

self-formation in plato

william h.f. altman

Edward Jeremiah's *The Emergence of Reflexivity in Greek Language and Thought: From Homer to Plato and Beyond* (2012)¹ is an illuminating study that pursues philosophy and philology to the elusive vanishing point of their intersection. It culminates with a dialectical analysis of "the self itself"² which justifies the approach that has been guiding him from the start.³ His observations about the god-like pretensions of the subjectivist antithesis to "Platonic absolutism" are worth noting,⁴ but his luminous analysis of the conundrum that blocks German Idealism's "founding act of self-reflection" is even more significant:

The question of self-knowledge becomes especially critical to the German idealists. Since the self is understood, after the manner of Plotinus' $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, as inherently reflexive, a detailed account must be given of its founding act of self-reflection. But here they ran aground on a permutation of the very problem we have been discussing.⁵ If the self is constituted by the act of self-reflection, and this act transpires discursively as a relation between a subject and an object, observer and observed, then some distance and difference between these two will always obstruct their complete equation, compromising the act's unity and coherence.⁶

Building on these illuminating reflections on the problem of reflexivity in German Idealism, I will argue that Jeremiah gets the order wrong when it comes to Plato,

and will therefore single out the following passage for criticism:

There is an intriguing structural correlation here between the thinking soul as that which should relate only with itself and shun any association with the body and the senses, and the objects of its thought as things which similarly relate only to themselves as things-in-themselves. A self-relating subject thinks self-relating entities.⁷

My purpose is to illuminate a Platonic solution to the problem Jeremiah describes, and I will show that it was rather on the basis of the Idea as thing-in-itself that Plato was able to discover and illuminate a new kind of self-formation, not the other way around. To validate this reversal, I will begin with Plato's *Alcibiades Major*, a dialogue that refers to "the self itself [αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό],"⁸ and has arguably suffered more than any other as a result of nineteenth-century German philosophy, thanks to F. D. E. Schleiermacher (1868-1834) who first banished it from the canon.

The twenty-first century Anglophone reception of Plato has gotten off to a promising start with Nicholas Denyer's 2001 commentary on *Alcibiades Major*,⁹ the real purpose of which is undo the damage done by Schleiermacher by reopening the case for its authenticity.¹⁰ To begin with, this obviously introductory¹¹ dialogue works in tandem with the far more complex *Symposium*,¹² not only thanks to the presence of Alcibiades himself in both, but because of the argument Socrates uses to show Alcibiades why incurring wounds and death¹³ in order to come to the aid of your friends is productive of happiness.¹⁴ This argument turns on an often misleading substitution and an easily recognizable fallacy: since those who die for the sake of their friends in battle "do nobly [καλῶς πράττειν],"¹⁵ they therefore—by substituting "good" or "well" for "beautiful"¹⁶ and "beautifully" (also "nobly," "honorably")—"do well," and in an equivocation exploited frequently in the dialogues, this means they "fare well [εὖ πράττειν],"¹⁷ i.e., are happy.¹⁸ Yet the one who dies nobly in battle does not "fare well" in any sense that we would usually associate with "happiness," "faring well," or even "the care of the self." The definition of courage given at the *Alcibiades Major* 115b5-7 in fact makes this clear—ἀνδρεία is beautiful but not advantageous—as does the fact that Alcibiades regards injustice as advantageous but never beautiful (115a1-9), an insight he notably shares with the Polus of the *Gorgias* (474c4-d2).

But the most arresting passage in *Alcibiades Major* is the famous simile of the mirror,¹⁹ where Socrates analogizes the Delphic injunction by imagining that it

commanded the eye to see itself.²⁰ What makes this passage even more striking is that our manuscripts lack some lines preserved by Eusebius and Stobaeus to the effect that it is definitely not enough to discover the self even in the most divine part of the self but rather only as reflected by God.²¹ The problem of “the [Eusebian] Addition” (*Alc.* 133c8-17) has generated a great deal of scholarship.²² But one basic point has received insufficient attention: it was scarcely in the interests of the Neoplatonists,²³ whose commentaries on *Alcibiades Major* survive,²⁴ to emphasize as fully Platonic a separation of the most divine part of the self from God, and thus to imagine a transcendent God as “the self itself,”²⁵ imaged here as a far purer and brighter mirror wherein and whereby alone we would be able to see ourselves. Consider the analysis of Harold Tarrant:

It is clear then that Olympiodorus would reject any reading at 133c that would have Alcibiades gaze into any god outside the human soul. This would of course include 133c10-11 from the disputed lines: ‘so the god too happens to be purer and brighter than what is best within our soul.’ The passage alerts us to the key point in the ancient struggle over the meaning of the dialogue’s climax: the tradition of which Olympiodorus is part has Alcibiades directed towards a god within the human soul or ‘self,’ while the tradition to which Eusebius subscribes has him directed towards a single external god that is apparently the brightest mirror in which a human might see his inner self.²⁶

As Tarrant suggests, this is not, from a Neoplatonist’s point of view, merely what Christopher Moore calls “one odd piece of information” in the following passage (emphases mine):

These lines answer no questions about the means by which one knows the god, nor advance more than a merely metaphorical explanation for the improvement in self-knowledge these better reflective surfaces provide. Indeed they *mostly* restate the implications of the preceding analogy. They do, however, answer one question, and add *one odd piece of information*. God is purer and brighter than the best in the soul; this suggests that *god is separate from the soul*.²⁷

This separation constitutes this paper’s center, marking as it does the boundary between Plato and both his Neo- and post-Platonic receptions.

In order to get a clearer sense of this boundary, it is useful to see how it gets blurred in Christopher Gill's work on "selfhood."²⁸ In "Self-Knowledge in Plato's *Alcibiades*,"²⁹ Gill enlists the aid of Jacques Brunschwig,³⁰ who provides "the most acute and suggestive modern reading of this part of the dialogue,"³¹ to undermine an ultra-subjectivist interpretation of "the Self Itself" championed by Michel Foucault.³² Although Gill's 2007 paper illustrates the growing importance of Plato's *Alcibiades* in the wake of Denyer,³³ what makes it more important is that he follows Brunschwig in distinguishing a theocentric reading of the dialogue—explicitly tied to "the Eusebian Addition,"³⁴ and erroneously identified by both as "pre-Neoplatonic"³⁵—from a horizontal and humanist alternative,³⁶ a nuanced version of which he will deploy against Foucault.³⁷ In the process, Gill confirms Brunschwig's most provocative insight:³⁸ those who regard *Alcibiades* as genuinely Platonic tend to regard "the Eusebian Addition" as interpolated, while those who emphasize its integral connection to the rest of the dialogue reject the whole as inauthentic.³⁹ I am therefore challenging the validity of Brunschwig's revealing disjunction by connecting a genuinely and characteristically Platonic "Eusebian Addition" to an authentic *Alcibiades*, while also upholding the underlying accuracy of his ongoing claim: a humanist reading of *Alcibiades* must ultimately give way to the theocentric implications of its most arresting and important passage.⁴⁰ The boundary dividing us, then, is that Brunschwig and Gill fail to grasp that Socrates' identification of an extra-psyche God with a mirror more perfect than whatever in us is most like the divine is anything but Neoplatonic.⁴¹

As a result, another interpretation of "the Eusebian Addition" becomes possible: it is better understood as "the Neoplatonic Deletion." It was the Neoplatonists who had more to lose than the Christians had to gain,⁴² and they were clearly more comfortable with the arguably equalizing pairing of θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις ("both God and wisdom")⁴³ just before the Addition (*Alc.* 133c5) than with the separation of God from even the most divine part of the soul. By explicitly stepping outside of the circle of reflexivity, the original text of *Alcibiades Major*—i.e., including the Addition—illustrates the link between German Idealism and Neoplatonism once again by showing Plato to be opposed to both. I am suggesting, then, that long before Schleiermacher purged the entire dialogue from the canon,⁴⁴ its soul had already been purged from our manuscripts, and it should not go unmentioned that Schleiermacher's theology tended rather to a subjectivist notion of God, i.e., a god rather within than without.⁴⁵

In another place I will argue this complex case in more detail,⁴⁶ but for the present I want to build on a combination of my own previous work and the very promising start made by Denyer on the Addition.⁴⁷ Although he too regards the Addition as inauthentic, he makes two other important claims about it. The first is that the Addition merely makes explicit what was implicit in the lines that precede it:

These lines therefore give a fair exposition of what is already implicit [cf. his opening words on c8-17 (emphasis mine): ‘these lines are extent only in the indirect evidence for the text. They make *explicit* one final detail of the analogy: the comparison between mirrors (last mentioned at 133a3) and God’] in the analogy.⁴⁸

The second, is that the Addition is directly analogous to the famous Divided Line in Plato’s *Republic*:

Thus, as in the analogy of the Line (*Rep.* 509d-511e), both vision (with its contrast between reflections in pupils and clearer reflections in mirrors), and the intellect (with its contrast between human wisdom and the clearer wisdom of God), provides analogies for the way that the realm of vision as a whole is like, but inferior to, the realm of intellect.⁴⁹

God as the perfect mirror corresponds to the First (i.e., highest or νοήσις-accessed) Part of the Divided Line while the imperfect mirror of the soul corresponds to the level of διάνοια, i.e., its Second Part.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, in *Plato the Teacher: The Crisis of the Republic*,⁵¹ I have illustrated the link between the methods associated with διάνοια and the so-called “Shorter Way” that reaches its anti-climactic climax in *Republic* 4:⁵² thanks to the Image of the City and the Hypothesis that justifies the soul’s tripartition,⁵³ Socrates can show that justice is to our advantage,⁵⁴ just as he did in *Alcibiades Major* by equivocating there on εὖ πράττειν.⁵⁵ The Longer Way, by contrast, is based on the un-hypothetical Good—corresponding in *Alcibiades Major* to the perfect mirror or “the self itself”—and points to the Allegory of the Cave as the real locus of Plato’s account of justice.⁵⁶

Plato’s fullest description of a transcendent Idea is found in his immortal *Symposium*,⁵⁷ and the poetic fulsomeness of the peroration of Socrates’ speech creates a pointed contrast with his reticence in describing the Idea of the Good in *Republic*.⁵⁸ Generally analyzed in terms of the lower and higher mysteries,⁵⁹ Diotima’s discourse is better understood in relation to the logically and

philosophically prior distinction between good things and beautiful ones at 204d4-e7.⁶⁰ When asked by Diotima, Socrates cannot say what there will be for the one for whom beautiful things come into being (γενέσθαι)—and that makes two ethical datives in a single eight-word question.⁶¹ But he *can* answer, and easily, in the case of good things: the answer is that he will be happy.⁶² This substitution, I contend, is not based on the identity of the good and the beautiful. Nichols states it bluntly: “The beautiful cannot be reduced to the good.”⁶³ The clearest sign of this non-identity are cases of noble self-sacrifice, as we suggested above, and as Gabriel Richardson Lear has also observed:

The benefit of beauty per se is not immediately clear. The problem becomes all the more acute when we realize that among the most admired of beautiful things are self-sacrificing acts of virtue. The virtuous life is beautiful, but is it, after all, happy?⁶⁴

It is rather best understood as a shortcut that anticipates the eudaemonist Shorter Way in *Republic*,⁶⁵ and for which the fallacious argument based on εὖ πράττειν in *Alcibiades Major* has prepared us.⁶⁶ It is only because the Idea of the Good is a post-eudaemonist good, like Beauty in Diotima’s discourse, that it can inspire “giving birth in the beautiful,”⁶⁷ a process that culminates in Socrates’ reply to Glaucon in *Republic* 7:⁶⁸ it is only an other-regarding Justice that compels the philosopher to return to the Cave.

Plato dramatizes the inadequacy of this eudaemonist substitution of good things for beautiful things for us at least twice. First of all, it leads Diotima to explain as self-serving the examples of self-sacrifice that Phaedrus had used in the dialogue’s first and often overlooked speech.⁶⁹ Anyone who knows why τὸ καλόν means not only “the beautiful” but also “the ethically noble,”⁷⁰ and why it, unlike the good or the beneficial, is not generally modified by the ethical dative,⁷¹ and thus why Aristotle distinguishes it in the *Rhetoric* from the advantageous⁷²—i.e., from what is advantageous “for us”—anyone who knows or rather recollects the intrinsic basis of all such things will also know that it was not for the sake of their own fame or happiness that Alcestis and Achilles laid down their lives for their friends.⁷³ Secondly, it is thanks to the proliferation of ethical datives repeatedly coupled with γενέσθαι in Diotima’s peroration,⁷⁴ that she ultimately answers the question that Socrates cannot:⁷⁵ what comes into being for the one who climbs her ladder of the beautiful things⁷⁶ up to the highest mysteries is not happiness⁷⁷ but a vision of the Idea of Beauty, with Socrates’ own speech becoming a perfect example of

its productivity and thus of “giving birth in the Beautiful.”⁷⁸

We have often been told that since Socrates didn’t, Plato couldn’t accurately describe the Idea of the Good,⁷⁹ but this truism is importantly untrue. Even if the only thing Socrates had told us about the Good was that it is most like the Sun outside of the Cave, we could be sure that he knew it couldn’t be described in relation to this life of ours,⁸⁰ where the closest thing to the Good is the fire blazing at our backs as we sit immobilized, seeing nothing but the shadows it makes possible. And if, as we are also often told, Plato and his Socrates were really eudaemonists,⁸¹ the Good would not be outside of the Cave but within our ken if not in our immediate grasp: even if we debate how to get happiness, everyone must know what all men seek. It is amusing and revealing that all attempts to explain Socratic eudaemonism depend on Plato’s *Euthydemus*,⁸² a dialogue in which Socrates teaches a youngster how to recognize equivocation⁸³ immediately before he begins the critical speech with one, i.e., the claim that all men wish to εὖ πράττειν,⁸⁴ only later glossed by εὐδαιμονεῖν.⁸⁵

For the epigones of Aristotle, the Good will in any case lose its Platonic separation as some ethically chastened version of happiness,⁸⁶ becoming in the process something else that the Idea of the Good is not: unquestionably “good for us.” As Julia Annas observes:

The culmination of the whole journey is comprehension of the Form of the Good—and this is precisely what is not good for the seeker, or good for others, or good in relation to anything or anyone, but simply and unqualifiedly good, in a way that is completely impersonal and indifferent between individuals.⁸⁷

It’s not just that the ethical dative is never applied to the Idea: the deeper problem “for us” is that the Cave image makes equally clear—by depicting the cave-dwellers as looking forwards at the shadows on the wall, which is no mirror—that we have not seen and therefore cannot even describe *ourselves*:

Socrates: ‘A strange image you speak of,’ he said, ‘and strange prisoners.’ ‘Like to us,’ I said; ‘for, to begin with, tell me do you think that these men would have seen anything of themselves [ἐαυτῶν] or of one another except the shadows cast from the fire on the wall of the cave that fronted them?’⁸⁸

In the Cave, there is no fully formed self that any given thing could be “good for.” It is therefore significant that the justice of the vividly described tripartite self is justified on a eudaemonist basis along the Shorter Way:⁸⁹ that’s precisely why the Idea of the Good is the determinative basis of the Longer.⁹⁰ It is also the reason that Socrates’ just demand that the Guardians must return to the Cave has become the theme of endless scholarly discussion:⁹¹ it requires considerable ingenuity or rather sleight-of-hand to show that such self-sacrifice for the good of others⁹² is at one and the same time good for us.⁹³ Gail Fine has wrestled with this problem for the eudaemonist Plato:

Hence Plato’s claim that the PJ [sc. ‘psychically just,’ on the basis of the Shorter Way’s tripartite soul] person will benefit others does not violate his eudaemonism. It is sometimes claimed, however, that Plato admits at least one exception to his eudaemonism. For he says that the philosopher—and it emerges that only the philosopher, in Plato’s view, can be PJ, since only he can have the requisite knowledge [note that R. 443c9-444a9 is in book 4; the philosophers emerge in book 5]—must go back to the cave in order to take his turn at ruling. However, he views some aspects of ruling as unpleasant; and that might seem to show that he is not motivated by egoistic reasons. On one view, he returns to the cave not because it is *good for him*, but simply because it is *good*—impersonally good or good *simpliciter*.⁹⁴

Shackled inside the Cave, then, we know neither the Idea of the Good nor ourselves, and the question guiding me in this paper relates to the priorities involved in this Platonic congruence: do we come to know the Good through deeper reflection on ourselves, or can we achieve genuine self-formation only in the light of the transcendent Good? And what I’d like to suggest is that there is another and anti-Platonic congruence to be considered: a Janus-faced project to make the Good immanent. Having begun with a circle of reflexivity common to German Idealism and Neoplatonism, I have suggested that there is another path that comes at Plato from a different direction but which leads to a remarkably similar destination: starting from Aristotle’s account of Socrates,⁹⁵ and based on what Gregory Vlastos called “the Eudaemonist Axiom,”⁹⁶ there has emerged in the Anglo-American West an ongoing attempt to interpret both *Symposium*⁹⁷ and *Republic*⁹⁸ as if Plato regarded the Good as nothing more than Happiness, thereby justifying Aristotle’s own views as expressed in his famous critique of

Plato's separate Idea of the Good.⁹⁹ In comparison, the Tübingen School¹⁰⁰ —the pincer coming from the East, as it were—is philosophically more sophisticated, but it is equally dependent on Aristotle's testimony,¹⁰¹ and it too culminates in the attempt to make the Good immanent as “the One” of the Unwritten Teachings.¹⁰² Having already used Jeremiah's remarks on reflexivity to call attention to a pre-established harmony between the excision of *Alcibiades Major* and German Idealism, it will be valuable also to briefly consider Plato's most thorough account of the One and the Indefinite Dyad in his *Parmenides*.

Explicitly performed as a gymnastic exercise for the sake of the Good, the Beautiful, and the Just¹⁰³—i.e., the kind of “forms” which are immune to the Third Man¹⁰⁴—Parmenides considers what he calls “my hypothesis,”¹⁰⁵ i.e., the One, and it is necessary to ask: “Why is this a good way to prepare for what lies ahead?” Since Socrates is a youngster, the *Republic* is still very much in *his* future even if we, who are reading *Parmenides*, have that dialogue—and the Divided Line in particular—in our past.¹⁰⁶ The Neoplatonist appropriation of *Parmenides* was determined to read it as the highpoint of Plato's thought,¹⁰⁷ where the ineffable One of the First Hypothesis stood atop a pyramid, with imitations of its unity made successively immanent in the various levels below it. As Gerald Bechtle has put it:

The general importance of the *Parmenides* for the philosophical speculation of the Middle Platonists and Platonizing Neopythagoreans is such that one could, I think, claim without hesitation that it is from there that they have developed, on a theologico-metaphysical level, the second One as a whole [sc. the ‘One’ of the Second Hypothesis], the ἐν ὄν. Its level is characterized by opposites joined together, from these opposites, then, becoming can come into being.¹⁰⁸

The goodness of a thing was its unity, and the harmony of Plato and Aristotle could be defended on this basis.¹⁰⁹ But this hypothesis ignores the fact that the part-less One was made dependent on διάνοια in the Second Hypothesis,¹¹⁰ as was “indefinite plurality”¹¹¹ in the Third and Seventh.¹¹² Our ascent to the Good and the Beautiful—like activity in accordance with Justice, among the shadows of the Cave¹¹³—by contrast requires us to see why these un-hypothetical and διάνοια-independent Ideas are different in principle from not only hair and mud,¹¹⁴ man and fire,¹¹⁵ but from the One and Many as well.¹¹⁶ They are fully transcendent, and only accessible to νοήσις, like the God of the Addition to the *Alcibiades Major* with which we began.

What then happens to the self in the moment of ecstatic vision that Plato describes in Socrates' Diotima-discourse? As the example of the infinitely didactic yet equally ironic Socrates repeatedly proves, it can scarcely be said to disappear by merging into a mystical monism. Has there ever been a richer or more vividly human self than that of Socrates, the son of Phaenarete? If wonder was the origin of pre-Socratic philosophy, then Socratic philosophy seems to begin with wondering about Socrates,¹¹⁷ he who—in Cicero's memorable phrase—brought philosophy down from the heavens and into the cities and the lives of men.¹¹⁸ A true son of Athens, Socrates will justify the dedication of his native city to the Goddess of Wisdom by dying nobly for philosophy, the love of wisdom.¹¹⁹ The reason that Socrates invokes the example of Achilles in *Apology*¹²⁰ is because he too will lay down his life for his friends, and it would demonstrate a moral blindness to the kind of admiration Plato has been generating for his hero from the start, as well as literary blindness to the role Plato has carved out for himself by writing as he does, to imagine that Socrates sacrifices himself for the sake of his own immortal fame. But what really motivated the midwife's son?

We seem to have forgotten, and it requires a sympathetic Platonist like Plutarch to reveal to the rest of us the inner consistency between the humility of Socratic ignorance and the certainty imposed by the divine mission that leads to his trial and death.¹²¹ In order to explain the seemingly antithetical relationship between Socrates' certainty about his divine mission and his intellectual barrenness, Plutarch offers the following analogy based on hearing: just as we cannot hear sounds clearly if there is an internal buzzing in our ears, so too we cannot accurately "hear" the arguments of others if our mind is teeming with its own pre-established conceits and conceptions.¹²² According to Plutarch, Socrates' intellectual barrenness opens him to divine wisdom:

If nothing is apprehensible and knowable to man, it was reasonable for god to have prevented Socrates from begetting inane and false and baseless notions and compel him to refute the others who were forming such opinions.¹²³

Once the divine becomes responsible for "Socratic ignorance," it is easy to see that Plutarch's (pre-Christian) analogy corresponds to the one based on vision in *Alcibiades Major*: the imperfect mirror of our soul is still buzzing with error and conceit; God, as perfect mirror without, enjoins silence within. In this light, even

a critic of the Addition like Annas offers evidence for its Platonic provenance.

Further, the suspected passage spoils the metaphor. We were told that to see itself an eye should look at another eye (as seems reasonable in a culture with metal mirrors which would not give as clear a reflection of the eye as another eye would). Analogously, a soul should look at another soul, and there see God. But now we are abruptly told that God is a better and clearer mirror, just as there are better mirrors than the eye for an eye. So looking at God is now different from looking at the mirror in another soul. God thus seems to be both outside and inside the soul. It is tempting to see the passage as the work of a late pagan, or Christian writer, concerned to save Plato from the view that God is in our own souls, and hurriedly bringing God in as something external to us.¹²⁴

Against this revealing albeit negative verdict, consider Denyer's succinct comment on the Mirror Passage as a whole: "God will provide a human soul with better understanding of itself than it could ever get from another human intellect."¹²⁵ Although we cannot doubt that Socrates seeks self-knowledge and famously wonders about his true self,¹²⁶ can we find any other evidence that he sought "better understanding" from this unfashionable source? Aside from *Alcibiades Major* and the divine origin of the Delphic exhortation to "Know Thyself,"¹²⁷ Socrates has long since answered that question: his Divine Sign prevented him from doing what he was about to do.¹²⁸ Unless we are prepared to believe that Socrates routinely acted unreflectively,¹²⁹ we cannot doubt that the Sign, which he always obeyed, was thereby "trumping" his reasoning,¹³⁰ a particularly important finding if "Socrates' moral psychology" requires every agent, Socrates included, to pursue nothing but his or her own good.¹³¹

In *Alcibiades Minor*, Socrates illustrates the effect of the Sign by himself arresting the intended action of Alcibiades. The ambitious youngster is on his way to prayer; he intends to ask the gods to give him tyrannical power. Socrates' questions obstruct his path: intent on prayer at the start, Alcibiades gives up his plan at the end. The philosophical implications of this development center on the two times Alcibiades uses the word ἐγώ:¹³² he definitely changes his mind about himself between them, and is brought to see himself better—especially the extent of his own ignorance—as a result of Socrates' intervention. Appearing first in Socrates' opening question,¹³³ ὁ θεός creates the close textual connection with *Alcibiades Major* and the Sign.¹³⁴ In addition to the first three mentions of God,¹³⁵ the three

uses in the long speech between *Alc2.* 148b9 and 150b4 mark it as the locus of instruction about God,¹³⁶ and thus an important cause of the shift in Alcibiades' use of ἐγώ that betokens his increased self-knowledge.

A quotation from Homer near the end of this despised dialogue strengthens the connection between it and *Alcibiades Major* in a crucial way:

Socrates: But I think, as Homer relates how Athena removed the mist from the eyes of Diomedes, 'That he might well discern both god and man,' so you too must first have the mist removed which now enwraps your soul [ψύχη], and then you will be ready to receive the means whereby you will discern both bad and noble [ἐσθλόν]. For at present I do not think you could do so.¹³⁷

The fog is first removed specifically from the eyes, but the eyes become the soul immediately after the quotation; this keeps us in the realm of the more famous dialogue's mirror image. No longer the man who was preparing to pray for tyranny,¹³⁸ Alcibiades is now the new ἐγώ who then responds:

Alcibiades: Let him remove the mist or whatever else he likes to call it: for I [ἐγώ] am prepared to obey every one of his commands, without fleeing, whoever the man may be, so long as I am to be the better for them.¹³⁹

While this response leaves open a "God in Socrates" reading of *Alcibiades Major*¹⁴⁰—a reading that likewise requires deleting the Addition¹⁴¹—Plato forecloses that possibility at the end of both dialogues.¹⁴² The God, through *but not within* Socrates, has prevented Alcibiades' prayer, and from being the "I" who was prepared to pray it, he has for the moment become the new "I" who seems to have the fog (or whatever else it might be at 150e5) removed from his soul. But despite his promise not to flee (150e6), we know that he eventually will (*Smp.* 216b5-6).¹⁴³

As for Socrates, it's easy to see that he came to know himself—in accordance with Delphic wisdom—as the Socrates who obeys the Sign, not as the one who had his own good reasons for doing what the intercession of the Sign prevented him from doing. Securing his own happiness is not Socrates' guiding principle, nor does Plato expect it to be ours. But even though the Anglo-American reduction of the Good to Happiness (as "the good for us") distorts the core of Platonism, an even graver threat to Plato—and to the rest of us—comes from the kind of

Continental Philosophy that remains untroubled by Heidegger's shadow. To state the congruence more ominously, thanks to the dependence of Socratic self-knowledge on the self-transcending and fully separate Idea,¹⁴⁴ Plato is far closer to being a Jew than a German Idealist.

F. H. Jacobi (1743-1819), who initiated the *Pantheismusstreit* by reviving interest in Spinoza,¹⁴⁵ and who exercised a determinative influence over Schleiermacher,¹⁴⁶ expressed the dilemma well:

I repeat: God is, and is *outside* me, a *living, self subsisting being* [*Wesen*], or I am God [*Ich bin Gott*; a different *and* larger font is used here for emphasis]. There is no third.¹⁴⁷

It would be naïve to take it on faith that Jacobi chose the former,¹⁴⁸ but not that Plato did. Glimpsed in the more perfect mirror of what the three Religions of the Book would recognize as “I am what I am”¹⁴⁹—i.e., that which we are not¹⁵⁰—the self, purified of the epistemological certainties that alone could justify its eudaemonist end,¹⁵¹ let alone of its self-maddening pretensions to misconceive itself as the *Übermensch*,¹⁵² becomes free to be just as elusive, playful, and unforgettably human as the Socrates who Plato made famous, the one who describes himself being schooled by Diotima before leaving the creature comforts of Agathon's dining-room in order to school the rest of us from a jail-cell, where his true self had always known that it was already housed,¹⁵³ if only temporarily.

Florianópolis, Brasil

NOTES

A shorter version of this paper was presented as “Philosophy and Self-Formation in Plato” at the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy Conference at Deakin University, December 7, 2016.

1. Edward T. Jeremiah, *The Emergence of Reflexivity in Greek Language and Thought: From Homer to Plato and Beyond*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
2. See Jeremiah, *Emergence of Reflexivity*, 250-52.
3. Jeremiah, *Emergence of Reflexivity*, 253: “For the reasons outlined above, just as in the case of the reflexive, the emerging role of the ‘I’ in reflections upon human identity and self-consciousness begins to generate those capillaried networks of linguistic connection upon which the overt concept formations of later philosophy depend.”
4. Jeremiah, *Emergence of Reflexivity*, 202: “It is of interest how extreme statements of subjectivism often treat the subject in ways otherwise associated with a divine creator of the universe.”
5. In “The (Im)possibility of Holistic Reflexivity,” beginning on 255.
6. Jeremiah, *Emergence of Reflexivity*, 258: Cf. 259: “There is a thorny contradiction in the notion of reflecting on something that is putatively pre-reflective.”
7. Jeremiah, *Emergence of Reflexivity*, 204.
8. *Alc.* 130d4; a similar expression (αὐτὸ ταῦτό) has already appeared at 129b1. I will not enter here into the problem of how this phrase should be translated, but will recommend R. E. Allen, “Note on *Alcibiades I*, 129b1.” *American Journal of Philology*, 83, no. 2 (April 1962), 187-190 as the proper starting point for such a discussion. Abbreviations for the dialogues follow LSJ and citations to them are based on the most current OCT versions.
9. See Nicholas Denyer (ed.), *Alcibiades, Plato*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. The ground was prepared by a number of earlier studies, among which the following should be mentioned: Julia Annas, “Self-Knowledge in Early Plato” in D. J. O’Meara (ed.), *Platonic Investigations*, 111-138. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1985, Jean-François Pradeau (ed.), *Alcibiade. Platon; traduction inédite par Chantal Marbœuf et Jean-François Pradeau; Introduction, notes, bibliographie et index*. Paris: Flammarion, 1999, and Gary Allan Scott, *Plato’s Socrates as Educator*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000. For a reasonably up-to-date summary of the *status quaestionis*, see Jakub Jirsa, “Authenticity of the *Alcibiades I*: Some Reflections.” *Listy filologické/Folia philologica* 132, no. 3/4 (2009), 225-244. More recently, see Marguerite Johnson and Harold Tarrant (eds), *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012, and François Renaud and Harold Tarrant, *The Platonic Alcibiades I: The Dialogue and its Ancient Reception*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
10. As recognized in a critical vein by Mark Joyal, “Review of Nicholas Denyer (ed.), *Plato: Alcibiades*.” *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2003.01.28, who usefully points out the curious fact that Denyer fails to mention Paul Friedländer’s *Der Grosse Alcibiades: Ein Weg zu Plato*. Bonn: Friedrich Cohen, 1921, and *Der Grosse Alcibiades, zweiter Teil: Kritische Erörterung*. Bonn: Friedrich Cohen, 1923. For another post-Denyer critic of authenticity, see Nicholas D. Smith, “Did Plato Write the *Alcibiades I*?” *Apeiron* 37, no. 2 (June 2004), 93-108.
11. For the ancient commonplace that *Alcibiades Major* was the first dialogue a student should read, see Diogenes Laertius 3.62; cf. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 14: “By late antiquity this had become the

- standard view.” For more detail, see the admirable introduction to A. Ph. Segonds (ed.), *Proclus: Sur le premier Alcibiade* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1985).
12. Note the connection between *Symposium* and *Protagoras* as indicated by *Prt.* 315b9-316a5; of Agathon’s invited guests, only Aristophanes is missing.
13. See *Alc.* 115b1-4.
14. *Alc.* 116a6-b6.
15. *Alc.* 116b2.
16. See Rachel Barney, “Notes on Plato on the *Kalon* and the Good.” *Classical Philology* 105, no. 4 (October 2010), 363-377, Nicholas Riegel, “Goodness and Beauty in Plato.” *Archai* 12 (January-June 2014), 147-158.
17. *Alc.* 116b3-5. The fallacy turns on the equivocal εὖ πράττειν, best understood in the following grammatical terms: (1) active, “to do well,” (2) middle, “to do well for oneself,” i.e., “to succeed,” and (3) “to fare well.” At 116b3, εὖ πράττειν is used in sense (1), immediately thereafter, at b5, in sense (3). The classic account of this standard trick—“the convenient ambiguity” on 335—is E. R. Dodds, *Plato: Gorgias: A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959, 335-36. More recently, see Rebecca Benson Cain, *The Socratic Method: Plato’s Use of Philosophical Drama*. New York: Continuum, 2007, 17 and 120n16-17.
18. Terence Irwin, *Plato’s Ethics*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, chapter 4.
19. *Alc.* 132d1-133c17. Cf. Annas, “Self-Knowledge,” 131: “the most famous in the dialogue.” Cf. Jeremiah, *Emergence of Reflexivity*, 255-56.
20. *Alc.* 132d5-133b6; for the meaning of ὄψις in this passage, see Jacques Brunschwig, “Sur quelques emplois d’ὄψις” in *Zetesis: Album amicorum door vrienden en collega’s aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. E. de Strycker ter gelegenheid van zijn 65e verjaardag*, 24-39 (Antwerpen: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1973).
21. *Alc.* 133c10-11.
22. Most recently, see Renaud and Tarrant, *Platonic Alcibiades I*, 187-89.
23. See Burkhard Reis, “Im Spiegel der Weltseele. Platon, *Alkibiades* 133c8-17 und der Mittelplatonismus” in John J. Cleary (ed.), *Traditions of Platonism: Essays in Honour of John Dillon*. Aldershot, UK and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1999, 89-90, concluding with: “Eine neuplatonische Herkunft der Zeilen, wie sie z.B. Croiset (1953, 110n1) und Friedländer (1964, 334n13) erwogen haben, muß als unwahrscheinlich gelten.” Why? See earlier on 90: “Gott [for Porphyry] spiegelt sich also im Spiegel der Seele wider und nicht umgekehrt die Seele im Spiegel Gottes, wie es der Verfasser von *Alc. I* 133c8-17 formuliert.”
24. See Segonds, *Proclus*, introduction, and Renaud and Tarrant, *The Platonic Alcibiades*, chs. 3-4.
25. *Alc.* 129b1 and 130d4. For the possible connection between “the self itself” and God as mirror in “the addition,” see Owen Goldin, “Self, Sameness, and Soul in «Alcibiades I» and «Timaeus».” *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 40 (1993), 5-19, on 15: “an identification of the Self Itself and ὁ θεός is at least invited.”
26. Harold Tarrant, “Olympiodorus and Proclus on the Climax of the *Alcibiades*.” *International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 1 (2007), 3-29 on 12.
27. Cf. Moore, *Socrates and Self-Knowledge*, 124.
28. See Christopher Gill, *Personality in Greek Epic, Tragedy, and Philosophy: The Self in Dialogue*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, and *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, especially 344-359.
29. Christopher Gill, “Self-Knowledge in Plato’s *Alcibiades*” in Suzanne Stern-Gillet and Kevin Corrigan (eds), *Reading Ancient Texts; Volume I: Presocratics and Plato; Essays in Honour of Denis*

- O'Brien, 97-112. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007.
30. J. Brunschwig, "La déconstruction du 'connais-toi toi-même' dans l'*Alcibiade Majeur*." *Recherches sur la Philosophie et le Langage* 18 (1996), 61-84.
31. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 104.
32. See Michel Foucault, *L'herméneutique du sujet: Cours au Collège de France (1981-2)*; edited by F. Ewald, A. Fontana, and F. Gros. Paris: Gallimard, 2001, and more accessibly *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France (1981-2)*, edited by Frederic Gros, translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, especially 52-54. Cf. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 100-104 and Gill, *Structured Self*, 348-49.
33. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 101-102, especially 101n20; cf. Brad Inwood, *Reading Seneca: Stoic Philosophy at Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, 335n15; note the characteristic "ontological minimalism" (334 and 323). Note that Foucault is even farther from a non-Neoplatonic Plato than Gill; e.g., *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 53 (emphasis mine): "What is this identical element present as it were on both sides of the care: subject of the care and object of the care." It is most unfortunate that Foucault fails to mention J. G. Fichte in these lectures. Cf. Jeremiah, *Emergence of Reflexivity*, 258-59 and 250-52.
34. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 105n30 and 108; Brunschwig, "La déconstruction," 74-75n15.
35. See Brunschwig, "La déconstruction," 71; cf. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 104-105; the term was coined by Eugen Dönt, "'Vorneuplatonisches' im Großen Alkibiades." *Wiener Studien* 77 (1964), 37-51; see 39-40 on "the Eusebian Addition."
36. See Brunschwig, "La déconstruction," 72-76; cf. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 104 and 107-109.
37. See "triangular relationship" in Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 109-110.
38. Confirmed by Dönt, Paul Friedländer (see "Vorneuplatonisches," 39-40), Gill (cf. "Self-Knowledge," 97n1), and Brunschwig himself ("La déconstruction," 61); disproved by Denyer, Schleiermacher (see below), and the author.
39. Brunschwig, "La déconstruction," 71-72.
40. See Brunschwig, "La déconstruction," 71-76; cf. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 107-108.
41. Despite a plethora of valuable observations, Brunschwig can scarcely be praised for "La déconstruction," 76n16 which begins with an error in parenthesis: the Neoplatonic commentators did not read "the Eusebian Addition." Cf. Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 98-99.
42. In addition to Tarrant and Renaud, *Platonic Alcibiades I* on "the Christian Alcibiades" (187-89), see G. Favrelle (tr. and ed.), *Eusèbe de Césarée: La Préparation Évangélique, Livre XI*. Paris: Sources Chrétiennes, 1982, and Stefania Fortuna, "Per un'origine cristiana de Platone *Alcibiade* 1 133c8-17." *Koinonia* 16 (1992), 119-136.
43. Cf. Brunschwig, "La déconstruction," 76: "les deux [différent?] éléments."
44. Note that Schleiermacher suppressed the Addition (without comment) before athetizing the dialogue as a whole; see F. Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, 1.3.252 and 365.
45. See Thomas H. Curran, *Doctrine and Speculation in Schleiermacher's Glaubenslehre*. Berlin and New York: W. de Gruyter, 1994, and Jacqueline Mariña, *Transformation of the Self in the Thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, and especially Julia A. Lamm, "Schleiermacher's Post-Kantian Spinozism: The Early Essays on Spinoza, 1793-94." *Journal of Religion* 74, no. 4 (October 1994), 476-505, and *The Living God: Schleiermacher's Spinoza*. College Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996.
46. In a work in progress to be called "Ascent to the Beautiful: The Pre-Republic Dialogues from *Protagoras* to *Symposium*."
47. See Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 236.

48. Denyer, *Plato, Alcibiades*, 236. This point of view is upheld and strengthened by Brunschwig, “La déconstruction,” 74-75 and André Motte, “Pour l’authenticité du «Premier Alcibiade».” *L’Antiquité Classique* 30, no. 1 (1961), 5-32, on 27n30. See also “mostly” in Moore, *Socrates and Self-Knowledge*, 124 quoted above.
49. Denyer, *Plato, Alcibiades*, 236.
50. As per *Rep.* 511d8-e1.
51. William H. F. Altman, *Plato the Teacher: The Crisis of the Republic*. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2012.
52. Altman, *Plato the Teacher*, chapters 3 and 4.
53. Altman, *Plato the Teacher*, section §12.
54. Framed in terms of pleasure as well as tripartition in the second and third “falls” of *R.* 580d2-583b2 and 583b2-587e4. For the continuity of the Shorter Way, pursued both before and after books 6-7, see *Plato the Teacher*, 142.
55. *Alc.* 113d1-116e1.
56. See Altman, *Plato the Teacher*, chapter 4.
57. *Smp.* 210e2-211b5
58. This contrast suggests that the Glaucon of *Symposium* (named at *Smp.* 172e3) who wants to know what was said at Agathon’s is the same young man who does not get the information about the Idea of the Good that he desires in *Republic* (*R.* 506d1-2). Certainly Plato provides no conclusive evidence that they are different, but see Debra Nails, *The People of Plato: A Prosopography of Plato and Other Socratics*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2002, 154. Cf. J. B. Bury (ed.), *The Symposium of Plato*. Cambridge, UK: W. Heffer and Sons, 1909, 3: “probably not.”
59. See F. M. Cornford, “The Doctrine of Eros in Plato’s *Symposium*” in *The Unwritten Philosophy and Other Essays*, edited by W. K. C. Guthrie, 68-80. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1967, 75: “I incline to agree with those scholars who have seen in this sentence [sc. *Smp.* 209e5-210a2, translated by Cornford as: ‘Into these lesser mysteries of Eros, you, Socrates, may perhaps be initiated; but I know not whether you will be capable of the perfect revelation—the goal to which they lead.’] Plato’s intention to mark the limit reached by the philosophy of his master.”
60. In addition to Barney, “Notes” and Riegel, “Goodness and Beauty,” see Gabriel Richardson Lear, “Permanent Beauty and Becoming Happy in Plato’s *Symposium*” in J. H. Leshner, Debra Nails, and Frisbee C. C. Sheffield, eds, *Plato’s Symposium: Issues in Interpretation and Reception*, 96-123 (Washington D.C. and Cambridge, MA: Center for Hellenic Studies and Harvard University Press, 2007).
61. *Smp.* 204d8-9: τί ἔσται ἐκεῖνον, [the first, followed by my comma] ᾧ [the second, for whom what comes to be is in not in question, as it is for the first] ἄν γένηται τὰ καλά.
62. *Smp.* 204e6-7.
63. Mary P. Nichols, *Socrates on Friendship and Community: Reflections on Plato’s Symposium, Phaedrus, and Lysis* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 66.
64. Lear, “Permanent Beauty,” 105.
65. Cf. Cornford, “Doctrine of Eros,” 75-76.
66. Cf. the equation of the Beautiful and the Good at *Alc.* 116c1-2 with 115a13-15, where their opposites are cross-mixed, with “the good things” meaning: “good for me.” The most egregious abuse of such equations is in *Protagoras*, where Socrates claims that since going to war is noble, it is also good and pleasant (*Prt.* 359e3-360a3); for the distinction between the Good and the Beautiful there, see C. C. W. Taylor, *Plato, Protagoras; Translated with Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 165-66 (especially the revealing understatement “less closely tied”). For the dramatic connection between *Alcibiades Major* and *Protagoras*, cf. Robert C. Bartlett, *Sophistry and Political*

Philosophy: Protagoras' Challenge to Socrates (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 226-27n4 and Laurence Lampert, *How Philosophy Became Socratic: A Study of Plato's Protagoras, Charmides, and Republic* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 141-44. For settling this quarrel in Lampert's favor, *Alc.* 111a14 is decisive; the young man learned this ingenious argument at *Prt.* 328a1.

67. Note the connection between this famous phrase (*Smp.* 206e5 and 209a3-b4) and virtue-inspiring λόγοι at 209b5-c2 and 210a4-e1.

68. On *R.* 519e1-520e3, see *Plato the Teacher*, section §16.

69. Note especially the use of ὑπεραποθνήσκειν (“to die on behalf of”) at *Smp.* 179b4 and 180a1; it reappears at 207b4 and 207d2. On the basis of Plato's statement in *Ep.* 314c4 that his writings were those of a Socrates who had become καλός and νέος, it might be more accurate to say that Plato returned to the philosophy of a *new* Socrates, now revealed by the maxim of the *beautiful* action that had led to his trial and death.

70. Cf. Taylor, *Plato, Protagoras*, 165: “praiseworthy, honorable, noble” and Cornford, “Doctrine of Eros,” 77: “we must learn to value moral beauty in the mind above beauty of the body, and to contemplate the unity and kinship of all that is honorable and noble—a constant meaning of τὸ καλόν—in law and conduct.”

71. See Barney, “Notes,” 367.

72. See *Rhetoric* 1358b38-1359a5.

73. *Smp.* 202d2-e1; our response determines whether we are pregnant in our souls.

74. *Smp.* 211d8-e1, 212a1-2, 212a3, and 212a6; cf. 204d8-9.

75. *Smp.* 204d8-11.

76. Cf. τὸ καλόν at *Smp.* 209b3 (cf. 210d1) with τὸ καλόν at 210d4. While the earlier passage is still in the realm of the good man (209b4-c2), the rich proliferation of “beauty” in 210a4-e1 (fifteen words for it appear there) indicates the connection between the higher mysteries (210a1) and the shortcut of 204e1-7.

77. Put in its proper place at *Smp.* 202e1-5, immediately after our “pregnancy test.”

78. *Smp.* 210d4-e1. The parallel passage before “the higher mysteries”—i.e., 209b7-c2 (see previous note)—applies better to the speech of Alcibiades in praise of Socrates than to the speech of Socrates in praise of τὸ καλόν.

79. The best recent example of such frequency is Iakovos Vasiliou, *Aiming at Virtue in Plato*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 31n26, 40n46, 230, 230n35, 243, and 259. See also Gail Fine, “Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* 5-7” in Gail Fine ed., *Plato 1: Metaphysics and Epistemology*, 215-246. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 226.

80. Hence also the strangeness of the image used to describe us; see *R.* 515a4-5.

81. For a particularly important statement of this commonplace, see Gregory Vlastos, *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 203-209.

82. In addition to Terence Irwin, *Plato's Ethics*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 52-53 (a section called “The Importance of *Euthydemus*” precedes “Eudaemonism” in ch. 4), see Naomi Reshotko, “Socratic Eudaemonism” in John Bussanich and Nicholas D. Smith eds, *The Bloomsbury Companion to Socrates*, 156-184. London: Bloomsbury, 2013, especially 178-79.

83. *Euthd.* 277e-278c1.

84. *Euthd.* 278e3. On the use of fallacy in “the First Protreptic,” see (in addition to the sources listed in the next note), William H. F. Altman, *Ascent to the Good: The Reading Order of Plato's Dialogues from Symposium to Republic*. Forthcoming from Lexington Books, 2018, section §3.

85. *Euthd.* 280b6. For critical attention to the speech, see Russell E. Jones, “Wisdom and Happiness

in *Euthydemus* 278-282,” *Philosophers’ Imprint* 13, no. 14 (July 2013), 1-20, Benjamin D. Rider, “Socrates’ Philosophical Protreptic in *Euthydemus* 278c-282d,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 94 (2012), 208-228, especially 211-12, and Terence Irwin, “Socrates the Epicurean?” in H. Benson ed., *Essays on the Philosophy of Socrates*, 198-219. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, 204-205: “After finding such serious flaws in this argument in the *Euthydemus* [sc. 279c9-281e5, analyzed on 203-205] we might remind ourselves that the dialogue as a whole is concerned with eristic, and suggest that even the protreptic passages are not free of the fallacious argument that is rife in the rest of the dialogue. But if we dismiss the argument we will have dismissed our best evidence of Socrates’ defense of the sufficiency thesis.” Cf. Rider, “Socrates’ Philosophical Protreptic,” 218n23. 86. See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.6.

87. Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981, 259.

88. R. 515a4-8 (Paul Shorey translation).

89. See the proclamation at R. 580b1-c9; on the basis of the tripartite soul (580c10-d4), the life of ὁ φρόνιμος is also proclaimed to be most pleasant at 583a1-5.

90. See R. 504b1-505b4. In the context of the previous note, consider also 505b5-d4.

91. Cf. Annas, *Introduction*, 269: “The Guardians’ return to the Cave has always been recognized as a major problem in the *Republic*.” It is “a great messy hairball” in Donald Morrison, “The Utopian Character of Plato’s Ideal City” in G. R. F. Ferrari, *The Cambridge Companion to Plato’s Republic*, 232-255. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 242-43.

92. Thrasy Machus has it just about right when he uses the equivocal phrase ἀλλότριον ἀγαθόν at R. 342c3 and 367c3.

93. See Richard Kraut, “Return to the Cave: *Republic* 519-521” in Gail Fine ed., *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul*, 235-254. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

94. Gail Fine, “Introduction” to Fine ed., *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul*, 1-33. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, 21-22. Emphasis in the original.

95. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 987b1-10 and *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1145b21-27.

96. See Vlastos, *Socrates*, 203.

97. See C. J. Rowe ed., *Plato*, Symposium. Oxford: Aris and Phillips, 1998, especially 181 (on 206a1-2).

98. Cf. Terry Penner, “The Good, Advantage, Happiness, and the Form of the Good: How Continuous with Socratic Ethics is Platonic Ethics?” in Douglas Cairns and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann eds, *Pursuing the Good: Ethics and Metaphysics in Plato’s Republic*, 93-123. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007, especially 123n36.

99. In addition to Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.6 generally (especially 1095a26-28 and 1096b32-35), see 1097a34-b6 and of course 1098a16-17.

100. For the Tübingen School, see most recently Hans Joachim Krämer, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zu Platon*, edited by Dagmar Mirbach. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2014. More accessible is Dmitri Nikulin, ed., *The Other Plato: The Tübingen Interpretation of Plato’s Inner-Academic Teachings*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012.

101. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 987b20-35.

102. See especially Hans Joachim Krämer, *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles: Zum Wesen und zur Geschichte der platonischen Ontologie*. Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1959, 547-548: “The One in its nimble worldliness [*Weltzugewandtheit*] is the highest standard of existence [*Seiendheit*], value, and truth and thereby, as measure (μέτρον), is in connection to the world [*auf die Welt bezogen*]. The concept ἔν as μέτρον indicates thereby the basis of Being [*Seinsgrund*] in its relationship to the world generally and thus represents the correlation, the point of contact between the resting-in-itself [*in*

- sich ruhenden], transcendent Absolute and reality [*der Realität*].”
103. *Prm.* 135c8-d1.
104. See William H. F. Altman, *The Guardians in Action: The Post-Republic Dialogues from Timaeus to Theaetetus*. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016, 236-38 and 276-83.
105. *Prm.* 137b3. See Altman, *Guardians in Action*, 227-29 for the claim that the indivisible One is Plato’s invention, and thus *his* hypothesis.
106. As suggested by the presence of both Glaucon and Adeimantus at *Prm.* 126a2, to say nothing of the dialogue’s evident difficulty. For Catherine Zuckert’s early placement of Parmenides, see William H. F. Altman, “Review of Catherine Zuckert, *Plato’s Philosophers*.” *Polis* 27 (2010), 147-150.
107. See E. R. Dodds, “The Parmenides of Plato and the Origin of the Neoplatonic ‘One.’” *Classical Quarterly* 22, no. 3/4 (July-October 1928), 129-142.
108. Gerald Bechtle, *The Anonymous Commentary on Plato’s Parmenides*. Bern: Paul Haupt, 1999, 212. See John D. Turner and Kevin Corrigan eds., *Plato’s Parmenides and Its Heritage: History and Interpretation from the Old Academy to Later Platonism and Gnosticism*, two volumes, Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010.
109. See Lloyd Gerson, “The Harmony of Aristotle and Plato according to Neoplatonism” in Harold Tarrant and Dirk Baltzly (eds), *Reading Plato in Antiquity*, 195-22. London: Duckworth, 2006; illuminating as well is David Bradshaw, “The Concept of Divine Energies” in Constantinos Athanasopoulos and Christopher Schneider (eds), *Divine Essence and Divine Energies: Ecumenical Reflections on the Presence of God in Eastern Orthodoxy*, 27-49, Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co., 2013, on 31-33.
110. See *Prm.* 143a2-9, especially λαμβάνειν τῆ διανοίᾳ at 143a7.
111. Among those connecting ἄπειρον πλήθος to the Indefinite Dyad are Kenneth M. Sayre, *Parmenides’ Lesson, Translation and Explication of Plato’s Parmenides*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996, 287, and Mitchell Miller, “Unwritten Teachings’ in the *Parmenides*.” *Review of Metaphysics* 48, no. 3 (March 1995), 591-633 on 621.
112. See *Prm.* 158c2-7, where διάνοια is linked for the first time to ἄπειρον πλήθει (cf. *Prm.* 158c6-7 and 165c2) albeit by using τῆ διανοίᾳ ἀφελεῖν instead of λαμβάνειν τῆ διανοίᾳ, as at 165a8-c5 and 143a7. For further analysis, see Altman, *Guardians in Action*, section §12.
113. Cf. Gail Fine, “Introduction” to Fine ed., *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul*, 1-33. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, 21-22.
114. *Prm.* 130c5-d2.
115. *Prm.* 130c1-4.
116. *Prm.* 130b3-6. For the centrality of 130b7-10, see Altman, *Guardians in Action*, 276n257 and 281-82.
117. Consider the verb θαυμάζειν in both the first and last sentences of Socrates’ first speech in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc.* 103a1 and 104c4), and then confirmed in the young man’s reply (104d4). Clearly the speech’s second sentence—on the Sign, with a promise of future enlightenment about it (103a6)—is intentionally designed to provoke wonder.
118. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, 5.10 (translation mine): Socrates, however, called philosophy down from the heavens first [*primus philosophiam devocavit e caelo*], and placed it in the cities, and introduced it even into the home; he forced it inquire about life, and customs, and things both good and bad.”
119. For “dying nobly” (καλῶς θνήσκειν), cf. Simonides’ epitaph on the heroes of Plataea in *Greek Anthology* 7.253 with *Ep.* 334e1; indeed *Ep.* 334d6-335a2 further validates a post-eudaemonist reading of Plato. Moreover, what makes Alcibiades worth Socrates’ time is the fact that he would

rather die than be a coward (*Alc.* 115d5-14); this means he prefers what is καλόν to life, i.e., to what is good (115b1-c7).

120. *Ap.* 28c1-d9.

121. For Plutarch's Platonism, and in particular for a magisterial reading of the first of his "Platonic Questions," see Jan Opsomer, "Divination and Academic 'Scepticism' according to Plutarch" in Luc Van der Stockt ed., *Plutarchea Lovaniensia: A Miscellany of Essays on Plutarch*, 164-194. Lovanii, 1996 and *In Search of the Truth: Academic Tendencies in Middle Platonism*. Brussel: Palais der Academiën, 1998, 132-184.

122. See Opsomer, *In Search of Truth*, 157n141; cf. 135n23.

123. Plutarch, *Platonic Questions*, 1000b-c in Plutarch, *Moralia*, volume 13 part 1, translated by Harold Cherniss. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976, 25.

124. Cf. Annas, "Self-Knowledge," 132n51.

125. Cf. Denyer, *Plato, Alcibiades*, 236.

126. *Phdr.* 230a3-6.

127. However difficult to separate: see *Alc.* 124a7-b3, 129a2-6, 130e8-9, and 132c7-10.

128. See *Ap.* 31d2-4 and *Thg.* 128d2-5.

129. See Cf. Gregory Vlastos, "Letter to the Editor," *Times Literary Supplement* (January 19-25, 1990), 63: "the daimonion sometimes vetoes quite trivial, unreflective, actions. Thus when he [sc. Socrates] is about to stand up in the palaestra the 'voice' says 'Sit' [importantly false; it sounds—Plato never implies it speaks in words—when Socrates has decided to stand and is about to do so], and sit he does. But neither here is there any trumping of rational argument: there is no rational argument to trump."

130. See Thomas C. Brickhouse and Nicholas D. Smith, "Letter to the Editor." *Times Literary Supplement* (January 26-February 1, 1990), 80: "We find it wholly implausible that Socrates could have made such a morally significant decision [sc. to engage in politics; see *Ap.* 31d2-5] purely on impulse." For more on this, see *Ascent to the Good*, section §13.

131. Terry Penner never tires of making this claim and therefore it can be found in any of his writings.

132. *Alc2.* 148a8 and 150e6.

133. *Alc2.* 138a1.

134. For "god" and Sign in *Alcibiades Major*, see *Alc.* 105d5, 105d7, 124c8, 127e6, and 135d6

135. See (1) in the following note.

136. Plato emphasizes this shift in the usual way, i.e., with repeating word patterns: (1) cf. 141a6-7 and 148a1-2, picking up on the first line at 138a1, and (2) cf. 146c6-7 and 148a9-b4.

137. *Alc2.* 150d6-e4 (W. R. M. Lamb translation modified).

138. In *Alc.* 105d2-4, Socrates was the only one who could help him to realize his ambitions.

139. *Alc2.* 150e5-8 (Lamb modified).

140. Tarrant, "Olympiodorus and Proclus," 20-21: "Looking into Socrates' intellect is in Proclus' view the culmination of a foreshadowing of the climax of the dialogue. Surely, therefore, Proclus associated this focus upon Socrates' mind with the culmination of the climax itself."

141. Tarrant, "Olympiodorus and Proclus," 23: "This is where Olympiodorus would have him [sc. Alcibiades] being told to look into Socrates' soul (as an alternative to his own soul), while Eusebius would have him being told that he needs to look upon god." Cf. 27: "There really is no hint that Albinus has any movement towards an external god in mind as a likely outcome of reading the Alcibiades, and every reason to believe that the dialogue is already encouraging what it will encourage for the Neoplatonists—reversion to one's own inner self."

142. *Alc2.* 151a7-b3 (Lamb): “*Alcibiades*: Look now, I will crown you with this garland [it had been intended for the gods;], as I consider you have given me such good advice; and to the gods [this distinction creates the foreclosure] we shall offer both garlands and all the other customary things when I see that day has come. And come it will ere long, if they are willing.” Cf. *Alc.* 135d3-6.
143. On this important passage, see also Matthew Sharpe, “Reviewing *Megalopsychia*: Reflections on the *Alcibiades II*” in Johnson and Tarrant, *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover Educator*, 134-146. London: Bristol Classical Press, 2012, 145. This paper is dedicated to him.
144. Note that “Socrates” in this paper never refers to anyone other than “Plato’s Socrates,” and does so without introducing any Vlastos-inspired distinctions.
145. See Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987, chapter 2.
146. For Jacobi’s influence on Schleiermacher, see Mariña, *Transformation of the Self*, 46-49, and Curran, *Doctrine and Speculation*, 8: “Schleiermacher’s reverence for Jacobi is well attested.”
147. Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel Allwill*, translated and edited by George di Giovanni, Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1984, 524 (emphases in original).
148. For Jacobi’s exotericism as it bears on this sentence, see 45-51 of William H. F. Altman, *The German Stranger: Leo Strauss and National Socialism*. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2011; also relevant is 63-74 (“Self-Deification in German Philosophy”).
149. My unpublished “Towards a Theology of Self-Deception” (2006) is available upon request for those who may be interested.
150. Cf. Denyer, *Plato, Alcibiades*, 191: “The maxim [sc. ‘Know Thyself’] enjoins us to know our limits.”
151. For Plato’s awareness of the fragility of εὐδαιμονία through its dependence on events post-mortem, see *Mx.* 247a4-6.
152. For a philosophical explanation of Nietzsche’s madness, see William H. F. Altman, *Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche: The Philosopher of the Second Reich*. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2013.
153. Cf. *Grg.* 493a2-3, *Cra.* 400c1-9, and *Alc.* 128e10-130d6.