undertakings on someone else's work – they say that the intellective (*noêros*) [daimon] is allotted to this person, and for this reason, because he is doing someone else's work, he fails to hit the mark in some [instances].
>
> (*in Alc.* 20,4–13)

Thus one criterion for recognising the achievement of this highest kind of excellence is *acting* according to one's unique and natural character. As E.R. Dodds points out (1933: 199), the One, the first principle and highest god, 'is the ground of individuality' for Proclus (1963: 199). As Edward Butler puts a similar point, (2003: 75), 'the cardinal doctrine of Neoplatonism, the pre-eminence of *unity* and its identity with the Good, is identified by Proclus with the primordial nature of *individuality* in relation to all other determinations'. As it happens, such unique characters correspond to individually unique

gods, an idea deriving from Plato's *Phaedrus* (e.g. 252D–253C); this fits well with later Neoplatonic metaphysics, according to which the traditional literary 'gods' of Homer are, strictly speaking, representations of individual unities (*henades*).[71]

How does philosophy strive for this goal? Olympiodorus suggests that the philosopher is an imitator of god (*in Phaed.* 1.2,6). First, he resembles god as a contemplator of the truth (cf. *in Gorg.* 25.1), one who knows beings in themselves (*onta hêi onta: in Alc.* 25,2, 175,17–178,6) and nature as a whole (*phusis, in Cat*. 138,15, *in Alc.* 2,94). This knowledge resembles divine pleasure (*in Gorg.* 26,15). Second, as a statesman or civic agent (*politikos*), he acts providentially for the best organisation of his inner, psychological 'city' (the 'polity' of reason, spirit, and appetite, adopting the model of Plato's *Republic*), and he strives for the analogous improvement of his fellow citizens wherever he can (*in Gorg.* 8.1, etc), healing souls or preventing their injury (*in Gorg.* 49.6, *in Alc.* 6,5–7). Philosophy has two indispensable phases: one phase looks 'upward' or 'inward' (in terms shared by Olympiodorus and Damascius), and the other looks 'outward' or 'downward':

> The contemplative [philosopher's] gaze always flies toward the divine, whereas the [philosopher-]statesman's, if he has worthy citizens, remains and shapes them. If they are not worthy, then in truth he retreats and makes a fortress *(teikhion)* for himself … This is what Plato and Socrates did (*in Gorg.* 26.18, tr. Jackson et al. 1998).

During one lifetime, Olympiodorus suggests, we might develop from the latter, civic kind of philosopher (the philosopher *politikos*) into the former, contemplative kind (the philosopher *theôrêtikos, in Gorg.* 26.13).[72] He often cites Homer's Odysseus as an exemplar for this transformation, when Odysseus springs to face down the suitors in *Odyssey* 22, and 'strips off his rags' (*in Gorg.* 22.1), rags which Olympiodorus identifies with the affections (*pathê*) of the soul (*in Alc.* 51,1–10; cf. 99,16–17).

Summary

While the 'scale of virtues' is more complex than this outline would suggest, both in Olympiodorus and more broadly in later Neoplatonism, this might serve as a schematic introduction to one of the central organising ideas in

Olympiodorus' commentary, and in the Platonic curriculum that he teaches (more on this below). The path might be summarised as follows: ordinarily, we think that we are coherent moral agents acting for reflective reasons, but this is false; in fact, we are acting in an incoherent way from (at best) good natural instincts (*phusis*) and good socialised habits (*êthos*). Philosophy invites an analysis of those instincts and habits, which leads to the recognition that 'we' are a complex soul acting from one rational cluster of motivations called reason (*logos*), and two non-rational clusters of motivations called spirited-emotion (*thumos*), which is concerned with status, and appetite (*eputhumia*), which is concerned with desires and aversions. Presently the latter two, non-rational clusters largely govern us, perhaps as a tyranny of one appetite, or a 'democracy' of many (often inconsistent) appetites, or a 'timocracy' of the drive for social status. By reorganising this complex in such a way that all three motives play a part under the shared jurisdiction of reason, we attain 'moderation' (*metriopatheia*), and civic excellence (*politikê aretê*) – which applies both inwardly, and outwardly at the individual, household, or civic scale. But we can go beyond this to contemplate just our reason, in separation from the non-rational aspects of our being and experience. This study gradually liberates reason (purificatory excellence, *kathartikê aretê*) until we attain 'liberation from affection', or freedom from the non-rational affections and forms of suffering (*apatheia*); and with that liberation, we are free to contemplate the intelligible, eternal, and non-contingent principles that structure our mind, which is contemplative excellence (*theôrêtikê aretê*). Building on that achievement, we may experience moments of 'inspiration' from a god; building those inspirations out into a coherent pattern of actions that accurately represents the unique character of one's *own* god amounts to inspired excellence (*enthousiastikê aretê*).

3. The Platonic curriculum and the *Alcibiades*: from natural gifts to civic responsibility

In this discussion, I would like focus on how Olympiodorus frames his lectures on the *Alcibiades* as an approach to this ladder of excellences or *scala virtutum*. (I will not explore the reception history of the *First Alcibiades* itself, or the

problem of its authenticity, which was not questioned in antiquity; for some tentative comments on the dialogues' reception, however, see Griffin 2014d: 19–46. The reception history of the *Alcibiades* has recently been surveyed in detail by Renaud and Tarrant 2015).

In approaching the Platonic curriculum, Olympiodorus focused on the rational or 'philosophical' grades of human excellence, which fall in the middle of the broader hierarchy described above: they are (3) civic excellence, (4) purificatory excellence, and (5) contemplative excellence. Each could be inculcated by the close study, with a teacher, of one or more dialogues in the Platonic curriculum that had previously been advanced by Iamblichus. We might tabulate these as follows (see Westerink 1962, xxxix–xl):

		Excellence	**Texts studied**
Pre-Philosophical	1	Innate or natural (*phusikos*)	n/a
	2	Habituated (*êthikos*)	Pythagorean *Golden Verses*, etc.
Philosophical	3	Civic or constitutional (*politikos*)	*Alcibiades, Gorgias*
	4	Purificatory (*kathartikos*)	*Phaedo*
	5	Contemplative (*theôrêtikos*)	*Cratylus, Theaetetus, Sophist, Statesman, Phaedrus, Symposium, Philebus*
			Two 'complete' dialogues: *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*
Beyond Philosophy	6	Exemplary (*paradeigmatikos*)	Orphic, Chaldaean texts (cf. Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 26)
	7	Hieratic (*hieratikos*) or Inspired (*enthousiastikos*)	

For the later Neoplatonists, the *Alcibiades* represents a crucial step on the 'ladder' of excellence's cultivation: it is literally the gateway to philosophical excellence (Olymp. *in Alc.* 11,3–6). Proclus, Damascius and Olympiodorus all wrote commentaries on the *Alcibiades*[73] and searched for a unifying 'purpose' or 'target' (*skopos*) of the work as a whole, unpacking Iamblichus' view that this dialogue contained all philosophy 'as if in a seed' (fr. 1 Dillon 1973). This style

of reading represents the broader exegetical approach of later Neoplatonism, which sought to unify a complex intellectual and cultural heritage through allegory and interpretation.

But the *Alcibiades* was a particularly meaningful and sensitive case. As we notice in Proclus' commentary, its introductory and 'seminal' position demanded that the commentator provide complete and thorough coverage of his sources. Therefore, in interpreting the *Alcibiades*, Proclus will engage with the entire 'philosophical'[74] curriculum (*in Alc.* 11,4–15).[75]

In *Ennead* 1.1 [53], Plotinus took up the central argument of the *Alcibiades*: 'We' are the soul alone, which is regarded as separable, precisely because it is the separate 'user' of the body.[76] To recognise this truth is to begin our ascent to the divine, as philosophy draws our attention upward from the particular human person, with her inward affections (*pathê*), to the human person viewed as a whole, or universal, entity, who is able to rise to intellect (*nous*) and even to God, achieving the goal of likeness to divinity (*homoiôsis tôi theôi*).

Common to these readings of the *Alcibiades* is an exhortation to use philosophy in order to 'turn' inwards or upwards to the soul, to the true or authentic self. This idea grows in importance: such encouragement to privilege the mind (*nous*) as the true person is arguably already detectable in Stoicism, especially Roman Stoicism,[77] while Albinus already uses the *Alcibiades* to support this exhortation, and for Plotinus, the act of 'turning the eye of the soul upward' becomes crucial to the soul's ascent and salvation. The summit of Plato's Allegory of the Cave (*Republic* 7) provides a source for this talk of turning or reversion, together with the 'turn' to the Good at *Republic* 7, 518C.[78]

Superimposed on the Platonic allegory is the ideal relationship of the mature philosopher to the student. The philosopher of *Republic* 7, who has transcended the 'Cave' that represents mere material existence, glimpses and contemplates true, intelligible reality beyond. Afterwards, however, he descends again to the Cave to help others effect their own escape. That analogy holds for the philosophical teachers of the Neoplatonist schools. Many of these teachers have grasped the nature of reality: in Neoplatonic terms, they have vaulted to the summit of philosophical achievement, 'contemplative excellence', and cultivated a thorough understanding both of natural philosophy (physics) and first philosophy (theology) (see p. 13, above); some have even obtained

a kind of 'godlike' status. Yet they descend again from that height in order to help their students follow in their footsteps.

It was Iamblichus, as Proclus informs us at the outset of his commentary, who took up Albinus' suggestion to place the *Alcibiades* at the head of that formal curriculum, and ascribed a kind of seminal status to this dialogue. This claim might partly refer to the *Alcibiades*' tremendously wide range of quotation and allusion to many other Platonic dialogues, which lends it a 'handbook-like quality'.[79] Iamblichus, like Albinus, might also have placed value on the *Alcibiades*' treatment of the 'separable soul' as the self, and he may have shared Albinus' view that Alcibiades represented the ideal young recruit to philosophy.

Proclus makes it clear that Iamblichus treated the *Alcibiades* as 'seed-like' especially in the context of the Platonic curriculum. That curriculum was designed to inculcate philosophical excellence. When Iamblichus discussed the *Alcibiades* as containing philosophy in a seminal way, he might have meant that the *Alcibiades* anticipates the themes of the following ten dialogues, which together lead the way up the ladder of excellence.[80] In the *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, we find a representation of the Iamblichean curriculum of dialogues as a succession of grades of excellence (*aretai*), which we have already discussed above (§2.1). As Blumenthal pointed out, Marinus' *Life of Proclus* reflects this same hierarchy expressed in the very life of the sage.[81] In fact, a narrative composed of a journey from 'natural' to 'civic' excellence, then an ascent to daimonic (semi-divine) and finally to divine status (*homoiôsis tôi theôi, Theaet*. 176B), comprising our completion or fulfilment (*teleiotês*), is already expressed in Plotinus 3.4 *On the Daimon*.[82]

The *Alcibiades* represents a process of 'turning upward' or 'reversion' from an exclusive focus on natural talent (*phusis*) – represented through Alcibiades' gymnastic training and natural advantages – to an understanding of (inner and outer) civic justice (*ta politika*). I would suggest that this 'turn upward' from pre-philosophical talent to civic excellence (*politikê aretê*) motivated Iamblichus to place the *Alcibiades* at the start of the 'philosophic' curriculum. For a single dialogue to contain Platonic *philosophy* in a seed-like or seminal way would require that it draw the reader out of natural and habituative excellence and advance him or her toward the first of the philosophical grades of excellence, namely the civic (*politikê*), and lead the reader toward the purificatory (*kathartikê*) and finally to the contemplative (*theôretikê*) grade of

excellence. Iamblichus, as Olympiodorus explains in his commentary on the *Alcibiades*, used the image of a temple to describe his design: the *Alcibiades* would function as the forecourt, and the *Parmenides* as the *aduton* or holy of holies (11,3–6). (The Neoplatonists read the *Parmenides* as a dialogue concerning the nature of the One or Good, the highest of the three hypostases: the One, Intellect, and Soul). Like the philosophical forms of excellence, the *Alcibiades* – on Iamblichus' reading – advances from a 'civic' starting point, concerning justice, to turn Alcibiades 'inward' to the 'purification' of the soul, and finally to the 'contemplation' of being, including even the divine. This progression mirrors the Iamblichean curriculum of ten dialogues.

If Iamblichus' commentary did follow this pattern, and he taught the other dialogues on a similar model, then the unique status of the *Alcibiades* at the head of the curriculum can be explained internally from the exegetical approach that Iamblichus applied. The *Alcibiades* pivots on the 'reversion' (*epistrophê*) of Alcibiades from obsession with natural gifts, by demonstrating that this advantage does not help him to address civic affairs (*politika*) with any competence. For this, he requires another degree of excellence, which is civic (*politikê*). This provides at least one plausible explanation for Iamblichus' choice to place this dialogue first. In pivoting from Alcibiades' natural gifts to the first properly 'philosophical' excellence, it represents an ideal beginning for the 'philosophical' curriculum.

4. Olympiodorus' lectures *On the Alcibiades*

These lectures are entitled 'from the voice' of Olympiodorus (1,2): they were perhaps delivered over about ten weeks[83] around the middle of the sixth century AD.[84] The phrase 'from the voice' (*apo phônês*) describes notes taken by a pupil during a lecture or tutorial.[85] For the sixth-century AD philosophy student, working up a record of the master's remarks was regarded as a valuable pedagogical practice, and perhaps also a kind of 'spiritual exercise'.[86] Similarly, a philosopher working alone might make substantial progress by following and adapting a predecessor's written commentary.[87]

Olympiodorus introduces his class to the conversation of Socrates and Alcibiades as a 'turning point' in their own paths to excellence,[88] and aims to

make Plato accessible to an audience that sometimes needs as much help with the fine points of Attic usage (25,25–26,2) as with the basics of Neoplatonic metaphysics (103,9–11). As Renaud and Tarrant (2015: 190) point out, his approach is sometimes more 'philological' and less distinctly 'theological' than that of Iamblichus, Proclus or Damascius; this feature might be driven by his estimation of his class's needs, both for help with construal of the Greek and for an accessible presentation of complex metaphysics.[89] Like Proclus, he deals at length with the standard *topoi* in introducing the text (Mansfeld 1994; for more on Olympiodorus' treatment, see the Introduction to the first volume of this translation in Griffin 2014d: 33–36, and Renaud and Tarrant 2015: 195–201): its target (*skopos*) (3,3–9,19), its usefulness (*khrêsimon*, 9,20–10,17), its position in the curriculum (10,18–11,6), and its division (*diairesis,* 11,7–23), and more briefly its genre (13,11) and title (3,5–8). The theme of the dialogue's target and usefulness in particular recurs throughout his discussion, especially at the beginning and end (Lecture 1; Lectures 23–28). On Olympiodorus' view, the target of the *Alcibiades* is *primarily* self-knowledge as a *civic* person (*politikos*) – that is, as a rational soul using the body as an instrument (Lecture 1: 5,17–9,20); but he allows that other 'degrees' of self-knowledge, including the purificatory and contemplative levels of excellence, are included in the text (see especially Lecture 28, below).

The archetype of all the surviving copies of the text is Marcianus graecus 196 (*c.* AD 900). It is in very good condition, and so the transcripts that derive from it are mostly useful for filling the lacuna between folios 119–120 (2,94 *Epeidê* to 20,9 *hupo*). The manuscripts and textual and linguistic issues associated with the text are concisely discussed by Westerink (1982, vii–xiv). Westerink's edition is outstanding, as Dodds (1957) judged, and is a thorough development from the only earlier edition, by Creuzer, which was based on one of the transcripts. It was copied, directly or indirectly, from a record of Olympiodorus' lectures likely prepared by a student editor, who did not get everything down,[90] and apparently had difficulty with the material:[91] at any rate, the lectures contain slips that might be attributed to the redactor, the lecturer, or both (see Westerink 1982: viii–x; Dodds 1957). In this translation, I have usually corrected apparent slips of the pen (or ear), such as the citation of *Phaedo* as *Phaedrus* (174,1) or *Charmides* as *Parmenides* (214,9); I have left other difficulties intact, such as Olympiodorus' description of Lycurgus' decree

to the Lacedaemonians to use bronze, not iron, money (164,12).[92] (For discussion, see also Griffin 2014d: 46–47.)

I append here a brief outline of Olympiodorus' lectures *On the Alcibiades*. Lectures 1–9 are translated in Griffin 2014d, while Lectures 10–28 are translated in the present volume. The major headings below are provided for convenience, and are not found in the text.

- Overview
    - Lecture 1: Life of Plato; target (*skopos*) of the dialogue (self-knowledge and care of the civic person, or the person in general).
    - Lecture 2: Usefulness and curricular position of the dialogue, and its structure, divided into refutation (106C–119A), exhortation (119A–124A) and midwifery (124A–135D) of Alcibiades.
- Prologue
    - Lecture 3 (on *Alc.* 103A–B): Distinction between crude and divine lovers; discursus on daimons, including daimons by analogy, by essence, and by relation, and discussion of our (and Socrates') allotted daimons.
    - Lecture 4 (on *Alc.* 103B–104C): Alcibiades' pride and love of reputation.
    - Lecture 5 (on *Alc.* 104D–105C): Socrates' good timing, and Alcibiades' impression of him; the god's questions to Alcibiades, and his acknowledged ambition.
- 1. Refutation (105C–119A)
    - Lecture 7 (on *Alc.* 106C–107B): What does it take to be a good advisor?
    - Lecture 8 (on *Alc.* 107C–108D): What will the Athenians deliberate on?
    - Lecture 9 (on *Alc.* 108D–110D): Proof that Alcibiades does not understand justice, which is the subject of his prospective advice to the Athenians, for he has neither found it out for himself nor studied it with a teacher.
    - Lecture 10 (on *Alc.* 110D–112D): Are ordinary people teachers? Of ordinary language, but not of justice. Notice taken of Alcibiades' natural talent.
    - Lecture 11 (on *Alc.* 112D–114B): Proof that the respondent in a dialectical exchange is the real speaker.

- Lecture 12 (on *Alc.* 114B–115A): Alcibiades attempts to shift ground from discussing justice to discussing advantage, but this doesn't help him, because the same questions apply. Discussion of the idea that someone who can persuade individuals can persuade a crowd comprised of such individuals.
- Lecture 13 (on *Alc.* 115A–116B): Proof the just is identical with the advantageous, with the noble (*kalon*) as an intermediate term.
- Lecture 14 (116B–118B): Alcibiades has been in double ignorance, thinking he knows what he doesn't know. This is dangerous to him and those around him.
- Lecture 15 (118B–119A): Alcibiades recognises and acknowledges his ignorance and arrives at simple ignorance (knowing what he doesn't know), an intermediate state. Double ignorance affects many so-called statesmen. Who, then, really *has* expertise, and how do we tell?

- 2. Exhortation (119A–124A)

  - Lecture 16 (on *Alc.* 119A–120D): Socrates exhorts Alcibiades to practise care for himself by pursuing self-knowledge, but he's too lazy, because he believes that he can best his Athenian contemporaries by his natural talents. Socrates identifies 'worthy adversaries' to stir him to a higher challenge: the Spartans (Lacedaemonians) and Persians.
  - Lecture 17 (on *Alc.* 120D–122B): Socrates argues that the Persian and Lacedaemonian kings are (currently) superior to Alcibiades, through lineage, birth, upbringing, and education. Emphasis in this section on the Persians.
  - Lecture 18 (on *Alc.* 122B–124A): Socrates argues that the Lacedaemonian kings are superior to Alcibiades through their love of honour or reputation and their material possessions or wealth.

- 3. Midwifery (122B–124A)

  - Lecture 19 (on *Alc.* 124A–D): Discussion of the need for self-care.
  - Lecture 20 (on *Alc.* 124D–126C): Discussion of the genuine civic person or statesman (*politikos*): his causes, material, efficient, formal, and final. His material cause is more general than that of the other crafts; his goal is friendship (including agreement and affection) among citizens.

- Lecture 21 (on *Alc.* 126C–127E): Alcibiades thinks he understands the statesman's goal, and appears to identify friendship with affection alone (excluding the possibility of each 'doing their own work' in a just society), so Socrates shows him that this can't be right, partly by reducing the idea to absurdity. The statesman, household manager, and person of good character are one and the same (the person of civic excellence), regardless of scale. Alcibiades acknowledges his own ignorance. Discussion of the senses of friendship (*philia*).
- Lecture 22 (on *Alc.* 126C–127E): The goal of the statesman may be friendship, but not as affection (alone).
- Lecture 23 (on *Alc.* 127E–129A): How do we care for ourselves? Self-care is not care for belongings. We must first *know* ourselves. What is the human being?
- Lecture 24 (on *Alc.* 129B–130A): How can we get to know ourselves, or what we are? We (the human being) are the soul using the body as an instrument, and separate from that instrument. According to Proclus, the target of the *Alcibiades*' account is civic and ethical (the rational soul engaged in action and using the body), and he follows the text closely; according to Damascius, the dialogue also discusses the rational soul independently, in purificatory and contemplative virtue.
- Lecture 25 (on *Alc.* 130A–D): Hypothetical demonstration of the points concluded in Lecture 24.
- Lecture 26 (on *Alc.* 129B, etc.): Abstract of a lecture, discussing among other matters the civic, purificatory, and contemplative notions of self.

- Conclusion

  - Lecture 27 (on *Alc.* 130D–133C): corollaries of the view that the self is the rational soul using the body as an instrument: (1) souls converse only with souls, (2) no expert in a particular skill (insofar as he is a particular skilled expert) has self-knowledge, (3) or self-control, and (4) lovers other than Socrates loved only Alcibiades' belonging (his body), not himself.
  - Lecture 28 (on *Alc.* 133C–135E): The person who lacks self-knowledge and self-care is not really a statesman (*politikos*); someone without self-knowledge and self-care causes misery for themselves and others. Alcibiades commits to follow Socrates and 'reciprocal love' is born.

Appendix

Olympiodorus' works

We can attribute the following courses to Olympiodorus with a high degree of confidence. Together, they demonstrate that a broad cross-section of the traditional Aristotelian and Platonic curricula was still taught in the sixth century.

- On Porphyry's *Isagoge* (lost, but serves as a source for David and Elias' lectures)
- Prolegomena to Aristotelian Philosophy (extant)
- On Aristotle's *Categories* (extant)
- On Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* (partially extant as scholia)[93]
- On Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption* (lost, but mentioned by Arabic sources)[94]
- On Aristotle's *Meteorology* (extant; delivered in 565)
- On Aristotle's *De Anima* (lost, but mentioned by Arabic sources)[95]
- On Plato's *Alcibiades* (extant; delivered *c.* 555–560?)
- On Plato's *Gorgias* (extant; delivered in the 520s?)
- On Plato's *Phaedo* (extant for *Phaed.* 62C–79E; delivered between 530s and 540s?)
- On Plato's *Sophist* (lost, but cited in Arabic sources, and mentioned by Olympiodorus himself)[96]

Olympiodorus' course on Plato's *Gorgias* relies heavily on anecdotes of Ammonius, particularly toward the end of the course.[97] Westerink draws the reasonable conclusion that these lectures were delivered early in Olympiodorus' life.[98] His course on the *Alcibiades* draws on Damascius as well as Proclus, and this course is presumably later.[99] These lectures demonstrate a careful reading of Proclus' commentary, and display sympathy for both Proclus and Damascius; it is tempting to speculate that Olympiodorus gained access to new manuscripts from the Athenian school after the 520s, or even met Damascius in person. These (presumably later) lectures on the *Alcibiades* are more difficult to date, but it is fair to suppose that they belong to the later 550s or 560s.[100] The lectures on Aristotle's *Meteorology* can be dated precisely to March/April 565.[101]

Uncertain attributions

The surviving *Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, sometimes credited to Olympiodorus, presumably was composed by a student or member of his school.[102] A commentary on Paulus of Alexandria, dateable to summer 564, demonstrates an affinity with Olympiodorus' school,[103] but diverges from Olympiodorus on some important points (Opsomer 2010: 710). Westerink has shown that the anonymous notes on the *Phaedo* and *Philebus* preserved in Marc. gr. 196 belong to Damascius.[104] A commentary on the alchemist Zosimus of Panoplis *On Operation* (*Kat' energeian*) was once attributed to Olympiodorus, but its treatment of Aristotle and Plato seems unlikely to belong to an Alexandrian philosophy professor; more probably, the attribution to Olympiodorus aimed to strengthen the manuscript's authority. The author may have genuinely worked from Olympiodorus' lectures on Aristotle's *Meteorology*;[105] perhaps he was a Christian alchemist[106] who studied under Olympiodorus. Finally, our Olympiodorus was sometimes mistakenly identified with the deacon, but this is impossible on chronological grounds.[107]

Notes

1 In this introduction, I attempt to complement the Introduction to volume 1 (Griffin 2014d) with limited duplication. This introduction will not cover material primarily relevant to vol. 1 and discussed there, including Olympiodorus' *Life of Plato*; I also omit here the broader reception history of the *First Alcibiades* itself, which is explored in some detail in vol. 1.

2 For overviews of Olympiodorus' life and philosophy, see recently Wildberg 2008a, Opsomer 2010, and Westerink 1990. For his relationship with contemporary Christianity, see Tarrant 1997 and Griffin 2014b. Since Olympiodorus indicates that he heard Ammonius lecture (e.g., *in Gorg.* 39.2), he cannot have been born much later than 505; but since Olympiodorus was actively lecturing in 565 (the secure date of his lectures *On Aristotle's Meteorology*, based on his report of a comet passing at 52,31), he cannot have been born much earlier than 495. For a helpful overview of Olympiodorus and Damascius, see recently Gertz 2011: 7–14.

3 It is also possible, though less likely, that Olympiodorus was born to a Christian family but attracted to traditional 'Hellenic' or pagan philosophy at Ammonius' school, where he could have taken a new name; for the atmosphere of religious

experimentation that prevailed at least until Nicomedes' investigation in 487/88, see Watts 2010: 1–22.

4 Including legislation under which pagans could be tried and executed (cf. Wildberg 2005, 332). In late antiquity, the atmosphere of the Neoplatonic academic communities combined intellectual and religious traits; on this atmosphere, see for example Hoffman 2012, esp. 597–601, Festugière 1966, and Saffrey 1984.

5 For the social environment, see Watts 2008, chs. 8–9; Watts 2010, chap. 1.

6 Ammonius (*c*. 435/45–517/26), who was followed in the chair by a mathematician called Eutocius and then by the young Olympiodorus himself, had previously instituted an 'agreement' of some kind with the Christian authorities in Alexandria (so Damascius 118B Athanassiadi 1999) on account of which he was able to continue teaching at the public expense. Whatever Ammonius' arrangement might have been, it seems reasonable to suppose that Olympiodorus followed in his footsteps, perhaps restricting the subjects or manner of his teaching or religious practice, and so was able to secure the professorship from Christian or governmental hostilities. It has been hotly debated whether the 'agreement' attributed to Ammonius by Damascius came down to a particular doctrinal compromise, or a commitment not to teach theurgy, or even some nominal confession of Christian creed. See further below, note 7.

7 John Philoponus, initially Ammonius' editor, became his sharpest intellectual critic. For Zacharias' dialogues, see now Dillon, Russell and Gertz 2012, with introduction and commentary. Damascius famously implies (*Life of Isidore* / *Philosophical History* 118B Athanassiadi) that Ammonius managed to arrive at some sort of 'agreement' (*homologia*) with 'the overseer of the prevailing doctrine' (*ton episkopounta . . . tên kratousan doxan*, perhaps a circumlocution for Peter Mongus; compare Athanassiadi 1999 ad loc., Westerink 1990: 327. For the *Life of Isidore*, see Athanassiadi 1999: Introduction and the previously standard edition of Zintzen 1967). The nature of Ammonius' agreement has been a subject of intense speculation: for example, Praechter (1910: 151–56; 1912) suggested that Ammonius ceased the teaching of Plato (but this seems improbable, given the strong record of Ammonius' Platonic lessons in the sixth century, such as Olympiodorus' own); more promisingly, Sorabji (2005) proposed that Ammonius agreed not to promote pagan ritual or 'theurgy' in public. For discussion of evidence for this proposal, see van den Berg 2004.

8 See below, Appendix.

9 For the atmosphere of the Alexandrian school, including the oral tradition handed down in private by the professor, see Watts 2010: 29–88, esp. 39 and 63; Damascius'

Philosophical History or *Life of Isidore* (Athanassiadi 1999) is a rich source. (For these traditions more generally, see Cox 1983: 9–20; Cox Miller 2000: 242–44). For the environment of the later Neoplatonic school more broadly, see Hoffmann 2012. For Olympiodorus' use of Ammonius' anecdotes in class, see *in Gorg.* 24.2, 39.2, 40.5, 44.5, 44.6, 48.5, with comments by Jackson, Lycos & Tarrant 1998: 252 n. 739.

10 See Siorvanes 1996, Chlup 2012.

11 See Athanassiadi 1999.

12 See Segonds 1985–1986. Gertz points out Olympiodorus' reliance on Proclus as a rule, especially in cases where Olympiodorus disagrees with Damascius (2011: 9).

13 I use 'Christianity' here to speak in general terms of the diverse Christian sects and doctrines that populated Alexandria in Olympiodorus' day, which might have been perceived by him collectively as the customary culture (*sunêtheia*) of the majority (*hoi polloi*). Mossman Roueché has kindly sensitised me to the dangers of treating these as a monolith. The particular beliefs of a Christian student would have been unlikely to interfere with their studies, but could be safely compartmentalised while they studied to become a gentleman and, often, future civil servant (*kalos k'agathos, mousikos anêr*); on that long-standing tradition in late antiquity, see Watts 2006, ch. 1. It is unlikely that Olympiodorus faced serious or dangerous hostility in Alexandria, which prized higher education, as her heavy investment in lecture-theatres testifies (Derda et al. 2007), but like any good lecturer, he appears acutely aware of the need to cater to his audience in terms that they will understand and find relevant to their lives and culture.

14 cp. Proclus *in Alc.* 264,5–6 with Olymp. *in Alc.* 92,4–9.

15 Westerink 1976, 23; but see Tarrant 1997.

16 cf. *in Alc.* 87,10 and 65,8.

17 Philosophy, like any craft, might be defined by its *subject* and its *goal* (Ammonius, *in Isag.* 2,22–9,7). Philosophy addresses itself to the well-being of persons, who are, in the strictest sense, their soul or psyche (*psukhê*) alone. The subject of philosophy is the soul, and its goal is to achieve the Good of the soul (Olympiodorus *Proleg. Log.* 1,4–20; *in Alc.* 1,6–7, 2,13), which is 'likeness to God, as far as human ability allows' (*Proleg. Log.* 16,25, echoing the famous phrase of Plato's *Theaetetus* 176B).

18 To live well – to be *spoudaios* (*in Alc.* 229,5–6) or *khrêstos* – just *is* to live the 'philosophic life' (*in Gorg.* 0.1).

19 I borrow this vocabulary from Simplicius, *in Cat.* 7.23–32. Olympiodorus' treatment of apparent disagreement between Plato and Aristotle (Olymp. *in Cat.* 68,34–40; *in Mete.* 266,19) is an ideal exemplar of the pattern. Interestingly, Olympiodorus deploys the same distinction when he remarks that Proclus

interprets the text (*lexis*) of the *Alc.* more closely than Damascius, while Damascius grasps the underlying meaning (*pragmata*) more directly (*in Alc.* 205,6–7).

20 For the ancient 'harmony' thesis, see Karamanolis 2006.

21 See examples discussed in Griffin 2014d: 3–5, including *in Gorg.* 4.3 and 47.1–5.

22 *in Alc.* 9,13.

23 *in Gorg.* 34.4, on the 'actual truth' that philosophers pursue beneath the surface of a myth.

24 See Tarrant 1997: 189–91 on the *koinai ennoiai*, and Olympiodorus' use of these to compare Christianity and Hellenism (e.g., *in Gorg.* 41.2).

25 For the course of *paideia* in late antiquity, see Cribiore 2001, Kaster 1988, Hadot 1984. For Olympiodorus' own attitude to Hellenic *paideia*, see Tarrant 1997: 182–83.

26 Tarrant has stressed Olympiodorus' primary commitment as a teacher of Hellenism, a 'classicist' or 'champion of some ancient heritage that needed to be kept alive', while drawing out his views on the common ground of Platonism and Christianity. Indeed, Olympiodorus regarded himself as a teacher first and foremost, an expounder of Hellenic *paideia* (Tarrant 1997: 188–192).

27 *in Alc.* 1,3–9.

28 See Wildberg 2008; on David, Calzolari and Barnes 2009.

29 See Westerink 1990: 340.

30 Usener 1879 proposed that Stephanus accepted an imperial appointment in 610, and it has been suggested that he brought the school's library to Constantinople (Westerink 1986; see also Rashed 2002, Goulet 2007, and on his identity, Wolska-Conus 1989). Roueché has provided strong reasons to doubt Usener's narrative (Roueché forthcoming and 2012). I am indebted to Mossman Roueché for sharing his views, and for many helpful suggestions and references.

31 The eternity of the world 'according to Aristotle', *in Int.* 540,27; the rationality of the heavens, 595,33–598,7; the pre-existence of the soul, 541,20–542,5. Some passages are very close to explicitly Christian views, such as Stephanus' treatment of future contingents and divine foreknowledge (*in Int.* 35,34–36,8).

32 As Roueché (forthcoming) has attractively argued that the 'teacher' of Stephanus named by him at *in Int.* 5,13 is John Philoponus.

33 Here and throughout the translation, I have generally translated *aretê* as excellence.

34 See Olympiodorus *in Phaed.* 1.2,6, *in Gorg.* 25.1, 26.18.

35 For a general treatment across these genres, see for example Nussbaum 1986.

36 For the scale of virtues, see for instance Dillon 1996, O'Meara 2013 and 2012, Tarrant 2007. On the curricular ascent, see also Hoffmann 1987, Griffin 2014a and 2014d: Introduction. Westerink 1976, 116–18 (n. ad. Olymp. *in Phaed.* 8.2), offers an excellent summary of the textual sources for the scale of virtues. The complete hierarchy may

have been developed by Iamblichus, although the list tabulated earlier appears mostly in sources later than Marinus, such as Damascius (*in Phaed.* 1.138–44 Westerink), Simplicius (*On Epictetus'* Handbook, 2.30–3.2 Duebner), and Olympiodorus *On the Alcibiades* (4,15–8,14 Westerink). Plotinus distinguished the cardinal 'civic excellences' (*politikai aretai*) of *Republic* 4 from higher *aretai* which he termed 'purifying', a distinction for which the Neoplatonists cited *Phaedo* 82A–E (where good reincarnations result from the practice of 'civic' excellences such as moderation and justice, but only philosophy delivers genuine 'purification'). Porphyry, drawing on Plotinus, already gives us the basic stages of 'civic', 'purificatory', 'contemplative', and 'exemplary' *aretai*. And Plotinus, in *Enn.* 1.3 and elsewhere, already studies a kind of natural excellence which is most basic to our being, and is shared even by plants.

37 For Plotinus' adaptation of Aristotle's ethics, see O'Meara 2012.

38 See Watts 2008: ch. 1.

39 The underlying Greek notions of personhood have been richly studied by Sorabji 2006 and Gill 2006: in general, in Parfit's (1984: 210–11) terms, it is fair to say that ancient Greek philosophers were non-reductionist about the self. For the Neoplatonist view, see also Griffin 2015.

40 For Aristotle, *ho tis anthrôpos* ('an individual person') is the primary exhibit of a being that exists naturally, displays unity in number, form, and function, and is obvious to everybody (*Cat.* 3, 1b4–5; *Metaph.* 5, 1016b31–33; *Phys.* 2.1, 192b9–11). Aristotle stresses the uniqueness to human beings of self-guided moral action or *praxis* (*Nic. Eth.* 6.2, 1139a17–20).

41 I have argued in Griffin 2015a that for the later Neoplatonists, at any rate, we don't get unity 'for free'; it is part of a virtuous project of self-constitution (cf. for example Proclus, *El. Theol.* prr. 44, 83, 189). To find our unity is to find our good (Proclus, *El. Theol.* 9, 13, *in Alc.* 1,3–3,2), and to escape from the rending force of multiplicity is to escape our danger (*in Alc.* 6,12–17,8; 43,7–44,11).

42 The Neoplatonic notion of character traits habituated in childhood is indebted to Aristotle *Nic. Eth.* 2.1, 1103a17: see also O'Meara 2012.

43 For the notion of 'imitation' in the Alexandrian school (and its relevance to Platonic hermeneutics), see *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy* 4.

44 Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 6.13, 1144b3–9 is a key passage for the Neoplatonist interpretation of natural excellence, mentioned here and discussed below.

45 On the Platonist view, although the physical and psychological traits and privileges associated with a life are partially 'random', the life is chosen in advance by the soul (from a selection offered by lot), and therefore the soul does carry responsibilities for at least some features of its life (*Rep.* 10, 617D–E).

46 Damascius *in Phaed.* 1.138, Olymp. *in Phaed.* 8.2,2–3. Again, the name and the concept derive from Aristotle *Nic. Eth.* 6.13, 1144b3–9.

47 Damascius *in Phaed.* 1.139, Olymp. *in Phaed.* 8.2,3. Again, the name and the concept are partly inspired by Aristotle *Nic. Eth.* 2.1, 1103a17.

48 For the list of virtues at the 'habituated' level, which incidentally do *not* obey the Socratic rule of the reciprocity of the virtues (unlike the 'civic' virtues), see Olymp. *in Alc.* 154–55.

49 '[T]he greatest good for a human being [is] to discuss excellence (*aretê*) every day and those other things about which you hear me conversing and testing myself and others, for the unexamined life is not worth living for human beings' (*Apology* 38A). With Sellars 2014, I think it is very fruitful to read the *Apology* as a metaphilosophical text.

50 See for example Proclus, *in Alc.* 7,1–8 and Olympiodorus, *in Alc.*, Lecture 14 (on *Alc.* 116B–118B).

51 The Greek philosophical tradition is arguably observant of many ways in which we are non-rational, including confabulation (Nisbett & Wilson 1977) and a range of cognitive biases and implicit assumptions recognised in modern social psychology and decision theory (in the wake of Tversky & Kahneman 1974). The Neoplatonist analysis of irrationality is, of course, rather different from ours; see below.

52 Unless, with Vlastos 1983, we suppose that Socrates *himself* might have satisfied such conditions in practice.

53 For the quotation, see Chrysippus at Plutarch, *De stoic. rep.* 1048E.

54 In Olympiodorus' terms, the *trimereia tês psukhês*; e.g., *in Alc.* 4,10.

55 For this kind of treatment, see for instance Cooper 1984.

56 *Thumos* is especially difficult to translate in this context, being open to renderings as diverse as 'pride', 'emotion', 'anger', and 'self-esteem'; I focus here on the common notion of *concern for status* (which Olympiodorus also emphasises under the name of *philotimia*, the most difficult of the affections to wash away: *in Alc.* 50,26).

57 Socrates aptly diagnoses the influence of conformity and authority in human motivation (Nussbaum 2012, pp. 54–55); in a very loose sense, he can be seen as doing a kind of proto-social-psychological experiment, noting results similar to Asch (1951) and Milgram (1963).

58 For the Neoplatonic view of Socrates and his paradigmatic role, see the essays in Layne and Tarrant 2014; for Olympiodorus' view in particular, see Renaud and Tarrant 2015: 201–203.

59 'Each one of us and of mankind in general is more or less clearly subject to the very same misfortunes as the son of Clinias [i.e., Alcibiades]. 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; 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' (Proclus, *in Alc.* 7,1–8, tr. O'Neill 1977).

60 cf. Simplicius *in Cat.* 6,1–3.

61 Simplicius *in Cat.* 5,9–6,3; cf. 14,5–20.

62 Proclus *in Alc.* 1,3–7.

63 *Republic* 2, 368D–369A.

64 See Olympiodorus *in Alc.* 186,20–22 for the identity of the statesman, household-manager, and individually good character, who are the same in form and differ only in scale (which is irrelevant).

65 See Olymp. *in Alc*. 172,5–12.

66 As reason (*logos*), spirited emotion (*thumos*), and appetite (*epithumia*).

67 cf. *in Alc.* 20,4–13, translated below.

68 See Griffin 2014d: 11–12 on Olymp. *in Phaed.* 8.2,1–20 and Damasc. *in Phaed.* 1.138.

69 For a summary of theurgic practice, see Chlup 2012: 168–84.

70 Examples include the address of the Demiurge in the *Timaeus* (*Tim.* 41A–D) and Socrates 'possession' by the Muses (*Republic* 8, 546A–547C), nymphs (*Phaedrus* 238D–241D), and philosophy (*Theaetetus* 173C–177B).

71 On the 'henads' see for example Chlup 2012: 112–36.

72 'Understand that we should always pursue philosophy, when we are young for the sake of soothing the passions, and especially when we are old, for then the passions begin to subside, and reason flourishes. We should always have philosophy as our patron, since it is she who performs the task of Homer's Athena, scattering mist' (Olymp. *in Gorg*. 26.13, tr. Jackson et al. 1998).

73 Proclus' commentary is extant to 116AB; Damascius' is lost (but it seems very likely, based on Olympiodorus' references, that he wrote one); Olympiodorus' own commentary is complete. See §3.4 in Griffin 2014d: Introduction for a more detailed discussion of Proclus' and Olympiodorus' surviving commentaries.

74 In the sense of 'philosophical' described above (p. 13, table).

75 Including '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 regarding 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 actual first turning towards ourselves. It seems to me that this is why the divine Iamblichus gives it the first position among the ten dialogues, their whole subsequent development having been, as it were, anticipated in this seed' (tr. O'Neill 1965). Here and following, translations from Proclus *in Alcibiadem* are lightly adapted from O'Neill 1965,

with some modifications. The best modern translation available is that by Segonds (Tome 1: 1985; Tome 2: 1986).

76 On this treatise and Plotinus' sources, see Aubry 2004: 15–61.

77 See Gill 2007, 194.

78 'Our argument shows that the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already; and that just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being, and of the brightest and best of being, or in other words, of the Good' (tr. Grube, revised by Reeve, in Cooper and Hutchinson 1997). For the imagery of 'looking up', compare also *Timaeus* 47B–C: the soul must 'look up' to the heavens in the *Timaeus* to recognise the motion of intellect (*nous*), and formulate its own motion accordingly.

79 This quality has counted against both *Alcibiades* and *Theages* in modern-day judgements of authenticity: see Joyal 2000, ch. 4.

80 In that curriculum, the philosophical virtues appear to embrace the study of natural philosophy and theology under the heading of the 'contemplative' virtues.

81 Blumenthal 1993a. On the idea of the 'practical' activity of the sage in late antiquity, see also Dillon 1996.

82 As Dillon points out, such a 'journey' was also already presented allegorically by Origen in his exegesis of the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the Desert (Num. 33), in the 27th *Homily on Numbers*: cf. Dillon 1996, 104.

83 If we take *prôên* in Lecture 4, 34,8 as meaning 'the day before yesterday' (LSJ A II), pointing back to Lecture 3, 14,20–26.

84 Only Olympiodorus' *Meteorology* commentary can be dated with confidence to some time not long after AD 565, thanks to Olympiodorus' reference to a recent comet (*in Meteor.* 52,31). The *Alcibiades* commentary may have been about a decade earlier. The *Gorgias* commentary is often thought to be quite a bit earlier, as it seems less mature (Jackson et al. 1998, 3–4).

85 See Richard 1950; Hoffmann 2012: 615–16.

86 See Marinus, *Life of Proclus* ch. 12, 295–300; ch. 13, 318–31, translated in Sorabji 2005.3: 2(a)10. Proclus may have discussed the points to be examined with a teacher in a treatise entitled '*Sunanagnôsis*', or 'Explication of a Text under the Supervision of a Master' (Hadot et al. 1990: 26, 34; for this translation, Hoffmann 2012: 608). For the concept of a 'spiritual exercise' in antiquity, see Hadot 1995: 2002.

87 See Simplicius, *in Cat.* 3,2–9; Hoffmann 2012, 615; Hadot 1978, 147–65; 1996, 41–60.

88 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 7,1–8.

89 As Dodds (1957: 356) puts it, Olympiodorus' lectures 'were evidently designed for beginners: they explain elementary points of usage, and try to help the auditor by giving simple illustrations especially from Homer; they presuppose some acquaintance with the elements of Aristotelian logic, but little else in the way of philosophical knowledge'. Digressions on Neoplatonic metaphysics are also rarer than in Proclus, although not absent (see for example 103,9–15 below).

90 The lectures become much shorter as the text continues, and Lecture 26 is only an abstract. Dodds (1957: 356–57) points out a false reference at 212,12, suggesting that material has been missed out in the copy.

91 See Dodds 1957: 357 for a sampling of the note-taker's difficulties.

92 cp. Plutarch, *Lyc.* 9; Olympiodorus repeats the same account at *in Gorg.* 44.2.

93 Scholia in Vaticanus Urb. gr. 35, included in Tarán 1978.

94 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 251,5; see Opsomer 699: n. 9, Westerink 1976: 21–2, n. 32–33.

95 And perhaps excerpted in one manuscript, Ambrosianus Q74 Sup.

96 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 246,11–12 (Dodge 1970: 593) and 215,13–14 (Dodge 1970: 604). Olympiodorus mentions lectures on the *Sophist* at *in Alc.* 110,8–9.

97 As has been frequently pointed out; see e.g. Westerink 1990: 331; Watts 2010: 61–2. For exegesis, e.g., at 32.2, 41.9; for personal anecdotes, 24.2, 39.2, 40.5, 44.5, 44.6, 48.5, with comments by Jackson, Lycos & Tarrant 1998: 252 n. 739.

98 Westerink 1990: 331; see also Jackson, Lycos and Tarrant 1998: 3–4.

99 As Opsomer points out (2010: 698). For instance, Olympiodorus accepts Proclus' interpretation of the phrase 'self itself' (*auto to auto,* from *Alc.* 130D) without discussion in his lectures on *Gorgias* (18.2, 103.26–104.2) and *Phaedo* (8.6.10–12), but in lecturing on the *Alcibiades* he attempts to adjudicate and harmonise Proclus and Damascius (204,15–205,7; 209,15–210,11; see also 5,17–8,14 on the topic or *skopos* of the dialogue).

100 On the one hand, at 141,1–3 Olympiodorus comments that Plato refused tuition fees because of his wealth, 'which is why the endowment [of the Academy] has lasted until today, despite the many confiscations that are underway (*ginomenôn*)'. This implies that the lectures were delivered before the closure of the Athenian school in 529, when Justinian's implementation of 'a machinery . . . to wipe out paganism on a broad scale' came into effect across the empire (cf. *Codex Justinianus* 1.11.9–10), including legislation under which pagans could be tried and executed (cf. Wildberg 2005, 332). On the other hand, Olympiodorus refers to the recent arrival of a governor named Hephaestus (2,80–2), an event that likely took place in 546. The right conclusion may be that the endowment of the Academy continued after 529, or even, with Tannery (1896: 286), that a portion of the Athenian school's private revenues was

reinstated upon their return to support their ongoing scholarship; see also Westerink 1990: 330.

101 Based on the passing of a comet described at *in Meteor.* 52,31.

102 Westerink 1962; Westerink, Trouillard and Segonds 1990.

103 Though attributed in the past to Ammonius' brother Heliodorus, the lecturer dates his course to summer 564, which makes Heliodorus an implausible author. The attribution to Olympiodorus' school rests on stylistic resemblance (the *theôria–lexis* division) and similarities with Olympiodorus' lectures on Aristotle's *Meteorologica*, delivered the following year. (See Opsomer 2010: 700).

104 Westerink 1959: xv–xx; 1977: 15–77.

105 Viano 2006.

106 The author ascribes to 'the Lord' (94,13–15) a quotation from St. Paul (2 Cor 3:6), as Wildberg 2008a: §4 points out.

107 Westerink 1976: 20.

Textual Emendations

The edition of Westerink (1982) is excellent. I have rarely deviated from Westerink's printed text, primarily to accept conjectures offered either by Westerink himself (in his apparatus or addenda), or by Dodds (1957). I list here only these deviations and some of the more substantial conjectures that I have accepted from Westerink's text or apparatus (with attribution in the notes ad loc., as appropriate).

90,28–91,1	For *antitithetai* read *anatithetai*
93,23–24	For *antitithetai* read *anatithetai*
99,5	Add *ou lanthanei* after *logou*
112,17	Delete obelisks
118,11	Add *kalon* with Westerink
120,6	Add *ei* and deleting *katho* with Westerink
126,4	For *de* read *ge*
126,19	For *mêden* read *mêdeteron*
132,16	Read *hôd' epos epein* with the manuscripts of Euripides, *Or*. 1
137,13	For *autois* read *autôi*
139,7	Delete *an* and read *tína* for *tiná*
164,12	Delete *sidêra* with Westerink, comparing Ol. *in Gorg*. 209,26–8
175,24	Add *philotimos* with Creuzer and Westerink
188,10	Delete first *de*
192,15	Perhaps read *storgêi* and *homonoiâi* with *huparkhei*
214,9	For *Parmenidêi* read *Kharmidêi* with Creuzer

Olympiodorus

On Plato
First Alcibiades 10–28

Translation

Lecture 10[1]

With the god's[2] favour[3]

Alc. But maybe I gave you the wrong answer,[4] [when I said I knew it by finding out on my own. Soc. Then how did it happen? Alc. I suppose I learned it in the same way as other people. . . from ordinary people (*hoi polloi*). Soc. When you give the credit to 'ordinary people', you're falling back on teachers who lack competence (*ouk. . . spoudaios*). . . they can't even teach you which moves to make, or not to make, in knucklebones. Yet that's a trivial matter, I suppose, compared with justice. . . So although they can't teach trivial things, you say they can teach more serious things? Alc. I think so. . . for example, I learned how to speak Greek from them; I couldn't tell you who my teacher was, but I give the credit to the very people you say are no good at teaching. 110D 110E 111A

Soc. Yes, my noble friend, ordinary people are good teachers of that. . . Don't you see that somebody who is going to teach anything must first know it himself? . . . If people disagree about something, would you say that they know it? Alc. Of course not. Soc. Then how could they be teachers of it? Alc. They couldn't possibly. . . Soc. Now if we wanted to know not just what men and horses are like, but which of them could and couldn't run, would ordinary people be able to teach this as well? Alc. Of course not. Soc. Isn't the fact that they disagree with each other about these things enough to show you that they don't understand them, and are not helpful (*krêguoi*) teachers of them? Alc. Yes, it is . . . 111B

Soc. Very well, then – does it seem to you that ordinary people actually agree among themselves or with each other about just and unjust people and actions? . . . Do they disagree with each other a huge amount about these things? Alc. Very much so. Soc. I don't suppose you've ever seen or heard people disagreeing so strongly about what is healthy and unhealthy that they fight and kill each other. . . but I know you've seen this sort of dispute over questions of justice. . . at least you've heard about it from many other people – especially Homer, since you've heard the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, haven't you? . . . I suppose the same is true of those Athenians and 111E 112A 112B

Spartans and Boeotians who died at. . . Coronea, including your own father. The disagreement that caused those battles and those deaths was none other than disagreement over justice and injustice, wasn't it? . . . Are we to
112D say that people understand something if they disagree so much about it that in their disputes with each other they resort to such extreme measures?][5]

Now that Alcibiades has been proven ignorant of justice (since he neither learned it nor found it out, as [Socrates] demonstrated earlier), he uses his
91,1 natural talents[6] to reply, by rejecting the premiss[7] that he knows about justice because he found out about it [by himself]. Since that premiss has been systematically refuted [110D], he suggests that he answered poorly: 'because my knowledge comes not from finding it out, but from learning about it'. And when Socrates is about to deploy the same arguments [as before] – namely,
5 'When? From which teachers?', and so on[8] – Alcibiades offers 'ordinary people' (*hoi polloi*) as his teachers, and explains that he has learned about justice from 'ordinary people'. In support of this, he observes that ordinary people teach, not only justice, but also how to speak the Greek language (*hellênizein*).[9]

Now, [Alcibiades] thought that 'ordinary people' have knowledge about both [justice and language], and are competent teachers in both areas, because he reckoned that both are matters determined by general convention (*thesis*). (After all, 'ordinary people' are masters of matters determined by convention: for instance, they know which convention they have established when it comes
10 to [the meaning of] nouns).[10] In reality, however, justice is far from being a matter determined by convention.[11] That's why Socrates accepts the one [assertion], that ordinary people are teachers of the Greek language, but rejects the other, that they are teachers of justice.

In the first place, then, he says: 'How can people who are ignorant about relatively trivial and humble (*kheirô*) subjects – like [how to win at] a game of
15 knucklebones[12] – know enough about more advanced subjects, like justice and injustice, to teach about them?' Now this argument presents a puzzle (*aporos*), namely, how Socrates can claim that ordinary people are ignorant about justice on the grounds that they're ignorant about humbler things. (Consider: Hippocrates' ignorance of carpentry didn't also render him ignorant about the four elements, from which, he says, human bodies are made:[13] but this latter
20 [knowledge] is more advanced than carpentry). Well, Proclus offers the

following solution: he says that people who are ignorant about trivial subjects *that are more familiar to them* (*oikeioteros*) are also ignorant about more advanced subjects.[14] But Damascius doesn't [solve the puzzle] like this, because on his view, there's no need for this addition of the words 'more familiar'; instead, he resolves it as follows. Those who *lack the capacity to learn* about more trivial issues also lack knowledge of more advanced ones:[15] and [winning] a game of knucklebones is more trivial than knowing about justice, and [ordinary people] are ignorant about the former: therefore, it is clear that ordinary people are also ignorant about justice.

Next, Socrates continues his argument that ordinary people are ignorant 92,1
about justice, by pointing out that they disagree with each other: in other words, different people take different positions about what is just. And failure to agree (*asumphônia*) is evidence of ignorance and a lack of understanding. Now it's not *always* the case that people who agree with one another [about a 5
subject] understand it (consider the case of the Democriteans,[16] who agree among themselves that the void exists, but are mistaken for this very reason, because in fact it does not);[17] but those who *do* understand *do* agree with one another, as we can see by conversion by contraposition of the following premiss, that those who do not agree are ignorant.[18]

[Socrates] also draws attention to the vehemence of the disagreement, pointing out that ordinary people get into civil strife (*stasiazein*) over justice, 10
and not only that, but the most important conflicts have been fought over it. For civil strife is a limited conflict (even though it is *worse* than warfare [between states], since it's fought against those near and dear to us), whereas warfare [between states] is a large-scale conflict. But in fact, as we have already pointed out,[19] since justice permeates our entire being (*ousia*) and the three parts of our soul, it's for this reason that people who have been treated unfairly 15
reckon themselves as good as dead and non-existent (*anousios*) unless they can win just [compensation]: that's why they start the greatest wars [over it]. And [Socrates] uses the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as examples of wars waged for justice. For the *Iliad* is nothing other than an epic about barbarians[20] and Greeks seeking justice (*dikaiologia*), with the barbarians maintaining that they 93,1
suffered the first injustice, when Jason, a Greek, captured Medea, a barbarian,[21] whereas the Greeks claim that they suffered the greater injustice when Helen was captured. Herodotus narrates these events right at the beginning of his

own *History*.[22] And in the *Odyssey*, the suitors and Telemachus seek justice,[23] as the suitors maintain that a widow must not refuse the noblest men of Ithaca when they woo her with plentiful bride-gifts, while Telemachus claims that it is not yet clear whether his father has died, and that it is unjust for them to be plundering his father's house.

And [Socrates] presents the Battle of Coronea[24] as another example, since it was also waged for justice – and although he could introduce another, more important war than this, he doesn't, and so he adds variation to his lesson. (That is, he described the Trojan war because of the greater fame of the subject, but he described the Battle of Coronea because it came closer to home for the young man,[25] since Alcibiades' father Clinias distinguished himself there and lost his life). And he did this in imitation of the poet [Homer]: for in the poet, Nestor in conversation with Achilles recalls the war with the Lapiths, where Peleus distinguished himself,[26] as Isocrates also remarks in his *Euagoras*.[27] So also Priam says to Achilles:[28]

> Godlike Achilles, remember your father.
> That is the content of the survey (*theôria*).[29]

110D Alc. **But maybe I gave you the wrong answer, when I said I knew it by finding out on my own.** Here, as we have pointed out, [Alcibiades] rejects one of the premisses, suggesting that he gave a poor answer when he said that he knew about justice by finding out about it. 'For it's not by finding out [on my own]', he explains, 'but by learning about it, that I have knowledge on this subject'. And when Socrates presses him to name his teachers (so that he might study with them himself), the young man says that he's learned 'from ordinary people'. Then Socrates proves that these are not *teachers* in the proper sense of justice, and in fact they're not even 'helpful' (*krêguos*), as he puts it a little later in the passage [111E1]. (He uses the word 'helpful' to mean 'good' (*agathos*), as this [verse] from the poet [Homer] makes clear in its contrast [of 'helpful'] with 'bad' (*kakos*):[30]

> Seer of bad news (*kaka*), never yet have you told me something helpful (*krêguon*),

adding,

> it's always dear to your heart to prophesy bad news . . .

That is, he contrasts 'bad' with 'helpful', because the latter is 'good'). 10

When you give the credit to 'ordinary people', you're falling back on teachers who lack competence (*ouk. . . spoudaios*). . . The saying of the Seven Sages[31] hints at the same point: **110E**

> The more, the worse.[32]

Now we investigate how, if the natural occurs more frequently than the unnatural (for all human beings are, by nature, five-fingered, and this occurs more frequently,[33] but [some] are unnaturally six-fingered, and this is rarer) – 15 how, then, if the natural occurs more often than the unnatural, can 'more' be described as 'bad'?[34]

Well, we reply as follows: just as it's no surprise to us when most people dwelling in a plague-spot fall ill, but we're surprised when a few remain healthy, so too in this case we ought to suppose that souls, after they descend here,[35] fall sick rather than remaining healthy because they are dwelling in an alien 20 country (*anoikeios*), and this is why most of them are in bad shape (*kakoi*). For our father, and our true country, lie above alone.[36]

Yet that's a trivial matter, I suppose, compared with justice . . . 95,1

Here is the puzzle that we took up earlier in the survey,[37] as well as the two solutions to it offered by Proclus and Damascius.

[I think they can teach] more important (*spoudaioteros*) things than knucklebones. —Like what? —Like how to speak Greek. The youth explains that 'ordinary people' are not only [able] to teach justice, but they also teach 5 how to speak Greek, even if one allows that they don't have knowledge about more trivial things, like knucklebones. Now it's in imitation of the Pythagoreans (*zêlon*) that he singles out 'speaking Greek' in the first place, when he says that they're able to teach 'more important things', and goes on to specify that he means 'speaking Greek'.[38] For you should know that the Pythagoreans used to express wonder and admiration (*ethaumazon*) for the people who first 10 discovered numbers, claiming that they had insight into the essence of Intellect (*egnôkenai. . . ousian tou nou*) (since they used to call the Ideas 'numbers', and the Ideas are in the Intellect). They also used to express wonder and admiration at those who first laid down names for things: for these, they explained, had insight into the essence of the Soul (since it belongs to the soul to lay down

names, and not to Intellect, since Intellect produces all things by nature, but the soul by convention, and names are established by convention).[39] So too, then, Alcibiades praises 'speaking Greek' first, when he is about to explain that ordinary people are teachers of it – from whom, he claimed to have learned about justice.

And note that 'speaking Greek' (*hellênizein*) has two meanings: it can simply mean 'using only the Greek tongue', which is what 'ordinary people' teach; or it can mean 'conversing flawlessly', which lecturers in literature (*grammatikoi*) teach, for their discipline (*grammatikê*) trains cultured Greek (*hellênismos*).[40]

111A 96,1 Yes, my noble friend, they are good teachers of this. . . Since 'ordinary people' have no family standing (*agenês*), Socrates sets the young man ahead of ordinary people by calling him 'noble' (*gennaios*). And notice here how, as we have seen already, Socrates has granted that ordinary people *are* teachers of the one subject (speaking Greek) but not by any means of the other (justice). For he convicts them of ignorance on this count in the following words, since he praises them for their agreement on the subject of the Greek language in order that he can prove them ignorant about justice, since they disagree about that.

111B Don't they agree on [what wood and stone are] and reach for the same thing. . .? The verb 'agree' here relates to understanding (*gnôseôs esti*), and the word 'reach' relates to life (*zôê*). Now, he linked and joined these both together, showing that [one's way of] life generates philosophical beliefs (*dogmata*), while at the same time, beliefs generate [one's way of] life.[41] After all, the person who believes that pleasure is the good strives to experience pleasure, and lives his life according to it, and conversely, the person who lives for pleasure also expounds beliefs to this effect, that pleasure is the good.[42]

111C I think I've pretty well learned that this is what you mean by understanding Greek, haven't I? Notice how clear it is here, too, that 'speaking Greek' has two meanings.[43] For after the youth has said that everyone knows in the same way what to call stone and wood and things like that (and it's not the case that some people call them this, others that – which shows only that they are using the Greek language), then, on this basis (*loipon ek toutôn*), Socrates says that 'I think I've pretty well learned that this is what you mean'. This doesn't refer to the other sense of 'speaking Greek', namely, that with which lecturers in

literature (*grammatikoi*) are concerned; for this latter sense doesn't have to do with calling the right things by the right names, but with using the established names flawlessly. 20

[Now if we wanted to know not just what humans and horses were like], but also which of them were racers and which weren't, [would ordinary people be able to teach this as well?] Socrates is about to move on to his proof that ordinary people are ignorant about justice, and so he secures agreement to this [point] first.[44] He says, 'If we wanted to know not merely what humans and horses were like' (this is just like the previous question about stone and wood, referring to speaking Greek) 'but also which of them were racers' (and, as he adds later, which of them is healthy), 'do ordinary people know about this too?' **111D** 97,1

And the youth answers 'Of course not'. For it's clear that these questions belong to the skills of experts (*tekhnai*), which are beyond ordinary people: medicine when it comes to health, physiognomy when it comes to recognising racers, and so on. (On that note, we should be aware that 'runner' (*dromeus*) doesn't mean the same thing as 'racer' (*dromikos*): the former names a state (*hexis*), that of running, but the latter is the name of a fitness (*epitêdeiotês*), namely, of being fit for [competitive] racing. And ordinary people may possibly be able to teach about *runners* – for instance, which horses are swifter on foot, and which slower, and likewise when this is a matter of gymnastics; but even if they do know this, nevertheless they can't identify the *racers* among them, since it's a matter for a very challenging area of expertise, physiognomy, to state which will be racers or boxers and so on). 5 10

[Very well, then – does it seem to you that ordinary people actually agree. . . about just and unjust people and actions?] —Yes by Zeus (*nê Dia*), far from it, Socrates. . . Since the word 'not' (*ma*) is negative, while the word 'yes' (*nai*) is affirmative, he [normally] ought to have said '*not* by Zeus' (*ma Dia*); but he cancelled the positive force of the 'yes' in 'yes by Zeus' nonetheless by adding 'far from it', which stands in for 'by no means' (*oudamôs*), which itself is clearly negative.[45] **112A** 15

[But I know you've seeen this sort of dispute over questions of justice and injustice; or even if you haven't seen it], at least you've heard about it from many other people – especially Homer. . . Since we assert that Alcibiades **112B**

knows only three subjects – namely letters, cithara-playing, and wrestling – we should investigate why Socrates now claims that he also knows about poetry.[46] Well, we reply that he knows those three subjects as skills (*tekhnai*), but if he has also 'heard' some poems, that's certainly not something he learned *in the manner of a skill.*

112D **Well, then, given that your opinion wavers like this. . .** After it's been proven that ordinary people are ignorant about justice, and after the youth has agreed to this, Socrates asks 'how can it be plausible that you have knowledge about justice, when your opinion about it wavers like this?' (And the youth indeed did waver on this subject, when he said at first that 'ordinary people' knew about justice and that he had learned from them; but now, thanks to Socrates' cross-examination, he acknowledges that they are ignorant). Again, [Socrates points out] that 'earlier, we saw that you hadn't found it out for yourself, but now we see that you haven't learned it either, since you had no teachers'.

Lecture 11

With the god's favour

112D–114B **Soc. Well, then, given that your opinion wavers so much, and given that you obviously neither found it out yourself nor learned it from anyone else, how likely is it that you know about justice and injustice? Alc. From what *you* say, anyway, it's not very likely . . .**

Because Alcibiades has been proven doubly ignorant[47] about justice (for he didn't know about justice, and despite his ignorance, he thought he did know about it; moreover, he registered 'ordinary people' as his teachers, even though they knew nothing about justice, as their disagreement on this subject revealed) – [because of all this], given his natural talent as an orator, he replies, 'From what *you* say, it's plausible that I don't know about justice'. And when he uses the words 'plausible' (*eikos*), and '*you*', he displays his own character, one that cares for reputation (*philotimos*). Now care for reputation is a difficult affection to discard, as we have frequently pointed out,[48] because whatever the soul put on first, it casts off last.[49] For the other affections come to an end swiftly, much

like the love of pleasure in old age; in fact, the quotation of Sophocles in the *Republic* makes that clear: as [Cephalus] puts it, 'I am very pleased to have escaped all that' [1, 329C].

Now, Socrates says that Alcibiades hasn't spoken well, since it was *himself* who bore witness to his own ignorance about justice. That's because in general, when there are questions and answers [between two people], it's the respondent who says [whatever's said], not the questioner.[50] Now because in dialectical questioning the questioner and the respondent both say the same things (for 99,1
instance, 'Is the soul immortal, or not immortal?', to which the respondent responds either 'immortal' or 'not immortal'), in this case it escapes us which of them asks the questions and which answers them; but in interrogative questioning (*pusmatikôn erôtêseôn*),[51] where the questioner says one thing, but the respondent says something different (because some explanation (*logos*) is required), <it does not escape us>;[52] [because of this, then], he sets out more clearly the argument that the respondent is the one who speaks.

But we will show that in dialectical argument as well [as interrogation] the respondent is the one who says [whatever's said], rather than the questioner. [1] [First], if the respondent alone speaks truth or falsehood (for he is the only one who makes declarations, whereas the questioner speaks interrogatively, and declarative speech is different from interrogative speech, and [the former] alone among speeches says something true or false), then it's also clear that he alone speaks: for the person who speaks neither truly nor falsely does not say [anything].[53] [2] Second, if the whole syllogism is made up from the questions put to the respondent, the person who is questioned is the speaker. [3] Again, consider that the respondent often asserts premisses that the questioner would not endorse, and the syllogism is made up of these. [4] Moreover, consider that even if the questioners *are* the speakers in other cases, nonetheless *Socrates*, in his capacity as a midwife (*hôs maieutikos*),[54] is not the speaker, since his case is just like the midwife who does not give birth, but prepares those in labour to deliver.

So where does that leave us? Does the questioner say nothing? No: he speaks in his own right, but he doesn't assert premisses; instead, he supplies the construction [of the syllogism] and its conclusion.[55] For the conclusion is not in the questions, since it follows necessarily from the premisses. That's why we assign blame to the respondent for giving poor replies, if falsehood follows from what he has said (for falsehood would not have followed, unless he had

provided one false premiss); but if nothing at all follows from the premisses, we blame the questioner for failing to derive any conclusion from the questions.

But if the questioner is also a speaker, in what sense does Socrates say that the respondent is the *only* one who speaks? It's not in an unqualified sense that he says 'the questioner does not speak', but he says that it's 'in the context of question and answer' that the respondent is the [only] speaker: for he does not question what the questioner does say, namely, the construction and conclusion of the syllogism, since that isn't interrogative, since it isn't posed as a question. Moreover, Plato himself was hardly ignorant of both perspectives, and he knows that the respondent speaks here ('in the context of question and answer, the respondent is the speaker'), yet in what follows he says something different, namely, 'Show me that you know about justice, either by asking your own questions, or by presenting an argument at length' – since he knows that the questioner is sometimes a speaker as well. And that, as we have pointed out, is why we assign blame to [the questioner] when he fails to draw any conclusions.

After [Socrates] has said this, and so completed the third syllogism[56] (for [recall], there was the first, where he was striving to show that [Alcibiades] was doubly ignorant about justice, because in his ignorance he supposed that he had knowledge; then the second, where he was establishing this based on ordinary people, since [Alcibiades] proclaimed them to be his own teachers; then the third, where [Socrates] proved that in general, in the context of question and answer, it is the respondent who speaks, not the questioner) – after [Socrates] has finished the third, then, the young man changes the remaining premiss, thanks to his natural talents. For not long ago, he shifted his attitude to the other premiss, when he said that 'I was wrong to say that I didn't learn, since I learned from ordinary people'; and again now [he shifts his attitude] to the remaining premiss, when he says that 'I gave the wrong answer when I said that the Athenians deliberated about justice, for it's not about what's *just* that they deliberate, but about what's *advantageous*'; and he says this from an orator's perspective (*hôs rhêtorikos*), since he knew that the adviser's goal is advantage, not justice.[57]

Again, Socrates says, 'But you will be proven, through the same arguments, to be ignorant about what's advantageous, since you either learned it, or found out about it. (For there's no need to fear that arguments will wear out, like equipment worn down by time).[58] After all, either the just and the advantageous

are one and the same, in which case when you were proven ignorant about justice, you were simultaneously proven ignorant about the advantageous as well; or they are different, and you'll be proven ignorant about two things in place of one. For you can't state the time when you didn't think you knew what the good was, for all things aim at the good'.[59]

That is the content of the survey.

From what *you* say, anyway, it's not very likely. . . Notice how Alcibiades reveals his care for reputation (*to philotimon*), when he says 'not very likely' and 'from what *you* say', since he's unable to bear simply acknowledging that he's ignorant about justice. For this affection is a difficult one to discard – so much so, that even when we develop the desire *not* to care about our reputation, we fail to notice that we're slipping through that very act into this same affection, namely, acting out of care for our reputation – so that we are despising our reputation *because* doing so bolsters our reputation! **112D** 101,1

It's just as Epictetus the Stoic (who became a [genuine] Stoic in his soul) explains: 'It is the part of an uneducated person to blame others for his own faults (*eph' hois autos prassei kakos*); to blame himself, but not others, is the part of one whose education has begun; to blame neither another nor his own self is the part of one whose education is now complete'.[60] Likewise Alcibiades – since he lacks education – blames Socrates by saying 'as *you* say, I don't know about justice'; but later, when he begins to be educated, he will blame himself; and had he arrived at fulfilment in the present dialogue, he would have blamed neither himself nor anyone else. And in the poet [Homer], we have a verse about blaming others, here [*Il.* 19.86–87]:[61]

> . . . yet I am not responsible
> but Zeus is, and Destiny, and Fury the holy wanderer . . .[62]

What? Aren't you saying. . . Socrates employs Phaedra's saying here: for when her nurse says, 'Do you mean Hippolytus'?, she replies 'You heard it from yourself, not me!'[63] Likewise Socrates: 'You said this, not me'. And this marks the opening of the third syllogism, where he uses geometrically compelling proofs to show that the respondent, not the questioner, is the speaker. **112E** 102,1

If I ask you [which is more], one or two. . . Notice how he introduces interrogative questions,[64] saying 'If I ask you which is more, one or two, you

will say "two"; and if I ask you "more by how much", you will say "by one"'. For in [replies] where a sentence (*logos*) is unavoidably necessary, and it's inadequate to respond by saying 'yes' or 'no', or by shaking or nodding the head, here we have an 'interrogative' answer rather than a dialectical one.

That two is more than one by one. . . Socrates combines the young man's two answers.

112E–113A **Clearly I am. —And what if I ask you how to spell 'Socrates'?** Notice from the phrase 'clearly I am' how the young man has manifestly been benefited: for he is plainly assigning blame to himself; but if he had been *fully* benefited, he would have blamed neither himself nor anyone else.

Next, [Socrates] uses a different interrogative question, namely, 'If I ask you how to spell "Socrates", perhaps you will agree that you are the one giving the answer in this case?' And he replies, 'Yes'.

Come then, put it [all together] in a single argument. . . He means, 'State it in a general way: in the context of question and answer, who is the speaker?' And he replies, 'The respondent'. And he's right to use the words 'in the context of question and answer', since even if the questioner also has something to say, this is not part of the question-and-answer process.

113B **It appears, Socrates, [that it was me. . .]** Notice again how his fondness for reputation makes it unbearable for him to fully acknowledge his ignorance, but instead he says 'it appears'.

And surely what was said is that Alcibiades, [the beautiful son of Clinias doesn't understand] justice. . . That is to say, 'Wasn't it said' (insert 'by Alcibiades') 'that the beautiful Alcibiades doesn't understand'? At the critical moment, since [Alcibiades] admitted his ignorance about justice, [Socrates] has launched a series of criticisms of Alcibiades (*katadromêi elenkhôn*).[65] And since it's vulgar to present one's criticisms *in propria persona* – well, consider, it's the same way in the poet [Homer], when Phoenix wants to mount a series of criticisms against Achilles, but doesn't introduce the arguments *in propria persona*, instead introducing Peleus and criticising him that way;[66] and similarly, again, when Demosthenes wants to criticise the Athenians, he delivers his charges as if they are presented by all the Greeks;[67] but it doesn't satisfy

Socrates to use another persona, but instead, he actually puts the criticised party *himself* to use for a more effective charge, saying that 'it's been said by Alcibiades that, lacking any knowledge of justice, he is about to advise [the Athenians] on a subject that he doesn't understand'.

Now, Alcibiades fell short of three primary hypostases, Intellect (*nous*), God (*theos*), and Soul (*psukhê*).[68] [1] [He fell short] of Soul, first, since he lacks knowledge (*ouk oiden*), and understanding (*gignôskein*) is a distinctive feature of Soul. [2] He fell short of Intellect since while he lacks knowledge, he supposes he has it; for it is a distinctive feature of Intellect to revert [upon oneself] (*epistrephein*). (That's because Intellect is analogous to a sphere, as it makes each point both origin and limit). [3] [And he fell short] of God because he is producing harmful results (*kakopoios*): for he is on the verge of giving advice about what he doesn't know, so that he may bring those who take his advice to harm; but God is characterised by goodness. For consider the case of a person who is ignorant about medicine and doesn't give advice about medical matters and [thus] doesn't make mistakes, whereas the opposite holds of a person who tries to give advice in his ignorance; and likewise, it's the person who gives advice about carpentry *without knowledge of this subject* who makes mistakes (for the cause of error isn't simple ignorance, but double): the same applies to Alcibiades.

And Alcibiades is like madmen:[69] for his case is analogous to that of Ajax in Sophocles, who supposed as he slew the flocks that they were the Greeks;[70] likewise [Alcibiades] here supposes that he knows about justice, in spite of his ignorance, so he too brings those who take his advice to harm (*kaka*). And just as the presence of a teacher is useless in the face of double ignorance, for a teacher is no help to the person who supposes he knows [all about the subject], it's the same way with the doctor and the madman: that's why [Socrates] calls [Alcibiades] 'mad' (*manikos*) [113C5].

The beautiful son of Clinias. . . This drives home the point that 'None [of this] helped you toward knowing about justice: not beauty, nor wealth, nor noble birth'.[71] 104,1

Apparently. – Then it's just like in Euripides: Plato teaches us how one ought to paraphrase poetic passages (*parôidein khrêseis*), namely, that one shouldn't quote the passages themselves (since that's tedious and deprives the words of **113C**

force), but rather, [one should excerpt] some phrases: that's why he doesn't provide the entire passage.[72]

He runs the risk [of being said to have heard this from himself]. . . Risk (*kindunos*) doesn't lie only in deeds, but also in speech, where assent is generated through the force of the arguments and the examination: that's why he uses the word 'risk'.

And I'm not the one who says these things. . . [He says this] because an analogy holds between the questioner and the god who offers souls their choice of life,[73] by offering them one or the other alternative (in any case, that's how it is in the *Republic*: 'You will choose your daimon; a daimon will not be assigned to you by lot' [*Rep.* 10, 617E]); and in the analogy, the respondent corresponds to the soul as it chooses lives.[74]

This scheme you have in mind is mad (*manikos*). . . Notice how he calls him 'mad', as we pointed out before.[75]

113D Actually, Socrates, I think that [the Athenians and the other Greeks] rarely [discuss which course is more just or unjust]. Notice how he uses this speech to make his escape, in the spirit of orators:[76] 'The Athenians don't deliberate about what's just, but about what's advantageous, since that's the adviser's goal'. Now from the orators' perspective, the just and the advantageous are different things,[77] since[78] they were in the habit of claiming that it is possible to obtain from unjust means something that is advantageous, but not just, whereas dying for one's country was just, but certainly not advantageous, for it was no advantage to the body. That's why Socrates, too, often solemnly cursed those who first distinguished these from each other,[79] since they had produced the worst sort of a snare for souls, and thrown both the essence (*ousia*) of the soul and our mode of fulfilment (*teleiotês*) into confusion. For if the just is proven interchangeable with the advantageous – such that 105,1 everything just is also advantageous, and vice versa – the result will be that the human being is the soul [as in fact it is], rather than the combination [of soul and body]. Thus [by denying this] they confused our essence, to begin with. Moreover, [the result will be] that excellence (*aretê*) is sufficient for well-being (*eudaimonia*), and defectiveness (*kakia*) is sufficient for ill-being (*kakodaimonia*): hence [by denying this] they confused our mode of fulfilment.

Otherwise [if they were correct], there would have been no benefit for the man who said 'pound!'[80]

But how did Alcibiades come to say that the Athenians didn't deliberate about these matters, i.e., about justice?[81] It's because (since he was inclined to oratory and had plenty of rhetorical preparation thanks to Pericles) he used to observe [the Athenians] saying that oratory in the courts of justice had one goal, but deliberation [in the Assembly] had another, namely the advantageous, based on the foci (*kephalaia*) [of rhetorical training]. For they used to say that [rhetoric] takes its focus either from custom, or from justice, or from advantage.[82]

Alternately, it's because everyone supposes that justice is determined by convention, while what's good is determined by nature:[83] for no human being supposed that what's good [for them] was determined by convention, except Clitophon alone in the *Republic*,[84] which is why [Plato] did not deem it worthwhile to name him, but he says 'one of those present said',[85] since he spoke contrary to the common concept.[86] – So that's why he thought there was a difference between the just and the advantageous.

And furthermore, you're quite right to say so. . . Democritus, surnamed (because when his name is measured, it adds up to 651),[87] takes the phrase 'you're quite right to say so' as spoken by Socrates, but Damascius takes it as spoken by Alcibiades. The second alternative is better, since, as we pointed out,[88] Alcibiades was beginning to be benefited, and he is cricitising himself. 651 **113C** 106,1

They think that sort of thing is obvious: Alcibiades makes a good point: for since they consider just [actions] to be so by convention, and [consider themselves] to be their inventors, they don't think it's worthwhile to teach or give advice about them, but instead they deliberate about advantageous [actions]. **113D**

So? Even if just [and advantageous actions happen] to be completely different, [surely you don't think that you know what's advantageous for people and why, do you?]: He makes a start on the refutation,[89] and proves [Alcibiades] ignorant about the advantageous based on [this] counter-objection, because the objection (*enstasis*) [will] require many arguments to prove that the

just and advantageous are one and the same, which he'll show in what follows. But for now he says that 'If the just and advantageous are one and the same, and you were proven ignorant of the just, surely it follows that you're ignorant of the advantageous? And if they differ, and you were to be proven ignorant about the advantageous by the same arguments [as before], then you'll be proven ignorant about two subjects instead of one'.

113E **What's to stop me, Socrates? Unless you're going to ask me all over again. . .**
15 'What's to stop me', Alcibiades means, 'from knowing about the advantageous, even if I *am* ignorant about justice? As long as you don't question me with the same arguments again! If you do that, then I'll be proven ignorant'.

[The argument by which this will be shown is] that by which the former point [was shown]: [He says this] because Alcibiades resembles a gourmand
20 when it comes to arguments. Hence one proof doesn't suffice, but he wants the same point to be demonstrated by many proofs, just as when it comes to food, gourmands aren't satisfied by one kind of food.

As if the previous ones were worn-out equipment. . . Plato makes clear that 'equipment' (*skeuaria*) doesn't mean implements (*skeuê*), as our ordinary usage has it, since he adds 'that you would refuse to put on again'; rather, he
107,1 uses the word 'equipment' to mean the costume of comic and tragic [actors]. But if you also want to understand how the word relates to costumes, then [you should learn that] 'equipment' has three meanings in Plato:[90] either [1] costume, or [2] clothing (which is why he adds 'that you would refuse to put on again'), or [3] luxury, since Alcibiades had the habit of a great deal of luxury, so that
5 quite a few people have written lengthy tomes about 'the luxury of Alcibiades';[91] but all of these things are 'costumes' in the sense that they belong to the outside world. But why on earth does the soul want to employ the costume that lies outside itself, its clothing? Really, it's after other, different things, and it's wrapped up in other things: for it holds a concept (*ennoia*) of its *inward* wrappings, the luminous, pneumatic, and shell-like [vehicles];[92] by means of
10 this visible clothing, then, the soul demonstrates her desire to possess pure *inward* wrappings (so too the Poet writes [*Od.* 5.167],

> and dress you in garments):
> She wants to have them, then, in a stainless condition.[93]

[**I'll pass over] your sallies from your base. . .** The word 'sally' (*prodromê*) is used in cases where one side in war takes some secure base, from which he's able to wage war from a position of security: Alcibiades, then, thought it was a [good] sally [to ask] not to be questioned by Socrates using the same arguments [as before]. **114A**

From what source did you learn what is advantageous? Socrates pithily presents his questions from [his earlier discussion of] 'Where did you learn or find out?' [106C–110D].[94] [He does so pithily] because he's already gone through these things, just as the Poet puts it [*Od.* 12.452–53]:

> It would be tedious
> to tell again what's clearly been told.

[Why don't you prove] whether the just and advantageous are the same. . . By these comments, he presents the objection that 'You ought to show that justice and advantage are not the same: for if you don't show this, you'll be proven ignorant of two things in the place of one'. **114B** 108,1

You can question me, if you like, just as I questioned you, or else work it out yourself, in your own argument: Notice how he is aware that the questioner, too, speaks and he never adds 'in question and answer', since he recognises that the respondent is the speaker in a case of question and answer.[95]

But why did Socrates want Alcibiades to ask questions or deliver an argument at length (*apotadên*)? Well, it's because he knew that he was no longer willing to answer questions after he had been refuted by Socrates, and so he changed the mode of discussion to this. And [it can be delivered] at length, since if Socrates were the person *giving* the discourse, there would be cause to worry that he would deliver his speech to a sleeping audience (as Aischines puts it: 'the judges were dreaming as the speech at trial was being made');[96] but since in fact Socrates is [the audience], there's no reason to worry that he will suffer this.

[No], Socrates, [I don't think I'd be able] to work it out when I'm facing you . . . He means, 'I don't know if I have the capacity to maintain a dialectical conversation with you': and the phrase 'facing you' (*pros se*) had a warlike and combative character.[97]

That is the content of the lecture, with the god's favour.

Lecture 12

With the god's favour

114B–115A **Alc. But I don't know if I'd be able to work it out when I'm facing you, Socrates . . .**

Due to his natural talent, Alcibiades has withdrawn his endorsement of the remaining premiss [sc., that the Athenians deliberate about justice], by saying, 'But the Athenians don't deliberate about justice, but about advantage, since the adviser doesn't aim for justice, but for advantage'; and Socrates has refuted him with a counter-objection, saying that 'Even if we do grant that there is a difference between the just and the advantageous, all the same you'll be proven ignorant about what's advantageous by the same arguments that proved you ignorant about justice' (for there's no reason to worry that arguments will wear out like equipment);[98] beginning from this point, and aiming to refute Alcibiades, he also works up to his objection, in which he demonstrates that everything just is advantageous and everything advantageous just, in order that he may demonstrate the identity of justice and advantage by their mutual convertibility (*dia tês antistrophês*).

Now the present syllogism contributes both to our essence (*ousia*) and to our fulfilment (*teleiotês*).[99] [It contributes] to our essence, first, because if the just and advantageous are proven to be one and the same, then wherever justice is, there is advantage too: and justice is in the soul, and therefore advantage, too, is in the soul. And since advantage consists in 'being well-off' (*eu einai*), and where there is well-being there is also being in general (*pantôs*), then it follows that our being, too, lies in the soul. But he also demonstrates our fulfilment through this [syllogism]: for if justice and advantage are one and the same, then our goal is justice and, by that argument, excellence (*aretê*) is sufficient for well-being (*eudaimonia*), and deficiency (*kakia*) for being badly off (*kakodaimonia*), even if all the rest of one's external situation were to be in good shape.

But in what sense does Plato mean all this, namely, that everything just is advantageous, and everything advantageous just, and that they are mutually convertible?[100] And [why], in what follows [115A–116D], will he show that the beautiful or noble (*kalon*),[101] too, is convertible with [both of] these, and vice versa? Well, if we adopt Proclus' rule,[102] then loftier [beings] do not end or

begin at the same point as hollower [beings]: rather, their progression extends further, like three archers of unequal power, and the stronger archers fire a great distance. And the advantageous corresponds to the Good (*agathon*), but the noble (*kalon*) to the Intellect (because beauty is the foam[103] and flower of Form (*eidos*), and Form corresponds to Intellect as it reverts to its source; and that's because what is partless reverts upon itself, since partition arises on account of matter (*hulê*), because all the formulae (*logoi*) exist in a partless way in the seed – such that when a part is cast away, the remainder still fulfils its needed task),[104] and justice begins from Soul. That's why the Good descends even as far as matter (for [matter] itself is good, and fulfils its needed task for the all); but the gift of Intellect extends as far as anything made by Form; and the gift of Soul extends as far as the non-rational soul (for justice is in the [non-rational soul] too, [for example] among the storks).[105]

You might also grasp [Plato's] meaning from different examples (*paradeigmata*). Consider: Being is prior to Life, but Life is prior to Intellect (as we will learn more precisely in the *Sophist*'s discussion of being);[106] on this account, more [things] exist than live, and more [things] live than think.

Well, then, how does he make these terms convertible, justice and advantage? Of course, the conversion holds true in the case of the human good, advantage and beauty: just as, when both intellect and life are in the soul, these convert; for where there is one, there are also the others. That is the view of the philosopher Proclus. But the divine Iamblichus doesn't distinguish the loftier from the hollower [entities] in the extent of their contribution (for *all* [of them] descend to matter, because it's his position that whatever the point might be from which a thing begins to act, it doesn't stop until it reaches the furthest limits (*eskhata*); for even if it's stronger, nonetheless a balancing force can arise to weaken the effect through the distance of separation), but he does make a distinction in the more 'striking' nature (*drimus*) of the contribution of the loftier [entities]. For we aim for being more than for life, and more for life than for thinking.

And once Socrates has offered Alcibiades the choice (since he doesn't want to answer him) either to ask the questions or to deliver an account [of the advantageous] on his own and at length, Alcibiades replies: 'I don't know if I'm able to produce the account of the advantageous when I'm facing Socrates'. Hence Socrates adds another syllogism, namely: 'Well, how will you persuade the Athenians when you advise them? For someone who is persuasive to one

person is also persuasive to many; and someone who is persuasive to many people also persuades one'. Through this syllogism, it's made clear that our mode of fulfilment is something incorporeal,[107] since the body is unable to give of itself to others without diminution, whereas the mode of fulfilment that belongs to the soul is able to give of itself without diminution, both to one [recipient] and to many: and perhaps it even adds a greater increase, since the teacher is fulfilled (*teleioutai*) by delivering his arguments.

Now in what sense does Plato mean this? How are we to understand it?[108] Does the person who is persuasive to one mindless person (*anoêtos*) also persuade a multitude of philosophers? Or does the person who is persuasive to a multitude of philosophers also persuade one mindless person? We reply that Plato resolves all of these questions in one phrase, when he says 'each one by one' (*hena hekaston*).[109] For the person who persuades one also persuades many, since those 'ones' (*ta hena*), if I may say so, are part of the many, and he made this clear by using the word '*each* one' (*hekaston*). Moreover, since the many is made up from individuals (*henades*), the person who persuades the many also persuades the one [in it].[110] And in addition to this, [he will be persuasive] if he is knowledgeable about his subject: for the arithmetician is capable of being persuasive about numbers, to one and many alike, assuming that they are knowledgeable (*epistêmonas*).[111]

That is the content of the survey.

114B But I don't know if I'd be able (*hoios*) [to work it out facing you], Socrates: Notice that he refuses to answer facing Socrates. That's why [Socrates] says 'Then how can you advise the Athenians? For someone who is persuasive to an individual, is also persuasive to many'. And he also introduces [talk about] the Assembly and the courtroom and the people, since the young man is inclined to oratory.[112]

Even there, you know, you'll have to persuade them each one by one. Notice the rule that the person who is persuasive to one is also persuasive to many: and by using the words 'each one', he makes clear that he must mean ['one' in the sense] 'part of many'.

[If somebody knows something], don't you think he can persuade people about it as individuals (*kata monas*), as well as all together? Notice again

that by the phrase 'as individuals as well as all together', he shows that it belongs to one and the same person to persuade both many and one, at least where the plurality is constituted from individuals. So why does he repeat himself (*adoleskhei*)? For he said this earlier, too. Well, in one place he takes the one as *part* of the many (as he does here), but in another place he takes the one individually as *separated* from the many – as he does above, [when Alcibiades refers to] 'being able (*hoios*) [114B] [to persuade] Socrates about it (*Sôkratê peri autou*)'[113] – for [Socrates] is separated from the many, though he can be counted among them.

About things that he knows, just as the schoolmaster. . . Notice the second condition, that it's necessary for him to *know* as well. For it's the person who knows about letters who will be persuasive, to one and many alike. **114C**

And this person who knows is called an arithmetician? He wasn't satisfied with mathematical necessity as an instrument of persuasion (for the arithmetician is a kind of mathematician), but he also added 'the one who knows (*ho eidôs*) about these things').[114] 113,1

[Is there any difference between an orator speaking to the people and an orator speaking in this sort of conversation, except] insofar as the former persuades them of the same things in a group while the latter persuades them one by one? Notice again how he juxtaposed 'one by one' with 'in a group': it's clear that he means the same people, at one point taken individually, at another, as a group. **114D**

There's a good chance (*kinduneuei*). . . The phrase 'there's a good chance' is used about [beliefs] which, thanks to a ladder of cogent arguments (*dia klimaktêra anankês*), are on the verge of being necessarily exchanged for the contrary belief.

You're being pushy (*hubristês ei*), Socrates. . . He labels his cross-examiner 'pushy'. And Socrates admits this,[115] and says: 'Not only am I pushy, but the most pushy imaginable, since I don't only want to prove your arguments false, but also to prove the contrary position true, that everything just is advantageous, and vice versa'. For some propositions are false, not because they are refuted by their contraries [being proven true], but by the intermediate [being proven

true], as holds in the case of the [proposition] 'every human being walks'. For that isn't refuted by its contrary (which is also false), but by the intermediary [sc., 'some human being does not walk'].[116]

Now, in fact, I'm going to be pushy and persuade you of the contrary. . . That is to say, 'In being insolent, I'm not only refuting you, but I'm also going to persuade you of the contrary [of your position], if you would answer me'. But [Alcibiades] doesn't want to answer, since – thanks to his natural talent – he was aware that wherever there's question and answer, the respondent is the one who speaks, not the questioner.[117] And [Socrates] in turn insists on his answering, for this kind of refutation (*elenkhos*) is the most efficacious of all, since we are better persuaded when we refute our own selves, and in dialectical questioning, the person who refutes relates to the person refuted more than snake's bite to the body.[118]

114E **No, you do the talking yourself. . .** Plato uses 'do the talking' (*lege*) here to mean 'speak at length'.

114,1 **What? Don't you want to be *really* (*malista*) convinced?** Socrates says, 'What else do you want, if not to be persuaded that everything just is advantageous, and vice versa'? That's because two syllogisms will be proven through this argument.

Then answer my questions; and if you don't hear yourself say. . . 'Answer my questions', he says; 'and if you don't hear yourself saying that everything just is advantageous and vice versa, don't trust anyone else saying it. . .' For whenever someone is benefited by an argument developed at length, they are obliged to say:

> How could you say what *I* ought to be saying [myself]?[119]

For [Alcibiades] ought to have given these answers himself, so that his arguments would not be formed from without, like a lifeless vessel that holds its water [poured] from outside: rather, the refutations (*elenkhoi*) ought to be presented from one's own self. That way, learning is recollection.[120]

But I'd better answer: for I don't think I'll come to any harm. . . Thanks to his natural talent, he finds another escape route, namely, that 'I am answering

because I don't think I'll come to any harm'. But [Socrates] grants him this, and says, **'You're inclined to prophecy':** for the person inclined to prophecy (*mantikos*), like the naturally talented person, hazards well-aimed guesses about the future.[121] Yet it wasn't merely the case that [Alcibiades] would come to no harm, but he is actually going to be benefited. And [Socrates] didn't say 'you're a prophet (*mantis*)', since the prophet is *knowledgeable*, while the prophetically inclined person is unfulfilled [in the mastery of their talent]: just as the doctor (*iatros*) and the medically inclined person (*iatrikos*) are not the same. And Alcibiades didn't make this statement with knowledge, but he offered his prediction based on opinion (*doxa*).

That is the content of the lecture.

Lecture 13

With the god's favour

Soc. Now tell me: are you saying that some just things are advantageous, but others are not? **115A–116B**

The present dialogue has ten syllogisms;[122] he lays out the fifth of these to prove that the just and the advantageous are one and the same. He uses two syllogisms to demonstrate this: first, that everything just is also advantageous; next, that everything advantageous is also just. For converting [the proposition] yields the identity [of the terms].[123]

Now, he presents the syllogism as follows:[124] 'Everything just is noble (*kalon*):[125] and everything noble is advantageous: therefore everything just is advantageous'. And the youth does not reject the minor premiss (the one stating that 'everything just is noble'), as someone who cares about his reputation (*hôs philotimos*), because he considers just deeds praiseworthy. (That is also why he donated ten talents to the council of his own free will).[126] But he resists the major premiss (the one stating that 'everything noble is advantageous'), by arguing that some deeds are noble but bad, while other, shameful deeds are good.[127] And [on his view] this isn't a contradiction. For there are two contradictories: noble and shameful, and good and bad – and the noble is contradictory to the shameful, while the good is contradictory to the bad, but the *noble* is not contradictory to

the bad. For (as [Alcibiades] claims) a noble act can be a bad one: for instance, going to war on behalf of one's country, and dying for a friend (*philos*) – this action is noble because it's praiseworthy (for it's done for a friend), but it's not *good*, inasmuch as it brings no benefit to the body. And the converse holds of the shameful and the good, as in the case of refusing to give one's life for a friend.

Now the Oracle made both of these points very clear.[128] On the topic of refusing to give one's life for a friend, on the one hand, [she] said this:

> You did not defend your friend, though you were at his side as he was dying:
> You arrive impure: depart from my all-beautiful shrine.

116,1 On the other hand, when it came to a man who thrust out his arm to help his friend, but his spear[129] struck [his friend by accident], she said this:

> You reached out to save your companion: the blood does not pollute you,
> but you are purer of slaughter than you were before.

Now [Socrates] might have refuted Alcibiades by saying the following:[130] 'But the human being is the soul, and harms (*kaka*) to the instrument don't come back on its user. It's true that harms suffered by parts do come back on the whole: if, then, the human being were compounded from soul and body, then harms to the body *would* come back on the whole. But since the one [sc. body] is the instrument and the other [sc. soul] is its user, the errors (*hamartêmata*) of the instrument can't come back on its user, just as the blunting of the adze doesn't come back on its user'. But since these [arguments] are more philosophical (and the question would be begged right from the start, 'On what grounds [do you claim] that the human being is the soul?'),[131] he [instead] employs three arguments to prove that the just and the advantageous are one the same: and the first argument is that everything noble is advantageous.

The first argument runs as follows: 'Two [different qualities] – say, nobility (*to kalon*) and harm (*to kakon*) – don't both attend on a single [subject] – say, courage. Rather, two [different qualities] attend on two [different subjects]. For nobility attends courage on behalf of one's friend, but harm attends death: so courage and death are not identical, at least, not unless everyone who is brave in battle dies, or everyone who dies in battle is brave. The consequence is that the two [different qualities] – both the harm of death, and nobility – attend two [different subjects] and not one, courage'. And in saying this, [Socrates]

allows that death is something harmful, since he is crafting his words for Alcibiades.[132]

The second argument: 'Even if we do grant that two [different qualities] (nobility and the harm of death) follow [an act of] courage as such, nonetheless, they don't follow in the same way: for nobility followed courage insofar as it is courage [i.e., essentially],[133] but harm only followed by accident, by the destruction of the underlying [body] and by allowing courage as such [to run its course]. For if one had destroyed courage insofar as it is courage, it would have been cowardice that followed for that person, not death; for it's cowardice that destroys courage *as such*'.

Next, since he is conversing not in the Socratic manner, but as a teacher, and thus he is overstepping the instruction of the god, according to which 'the god made me a midwife [of ideas], but prevents me from begetting' [*Tht.* 150C] (for now he is *teaching* these lessons, rather than acting as a midwife, since [for midwifery] we would need to hear these statements from Alcibiades, not asserted by Socrates), and since he was a midwife's son, he reverses the arrangement, and makes Alcibiades the respondent by asking these same questions of Alcibiades. And he practices the argument with courage, since their conversation has taken a turn toward military matters; and he proves that courage is good, since it is something noble. (For consider, if he had been talking with Charmides, the 'most temperate' (*sôphronestatos*) – since that dialogue was actually entitled by him [sc. Plato] '*Charmides, or Concerning Temperance*' – he would have practised the argument with temperance [rather than courage]). 117,1

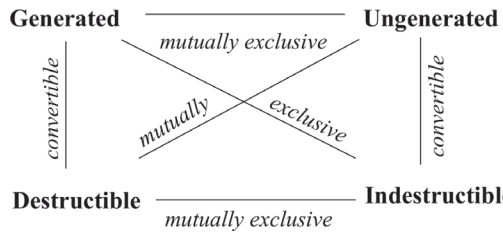
He asks him, then, 'whether you would choose to be a coward, or to die?' And Alcibiades chooses to die, since he is courageous. And again, 'Do you consider death and cowardice equally [harmful]'?[134] And Alcibiades also agrees here, in error: for it is better to die than to be a coward, since courage causes us to exist *well* (*eu einai*), but life [only causes us to] exist: surely, too, the [one] drop (*apoptôsis*) is worse than the other, that is, existing in a bad condition (*kakôs*) [is worse] than not existing. But since these matters are more philosophical, Socrates lets them go and uses [Alcibiades'] own words to prove that everything noble is good.

Now earlier on, before his midwifery, [Socrates] proved that everything noble is good in the following way: 'Courage is something noble' (for the young man granted this also in the case of justice); 'everything noble, insofar as it is noble,

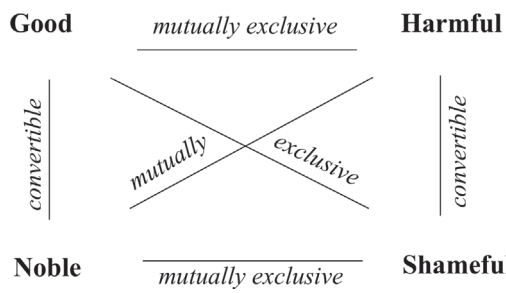
is good' (for the second syllogism showed this, the one which asserted that 'the good followed courage insofar as it is courage, since it is noble, and it was [only] in an accidental way that death, which is harmful, followed something noble); 'and since the phrase "insofar as" implies convertibility [between two terms], it is also noble insofar as it is good. And after we have made the same arguments in the case of temperance', he says, 'and the other excellences (*aretai*), we will hold that everything noble, insofar as it is noble, is good, and thereby the same'.

Following his midwifery, however, he devises a different kind of syllogism,[135] asserting that 'Courage is desirable to Alcibiades; everything desirable is good, since desire waxes and wanes with the good (for the greater the good, the greater the desire); courage, then, is good; and the same goes for the other excellences; the consequence is that everything noble is good'. For if courage, as something noble, is desirable, and if it is also an object of love (*erastos*) (for what's noble and beautiful (*kalon*) is so relative to love), and if the desirable is good, then courage is good; and after we have done the same for self-control and proven that self-control is something good, and likewise for the other excellences, we will hold that everything noble is good, as we have said. And since the particular assertion is convertible with itself,[136] and it's been proven that everything noble (and the aggregate constructed from the particular assertions) is good, the entire aggregate is also convertible.[137]

In addition to this, he also uses a third syllogism to prove that everything <noble> is good, and the converse:[138] he has employed a proof that Aristotle found use for in *On the Heavens* [*De Caelo*]. That is, after he takes two contradictory terms (and each of their legs is convertible with the other leg), he proves that the terms on the diagonal cannot both be true.[139] And here are the two contradictory terms [that he uses]: generated, ungenerated; destructible, indestructible. Now, since he has demonstrated that the generated is convertible with the destructible (for everything generated is destructible, and vice versa), and likewise for the other pair (everything ungenerated is indestructible, and everything indestructible ungenerated), it's impossible for both of the diagonal terms to hold true [of something], e.g., destructible and ungenerated: for if both *do* hold true, then – since he has proven that everything destructible is generated – there will be something generated and ungenerated, and a contradictory proposition will hold.



This is the [scheme of] proof that Plato has used here, taking the following as his two contradictory [sets of] terms: good, harmful; noble, shameful.



And once he has proven that the good is convertible with the noble and the harmful with the shameful, he shows that it's impossible for one and the same thing to be both noble and harmful. For if it is, then, since he has proven that 25
the noble is good, one and the same thing will be both good and bad, which is impossible.

That is the content of the survey.

Now tell me: are you saying that some just things are advantageous, but 119,1
others are not? What is the object (*skopos*) of the discussion (*praxis*)? To show, **115A**
using three arguments, that the just and advantageous are one and the same: and he does this by the convertibility of the just and the advantageous. And notice that he did *not* ask [Alcibiades] whether he thought that *no* just things were advantageous, but instead he posed the more persuasive question, 5
whether he thought that *some* just thing was advantageous, but another was not. And he introduces that [aforementioned] syllogism, that 'everything just is noble', and [Alcibiades] grants this: but he resists the major [premiss], which states 'and everything noble is advantageous'.

What do you mean by that question? The young man wasn't unsure without cause, but because Socrates named two things, the just and the advatangeous, and then asked whether some of these are noble but others shameful, [Alcibiades] was unsure to which of these [i.e., the just or the advantageous] to refer his answer.

Have you ever thought that someone was doing something that was both just and shameful? Notice how he asks him for the minor [premiss], and the young man, since he's fond of reputation (*philotimos*), grants that everything just is noble.

[What I think, Socrates, is that] some noble [actions] are harmful. Notice how he resists the major premiss, that not everything noble is good, considering wounds suffered in war.[140]

115B **Surely you call a rescue of this sort noble?** He could certainly have said the same things about temperance (*sophrosûnê*),[141] but since this discussion is about warcraft, he mentioned a relevant example. (Consider, the temperance of Hippolytus was noble, but not good, since he died).[142]

115C **Now courage is one thing, but death is something else, right?** Here is the first solution, that two [results] follow from two [different kinds of act], not two from one: for courage and death are not the same.

120,1 **Now let's see whether, insofar as it's noble, it's also good. . .** Here is the second syllogism, the one which says, 'Even if we allow that both nobility and the harm of death follow on one and the same act, namely [an act of] courage, it's still not in the same *way* [that they follow]; rather, the noble follows from courage insofar as it is courage, while harm follows accidentally, by letting [courage] go free and attacking its underlying subject [sc. the body]'. That is why he says: 'Consider <whether>,[143] insofar as it is noble, it is also good'[144] (and he uses this phrase 'insofar as' (*hêi*) in cases of convertibility), 'following our current model of courage. For it was claimed earlier that two results follow on two [different acts], but now [it's said] that two follow on one: for nobility *in and of itself* follows courage, but harm follows incidentally. So consider whether this nobility itself is good or bad'.

Consider it like this: which would you rather have, good things or bad things? He changes the structure of the argument to midwifery, to avoid overstepping the injunction of the god: 'the god made me a midwife [of ideas],

but prevents me from begetting' [*Tht.* 150C]. And he sets the argument out for Alcibiades as follows, saying that 'courage is desirable; everything desirable is good (because these two wax and wane together; for we have greater desire for the greater good); courage, then, is good'.

And after we have practised the same arguments in the case of the other noble [qualities], since nobility is a collection of excellences – for example, in the case of temperance: 'for the temperance of Hippolytus is harmful incidentally, since death followed'[145] – <we will conclude that everything noble is good>.[146]

[Cowardice is] on a par with death. . . Notice how the young man errs here: for existing in a bad condition is worse than not existing.[147] **115D**

[So you called] rescuing your friends in battle [noble]. . . Here begins the first dialectical proof, to the effect that two [qualities] follow on two [different] acts, that is, nobility from courage and harm from death, through midwifery. **115E**

So we may fairly describe each of these acts as follows: [Here is] the second dialectical argument, to the effect that 'the noble, insofar as it is noble, is good'. 121,1

Isn't it also noble insofar as it's good? He employs conversion here, because (since the phrase 'insofar as' is used in cases of convertibility) [an act] is also noble insofar as it is good.

[Then when you say that rescuing one's friends in battle is] noble, but harmful. . . At this point he presents the third syllogism, the one that develops from two contradictories, which Aristotle also found useful.[148] And he explains that that 'in saying that the noble act is harmful, you are not uttering a contradiction on the face of it, but you are *potentially* contradicting yourself, since what you're saying is actually that the harmful is good, given that the noble is convertible with the good, and everything noble is good'.

Lecture 14

With the god's favour

Soc. Now then, let's take a new approach: people who act nobly do things well, don't they? **116B–118B**

Since Socrates demonstrated that everything noble is good, using the example of courage (since he was explaining how 'the noble, insofar as it is noble, is desirable; everything desirable is good; therefore, everything noble is good'), and Alcibiades granted that courage is noble, courage is therefore good. And once we have established the same result for the other excellences (since nobility is, in a sense, a collection and flowering of the excellences), we will also conclude that everything noble is good.

Now since he knew (even before Aristotle)[149] that a demonstration relying on particular terms is weak, he wants to demonstrate this conclusion using a universal argument as well: so he takes universal propositions, and uses these to demonstrate that everything noble is good and the converse. And the syllogism goes like this: 'The person who performs noble deeds, acts well; the person who acts well has well-being (*eudaimonia*); the person who has well-being does good deeds; therefore, the person who performs noble deeds performs good deeds, and through this, it follows that the noble is good'.

122,1 Since Plato has advanced these arguments, people who want to disparage this syllogism enjoy a great deal of license for criticism, asking [1] 'What differentiates the premisses from each other? That is, what differentiates "performing noble deeds" from "acting well"? [2] Or what differentiates "acting well" from "well-being"?'

[1] Well, we reply to the first question that 'performing noble deeds (*kala*)' and 'acting well' are not the same. For 'well' is a middle term between the good, and the noble or beautiful (*kalon*),[150] since 'well' is an outflowing and a kind of radiance of the good toward the beautiful (*kalon*), beginning from the good, and ending with the beautiful. For that reason, the beautiful is also described by the [adverb] 'well', for example when we say that those who speak beautifully speak *well*. But 'well' also refers to the good, since we also describe people who are kind to us and wish us good things as 'well-intentioned' (*eunous*) toward us.

'Well' applies to each [of the beautiful and the good] because it is desirable. The beautiful, of course, is desirable because it calls [people] to itself (*kaloun eph' heauto*), while the good (*agathon*) [is so called] because it causes all people to 'rush with energy' (*agan thein*) toward it. That is also why the extraordinary (*daimônios*) Aristotle conjectured as the first cause, not the [true] first principle

(*arkhê*), but [the second], mind (*nous*).[151] And when he discussed it in the *Metaphysics*,[152] he described [the applicability of the word] 'well' as twofold, applying in one sense to the military leader (*stratêgos*), and in the other to his army, and 'wellness' in the leader causes 'wellness' in the army. In this way, 'well' became assimilated with beauty, since beauty is akin to Intellect (*nous*).[153] For had his argument been made about the good, he would not have used [the word] 'well', because the first [i.e., the Good] stands above this.

[2] And as for the second question, this is not the same, for it is one thing to act well and another to achieve well-being (*eudaimonein*): for the former befits self-moved agents (since it is a distinguishing feature of self-movement to live with excellence [*kata aretên*]), but well-being has reached us from above, if we are beings who have lived in an excellent way; for the radiance that shines from divinity attends those who have made themselves suitable [to receive it], and this radiance is well-being, and this kind of movement deriving from another (*heterokinêtos*) is greater than self-movement; for being led by divinity is superior to being led by their own selves.[154] 123,1

Next, he attaches two premisses to what's been said so far, and thus draws the conclusion that was proposed at the outset – one more general [premiss], and one more specific. The more specific premiss is that the person who performs *good* deeds, performs *advantageous* deeds (for the good and advantageous are the same); and the more general [premiss] is that the person who does just things, does noble things (for Alcibiades was already committed to this, that 'everything is just is noble'); and [Socrates] concludes that 'surely everything just is also advantageous'.

Next, he converts one of the premisses stated in the middle,[155] by saying that 'the person who acts well also performs noble deeds'. And he accomplishes this by proving that all of the premisses convert, and on that account, the conclusion also follows. For it had been proposed to prove not only that everything just is advantageous, but also that everything advantageous is just, so that this conversion would follow: 'The advantageous is good: the good causes well-being: what causes well-being constitutes good action: it is such [good action] to perform noble deeds; to behave thus [sc. nobly] constitutes justice; therefore, the advantageous is just'.

Now after Socrates' argument has proceeded that way, and after Alcibiades has been released from double ignorance (but he has not yet reached simple

ignorance: rather, he is in the borderlands (*methorios*) between double and simple ignorance), [Alcibiades] grants that he does not know what sorts of statements he is agreeing to, one kind or another. For he says, 'I have no idea what I'm saying (*ho ti legô*). . . one moment things seem like this to me, and at another moment, they seem different' [116E]. And this [state] lies between
25 simple ignorance (namely, knowing that one does not know) and double ignorance (namely, firmly supposing that one knows), that is, supposing at one moment that one knows, and at another not holding that supposition (just as opinion is a mean between double ignorance and knowledge. For the person holding an opinion who knows *that* it is so, but remains ignorant of *why* it is so, is so to speak 'in the borderlands' between those cases [i.e., double ignorance
124,1 and knowledge] that are diametrically contrary to one another).[156] That is also why the argument was being made [in an earlier lecture, 38,16–18] that the person holding a [true] opinion differs from the knowledgeable person only in respect of the *reason why*: for he does exactly what the knowledgeable person does, just as the empirical doctor does exactly what the scientific doctor does.[157]

Next, since Socrates wants to free Alcibiades completely from double
5 ignorance, he attacks it and condemns it with dramatic flair (*ektragôidei*), claiming that it is the cause of our going astray (*planê*), the cause of error, the most shameful and ugly[158] thing of all (*aiskhistotatos*). That's because simple ignorance is 'most shameful' (*aiskhistos*), but this [double ignorance] is 'the most shameful thing *of all*' (*aiskhistotatos*) and 'the most deserving of reproach'. That's why it belongs to [double ignorance] to be 'most deserving of reproach', since it's the cause of our wandering astray: this follows from the fact that [1] the person who knows the path doesn't go astray, nor does [2] the person who,
10 while not knowing [the path], recognises his ignorance (for this person would not even undertake the journey); but [3] it's the person who is ignorant, while at the same time supposing he knows, [who wanders astray]. And he is the cause of ethical mistakes (*hamartêmata*) as well: for this [doubly ignorant] person tries to teach others what he doesn't understand, and [so] instills damaging beliefs in them.

Now, [Socrates] describes [double ignorance] as 'the most shameful thing of all', since even simple ignorance counts as 'shameful', as it is a form of ignorance. For ignorance produces a shameful effect (*aiskhos*) in the soul; but shame is

one thing, and disease is something else.[159] For shame is observed in reason (*logos*) alone, but ethical weakness (*ponêria*), which is a disease of the soul, does not belong only to one of its parts, like reason (for disease does not belong in one part [of the organism], as Hippocrates says: 'for if a human being were one [whole], he would not suffer pain');[160] rather, it lies in the struggle between the parts of the soul.

And this [ignorance] is 'the most shameful thing of all' because we are doubly ignorant, and it's 'most deserving of reproach', considering that we do not reproach those who lack [knowledge], but those who have it but fail to use it, or those who use it badly. Likewise, the simple lack of knowledge (*amathia*) 'deserves reproach', since the person who lacks knowledge, despite possessing innate principles of reason (*logoi*) as part of his nature, fails to put those arguments to use; but it is 'most deserving of reproach' when someone possesses [arguments] and puts them to *bad* use, and this applies in the case of double lack of knowledge.

And it 'produces the most harm' (*kakourgotatos*), since it strives to draw false conclusions and to persuade us of what it doesn't know. And the person who is in this condition [of double ignorance] has fallen short of Soul (*psukhê*) and Intellect (*nous*) and God (*theos*).[161] First, due to his double lack of knowledge, he has fallen short of Soul, since understanding (*gnôsis*) is congenial to the soul; and due to his being in a 'most shameful' condition, he has fallen short of Intellect, since he is unable to revert to himself, which is distinctive of mind, and also because the noble or beautiful (*kalon*) is congenial to Intellect, and thus in becoming 'most shameful' he has fallen short of it; and he has fallen short of God in 'producing the most harm' and 'deserving reproach', since simplicity is congenial to God, and wellness (*to eu*) also derives from simplicity. (For [the adverb] 'well' is a designation of simplicity, which is why we call simple ways [of acting] 'well-intentioned' (*euêtheis*)).

'And how will you offer advice, Alcibiades – you who desire a good reputation – though you deserve reproach? And when you desire to be the most beautiful and noble (*kallistos*), [how will you offer advice] though you are the most shameful and ugly (*aiskhistos*)? And when you desire to know what's advantageous and advise it, [how will you offer advice] though you are the most harmful?' We should understand <that>[162] it is by being most deserving of reproach that [Alcibiades] falls short of God, and thereby (*hôs*) of being

blessed; for the word 'blessed' was used of a person untouched by the doom of
20 death, which is also why 'reproachable' is opposed to 'blessed' in the line [from Euripides, *Orestes* 4]:

That blessed man – and I do not reproach his fortunes. . .

That is the content of the survey.

116B 126,1 Now let's take yet another approach. . . By using the word 'yet', he shows that he intends to produce the same [conclusion] again using a different argument. For before, he produced this conclusion in particular terms, but now [he will produce it] in universal terms.

People who do what's noble act well, don't they? He asserts the first premiss, that those who perform noble[163] deeds act well. Just because[164] he makes the
5 just and advantageous identical by using the intermediate term 'noble', he does not thereby mean that they are *absolutely* (*antikrus*) the same (for the nature of the good is one thing, and that of the noble, something else; after all, the good has transcended the noble or beautiful (*kalon*) 'above',[165] and 'below' on account of matter, which is shameful, but participates in the good). Rather, [he asserts] that they are *convertible* in the case of a human being, since they convert in their subject. It's like when we say that 'the human being' differs in no respect
10 from 'the being who is capable of laughter':[166] that's not because they are the same thing, but because the subject possesses the property of 'humanity' in every case where 'capable of laughter' is predicated of it;[167] hence, these [two terms] are also convertible in the case of a human being.

And since justice in a human being embraces goodness as well, it's clear, considering his earlier discussion of courage, that [courage] is good;[168] and here he comments that those who perform noble deeds act well, and according
15 to this account, they have well-being and thereby are performing good deeds, and acting, well-being, and acting well are functions of souls. It's also clear in the passage that he maintains the identity of the noble and good 'according to this argument, at least', meaning 'they are the same with reference to the subject, in that the subject escapes neither'.[169]

20 This is also the view of the philosopher Proclus:[170] but Damascius interprets [the passage] differently, taking the view that just because the noble, just, and advantageous are the same with respect to their subject, it does not follow that

they are the same with respect to their distinguishing character (*idiotês*), but rather, they are convertible in spite of remaining separate with respect to their own distinguishing character, and it's insofar as they are convertible that they are called 'the same'. As he explains, it's like how the excellences (*aretai*) are mutually convertible while they separately preserve their own distinguishing character. For consider, the convertibility of the excellences doesn't cause them to be identical [with one another],[171] nor does the convertibility of 'capable of laughter' and 'human', but following conversion each [term's object] retained its proper, distinctive character. Thus the good and the beautiful are also not the same, even if they do convert. And that is why the passage says 'everything else like this', meaning 'things that are identical in their subject, but differ in their unique character (*idiotês*)'.

And people who act well possess well-being (*eudaimonia*), don't they? Here is the second premiss: we have noted the puzzles (*aporiai*) that confront it, as well as their solutions.[172]

And they get these [good results] because they act well and admirably? [Plato] didn't combine these terms – 'acting well' and 'acting admirably' – at random, but because [acting] well is a mean between the [morally] beautiful and the good, and [acting] well flowed from the good to the beautiful, and serves as a bond between them.[173] That's why [Plato], who knows all of this, uses the words 'therefore [acting] well is good', even though the conclusion ought to assert 'therefore the *person* who acts well does good deeds'.

Surely good conduct is noble? Notice how he converts one premiss here, providing us with an idea (*ennoia*) of how to convert the others, and also on this account [providing us with an idea] that everything advantageous <is just>: for that is what demanded proof. For consider, he made the conversion by saying, 'Good conduct is noble'.

So we've seen once again that they're the same. . . He didn't say 'once again' idly, but because this had already been proven by the syllogism based on particular terms, but now has been proven using the universal premiss.

So it follows that if we find something noble, we'll also find that it's good – according to this argument, at least. Notice how well the interpretation of the

25 127,1 5 10 15 **116C**

philosopher Proclus accords with this passage.[174] For he says that [when Socrates claims] 'everything that we find noble, we'll also find good', he means that '[these terms] are convertible through their subject'. For no feature of the subject that is good escapes being just. We should be grateful to the philosopher [Proclus] for explaining these things in this way.

Well then, are good things advantageous? At this point, he adds the other two premisses: first, the more specific premiss, that 'good [acts] are advantageous', and later the more general premiss, that 'as [Alcibiades] has granted, just [acts] are noble'. And on this basis, everything just is advantageous, and vice versa.

116D So, Alcibiades, just things are advantageous. . . Since he introduced the conclusion [here], it is appropriate that he also mentioned Alcibiades' name, in order to arouse his attention and show him that *he* is the one offering these [conclusions], and not Socrates.

Well then, aren't you the one who is making these points? 'So who gave these answers and offered these [conclusions]? Aren't you the one who is giving the answers?' Because, as has often been pointed out, the person who gives the answers is the speaker, not the person who asks the questions.

So if someone [who believed that he knew what is just and unjust] were to stand up to advise. . . If it was any other writer who was saying all this, rather than Socrates, he would certainly have addressed Alcibiades with vulgar language following his refutation (*elenkhos*), saying 'Now how in the world do you propose to give advice about what you don't understand?' But since Socrates is the speaker, what he says to him is this: 'Surely, if someone stood up to offer advice about what he did not understand, you would laugh at him as he stood up?' He has put the person who is being ridiculed in the position of laughing at others. For it is the fruit of Socrates' company to make the person who laughs at others into an object of ridicule himself.

He uses the phrase '**even the Peparethians**' because Peparethus was an insignificant island; by [saying] this, he shows that the famous name of Attica will not help to make the person who is 'doubly ignorant' about justice knowledgeable on the subject. 'For [good] advice is given by the person with understanding about each subject',[175] not by the person [who happens to be] an Athenian; so it's useful to make this point here.

I swear by the gods, Socrates, [I have no idea what I mean. . .] Notice how the young man has been liberated from his double ignorance and has come to stand in the intermediate position: for he claims that 'one moment things seem like this to me, and at another moment, they seem different'. And the timing of his oath is not without significance; in fact, it shows that he is [now] in a speechless state. (Consider, why did he not swear earlier?) That is also why, when Socrates criticises him, he calls him 'friend'; another reason is that [Alcibiades] climbed up one rung [on the ladder of knowledge]: for he stepped from double ignorance into the intermediate condition between simple and double [ignorance]. **116E** 129,1 5

If someone asked you whether you had two or three eyes. . . Here, he wants to show that [Alcibiades]' ignorance has put him at odds with himself. And he has deployed quite a few examples that are appropriate to this purpose, by saying 'if someone asked you if you had the ability to ascend to heaven. . .' [117B]; and there's a sense in which this was appropriate to Alcibiades, on account of Pericles, who used to be called 'Olympian'. Thus the line went about him, 10

> He hurled the lightning, he thundered, he cast Greece into turmoil. . .[176]

And it wasn't thanks to good deeds that [Pericles] gained this respect, but for money, as we learned from the outspoken comedy [*Peace*]: he started the Peloponnesian War in order to avoid rendering accounts of the money spent on Pheidias' Athena.[177] 'Again, if someone asked you about navigation, how would you answer? Or about cooking? Yet in these cases you aren't at odds with yourself, since you know that you are ignorant'. 15

These examples also are appropriate: the first [of ascending to the heavens], because it shows that it's necessary for the statesman to be raised above those entrusted to his care; and the next case of the navigator because, just as the navigator exercises foresight on behalf of his ship, [the statesman] must exercise foresight on behalf of those entrusted to his care, even if he is above them; and the third case of cooking, because it's necessary for the statesman to be gentle (*prosênês*) to those he advises in making his arguments. For if those he advises failed to be persuaded that their adviser is guiding them for their own benefit, they would never be persuaded by him. For it's through gentleness alone that the Greeks' adviser [sc. Nestor] was called 20 130,1

> one from whose tongue flows speech sweeter than honey.[178]

Now, [Socrates] does not ask questions that admit of [multiple] possibilities, but questions with an impossible answer. For he didn't ask 'whether you have two eyes or one' – since [either of these answers] would have been possible, and [Alcibiades] could have given different answers at different times; but [he asks] whether he has *three* eyes, or two or *four* hands.[179]

117A **I'm a little worried about myself now. . .** Alcibiades is afraid of answering even such a clear question. And this is [natural] for someone who has been shown the abundance of Socrates' dialectical power: that is, it's because he's already had experience of this that he is afraid. 'For those of the Argives who have been struck, they understand', as the saying goes.

117B **[Whenever someone doesn't know something], his soul will necessarily waver about it. . .** At this point, since Alcibiades has been loosely (*pakhumerôs*)[180] benefited, Socrates launches an assault on double ignorance and makes all those [aforementioned] points against it a little later.

117D **Don't you realise, then, that the errors in our conduct (*hamartêmata en têi praxei*) are caused by this kind of ignorance, [thinking that we know when we don't know?]** The phrase 'through this kind of ignorance' (*dia tautên tên agnoian*) was well chosen, since our errors of reason arise through ignorance. (And presently we are examining [only] cognitive errors (*kata gnôsin*), where we speak of double and simple ignorance. But there is also another source of errors, namely, force: that is, errors fall into two categories, arising either by ignorance, or by force). Now at this point he proves that [double ignorance] is a cause of errors as well [as its other risks]. For those who have knowledge do not err, since they succeed in their goal; nor do those in simple ignorance, since they do not make the attempt in the first place.

118A **And ignorance (*amathia*) that deserves reproach. . .** That is, it fell short of the good because it was deserving of reproach. For reproachability is contrary to blessedness, and blessedness is appropriate to the gods, for whom the doom of death does not exist.

Well then, can you name anything more important than the just and noble? He says that the just and good and advantageous are of 'the greatest importance (*megista*)', since all people strive to make use of these from birth, working from

a common concept;[181] it's unlike other skills, where certain people possess [one skill] in separation [from another]. For example, certain people – not all – make use of the art of letters (*grammatikê*), or of philosophy, but *all* people endeavour to encourage and discourage and praise and blame and denounce and defend [with relation to the just, good, and advantageous], and in short, make use of the three kinds of rhetoric.[182] And orators do not differ from other people, except in the arrangement or lack of arrangement [of their words]: one *says* the same thing, whether or not one speaks with competence in the skill [of oratory]. Hence, he says that these 'greatest' matters are universal. So this [matter of arrangement of words] belongs to rhetoric alone, just as speaking Greek belongs to all Greeks, but skilfully causing someone [else] to speak Greek belongs to the art of letters alone.

Lecture 15

With the god's favour

Oh dear, Alcibiades, what suffering (*pathos*) you've been through . . . **118B–119A**

132,1

Consider that there are two parts of the soul, one concerned with cognition, the other with vital functions: the cognitive part is purified by cross-examination, but the vital part is purified by forceful correction (*epiplêxis*).[183] Therefore, after Socrates has purified the cognitive [part] of Alcibiades by proving to him that he suffers from double ignorance, he [purifies] the vital part by explaining – with tragic flair (*ektragôidêsai*) – all the different kinds of troubles that follow from double ignorance (for he described the cause of his errors (*hamartêmata*)[184] as 'the most shameful thing of all, most deserving of reproach, most harmful' [117D–118A]). At this point, after laying out the qualities of double ignorance in general, he goes on to mention its individual (*idia*) consequences to Alcibiades, by saying, 'Oh dear, Alcibiades [. . .what suffering you've been through!]' [118B]. Now, this is the [language] of someone who is mourning and bemoaning Alcibiades as if he has perished, making a speech about the departed. This is Pythagorean [behaviour]: for the Pythagoreans used to cast out unsuitable [students] from their company

(*homakoeion*) with their belongings, make a funeral monument (*kenotapheion*) for them, and mourn them and speak of them as if about the departed.

Also, when he says 'what' (*hoion*), in 'what suffering you've been through', it's similar to the tragic verse:[185]

> There's nothing so terrible to describe,[186]
> [or suffering, or heaven-sent affliction,
> that human nature may not have to bear the burden of it.]

133,1 **Which I hesitate to call by name**: As appropriate to suppressing [the name], he raises the tone of his cross-examination, that is: 'it is undiscovered, beyond fate, unspeakable'. And it's appropriate, too, that he said 'I hesitate to call it by name', since it is unspeakable (*aphrastos*) and cannot be captured by language (*arrhêtos*), inasmuch as this has to do with matter (*hulê*), just as matter itself cannot be captured by language and is without form (*aneideos*). Granted, the first cause is also beyond language, but that is as *beyond* form: matter, on the other hand, is beyond language because it is *inferior* to all form.[187]

Nonetheless, since we two are alone, it must be said: Because public criticism is interpreted as hostility by a person who is in the habit of caring about their reputation. That's also why a certain Pythagorean, criticised in public 134,1 by his teacher, could not bear the shame and killed himself.[188] Hence among philosophers, the habit used to be to offer criticism in private, not in public.

You're wedded to extreme ignorance, my very good man: 'Wedded' (*sunoikeis*) is a good choice of word. Consider, if the reason that civil strife is worse than [international] war[189] is that the one is waged by people from outside [one another's borders] and far apart, but the other is waged by people within and nearby (the saying 'out of all brotherhood, outlawed. . .', etc. [Hom. *Il.* 9.63] is about this), then war between members of the same household is worse than civil strife to the same degree as they are nearer together. And [Socrates] does not only say 'you're wedded to ignorance', but '*extreme* [ignorance]'.

The argument (*logos*) convicts you of it, and so do you yourself: [He means,] you have strong witnesses to this, since the argument convicts you (because it's been shown that in a context of question and answer, the respondent is the speaker, not the questioner);[190] and what's more, you have an invincible witness, yourself.

That's why you're rushing into politics. . . That is, 'Your beliefs are engendering a way of life in you: since you're doubly ignorant in supposing you know about justice before you've learned about it, you are hurrying into public life'.[191] 15

And you're not the only one who's suffered this, but most [of our city's politicians are in the same situation]. . . Now to Alcibiades, this is a consolation, to share his bad condition with many [others]: but this was no consolation to Socrates, since he wanted all people to be good, since he was the protector of humankind.[192] 135,1

There are only a few exceptions, among them, perhaps, your guardian Pericles. We inquire why he praises Pericles here, calling him 'wise', but runs him down a little later, saying that he is not a statesman (*politikos*) (just as he also proves in the *Gorgias* [515C–516D] that [Pericles] is no statesman; this is also how he roused Aristides to produce a speech in opposition, due to the arguments in the *Gorgias*).[193] Now the philosopher Proclus says, 'He refutes [Pericles] since he is not a man of knowledge (*epistêmôn*), but accepts him as a man of true belief (*orthodoxastikos*)'.[194] But the philosopher Damascius rejects this explanation, arguing that the only difference between a person with true beliefs and a person with knowledge lies in [the latter's] grasp of the *cause*, just as the scientific physician is no different from the empirical physician, since they do exactly the same things in practice:[195] accordingly, if [Pericles] was a man of true belief, he would not have made mistakes (*hêmartanen*). Hence his own solution of this puzzle is that [Socrates] accepts Pericles as a general (*stratêgos*), since [a general's] goal is victory, but rejects him as a statesman, since he did not make his own citizens noble and good (*kaloi kai agathoi*). **118C** 5 10 15

Next, Alcibiades seizes a short pause after his own relative has been commended (so that Socrates does not repeat about Pericles the questions that he asked [Alcibiades]: 'How did he become wise, by learning or discovery?'), and he preempts [Socrates] by enumerating his teachers. For [Pericles] was Anaxagoras' pupil in philosophy, and Pythocles' pupil in music. He continues to raise his teachers, saying 'Even now, entering on 'the threshold of old age',[196] he is studying under the musician Damon'. But [Socrates] replies: 'And yet this man is no statesman, since he does not have the ability to make his citizens noble and good'. And he was right not to say ['since he does not] *make*. . .', because we 20 136,1 5

cannot distinguish[197] who is wise on this basis. For consider: suppose a person were not preoccupied with matters of secondary importance, and suppose that instead he were to occupy himself with purification (*katharsis*) or contemplation (*theôria*), when he separates himself from the many (*hoi polloi*)?[198] What if he were to live the political life, but his comrades were unsuitable to him?[199] So instead, Socrates said, 'If he was wise, he would have been *able* to make another person wise: yet he made neither you, nor your brother Clinias, nor his own sons wise'. ([Pericles] had them by Aspasia of Miletus, who was also his own teacher—for Pericles was taught by a woman, just as Aristippus was taught by his mother.)[200] But if you claimed that 'Nonetheless, he *was* a statesman, thanks to the tributes that he brought in [for Athens]', this also wouldn't imply that he was wise. Consider how he gave power to a city that was feverish,[201] although he had the ability to transform his own constitution from democracy to meritocracy (*aristokrateia*). (For the constitution under him was, as the historian [Thucydides] puts it, 'in name a democracy, but in fact the domination of one man' [2.65,9]. And it is suitable that Plato spoke in favour of meritocracy (*aristokrateia*), but not for kingship (*basileia*), since Plato regards kingship with suspicion because of the mortality of the person who becomes king. So due to the instability [of kingship] he entrusted his own constitution to many). Yet the law of nature orders that 'the more you use what's impure for bodies as their nourishment, the more harm you do'.[202]

With this, the first part of the dialogue is complete, in which [Socrates] refuted Alcibiades both cognitively and with respect to his vital functions.

That is the content of the survey.

118B **Most of our city's politicians [are in the same situation]**: This is why Socrates was condemned to the hemlock, since he castigated the majority (*hoi polloi*) for attempting to behave justly without any knowledge of [justice].[203]

118C **For it's said, Socrates, that he didn't acquire his wisdom all by himself:** Notice how the young man sobers up and shows that Pericles has got teachers, so that the same arguments won't be used in his case that were used in Alcibiades' case. That's also why he says 'He didn't become wise all by himself, but [by learning] from teachers'. Notice too how Alcibiades meets the questions with natural talent (*euphuôs*).

Pythoclides and Anaxagoras. . . [Pericles] was aided by Anaxagoras in governing (*to arkhein*), for this man was the first to introduce Intellect (*nous*)[204] into things (*pragmata*), a ruler raised above what comes after it,[205] and not embedded on the same level with them (*enkatatetagmenon*): thus Pericles too was not comparable to the many in the democracy, and he governed them, as if *he* was their Intellect (*nous*). Pythocles is mentioned here not only as a musician, but because he harmonised the citizens [of Athens] using suitable melodies. For just as there are melodies that foster self-control (*sôphronika melê*) (which is also why Aegisthus could not corrupt Clytaemnestra until he slew the bard on the 'desolate isle', whom Agamemnon had left behind as guardian—as the poet [Homer] says),[206] likewise there are melodies that harmonise the citizens, and Damon helped Pericles with these, using which he harmonised the city. 20 138,1 5 10

Even now, at his age, he consults with Damon. . . 'At his age', meaning 'on the threshold of old age',[207] he visited Damon for lessons. Plato mentioned this man again in the *Republic*, since he had help from him in music.[208] 15

Really? Have you ever seen a wise person [who can't make others wise. . .?] At this point, he is running down Pericles and showing that he is not really wise, on the grounds that he does not make others wise. For there are three ways of distinguishing (*kharaktêristika*) wise people, [1] by those who precede them, [2] by those who keep company with them, and [3] by those who follow them.[209] [By observing] [1] those who precede [him, sc. the wise person], if he can identify his teachers; [2] those who keep company with him, if he agrees both with himself and with the wise; and [3] those who follow him, if he can say that he made [these] others like this [i.e., wise.] Now, Plato mentions each of these in one part of the dialogue or another: first [109D], when he sought to identify teachers of justice; second, [111A–112D] when he was saying, 'Most people (*hoi polloi*) do not understand justice, since they disagree about it'; and third, here, [when he investigates] whether Pericles can say that he made others like this. 20 139,1

For I suppose this is pretty good evidence: For this *is* sound evidence of a wise person, if he's able to make others wise. 5 **118D**

Well then, can you tell me who Pericles has made wise?[210] 'Well now', says Socrates, 'did he make his sons wise?' And he goes on, 'What should we say

about it, if they became stupid and unfitted for learning'? And he asks, 'Well, did he made your brother Clinias [wise]?' And he accuses [Clinias] of insanity, and says 'Why? Wasn't he able?' 'And what about you?' And [Alcibiades] explains, '[No], because I'm lazy'. Now notice, here are three reasons why one might fail to become wise: stupidity, insanity, and laziness.[211] The poetic verse makes a similar point:

> Are you such a longstanding fool, stranger, so weak-minded . . .[212]

For in the first part [of the line] he pointed to witlessness (*anoia*), and in the words 'so weak-minded', to insanity; and then through the line

> Or do you give up of your own free will, and enjoy suffering sorrows?[213]

he refers to laziness. As for the words 'and enjoy suffering sorrows', Euripides talks about this when he says

> Long talk and leisure, a pleasant evil (*kakon*) . . .[214]

119A **But [can you name] any other Athenian or foreigner. . .** He asks him, 'What, then? Did he make anyone else wise?' Suppose you claim that 'Everyone else was unsuitable': but this is [the view of] Timon the misanthrope, to reject the suitability of *all* human beings.

[I can name] Callias, son of Calliades, [who became wise by associating with Zeno. . .] By 'Callias', he doesn't mean the man who is described in the comedy, the son of Hipponicus;[215] this is the son of Calliades.[216]

Each paid [Zeno] a hundred minas each, and became well-spoken (*ellogimos*): By 'well-spoken' (*ellogimos*) he means 'noteworthy' [i.e., well-spoken *of*], and not what we mean by the word now, 'eloquent'[217] – that's clear, because he called him 'wise'. But if Zeno was a philosopher, why did he take payment?[218] Well, we reply that he did this in order to accustom his students to despising money; or in order to provide funds to those in need, by taking them from those with plenty; or so that he might balance out the excess wealth [of some] and maintain equality [among his students] by giving to those who had less. For he *pretended* to take payment, without actually taking it [for himself]: for this was Zeno, who was good at pretending; this is also why he used to hear himself called 'double-tongued',[219] not because he spoke on both opposing

sides of an issue,[220] but because he was in the habit of pretense. This is also why, when a certain tyrant asked him who was plotting with him against the tyranny, he pointed out his own bodyguards; when [the tyrant] had done away with them, he was easily done away with himself.[221]

You can also see from this that Plato was the first [philosophical teacher] to make a point of refusing fees, since he was Zeno's contemporary, and Zeno did take fees. But why does philosophy alone not demand fees, although other skills do? Perhaps it is because no other skilled craftsmen claim to make their pupils *good people*, but only to make them skilled – as doctors produce doctors, and the carpenter produces carpenters. But the philosopher claims to make people good, and in so doing, he hopes not to be treated unfairly by them.[222] Perhaps Plato made a point of refusing fees thanks to his own wealth; that is also why to this day the school's endowment (*diadokhika*) is preserved, despite the many confiscations that are taking place.[223]

So concludes, with the god's favour, the first section [of the dialogue].[224]

Beginning of Part 2[225]

Lecture 16

With the god's favour

All right, then. What's your plan for yourself? To remain [in your present condition, or practice self-cultivation. . .?] **119A–120D**

During the first section [of the dialogue, 106C–119A], Socrates cross-examined and refuted (*elenxas*) Alcibiades, proving for the cognitive [part of his soul] that he is doubly ignorant, and using tragic flair to explain to the vital [part of his soul] the harmful consequences of double ignorance, describing it as 'the most shameful thing of all, most deserving of reproach, most harmful' [117D–118A], the reason we go astray (*planê*), the cause of errors, and on this basis Alcibiades was enlisted for refutation, and [Socrates] used these [methods] to lay him low. In the second section, he encourages [Alcibiades] after his defeat, and rouses him, saying: 'Be of good hope, Alcibiades: for you have within you something fit for civic knowledge, something fit for ordering

the affairs of the state, namely, your commanding part (*hêgemonikon*):[226] so you ought to take serious, careful foresight (*pronoia*) for yourself by practicing self-cultivation'. And he encourages him in the present section, which is protreptic [119A–124A], in order that in the final section [124A–135D] he can practice midwifery on him and prepare him to declare who the 'civic person' really is,[227] namely, the rational soul when it uses the body as an instrument. For this is the definition of the civic person, but the purificatory and contemplative person do not use the body as an instrument, since it begins to present an obstacle to them.[228]

But [Alcibiades], since he is lazy and concerned with his reputation, says that he doesn't need to take trouble over self-cultivation, since he does not have to deal with generals who are worthy adversaries: 'For if I was dealing with superior people, perhaps I would be concerned to surpass them, but since in fact I look to inferior people, there's no reason to fear that I won't surpass them: for I have the ability to get the better of them by my own nature'. And [he says this] because of both these concerns, namely, to avoid going to trouble over self-cultivation, and, for that reason, appearing incapable of setting the affairs of the state in order.

But Socrates laments bitterly over him, since in the first place he regards his allies in the contest as his adversaries. For he thinks that his rivals are the Athenian generals, who are really his allies – as if a ship's pilot were to regard the sailors as his rivals instead of allies, rather than joining them in looking to other adversaries, to the chance movement of the winds and storms. For just as we take care to be healthy and prosper, even if no one knows about it, so too we must take care of ourselves, even if we were to have no rivals to contest with. For our excellence is not measured against others, but against ourselves, and excellence is what it is in and of itself, not relative to something else. For this reason, indeed, we must not turn our attention away to others; and also because, even if it is necessary to look to others, we must not look to *many* [others], but to the minority, and they should not be base and ordinary, but good and serious (*spoudaios*) people.

He also challenges [Alcibiades] with a counter-factual objection when he says, '[That stands] even if you don't look to [your fellow] citizens as adversaries, but as allies, and instead you look to foreigners as really worthy adversaries – for example, the Great King of Persia and the kings of the Lacedaemonians, against whom the city of Athens is locked in continual struggles, as the Persian

and Peloponnesian Wars demonstrate;[229] but it's the ancestral custom (*patrion*) of the Athenians to win [these struggles] by wisdom (*sophia*)'.

But [Alcibiades] refuses to retreat from his laziness or his concern for his reputation, but he says that even *these* people aren't important. Hence, whereas Socrates, playing up the stature of [Alcibiades'] enemies, once calls them 'Great King', and elsewhere 'Kings of the Lacedaemonians', Alcibiades calls them 'the Lacedaemonian generals', and instead of the 'Great King', just 'king'. But Socrates, who wants him to get free of this sort of combativeness and lazy character, refutes him with an objection and a counterfactual: by way of objection, he says that [the Persians are] 'the greatest enemies against whom our city is locked in continual struggles', and by way of a counterfactual, he says, 'even if we *were* to allow that they aren't worthy of notice, still, we would have to work on the *hypothesis* that they were, so that we would be thereby motivated to strive for excellence'. Now, Aristotle in his *Protrepticus* commented that 'if we must do philosophy, then we must do philosophy; but if we must not do philosophy, then we must do philosophy; no matter what, then, we must do philosophy'.[230] And Plato says, 'if the Persian and Lacedaemonian kings are worthy of note, we must attend to excellence, so that we might thereby surpass them; but if they aren't, we must hypothesise that they are, in order that we might strive for excellence; no matter what, then, we must strive for excellence'. And again in the *Theaetetus* [170E–171C]: 'if Protagoras is lying, he lies; if he is not lying, he lies; no matter what, then, he is lying'. As you can see, we have many arguments along these lines from the philosophers. You also have here the Platonic doctrine, that whereas Aristotle wants Intellect to be the first principle,[231] Plato wants the Good [to be the first principle], since intellect lacks the capacity to give a share of itself to a lie, but the good gives a share of itself even to a lie, for there is such a thing as a good lie:[232] likewise here, [we have] the notion of taking something untrue as true for the sake of the good. But lying is not intellectual (*noeros*), as the good is.

Since there are five methods of purification, these five have been transmitted by Plato in the present dialogue. For it is possible to be purified [as follows]:

[1] By escaping into sacred precincts, or to teachers, or by studying books that one encounters; and he has conveyed this method by saying, 'But, my blessed friend, trust in me and in the Delphic inscription, "Know Thyself"' [124A].

[2] Second, by forceful correction (*epiplêxis*), which he conveyed when he used the method of rebuking [Alcibiades], criticising his cognitive [part]

for double ignorance, and his vital part and explaining with tragic flair the consequences of double ignorance, how [harmful] they are.

[3] Third is the Pythagorean [method], which is also perilous, since it causes one to take a taste of the passions 'with the tip of the finger' – which the doctors employ as well, making use of what is 'a little worse':[233] and he has conveyed this [method] here by saying that 'You have something in you fitted for ruling the city, your natural leading portion (*hêgemonikon*), if you find yourself willing to adorn this with education';[234] for he exalted his reputation-loving nature this way.

[4] Fourth is the Aristotelian [method], which heals one harm by another (*kakôi to kakon iômenos*), bringing the battle of the opposites into a harmony; and he has conveyed this here by at one point using an accusation to castigate Alcibiades, and at another time rousing him up to the height with encouragement, causing him to produce the definition of civic knowledge.[235]

[5] Fifth is the most efficacious [method], the Socratic, which uses a procedure of transformation (*metabasis*) from similarity; and he uses this here, when he says 'You long for power? Learn what is true power, which cannot be taken away by a tyrant. You long for pleasure? Learn what is true leisure, which is observed even among the gods'.

That is the content of the survey.

119A **All right, then. What's your plan for yourself?** Now, the phrase 'All right' (*eien*) belongs to an encouraging person. [And he says] 'What will you do?' because [Alcibiades] has been refuted, and is in bad shape both in his cognitive [part], since he suffers from double ignorance, and in his vital [part], since it's been proven that double ignorance is the cause of so many harmful [consequences].

119B [Alcibiades] says **'a common plan'**, meaning 'Let's make a plan together, for what I ought to do'. The poetic verse runs

> There's need of a plan for me and you, Zeus-nurtured [brother]. . .[236]

Up to this point, he was escaping double ignorance, and [now] he has arrived at simple [ignorance]. Consider: neither the doubly ignorant person, nor the knowledgeable expert, deliberates. For the skilled craftsman does not make plans *qua* craftsman: if the carpenter plans, for example, it is not *as* a carpenter, but as a human being; for planning amounts to a lack of expert

knowledge (*phronêsis*), since one makes plans in cases where one doesn't already know the answer. In the remainder [of the dialogue], he strips off his own passions, laziness and love of reputation, and says, 'all but a few of those who manage the affairs of the city are uneducated' (he says 'but a few' because of Pericles), 'and so my contest is not against great people'. 25 147,1

[**Anyone who wanted to contest with them] would have to learn and train (*mathonta kai askêsanta*):** 'Learning' is said about reason (*logos*), but 'training' about the unreasoning animals, since they are tamed by cultivation and training.[237]

[There's no need for me] to go to the trouble of learning . . . [The phrase] 'To go to the trouble' (*pragmata ekhein*) has to do with reason and the non-rational, and basically with our entire essence (*ousia*). 'For', he says, 'I know that I'll naturally get the better of them'. And notice how admirably [Socrates] describes both of the young man's passions. 5

Good grief, my good man, what a thing to say: how unworthy of your fine form (*idea*). . . Again, Socrates grieves over the young man and himself and complains, saying that '**I'm angry about you, and about my [love]**: about you, because you turn out to be so petty (*smikroprepês*); and about myself, because I love someone so petty'. **119C** 10

But the phrase 'What a thing to say' describes what the poet puts indirectly:

What sort of word has escaped your teeth's barrier?[238] 15

and

And he tosses out some word which is better left unspoken.[239]

And he adds the phrase 'unworthy of your fine form (*idea*)', meaning 'appearance',

But there is no strength in your mind, no courage.[240]

119D **How do you mean? Isn't my competition with these people?** Alcibiades introduces this [line of questioning] interrogatively: 'Isn't my competition with the people of the city?' But [Socrates] replies that 'If you wanted to pilot a trireme,[241] would you be in competition with your fellow sailors? Or would you keep these as allies and choose to compete against others, against the chance 20

movement of the winds and waves?' (Plato chose the trireme, as opposed to an ordinary ship, as a relevant example, because it is relevant to war).

119E **How worthy of you to be pleased if you're [better than] the soldiers. . .** That's
148,1 because the general shouldn't contest with the soldiers, striving to be better than they are, but he should consider them allies, and struggle alongside them against the enemy.

120A **But you've got to keep your eye on Meidias the quail-flicker:** This Meidias
5 was called 'quail-flicker' because he reared quails for fighting. At the same time, [this example] is a dig at Alcibiades, because they say that once, when Alcibiades was at the podium advising [the people], a quail flew from [his robes].[242] (But [Socrates] doesn't mean by 'Meidias' the person who slapped Demosthenes;[243] this [Meidias] was born earlier than that one).

120B **And still have the 'slavish hairstyle', as the women would say. . .** It's a saying of women, both about freed slaves and those who remain in slavery, that 'you have the slavish hair on your head', meaning 'you're still wearing a slave's
149,1 haircut'. For in the old days, free men and slaves were distinguished by their names and their hairstyle, since [slaves] were given names like 'Gete' and 'David' and 'Phryx'; but now, these have been confused.[244] But [Socrates],
150,1 instead of saying 'on the head', says that 'you have the slavish hairstyle in your soul, thanks to your lack of culture (*amousia*)'.[245]

120C **And make every preparation. . .** In other words, we must take care even of the
5 instruments, the spear and shield, that clash with our enemy:

> Let a man put a good edge to his spear, and his shield in order;[246]

—and not be careless of them, so that we 'start pottery on a wine-jar'[247] and get a thorough lesson in our enemy's expertise (*epistêmê*). This is also how the Athenians, out of carelessness, used to engage their enemy with luck instead of preparation, whereas the Lacedaemonians used to succeed by serious discipline
10 (*spoudêi. . . kai askêsei*).

[But still I don't think] the Lacedaemonian generals [or the Persian King are any different]. . . Notice how he calls them 'generals' instead of 'kings', and instead of 'the great king', says 'the Persian king'.

Do you think you would cultivate yourself more [if you feared them and thought them formidable. . .] Notice how he uses a counterfactual here, to the effect that even if they are actually unworthy of notice, all the same we should consider them [worthy], in order that we will cultivate ourselves.

Lecture 17

With the god's favour

Is it likely that natural talents will be greater among noble families, or not? **120D–122B**

Following Socrates' guidance, Alcibiades should have regarded his competitors as worthy of consideration, even if they were not really so, in order that he might take great care to strive for excellence. But since he is lazy, even though they actually *are* worthy, nevertheless he does not regard them as such, in order to avoid the effort of caring for himself. That's why Socrates also establishes that the Lacedaemonians and Persians are superior to Alcibiades. And he proves this from four arguments: [1] from lineage (and he includes homeland in lineage, for 'one's race is also one's homeland', as Porphyry puts it);[248] [2] from birth; [3] from upbringing; and [4] from education (and this is divided into two, preparatory education (*propaideia*) and education proper (*paideia*)).

[1] [He argues] from lineage that 'They derive [their lineage] from Zeus, but you [derive yours] from human beings': for Perseus was the son of Zeus and Danaë, and Achaemenes was the son of Perseus and Andromeda (the one in heaven),[249] which is also why the Persian [kings] are called 'Achaemenids'. But Alcibiades claims that he himself is also descended from Zeus, for he was originally a descendent of Ajax. And Socrates wittily declares that he too is descended from Zeus, since he was a descendent of Daedalus, and Daedalus traced his line to Hephaestus, the son of Zeus. Now, he claimed that he was Daedalus' descendent because Daedalus was the first one to separate the feet of statues, which had them together, producing a representation of walking and self-movement (*autokinêtos*); and Socrates was the first to make humans self-moving, since he did not allow them to come to knowledge by instruction, but by midwifery and discovery, and in this way he made them self-moving.

And he says that 'Even if we *are* descended from Zeus like [the Persians] are, the lineage is not the same in both these cases: for we watered down our lineage over the intervening generations and we did not maintain its purity, but that's not their situation; instead, they have guarded this [line] unadulterated in the transmission of their lineage, because they are kings'. And next, he also establishes that they are superior in their homeland, as in their lineage: he says that 'You are not originally Athenian, Alcibiades, if you trace your lineage from Ajax; for Ajax was from Aegina, and Ajax was [descended] from Telamon of Salamis, and it's from this man that Eurysaces was born'; and [he adds] that 'It's unclear whether you might not really be sprung from Zeus, but illegitimate, since the Athenian women are unguarded'; but the Lacedaemonian women were guarded, as the shameless comedy showed in the line:

It's a Spartan key, not to be carried about.[250]

153,1 The Lacedaemonians guarded them because they received an oracle that they would have ill fortune if they put forward a king 'lame in lineage',[251] that is, one who did not belong to the line of the sons of Heracles. Therefore, when Leotychidas had become king of the Lacedaemonians, because he was a product of adultery they later experienced [the Oracle's prediction]:' for Alcibiades, when he joined the Spartans, slept with this man's mother, the wife of Agis, and that was how he was born.[252] But among the Persians, they did not consider it worthwhile to set a guard [on the Queen], since they felt that the terror of consequent punishments was a sufficient guard.

[2] So much for [the argument] from lineage (*genos*); but the argument from birth (*genesis*) is that among the Persians, from the very beginning, the person who is going to be king grants all his subjects a full display of his own right to rule (*basileia*). That's because it was their custom for the eldest to rule; naturally, then, the Persians and all Asia sacrifice to him and pour libations as soon [as he is born], honouring him as a god (since before Alexander, all Asia was ruled by the Persians). But when Alcibiades was born, not even his neighbours were aware of it.

[3] Next is [the argument] from upbringing (*trophê*), that 'Among those people [sc. the Persians], as soon as the king was born, the eunuchs with the best reputation began to care for him, and they mould his body parts with an eye to beauty, even making his nose aquiline, showing that the boy is fit for

leadership and kingship'. (For this is also why the eagle has an aquiline [beak], because it is kingly; and it was due to Cyrus that they began to cultivate the development of this aquilinity, since he was exceptionally kingly and civilised). 154,1
'But when *you* were born, [Alcibiades], you were taken care of by a Thracian slave, who took no care for your beauty;[253] for you have nothing more than your nature as your gift'.

[4] And [the argument] from education (*paideia*) is that 'Those people receive both preparatory education (*propaideia*) and education [proper] (*paideia*). For after reaching their seventh year, they are taught to hunt not [merely] fish and fowl, but four-legged animals; and at the age of fourteen, they identify four tutors for these [boys], one of whom teaches wisdom, another justice, another courage, and another self-control.[254] (Xenophon relates this in his treatment of Persian education).[255] 'But you studied none of these subjects, except letters, cithara-playing, and wrestling, since Pericles assigned you Zopyrus as a tutor, who was physically maimed and rendered useless by old age; 155,1
and if he weren't that sort of person, even *he* wouldn't be appointed to you and available to you.

But what kinds of excellence (*aretê*) were the Persians educated in?[256] We assert that it was not the natural forms of excellence (*phusikai*), since these are not produced by teaching; and they were certainly not [educated in] the civic [forms of excellence] (*politikai*), since [if they were, Xenophon] would not have said that different men taught different subjects, but one man alone would have been sufficient to teach them all, since they are mutually convertible [i.e., the possession of one implies the possession of the others];[257] rather, it was the habituated (*êthikai*) [forms of excellence], for these are taught and are not mutually convertible.[258]

But how could Plato be telling the truth when he says here that [the Persians] were educated in wisdom, but later[259] he says to Alcibiades that 'You have to cultivate yourself, for it's your city's ancestral custom (*patrion*) to win by wisdom (*sophia*)?' So if *they* were educated in wisdom, why does he make a special point of saying this about the Athenians? It's because the statement (*logos*) can be true at one time and false at another. For it's nothing strange if [the Athenians] had such a constitution in the distant past, but by the time of Socrates they had declined from this level, and it is no challenge to criticise this constitution [the democracy contemporary with Socrates]. For that reason, the [argument] from lineage was also untrue [by that time]: for Darius, who

became king of [the Persians] thanks to a horse's neigh, was no Achaemenid;[260] so it is the ancient [Persian] constitution that [Socrates] describes. Alternatively, we might say that perhaps Darius *was* an Achaemenid, if not as a grandson, still by an indirect line; that is, even if he was not, as the poet says,

20 [Their own] son, and grandson of Zeus who gathers the clouds;[261]

– but still a daughter's son, or related in some other way, since there would perhaps have been no argument over the kingship, if he were not descended from Zeus.

That is the content of the survey.

120D Is it likely that natural talents will be greater [among noble families]? He asks him, 'Do you think that those who are descended from noble (*gennaios*) 156,1 ancestors are superior, and would you call wellborn (*eugenês*) people 'noble', rather than strong people?' For in virtually every case, those from wellborn families are better; which is also why we read in the poet,

Putting mares under them without Laomedon's knowledge.[262]

For everyone is convinced that people from wellborn families are themselves wellborn.

120E Let's compare our situation with theirs: He did not choose to juxtapose the 5 Athenian and Persian constitutions, but [to juxtapose] their constitution with Alcibiades. [That's because] as a lover (*erôtikos*), he acts in a manner that draws the young man in (*oikeiopoieitai*): for the lover does not want to ascend alone, but along with his beloved.

The line of Heracles and Achaemenes [go right back to Perseus, son of Zeus]: 10 For Perseus was born of Zeus and Danaë; and Achaemenes from Perseus and Andromeda, and Alcaeus and Electryon were born from other women; and from Alcaeus and Amphitryon, Electryon and Alcmene; and from Amphitryon and Alcmene, Heracles. Hence Heracles is sprung from Zeus on either side, for he clearly possessed much of Zeus' character and vitality from both his father's side and his mother's side; at any rate, the story goes that in a single night he made 15 love to fifty women, and and every one of them had a child by him.

Now the philosopher Proclus[263] here raises the puzzle why, when [Socrates] could prove that the Lacedaemonians also trace their lineage to Zeus by way of

Heracles, he does not do this, but he presents them as deriving from Perseus [instead]. And he resolves [the puzzle] himself, saying that [Plato] probably honoured [Perseus] before [Heracles] because he was winged:[264] for both men were born to purify [the world] of evils, and especially Heracles; hence Pisander describes him as 'an utterly just destroyer',[265] since he performed a great many slaughters for purification. But Perseus was also such a person, and he also had [the advantage of] being winged, as the comedy showed, and the Gorgon and the sickle.[266] 157,1 5

[Every one of them is a king all the way back to Zeus]—kings of Argos and Sparta: He uses these words to describe the Peloponnese, because this [land] was long ago divided into five parts: the lands of the Argolid, Messene, Arcadia, Elis, and Laconia.[267] **121A**

Their wives are guarded at public expense: To protect the line of the Heraclids for kingship, the ephors used to guard the wives of the kings. And among them, there were three penalties concerned with marriage: for remaining unwed, for late marriage, and for a bad marriage. And they used to say that a bad marriage was one struck for the sake of money.[268] **121B** 10

[When the eldest son and heir to the throne is born], all [the king's subjects] have a feast day: Here [Socrates] proves his argument from birth: for from the very start, the newborn [king] grants a full display to all his subjects. That's why all of them immediately conduct a sacrifice, then honour the king's birthday each and every year, because the Persians honour what is heavenly, and most of all in the heavens the Sun; and this is also why they celebrate the king's birthday every year, because the Sun is the symbol of the year. For [the year] is called 'annual' (*eniautos*) because it generates the Sun in itself (*en heautôi poiôn*). **121C** 15 20

Even the neighbours [hardly notice], as the comic poet says: This is a citation from Plato the comic poet.[269] **121D** 158,1

When they reach seven years of age [the boys take up horseback riding with their instructors, and begin to hunt wild game]: For at seven years of age, their cultivation changed: this is because seven is respected as a critical moment (*krisimos*), and because a seven-month-old [embryo] is considered viable (*zôsimos*),[270] and because *hepta* ['seven'] is said like *septa* ['august', 'revered'].[271] **121E**

159,1 That is also why the Romans call number *septem*, from the number 7, which is held in very high esteem,[272] [and as] the whole (*holon*), as in the verse 'Teucer, dear head' [*Iliad* 8.281].[273]

Who they call 'royal tutors': Unless they were comparing these men to Zopyrus, a cheap tutor, since they would have called them 'teachers' for training
5 [the boys] in habituated kinds of excellence (*êthikai aretai*).[274]

Considered the best: Meaning, 'Those who, at each age, have proven themselves in their actions'; for he calls these 'those considered the best'.

The wisest, the most just, [the most self-controlled, and the most courageous. . .] He ranks wisdom (*sophia*) first, since it belongs to the more
10 valuable part of us, our reason (*logos*); justice (*dikaiosunê*) comes immediately afterward, since it interpenetrates our entire being (*ousia*).[275] And he says that the man who teaches wisdom 'teaches him the Magi's art', but to prevent anyone imagining that by 'the Magi's art' (*mageia*) he means spells (*manganeia*) and sorcery (*goêteia*), he adds 'which is the cultivation (*therapeia*) of the gods'.[276] For the Persians honoured (as we have said)[277] what is in the heavens, whom [Socrates] calls 'gods' (*theoi*) because [heaven] 'always runs' (*aei thein*).[278] For
15 he does not mean the 'sorcery' that Demosthenes ascribes to Aeschines' mother: for this man was a mendicant priest of Cybele (*mêtragurtês*).[279]

They also teach what a king should know: If kingship is teachable, then it is [properly] not assigned by lot, but according to expertise (*epistêmê*), and we should not accept kingship that's assigned by lot.

20 **[The justest] teaches him to tell the truth through his whole life:** For justice is observed not only in our actions, but also in our words. And the just person portions out what each deserves: therefore, when he portions
160,1 out what is deserved in speech, he will speak the truth; for he does not portion out lies.

[The most self-controlled teaches him] not to be ruled by even a single pleasure: For it is a strange business if a person who has defeated the enemy is then conquered by their spoils, if that happens to be women in their prime. It is when we are not under [another's] control that we are truly free, fearing
5 nothing, since the word 'slave' (*doulos*) is derived from 'fear' (*deos*); for the slave

as such is 'afraid (*dedien*) completely (*holos*)' of his master, since he always has him in mind.

[Zopyrus, a tutor] so old he was perfectly useless: [He was] not only perfectly useless because of his old age, but also because he was maimed – 'someone who [Pericles] would never have assigned to you as your tutor if he were *not* in this kind of a useless condition'. (As a matter of fact, this is also what children's tutors are like in the present day).[280] **122B**

I could tell you about all the rest of [the upbringing and education] of your competitors. . . [This is the rhetorical] figure of omission (*paraleipsis*), which enlarges both the speech and the speaker, and hints silently at something greater. Hence he says, 'I could have told you other things too, if I didn't think this was [already] enough'.

[Your birth, upbringing and education . . . is of no concern to anybody], except perhaps someone who happens to be in love with you: He ought to have told him, 'No one is paying attention to your cultivation (*epimeleia*)'; but because philosophers are fond of generalisation, he says that 'No one is paying attention to *you*, unless it's someone happens to be in love with you'.

Lecture 18

With the god's favour

And again, if you care to consider the wealth of the Persians . . . **122B–124A**

Socrates has compared Alcibiades with the Persian King and proven him inferior to that man [i.e., the King], arguing from four distinct [bases]: [1] from homeland or lineage, [2] from birth, which he called 'birthday celebrations' (*genethlia*), [3] from upbringing (*trophê*), and [4] from education (*paideia*) (and he subdivided education into 'preparatory education' and 'education proper'). Since [in that passage] he did not also compare him with the Lacedaemonian kings and employ the same four arguments to show that he is also inferior to the Lacedaemonians, he now compares the young man with the lifestyle (*diaita*) and wealth common to both [Persians and Lacedaemonians]. 161,1

Now [Socrates] is generally disgusted (*duskherainei*) with the criteria of comparison that he uses here for Alcibiades (for if the human being is the soul, we should not make comparisons on these criteria),[281] and he is even more disgusted with the use of *wealth* as a criterion of comparison, since this especially lies outside of us [ourselves]. For lifestyle (*diaita*) concerns the body, but wealth concerns what derives from outside [the body]; hence in the case of lifestyle he uses the words 'if you wish' [122C4] but in the case of wealth, 'we can't leave this unspoken' [122D2].

He also says, 'Alcibiades, even if you rejoice in your luxurious lifestyle' (for Alcibiades was that kind of person, as witness the writers who composed books of many lines about his luxury, just like the cookbooks passed down even today),[282] 'still the Persian table exceeds your lifestyle, since it is even more luxurious than the Sybaritic table;[283] while if the Lacedaemonians make no use of luxury, you're still outdone by their frugal lifestyle'. From this passage, [the commentators] raise the puzzle (*aporia*) why Socrates contrasts Alcibiades with the Persians in luxury; for by doing so, he makes [Alcibiades] all the more competitive with them, and prone to emulate them in this [sort of thing]. Now, we resolve the puzzle as follows, by explaining that 'nevertheless, he does not compare [Alcibiades] to the Persians in their soft living alone, but also to the Lacedaemonians, who employ a frugal lifestyle'; moreover, he constructs his argument on the basis of what appears good to Alcibiades, and luxury does seem good to him.

'But you're also inferior to the Lacedaemonians in wealth'. Consider that wealth is threefold: [1] self-moving (*autokinêtos*), [2] moved by another (*heterokinêtos*), or [3] not moving at all (*akinêtos*):[284] in every one of these cases the young man is worsted by the wealth of the Lacedaemonians. [1] In the case of unmoved [wealth], it's because after [the Lacedaemonians] took Messene,[285] they marked it off to serve as an abundant resource for their needs; Tyrtaeus the poet said about it,

> Messene, good to sow in, good to plant in;[286]

– for the land was fertile.

[2] Moreover, they used to vaunt themselves for their wealth in self-moving [resources], since they enslaved the entire people of the Helots; and [their wealth] was also visibly self-moving, since they were horse-masters, as witness the saying 'into horse-pasturing Argos'.[287]

[3] They also used to outdo others in wealth that is moved by others (*heterokinêtos*), since it is reported about them that they demanded two parts of their subjects' income, and that their veins are said to be 'of silver and gold', and there's the saying 'Mycenae rich with gold';[288] and the report of them also runs that the gold entering their possession never left. Hence he also uses a story to describe this kind of [one-way] tribute: the story goes that once upon a time, a lion who had grown old pretended that he was ill, and the other animals came in [to his den] to visit him, and he captured them, ate them, and so brought them to ruin. But the fox, who was clever, refused to enter, but instead he stood at the entrance; and when [the lion] pressed him to come in, he said that he would certainly not, since he observed footsteps of the [animals] going in to the [lion], but no footsteps going back out – that is, he saw footsteps going inward from the entrance, but none going back out to the entrance.[289] So it is the same in the case of the Lacedaemonians: [Plato] says that the money goes in, but even to this day, nothing ever goes out. And he compares them to the lion who has grown old, since they live according to a meritocracy (*aristokrateia*), which is appropriate to the lion, but they weakened it, so that they were at risk of declining from a meritocracy into oligarchy.[290]

But if the Lacedaemonians outdo Alcibiades in wealth, the Persian kings outshine Alcibiades far more by this [criterion], too. For the story about them runs that entire cities – stretching out as long as a day's journey – are allocated (*aphorizein*) for each and every ornament of their women, so that each ornament comes from [that city's] tribute. That's also how the cities came to have names derived from these [ornaments]: for where else would [a city] get the name 'Queen's Girdle' or 'Veil', other than this? And this is not implausible, if you also consider that when Themistocles changed sides[291] the king allocated three cities to supply his needs – for he asked to spend a year among [the Persians], until he could master Persian customs, and thus to discuss in person his betrayal of Greece – since as the historian [Thucydides] relates, [the king] handed over Magnesia and Myus and Lampsacus to him.[292]

Now once again [the commentators] raise the puzzle why Socrates plainly discourages Alcibiades from becoming this sort of person,[293] even as he compares him to the Persians, and exalts Persian customs. Well, it's not that he vaunts their customs; rather, he dismisses them as women, since [women] are lovers of money, having this character thanks to their lower birth – for

they are naturally weaker and tend to be fond of money.[294] And since the Persians are like this (effeminate in their character), that's why they also wear trailing robes and use adornments. And they're not the only ones like this, but the Indians also have this kind of affection.

Nor does [Socrates] vaunt the Lacedaemonians and express amazement at them, but on the contrary, he reproaches them with the words of the oracle, which runs:

> Love of money will undo Sparta, and naught else;[295]

And it's for this reason that Lycurgus mandated that their currency be bronze,[296] and that they steep it in vinegar, so that it would degrade swiftly and would not remain among them for long. It's also said that Pherecydes, the teacher of Pythagoras, whose book on theology is preserved, experienced a dream after he arrived among the Lacedaemonians, and told the Lacedaemonian kings not to place value on money; and on the same night, it's said that [the dream] appeared to the other king, [advising him] to trust Pherecydes; and as soon as Pherecydes woke up and spoke to the king, it's said that their constitution changed course, when it was once again on the verge of declining into oligarchy.[297]

165,1 After Socrates has criticised (*elenxas*) Alcibiades along these lines, with a long and drawn-out speech (because someone who presents history is obliged to use drawn-out speeches, since the discussion is about particular cases (*merikôn*), whereas in [discussions about the] universal, discourse by question and answer is appropriate, because discussion through questioning is appropriate to beings that are bodiless and partless, whereas drawn-out discussion befits bodies which have parts and are extended in space: that is also why orators use drawn-out speech, since they are concerned with particular cases) – after criticising him for the first part [of the dialogue] as ignorant of himself, at this point he begins the third part by saying, 'No, my excellent friend, trust in me and in the Delphic inscription, and "Know Thyself"' [124A]. In these words, with the god's favour, the second part [of the dialogue] and the present survey are complete.

122B Again, if you care to consider the wealth [of the Persians]: Notice how disgusted Socrates is when he compares Alcibiades to the kings of the Persians in terms of lifestyle (*diaitan*); this is also why he uses the words, 'If you care to'.

And he will appear even more disgusted later, when he compares him [to them] on the [criterion] of wealth, because [wealth] is even [more] outside of us; this is also why, still disgusted, he says 'we can't leave this unspoken' [122D2]. Note, too, how Socrates chooses the right moment to speak like an orator and use a mocking tone, setting everything out in plurals instead of singular forms, using the words 'wealths' and 'luxuries'.[298] And he speaks about 'trailing robes' (using two words) because the Persians wear tunics that stretch to their feet, which is also why they're called 'robe-trailers' (*helkesipeploi*); as do the Indians, like the Ionians too.

The throng of servants-in-waiting: Notice as well how he introduces plural forms to elevate [the Persians], even though the train [of servants] is singular. **122C** 166,1

Again, if you care to consider the self-control and decorum [of the Lacedaemonians]: After the comparison with the Persians, [Socrates] turns and contrasts him with the Laconians. Now we should investigate why he claims that the Laconian women are self-controlled (*sôphrôn*), supposing the comic saying is true that

> It's a Laconian key, not to be carried around,[299]
>
> and
>
> Not every man's voyage leads to Corinth.[300]

– For Lais came from [Corinth], while Helen was Laconian.[301]

Well, he says that the Laconian women are self-controlled because they are obedient to their masters. For this is also what the poet [Homer] means when he says of the Trojans, 'The Trojans [came on] with clamour', etc. [*Il.* 3.2], whereas he says of the Greeks, '[They marched] silently, in fear of their commanders' [*Il.* 4.431]. And this is appropriate to self-control, that the inferior obey the superior; for when [self-control] develops in the remotest portion of the soul,[302] it causes [the soul] to obey reason.

And their love of hardship, love of victory, and love of honour: For the Laconians were also fond of hardship (*philoponoi*), which is why from childhood they were whipped, habituating them for hard work; for they received whippings from four years of age. But they also used to enjoy

167,1 practicing gymnastics at the Eurytus, as Euripides says, with men and women exercising together. And the word 'love of victory' (*philonikia*) should be written with [the letter] 'i',[303] since they used to rejoice in victory. And notice how he finished with love of honour (*philotimia*), since they lived under that kind of constitution, namely, under a timocracy.

122D 5 **For they have so much land of their own, and in Messene [that not one [of our estates] could compete with in size or excellence. . .]:** Notice that he begins by comparing wealth; and he makes the comparison first on the basis of wealth moved by another (*heterokinêtos*). The Peloponnese was divided into five parts, of which one was Messene. Also, the language should be interpreted in reverse: 'For they have so much land, both in size and excellence, of their 10 own and in Messene, that not one [of our estates] could compete with'.

122E **For many generations, [gold and silver] have been pouring in to them from all over Greece:** Note how it's also possible to show from these words that Plato really reproaches [the Lacedaemonians], since it's a sign of envy only to take and never to give. In fact, he represents their wealth as enmeshed in matter 15 (*enhulos*); for this – only to take and never to give – is suitable to matter, which is also why Plato in the *Timaeus* [51A–B] assigns no other name to [matter] but 'receptive' (*metalêptikos*). So how could he approve of them, when he joins the Pythia and Pherecydes and Lycurgus in reproaching them? And in the rest [of the lemma], he adds the parable of the Fox [and the Lion], gracefully 20 and suitably presented. For Platonic grace always flourishes, and never grows old.

123A **[You can clearly see the tracks] of the money going into Lacedaemon:** He changed the name of the lion into 'money'; for he likened [money] to a wild beast.[304]

123B **I once heard a reliable man:** [The commentators] explain that he is talking about Xenophon: for this man related his inquiry into Persian [life] in 168,1 the *Anabasis*,[305] after joining Cyrus in his expedition against his brother Artaxerxes.[306]

[He crossed] 'the Queen's Girdle': There's nothing implausible (*atopos*) about cities being allocated for each and every ornament worn by the queens

of Persia, since among us, too, purple is called 'Tyrian', [Tyre] being the source of purple dye, because it's allocated especially for the Emperor's purple toga.[307]

Notice, too, how he used this kind of talk to dismiss them as women: for [women] love wealth because of their low birth and natural weakness. That's also why the Persians have a feminine look, since they enjoy wearing that kind of jewellery.[308] But if *our* soldiers wear adornments, in doing so they turn their character (*êthos*) into something foreign (*barbaron*).

Now if someone were to say to [Amestris], the king's mother [and the wife of Xerxes]: He builds his speech up from the prior generation to the contemporary to the posterior, speaking of the king's mother, wife, and daughter. And he remarks, 'If someone were to tell [her] that Alcibiades wishes to enter competition with her son, how in the world could you compete with him with confidence? For there's no other way you should attempt to do this, except by cultivation [of yourself] developing from wisdom (*sophia*); for it's the ancestral way of the Athenians to achieve victory by wisdom'. (So when he commented earlier that the four later [teachers] educate the Persian kings,[309] and one teaches courage, another wisdom, we shouldn't understand [these to be] *excellences* in the strict sense).[310] 'So shouldn't we be ashamed, Alcibiades', he goes on, 'if we are worsted by our enemies, and not only by them, but also by their wives? And not only at that, but also because they grasp the means for our salvation, while we're ignorant of it!' **123C** 169,1

The son of Dinomache: This is emphatic; for where he had previously elevated his speech by basing it on prior, contemporary, and posterior generations, now he says, 'The son of Dinomache'.[311]

This 'Alcibiades' [. . . hardly twenty years old]: This is also emphatic, namely in the phrase 'who has not yet turned <twenty>,[312] which ranks [Alcibiades] in the third place: **123D**

> For that man is best who has insight into all things himself;
> next, excellent is he who pays heed to a good adviser.[313]

But Alcibiades has been cast down into the third rank, since he does not even pay heed to someone else.

Secondly, entirely uneducated: Meaning, 'Doubly ignorant, knowing nothing of himself and his affairs'.

[When his lover tells him] to learn and cultivate and train himself: [The word] 'learning' referred to reason, but 'training' (*askêsis*) to the non-rational soul. For learning is categorically distinguished from training, since of course the non-rational [parts of the soul] are educated through training; but 'cultivation' (*epimeleia*) is common to both [the rational and non-rational soul].

123E **And I think that Lampido, the daughter of Leotychides**: He adds another constitution, that of the Lacedaeomnians, and again he elevates his speech by basing it on prior, contemporary, and posterior generations.

124A **And yet, [don't you think] it's shameful that our enemies' wives [have a better appreciation than we do of what it would take to challenge them]?** He makes the remark that we already mentioned, namely, that it is shameful to be worsted by one's enemies, and not only by them, but even by their wives; and what's most shameful of all, that they should know how we can be helped, while we have no idea.

So concludes, with the god's favour, the second section [of the dialogue].[314]

170,1

Beginning of Part 3[315]

Lecture 19

With the god's favour

124A–D **No, my blessed friend, trust in me and in the Delphic inscription and 'Know Thyself'.**

Now the first and second part of the refutations of Alcibiades initiated a shared project:[316] for in the first part, [Socrates] demonstrated that [Alcibiades] was ignorant of himself with respect to his soul, and in the second part, [that he was ignorant of himself] with respect to his body and external factors:[317] first with respect to soul, because he thinks he has knowledge without actually having it, so that he is doubly ignorant; or as a beginning doctor might initially consider himself a philosopher, to whom Alexander wrote,[318]

Be still, poor wretch, among your bandages (*en splêniois*)!
You don't actually see what you think you see.

— or with respect to body, as if some Thersites were to think that he was a man 171,1
in his prime;[319] or with respect to externals, as if some utterly destitute person thought himself wealthy when he wasn't.

With these comments [24A–D], then, he introduces the third part [of the dialogue] and he comes to the two refutations that he laid out in the [first] two parts [and says]: 'No, my blessed friend, trust in me and in the Delphic 5
inscription and "Know Thyself"' [124?]. And he calls [Alcibiades] 'blessed' (*makarion*) because he is about to link him to the gods; and in this context, [the word] 'blessedness' (*makariotês*) is used for the negation of 'fatedness' (*kêr*), since [the prefix] *ma–* indicates negation. And he positions himself before the god because he is the proximate cause of Alcibiades' salvation. By using the phrase 'Know Thyself' (*gnôthi seauton*), he reveals the content of 10
[the god's] command (*prostattomenon*), since he used the [words of the] instruction to reveal what [the god] commanded: [1] he used the word 'know' (*gnôthi*) [to show] that we are not a body (*sôma*) (for [a body] does not have knowledge), nor a combination [of body and soul] (for this does not have knowledge either, insofar as it is a combination, since it certainly doesn't have knowledge as a body), but [instead] we are a soul (*psukhê*), and not a vegetative soul (for that has no knowledge);[320] and [2] he used the word 'thyself' 15
(*seauton*) since [we are] also not non-rational (*alogos*) (for the non-rational [soul] does not revert upon itself), but [rather] rational, and not always *completely* rational, but sometimes even ignorant. That's also the reason why he added the [imperative] command 'know' (*gnôthi*): for no one commands the agent to act, but now [sc. in Alcibiades' condition of ignorance], he commands him to *know himself*.

'For you're in urgent need of cultivation', he says, 'and you're not the only one, 20
but I am too. For all human beings – more than other animals – stand in need of cultivation, and you and I especially so, most of all'. Now let us investigate why he 172,1
maintains these three positions: that is, [1] why is Socrates ignorant of himself? [2] Why is the human being alone in need of cultivation, more than other animals? And [3] why does the third point also hold, that Socrates and Alcibiades especially stand in need of cultivation, more so than other human beings?

[1] Well then, the answer to the first question is that 'self-knowledge' is said in many ways (*pollakhôs*):[321] it is possible to know oneself with respect to one's external [possessions]; and of course it is possible to know oneself with respect to one's body; and it is possible to know oneself as a civic or social person (*politikôs*), when one knows oneself in the tripartition of one's soul;[322] and it is possible to know oneself as a purificatory person (*kathartikôs*), when one knows oneself in the act of liberation from the affections (*pathê*); and it is possible to know oneself as a contemplative person (*theôrêtikôs*), when a person contemplates himself as liberated (*heauton. . . theasêtai*); it is possible to know oneself theologically (*theologikôs*), when a person knows himself according to his paradigmatic Form (*idea*); and it is possible to know oneself as an inspired person (*enthousiastikôs*), when a person knows himself as a unity (*kata to hen*) and, thus bonded to his proper god (*oikeios theos*), acts with inspiration (*enthousiâi*).[323] Now Socrates did not know himself as an inspired person, which is also why in the *Phaedrus* he says, 'it is ridiculous to look into other things, while remaining ignorant of myself' [229E–230A].

[2] As for the second question, [the commentators] say that the human being stands in need of cultivation more than other animals, not only with respect to his body (since nature made it naked, after providing hair all over for other animals, and horns for some, and hooves), and again not only with respect to externals (since we are the only animal to need shelter from houses), but also with respect to reason (*logos*), since the troubles that human beings face are extremely harsh, more so than other animals, which is why we have resourceful reason within [us], like some Odysseus toiling to the limit for his appetite, and elaborating his sufferings (*pathê*).[324] That is also why it was said,

> The earth breeds nothing feebler than a human being.[325]

For this reason, then, [Socrates] says that the human being is more in need of cultivation [than any other animal].

[3] As for the third [question], why Alcibiades and Socrates [stand in need of cultivation] more than other people: first, Alcibiades [does], because great natures become causes of great harm (*kaka*) when they go without cultivation, just as when they happen to be cultivated, they are the causes of great goods. As a matter

of fact, this is analogous to the case of rich land that produces good fruit when it is cultivated and farmed, but when it's uncultivated, naturally produces thistles (for it knows only how to generate its produce, without distinguishing whether it is thorny or otherwise); that is just the situation with talented natures (*dexiai phuseis*). And wherever Alcibiades inclined from or to, he made a change (*tropê*). For instance, when he joined the Laconians, he slept with the king's wife, mother, and daughter; and when he came to Athens, he advised his guardian Pericles to consider how he might avoid rendering an account to the Athenians of the money spent on the Athena of Pheidias.[326] That's also why that man [sc. Pericles] used to say to the people who came to examine the expenditures that 'it was spent on necessities (*to deon*)'. And the comedy about him says 'I was ruined (*apôlesa*) on necessities', instead of 'I spent (*anêlôsa*)'.[327] And that was the beginning of the Peloponnesian War.[328] For these reasons, Alcibiades stood in need of a great deal of cultivation.

But Socrates was also [in need of cultivation and that was] because of the loftiness of his love of wisdom (*philosophia*).[329] Alternatively, since he's a lover he wants to be in the same state as his beloved, so he says that he is with him in standing in need of much cultivation.

That is the survey.

Trust in me and in the Delphic inscription: He allies himself with the god: and he has many grounds for doing so. Thus in the *Phaedrus* [*sic*; *Phaedo* 85B][330] he calls himself 'a fellow-slave of the swans'; so too in the present dialogue he allied himself with Apollo, criticising the Lacedaemonians for their love of money (for the oracle was given about them: **124A** 174,1

> Love of money will destroy Sparta, and naught else).[331]

So in the *Theaetetus* [151D], [he says] 'no god is unkind to humanity, nor do I do this out of unkindness, but it's altogether wrong for me to allow falsehood or hide the truth'.

These people are our competitors: 'For the Persians and Laconians are our competitors and adversaries, "but not the ones you thought"' (for those [Athenians] turned out to be allies); 'and we can't overcome them in any way except by wisdom and cultivation'. And note how he says that he, too, is ignorant of himself [cf. 124B–C]. **124B**

[Winning fame] in Greece and among foreigners, which is what I think you want: [Here is] Socratic therapy, to say 'If you aim to become famous, learn what civic knowledge (*politikê epistêmê*) is; for that alone has the capacity to make you famous'. For Socratic healing develops from the application of likes to likes, in the manner of doctors who apply similar medicines (*pharmaka*) to the humours, and in that way empty out the excessive, harmful humour.[332]

Can you interpret this for me? For [your words] seem very much like [the truth]. The boy answered with natural talent: for he calls [Socrates] an 'interpreter' (*exêgêtês*), because Apollo was honoured by the Athenians as an interpreter, since through the interpretation of his oracles he became a cause of salvation for the Greeks.[333] So [Alcibiades] called [Socrates] an 'interpreter' when he allied himself with the god.

Yes – but let's take counsel together: Notice how Socrates also acts [as if he is] ignorant (*agnoei*), and this is also the reason why he takes counsel together [with Alcibiades]. For he takes counsel with his beloved in ignorance, even though he is a knowledgeable person (*epistêmôn*) with the capacity to understand [what he claims not to know]. But it's because he is a lover that he acts ignorant in company with his beloved.[334]

For when I speak about the need of being educated, I'm not referring only to you: 'For it's something we have in common', he says, 'me and you, being ignorant of ourselves and therefore standing in need of education; but we have just one difference, that your guardian is Pericles, but mine is a god', which is one and whole.[335] The same goes for other passages: 'For I know nothing but one thing, and one thing only: how to offer and grasp arguments (*logoi*)',[336] that is, dialectic, which is the whole, granted that philosophy has knowledge of all things.

What? Did Alcibiades not have a guardian who was divine? Yet it is said in the *Phaedo* [107D] that after death the daimon leads the person to the judges, [the daimon] who had been allotted to him in life. But [Alcibiades does not have such a daimon] *with awareness of it* (*sun aisthêseôs*), as Socrates does.

[I say] that [there's no other way you will come to be] manifest. . .: He used the same word, 'manifestation' (*epiphaneia*), both for the god and for Alcibiades;

because in its proper sense 'manifestation' is said of a god.[337] For Alcibiades <cared for his reputation>,[338] and the reputation-lover is fond of being manifest. Notice, also, how [Socrates] boasts at the right moment (*en kairôi*), as he claims 'your manifestation will come about through me. 25 176,1

You're being playful (*paizeis*), Socrates. –Maybe. . . [Alcibaides] says that he is 'being playful' because he said 'I'm in need of cultivation too'. But [Socrates] replies, '*perhaps* I'm playing'; for activity about matters of secondary importance is a game (*paignion*). That's also the reason for the [verse]:[339] **124D**

> But among the blessed immortals, unquenchable laughter went up 5
> as they saw Hephaestus bustling about the palace.

For the poets have described the overseer of the bodily world (*sômatikon pan*) as lame in both legs; this is what they mean by the epithet 'twin-lamed' (*amphiguêeis*).

All people [need cultivation], but especially we two, most of all: Consider the difference between Socrates' words and those of Homer's Achilles. For the latter says to Patroclus, rousing him up to fight:[340] 10

> [If only] not one of the Trojans could escape death, not one of them,
> nor any of the Argives, but you and I could escape destruction.

For he says, 'let everyone else perish, but let us be saved', whereas Socrates, as the guardian of human nature, says that *all* human beings stand in need of a great deal of cultivation. 15

There must be no giving up, nor slacking off: 'There must be no giving up', with a view to the argument (*logos*), for we must not have the argument enfeebled with its sinews cut; 'nor slacking off', with a view to appetite (*epithumia*), for we must not let our appetite slacken, but keep it taut, straining for the aim of benefit (*ôphelia*). 20

Lecture 20

177,1

With the god's favour

124D–126C **Now tell me: we say that we want to be as good as possible, don't we?**

Now since[341] the target (*skopos*) of the dialogue is knowledge of ourselves (*gnônai heautous*)[342] – not as our body, nor as external things (for it's been entitled '*Alcibiades, Or Concerning the Nature of the Human Being*'), but as the soul (*psukhê*), and not as the vegetative soul, nor as the non-rational [soul], but as the rational [soul]; and [since it's] certainly not about knowing ourselves as [the rational soul] when it acts to purify itself, or in its contemplative or theological or theurgic [aspects],[343] but as a *civic* person (*politikôs*) (for Alcibiades wouldn't be willing to work for what he seeks, if he didn't have some incentive for it, whereas certainly in this [passage] he is disgusted at how lazy he has been in the search; for [Alcibiades] is – as the text [118B] says – 'rushing into politics', and thanks to this he has some willy-nilly desire for what he seeks); and what comes next also agrees with this interpretation of the [dialogue's] target (for in the next part, [Socrates] defines the human being as a 'rational soul using the body as an instrument' [129E–130C]: and only the civic person is like this; for the purificatory person does not use [the body] as an instrument, if instruments contribute to the goal of the wielder; rather, the body becomes more of an impediment to the purificatory person, and Aristotle put it well when we said, 'it is difficult even to imagine what sort of [bodily] part mind (*nous*) will hold together, or how');[344] and for the purpose of this dialogue, some points had to be taken up that are comparable to the next dialogue in sequence, the *Gorgias*, which treats the civic forms of virtue individually[345] – [for all these reasons], it was therefore necessary to explain who the person with civic [excellence], or statesman (*politikos*), is:[346] on account of this, he states here the causes of civic knowledge, [including] [1] the material [cause], [2] the formal [cause], [3] the efficient [cause], and [4] the final [cause].[347]

[1] The material cause (*hulikon*) is not concerned with [paradigmatic Forms] to be grasped by contemplation, but with practical materials (*prakta*): and not just with some of these (for certain materials underlie the work of the carpenter, like wood; and ship-building has some too, like the ships), but with

all [practical materials]. For just as each skill has knowledge of one thing, but is ignorant of many [others], while the philosopher knows *all* beings, so too whereas each of the other skills has a single underlying [matter] and deliberates carefully about it, the civic [skill] (*politikê* [*tekhnê*]) takes *all* beings as its practical materials (*prakta*), with a view to improving them. For it would be out of place for [the civic skill] to have only one underlying material, considering that the statesman (*politikos*) imitates the Demiurge[348] and deliberates about how to imitate him in his productive activity, and therefore he too wants to set [all things] in better order. And in doing this, the civic [skill] is unwilling to do any injustice to the skills that have descended from it, by putting their functions to its own use, for on the contrary it wishes to preserve them, by offering advice about whether and when they ought to be employed. In fact, it's like this when Homer's Achilles encourages [the Achaeans] to consult a prophet,[349] but he has not done the prophet's work [himself], or offered a prophecy.

[2] Now the form (*eidos*) of political knowledge is rulership (*arkhein*); and it's not the rulership of non-rational [animals], 'caring by blows',[350] but of human beings; and it's not of human beings simply, since the doctor also rules human beings in distress; nor of human beings when they reap (for that's the work of farming); nor of sailors (for that's the pilot's work); nor of singers (for that's the chorus-teacher's work); but of human beings 'as they deal with (*khrômenôn*) human beings' [125C]. But since the pilot also rules people who are boatswains (it's people who look after the ship's tackle who are called 'boatswains'), who rule the people who row, and the chorus-teacher rules the flute-players who lead the singers, therefore [Socrates] adds that the statesman rules human beings, those who are in positions of leadership, and who join together in contractual agreements.

[3] And the efficient cause (*poiêtikon aition*) is not wisdom (*sophia*), but practical wisdom (*phronêsis*), which is concerned with practical matters (*prakta*).

[4] And the statesman's final [cause, or goal] is producing agreement and affection in the state (*polis*), either between [different] understandings (*gnôseis*), in which case he produces agreement (*homonoia*) (for agreement is nothing but commonality of understandings and shared belief (*homodoxia*)), or between ways of life, in which case he produces affection (*storgê*) (for

10 <affection>[351] is natural love (*philia*)). Now these two are not identical, since there is such a thing as affection without agreement, as for instance a husband and wife [might] love one another without agreeing [on specific subjects] (for they are not in agreement in their domains of expertise: the woman, for example, is not in agreement with her husband on matters of war or expertise in armed combat, while the man [is not in agreement] with his wife in 15 knowledge of wool-spinning);[352] and conversely, there is agreement without affection, since potters agree [with one another], out of their concern for the same objects of knowledge, and they have the same thoughts (*ta auta noousi*) [about their area of expertise] (for this is called 'agreement' (*homonoia*)), yet they do not have affection for one another, whence the saying

20 One potter begrudges another; likewise for the carpenter.[353]

180,1 Now how might the statesman produce agreement and affection in the state? He could produce affection, if he causes the citizens to be disposed to one another like a state comprised of a single family, so that they measure their 5 kinship by age, regarding all the aged as fathers, those who are much smaller as children, their contemporaries as brothers, so that instead of his[354] saying 'age-mate delights age-mate', we should say 'citizen delights citizen'. And if everyone were to enjoy the same experiences of sight and sound, agreement follows. For agreement was [found to be] a shared understanding (*koinônia gnôseôn*); and those who have achieved this would [also] have a shared vision and hearing, since the senses are kinds of understanding.

10 And that is the survey.

124D **Tell me: we say that we want to become as good as possible?** That is, 'We want to become as good as possible, so for this reason it's necessary that we learn what the statesman knows'. And at this point [Socrates] began the prelude to his work (*prooimion tês praxeôs*), by describing the material of the statesman's knowledge.

124E **Clearly, in what good men do**: Since Alcibiades is young, he didn't answer well 15 when he said 'it's necessary to have that excellence which "good men have"'. For 181,1 he ought to have described the [specific] *kind* of excellence required, whether it is concerned with objects of contemplation (*theôrêmata*), or with actions (*prakta*). Hence Socrates asks him 'Good at what?' For the text (*lexis*) doesn't

proceed exactly like the conceptual survey (*theôria*), providing [the account of] the material of the statesman in good order, but [it proceeds] by question and answer, because Socrates doesn't want to describe the material himself, but in concert with Alcibiades, as a midwife (*hôs maieutikos*); for if he wanted to express it himself, he would present the survey (*theôria*).

Taking care of practical matters (*pragmata*), obviously: Notice how up to this point, Alcibiades was benefited on one rung [of the argument]: for he took the argument as a single, undivided whole maintaining that practical [matters] serve as material for statesmen. That's why again [Socrates] asked him 'What kind of practical [matters]? To do with horses?' And he says 'No'; for when we want to learn about these things, we study under equestrians. 'For [good] advice about a subject comes from the person who understands it, not from the wealthy person.'[355]

What the noble and good citizens (*kaloi k'agathoi*) of Athens [concern themselves with]: Alcibiades was benefited in this respect alone, that he converts the noble and good (*antistrephei kalon kai agathon*). As for the rest, [Socrates] asks him, 'Apparently, insofar as someone has knowledge, he is not wise? For example, surely the shoecutter who is wise in making shoes will also be good [at shoemaking], but he'll be unwise at something else, like weaving; and [thus] the same person will be both good and bad!' And there's nothing out of place about this in the case of the shoemaker, but it is out of place in the case of the statesman who wishes to produce a benefit for every practical concern (*prakta*), because he is putting on the persona (*hupoduetai*) of the Demiurge.

What? Are you saying that good men are also bad? Notice how he grants in **125B**
the conclusion that all practical matters (*prakta*) serve [as material] for the statesman; for he says that good people are by no means bad [at statecraft], but this is exactly the case for experts in *particular* crafts (*tekhnitai*), that they are both good and bad.

So which ones do you say *are* the good men? At this point, he begins to explain the form (*eidos*) of the statesman, namely, rulership (*to arkhein*). And 182,1
again, by using appropriate questions, he moves from [abstract] universals (*katholou*) to the real form (*tôi onti*).[356] For he uses suitable questions to compel

[Alcibiades] to grant that [it is] the rule of people as they deal with [other] people in lawful, customary contracts. And we might experience wonder at the midwifery of Socrates, how he uses such a plethora of examples to broaden the soul's narrow passage, and induce it to give birth to truth.

125C **When they're doing nothing?** That is, 'unoccupied'. And he replies, 'no'.

When they do business with each other: Notice again how the youth was benefited in [recognising that the statesman] rules over people as they manage and 'do business' with each other, that is, as they rule others.

125D **[I mean ruling over people] who take part in citizenship and do business with each other.** Notice the final answer, that [the form of statesmanship] is to rule over people as they deal with each other in lawful, customary contracts (*kata nomon sumbolaiois*).

Well, what skill is this? At this point he begins [to discuss] the efficient cause, that it is practical wisdom (*phronêsis*), not wisdom (*sophia*).[357]

125E **[I call it] good advice (*euboulia*), Socrates.** Instead of [naming] a state, the youth moved to an activity. [But that was a mistake], for he ought to have named practical wisdom, but he named good advice [instead]; and having said that, he named it simply, [but that was a mistake], for he ought to have said which *kind* of good advice. And we should note that above, too, he moved to participants intsead of the state participated, which he could not see, like someone who was unable to see small letters and so turned to look at large letters.[358]

126A **And when the city is better managed, what is present [or absent]?** Perhaps
183,1 [he means to refer to a time] when affection is present and division of opinion absent (which he subsequently calls 'civil strife' (*stasis*), that is, war with one's own people). The poetic verse about this was well stated:[359]

> Out of all brotherhood, outlawed, homeless is that man,
> who longs for the horror of fighting among his own people.

126B **[What is present in our eyes when they're better cared for? . . . Sight is present and] blindness is absent:** What, then? Is it possible for blindness to become absent thanks to human ingenuity? For that belongs to divine radiance.

[The explanation is] that it's possible to use the name 'blindness' for the condition that is caused by cataracts.[360]

When mutual friendship is present: Socrates has used many examples to explain to the young man what the statesman's final cause [or purpose] is, and at this point, Alcibiades gives birth to this [answer], saying that it is 'to produce friendship among his citizens'. And once he has articulated this in its basic form (*haplôs*), in the next [section] Socrates makes him discriminate and declare its fulfilment (*teleion*). **126C** 10

Lecture 21

With the god's favour

When you say 'friendship' (*philia*), do you mean agreement or disagreement? **126C–127E**

Since Alcibiades was describing friendship as the goal of the statesman's knowledge, Socrates challenges him – not because he himself *disagrees* that friendship is the goal, but because he suspected that Alcibiades did not distinguish between affection (*storgê*) and friendship (*philia*). And he shows that agreement is friendship both directly, and by an argument from impossibility [i.e., reduction to absurdity]. His direct [argument] runs as follows: 'If disagreement is enmity, agreement will be friendship; therefore, not only is affection (*storgê*) friendship, but so is agreement'. And his argument from impossibility runs as follows: 'If a husband and wife do not agree, and if we were claiming that agreement is to know the same things, but these people <do not>[361] know the same things ([which they don't], since [the husband] supposes that he need know nothing of wool-spinning, and [the wife] thinks that she need know nothing about mastering horses); but those who do not enjoy the same objects of knowledge are not friends to one another; therefore, a husband and wife are not friends to one another'. (And it's clear that they are not in agreement with respect to their *immediate* goal, inasmuch as one happens to understand horsemanship, the other wool-spinning, whereas they *are* in agreement with respect to their more *final* goal, for the [husband] goes to war to protect his wife – because [men fight] 'for their children and for their 15 20 184,1 5

wives'[362] – but she weaves wool to protect the man, so that he may not be destroyed by the onslaught of the climate).

Next, having extracted [the premiss] from [Alcibiades] that those who do not enjoy the same objects of knowledge are not friends to one another, he proves [from this] that just people are not able to organise (*oikein*) their cities well. He also takes a premiss proven in the second figure:[363] 'Those who do their own work and don't meddle in others' business are not friends to one another; those who organise their city well (*eu*) are friends to one another (for that was the purpose of the statesman's knowledge, [namely], friendship and unity); therefore, those who do their own work are not friends to one another'. Once he has obtained this conclusion, he proceeds to reason, having added on another premiss from outside [the argument, as follows]: 'The just do their own work: those who do their own work do not organise their cities well; therefore, the just do not organise their cities well'.

But Alcibiades ought to have considered that [the word] 'friendship' (*philia*) is said in many ways. For there is friendship in respect to the One (*hen*), which is also called 'union' (*henôsis*), and this arises in [episodes of] inspiration (*enthousiasmois*) [that derive] from the One and [unite us] with what is better (*pros to kreitton*). And there is friendship in respect to mind (*nous*), which is called 'agreement' (*homonoia*). And there is [friendship] in respect to thought (*dianoia*), which is called 'thinking alike' (*homophrosunê*); that's also [the meaning of] the phrase 'in my sharp-witted thoughts' (*en phresi peukalimêisi*).[364] And [there is] friendship in respect to opinion, which is called '[holding] the same opinion' (*homodoxia*). And there is [friendship] in respect to habits of character (*êthesin*), which [is called] 'shared feeling' (*homoiopatheia*); that's also the [meaning of the phrase] 'comrade delights comrade', by shared feeling, for children delight each other and so do youths and the elderly, by enjoying [having] the same feelings and experiences (*pathê*). And there is another [form of] friendship, which belongs to descent (*kata ta genê*), which is called 'kinship'.

That is the content of the survey.

126C When you say 'friendship', do you mean agreement? etc.: That is to say, 'Do you call it "agreement" because [it involves] enjoying the same objects of knowledge? For example, do you call it "agreeing" about numbers when [people] have the same [numbers] in mind, due to the [skill of] arithmetic?

And surely you call it "agreeing" about sizes [when it comes about] thanks to the [skill of] measurement, and likewise in the case of weights and the [skill of] weighing (*statikê*)'?

Now up to this point, you can derive from [the passage] that Plato countenances three species of quantity,[365] [namely], the discontinuous, continuous, and weight (*rhopê*) (since [in the text] he discussed and distinguished the art of weighing from the others). And in the case of arithmetic, he began from a multitude and arrived at one, when he said 'cities agree with one another about numbers thanks to arithmetic', then 'private citizens' do, and 'each person with himself' [126C]. But in the case of geometrical measurement, he did the reverse, beginning from the one and arriving at the many, when he said, 'What about size? [Isn't it geometry] that makes a person agree with himself, and private citizens with one another, and cities'? That's because the multitude is appropriate to arithmetic, since [that skill] has to do with numbers, but the one (*to hen*) [is appropriate] to geometry, since [that skill] has to do with continuity (*to sunekhes*), whereas the former has to do with discontinuous quantity. In the case of weighing, on the other hand, he didn't use any of this language, neither starting from the one and arriving at the many, nor [starting] from the many and arriving at the one, since this is a different case than those [of arithmetic and geometry]. For it's clear that weight is different from continuous [quantity], since they are affected in a manner contrary to one another: for [there can be] a small weight in a great size, and vice versa. 186,1

And Homer thought nothing of ungrammatical expression (*soloikismos*), so that he points the way to the undisciplined motion of a horse by assimilating his words to their subject and saying:

> As when some stalled horse who has been corn-fed at the manger
> lightly him the knees do carry . . .[366]

But Plato, by contrast, [verbally] imitates his subject (*pragmata*) without error in his language.[367]

What is [this agreement you're describing], and what is it about, and what skill secures it? It's worthwhile to investigate why Socrates asks many questions [at once].[367a] For he asks what this agreement is, and where it resides, and what is its efficient cause, and whether the statesman (*politikos*) is identical with the **126D**

person of good character (*êthikos*) and the household manager (*oikonomikos*). For these reasons, and since he himself is aware that he asked a lot of questions, he says 'Don't flag in your answers' (*mê kamês apokrinomenos*); and the words 'don't flag' came out at the right moment, since there were so many questions. Yet [Socrates] himself, in the *Gorgias*, censured Polus for asking a lot of questions. Well, to begin with, let us get to know (*mathômen*) what the questions are, before [we explain] the solution [to this puzzle]. [1] 'What is this agreement?' [The answer] is that it is shared understanding (*koinônia gnôseôs*). [2] 'Where does it occur?' [The answer] is that it occurs among objects of knowledge that are teachable (*en tois didaktois gnôstois*), and not among actions. [3] 'What is the skill that produces it?' [The answer is] statecraft (*politikê*): for this uses teaching to make [people] enjoy the same objects of knowledge (for just as it comes naturally to fathers to have affection for their children, agreement [develops] like this). [4] And 'are statecraft (*politikon*), good individual character (*êthikon*), and household management (*oikonomikon*) the same, or not?' [The answer is that] they are the same: for just as large letters don't differ from small letters in form (*eidos*) (since [making them] bigger or smaller produces no alteration of form),[368] so too practical actions (*pragmata*) don't differ because of their scale; [another answer] is that in the preceding parts [114B–D], we have [learned] that the person who is persuasive to one individual is also persuasive to many, and it belongs to the same person who persuades many to persuade one; [and another explanation] is that just as there's no difference between the doctor who cures one person, the doctor who cures many, and the doctor who cures everyone (for it makes no difference for their capacity [to cure] (*hexeis*) where there is more or less of their subject), likewise there is no difference between the statesman, the household manager, and the person of good character.

It remains to explain why he asked many questions [at one time]. Perhaps it's because he brings the many to one, and his questions have continuity. For he first asked 'What is it?' then 'In what does it occur?' then 'What skill produces it?' and then 'Is there a difference between the statesman, moral person, and household manager?' – and in a sense these are all [one question]. But you should offer another solution (*lusis*), as well: one should not ask multiple questions [at once] in [strict] dialectical questioning, where there's no place for [extended] speech (*logos*), but it's sufficient to nod or shake your head and

say 'yes' or 'no'; and that's because if we do ask many questions it [becomes] unclear which sort of question [the interlocutor] answered. In interrogative questioning, on the other hand, it's not impossible to do this, since [the respondent] may also use [extended] speech to distinguish which sort of question he is answering. Thus the poet, too, asked many questions [at once] in an interrogative context:

> What man are you and where do you hail from? Where are your city and parents?[369]
>
> Since he was able to use [extended] speech in his answer.

And is [that skill] the same in a state and in a private individual?[370] He poses the fourth question, whether the household manager, statesman, and person of good character are one and the same. For by saying 'Is it the same in a state', he pointed to the statesman; but by saying 'an individual with himself', he pointed to the person of good character; and by saying 'and with another', to the household manager. And Alcibiades replies, 'Most likely'. Now how did Alcibiades come to understand such a substantial position, that these are identical with one another? Well, the present dialogue helped him, thanks to the argument that ran, 'The person who is persuasive to one is also persuasive to many' [cf. 114B–D].

I *think* I mean the sort of friendship and agreement [you find when a mother and father agree with a son they love. . .] Note that due to these [words], Socrates needed to present the refutation stating that the goal of the statesman's knowledge is not friendship, since Alcibiades is clearly claiming that friendship and affection are identical (for he says, 'I say that a father "agrees" with his children, and siblings with siblings').

Well, Alcibiades, do you think that a husband is able to agree with his wife [about wool-working. . .] At this point he begins to cross-examine [Alcibiades] and deliver his proof from impossibility, proving that friendship is agreement. And the skill of carding wool (*xantikê*) is either called 'wool-working' (*talasiourgia*) from the working of wool (*ta lasia ergazesthai*), or from the baskets (*talaroi*); and if mules also have the name of 'labourers' (*talaergoi*), thanks to their willingness to work and struggle (*talaipôrein*) at their tasks, [that name] was taken[371] from wool-working (*talasiourgia*). And women also

126E

188,1

have this kind of disposition – being willing to work – whereas men do not: that's why the line about them runs:

> He goes outside and puts a stop to his heart's frustration;[372]

For this is a woman's area of learning: Now if men and women have common areas of excellence (*aretê*),[373] why does he say 'for this is a woman's area of
15 learning'? The answer is, [that's true] under this [present] kind of constitution.[374]

127A Could she agree [with her husband about military tactics] without having
189,1 **learned about it?** The words 'without having learned' are appropriate, since the Amazons were warlike [women].[375]

Perhaps you would say [that's for a man to know about]: The language 'perhaps' and 'you would say' is appropriate [i.e., because Socrates himself would reject these claims]. For the excellences of men are shared in common [with women], since their natures are shared. The male parts, when pushed inward, become female; and conversely the female parts, pushed outward, [become male]; and if the female dog shows no difference from the male in regard to guardianship, nonetheless they are both guardians by disposition. If their natures are common, then, why are their knowledge and excellences not also common? And one should no longer call learning 'female' or 'male', but 'human', for 'human' is common [to both genders].

Nor is there friendship: 'If they do not agree', he says, 'they are no friends to one another, considering that friendship was agreement'.

127B Nor are the cities well governed [when the different groups each do their own work]: At this point, he wants to prove that [on Alcibiades' false assumptions] just people do not organise their cities well. And he adds on the
190,1 premiss and works out the rest of his argument, that 'when friendship is present among those who do their own work, wherever it arises we say that those states are organised well', constructing the argument as follows: 'Those who do their own work are not friends to one another; those who organise the state well are
5 friends to one another, which is why this is the goal of statecraft (*politikê*); therefore, those who do their own work do not organise their states well'.

But it seems to me that [friendship arises between them] on just that account – [that they do their own work]: Alcibiades argues against Socrates

that 'Actually they do organise their states well, for this very reason, that they do their own work'; and Socrates replies, 'this is what you were maintaining before'.

[When everyone does his own work], are they acting justly or unjustly? **127C**
Here he begins to present the argument that the just do their own work. 10

No, by the gods, Socrates, I don't even know myself what I mean: Notice **127D**
how Alcibiades has clearly been benefitted: in fact, he has arrived from double ignorance to simple [ignorance], since he [now] agrees that he doesn't know. Aristides also <remarks>[376] about the orator Demosthenes that 'He was the 15
very pattern (*tupos*) of an eloquent Hermes, come among men';[377] but I would say that this [saying] is better suited to Socrates, since he was first assimilated to Hermes (for he is called 'Herm's son'), and just as Hermes used to produce sleep and wakefulness 'with one strike of his rod' –

> [He charms to sleep]
> whom he wishes, and he wakes again the sleepers[378] 20

– so too Socrates uses one rod, namely dialectic, both to overthrow those who 191,1
speak proudly, and to rouse again those who have fallen and call them back up. Thus when Alcibiades was upright, he used refutations (*elenkhoi*) to overthrow him, proving that he was doubly ignorant; and now, he arouses him after he has been laid low, saying 'Take courage, for you are a young man and you're capable of learning' (for 'all the heavy labours belong to the young',[379] and 'all things suit 5
the young'[380]): 'for if you were upwards of 50 years old, it would be difficult for you to learn'. And the word 'difficult' was well chosen, but it's not 'impossible': for Socrates wants to help every human being, both the young and the elderly.

Now that I've seen it, what should I do about it? [Alcibiades] asks him what **127E**
he should do to learn; and [Socrates] replies that it's nothing difficult, nothing 10
like the attempt of Otus and Ephialtes to

> plan to put Ossa atop Olympus,[381]

but [only] to offer and receive arguments (*logos*). And Archimedes, after his invention of the lifting-screw – when he proved that with a given force he 15
could move any given weight, since relying on this, even one man could move the earth – made a great (and impossible) boast: 'Give me a place to go, and I

will move the earth';[382] for he said that was possible, given a place [to go]. But Socrates asks something easy.

If god wills: He says 'god' (*theos*) to refer to the allotted daimon, for he also
192,1 called this 'god' earlier.[383] And he says **'If [we are to trust] in my prophecy'**, because prophecy is twofold: on the one hand divine, which is also a kind of madness (*mania*); on the other hand skilled, which is called inquiry (*masteia*). So Socrates is speaking now in terms of the double [nature] of prophecy; through the divine kind, which is why he says 'if he wills', and mentions god;
5 and through the skilled kind, since he judged from Alcibiades' nature[384] that he was capable of learning.

You and I will be in a better state: How will Socrates *also* be in a better state? Clearly, it's because he is ascending along with his beloved.

Lecture 22[385]

10 ## With the god's favour

126C–127E **When you say 'friendship' (*philia*), do you mean agreement or disagreement?**

Since Alcibiades described friendship as the goal of the statesman's knowledge, Socrates refutes him on this point – not because he doesn't want this [to be the outcome], but because he thinks [Alcibiades] means that friendship (*philia*) and affection (*storgê*) are one and the same. And the text at hand[386] presents
15 three proofs of this. [1] First, that not only affection, but agreement (*homonoia*) as well, are cases of friendship;[387] and this is proved right away at the start. For if disagreement is enmity, then agreement is friendship; but the first, therefore the second.[388] [2] Second, he proves that friendship develops according to agreement, as in the case of the skilled crafts (*tekhnai*); for skilled craftspeople (*tekhnitai*) agree with each other and thereby are friendly to one another, and for that reason they enjoy the same objects of knowledge – but they do not
20 have *affection* for one another (*stergousin*), since [as the saying goes] 'one potter begrudges another'[389] (but [Socrates] uses philosophical examples, arithmetic and geometrical measurement and weights); surely, then, [in these cases] there is friendship without affection. [3] Third, he proves that conversely there is also affection without agreement: for a man and a woman love one another with

affection, but they certainly do not agree: for the man does not have the same thoughts about wool-working as his wife (for how could he, if he is ignorant about it?) nor does the woman, of course, about fighting on horseback (*hippikê*). And it's clear that it's [only] according to their *immediate* goal that they do not agree, since (as we have pointed out) they do agree according to their more final goal [sc. protection of one another].[390] And he does this as a proof that both agreement and affection are cases of friendship, since friendship exists when either one of these is present alone. 193,1 5

What skill is it that makes cities agree about numbers? Notice how he proves the second point in this [passage] – that there is a [kind of] friendship according to understanding (*gnôsis*), not according to affection – using [the example] of skilled craftspeople: for they are friends to one another in this [former] sense, since they think the same things, and insofar as they are skilled, they are friends; but as human beings, they envy and dislike one another. And you should add on here what we said earlier.[391] **126C** 10

Well, this agreement you're talking about, what is it? Since it's necessary to introduce the other [third argument] here – that there is affection without agreement, as for instance in the case of a husband and wife – [Socrates] interrupts the argument and asks [Alcibiades] four questions: [1] what is agreement; [2] in what does it occur (because it's in what is taught, but not in what is done); [3] what is its efficient cause; and [4] if household management, statesmanship, and being a good person are one and the same.[392] And we should recognise that it's also possible to prove, based on other sources (*allothen*),[393] that there's nothing out of place about asking many questions [at once] in interrogative questioning (*pusmatikai erôtêseis*). At any rate, [Socrates] himself asks many questions [at once] in the *Apology*: 'Who is he, and where is he from, and what's the price [of his teaching]?' [*Ap.* 20B]. And [Callias] replies to him, answering 'who' by saying 'Evenus'; and 'where from' by saying 'from Paros'; and the third question [by saying] 'for five minas'.[394] **126D** 15 20

That does seem quite likely: Notice how Alcibiades is superior to Aristotle, once he has been helped by the present dialogue [to recognise] that the person who is persuasive to one is persuasive to many, that the person of good character (*êthikos*), the household manager (*oikonomikos*), and the statesman

(*politikos*) are one and the same, differing only in their greatness or smallness and having no other difference in their nature besides this; but [Aristotle] distinguishes between these [spheres].[395] In order, however, that we not cut down Aristotle's worthy reputation (*axiôma*), let us say that Alcibiades is superior to Aristotle, not [when he acts] by himself, but when he acts in concert with Socrates.

126E **I think that I mean the kind of friendship [and agreement you find when a mother and father agree with a son they love]:** It's due to this [statement] that Socrates was compelled to refute Alcibiades in his assertion that the goal of the statesman's knowledge is friendship, because here he plainly understands friendship as identical with affection, due to the examples [that he provides]: except, thanks to his error on this point, he could not grasp the form of affection, but descended to [the level] of examples; and [he also erred] because he could not understand the simple form of [affection], but he descended to the composite,[396] as from small letters to large.[397]

Well, Alcibiades, do you think that a husband [is able to agree] with his wife [about wool-working. . .] He proves the third point, that there is affection without agreement, and he asks whether 'a husband agrees with his wife about wool-working, [that is], if he thinks what she thinks?' For agreement proved to be thinking alike about the same things. And the words 'the man who does not know with the woman who does know' were well chosen: for anyone can *learn* to weave wool. But if they do not agree, then they are not friends to one another: for Alcibiades was saying just recently, through the examples [of parents and sons, siblings, and spouses] that agreement and friendship are one and the same, referring to affection under the name of agreement (*homonoian legôn tên storgên*).

127A **Perhaps you would say that this is for a man [to know about]:** If the excellences (*aretai*) are common between men and women, as was proven [by Plato] in the *Republic*,[398] since their nature is common (for male and female parts are the same, different only in their placement (*thesis*)), and their education is common[399] (for it's analogous to how female dogs are just as fit for guard duty as male dogs); and considering that Agamemnon[400] combined the female and the male in one pair, as the line shows,

Aethe, Agamemnon's mare, and his own Podargus;[401]

– then why does he say here that a man has one task (*ergon*), and a woman another, instead of saying that there's a single task for every human being? It's because this remark doesn't correspond to the best kind of constitution (*hê eu ekhousa politeia*), but to another kind; moreover, he says 'according to your argument (*logos*)' [127A], and 'perhaps', and so on.

And the syllogism is structured in the second figure[402] as follows: 'A woman and man do not agree (for they are not concerned with the same objects of knowledge); those who are friends to one another agree (since it has been proven that disagreement is enmity); therefore, a man and woman are not friends to another'.

Nor, then, are cities well governed [when the different groups each do their own work]: After using one paradoxical [argument] to demonstrate that friendship and agreement are not identical, but friendship applies to more cases (by demonstrating that a husband and wife are not friends to one another), here he also adds a second paradox to his argument, namely, that the just do not govern their cities well. And we must introduce the syllogism, not in the first figure, as the survey presented it[403] (since [then] we collapse into paradoxical dialectic, constructing the argument out of negations), but we ought to analyze the passage into the pre-syllogism (*prosullogismos*) and syllogism [proper] (*sullogismos*). For the pre-syllogism runs like this: 'Those who do their own work do not agree (since they do not have the same objects of knowledge); those who are friends to one another do agree; therefore, those who do their own work are not friends to one another'. And the second pre-syllogism, taking [that] syllogism's conclusion [as its first premiss], runs: 'Those who do their own work are not friends to one another; those who govern their states well are friends to one another; therefore, those who do their own work do not govern their states well'. And finally, the syllogism (*sullogismos*): 'The just do their own work, for they do not treat one another unjustly; those who do their own work do not govern their states well; therefore, the just do not govern their states well'. **127B** 196,1

How can you say that? Without the presence of friendship [which we said must be present if cities are well governed. . . .] Since Alcibiades said that

'I think states are well governed whenever every individual does their own work and does not treat one another unjustly', Socrates asks him, 'How can you say this, that when friendship is not present it's ever possible for states to be finely governed? For you have granted that those who do their own work are not friends to one another, given the argument that we developed about a husband and wife'. And [Alcibiades] replies, 'But on this same model, on which they do their own work and do not treat one another unjustly, friendship develops'.

127C **Not [according to you] a moment ago: but now, what do you mean this time?** Socrates says that 'A moment ago, you didn't agree with this point of view, but now I ask you again: what *do* you mean? When agreement is absent, how could friendship arise? Or is it possible for agreement to exist about issues where there is no commonality of viewpoint (*homoiotês gnôseôn*)?' And in these words, he analyzes [deductively] what he showed synthetically earlier.[404]

127D **Then what *do* you mean by this 'friendship' or 'agreement'?** Socrates asks again, after he refuted him and showed that the just do not govern their states well, 'Tell me, then, what do you say friendship or agreement is?' That is: 'Take back whichever premiss you want'.

Well, Socrates, I swear by the gods that I don't even know what I mean: When Alcibiades has been refuted on many grounds – when [Socrates] proved him doubly ignorant about justice, and again when he was claiming that justice differed from advantageousness, and now – he is nowhere as distressed as he is here, because he has been proven ignorant about the very subject that concerned him most, that is, about the goal of the statesman's knowledge: hence he says, 'I don't even know what I mean'.

I think I must have been in a shameful state for a long time without being
197,1 **aware of it:** Again, notice how he has been helped, since he called ignorance a 'shame'. For there are two kinds of defectiveness (*kakia*), a point that has been demonstrated in the *Sophist*;[405] there is the defectiveness of the soul, and this is called 'shamefulness' (*aiskhos*) and 'badness' (*ponêria*); and [there is the defectiveness] of the living animal (*zôion*), and this is called 'disease' (*nosos*).

Answer the questions asked, Alcibiades: That is, [Socrates asks] 'nothing great, except to answer the questions or allow yourself to learn from my argument (*logos*)'. **127E**

Lecture 23

With the god's favour

Come then, what is it to cultivate or care for oneself (*to heauton epimeleisthai*)? **127E–129A**

Since Socrates' speech has now arrived at the necessity of exercising great care [for one's own cultivation], [therefore], before he teaches what the method (*tropos*) of cultivation is, he presents in advance two premisses (*lêmmata*) that support his demonstration of the proposed [conclusion].

[1] The first [premiss] is that it is not the case that someone who cares for his belongings also [thereby] cultivates himself. For there are some three typical subjects to be considered: 'me', 'what belongs to me', and 'what belongs to my belongings'. Hence he says that it is not the case [a] that someone who cares for his belongings in so doing also cares for himself, nor [b] that someone who cares for what belongs to his belongings in so doing also cares for his belongings.

[The commentators] present a puzzle (*aporia*) about the second [subject]: 'Note that physical training (*gumnastikê*) and medicine (*iatrikê*) care for one's belongings (i.e. the former can produce health, while the latter can preserve it), and yet they also contribute to self-cultivation: for through the production of health, they care for the activity of the soul without interference through the body.' [The solution is] that it is one thing to reflect on (*phrontisai*) oneself, and another to cultivate the soul with a view to its activity (*to energêsai*). For the one reflects on the being (*ousia*) of [the soul], the other on its activity: and the activity is the first possession (*ktêma*) of the soul, but not [the soul] itself.

Again they present a puzzle: 'Note that weaving and sandal-making care for what belongs to one's belongings (the former for clothing, the latter for shoes), and they also care for one's belongings (the former for feet, the latter for the whole body).' [The solution is] again, that physical training and medicine,

198,1 which reflect on (*phrontizousa*) the being (*ousia*) of the body, are one [kind of skill], while the skill which [reflects on] its activity (such as weaving and sandal-making) is another, which [operates] in order that [the body] may act comfortably (*eukolôs*). Therefore, through these questions he explains that it is necessary to consider the *being* of the soul, in order that we may make it supremely good (*beltistên*).

5 [2] The second premiss is that someone who would care for anything must get to know its being well in advance: for in relation to different [kinds of] being, care and fulfilment (*teleiotês*) are different.[406] For if we were the body, we would take care to possess beauty and strength; and if we were the vegetative soul, again we would reflect upon how to remove the excesses and 'weave anew'[407] the remainder; and if we were spirited emotion (*thumos*), our goal 10 (*telos*) would be victory (for such is spirited emotion, 'wishing to conquer all'):[408] and if our being were the tripartition [of the soul], then our goal would be the moderation of affection (for such a person uses spirited emotion moderately (*memetrêmenôs*) at appropriate times (*kairôi tôi thumôi*) in addressing incoming [affections], in the same way as through desire it lays claim to (*epipoioumenos*) the cultivation of the body): but since [in fact] we are 15 the reason (*logos*), our goal is freedom from affection (*apatheia*).[409]

Once he has said this, though it is necessary to introduce and state the method of caring for ourselves, he instead defines what the human being is. And he [thereby] seems to be doing what he did not propose [earlier], for he introduces this [question] nowhere [else]. And we resolve this (*luomen*) as follows: by doing this, he also [simultaneously] taught what he proposed [to teach]. For in medicine, the student who has mastered the principles (*logoi*) of 20 medicine does not also [successfully] heal in every case (*pantôs therapeuei*): but in philosophy, someone who gets to know the being of the human person (*anthrôpos*) also discovers that [the human person] is the soul: and someone who knows the soul also knows the principles (*logoi*) in it: and someone who knows the principles in [the soul] thereby knows all beings (*panta ta onta*), since he discovers that [the soul] is a representation in every shape (*pammorphon agalma*) of all beings, and through one thing he knows all beings, and does not toil over the knowledge (*gnôsis*) of 199,1 the rest: such a person knows the principle of the just, which is in [the

soul]: and since (as he makes clear in the *Gorgias*)[410] someone who knows just things is [himself] just, someone who knows the soul will thereby be just. And it was appropriate (*kalôs*) that before the temple of Apollo at Delphi all that was inscribed was '*Know Thyself*, since the one who knows himself knows all beings, and the knowledge of all beings belongs to the prophet.

That is the content of the survey.

What does it mean to care for or cultivate oneself? He says, 'We must understand what it is to care for or cultivate oneself (*to heautou epimeleisthai*), what it is to care for *the* self (*tou autou*), and third, what it is [to care] for one's belongings, so that we don't forget and imagine that, in caring for externals, we are caring for ourselves.[411] And we must grasp when it is that the human person does this very thing, that is, "cares for himself"; is it whenever he reflects on his belongings?' And [Alcibiades] – since he is uneducated – answers, 'Yes'. **127E**

Really? When does a person care for his feet? He asks [Alcibiades] again if the person who cares for his sandals [thereby] cares for his feet. And [Alcibiades] replies that 'I don't understand (*ou manthanô*)', because the person who cares for his sandals *seems* to care for his feet as well. This is why Socrates transfers the argument to uncontroversial ground, by asking, 'Does the person who cares for his ring also [thereby] care for his hand?' For it's clear here that the ring contributes in no *essential* way (*pros tên ousian*) to the hand, no more than [it does] to sandals or weaving. That's also why Alcibiades readily answers here, 'of course not', but he answered the other [cases] doubtfully, 'I don't quite understand, Socrates'. And it's quite timely to comment here, 'But Alcibiades was not yet aware that the person who takes care of his belongings does not [thereby] care for himself', which Aristotle said about Plato's teacher Parmenides in the *Physics*.[412] **128A** 200,1

So whenever someone makes something better, do you call that 'taking proper care of it' (*orthê epimeleia*)? Note how in these words he resolved the two puzzles, by saying that 'I describe that person as "taking care" who makes the being (*ousia*) better, not its activity (*energeia*)'. For there are three columns (*sustoikhiai*) and three entities (*pragmata*) [in each column]: me (*egô*), mine (*to emon*), and what belongs to what is mine (*to tou emou*):[413] **128B**

Entities (*pragmata*)	**Designations (*prosrhêmata*)**	**Skills by which they are fulfilled (*tekhnai di' hôn hai teleiotêtes*)**
Soul (*psukhê*)	Me (*egô*)	Philosophy (*philosophia*)
Body (*sôma*)	My belonging (*to emon*)	Exercise and medicine (*gumnastikê kai iatrikê*)
Externals (*ta ektos*)	Belongings of my belonging (*ta tou emou*)	Money-making (*khrêmatistikê*)

And the entities are not confounded with one another, nor is their care, nor their modes of fulfilment (*teleiotêtes*), but in fact none of the [particular] skills are productive of our [own] fulfilment. For our own fulfilment comes about through philosophy, but [the fulfilment] of our belonging through [the skills
10 of] exercise and medicine, and [the fulfilment] of our belonging's belongings through [the skill of] money-making (*khrêmatistikê*).

128C **Or by that skill by which we make feet better?** That is, 'We don't make feet better by the cobbler's skill, but by another skill; namely, that which improves the rest of the body, exercise (*gumnastikê*)'.

128E **Now, could we ever have known what skill [makes a shoe better, if we had**
201,1 **not known a shoe?]** The second premiss, that it's impossible to care for anything without first knowing its being (*ousia*).

129A **And was it some scamp who inscribed these [words 'Know Thyself'] on the temple at Delphi?** 'Scamp' (*phaulos*) here doesn't designate someone with a bad character, but a lightweight person (*eutelês*). That is, 'Was it some
5 lightweight person, the one of the seven sages who inscribed this on the shrine of the prophetic god?' But it was Chilon of Lacedaemon.[414]

Often I think, Socrates, that it was for anybody: Self-knowledge seemed to Alcibiades sometimes to be easy, other times to be extremely difficult, because of the tragic [verse] that says

10 To know yourself in words is nothing great;
but in deed, only Zeus of all the gods knows [how to do it].[415]

So [it struck Alcibiades] as a minor thing in name, but challenging in action.

But, Alcibiades, whether it's easy or not, [nevertheless this is the situation we're in]: [Compare] the saying elsewhere, 'whether it is easy or not,[416] 'we must pursue the path'.[417] For whether it is challenging or easy to know ourselves, it is absolutely necessary to know ourselves. 15

Lecture 24
With the god's favour

'Come then, in what way might the self itself (*auto to auto*) be discovered?' **129B–130A**

The object proposed is to find out what our being (*ousia*) is, since a human being (*anthrôpos*) is neither the body nor the combination [of soul and body]. And he demonstrates this through two syllogisms, [A] one categorical and [B] the other hypothetical. And he places the categorical before the hypothetical because it is more rigorous (*iskhuroteron*): he presents the categorical [syllogism] in the present examination (*theôria*), and he will present the hypothetical [syllogism] next in sequence. Here is the categorical syllogism [A]:[418] 202,1 5

> [A^1] 'A *human being uses the body as an instrument* (*organôi*) (for he is its master [*despozei autou*], for he moves it[419] (*kinei auto*) when he wishes, however much he wishes, and wherever he wishes).
>
> [A^2] The *soul is that which uses the body as an instrument*.
>
> [A^3] Therefore (*ara*) *a human being is the soul*.'
>
> [*The Minor Premiss* [A^1]][420]

Come then, let us test out (*kôdônisômen*) each of the premisses: for the minor premiss [A^1] will appear not to be tenable, but to take the targeted conclusion [A^3] as granted.[421] That is, the object of inquiry is 'Is the human being the soul'; and he has said that [the human being] uses the body as an instrument, which is distinctive (*idion*) of soul. Accordingly he takes it as given that the human being is the soul before demonstrating [this]. And he himself establishes the minor premiss through particular [examples] (*dia tôn kath' hekasta*) by saying, 'If the lyre-player uses the plectrum as an instrument, and the shoemaker uses his hand, and if they themselves are different from their instruments, then it is also clear that the human being, who uses the body as his instrument, would be something different [from the body].'[422] 10 203,1

[4] But since, as we have said, he appears to take the targeted conclusion as granted upon, it must be said that any whole, which possesses its real existence (*hupostasis*) in its parts, does not care nothing for (*periphronei*) the part, since [by doing so] it would aim at its own destruction: yet the human being relinquishes his body when his courage is tested (*andrizomenos*) in terrible circumstances: and therefore the human being is not the combination [of soul and body].

But on this argument non-rational animals (*aloga zôa*) will also be [identical to] the non-rational soul, given that they think nothing of being in a fight against attackers. For those [non-rational animals] also believe that the non-rational soul is not in the shell (*ostreinôi*),[423] since [otherwise] they would not relinquish the body: but indeed they do relinquish [the body] inasmuch as they are aware (*eidotes*) that the soul does not perish with the body, for the user does not share danger with the instrument, as the whole [shares danger] with the parts.[424]

Accordingly the minor premiss holds true.

[*The Major Premiss* [A^2]]

Likewise the major premiss [A^2] [holds]: for the soul is that which uses the body as an instrument, which is neither the body nor the combination. [It is not] the body, since a body never uses a body as an instrument, being [by definition] moved by something else (*heterokinêton*): yet neither is it the combination, since the user [by definition] differs from the instrument. In order, then, that the part and the instrument might not be identical, it follows that it is soul.

And this is [our exegesis] of the text.

[*'Self' and 'The Self Itself' According to Proclus and Damascius*]

Come then, let us digress [beyond the exegesis of the text] and discuss and inquire about the terms (*onomata*) [used here], what is 'self' and 'self itself', both according to the philosopher Proclus and according to the philosopher Damascius.

Now, the philosopher Proclus states that [the self] is three things: [he calls] the tripartition of the soul 'self' (*auto*); he calls the rational soul 'the self itself' (*auto to auto*); and [he calls] the individual (*atomon*) 'each self itself' (*auto to auto hekaston*).[425] For, as the text (*lexis*) says, if we would know what 'the self itself' is, we must also learn what 'each self itself' is, because it is insufficient to know a human being unqualifiedly (*haplôs*), but one must also get to know

what the individual is, because the task at hand is to help Alcibiades also to get to know himself who *this person* is, i.e. that [he is] the soul; and [our] actions (*praxeis*) are concerned with particular cases (*ta kath' hekasta*).[426]

And this is not the only reason [that the individual is identical with the soul], but also because the Peripatos erred concerning the individual, supposing that it comes to be from the coincidence (*sundromê*) of the accidents. This is why they also define it thus: 'that of which the assemblage (*athroisma*) could never come to be in the case of anything else'.[427] And [thereby] they make the better from the worse, i.e. from the accidents.

But Damascius calls 'self' the civic soul, which uses the body as an instrument: and 'the self itself' [he calls] the purificatory and contemplative [soul], which certainly does not use the body as an instrument. And Damascius seems to speak more with a view to exact knowledge (*epistêmonikôteron)*, and the philosopher Proclus more with a view to the exegesis of the text (*exêgêmatikôteron lexeôs*). In fact, the text agrees with [Proclus]: for from the beginning it says that, if 'the self itself' is to be discovered, one must also inquire into what 'each self itself' is. And in this [context] he proposes to present not the purificatory nor contemplative [human being], but the civic human being: which is why he also defines it as 'the rational soul using the body as an instrument'. Thus [Damascius] attended to the [underlying] subject-matter (*pragmata)*, whereas [Proclus] focused on the text (*lexis*).

That is the content of the survey.

Maybe this is the way to find out what we ourselves might be: 'If we could find out', he says, 'what the human being is, then in addition to this it's also possible to know what each one of us is, for thus we might quickly learn about this [sc. each of us]; but ignorant of this, our common [humanity], it is impossible to get to know the individual'. **129B**

Hold on, by Zeus: who are you speaking with now? At this point, he wants to construct the minor [premiss], that the human being uses the body as an instrument. 'For', he says, 'if *you* are talking with *me*, and the soul is using the body as an instrument for the conversation' (for speech is the result and instrument of soul: for thoughts (*noêmata*) are the soul's messengers, just as Aristotle's logic is both an instrument and result, like the smith's anvil and the carpenter's hammer);[428] 'but surely Alcibiades is also the one who is listening,

and this is a distinctive trait (*idion*) of the human being, [the capacity] to listen'
206,1 (but you should add 'hearing in this way, through speech': for non-rational animals also have hearing); 'and so, since it converses and hears, a human being is the soul using a partial instrument'. But since we should not take a partial instrument as an example (*paradeigma*), he offers the example of the cobbler
5 using a complete instrument in his projects (*ergasiai*).

129C **For example, I suppose a shoemaker cuts with a carving knife:** Note that the example is about using the whole body as an instrument.[429] For if [the soul] uses just one hand, [that hand] still receives outflows and portions from the first principles (*arkhai*), namely, arteries and veins and nerves. For that reason, the Peripatos was also right to say that the hand doesn't weave, but the human being
10 weaves *using* his hand, since it is the whole [being] that acts *through* the part.[430] And you can say the same about speech (*ta tês glôttês*) as well, that he uses it to present the whole [body] as an example; but it's clear in these cases [cf. 129B–C].

And the scraper and shoemaker's knife aren't the same thing: for the scraper (*smilê*) has an even base, but the knife (*tomeus*) has a round base.

129D **Does he cut with instruments only, or also with his hands?** 'With instruments'
15 [meaning] from outside, but 'with hands' meaning 'with his natural instruments', which we also need in the argument.

129E **[Then what *is* a human being?] – I don't know what to say.** Alcibiades was right to have doubts about the definition of the human being, since he is missing the major premiss to prove that the human being is the rational soul: and he adds this [premiss next].

207,1

Lecture 25

With the god's favour

130A–D **Then [the soul] rules (*arkhousa*)? – Yes. – In fact I think that nobody [would believe otherwise].**

Socrates, having demonstrated through a categorical syllogism [A, above] that *the human being is the soul*, now establishes this same [proposition] through a
5 hypothetical [syllogism] [B, below]. He presupposes the following premiss for this [syllogism], that the human being rules the body:[431] and this [premiss] is

evident not only from people who are in control (*tôn enkratôn*), but also from people who are out of control (*tôn akratôn*), since, though *able* to control [themselves], they do not control themselves: for if they were out of control under compulsion (*ex anankês*), we would not chastise them.

Having presupposed this [premiss] he establishes [the conclusion of A] through a hypothetical syllogism [B] as follows:[432]

[B[1]] '*The human being is either the body or the soul or the combination*;

[B[2]] *But it cannot be the body* (because a body never rules the body, since [in doing so] it would both rule itself and turn back upon itself);

[B[3]] *But neither can it be the combination qua combination* (since again, if it rules a body, the body will rule itself, and [the human being] will again be the body).

[B[4]] Therefore what is left is that *the human being is the soul*.'

When the argument is advanced in this way, some criticise it by claiming that 'on this argument, since honey-water is either water, or honey, or honey and water, and it is not honey, nor indeed honey and water, then what is left is that it is water'.[433]

But we reply that 'Your premisses are false, since honey-water is not honey under all conditions, and not honey and water under all conditions, even if it is altered: whereas Plato's [premisses] are true. That is, the human being is not wholly body (given that the human being rules the body, but body, as we have said, never rules itself); nor is it the combination (since if the combination rules the body, [the body] will also rule itself): accordingly, the [underlying] paradigm is not the same.

Having pre-established his [argument], he defines the human being as the rational soul (*psukhê logikê)* that uses the body as an instrument (*organôi*). And in order to prevent the definition also encompassing the heavenly souls, it is necessary to add 'the body moving in a straight line (*to euthuphoroumenon sôma*)'.[434] And he presents (*lambanetai*) these demonstrations while saying that they are rough, and need differentiation, since [Socrates and Alcibiades] made a definition of the political person, but obviously not of the purificatory or contemplative or inspired [person]: for the latter do not use the body as an instrument. And so he spoke of the political person in broad terms in his relation to those [higher persons].

That is the content of the survey.

130A **And doesn't the soul rule [the body]?** He uses this comment to present the premiss that the human being rules the body, not only on account of people who are under control, but also on account of people who are out of control: for we do blame them, but not if they acted under compulsion (*ex anankês*).

130B **Then does the body rule itself?** [He asks] because it's impossible for a body
209,1 to rule a body, since [in that case] it would be [capable of] reverting upon itself.

Does the combination [of the two rule the body]? [He asks] because the combination can't rule insofar as it is a combination [of soul with body]. For the same paradoxical result (*atopon*) would recur, that the body would rule
5 itself.

130C **Do you need any clearer proof that the soul is the human being?** He asks him whether 'you still think that we need a clearer proof that the soul is the human being, or do we need more precise arguments to prove that the soul is the purificatory and contemplative and inspired human being? Or is that out
10 of proportion (*asummetros*) to your [capacities]?' And he replies, 'It's sufficient', because he is careless (*rhâithumos*).

[Well, if we've proven it fairly well], though perhaps not rigorously: Note how he himself understands these arguments, which also emerge from a [stipulative] definition, and says that they are [only] loose or rough (*pakhumerês*), comparing the inspired person and the rest.

130D **[We'll have a more rigorous proof when we find out what we skipped over,**
15 **because it would have taken quite a lot of study. – What was that?] – What we mentioned just now, [that we should first consider what 'itself' is, in itself]:** Previously the interpretation of the philosopher Proclus prevailed, that [Plato] calls the soul 'self' (*auto*), but the rational [soul] 'self itself'; and now the [interpretation] of the philosopher Damascius [prevails], that 'self' is the civic soul, but 'self itself' is the purificatory and contemplative soul.[435] For [Socrates] says, 'Presently, we have reached the basic stage of describing the civic soul as 'the
20 self itself'; but at that point [in the future], we will know with precision that the human being is the soul, and we will articulate properly what 'the self itself' is.

Lecture 26

With the god's favour

Abstract (*aposêmeiôsis*)[436]

Come then, in what way [might the self itself be discovered]? **129B**
He describes the rational soul as 'the self itself', not as it uses the body as an instrument or dwells in a body, like the purificatory or contemplative person: 210,1
and he describes the rational soul as 'self' when it avails itself of the affections and the body as an instrument, referring to the civic soul. And he also describes this 'self' as 'each self', due to the activity of the individual life (*atomos zôê*), 5
which is naturally attached [to the rational soul], concerned with indivisible [acts] (*atoma*). And since, when his project was to discover 'self', he discovered[437] 'each self', he indicates in what follows [130D] that he did not discover what he set out to [discover]. But perhaps he does not even discover 'each self', but only 'self': for he discovers who the civic person is, but not who *Socrates* is, which is why Proclus investigates – not as part of an independent digression (*parenthêkês*), but in his interpretation of the primary text (*lexis*)[438] – who is the 10
common (*koinos*) human being and who is the unique (*idios*) human being. For the Peripatos does not get it right about the individual person, since they construct his being (*ousia*) out of accidents (*sumbebêkota*).[439] And the text adds this point on next, saying, 'For if we discover the common human being, we might also discover each particular human being, which we also need [to discover]: for we also care for this. For the discussion was about *Socrates* and *Alcibiades*. But if [we don't discover] the first, we also [won't discover] the 15
second'.[440]

[The following points were also presented]:

[1] That the discussion concerns both the activity and instrument of a rational soul, like the carpenter's hammer and the smith's anvil,[441] and like the philosophers' practice of rational discourse (*logikê pragmateia tois philosophois*).

[2] That it is the [work] of the rational soul to hear, point out, and understand 20
discourse (*logos*).

[3] That a 'scraper' (*smilê*) is the [instrument] with a straight base, but it's a 'shoemaker's knife' (*tomeus*) whenever the base is rounded; for this is also the knife used in surveying (*geômetria*).

211,1 [4] That cobbling is also the work of the rational [soul], since every skill (*tekhnê*) is an echo of Intellect (*nous*). And the first skilled craftsman was Hephaestus, 'whose bellows (*phusai*) display nature (*phusis*)'.[442]

130D [5] That the [word] 'perhaps' [in the phrase, 'we've been considering what *each* self is . . . perhaps that will be enough for us'] is used properly: for the civic
5 person suffices for Alcibiades, but not for Socrates.

130B [6] That the living being does not [arise] from soul and body, but from a non-rational image [of the soul] and the body: but even if [the former] *were* the case, only plant [life would arise] from soul and body.[443]

[7] That Plato does not want to make even the *body* [let alone the human being] out of matter and form,[444] but [of] enmattered form (*eidos en hulê*), like the human being who is located in space (*en tôi topôi*) and the Achilles [who is
212,1 painted] on a board (*en tôi pinaki*).[445] For he wants forms in this place to be 'shadows' of the [paradigmatic] Forms; and he calls matter that 'in which', not 'out of which', and the form [he calls] '*that* which' (*ho*). And the products of some things [derive] from active and passive [principles], like honey-water, but neither matter nor form passively undergo anything from the other. There is a great deal of outstanding evidence, therefore, that
5 according to Plato the human being is not constituted out of the soul and body.

129E [8] **Then what *is* the human being?** Note how he wants the middle term of the first syllogism[446] to serve as a definition, since he is also making the syllogism clear not only based on its own terms, but also based on what comes next, since it is built out of convertible terms.

10 [9] That the human being, according to Plato, is a soul using a body *that moves in straight lines* (*euthuporos*); for this ought to be added on [to the definition] to account for the souls of the heavenly [bodies].[447] But the vegetative and non-rational [souls] will not be captured [in the definition], as we have pointed out,[448] because they use the body not only as an instrument, but also as a *subject* (*hupokeimenon*).[449]

130B [10] That Plato's arguments proving that the human being is the soul or that
15 the soul is the human being are meant in earnest, and he is in no doubt about them, and he presents them prior to the civic target (*politikos skopos*) [of the dialogue][450] because he only wants Alcibiades to revert (*epistrepsai*) [upon

himself], is proven by [his words] 'unlikeliest of all', which express strong disagreement (*diastatikos*), and [the phrase] 'it's been proven'.

[11] **Hold on:** The passage proves through induction that the human being **129B**
uses the body as an instrument, if Socrates is conversing with Alcibiades, but a 20
person who is having a conversation uses speech, and the person using speech as an instrument is using the body as an instrument; and if the shoemaker and the lyre-player use the body as an instrument; for the body is divided up and naturally attached [to the real person], both as a part and as a whole. And he proves the major [premiss] clearly by division.[451]

[12] That (since the whole uses the part) he uses the same induction to **129D**
prove that the user differs from the instrument it uses.[452] 25

Lecture 27

213,1

With the god's favour

So the right way of looking at it [is that, when you and I talk to each other, one soul uses words to address another soul.] **130D–133C**

As for 'the conversation of Socrates with Alcibiades' [130E], [Socrates] made its introduction out of dialectical struggles, and its conclusion using intoxication with love.[453] For restoration or return (*apokatastasis*) is also suitable to love, 5
which is a kind of reversion (*epistrophê*), and so is the conversation of lover with beloved; for they share the instrument of rational speech (*logos*). And [Socrates] previously understood [the word] 'conversation' (*dialegesthai*) as follows: 'since Socrates is conversing with Alcibiades, he avails himself of 10
rational speech (*logos*), and thereby has the body as his instrument' [129B–C]. But now he offers the following sort of interpretation (*dianoia*) of the same [word] 'conversation': 'Since Socrates is conversing with Alcibiades, and they have been proven to be souls, the souls are conversing with one another with the aim of mutual intercourse' [139D]: and [1] this is now a corollary [of the argument]. That is why, after he has launched himself into the corollary, he also appends three additional corollaries. For some parts of this dialogue comprise its target (*skopos*), like the arguments proving that we are the soul [124A–130D]; some parts precede the target, like the purification of double ignorance 15

[106C–119A] and the exhortation [119A–124A]; and some parts follow [the target], like the present corollaries.

[2] The second corollary [is] that no expert in the particular skilled crafts [insofar as he is such an expert] has self-knowledge. And here the Platonic doctrine appears that artifacts (*tekhnêta*) do not have rational principles (*logoi*) (for if the soul contained [such principles], the skilled craftsmen would know themselves); and [we also have the Platonic doctrine] that we must take heed of those branches of study. Their value to us is not limited to our life here, but is also helpful to us after our departure. For the things of this world (*ta têide*) are a preparatory education (*propaideia*) for our life in that world (*tou ekei biou*), which is many times longer.[454]

[3] The third corollary: no expert whose skill works on particulars (*kath' hekasta*) is self-controlled (*sôphrôn*), since he does not know himself. But why does self-knowledge belong to self-control (*sophrosunê*), but not to practical wisdom (*phronêsis*)? Well, it is because reversion belongs to self-control: for when [the soul] is engaged in the worst sort [of behaviour] and cannot descend further, it ascends. Or it is for the contrary reason: 'good habits are unstable at their peak'.[455] For in general, self-knowledge belongs to every kind of excellence (*aretê*): since it certainly does belong to self-control, because of reversion, as we have pointed out; and it also belongs to practical wisdom, since reversion develops on account of insight (*gnôsis*); and it belongs to courage, since [self-knowledge] submits to no [other] investigation of oneself; and it belongs to justice (*dikaiosunê*), since it is right and proper (*prosêkei*) to know oneself before anything else. Now why was it that in the *Charmides*[456] [164D–175D] Socrates refuted the definition of self-control which claimed that self-control is self-knowledge? Because even if the excellences (*aretai*) do reciprocally imply one another, nonetheless they differ in their distinctive quality (*idiotês*): for they are not [numerically] one, but all [of the excellences] are present in courage in a courageous way (*andreiôs*), and in another [excellence] in a self-controlled way, just as all the gods are present in Zeus in a Zeusian way, but in another [god] in a Heraean way, for no god is incomplete.[457] And as Anaxagoras used to say, 'all are in all, but [in each] one abounds':[458] we'll say the same about the divine beings. For every excellence is practical wisdom, since it has an understanding of practical actions (*prakta*); and every [excellence] is courage, since it engages in a struggle (*agônizesthai*); and every [excellence] is self-

control, since it leads [us] to what is better; and every [excellence] is justice, since it measures out which actions are right and proper. And among the civic 215,1
excellences, each one has its own distinctive subject-matter (*hupokeimenon idion*), but all those [excellences] beyond these [civic ones] are one and the same in their definition (*logos*).

But why are none of the skilled craftsmen self-controlled (*sôphrôn*)? Because self-control (*sophrosunê*) is threefold [sc. civic, purificatory, and contemplative]. For all reversion is from the worse to the better: for example, even when reason 5
(*logos*) reverts upon itself, insofar as it is reverting, it is inferior to the object of its reversion.[459] And the reversion of the non-rational to reason is civic self-control (*politikê sophrosunê*), and this is the only self-control that craftsmen skilled in particulars and statesmen (*politikoi*) alike are capable of having; but the [reversion] of reason to itself is purificatory self-control; and the [reversion] of reason to its betters is as contemplative self-control. Hence the statesman 10
knows himself according to common self-control, that of the non-rational to reason, but not according to purificatory or contemplative self-control.

[4] The fourth corollary: [that] none of Alcibiades' other lovers loves *him*, but [rather loves] one of Alcibiades' belongings; but Socrates alone loves *Alcibiades* and is properly speaking his 'lover': since the goal of love is union (*henôsis*), but 15
bodies are circumscribed by spatial location (*topos*) and do not interpenetrate, but souls are able, thanks to their similar character and life, to interpenetrate one another (for in fact, prior to the journey down here, all *were* one, in the same way that all the Ideas are one, and by interpenetrating they produce the Living Being Itself (*autozôion*), and [produce] the intelligible cosmos prior to the sensory cosmos); and that love (*erôs*) is for the Beautiful, but the *truly* beautiful 20
in the soul – for the body swims upon matter, which is ugly.

In cases where the lover's [skill] attains its goal, reciprocal love (*anterôs*) [arises]. For Alcibiades loves Socrates in return, and begs him not to abandon him; and Socrates announces that he will not abandon his love, unless he is destroyed by the people (*dêmos*). [He says this] because the people are a terrifying (*deinos*) teacher, since, by praising their orators, they encourage 25
them to construct speeches that are pleasing to the people. And what Hermes 216,1
is for Odysseus, Socrates becomes for Alcibiades:[460] when [Alcibiades] is about to approach the people (corresponding to Circe), he gives him the antidote (*pharmakon alexêtêrion*) called 'moly'; and he provides it lest [Alcibiades] be

transformed into a wild beast by the people.[461] And the medicine is this: not to observe (*theasasthai*) the entire people all together at once (*holon homou*), but to carefully examine (*skopêsai*) the [constituent parts] from which the people develop. For the people does not develop 'from oak or stone',[462] but from [its] particular [constituents]: for [when you analyze them in this way] you will find the fullers, cobblers, and carpenters; and those who are amazed by the people resemble those who think nothing of a single counterfeit coin, but are impressed (*thaumazousi*) by a great many of them together in one place. Yet a great many assertions do not [necessarily] produce a single syllogism (*sullogismos*), although one [assertion] can. Also, one should not want to be [warned by] the barking of many dogs: for the multiplicity is more confused than each individual one. And multiplicity is of no benefit, except when it comes to physical force.

And this is what Socrates did for Alcibiades:[463] for after he brought him around to the [craftsmen's] workshops, he asked him about each one, whether he thought it fitting that he be praised by this [person], and after he said 'no' in each case, he added, 'but surely the people is made up from these?' And [Socrates] calls the medicine not 'moly', but 'stripping off': for he strips the multiplicity (*plêthos*) from [Alcibiades], like multiple tunics. Similarly, Homer's Odysseus did not observe everything at once, but 'looked at each one with his eyes'.[464] Also, [the character] Circe – since we have mentioned her – references the overseer (*ephoros*) of sensory life; that is also why she is the daughter of Helios [the Sun], who is the leader of sensory things (*aisthêta*). But [Socrates] also provides [Alcibiades] with another antidote: for he advises him to care for excellence by training and learning; and training befits the non-rational [part of the soul], but learning [befits] reason.[465] For he knew that the young man was all aflutter about the people.

Up to this point, the discussion has been about the 'self', and [Socrates] has taught about who the civic person is. From this point forward, he is also speaking about the 'self itself', that is, the purificatory and contemplative [person], and he says, 'Just as if the Pythian [god] told the pupil [of the eye] "See thyself"' (and the command is appropriate to the one commanded, since as the Sun is the source of light, so too vision, since it is sun-like, is analogous to the Sun), 'and that [organ] obeyed the commander, as an appropriate leader, and yet, thanks to its externally moved nature (*heterokinêton*) was unable to

revert upon itself, it would surely look away to another [pupil] or to a mirror, from which it could observe itself; and likewise you, since you have utterly blinded what is self-moving in you and acted as something externally moved and lacking the capacity to revert upon yourself, now look into my soul, and know your own [soul] through it. And when you look away to my [soul], you will find therein 'divine images (*theia agalmata*)',[466] Intellect (*nous*) and God (*theos*); and in virtue of Intellect you will act in a purificatory manner, whereas in virtue of God you will act in a contemplative manner. For God is in [the soul] by relation (*kata skhesin*),[467] and we have the common concepts (*koinai ennoiai*) by the illumination of Intellect,[468] and we have inspirations by the [illumination] of God'. For as a lover, [Socrates] did not want the young man to be led upward *by* him, but together *with* him. That is also why he wanted [Alcibiades] to be led upward by his own soul, and not to have his own power of self-movement (*autokinêton*) twisted.

But since our discussion has turned to the images that appear in mirrors, we should not suppose, as the philosopher Proclus supposes,[469] that Plato thinks they are reflections. For these concepts are Peripatetic and mechanistic, that is, to claim that 'shadows' (*skiai*) come about by the interposing of a body.[470] For Plato does not suppose that they are fleeting, weak, and feeble things, but he wants them to be real beings (*hupostaseis*): for on his view, they develop because of the 'outflows' that emerge from sense-objects, just as [occurs] in the eye; and as they are concentrated, they appear in the mirror, so that the similarity [of the eye with the mirror] produces recognition (*gnôsis*).[471] For the outflows resemble the sources from which they flow; that is why the crystalline [part of the eye] sees itself in the mirror, due to its own outflows (*oikeios*).[472] For, as the philosopher Damascius says, just as the person who sees himself in a picture (*eikôn*) does not see himself by reflection (*anaklasis*), so too he does not see himself *by reflection* in the mirror; but [he sees himself there] because there is a copy (*apeikonisma*) of the eye there. And Plato also takes this view elsewhere. For in the *Sophist* he says that images come about 'by a supernatural process' (*daimoniâi mêkhanêi*) [*Soph.* 266B], [that is], because of their speed of concentration; for the ancients call everything speedy 'supernatural' (*daimônios*), on account of daimons' high level of activity (*drastêrion*), which is also the reason that they call Aristotle 'supernatural', because he is exceptionally quick. ([The historians] also relate about the river

Hyllus that if someone fills a drinking-cup from its water, fish are instantly generated: that's also why the poet picks it out and says 'in the fish-swarming Hyllus',[473] even though other rivers also generate fish, but [he does this] because of the speed of the concentration and generation [of the fish]).

Now the ancients maintain that this is true – that shadows and images (*skiai*) are real beings – [as follows]: first, when a dog is sleeping in a high place, if his shadow is cast to the ground, a hyena coming across the shadow and treading upon it causes the dog to descend: therefore, it is clear that [shadows] are not reflections, but outflows.[474] Second, if women who are purging their monthly flow look into a mirror, they instantly stain it, and it clearly follows that this happens because of their outflows.[475]

That is the content of the survey.

131D **Yes and I am glad [that you are the one who won't abandon me], Socrates:** Notice how he entreats [Socrates] to remain: his reciprocation of love (*anterôs*) is clearly displayed by this. For this is the goal of the lover, to be loved in return by his beloved and to exchange the arrangement (*skhêma*) of the love, to make the former lover the beloved, and to make the former beloved the lover.

Then you must try to be as beautiful as possible: That is, 'If you want me not to abandon you, be as beautiful as possible': for as a lover, he cannot bear to love someone without value. For love (*erôs*), since it is 'formidable' (*errhômenos*) (which is also why it has obtained this name),[476] and since it is 'heroic' (*hêrôikos*), cannot bear an object without value (*eutelês pragma*), but wants the beloved to be lofty.

131E **So this is how it stands with you: [Alcibiades] has never had another [lover], as it seems:** He says that 'I want you to be as beautiful as possible, for there has never been anyone who loved Alcibiades but Socrates alone'. Why, then, [does he say] 'Except for one alone, and this one cherished (*agapêtos*)'? For this seems silly: if he is the one [lover], then [of course] he is also cherished. Well, it is necessary to understand the phrase as follows: 'You have come to have one lover, and that is *the* cherished' (for he omits the article) 'Socrates, the son of the midwife Phaenarete and the stonemason Sophroniscus': the consequence is that Alcibiades' noble birth was no help to him (for he was a descendent of Alcmaean and

Aeacus), nor did Socrates' low birth do any harm to his wisdom. And the phrase 'so this is how it stands with you' means, 'this is your situation (*houtôs ekhei ta pragmata*)'.

And you said that I just anticipated you in coming to you: For this is what he was saying at the beginning, that 'You barely anticipated me in beginning a conversation, since I meant to ask you, why you would not leave me alone'. And he replies that 'This is the only reason why I don't leave you alone, that I am your only lover. That's why those men were only around while your body was in bloom; but when its bloom is off, I am present for the bloom of the soul. Both now', he continues, 'and always, if you are not destroyed by the Athenian people' (for he knew that [Alcibiades] was a lover of the people), 'I shall never forsake you'. For it's the case that we think nothing of a single person, but we make a fuss over a large crowd. Yet one assertion [can make] a syllogism, while many [assertions] do not [necessarily do so]; for the multitude resembles an assertion that brings its subject-matter (*pragmata*) into a single confusion, for in this way too the multitude is a cause of confusion.

For many good [Athenians] have already suffered that end: If they [were] good, how did they become lovers of the people, and suffer ruin? Well, they were only good in their disposition (*hexis*) [and not in practice]. **132A**

For 'the people of great-hearted Erechtheus' might look fair of face: He parodies the saying 'people of great-hearted Erechtheus'.[477] 'But it's necessary to observe the multitude stripped down': and notice the name of Socrates' moly, 'stripping'. So too Odysseus: 'But he looked at each one with his eyes'.[478] But the phrase 'fair of face' was used for all of them as a group (*epi holou hôs holou*), since each of them taken individually was valueless (*eutelês*).

Exercise yourself first, my blessed man, and learn: Notice that he provides him with another antidote, namely, training and learning about excellence. **132B** 222,1

But try to explain [exactly how we should cultivate our own selves]: Notice another indication of [Alcibiades'] reciprocal love, as he begs [Socrates] to teach. And the phrase 'our own selves' (*hêmôn autôn*) points by duplication [of the words] to 'the self itself', the purificatory life and the contemplative [life]: for up until this point, the civic life [has been under discussion]. But if the target (*skopos*)

of the dialogue has to do with ethics (*êthikos*), why would he speak about the purificatory and contemplative life?[479] For the discussion (*logoi*) is about that life from this point forward. Well, according to the philosopher Proclus, the target is ethical, for he understands 'self' as the tripartition [of the soul], and 'self itself' as the rational soul using the body as an instrument; but according to the philosopher Damascius, [the dialogue] has a civic, purificatory, and contemplative target, since he understands 'self' as the rational soul using the body as an instrument, and 'self itself' as the [rational soul] without an instrument.

We've agreed what we *probably* are: Notice that he says that 'we have defined civic self-knowledge': for he points clearly to this – the civic life – using the phrase 'probably' (*epieikôs*).[480] And [Alcibiades' reply] 'these things are so' (*esti tauta*), through the use of the plural, points to 'the self itself'.

132C [And the next step is] that we have to cultivate our soul and look to that: 'And so we must attend to our soul', he says, 'but not to our primary belonging, namely our body, nor to our secondary [belonging], namely our possessions: since again, [by doing the latter] we will know ourselves in a *civic* way, and now we want to know ourselves in a purificatory and contemplative way'.

Now, by what means (*tropos*) could we get the clearest knowledge of it? The [word] 'clearest' (*enargestata*) is appropriate to the [command to] 'Know Thyself', which is the Sun,[481] who is the overseer (*ephoros*) of clarity (*enargeia*). And again he says 'our own selves' next, pointing by reduplication to the 'self itself'.

132D I think it's likely that there are not many examples (*paradeigmata*) of it [except the case of sight]: That is, 'There isn't any more appropriate example than sight, because it is sun-like in form (*hêlioeides*), and appropriate to the one who makes the command [to know oneself]'.

132E [The eye can look] at mirrors and things of that sort: Through the [word] 'mirrors' he refers to artificial mirrors, and through the [phrase] 'things of that sort', to natural [mirrors], such as crystal and horn. And we should recognise that [the word] 'maiden' ['pupil'] (*korê*)[482] is used either because of its proximity to the form of crystal, which is pure, and so is the maiden, since she is unmarried; or it's because it has been wrapped around with many protective layers, just like the maiden.

Lecture 28

With the god's favour

But we agree that knowing oneself [is the same as being self-controlled]. **133C–135E**
Since we got to know ourselves as a civic person (as we recognised that the human being is a soul using the body as an instrument), and as a purificatory person (as we recognised that it is a rational soul making no use of the body as an instrument, but reverting upon itself), and as a contemplative person (as we recognised the human being as a rational soul that does not use the body as an instrument, but reverts upon its betters), he exalts self-knowledge, by saying that the person who does not know himself is not a statesman. And he says this because Alcibiades was planning on being a statesman: for [Socrates] saw him 'rushing' into public affairs [118B]. And he is not only *not* a statesman, but he is actually miserable, because he is in error (*hamartanôn*): and [he would be] all the more miserable, if he got the power [to be a statesman], and not only miserable, but a maker of misery, because he would be in charge of others; and especially a maker of misery, if he secured dockyards and harbours and walls and revenues [for them]. And he says this to point riddlingly to Pericles, who built the wall of the Piraeus, and Themistocles, who prepared the triremes, by the oracle:

> Wide-seeing Zeus grants to Tritogeneia [Athena] a wooden wall . . .[483]

And [Plato] develops some three [points]: [1] that the person who is 225,1
ignorant of himself is also ignorant of what belongs to him. (And why were we saying earlier that the doctor knows his belongings without knowing himself, and that the same applies to the money-maker?[484] Because he possesses what belongs to him and what belongs to what belongs to him,[485] or his own nature (*phusis*),[486] and this [possession] is how he – both the money-maker and the doctor – knows them; or because these [belongings] contribute to their needs and are instruments, and so these [people] are ignorant about them. Thus, then, let us liberate [Socrates] from this apparant self-contradiction. He himself also provides an indication in this direction when he says, 'Then it wasn't quite right to agree, as we did a few moments ago [131A–C], that some people know what belongs to them without knowing themselves'. For both are true in the

sense just stated). Those who are ignorant of their own belongings are also ignorant of others' belongings, for knowledge of contraries is one and the same:[487] the person who is ignorant of others' belongings is ignorant of the citizens' belongings: but such a person is not a statesman: therefore, the person who is ignorant of himself is not a statesman.

[2] Next, he builds upon this many other paradoxes, '[piling] Ossa upon Olympus', as the poetic [saying] goes;[488] [he shows] that [such a person] is neither a person of good character (*êthikos*) nor a household manager, as follows: 'The person who is ignorant of himself is not a statesman: but the person who is not a statesman is also not a person of good character (*êthikos*) nor a household manager, for these differ [only] in their large or small scale, like small and large letters;[489] but the person who is neither a person of good character nor a household manager, if he should act as an individual, errs against himself, and if he acts as a statesman, errs against many; and the person who errs against himself is miserable (*athlios*), and especially miserable, if he comes into power; and the person who [errs against] many makes others miserable, and especially so if he furnishes [the many] with power; therefore, the person who is ignorant of himself is not only miserable, but also makes others miserable'.

[3] The third argument, that the statesman knows himself, [runs as follows]: 'For the statesman makes his citizens good (for this is the definition of the statesman to make people good); the person who makes people good is [himself] good (for nothing provides what it itself lacks);[490] the good person is loved by god (for the good and god are one and the same); the person loved by god knows the divine in himself; such a person knows himself, because he knows the highest [part] of his soul, and its flower; therefore, the statesman knows himself'.

He also proves the remaining [point], which he accepted as unproven in the second argument, that the person who is ignorant of himself makes others more miserable if he should obtain power. First, [he proves] that this person resembles one who is sick and out of his mind, refusing to obey his doctors, but rearing his body to be unhealthy, with even his diet changed to be unhealthy. For the words were well said, 'the more you use what's impure for bodies as their nourishment, the more harm you do'.[491] His second effort is [to prove] that such a person resembles a tyrant, since the tyrant is nothing but power

deprived of reason. Third, [he proves] that he does not even have power: for power preserves the person who has it, but this person ruins the one who has [power, i.e., himself]. For it's just as badness (*kakia*) leads to ruin, and likewise as if someone inexperienced in steering attempted to steer a ship: for he becomes a cause not only of his own destruction, but also of [the destruction] of his fellow sailors[492] and those who voyage with him.

After this he proves, referring to the ancient saying that excellence is not ruled by a tyrant and is free[493] – for excellence is free by nature, unable to bear submitting to inferiors, which is also why the soul is naturally free, since it is self-moving and naturally tending to rulership (*arkhikê*): hence it's also difficult to rule over human beings, who are naturally suited to rulership, so that Plato also represents the capacities of the soul in the *Phaedrus* as horses, thanks to their pride, since rulership is also [proud] – Socrates is not only unable to bear this [sc. tyranny], but also says that excellence (*aretê*) rules and badness (*kakia*) is a slave, even if he is a king. For the bad person is a slave, even if he should rule all people, just as the good person is free, even if he is a slave. And he proves each of these two points: for the good person is a ruler, because he links himself to god, who rules all; and the bad person is naturally a slave, because he links himself to matter, which is worst, and is ruled by all things.

Next, at the conclusion of the dialogue, reciprocal love (*anterôs*) makes its appearance: for Alcibiades loves Socrates in return. That is also why he wants to cherish him in turn (*antipelargein*): for just as storks (*pelargoi*) take care of their parents when they have grown old, bathe them and carry them, and simply accomplish everything that their parents did for themselves, so too Alcibiades here imitates the stork. For reciprocal love has been compared with the stork not only because it reverts (*dia tên epistrophên*) – which is appropriate to love – but also because love 'has wings', as [Plato] says in the *Phaedrus*;[494] that is also why he is called 'Winged' (*pterôs*), deriving from 'wing' (*pteron*).

That is the content of the survey: for the present dialogue comes to an end alongside [the survey], with the god's favour.

But we agreed that knowing oneself was the same as being self-controlled: For it was also pointed out earlier that self-control is appropriate to reversion, because it rides upon appetite (*epithumia*), around the part [of the soul] most

remote [from reason]. Hence, since our nature is unable to be still, and cannot go further, it returns to its betters. Because of this, they say 'good habits are unstable at their peak'.[495]

15 **So if we didn't know our own selves [. . . would we be able to know which of the things that belong to us were good, and which were bad?]** Here is the first premiss of the first challenge, that the person who is ignorant of himself does not know what belongs to him, either. And both the puzzle and its solution have been stated in the survey.

228,1 **How could that be, Socrates?** Alcibiades answers readily, because he has been helped in this dialogue to see that the person who is ignorant of his own being (*ousia*) is also ignorant about how he can be fulfilled (*teleiotês*). So, since he said '[how could we know] good and bad', he replies, 'how could that be possible?'

133D I suppose perhaps (*isôs*) it would seem impossible to you [to know that what belongs to Alcibiades belongs to him, without knowing Alcibiades]: Note the solution to the puzzle in the word 'perhaps', since it is 'perhaps'
5 impossible that the doctor know his belongings, yet not himself. And he states the solution more clearly in what follows: for he says that Alcibiades does not know that his own belongings are Alcibiades' own, meaning [this in the sense], 'if he knows them according to their being (*ousia*), but not in their relation to something else'.

10 **Therefore, if we don't know what belongs to us, how could we know what belongs to our belongings?** This is an unnecessary addition (*ek perittou*), that the person who is ignorant of his own belongings is also ignorant of what belongs to those belongings: for the first [assertion] sufficed; but thanks to [Socrates'] abundance of capacity, he once again points riddlingly here toward the solution [to the puzzle], in the words 'what belongs to our belongings' (*ta tôn hêmeterôn*), since it's in *relation (têi skhesei)* to him [that he is ignorant of them].

Then it wasn't quite right to agree, as we did a few moments ago, [that some people know what belongs to them without knowing themselves, while others know what belongs to their belongings]: Note how he himself, as we
15 pointed out in the survey,[496] offers an indication of what we said above. For he

says that 'We weren't right to say that the money-maker and the doctor know their belongings and their belongings' belongings without knowing themselves: for one and the same person knows me, what's mine, and what belongs to what's mine'.

Whoever is ignorant of his own belongings [probably won't know other people's belongings either]: The second premiss: [it follows] because knowledge of opposites is one and the same.[497] And he adds the remaining [premiss] and the conclusion, that [such a person] could not be statesman.[498] **133E**

Nor could such a man become a statesman: In the conclusion, he raises the tone of the argument by saying that such a man is unable to be a statesman, that is, 'he is not able to benefit from the good that you have'.[499] So too the orators, in the climaxes of their speeches, raise the tone of the subjects of their arguments.

No, nor a household manager either: The second argument, that <the>[500] non-statesman cannot be a person of good character nor a household manager: for these differ in their scale, large or small.

And if he doesn't know [what he's doing], won't he make mistakes? That is to ask: he is miserable, if he cares only for himself, and he makes others miserable, if he cares for others too, and especially if he comes into power. **134A** 229,1

So the way to avoid being miserable is not by getting rich, [but by being self-controlled]: Timaeus conceptually distinguished the divine from the cosmos [*Tim.* 42E], so that he might gaze down upon the cosmos, which is the sort of thing that needs to be kept distinct from god; and Socrates separated power from philosophy, so that he might gaze down upon [power] as it is, the sort of thing that needs to be separated from the good person (*spoudaios*). **134B**

So it's not walls or triremes [that cities need . . .] Here he begins the second [*sic*; third] argument, which states that the statesman knows himself. For he says that 'We should not pay attention to walls and triremes, then, since these are not causes of well-being (*eudaimonein*), but of ill-being (*kakodaimonein*); instead, what the statesman should pay attention to is making his citizens better, <not>[501] richer'.

134C **Can one provide what one lacks?** The second premiss, that 'the person who makes people good must be the good person, for he cannot provide what he himself lacks. But if this is true, then you must strive for excellence (*aretê*)'.

15 **Then it is not power (*exousia*) or authority (*arkhê*) [to do what you please that you have to secure for yourself or the state, but justice and self-control]:** [He means] that [Alcibiades] should not fuss over wealth and power, but over justice and self-control. And he mentioned these excellences because [Alcibiades] possessed the others (since he had practical wisdom, as an organiser of the city's affairs, and courage, as a general).

134D **[And if you and the city] act with justice and self-control:**[502] The third
20 premiss, that the good man is loved by god.

With a view to what is divine and bright: Another premiss, that the person who is loved by god knows the divine in himself. And through the word 'bright', he pointed to the intelligence [in us] (*to noeron*); and through what follows, he ranged against them the 'godless and dark'. And if this [is true], the discussion concerns what is divine and intelligent in the human being, since he
25 also mentioned their contraries: and he contemplates the contraries [i.e., divinity and godlessness, light and dark] in a single subject-matter (*en miâi hulêi*). Why, then, does he say that the statesman contemplates the divine in himself, since even the person who has mounted to this [level], the purificatory person, does not know the divine in himself? For this belongs properly to the inspired person
230,1 (*entheastikos*). Well, it is because the divine is threefold: there is the *causally* divine, the *really* divine, and the divine *by participation*.[503]

134E **But if you act that way, [I am prepared to guarantee your well-being]:** After he has shown through the first argument (which stated that the person who is ignorant of himself is miserable, and not only this, but also makes others
5 miserable) – after he has shown by this that badness (*kakia*) is sufficient for ill-being; and having shown through the second argument (which states that the statesman knows himself) that excellence is sufficient for well-being; [after having shown that,] he says here that 'I want to guarantee this very point on either argument, that the one [good person] is well off, and the other [bad person]
10 is badly off'. And Socrates is a 'safe guarantor' because the one who has knowledge

in reasoned arguments (*logoi*) is a safe guarantor. And the Peripatos accepts one of these [premisses], that badness is sufficient for ill-being, but not the other, because Aristotle,[504] who adopts a more human perspective (*anthrôpinôteron*), wants [us] also to need external [goods] for well-being; but Plato accepts both [the premisses].

For if a man, my dear Alcibiades, has power to do whatever he wants [but has no intelligence]: At this point he proves [the premiss] that was accepted without a supporting argument: that the [unintelligent] person who has power is more miserable [than the one without power]. And now he constructs a case to support this premiss, from three arguments. [1] The first runs as follows: 'This person is like a sick person who has no medical insight (*nous*) and does not obey a doctor; for this person increases their poor health (*kakokhumia*) by making use of disorderly nourishment'. And we must kindle these [ideas] in the soul like [molten] silver, so that they become part of us. 231,1

With such a tyrant's power that nobody chastises him: The second [argument], that he is like a tyrant. For those instruments are especially harmful, that cannot be well used: which is also why it was said, **135A**

> Iron itself attracts a man.[505]

Won't his body, in all likelihood, be ruined? [Here is] the third [argument], that [in such a case] there is not even power, but powerlessness, because no [genuine] power is destructive to its possessor. And he introduces the example of the pilot, and shows that the person who wields bad power is both miserable and makes others miserable.

And before one acquires excellence, it's better to be ruled [by somebody better]: he constructs the other [supporting case], that excellence is not only free, but also rules (*arkhikê*): for excellence links itself to god, who is ruler of all, while badness [links itself] with matter, which is ruled by all and is most remote [from full reality].[506] What follows? Surely the good person (*spoudaios*) is not a slave to god? Well, this slavery is superior to every [kind of] rule, and [this person], by his slavery, rules over all others: for the condition of being moved by another (*heterokinêtos*) in *this* way is better than self-movement **135B**

(*autokinêtos*). And therefore he says that it is better to be a slave than a master and ruler who lacks excellence.

And the better is also nobler? For it's been proven that everything beautiful is good, and vice versa.[507]

135C **It suits the bad person to be a slave:** So Alcibiades, who wishes to rule over all human beings, has been proven to be a slave, if he fails to strive for excellence.

[Shouldn't we avoid whatever is appropriate for slaves?] – As much as possible, Socrates: He answers readily, because he is naturally suited for rule and so cannot bear slavery.

Now do you see what a condition you're in? Is it appropriate for a free man? For Alcibiades was naturally suited for freedom: that is also why at a meeting of the Athenian Assembly about [public] income, he offered ten talents of his own free will to the council [cf. Plutarch, Alc. 10].

232,1 **[Do you know how to escape from your present state?] Let's not call it [by name, where a handsome young man is concerned].** The matter is full of what isn't said, namely, 'slavishness': for namelessness is suitable to matter, which is ugly and without form. But [Alcibiades] says, 'If you are willing, Socrates, I am able to escape'. And Socrates does not accept his reply; for he responds, 'You haven't spoken well; instead [you should say] if the *god* is willing'. For the excellences are human insofar as they are excellences, but as concerned with achieving well-being, they derive from god: thus both [answers] are true, Alcibiades' and Socrates'.

135D **And furthermore I say this as well: [we're probably going to change roles, Socrates]:** At this point, reciprocal love [comes in]: for he says that 'it's likely that we'll exchange the arrangement [of our relationship], as I become the lover, and you the beloved'.

135E **And I will certainly begin, from this point forward, [to care] for justice:** After he has heard about the stork, he says, 'I will begin to be just', because [their] life is just.

I should like to think that you will carry this out: 'I would like you to carry this out, but I am afraid, because you are a lover of the people'. And note, too,

how Socrates knows that he will not remain [in this good condition], but that he will move toward the worse.

Lest [the state] overcome both me and you: How does the people overcome Socrates as well? The answer is that it will overcome him as a lover, and with his beloved.[508]

Thanks be (*kharis*) to the god of fulfilment.[509]

Commentary on the *Alcibiades* of Plato
from the voice of Olympiodorus the great philosopher.

Notes

1 Each lecture is preceded by a lemma from the primary text, which a student read aloud to the class. The lecture proper is divided into two components: (1) a survey (*theôria*) discussing themes, questions, or puzzles (*aporiai*) relevant to this portion of the text, and (2) a lecture in the form of line-by-line analysis (*praxis*), which sometimes covers the same ground as the *theôria* in more detail.

2 Although a monotheistic divinity may be implied here, I have generally used a definite article with the lower-case noun ('the god') throughout the translation, to capture the possibility that a particular god is intended. As an exception, I capitalise 'God' as an hypostasis (as at 103,10), along with Intellect and Soul. See also Griffin 2014d: 176 n. 100.

3 Traditionally, the phrase *sun theôi* connotes an action taken 'with god's help' or 'with god's blessing' (e.g., *Il.* 9.49, *Od.* 13.391). In a verbal context, it can also describe words spoken 'with god' in the sense 'with inspiration' (e.g., Herodotus 1.86; cf. LSJ s.v. *sun* A.2). Its force here in Olympiodorus might be 'with divine inspiration' (on which he places substantial value: 'all people. . . wish to quench their thirst with Plato's inspirations, 1,8–9), or 'delivered with god's help' or 'with god's grace', indicating the piety of the lecture's content.

4 The translation of each passage extends beyond the short excerpts included in the manuscripts, but I have also omitted some material, particularly sentences that receive no commentary from Olympiodorus. (See also n. 5, below).

5 Here and in the remainder of the translation from the *First Alcibiades*, I have lightly adapted portions of D.S. Hutchinson's translation of the dialogue (in Cooper 1997). Whereas Olympiodorus' Greek is often relatively repetitive and technical, the dialogue's language is usually lively, and the translation hopefully conveys the flavour of that difference. In Lecture 10, I have supplied nearly the entire Platonic passage on which Olympiodorus comments here, at the head of the survey (*theôria*); in subsequent lectures, I translate the short initial lemma, and supply further translation as needed alongside Olympiodorus' discussion of the text (*lexis*).

6 Olympiodorus paints Alcibiades as representative of 'natural excellence' or *phusikê aretê* (see Introduction); one example of this natural talent is his skill in debaters' dodges.

7 Olympiodorus refers back to his schematic analysis of Socrates' argument (see 64,9 and 89,1, translated in Griffin 2014). Alcibiades maintains that he will be a good adviser to the Athenian Assembly (106C). He also grants that the good adviser understands his subject (106C–D), and that his own subject is justice (*ta dikaia*, 109B). He is therefore committed to the view that he himself understands justice. He has further accepted Socrates' exclusive division of the sources of knowledge (*epistêmê*) about a subject: one *either* (1) learns the subject from a competent teacher, *or* (2) finds out about it for oneself (106D). After Socrates proved that Alcibiades did not (1) learn about justice from a teacher (106E), Alcibiades endorsed (2) the alternative that he found out about it (cf. Olymp. 89,1–9). Now that this second alternative has also been refuted (110D), Alcibiades rejects it, and returns to the possibility that he learned from a teacher, offering 'the many' or 'ordinary people' (*hoi polloi*) as his teachers.

8 Socrates previously persuaded Alcibiades that he had not learned about justice from a teacher, on the grounds that he is unable to identify a teacher, or to name a time when he learned (cf. 106E).

9 See also Proclus, *in Alc.* 259,19–260,6. Proclus and Olympiodorus will both stress a distinction between 'speaking Greek' in the rough sense of using the language competently, and 'speaking Greek' in the sense of a cultured fluency with Attic speech.

10 Plato's *Cratylus* (e.g., 421C–26C) served as a locus classicus for the question whether names were imposed on beings by nature (*phusei*) or by convention (*thesis*). For this formulation of the question, see for example Sextus, *Adv. Math.* 1.143–4; 11.241–42; *P.H.* 3.267–68; for its Neoplatonic legacy, see for example van den Berg 2008.

11 From the later Neoplatonist standpoint, the meaning and use of the noun 'justice' do have conventional and culturally relative elements, but ultimately derive from the real Form of justice in Intellect (*nous*); see Simplicius *in Cat.* 12,26–13,4, with Hoffmann 1987, Griffin 2013.

12 Ordinary people (*hoi polloi*) presumably *could* instruct Alcibiades in the rules of a game of chance played with knucklebones, but I take the point to be that they can't teach him a consistent strategy for *winning* the game. (Admittedly, 'knucklebones' seems to have described an amorphous cluster of children's activities rather than a single game).

13 For the construction of the body from the elements, Westerink compares Hipp. *de Carnibus* 2 (Littré vol. 8 p. 584).

14 See Proclus *in Alc.* 254,3–255,3. Proclus concludes that 'If *hoi polloi* are unable to teach the matters of less moment in which they engage, to which they are addicted and with which they are familiar, neither could they teach the matters of greater importance of which they have less experience and with which they are less familiar' (tr. O'Neill 1971).

15 Damascius takes Socrates' point to be something like this: mastering knucklebones requires a less advanced exercise of the same capacity as understanding justice; someone who has mastered a more advanced subject will also display mastery of the easier subject (assuming they depend on *the same capacity*); since *hoi polloi* don't display mastery of the easier subject, they don't understand the more advanced subject.

16 See Democritus A37, and for a short overview of Democritus' theory, see Berryman 2009.

17 Proclus' corresponding example is contemporary Christianity: 'at the present time *hoi polloi* agree that gods do not exist, but this has happened to them through lack of knowledge' (92,4–9); Olympiodorus may have substituted the example of the Democriteans to avoid ruffling feathers, but it is also a traditional example in its own right.

18 According to the rule of contraposition in traditional logic, 'every *S* is *P*' is equivalent to 'every non-*P* is non-*S*'. Then the contrapositive of the claim 'all those who disagree are ignorant' is 'all those who are non-ignorant do not disagree'.

19 At 73,5–12. The reference is to Plato's doctrine of the tripartite soul (*Republic* 4). Some excellences attach only to one part of the soul: self-control (*sophrosunê*), for instance, attaches only to appetite (*epithumia*). But justice ranges through the whole soul; Olympiodorus suggests that this is why we are prepared to fight especially vigorously to defend justice.

20 The word *barbaros* simply means 'non-Greek' or 'foreigner', so it embraces the Trojans as well as Medea (whose family hailed from Colchis on the eastern coast of the Black Sea).

21 A reference to the legendary voyage of the Argonauts.

22 *Hist.* 1.2–4.

23 *Od.* 2.35–223.

24 The First Battle of Coronea was waged in 447 BC between the Delian League, led by Athens, and the Boeotian League. Clinias fought with distinction in the battle before falling there.

25 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 273,17–21.

26 *Il.* 1.260–73.

27 Isoc. 9.16.

28 *Il.* 24.486.

29 Characteristically of Olympiodorus, the 'survey' (*theôria*) or general discussion begins each lecture, and is followed by a line-by-line discussion of the text (*lexis*).

30 Homer, *Iliad* 1.106–7.

31 The Seven Sages, whose names became synonymous with wisdom in the Hellenic tradition, were Cleobulus of Lindos, Solon of Athens, Chilon of Sparta, Bias of

Priene, Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mytilene, and Periander of Corinth. Socrates collecct s them as a group at Plato, *Protagoras* 342E–343B. Each was associated with an 'apophthegm' or pithy saying; the apophthegm below is associated with Bias of Priene.

32 Less compendiously, 'The more people there are, the worse they become'. The line is credited to Bias by Diogenes Laertius 1.87 (see also Homer, *Od.* 2.277).

33 Aristotle associates what occurs 'for the most part' (*epi to polu*) with what comes about by nature (*phusis*): see for example *GA* 777a19–21, 727b29–30, *Metaph.* 1027a8–28.

34 For the following discussion, compare Proclus, *in Alc.* 256,7–258,9.

35 That is, into a body.

36 Likely a memory of Plotinus, *Enn.* 1.6.8, 21: 'Our country from which we came is there, our father is there'.

37 At 91,16–92,1.

38 The connection is made more explicit in Proclus' discussion at *in Alc.* 258,20–259,18. Proclus divides three senses of 'speaking Greek' – (1) observing the ordinary usage of names, (2) speaking cultured Greek fluently, and (3) applying names to realities by nature, which only the philosopher can accomplish. He cites Pythagoras, who praised the discoverer of Number first, and the Name-Giver second. He suggests that Pythagoras intended to praise understanding at the levels of Intellect and Soul, respectively, since Soul is concerned with the application of names. For the Pythagorean allusion, Westerink compares Aelian's *Various Histories* 4.17 and Iamblichus' *Life of Pythagoras* 18,82. Proclus introduces a similar point at *in Crat.* 5,27–6,19: 'Pythagoras, for instance, when asked what is the wisest being of all, said, "Number". What is second in wisdom? "He that puts the names to things". By "Number" he hinted at the intelligible order encompassing the multitude of the intellectual Forms . . .'

39 Neoplatonic ontology described three levels of reality that arose from a sequence of emanation: from the One (*to hen*) flowed Intellect (*nous*), and from Intellect, Soul (*psukhê*). Intellect apprehends (and contains) the Platonic Forms or Ideas, and one of the characteristic activities of the Soul is the generation of names, on which see Simplicius, *in Cat.* 12,26–13,4 (cf. Hoffmann 1987, Griffin 2013).

40 For the course of education in Hellenised Egypt and late antiquity more broadly, see Cribiore 2001, Kaster 1988.

41 Modern scholars, especially following Pierre Hadot, have also emphasised the interdependence of ancient philosophical doctrines and ways of life: see for instance Hadot 2002, Cooper 2012.

42 This entailment is characteristic of ancient Mediterranean philosophy, but not of modern philosophy. For example, we do not require a philosopher who defends

utilitarianism in journal articles to live by the utilitarian calculus, but an ancient Epicurean would be expected to live consistently with Epicurus' ethical views.

43 Compare Proclus, *in Alc.* 266,5–8, and notes above.

44 See Proclus, *in Alc.* 267,6–21.

45 Sixth-century pupils of elementary Attic Greek would have learned that one uses the adverb *ma* to swear *negatively* by Zeus, but *nê* to swear positively, so Alcibiades' colloquial expostulation 'far from it, by Zeus (*nê dia*)' ought to have used the particle *ma* (compare Smyth 1920, §1596). Olympiodorus, obliged to comment on this, explains that *hêkista* ('far from it') stands in for the expected negative.

46 Compare Proclus, *in Alc.* 273,6–10.

47 Compare Olympiodorus' remarks on double ignorance at 11,9–10 and 65,14–15. Olympiodorus draws on the Socratic distinction between an ignorant person who fails to realise their ignorance (and so is doubly ignorant), and an ignorant person who recognises their ignorance (and so is simply ignorant). The former is better off than the latter. See the *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy* §5 (16,19–27, tr. Westerink 1962): 'Simple ignorance occurs when a person does not know a particular thing and knows that he does not know; double ignorance when he does not know a thing and is not aware that he does not know. . . .'

48 See for example 51,1–2.

49 Olympiodorus suggests that the soul 'puts on' love of reputation first in descending into embodiment, and discards it last on ascending. (Love of pleasure is discarded sooner, as he suggests next). He likely has in mind the theory of the soul's vehicle. In later Neoplatonist thought, as a soul descends into embodied existence, it 'collects' a series of envelopes or vehicles on the way; as the soul re-ascends, these vehicles are sequentially left behind in their natural spheres. For an overview of the theory of the soul's vehicle in Neoplatonism, especially in the theory's seminal form in Iamblichus, see Finamore 1985; for the theory in Proclus see Chlup 2012, 104–5 and Siorvanes 1996, 131–3.

50 See also above, 12,8, and Proclus, *in Alc.* 283,1–286,18. See also Kakkuri-Knuuttila 2012.

51 In rhetorical and philosophical terminology, indebted to the Stoics, an *erôtêma* is a question that requires the answer 'yes' or 'no' (cf. LSJ I.2), whereas a *pusma* is a more open-ended query that allows more complex answers. See Fink 2012: 8.

52 Adding *ou lanthanei*, at 99,5 which appears to be required for the sense (as suggested by Westerink in his apparatus).

53 cf. Aristotle, *On Interpretation* 9.

54 On Socrates' role as 'midwife' of ideas (*Theaetetus* 148E–151D), see above, 12,5–12, 63,15–17, and 74,21.

55 For what follows. cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 303,1–16.

56 Proclus and Olympiodorus describe an earlier tradition that divided the *First Alcibiades* into a sequence of ten syllogisms (cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 12,18–13,1): the third syllogism concludes that in a question-and-answer context, the 'speaker' is the one who gives answers.

57 See below, 105,6–16.

58 See below, 106,23–107,13. As that passage illustrates, the word *skeuaria* would have sounded like 'utensils' or 'equipment' to Olympiodorus' pupils, and so I retain these rather odd-sounding English translations. As Olympiodorus goes on to explain, however, Plato uses the word here in the sense of 'clothing'.

59 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 299,12–15.

60 Epictetus, *Handbook* 5 (Loeb tr., lightly adapted).

61 Agamemnon is explaining why his quarrel with Achilles was not his fault or responsibility (*aitios*), but he attributes fault to the gods.

62 Following Olympiodorus in reading *hierophoitis*, 'holy wanderer', a variant for the Homeric manuscripts' usual reading *êerophoitis* ('who walks in mist or air').

63 Euripides, *Hippolytus* 352 (cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 292,7–13).

64 'Interrogative' (*pusmatikos*) questions require more than a yes-or-no answer: see above, 99,3, with note.

65 For what follows, see Proclus, *in Alc.* 289,2–290,12.

66 *Iliad* 7.125–31.

67 Demosthenes, *Or.* 8.34–37.

68 Olympiodorus paints Alcibiades' shortcomings against the canvas of the three primary levels of being and understanding (*hupostaseis*) in Neoplatonism: the One (or God), which is the principle of unity, individuality, and goodness; Intellect (*nous*), which is the principle of being and basic, non-discursive awareness; and Soul (*psukhê*), which is the principle of life and reflexive, discursive cognition and experience. Plotinus, *Enn.* 5.1 is a classic exposition of the three hypostases; Proclus' *Elements of Theology* works out the system in the 'classical' late antique form that Olympiodorus would have known especially well (see Dodds 1963). For what follows, see also Proclus, *in Alc.* 291,1–4.

69 For what follows, see also Proclus, *in Alc.* 293,14–19.

70 Sophocles, *Ajax* 18–65.

71 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 290,16–19.

72 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 292,1–7.

73 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 292,17–293,6.

74 In *Republic* 617D–E, the soul freely chooses a *daimôn*; then, in an order assigned by lot, the soul chooses a life (and the life will later influence the soul, although 'excellence knows no master', so that the soul remains responsible for its actions); and the responsibility for its choice remains firmly with the soul.

75 At 103,26.

76 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 294,8–14.

77 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 295,4–9.

78 Deleting *esti* at 104,20, following Westerink.

79 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 296,2–297,2.

80 Anaxarchus at DL 9.59: '[W]hen after the king's death Anaxarchus was forced against his will to land in Cyprus, [Nicocreon] seized him and, putting him in a mortar, ordered him to be pounded to death with iron pestles. But he, making light of the punishment, made that well-known speech, "Pound, pound the pouch containing Anaxarchus; ye pound not Anaxarchus"' (Loeb tr.) See also Olympiodorus, *in Gorg.* 170,13–15.

81 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 294,19–295,9.

82 Westerink compares Hermogenes, *On Staseis* §1, §7, and Apsines, *Art of Rhetoric* 11.

83 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 327,21–328,4.

84 The reference may be to Clitophon's interjection on Thrasymachus' behalf in *Republic* 1, 340A–B.

85 Perhaps a loose allusion to *Republic* 2, 367A, where Clitophon might be included with Thrasymachus in the phrase 'Thrasymachus or anyone else might say. . .' As Westerink points out, the words are taken from *Phaedo* 103A4–5, but the reference is to the fourth guest in *Tim*. 17A1–3 (cf. Proclus, *in Tim*. 1.20,7–9; the Platonist Ptolemy identified the missing guest with Clitophon. See also Proclus *in Tim.* 23,4–11; *in Parm*. 671,25–32).

86 An allusion to the view, originating with the Stoics, that human beings share 'common concepts' (*koinai ennoiai*) that are basically true, such as the 'concept' that divine beings exist; Olympiodorus implies that someone who speaks against the common concepts virtually fails to be a 'speaker' in the proper sense. For Olympiodorus' use of common concepts, see for example 18,3–4 ('we know certain things. . . even without demonstration' by means of common concepts), 40,20, and *in Gorg*. 44.7. See also Tarrant 1997, 189–91 and for the role of the common concepts in Neoplatonism more broadly, see van den Berg 2009.

87 This is rather obscure, and may be a slip of the pen or tongue; as the scholiast points out, the letters of Democritus' name actually add up to 822 in Greek numerals.

88 101,13–14.

89 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 303,17–304,22.

90 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 301, 1–3.

91 Proclus also comments on Alcibiades' notorious luxury (*in Alc.* 302,18–21); Aristippus wrote about his daintiness and expenses in a work *On the Luxury of the Ancients* (DL 2.23), and Athenaeus describes a *Life of Alcibiades* by Satyrus. See also below, 161,14–16.

92 For an overview of the theory of the soul's vehicle in Neoplatonism, especially in the theory's seminal form in Iamblichus, see Finamore 1985; for the theory in Proclus see Chlup 2012, 104–5 and Siorvanes 1996, 131–3.

93 Proclus, *in Alc.* 301,7–15 explains that the discussion of 'stainless clothes' is metaphorical for souls of a nobler nature. Such souls, 'possessing a concept of the spotless purity of the gods and carrying it around in images, lay hold of purity in appearance; since the being of the divine vestures is spotless and their purity free from matter: this purity souls must don by thoroughly cleansing their congenital vestures and preserving their "garments" spotless from birth, but not by considering all-important the cleanliness of exterior clothes (tr. O'Neill)'.

94 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 305,1–3.

95 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 303,1–16.

96 cf. Aeschines 3.192, describing jurors whose minds wander while the charges are read aloud. Olympiodorus used the same example at 57,2. The anonymous *Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy* expands on the example (15, 210,3–11): '[The object of the dialogue form] is to make us pay attention to the contents by the very variety of the speakers; otherwise, if it is always one and the same person teaching us, we might, so to speak, doze off and the same thing might happen that happened during an address of the orator Aeschines, because in his case it was one and the same person who spoke from the beginning to the end. Standing on the platform and making his speech, he failed to keep his audience awake because there was no discussion, no asking and answering of questions, and the jurymen fell asleep; when the orator saw this he said to them: "I hope you have had sweet dreams about the trial."' (tr. Westerink).

97 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 306,10–15.

98 See above, 106,23–107,13.

99 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 315,5–317,15.

100 For what follows, cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 319,12–322,17.

101 I have retained 'beautiful or noble', or simply 'noble', in rendering *to kalon* here here. Where the following discussion will make use of the idea that *to kalon* is a Form, existing (from the Neoplatonist perspective) at the ontological level of Intellect (*nous*), I will render the same word as 'beauty'.

102 According to the 'Proclan rule', the 'higher' in the chain of being an entity is, the further 'down' its effects can reach. See Proclus, *Elements of Theology* §57: 'Every cause both operates prior to its consequent and gives rise to a greater number of posterior terms'.

103 An allusion to the story that Aphrodite, goddess of beauty and love, was born of the foam (*aphros*) that arose from the genitals of Ouranos after they were cast into the sea (Hesiod, *Theogony* 190–92).

104 See also Olymp. *in Phaed.* 13.2, 75,25–76,3: 'Further [intelligible reality] is "indissoluble", inasmuch as it does not consist of parts. . . All form, even materialised form, is without parts as far as the inherent principles are concerned; when materialised form, though itself without parts, is nevertheless divided, this is due to matter, and while in any part of the seed all the principles are present, as appears from the fact that even if a part of it is taken away, still the animal is shaped without a defect, it is matter that causes the head, the nose, etc. to be separate (tr. Westerink)'.

105 The ancients rightly noted that storks took great care in raising their young; the story was also told that they were rewarded by their children's careful care in their own old age (cf. Aristophanes, *Birds* 1353ff.). The scholiast on the same passage of Aristophanes states that storks represented justice on sceptres.

106 The *Sophist* would be read sixth in the Iamblichean curriculum that Olympiodorus followed, after *Alcibiades*, *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Cratylus*, and *Theaetetus*; it marked the beginning of the study of being proper.

107 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 307,19–308,9.

108 For what follows, see Proclus, *in Alc.* 308,17–309,16.

109 As Olympiodorus later puts it (216,4–17; 221,21), the ability to analyze a group into its constituent individuals 'one by one' is an antidote, like Hermes' 'moly', to the control exercised by multiplicity and the many.

110 That is, Plato doesn't mean that if I can persuade any one person, I can persuade any other multitude; he means that if I can persuade a multitude as a whole, I have persuaded each individual in the multitude.

111 I take the point here to be that the arithmetician is persuasive to other knowledgeable experts in his field, regardless of their number, but not necessarily to the crowd.

112 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 307,9–15.

113 The text is difficult to construe here, and Westerink obelises the words *Sôkratê peri autou*. I am very grateful to my anonymous reader for this section of the text, who advanced the plausible interpretation that I have adapted (to the best of my ability) here.

114 The text is also difficult to construe here, and I am not confident in the sense.

115 Proclus, *in Alc.* 313,10–17 expects surprise at Socrates' admission, and replies that this 'shows his lofty grandeur and contempt for everything inferior. The undertaking to prove the opposite of Alcibiades' convictions does not reveal him as pushy in regard to others, but as a contestant on behalf of the truth' (tr. O'Neill 1971, lightly adapted).

116 That is, a universal affirmation ('every human being walks') can be proven false by proving the contrary ('no human being walks') or merely the contradictory

('some human being does not walk'), and it's more 'pushy' to prove the former than the latter. In the traditional 'square of opposition' drawn from Aristotle, *Int.* 6–7, the *contrary* of A ('every S is P') is E ('no S is P'), but the *contradictory* of A is O ('some S is not P').

117 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 314,1–6.

118 As Alcibiades says at *Symposium* 218A: 'Well, something much more painful than a snake has bitten me in my most sensitive part – I mean my heart, or my soul. . . which has been bitten by philosophy, whose grip on young and eager souls is much more vicious than a viper's and makes them do the most amazing things'.

119 Euripides, *Hippolytus* 345; Aristophanes, *Knights* 15.

120 An allusion to the famous Platonic doctrine that learning is a process of recollection. For the later Neoplatonists' pedagogical analysis of the doctrine, see for example Simplicius, *in Cat*. 12,26–13,4, with Hoffmann 1987 and Griffin 2014a.

121 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 314,17–21.

122 Olympiodorus refers back to the tradition that divided the *First Alcibiades* into a series of ten syllogisms (cf. Proclus, *in Alc*. 12,18–13,1).

123 If everything just is advantageous, and everything advantageous is just, then the extension or referent of the two terms is identical.

124 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 318,20–23.

125 I will normally render *kalon* as 'noble' in this moral context. Later, when the same word is used for a grade of being in Neoplatonic ontology, I will use 'beautiful' or 'beauty', but transliterate the Greek to signal that the same word is meant.

126 For Alcibiades' donation (and the appreciation for reputation that allegedly motivated it), see Plutarch, *Life of Alcibiades* 10.

127 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 332,3–20.

128 Olympiodorus refers to a story also reported by Aelian, *Various Histories* 3.44, and by Simplicius, *On Epictetus' Handbook* 32. '[T]wo men on their way to Delphi fell in with bandits, and while one of them was being killed by them, the other either fled or did not come to his defence fearlessly. . . [A]gain two other men fell in with bandits, and one of the two was seized by the bandits. The other hurled his spear at a bandit, but missed him and struck and killed his friend' (tr. Brennan and Brittain 2002). The Oracle criticised the first man who chose not to help his friend, but did not blame the second man who inadvertently killed his friend. (It is the intent that makes the action good or bad, not the consequences).

129 Understanding *akôn* as spear; it could also be interpreted as 'accidentally' (which is clearly the sense, at any rate).

130 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 332,21–333,13.

131 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 334,9–11.

132 See Proclus, *in Alc.* 333,15. The *Alcibiades* belongs particularly to the level of 'civic excellence' (*politikê aretê*), to the rational soul using the body as an instrument (see Introduction, and Olympiodorus' Lecture 1, translated in Griffin 2014d). From this perspective, it's permissible to view death, the separation of soul from body, as a kind of harm. From the vantage point of the higher 'levels' of excellence, such as purificatory excellence (*kathartikê aretê*), however, the separation of soul from body can be regarded as good for the soul; this view is developed by Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo*, the third dialogue in the Neoplatonic reading curriculum of Plato after *Alcibiades* and *Gorgias*.

133 As Proclus points out in his corresponding comments (*in Alc.* 333,10–334,5), the same courageous act could be *essentially* noble, and only *incidentally* harmful, but sometimes people 'take the incidental as essential and do not distinguish these from each other according to the custom of philosophical discussion' (cf. Aristotle, *Sophistical Refutations* 166b28–36).

134 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 337,10–14.

135 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 336,5–8.

136 'Some S is P' implies that 'some P is S'. Reading *an<ti>strephei* at 118,9 with Westerink.

137 This reasoning is highly condensed, but the train of thought might run as follows. (1) Some noble things (e.g., courage) are good; therefore some good things are noble. (2) Olympiodorus imagines a case where it's been proven, both that everything noble is good, and that the aggregate of all particular noble things under consideration (courage, self-control, justice, and wisdom) are good. (3) Therefore the whole aggregate converts.

138 cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 339,7–15.

139 See the diagram below in the body text, drawn from the scholia to the manuscript. As Proclus explains, 'if two terms and their opposites are convertible with each other, the opposite of one of these two terms cannot be consistent with the other' (Proclus, *in Alc.* 339,7–15).

140 Again, noble actions in battle may cause harm that disadvantages the body.

141 See above, 117,8–10.

142 In the play *Hippolytus* by Euripides, the title character has sworn chastity and honours Artemis, goddess of virginity and the hunt, rather than Aphrodite, goddess of beauty, love and sexuality. Aphrodite indirectly brings about his demise, causing Hippolytus' stepmother Phaedra to fall in love with him, and setting in motion a chain of events that leads to his death.

143 Inserting *ei* and deleting *katho* at 120,6 with Westerink.

144 Inserting *ei* and deleting *katho* with Westerink, as follows: *skopei <ei>, êi [katho] kalon esti, kai agathon esti*.

145 See note above on the *Hippolytus*.

146 Supplying *hexomen hoti pan kalon agathon* with Westerink. The text is jumbled here, perhaps on account of a student recorder's haste at the lecture.

147 The manuscript text presents the position backwards (literally, 'Not existing is worse than existing badly', which is the contrary of the point that Olympiodorus means to make, as 117,15 makes clear). Either this is a slip of the tongue or the pen, but the text should be something nearer to *to kakôs einai tou mê einai*, 'existing badly is worse than not existing at all'.

148 See above, 118,13–22 and 118,22–26.

149 Aristotle, *Post. An.* 1.24: the more specific or particular the demonstration, the more indefinite and less explanatory it is.

150 I shift to 'beautiful' here as a rendering of the Greek word *kalon*, to capture the context of the following paragraph.

151 That is, Aristotle treated the second Neoplatonic hypostasis, Intellect (*nous*) or Being (*ousia*), as primary, rather than recognising the true first principle, the Good (*to agathon*) or One (*to hen*). This was a Neoplatonic commonplace.

152 The reference is to *Metaphysics* L (12.9–10), where Aristotle considers the nature of divine thought as 'most divine and precious', and then investigates how goodness (*to eu*) belongs to thought. He continues, 'We must consider also in which of two ways the nature of the universe contains the good or the highest good, whether as something separate and by itself, or as the order of the parts. Probably in both ways, as an army does. For the good (*to eu*) is found both in the order and in the leader, and more in the latter; for he does not depend on the order but it depends on him' (tr. Ross).

153 Again, it was a commonplace in Neoplatonism that Aristotle treated Intellect (*nous*) as the highest principle; Olympiodorus is suggesting that the use of the word *eu*, with its aesthetic overtones, also connotes this.

154 See also Olympiodorus, *in Phaed.* 2.9 Westerink (15,21–16,1): 'It is better to be taken care of by God than by oneself, and in this case being moved from without is superior to self-motion' (tr. Westerink).

155 'Stated' at 116B2–3; 'converted' at 116B13.

156 Compare the diagram at 118,15, above.

157 See also 38,16–18 and Olymp. *in Gorg.* 2.3 (16,5–10). For the dichotomy between the empirical doctor, who functions by trial and error, and the rationalist doctor, who functions with an explanatory theory, see also Frede 1988.

158 I occasionally translate *aiskhos* and cognates with both 'shame' and 'ugliness' in English to preserve the duality of sense that recurs at 125,16–17 in the contrast with *kalon*.

159 See *Sophist* 227D–228D; also Proclus, *in Alc.* 210,4–15; and below, 197,1–3.
160 The idea is that pain in the body arises from the strife between parts or elements, so a single whole would not undergo pain. See Hippocrates, *On the Nature of Man* 2, vol. 6, p. 34 Littré.
161 See 103,9–16.
162 Inserting *hoti* with Westerink at 125,18.
163 'Noble' and '[morally] beautiful' translate *kalon* in the following section.
164 Reading *ge* for *de* at 126,4, as suggested to me by Donald Russell.
165 The Greek word *anôthen* can mean literally 'from above' or 'in virtue of being more general' (in logic), and both might be implied here; in terms of Neoplatonic metaphysics, the Good stands 'above' beauty, but in terms of Neoplatonic logic, it's also a more 'general' term.
166 That is, the two terms have the same extension or referent.
167 Olympiodorus' double negative is slightly more circumlocutious: 'The subject. . . has only avoided possessing the property of 'humanity' in those cases where 'capable of laughter' is not predicated of it'.
168 If every excellence is necessarily good, any person who possesses excellence thereby possesses the good.
169 Reading *mêdeteron* for *mêden* at 126,19, as suggested to me by Donald Russell.
170 See also Proclus fr. 3; cf. Olymp. *in Gorg.* 5.2.
171 The principle that each virtue term (like 'justice', 'courage', 'wisdom', 'self-control') refers to one and the same thing goes back to Plato (*Protagoras* 333b4). There are subtly different views in the dialogues; in the *Laches*, courage looks like a proper part of excellence (190C–D, 199E), and in *Euthyphro*, piety is presented as a part of justice (11E–12E). See for example Brickhouse & Smith 1997.
172 122,3; 122,19–123,5.
173 Beauty (*to kalon*), as a Form, exists at the level of Intellect (*nous*) in Neoplatonic metaphysics. Therefore it is derivative from the One or Good, which lies above Intellect (see for example Plotinus 1.6.9). Olympiodorus presents '[acting] well' (*to eu*) as mediating between the Good and Beauty.
174 See above, 126,3–20.
175 See 107B.
176 Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 530.
177 Aristophanes, *Peace* 603–610.
178 Homer, *Iliad* 1.249.
179 In other words, Socrates chooses a question with a clear and unambiguous correct answer to illustrate his point, that there *are* some things that Alcibiades knows and can speak to confidently.

180 'Loosely' is a rough rendering of *pakhumerôs* here: the sense is that the argument has been roughly made with some loose ends that have to be tied up later (cf. 208,11.14 and 209,14 below).

181 For Olympiodorus' use of common concepts, see for example 18,3–4 ('we know certain things. . . even without demonstration' by means of common concepts), 40,20, and *in Gorg.* 44.7. See also Tarrant 1997, 189–91 and for the role of the common concepts in Neoplatonism more broadly, see van den Berg 2009.

182 See above, 105,11–12.

183 An allusion to Plato's analysis of the soul as tripartite, including reason (*logos*) and unreasoning faculties (*thumos, epithumia*), and his argument that the unreasoning faculites are educated by different means than reason; see for example Lorenz 2008, Cooper 1984.

184 See 124,5.

185 Euripides, *Orestes* 1–3.

186 Reading *hôd' epos epein* with the manuscripts of Euripides, *Or.* 1, for Westerink's *oude epos epein*; but I am unsure of the sense here. The idea may be that Socrates bemoans Alcibiades' ignorance in the same spirit as Electra at the outset of the *Orestes*, and perhaps (if we read *oude*) that language falls short of describing this suffering.

187 In the Neoplatonist scale of metaphysics and epistemology, the One is strictly speaking unknowable and unspeakable because it transcends being and knowledge, whereas matter is unknowable and unspeakable because it is beneath being and knowledge, a kind of substrate in which reality can be imaged. See for example Sorabji 2004, vol. 3, §14.

188 I was not able to locate a source for this anecdote.

189 See 92,9–19.

190 See 113A.

191 See 96,7–12, with notes.

192 For Olympiodorus' portrayal of Socrates, see Renaud and Tarrant 2015: 203–206; for the Neoplatonic Socrates, see now Layne and Tarrant 2014.

193 Slightly later in the *Alc.* (119A), as in *Gorgias* 515C–516D, Socrates is portrayed as questioning whether Pericles was really a capable 'statesman' (*politikos*), since he never seems to have improved any of his citizens. The orator Aelius Aristides (AD 147–after 177), a major figure of the second sophistic, produced a counter-argument in his 'Defense of the Four Politicians' Miltiades, Cimon, Themistocles and Pericles (*Or.* 46).

194 Proclus, *in Alc.* fr. 4. It is a Platonic commonplace that the good life requires real knowledge (*epistêmê*), not only true belief; see for example *Rep.* 5 and 7 (506C: 'Haven't you noticed that beliefs without knowledge are shameful and ugly';

520C: 'Do you think those who express a true belief without understanding are any different from the blind who happen to travel the right road? [To be good citizens, you must discover] the truth. . .'). This view was opposed by Plato's contemporary Isocrates (not to be confused with Socrates); for him, true belief is enough (*Antidosis* 271).

195 See 38,16–18 and Olymp. *in Gorg.* 2.3 (16,5–10). For the dichotomy between the empirical doctor, who functions by trial and error, and the rationalist doctor, who functions with an explanatory theory, see also Frede 1988.

196 A quotation from Homer (*Iiad* 22.60, *Odyssey* 15.246).

197 Olympiodorus' view is that the statesman always has the *ability* to improve his citizens, but may not exercise that ability in practice when he is engaged instead in higher forms of philosophical contemplation; see also 138,18.

198 Olympiodorus picks up the familiar tension between the politically active and contemplative philosopher, already anticipated in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (Books 1 and 10) and in Plato's *Theaetetus*. The Neoplatonist solution is to treat both civic and contemplative excellences as valuable steps on a 'ladder' of excellences; see Introduction.

199 For the philosopher in a hostile constitution, see *Republic* 6, 496C–E; Olympiodorus comments on that passage at *in Gorg.* 45.2.

200 Aristippus the Younger – the grandson of Socrates' pupil Aristippus – was taught philosophy by his mother, Arete (DL 2.86).

201 cf. *Republic* 2, 372E.

202 Hippocrates, *Aphor.* 2.10, IV 472 L.; cf. below, 226,9, and Olymp. *in Cat.* 10,7–8.

203 Reading *autôi* for *autois* at 137,13, as suggested to me by Donald Russell.

204 See Anaxagoras B12 DK.

205 Olympiodorus has in mind a metaphysical and epistemological contrast between Intellect (*nous*), as the second Neoplatonic hypostasis, and the faculties of Soul (*psukhê*) that come 'after' or 'below' it.

206 Homer, *Od.* 3, 265–72.

207 Hom. *Il.* 22.60, *Od.* 15.246.

208 cf. *Republic* 3, 400 B–C; 4, 424C; and earlier in this commentary, 2,43–44.

209 Cf. Olymp. *in Gorg.* 3.10.

210 Deleting *an* and accenting *tína* at 139,7.

211 Proclus, fr. 6.

212 cf. Hom. *Od.* 4.371.

213 Hom. *Od*. 4.372.

214 Eur. *Hippolytus* 384.

215 Callias son of Hipponicus (Callias [4] in *Brill's New Pauly*) was a profligate millionaire who spent most of his fortune, is mentioned or alluded to by

Aristophanes (*Birds* 282–84, *Frogs* 428–30, *Assemblywomen* 810); Olympiodorus may allude here to Eupolis' *Flatterers*, in which Callias was the protagonist.

216 Callias son of Calliades was an important political figure who tried to strengthen Athens' position against Sparta (Callias [7] in *Brill's New Pauly*). For Zeno of Elea in Athens, see *Parm.* 126E–128E.

217 cf. Ol. *in Gorg.* 189,18–19.

218 cf. Olymp. *in Phaed.* 7.5 (42,1–3 Norvin).

219 Timon fr. 45 Diels.

220 An expertise with which some sophists were credited, notably including Gorgias.

221 The story of Zeno's heroic opposition to the tyrant of Elea was famous in antiquity: see Diogenes Laertius 9.26.

222 Olympiodorus may allude to a practice by which a philosopher – like himself – could be supported by voluntary donations and gifts, without commanding fees as such.

223 On this famous passage, see Westerink 1990: 329; Wildberg 2005: 332–34.

224 The 'first part' is concerned with the examination and refutation of Alcibiades' errors (cf. Olymp. *in Alc.* 11,7–8), according to the division made standard by Iamblichus (cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 13,16–14,23).

225 The 'second part' of the dialogue is protreptic, concerned with exhortation of Alcibiades. (See previous note).

226 The Stoic technical term (*hêgemonikon*) refers to the rational 'commanding aspect' or 'ruling part' of the human person, although 'part' can be a misleading translation, since rationality is not a part of the soul; see *SVF* 2.823–33, Long 1996: 242.

227 129E–130C.

228 These distinctions play a significant role in the later lectures; see for example Lecture 25, below. Olympiodorus refers to several of the stages of virtue in the Neoplatonic *scala virtutum*; see Introduction.

229 The Greco-Persian wars, which played a key role in Athens's rise to political, military, and economic power in the eastern Mediterranean, from 499–449 BC; and the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta, from 431–404 BC, which gradually exhausted Athenian power. The wars and their causes are primarily treated by Herodotus (for the Persian wars) and Thucydides (for the Peloponnesian war).

230 Ar. fr. 51 Rose: see now Hutchinson & Johnson at www.protrepticus.info.

231 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* L (12.9).

232 The 'noble lie' of *Rep.* 3, 414E–415C is a particularly famous, though problematic, example.

233 cf. Hippocrates *Aphorisms* 2.38 Littré: 'An article of food or drink that is slightly worse (*smikrôi kheiron*), but more pleasant to the taste, is preferable to one that is better, but less pleasant.' See also 6,5–7,8; 54,15–55,14.

234 123D–124B?

235 cf. 134B–C, where Alcibiades arrives at the conclusion that the good statesman (*politikos*) must understand virtue or excellence (*aretê*) and impart it to his citizens.

236 Hom. *Il*. 10.43.

237 See Proclus, fr. 9, and below, 169,13–16; 217,2–3.

238 Hom. *Il*. 4.350; *Od*. 1.64.

239 Hom. *Od*. 14.466.

240 Hom. *Il*. 3.45.

241 An Athenian warship.

242 Plutarch, *Life of Alcibiades* 10.

243 cf. Demosthenes, *Against Meidias* (*Or.* 21).

244 An allusion to a perceived disintegration of the boundaries between free men and slaves under the Christian empire.

245 Proclus, fr. 8.

246 Hom. *Il.* 2.382.

247 That is, begin our practice of a new skill on a very large, ambitious project. See also Plato, *Laches* 187B, *Gorg.* 514E.

248 *Isag.* 2,4.

249 Andromeda was later placed among the stars by Athena (e.g., Hyginus, *Poet. Astr*. 2.10).

250 In Menander's *Man She Hated (Misoumenos)*, the protagonist Thrasonides grumbles that 'it seems I ought to carry a Laconic key' (*Lakônikê kleis esti, hôs eoike, moi perioistea*) (fr. 343 Kock), but Olympiodorus quotes a different line here, or adapts the text to his purpose. A 'Spartan key' would lock a door from the outside, but not from inside; see for example Plautus, *Most.* 405.

251 Xenophon (*Hellenica* 3.3.3) relates a debate over the meaning of the oracle: it said that the Lacedaemonians would run into trouble when their king was 'lame' (*khôlos*), but did this mean literally lame in one foot, or defective in lineage (as Lysander argued)?

252 Agis II publicly recognised Leotychidas as his son, but suspicions that Leotychidas was the product of a secret liaison between Alcibiades and Agis' wife Timaea haunted his succession, and Agesilaus was made king instead. See Xen. *Hellenica* 3.3.3, Plut. *Life of Lysander* 22 and *Life of Agesilaus* 3.

253 cf. Plutarch, *Alcib.* 1.

254 The four cardinal excellences or virtues (*sophia, dikaiosunê, andreia,* and *sophrosunê*).

255 Xenophon, *Education of Cyrus* 1.2,2–12.

256 On the 'scale of virtues' assumed here, a tradition deriving from Plotinus and Porphyry's distinctive interpretations of Plato and Aristotle, see the Introduction. Olympiodorus envisages a ladder of 'levels' of human excellence, beginning with (1) 'natural' (*phusikos*) or innate tendencies, then advancing to (2) qualities cultivated by 'habituation' (*êthikos*) (primarily in childhood), including the 'good habits' of practical wisdom, justice, courage, and self-control, and then advancing to (3) 'social' or 'civic' (*politikos*) qualities mastered by a self-conscious and philosophically motivated reorganisation of the 'inner city' (*polis*) of the soul, manifesting as the same virtuous behaviours (practical wisdom, justice, courage, and self-control) but now grounded by reason. The higher stages, not mentioned here, include (4) purificatory, (5) contemplative, and (6) inspired or theurgic excellence.

257 Olympiodorus takes the Socratic thesis of the 'unity' or 'reciprocity' of excellence (cf. *Protagoras* 333b4) to apply at the civic and higher levels of excellence: the possessor of one civic excellence thereby possesses all of them.

258 Here, Olympiodorus argues that Cyrus' multiple tutors trained him in (2) the habituative grade of excellence, since these habits require teaching (unlike the natural grade) and the possession of one does not automatically imply the possession of the others (unlike the civic and higher grades).

259 cf. 124B.

260 For the story, see Herodotus 3.84–87: when it was decided among a group of seven nobles that the king would be that man whose horse was first to neigh at sunrise, Darius agreed a clever scheme with his groom to ensure his selection.

261 *Il.* 5.631.

262 *Il.* 5.269.

263 Proclus, fr. 10.

264 Perseus flew on winged sandals and the winged horse Pegasus: see for example Apollodorus 2.4.1–5.

265 Pisander, *Heraclea* fr. 10 Kinkel.

266 The comedy is Aristophanes, *Thesm.* 1098–1102, where Euripides, dressed as Perseus, thinks he is flying and bringing the Gorgon's head to Argos, only to pause to rescue Andromeda. Perseus famously used an adamantine sickle to behead the Gorgon Medusa, whose gaze turned men to stone.

267 cf. Olymp. *in Met.* 110,6–7.

268 'For it seems that in Sparta, there was a punishment for failing to marry, for a late marriage, and for a poor marriage; and those were especially subject to the latter penalty who sought alliances with the rich instead of with the good and with their friends' (Plutarch, *Life of Lysander* 30, tr. loosely adapted from Dryden).

269 fr. 204 Kock.

270 See Iamblichus, *Theology of Arithmetic* 55,6–7 and 62,20–63,3 de Falco (tr. Waterfield 1988) for this view of the viability of the embryo, and the number symbolism that Olympiodorus draws on here. See also Theon of Smyrna, *On the Use of Mathematics* 104,4–5 and Philo, *On the Creation of the World* 124.

271 See Iamblichus, *Theology of Arithmetic* 57,15 (tr. Waterfield 1988) for the Pythagorean custom of reverence of the heptad (which they 'imperceptibly pronounced as "septa"').

272 Drawing on the verbal similarity of the Latin word *septem* to the Greek word *sebastos* ('reverend', 'august') and related roots: see Philo, *On the creation of the world* 127.

273 With Westerink 1982: IX, Olympiodorus may take 'septem' to be the Roman word for number; the quotation from Homer will be meant as an example of synecdoche, and the point will be that the Romans call *all* numbers after the name of the number seven, because of the special value of that number. The Neoplatonic numerological tradition also regarded seven as 'the head' and 'the whole', and Olympiodorus' point here may be that the Romans use words for augustness (comparing *septa* and *sebastos*) for seven because it is the valuable head and whole of number: cf. Proclus *in Tim.* 1.358,3: 'the whole is also called the "head"'. Seven is also called 'head' with reference to Athena, who leapt full-grown from the head of Zeus and neither produces (is a virgin) nor is produced (has no mother); see for example Iamblichus, *Theology of Arithmetic* 71,3–13; Philo *On the creation of the world* 124.

274 See Introduction on the scale of *aretai*.

275 See *Republic* 4: wisdom is the excellence of reason (*logos*), while justice is the excellence of each 'part' of the soul (including reason, spirited-emotion, and appetite) doing its own work.

276 Referring to theurgical practice: see Introduction.

277 Above, 157,17.

278 *Crat.* 397D.

279 Demosthenes portrays his contemporary and rival Aeschines as assisting his mother with Phrygian mystery rites (*On the Crown* 18.259–60; see also 18.130, 276).

280 Presumably reflecting Olympiodorus' dim appraisal of the standard of *paideia* and children's tutors in sixth-century Alexandria. For a rich overview of late antique education, see Watts 2008.

281 That is, if the human being (*anthrôpos*) is identical with the soul (*psukhê*), factors like wealth are extraneous to human excellence.

282 See also above, 107,4–6. This may be a reference to a book like Aristippus' *On the Luxury of the Ancients*, which apparently described Alcibiades' expensive luxuries in some detail (DL 2.23).

283 Sybaris (located in Southern Italy, sometimes associated with Sicily) was legendary for its luxurious cuisine, giving rise to the proverbial 'Sybaritic table'.

284 Olympiodorus has in mind a division of (1) possessions such as slaves and horses, who enrich their possessors by their own independent actions (*autokinêtos*); (2) possessions such as gold and silver, which enrich their possessors only when others move them (*heterokinêtos*); and (3) possessions such as fertile land, which enriches its possessor without moving at all (*akinêtos*).

285 The region of Messene was conquered by the Spartans in the early seventh century BC. The Spartans later kept its citizens as slaves ('helots'). After a series of unsuccessful revolts, Messenia was finally liberated by Thebes in 370/69 BC.

286 Fr. 4,3 Diehl.

287 *Iliad* 3.75.

288 See Homer, *Iliad* 7.180, 11.46; *Od.* 3.304.

289 Aesop, *Fab.* 246 Halm.

290 For the decline of constitutions, see *Republic* 8–9.

291 After his ostracism from Athens in 471 or 472, and a Spartan effort to discredit him, the Athenian statesman Themistocles (*c.* 524–459 BC) escaped Greece and eventually reached Persia, where Artaxerxes I (ruled 465–424) appointed him governor of Magnesia.

292 See Thuc. 1.138.5.

293 That is, valuing wealth.

294 This is a characteristic example of misogynistic and racist assumptions in the literary tradition of classical antiquity. For a general overview of racist assumptions in the ancient world, see for example Isaac 2004; for the experience and portrayal of women in late antique Egypt, when Olympiodorus lived and worked, see Moss 2012. Elsewhere, however, Olympiodorus follows Plato in *Republic* 5 in insisting that men and women share equally by nature in areas of excellence (e.g., 188,13).

295 Aristotle, fr. 544 Rose (1886). The saying is in Doric dialect.

296 Plutarch, *Lyc.* 9 reports that Lycurgus required the use of *iron* money, but Olympiodorus also describes the new money as bronze at *in Gorg.* 44.2. (Thus Westerink deletes *sidêra* from the MS reading here: *ho Lukourgos epetrepe ta nomismata. . . [sidêra] khalka einai*).

297 For this episode, in which Heracles appeared to Pherecydes in a dream, see DL 1.117. See also Pherecydes A2 DK.

298 As Olympiodorus explains below, the use of the plural rhetorically builds up the wealth of the Persians.

299 cf. Menander fr. 343 Kock; see above, 152,12–14, with note.

300 Aristophanes fr. 902 Kock.

301 Lais was a legendary Corinthian courtesan, while Helen's removal to Troy prompted the Trojan War.

302 Namely appetite (*epithumia*), which is 'furthest' from reason in Plato's model of the tripartite soul.

303 *Philonikia* could also be spelled *philoneikia* and sound identical, due to the ioticism of late antique pronounciation; Olympiodorus here has in mind alternative possible etymologies, (1) from *philia* and *nikê* ('love of victory') or (2) from *philia* and *neikos* ('love of strife'), and he defends the first. (It is also possible that he was aware of a variant reading *philoneikia* at *Alc.* 122C7).

304 For the possible underlying comparison between appetite and bestial nature, see *Republic* 9, 588B–589B.

305 *Anabasis* 1.4.9.

306 Artaxerxes II of Persia.

307 The later Roman emperors wore togas dyed in purple.

308 See Isaac 2004 for a general overview of racist assumptions in classical antiquity, and Moss 2012 for a specific treatment of the lived experience of women in late antique Egypt.

309 See *Alc.* 121E–122A.

310 See above, 154,9–155,4: the 'excellences' trained by the Persian teachers are actually habituative (*êthikos*) excellences, not civic (*politikos*) excellences, which are the first of the 'true', philosophical excellences.

311 That is, Socrates contrasts the relatively 'ordinary' parentage of Alcibiades to the lofty parentage of the Persian king, just described.

312 Added by Westerink, following the Platonic text.

313 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 293, 295.

314 The 'second section' has been concerned with exhortation of Alcibiades (cf. Olymp. *in Alc.* 11,7–8), according to the division made standard by Iamblichus (cf. Proclus, *in Alc.* 13,16–14,23).

315 The 'third part' is concerned with 'midwifery', elicitation of Alcibiades' ideas (see previous note).

316 I am not confident in this translation, but I hope that it may capture the sense of *koinon katagôgion hupêrkhen* (literally, 'initiated a common descent' or 'common return'): as I interpret this, in both of the first two sections, Socrates executed a single project of reaching 'down' to Alcibiades and bringing him back 'up' by proving his ignorance of himself in soul, body, and possessions.

317 In *Philebus* 48C–49A, Socrates enumerates three distinct, and increasingly 'ridiculous' (*geloion,* cf. *Phaedrus* 229E), grades of self-ignorance: (1) lack of knowledge of one's possessions ('If someone thinks he is richer than he is. . .'); (2) lack of knowledge of one's physical attributes ('if people think they are taller and handsomer than they are'); and finally—by far the most common, ridiculous, and dangerous—(3) lack of knowledge of one's soul's excellence (to suppose that one possesses wisdom when one does not).

318 An adaptation from Euripides, *Orestes* 258–59: there, Electra asks Orestes to stay put on his bed (*en demniois*) when he thinks he sees the Furies hounding him. But here the 'poor wretch' is 'among his bandages' (*en splêniois*), and Olympiodorus attributes the text to 'Alexander', addressing a novice doctor who thinks he's a philosopher: this may be an excerpt from a letter of Alexander of Aphrodisias, or the prominent sixth-century medical writer Alexander of Tralles, but I have not been able to find the quotation in either source.

319 Thersites was a member of the Greek host at Troy whose physical ugliness was notorious (*Il.* 2.211–77).

320 Referencing the Aristotelian hierarchy of functions of the soul, substantially adopted by the Neoplatonist commentators: growth and nutrition belonging to plants (here, the 'vegetative soul'); locomotion and perception belonging to animals; and reason belonging to human beings in particular (*DA* 413a23; see Sorabji 2004, vol. 2: 1(d)).

321 See for example *Philebus* 48C–49A.

322 As reason (*logos*), spirited emotion (*thumos*), and appetite (*epithumia*).

323 For the ladder of excellences or virtues, see the Introduction.

324 Compare perhaps *Odyssey* 10.307–372?

325 *Odyssey* 18.130.

326 See Plutarch, *Pericles* 31–32.

327 See scholia to Aristophanes, *Clouds* 859.

328 An allusion to the view that Pericles kindled the war to avoid giving an account of his use of public funds (e.g., Plutarch, *Life of Pericles* 32).

329 That is, Socrates' desire for knowledge and wisdom was sufficiently powerful that even after attaining a high degree of philosophical excellence, he continued to seek to improve.

330 *Phaedrus* is likely a slip of Olympiodorus' tongue, or his redactor's pen, for *Phaedo*.

331 Aristotle, fr. 544 Rose.

332 A contrast that Olympiodorus has made often: see, for example, 6,6–7.

333 For the Oracle's importance, see for example *Republic* 4, 427C. The story of the crucial oracle that saved the Athenians is narrated by Herodotus (7.141).

334 See also 192,8 below, where Olympiodorus adopts this explanation for Socrates' 'improving' alongside Alcibiades.

335 Note that on Olympiodorus' view, to have a god as a guardian daimon means to live authentically according to one's true nature (20,4–10).

336 cf. *Protagoras* 336B–C.

337 *Epiphaneia* can mean 'manifestation' in general, or the 'epiphany' of a god.

338 Adding *philotimos* at 175,24 with Creuzer and Westerink.

339 Homer, *Iliad* 1.599–600. As Proclus explains (*in Tim*. 2,98,9–13), Hephaestus represents the demiurge of the bodily (*sômatikos*) world, and as such is symbolically described as 'lame' and amusing to the gods. See also Proclus, *in Remp.* 1,126,5–128,23 and Hermias *in Phaedr.* 260,22–26.

340 cf. *Iliad* 16.98–99.

341 This is an extremely periodic sentence, which I have attempted to roughly preserve in English despite its complexity; *epeidê* will not be picked up until 178,1 below.

342 cf. Lecture 1, 3,3–9,20.

343 That is, in the hierarchy of levels of the soul corresponding to the levels of excellence, this inquiry concerns the 'civic' person – who is 'above' non-rationality, but 'below' the purificatory and contemplative experience of separation of the rational soul. (See Introduction).

344 *On the Soul* 1.5, 411b18–19.

345 In the Iamblichean curriculum, the *Alcibiades* is followed by the *Gorgias*, interpreted as concerned with civic excellence, and then the *Phaedo*, interpreted as concerned with purificatory excellence. (See Introduction).

346 In general, I take Olympiodorus to refer by 'statesman' or 'civic person' (*politikos*) to 'the person possessed of civic excellence' (*politikê aretê*); by 'purificatory person' (*kathartikos*) to 'the person possessed of purificatory excellence' (*kathartikê aretê*); and so on.

347 The Aristotelian scheme of 'four causes' is usually accepted by Olympiodorus and his fellow commentators, but more strictly, he endorses a scheme of six causes: material, formal, efficient, final, paradigmatic, and instrumental (cf. *in Gorg.* Proem 5,1–6,1) that had become standard in later Neoplatonism (cf. Proclus, *in Tim.* 1,3,14–19).

348 The creator of the cosmos who looks to Form as a model to bring organisation to the raw potential of the receptacle, as depicted in Plato's *Timaeus* (e.g. 29A).

349 See Homer, *Iliad* 1.62–67.

350 A quotation from *Critias* 109C.

351 Inserting *storgê* with Westerink, comparing 186,19.

352 But see 188,13 below, where Olympiodorus (following Plato in *Republic* 5) maintains that by nature men and women share equally in different areas of excellence.

353 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 25.

354 A saying quoted in Plato, *Phaedrus* 240C.

355 See 107B: It's no good frequenting someone with wealth, or another extraneous resource, to understand a subject; we must find the person with real knowledge of it.

356 On the development of the later Neoplatonic theory of universals, see Sorabji 2004, vol. 3: 5(a)–(i).

357 Where wisdom (*sophia*) involves contemplation of non-contingent truths, and practical wisdom (*phronêsis*) involves deliberation about contingent ethical choices (cf. *Nic. Eth.* 6.3).

358 cf. *Republic* 2, 368D.

359 Homer, *Iliad* 9.63–64.

360 I take the point here to be that it is for the gods to cure *true* blindness, so why does the text here suggest that medicine can cure blindness? Olympiodorus suggests that some kinds of blindness (caused by cataracts) can be resolved by human ingenuity.

361 Reading <*ou*> with Creuzer.

362 *Iliad* 8.57.

363 'When the same thing belongs to all of one term and to none of the other, or to all of each or none of each, I call such a figure the second' (Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* 1.5, 26b34, tr. Smith).

364 *Iliad* 8.366, etc.

365 A reference to the category of quantity (Aristotle, *Cat.* 6, 4b20–6a36); cf. Olymp. *in Cat.* 82,39–40.

366 Homer, *Iliad* 6.506, 511.

367 That is, Plato can imitate his subject in his subject's language without being ungrammatical or introducing solecisms.

367a See Aristotle, *Topics* 8.2, 158a25–8; Fink 2012: 42.

368 From the city-soul analogy of *Republic* 2, 368D.

369 *Odyssey* 1.170.

370 Part of the Platonic background here is the 'city-soul analogy' of *Republic* 2, 368D–369A.

371 Deleting the first *de* at 188,10, as suggested by Westerink in his apparatus.

372 Euripides, *Medea* 245: Medea suggests that men unhappy at home can leave the house for company, an option not available to women.

373 cf. *Republic* 5, 454D–457C.

374 As Socrates explains at *Republic* 5, 456C, according to the natural law of a just constitution men and women should share equally in governance and education; gender inequality is an accident of the inferior constitution of Athens (and other

Greek city-states) in his day. Matters have not changed in Olympiodorus' Alexandria.

375 That is, the Amazons show that it is very possible for a woman to become an expert in warfare.

376 Reading <*phêsi*>, added by Westerink.

377 *Or.* 46.

378 Adapting a phrase used of Hermes at *Iliad* 24.344, *Od.* 5.48 and 24.4; Olympiodorus reads *hous* for *hôn* at the beginning of the line.

379 Plato, *Republic* 7, 536D.

380 Homer, *Iliad* 22.71.

381 *Odyssey* 11.315; the giants Otus and Ephialtes planned to invade heaven by piling Mt Pelion on Mt Ossa and Mt Ossa on Mt Olympus, but were struck down by Zeus while they were still young.

382 cf. Plutarch, *Life of Marcellus* 14; a variant of the more often quoted saying, 'give me a place to stand (*stô* for *bô*) and I will move the earth'.

383 For the 'divine' allotted daimon, see 20,5.

384 A reference to Alcibiades' natural excellence or talent (see Introduction).

385 This lecture is substantially a review of material from Lecture 21.

386 LSJ s.v. *kheir* 6(i).

387 Perhaps reading the datives *storgêi* and *homonoiâi* with *huparkhei* at 192,15, for the paradosis *storgê* and *homonoia* (cf. 193,4–5 below).

388 An example of modus ponens, phrased in Stoic terms (if p then q; but p; therefore q). Disagreement and agreement, and enmity and friendship, are understood as pairs of contraries, so that if the contrary of A is the contrary of B, then A is B.

389 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 25; see also above.

390 See above, 184,5–10.

391 That is, earlier in the survey and the preceding lecture (21).

392 See for example above, 186,20–22.

393 That is, not discussed in the passage: Olympiodorus goes on to cite the *Apology*.

394 Olympiodorus expects his students to be familiar with the rules of the 'game' of dialectical question and answer, where questions are posed one at a time, and affirmation or negation ('yes' or 'no') would be the appropriate response to each question. Olympiodorus is stressing here that the Platonic dialogue context is a different venue: the rules of 'interrogative questioning' are looser, and multiple questions can be posed, and answered, at once. He cites the *Apology* as an illustration; earlier, he cited Homer.

395 cf. Aristotle, *Politics* 1.1, 1252a7–21; *Economics* 1.1, 1343a1–16.

396 That is, he 'descended' from the definable form of affection to particular examples comprised of matter and form, like the mutual intimacy of a family.

397 From the city-soul analogy of *Republic* 2, 368D.

398 *Republic 5,* 455D–E.

399 See above, 188,13–15, and *Republic* 5, 454D–457C. As Socrates explains at 456C, according to the natural law of a just constitution men and women should share equally in governance and education; gender inequality is an accident of the constitution of Athens (and other Greek city-states) in his day. Matters have not changed in Olympiodorus' Alexandria.

400 Olympiodorus' reference is to Menelaus' yoking of Agamemnon's mare Aithê together with his own horse Podargus; 'Agamemnon' is here a slip of Olympiodorus' tongue or his recorder's pen for Menelaus. (Agamemnon is mentioned in the next line).

401 *Iliad* 23.295. See also the scholiast's comments on Proclus, *in Remp.* 2,374,1–7.

402 'When the same thing belongs to all of one term and to none of the other, or to all of each or none of each, I call such a figure the second' (Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* 1.5, 26b34, tr. Smith).

403 cf. 184,11–20.

404 For the later ancient distinction of synthetic and analytic reasoning, and its sources, see for example Menn 2002, 193–223. Analysis is reasoning *from* first principles, or from the general to the specific; synthesis is reasoning *to* first principles. (See also Proclus, *in Alc.* 180,17–19).

405 *Soph.* 227D–228D; cf. 124,14–125,1.

406 For the principle that our 'completion' or 'fulfilment' (*teleiotês*) varies according to the level of our 'being' (*ousia*), see Proclus, *in Alc.* 1,1–5: 'It is surely necessary, in the case of each class of beings, to ascertain their being [*ousia*] before their perfection [*teleiotês*]; 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 or of those divided in association with bodies or of those in middle rank; whether it is of those that are eternal or those that subsist for all time or those that come to be in some portion of time; and whether it is of those that are simple and established prior to all composition, or of those that are composite indeed, but forever composed 'in indissoluble bonds', or of those that can be resolved again into the elements from which they were composed' (tr. O'Neill). Between the basic polarities of divisible being and indivisible being stretches the continuum of *psukhê*, which ranges from complete division (in association with bodies) to eternal unity. This doctrine of the intermediate soul, forever composed 'in indissoluble bonds', derives from *Timaeus* 35A.
For the ancient notion of 'care of the self', see also Foucault 1988.

407 cf. *Phaedo* 87C–D: the weaver weaves many cloaks; the one who wears them outlives the majority of his cloaks, but is survived by the last.

408 Hom. *Il.* 1.288.

409 This is again a reference to the scale of virtues: the civic person (*politikos*) harmonises the parts of the tripartite soul (reason, spirited-emotion, and appetite: cf. *Republic* 4, 443C–E), using the non-rational parts of the soul with moderation, while the purificatory person (*kathartikos*) works to liberate herself from non-rationality, and the contemplative person (*theôrêtikos*) is the rational soul contemplating itself independently from what is non-rational in it.

410 *Gorg*. 460B.

411 Deleting *tou* with Westerink.

412 *Phys.* 1.3, 186a31–32: as Proclus explains (*in Parm.* 714,31–33), Aristotle maintained that Parmenides had failed to distinguish between per se (*kath' hauto*) and incidental (*kata sumbebêkos*) features; Proclus rather cleverly interprets *Parm.* 128C as implying that Zeno (and by extension, Parmenides) used such a dsitinction.

413 The following table of columns (*sustoikhiai*) is adapted from the scholia to 200,5–10.

414 ap. Stobaeum 3.1, 173γ; 21,12; 13; 26. See also DL 1.40 for the attribution to Thales, with Chilon as 'appropriator' of the phrase.

415 Ion fr. 55 Nauck.

416 *Alc.* 129A.

417 cf. *Rep.* 2, 365C–D.

418 In traditional form the syllogism runs as follows: All human beings use the body as an instrument (A^1); All souls use the body as an instrument (A^2); All humans beings are souls (A^3).

419 In giving this explication of [A^1], Olympiodorus assumes the standard Platonic description of *psukhê* as that which moves (*kinei*) the body however it pleases (compare the description of *soma* as *heterokinêton* at 203,16 below).

420 I have supplied numbered lists in square brackets, and inserted headings in angle brackets.

421 Olympiodorus points out that the syllogism apparently begs the question (*petitio principii*) whether the human being is the soul. His solution relies on the hypothetical syllogism which he sets forth in the next lecture: The human being is either the body or the soul or the combination of body and soul (B^1); But it cannot be the body, because a body never rules a body (B^2); But it cannot be the combination, for the same reason (B^3); therefore, The human being is the soul (B^4).

422 A paraphrase of *Alc*. 129C7–129E9.

423 On the 'shell-like' nature of the body of the non-rational soul, cf. 5,9 and n. 60.

424 From 203,4 to 203,13 the structure of thought is rather compressed. The syllogistic argument of the first section (to 203,8) runs as follows:

a. Every whole (*holon*) wishes to preserve its parts. (For every whole possesses its existence (*hypostasis*) in its parts, wherefore the loss of a part would lead to the destruction (*pthora*) of the whole).
b. The human being, however, is prepared to sacrifice the body in certain circumstances.
c. Therefore the human being as a whole (*holon*) cannot be identified with any combination (*synamphoteron*) that counts the body among its parts. In other words, the human being is to be identified with the soul alone.

Olympiodorus then raises an objection to this conclusion. What about non-rational animals? According to the argument given (*hoson epi toutôi*, 203,8), they too will be identical with soul: for they are also unafraid of sacrificing the body in certain circumstances, namely when they face attackers (*en tôi makhesthai tois prosiousin*, 9–10). Olympiodorus' solution is characteristically Neoplatonic, adducing the Proclan principle that fulfilment (*teleiotês*) varies as a function of [level of] being (*ousia*), i.e. divided, permanently composed, or undivided: cf. 198,6–7 above with n. 406. The being of the non-rational animal stands at the level of *non-rational* soul (*alogos psukhê*, 9), whereas the human being is on par with *rational* soul (*logikê psukhê*). Thus non-rational animals, like us, are included in the argument given above, but at a different level of being. They, like us, perceive that their life is not really 'in the shell' (*en tôi ostreinôi*, 11) – that is, they recognise that their life is not limited to the 'shell-like' vehicle which temporarily conveys the non-rational soul. They are therefore prepared to sacrifice that shell, since they do not share its danger. Olympiodorus finally returns to clarify the underlying metaphysics of the argument. The body is not related to the human being as a *part* to a *whole*, but as an instrument to the one who uses it. The user does not share danger with his instrument (the whole, on the other hand, shares danger with the parts in which it has its existence, 203,5–6). Therefore the soul as user does not share in the danger that affects the body.

425 The individual (*atomos*) is what remains after every division of kinds has been completed, what cannot be divided any further; in this case it is the unique person Alcibiades, who is concerned with actions (*praxeis*) in particular cases (*kath' hekasta*).

426 In other words, the 'individual' (*atomon*) is truly the soul and (by definition) wholly unpartitioned; but his actions (*praxeis*) are concerned with particular

cases (*ta kath' hekasta*) as they necessarily 'come to be in a portion of time' (cf. Proclus *in Alc*. 4,8–9).

427 This would be backward, from the later Neoplatonic point of view: the individual (*atomos*) is the indivisible remainder that is present after all division (*diairesis*) through genera and species, so it is not comprised of an 'assemblage' at all; its nature is indivisibility. But according to Porphyry (*Isagoge* 7,22) an individual is constituted (*sunestêke*) of features whose assemblage (*athroisma*) 'will never be found the same in anything else'. Barnes 2003: 342–45 provides an invaluable analysis of this definition and its contentious history. In late antiquity Platonists (like Olympiodorus) complained that Porphyry was 'making the better from the worse' by constituting individuals of accidents; after all, indivisibility characterises the highest levels of being for the Neoplatonists. Arethas replies that 'Aristotle does not think that individuals get their being (*ousia*) from accidents – rather, they are *recognised* (*gnôrismata*) from their accidents and *characterised* (*kharaktêrizesthai*) by them' (Scholion 106,1 = *in Isag*. 64,17–19), a view which draws on Plato's use of the term 'assemblage' (*athroisma*) at *Theaetetus* 157B–C to describe the combination of qualities. Philoponus diplomatically talks of 'certain proper features and accidents from which the particulars are constituted *and* recognised' (*in An. Post*. 437,17–19).

428 That is, as the smith uses and produces an anvil, and the carpenter uses and produces a hammer, Aristotle uses and produces his logic as an instrument (*organon*) and a product of philosophy.

429 That is, the particular examples of the feet and hands are not exclusive, but naturally imply the soul's use of the whole body as its instrument: cf. 129E ('doesn't a man use his whole body, too'?)

430 cf. Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 1.22, 730b15–19.

431 At 130A11–12.

432 This syllogism assumes the structure of the Stoic 'fifth indemonstrable', an argument which, 'having an exclusive disjunction and the contradictory of one of the disjuncts as premisses, infers the other disjunct as its conclusion', Mates 1953: 73. In its simplest form it runs: either p or q; not q; therefore p. On the Stoic 'hypothetical syllogistic' in general (the term derives from Alexander of Aphrodisias' observation that Aristotle had promised an account of the syllogism from hypothesis, but no such account survived) see also Speca 2001.

433 Aristotle introduces the example of *melikraton* (a mixture of honey with milk or water) at *Metaph*. 1092a29–30 in arguing that non-arithmetic mixture (*outheni logôi*) can be qualitatively better than arithmetic measure.

434 The heavenly bodies are explicitly unmoved by all but still and circular motion, according to the plan of the Demiurge at *Tim*. 40B.

435 See Lecture 1, 3,3–9,20, and in the present lecture, 203,20–205,7.

436 This section is a summary of several points raised by the lecturer, rather than a verbal record or protocol.

437 Supplying *heuren* with Westerink.

438 See also above, 205,1, for Olympiodorus' emphasis on Proclus' attention to the text (*lexis*).

439 cf. 204,10–11.

440 The train of thought, I think, is something like this: if the Peripatetics were correct in constructing the individual out of accidents (cf. Barnes 2003: 342–45), then it would not be the case that by we could learn about the individual human being (*atomos*) by studying the form of the human being.

441 Examples of instruments used in the agent's activity, which are also products of that activity.

442 See Homer *Iliad* 18.372, 412, and 468, and Olymp. *in Gorg.* 226,13–14. Olympiodorus plays on the similarity of the words for 'bellows' (*phúsê, Il.* 18.372) and 'nature' (*phusis*).

443 For the relationship between nature and soul in the commentators, see Sorabji 2004, vol. 2: 1(d).

444 For the following discussion, see also Proclus, *in Alc.* 169,1–2: for Aristotle, on the later Neoplatonic view, the material cause is that 'out of which' (cf. *Metaph.* 1013a24–26, *Phys.* 194b23–26), but for Plato, it is that *in* which (cf. *Tim.* 49E–51B).

445 Olympiodorus' examples are cases of forms that are already *in* matter: the human being already *in* a place (and time), and the image of Achilles already presented in the medium of paint.

446 i.e., 'human being' (*anthrôpos*).

447 Which move in circular rotations.

448 We appear to be missing the target of this reference (cf. Dodds 1957: 357).

449 For instance, if a nutritive or vegetative soul animated a plant, it not only *uses* the body of the plant as an instrument for its ends, but it also *is* that body, in the sense that the plant's body is the subject for it as form.

450 Westerink suggests these words might have fallen out from 208,10, comparing 9,4–7, 171,14–16.

451 That is, Socrates constructs his proof of the major premise (that the human being uses the body as an instrument) by dividing up specific cases, such as the use of speech and the use of the body for crafts.

452 That is, simply showing that the person 'uses' the body in some sense would be inadequate to prove that the person is *not* the combination of soul and body

(since a whole might be said to 'use' its parts), without the further proof that the user differs from its instrument.

453 That is, the first part of the dialogue is refutative, while the conclusion concerns the love and reciprocal love of Socrates and Alcibiades.

454 cf. *Phaedo* 107D.

455 Hippocr. *Aphor.* 1.3, 4.458 Littré; cf. Olymp. *in Cat.* 121,20.

456 Reading *Kharmidêi* with Creuzer instead of *Parmenidêi* at 214,9: particularly given the recorder's evident haste, the latter reading is likely to be a slip of the pen.

457 The idea here, I take it, is that all gods are complete in containing something of all gods, a version of the rule that 'all things are in all things, but in a manner appropriate to each' (see for example Proclus, *in Tim.* 2,27,25–26). This kind of relationship between beings applies at the 'level' of souls (see the fourth corollary below, 215,13–21), intelligibles, and gods or henads. Plotinus, *Enn.* 5.8.4 presents a particularly striking image of this kind of existence at the intelligible level of being: 'they see themselves in other things; for all things there are transparent, and there is nothing dark or opaque; everything all things are clear to the inmost part to everything; for light is transparent to light. Each there has everything in itself and sees all things in every other, so that all are everywhere and each and every one is all and the glory is unbounded; for each of them is great, because even the small is great; the sun there is all the stars, and each star is the sun and all the others. A different kind of being stands out in each, but in each all are manifest . . .' (tr. Armstrong). But here, Olympiodorus has in mind the higher existence of gods, 'individuals' or 'henads' in the proper sense (cf. Proclus, *El. Theol.* prr. 113–65, *in Parm.* 1043–64; Siorvanes 1996: 167; Chlup 2012: 112–18).

458 See Anaxagoras B6 DK, Olymp. *in Met.* 133,28; 30.

459 I take the idea to be that reversion is *always* of the inferior to the superior: if it is of the non-rational to reason, this is obvious; if it is of reason to itself, then *insofar as it is the reverting aspect* reason is inferior to itself *as object of reversion*; and if it is of reason to what is superior to itself, this is again obvious.

460 A reference to *Odyssey* 10.275–306.

461 To this section, compare Proclus, *in Alc.* 243,13–244,11: '[T]he multitude . . . produces within us from our youth defective imaginings and various affections. We must, therefore, straighten out our reason (*epistêmonikos logos*) . . . there is in each of us 'a certain many-headed wild beast', as Socrates himself has observed [*Rep.* 9, 588C], which is analogous to the multitude; this is just like the people (*dêmos*) in a city, the various, non-rational and enmattered form of the soul, which is the most pedestrian part of us. The present argument [of

Socrates in *Alc*. 110D–E] exhorts us to withdraw from our boundless appetite (*epithumia*), to remove from our lives the multitude and the people (*dêmos*) within us as not being a trustworthy judge of the nature of things nor in short capable of any true knowledge. For nothing non-rational is by nature such as to partake of knowledge, let alone the most deficient of non-rational things, which by possessing multiplicity is at strife within itself and fights against itself . . .'

462 A quotation from *Odyssey* 19.163, echoed by Socrates at *Apology* 34D.

463 See Aelian, *Var. Hist.* 2.1.

464 Olympiodorus has in mind Odysseus' observation of Circe's isle from a high point (10.197), although Homer speaks specifically of Odysseus surveying *one thing at a time* earlier, in the Cyclops' cave at 9.218.

465 cf. 147,2–4 (Proclus fr. 9), and 169,13–16.

466 See *Symposium* 216E. Tarrant (2007) conjectures a brilliant reconstruction of the text on which Olympiodorus may comment here and at 8,2–12.

467 That is, god is in the soul in virtue of the soul's relationship to god.

468 For the descent of the 'common concepts' from Intellect and their role in Neoplatonic education, see see for example Simplicius, *in Cat*. 12,26–13,4, with Hoffmann 1987 and Griffin 2014a. For Olympiodorus' use of common concepts, see for example 18,3–4 ('we know certain things . . . even without demonstration' by means of common concepts), 40,20, and *in Gorg*. 44.7. See also Tarrant 1997, 189–91 and for the role of the common concepts in Neoplatonism more broadly, see van den Berg 2009.

469 Proclus, fr. 12. cf. Proclus, *in Remp.* 1,290,7–21; *in Parm.* 840,24–841,1.

470 cf. Aristotle, *Meteor.* 3.4, 373a35–b34; Alexander *in Meteor.* 141,3–144,9; see also Olymp. *in Meteor.* 209,15–217,19, Philop. *de An.* 330–341; see also Philoponus [Stephanus] *de An.* 605,22–31 on authorship, see Golitsis forthcoming.

471 cp. Plato, *Tim.* 45B–46C.

472 That is, the outflowing light from the eye (in the Platonic theory of vision) resembles its source (the crystalline structure of the eye), and when this outflowing light returns from the mirror to its source, 'like knows like' and the eye recognises itself.

473 Homer, *Il.* 20.392.

474 I have not been able to locate a source for this argument.

475 See Aristotle, On Dreams 2, 459b24–460a23.

476 cf. *Phaedrus* 238C.

477 Compare, e.g., *Iliad* 2.547.

478 See above, 216,18–20, with note.

479 That is, the dialogue may concern the rational soul as a moral agent (who uses the non-rational soul and body to commit particular acts or *praxeis*), and this, Olympiodorus suggests, is Proclus' interpretation or the dialogue may *also* concern the rational soul in separation from the non-rational soul and the body,

and this, Olympiodorus suggests, is Damascius' view (referring to the inclusion of 'the self itself' (*auto to auto*) here. Olympiodorus may also have in mind the idea, which he noted in his introductory lectures (2,61), that Platonic dialogues can be interpreted 'ethically', in the sense 'relating to individual character'; 'naturally', or 'theologically'.

480 Socrates acknowledges the tentativeness of his conclusions here, on Olympiodorus' view, precisely because they do not capture 'the self itself' (cf. 130D) and the rational soul itself.

481 A reference to Plato's description of the sun as facilitating sensation and existence in this world, and as analogous to the Good, which facilitates knowledge and existence in the intelligible world.

482 The Greek word *korê*, which could mean 'unmarried girl', could also mean 'pupil of the eye'.

483 Herodotus 7.141: Themistocles interpreted the Oracle's 'wooden wall' as referring to a navy of triremes, and he built the fleet that played a pivotal role in securing Athens' victory over the Persian invasion force.

484 See 131A–C, and above, 197,12–198,5 and 200,4–10.

485 Deleting *tôn* with Westerink at 225,4.

486 Here in the sense of 'nature' subordinate to soul.

487 That is, someone who knows A (e.g., hot) knows the contrary of A (e.g., cold).

488 *Odyssey* 11.315 cf. 191,13 above.

489 cf. *Rep.* 2, 368D–E.

490 cf. 134C.

491 Hippocrates, *Aphor.* 2.10, IV 472 L.; cf. Olymp. *in Cat.* 10,7–8.

492 Reading *sunnautôn* with Westerink at 226,14, for the MS reading *sun autôi*.

493 *Republic* 10, 617E.

494 So *Alc.* 135E; cf. *Phaedrus* 252B.

495 Hippocr. *Aphor.* 1.3, 4.458 Littré; cf. Olymp. *in Cat.* 121,20.

496 See 225,7–10.

497 Notionally, knowing what belongs to me and knowing what belongs to others are treated as opposites, falling under the rule that if I know one side of an opposition, I also know the other side.

498 Deleting *ho* in *ho politikos* at 228,21 with Westerink.

499 Following this discussion.

500 Inserting *ho* with Westerink at 228,26.

501 Insert *ou* with Westerink at 229,11.

502 The Platonic text from 133C8–17 is sometimes excised as interpolated by a Neoplatonist or other late antique editor, but Olympiodorus reads and discusses this section.

503 See Olympiodorus' excursus on daimons in Lecture 3 (15,5–23,17).

504 See *Nic. Eth.* 1.9, 1099a31–32; 1.11, 1101a14–16; 7.14, 1153b17–19. It was a matter of debate especially since Antiochus of Ascalon in the first century BC whether Plato, like the Stoics, maintained that virtue or excellence (*aretê*) was alone sufficient for happiness: see Sedley 2012.

505 *Odyssey* 16.294, 19.13.

506 In the Neoplatonic metaphysical conception, matter (*hulê*) is most remote from the One, after the second hypostasis of Intellect, the third of Soul, and after nature and body (for the hypostases, see Sorabji 2004 vol. 3: 14(a)-(b)); it is just the potential for *becoming* something, like the receptacle of the *Timaeus* (48E) being graspable only by a kind of 'bastard reasoning'.

507 115A–116D.

508 From Olympiodorus' point of view (and Socrates' own in *Apology*), Socrates is not 'overcome' by the people at his trial, 'for a good man cannot be harmed in life or in death' (*Ap.* 41D); rather, he is only 'overcome' by the people *insofar as* he loves Alcibiades and Alcibiades is so overcome. (However, as Olympiodorus pointed out in Lecture 3 (27,10–14), Alcibiades may still be benefited in *future* lives by Socrates' intervention: and in at least one sense, considering the vigour of the tradition of *Sôkratikoi logoi* about Alcibiades, this prediction rings true).

509 *Theos teleios* may be a reference both to the One and to Zeus as the 'complete' god and 'god of fulfilment or completion', in this sense, the completion of the series of lectures on the *Alcibiades*.

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English–Greek Glossary

abandon: *apalattein*
ability: *dunamis*
abundance: *periousia*
achieve: *prattein*
act: *praxis*
act: *prattein*, *energein*
action: *praxis*
activity: *energeia*
adolescence: *ephêbia*
advantageous: *sumpheron*
adversary: *antagonistês*
adviser: *sumboulos*
aetherial: *aithêrios*
affair: *pragma*
affection: *pathos, storgê*
airy: *aerios*
akin to: *oikeios*
ally: *sunagônistês*
amazed, be: *thaumazein*
ambivalent, be: *amphiballein*
analogous, be: *analogein*
analogy: *analogia*
angel: *angelos*
animal: *zôion*
antidote: *pharmakon alexêtêrion*
appear: *phainesthai*
appearance: *phantasia*
append: *sunaptein*
appetite: *epithumia*
appetitive desire: *epithumia*
appropriate: *oikeios*
arrangement: *skhêma*
assertion: *apophasis*
associate: *homilêtês*
athletically, performing: *gumnastikôs*
awaken: *egeirein*

bad: *kakos*
badness: *kakia*
based on current affairs: *peristatikos*
beautiful: *kalos*
beauty: *kallos*
become intellectually aware: *noein*,
becoming: *genesis*
being: *on*, *ousia, pragma*
belief: *dogma*
beloved, sweetheart: *erômenos, paidika*
beneficent: *euergetikos*
beyond the cosmos: *huperkosmios*
bind: *sundein*
blameless: *anaitios*
bloom of youth: *hêlikia*
boast: *megalaukhein, megalorrhêmonein*
body: *sôma*
bond: *sunaptein*
boundless deep: *abussos*
bubble over: *bluzein*

capacity: *hexis*
care for: *epimeleisthai*
care not for: *kataphronein*
causally: *kath' aitian*
cause: *aitios*, *aitia*
central (organ): *arkhê*
chain: *desmos* (of a chain that binds);
seira (of a chain that links)

character, taking into account: *êthikôs*
cheat: *adikein*
chorus: *khoros*
chorus-leader (philosophical): *koruphaios*
circumstantial: *peristatikos*
civic affairs: *politika*
civic life: *politika*
civic person, person of civic excellence: *politikos*
civic person, as: *politikôs*
civically: *politikôs*
class: *eidos, genos*
clothing: *skeuarion*
cognition, cognitive: *gnôsis, gnôstikos*
combative: *eristikos*
combination (of soul and body): *sunamphoteron*
commentator: *exegetes*
commentators, the view adopted by: *exêgêtikos*
common usage (esp. of Christianity): *sunêtheia*
compassion: *sumpatheia*
competent: *spoudaios*
conceit: *khaunotês*
concept: *ennoia*
concept, common: *koinê ennoia*
concerned with, be: *spoudazein*
conclusion, in: *teleutaios*
condition: *hexis*
conflict, enjoying: *philoneikos*
conscience: *suneidos*
conscientious: *sôphrôn*
consciousness: *suneidos*
constitution: *politeia*
contemplation: *theôria*
contemplative manner, in: *theôretikôs*
contemplative person, person of contemplative excellence *theôretikos*
contemplative person, as: *theôretikôs*
contentious attitude, have: *enantiousthai*
contrary: *enantion*
coordinate: *parametrein*
corrective treatment: *kolasis*
corrective treatment, give: *kolazein*
cosmos, beyond: *huperkosmios*
costume: *skeuê*
critical moment: *kairos*
crowd: *enokhlein*
crowding: *okhlêsis*
cultivate: *epimeleisthai*
current affairs, based on: *peristatikos*

daimon: *daimôn*
daimon, like: *daimoniôs*
daimonic: *daimonios*
daimonic beings: *daimonia*
dare: *tolmân*
darkening: *amaurôsis*
dear to one's own heart: *oikeios*
defectiveness: *kakia*
deficiency: *kakia*
demonstrate: *apodeiknunai, endeiknusthai*
demonstration: *apodeixis*
demonstration, without: *anapodeiktôs*
depend on: *artân*; *skhetikôs*
desire: *ephesis, epithumein*, *epithumia*
despise: *kataphronein*
difference: *diaphora*
difficult: *khalepos*
discipline: *askêsis*
discourage: *apotrepein, mê protrepein*
disease: *nosos; pathos* (in *sêlêniakos pathos* as moon-disease, epilepsy)
display: *epideiknusthai*
disposed to oratory: *rhêtorikos*
disposition: *hexis*

distinguish: *diairein*
distort: *diastrephein*
divide: *diairein*
divine: *theios*
divinely inspired: *entheos*
divinity: *theotês*
division: *diairesis*
do: *prattein*
doctor: *iatros*
doctrine: *dogma*,
double ignorance: *diplê agnoia, diplê amathia*
drive: *ephesis*
drop: *apoptosis*

eager, be: *spoudazein*
earthly: *khthonios*
effect: *aitiaton*
effeminate: *thêluprepês*
efficient cause: *poiêtikê aitia*
emanation: *ellampsis*
embracing every musical mode: *panharmonios*
enchanted: *katokhos*
encourage: *protrepein*
entity: *pragma*
ephebe, status of: *ephêbia*
epiphany: *epiphaneia*
equipment: *skeuarion*,
error: *hamartêma*, *plêmmelêma*
error, be in: *hamartanein*
escape: *apalattein*
essence: *ousia*
essence, according to: *kat' ousian*
essentially: *kat' ousian*
ethics, on the (interpretive) level of: *êthikôs*
everlasting: *aïdios*
exact: *akribês*
exactly: *akribôs*
examine: *exetazein*
example: *paradeigma*
example, for: *hoion*
excellence (of character, virtue): *aretê*
  natural excellence: *phusikê aretê*
  habituated or habituative excellence: *êthikê aretê*
  civic or constitutional excellence: *politikê aretê*
  purificatory excellence: *kathartikê aretê*
  contemplative excellence: *theôrêtikê aretê*
  paradigmatic excellence: *paradeigmatikê aretê*
  inspired or enthusiastic excellence: *enthousiatikê aretê*
exchange: *metameibô*
exercise: *gumnazein*
exhort: *protrepein*
exhortation, of: *protreptikos*
exhortative: *protreptikos*
existence: *huparxis*
existence, in: *kath' huparxin*
explanation: *logos*
extraordinary: *daimonios*
extreme: *eskhatos*
eye: *ophthalmos*

faculty: *dunamis*
falling away: *apoptôsis*,
familiar: *oikeios*
fasten: *exaptein*
faultless: *anamartêtos*
feathers, shedding: *pterorrhuein*
fiery: *purios*
fight over shadows: *skiamakhein*

figure (of speech, or of a syllogism): *skhêma*
finally: *teleutaios*
first: *prôtos*
first principle: *arkhê*
flux, in a state of: *rheustos*
focus (or class of rhetoric): *kephalaion*
form: *eidos*
form-like: *eidetikos*
formula: *logos*
fountain: *nama*
free, get: *apalattein*
fulfill: *teleioun*
fulfilled: *teleios*
fulfillment: *teleiotês*
furnish abundantly: *khorêgein*
furthest (limits): *eskhatos*

generation: *genos*
genus: *genos*
geometer: *geômetrês*
geometer of linear shapes: *grammikos*
gifted, naturally: *euphuês*
gifts, natural: *euphuïa*
give up: *aporein*
goal: *telos*
  immediate goal: *prosekhes telos*
  more final goal: *porrô telos*
god: *theos*
godlike: *theoeidôs*
good: *agathos*
good birth: *eugeneia*
good character, person of: *êthikos*
good hope: *euelpis*
good person: *spoudaios*
good timing: *eukairia*
good, similar to: *agathoeidês*
great-minded: *megalophronos*
great-mindedness: *megalosophrosunê*
grow along with: *sunauxanein*
guard: *epitropeuein*
guard: *phrourein*
guardian: *epitropos*
guesswork, limited to: *eikazein*

habituated: *êthikos*
habituative: *êthikos*
harmful: *kakos*
have in mind: *ennoein*
headstrong: *authadês*
heal: *epanorthoun*
healing: *iasis*
heavenly: *ouranios*
herd mentality: *agelaios*
hero: *hêrôs*
heroic: *hêrôikos*
high esteem, hold in: *eudokimein*
historian: *sungrapheus*
holy of holies: *aduton*
honour: *timân*
house-building: *oikodomia*
human being: *anthrôpos*
humour: *khumos*
hypotheses, not requiring: *anhupothetikos*

idea: *logos*
ignorance: *agnoia*
ignorant, be: *agnoein*
ignorant together, act: *sunagnoein*
ill-being: *kakodaimonia*
ill, do: *dustunkhanein*
image: *eidolon, indalma, phantasia, skia*
image (esp. sacred): *agalma*
imagination: *phantasia*
immortal: *athanatos*
immortality: *athanasia*

implausible: *atopos*
implement: *skeuos*
important: *spoudaios*
impression: *tupos*
individual: *henas*
indulgence: *akolasia*
injustice, do: *adikein*
inquire into: *zêtein*
inquiry: *zêtêsis*
insight, have: *noein*
inspiration: *enthousiasmos*
inspired: *enthousiastikos*
inspired manner, in: *enthousiastikôs*
instrument: *organon*
intellect: *nous*
intellective: *noêros*
intellectively: *noerôs*
intellectually aware, become: *noein*
intention: *prohairesis*
intermediary: *mesos*
interpret: *diermeneuein*
interpreter: *diermêneutikos*
introduction: *prooimion*,
investigate: *zêtein*

judgement: *krisis*
judgement, form: *krinein*
just: *dikaios*
justice: *dikaiosunê*

knick-knack: *skeuarion*,
knowledge: *episteme, gnôsis*
knowledge, having capacity for: *gnôstikos*

labyrinth: *laburinthos*
last: *teleutaios*
laughable: *geloion*
leader of the (philosophical) chorus: *koruphaios*
learn: *manthanein*
learning: *mathêsis*
lecture: *praxis*
lesson: *dogma*
life: *zôê*
life, engender: *zôopoiein*
life-engendering: *zôtikos*
lifeless: *apsukhos*
lifestyle: *diaita, diatribê*
lineage: *genos*
linear shapes, geometer of: *grammikos*
link: *sunaptein*
lively: *diegêgermenos*
living animal: *zôion*
living being: *zôion*
look down on: *huperphronein*
loosely: *pakhumerôs*
loss, be at a: *aporein*,
love: *erôs*
love: *eran, erasthai*
love, about: *erôtikos*
Love (god): *Erôs*
love in return: *anteran*
love reciprocally: *anteran*
lover: *erastês*
  divine lover: *entheos erastês*
  vulgar or crude lover: *phortikos erastês*
  having the disposition of a lover: *erôtikos*
lowest: *eskhatos*
luminous: *augoeidês*

majority, the: *hoi polloi*
manifest: *phainesthai*
manifestation: *epiphaneia*
many: *polus*
master: *tithaseuein*
material: *hulôos*

matter: *hulê*
mean: *boulesthai*
measurement, geometrical: *geômetria*
medically inclined: *iatrikos*
medicine: *pharmakon*
merely: *haplôs*
method: *methodos*
midwife: *maia, maieutês*
midwifery, of: *maieutikos*
midwifery, practise: *maieuein*
military command: *stratêgikos*, military command
mindless: *anoêtos*
mirror: *katoptron*
misrepresent: *sophizein*
mistake, make: *hamartanein*
mob: *okhlos*
moderation: *sôphrosunê*
moment, critical: *kairos*
moment, right: *kairos*
money-lover: *philokhrêmatos*
money, caring for: *philokhrêmatos*
moon: *sêlênê*
moon, of the: *sêlêniakos*
motivation: *orexis*
moved by another: *heterokinêtos; heterokinêtôs*
movement by another: *heterokinêsia*
much: *polus*
much-learning: *poluêkoia*
musical mode, embracing every: *panharmonios*
musically, performing: *mousikôs*

namely: *hoion*
natural: *phusikos*
natural philosophy, on the (interpretive) level of: *phusikos*
naturally gifted: *euphuês*
nature: *phusis*
negation: *apophasis*
noble: *kalos*, *gennaios*
non-rational: *alogos*

oath: *horkos*
oath (false): *epiorkia*
obstruct: *aporein*,
obstruction: *aporia*
obtain by lot: *lankhanein*,
one: *heis, hen*
one's own: *oikeios*
one's own, rightly: *oikeios*
one's own self: *heautos*
onerous: *khalepos*
oneself: *heautos*
only: *monos*
open-ended: *distaktikos*
opportunity: *kairos*
opposite: *enantion*
opposition: *enantiotês*
oratorical aspirations, with: *rhêtorikos*
oratory, disposed to: *rhêtorikos*
order: *taxis*
ordinary people: *hoi polloi*
organisation: *taxis*
origin: *arkhê*
out of place: *atopos*
outstanding effort, apply: *spoudazein*
outstanding person: *spoudaios*
ovoid: *ôioeides*

paradoxical: *atopos*
parentage and life: *genos*,
part: *meros*
passage: *lexis*,
passion: *pathos*
pattern: *tupos*
people: *dêmos*

perceived: *aisthêtos*
perceptible: *aisthêtos*
performing athletically: *gumnastikôs*
performing musically: *mousikôs*
person: *anthrôpos*
person of good character: *êthikos*
persona: *prosôpon*
personality: *prosôpon*
phantasm*: phantasia*
phortikos: crude
physician: *iatros*
physiognomic signs (for evaluating character): *phusiognômonikos*
picked out (as important): *exairetos*
place: *topos*
play dumb with: *sunagnoein*
pleasure, caring for: *philêdonos*
pleasure-lover: *philêdonos*
poet: *poiêtês* (usually Homer)
point: *logos*
position: *taxis*
possession: *ktêma*
power: *dunamis*
practical matter: *pragma*
practical wisdom: *phronêsis*
praise: *epainos*
precise fix, have: *akriboun*
precision, with: *akribôs*
prelude: *prooimion*
presence (physical), without: *aparousiastôs*
present with, be: *suneinai*
preside over: *ephistasthai*
pride: *huperopsia, thumos*
primarily: *proêgoumenôs*
prize: *agapan*
proem: *prooimion*
proper: *oikeios*
prophecy, of: *mantikos*
prosyllogism: *prosullogismos*
protreptic: *protreptikos*
psychic: *psukhikos*
pupil: *korê*
purificatory: *kathartikos*
purificatory person, person of purificatory excellence: *kathartikos*
purificatory person, as: *kathartikôs*
purpose: *telos*
pushy: *hubristês*
puzzle, raise: *aporein*

race: *genos*
radiance: *ellampsis*
rank: *taxis*
rash: *propetês*,
rational: *logikos*
rational principle: *logos*
reach out for: *oregesthai*
reality: *pragma*
reason: *logos*
reason, in common with: *logoeidês*
reciprocation of love: *anterôs*
recoil: *aneillein*
reconciliation, leading to: *sumbibastikôs*
recurrent nature, having: *apokatastatikos*
refutation: *elenkhos*
refutative, having to do with refutation: *elenktikos*
relation: *skhesis*
relation, by: *kata skhesin*
release: *epilusis*
relevant: *oikeios*
remedy: *iasis*
remote: *eskhatos*
representation: *agalma*
reputation: *timê*
reputation, bolster: *timân*
reputation, care for: *philotimia*

reputation, one who cares for: *philotimos*
reputation-lover: *philotimos*
responsible: *aitios*
revere: *semnunein*
revert: *epistrephein*
revert, tending to: *epistreptikos*
reverter: *epistrophos*
rhythm: *rhuthmos*
riddle: *ainigma*
ridiculous: *geloion*
right moment: *kairos*
right moment, at the: *eukairôs*
roughly: *pakhumerôs*
roundabout way: *hupostolê*
rush: *epeigein*

say something ambiguous: *epamphoterizein*
scientific (as opposed to empirical): *logikos*
scorn: *kataphronein*
season, of: *opôra*
section: *kephalaion*
self: *autos, auto*
self, each: *auto to auto hekaston*
self itself: *auto to auto*
self-control: *sôphrosunê*
self-movement: *autokinêsia*
self-moving: *autokinêtos*, *autokinêtôs*
self-originated: *autophuês*
self-sufficient: *autarkês*
selfsame: *autos*
sensation: *aisthêsis*
sensory: *aisthêtos*
sequence, in: *metabatikôs*
servant: *hupêretês*
sexual: *aphrodisios*
shadow: *skia*
shame, shameful: *aiskhos*
shape: *skhêma*
shedding our feathers: *pterorrhuein*
shell, in: *ostreïnos*
shell-like: *ostreïnos*
ship-building: *naupêgia*
shrink: *meiousthai*
sight-lover: *philotheamôn*
similar: *homoios*
simple ignorance: *haplê agnoia, haplê amathia*
simply: *haplôs*
skill: *tekhnê*
sociably, more: *politikôteros*
Socratic: *Sôkratikos*
Socratic way, in: *Sôkratikôs*
song: *ôidê*
soul: *psukhê*
speech: *logos*
spirited emotion: *thumos*
standard: *gnômôn*
starry: *astrôos*
state: *hexis*
statesman: *politikos*
statesmanly way, in: *politikôs*
statue: *agalma*
status, with: *timios*
strange: *atopos*
stream with: *pêgazein*
strength: *rhôsis*
strive: *spoudazein*
study with or under (a teacher): *phoitân*
subject: *pragma*
succeed: *eutunkhanein*
sufficient: *hikanos*
suitability: *epitêdeiotês*
suitable attitude: *epitêdeiotês*
shrink along with: *summeiousthai*
superabundance: *huperbolê*

supernatural: *daimonios*
supports: *sumphônos*
survey (general discussion): *theôria*
surveying: *geômetria*
swear falsely: *epiorkein*
sympathy: *sumpatheia*
syntax, not part of: *sumplektikos*

target (of a text): *skopos*
Tartarus, under: *hupotartarios*
taught: *didaktos*
taught by another: *heterodidaktos*
teachable: *didaktos*
teacher: *didaskalos*
text: *lexis*,
theology, on the (interpretive) level of: *theologikôs*
theory: *logos*
theory: *theorêma*
theurgic: *theourgikôs* (see also inspired)
think: *noein*
think little of: *kataphronein*
think nothing of: *kataphronein*
thought: *noêma*
timely: *eukairos*
touch: *haphê*
touch, by means of: *haptikôs*training: *askêsis*
transparent: *diaphanês*
treat: *khrân*
true: *oikeios*, *alêthês*
truly good person: *spoudaios*
turn aside: *apotrepein*

unambiguous: *haplos*,
unambiguously: *apophantikôs*
understand: *noein*
understanding: *gnôsis*
uneducated: *amathês*
unhypothetical: *anhupothetikos*
unification, process of: *henôsis*
unintelligent: *anoêtos*
union, process of: *henôsis*
unitary in form: *henoeidês*
unity: *henas, henôsis*
universal: *katholou*
unjustly, treat: *adikein*
unmanly: *anandros*
unproven: *anapodeiktôs*
unqualified: *haplos*
unqualifiedly: *haplôs*
unstable: *astathmêtos*
unsure, be: *amphiballein*
up to us: *en hêmin, eph' hêmin*
usefulness: *khrêsimon*
utensil: *skeuarion*
utterance: *phone*

vegetative: *phutikos*
vehicle: *okhêma*
victory, love of: *philonikia*
vision: *phasma*

want: *boulesthai*
watch, keep: *phrourein*
watery: *enudrios*
wax: *auxanein*
well suited: *eukairôs*
well-being: *eudaimonia*
wellborn: *eugenês*
what is wanted: *boulêtos*
whole: *holos*
wisdom: *sophia*
wisdom, practical: *phronêsis*
within the cosmos: *enkosmios*
without (physical) presence: *aparousiastôs*
witless: *anoia*

wonder: *thauma* (noun); *thaumazein* (verb)
wonder, causing: *thaumastos*
word: *lexis*, *logos*
words and ideas, of: *logikos*
worthy: *axios*
wrong, go: *hamartanein*

young man: *neos*

Greek–English Index

This index lists a selection of the more important words in the Greek text with their translation (in Griffin 2014d and the present volume). A much fuller index may be found in Westerink's word list (Westerink 1982, Index II). The translations given here may not correspond exactly to the rendering of them in a particular passage in the English text, since the demands of idiomatic translation may call for variations; but it should always be possible to work out what word is being translated. References are to the page and line numbers of the Greek text (indicated in the margins of the translation).

Index of Passages Cited

This index includes passages cited by Olympiodorus in the Greek text of this volume and volume 1 (Griffin 2014d), where these are reasonably secure. These references are indebted to Westerink (1982), Index 1, with limited expansions.

Index of Names and Places

References are to the page and line numbers of the Greek text (indicated in the margins of the translation). See also Subject Index, below.

Subject Index

References in **bold type** are to the page and line numbers of the Greek text (indicated in the margins of the translation). Other references are to page numbers in the Introduction or Notes to this volume. For individual names, see also the Index of Names and Places.