

PLATO

ALCIBIADES II

ΑΛΚΙΒΙΑΔΗΣ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΣ

The Greek text of John Burnet
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with a new English translation and notes

THE COMPLETE DIALOGUE

138a–151c

Translation by Diotimos Editions

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INTRODUCTION

THE DIALOGUE

The *Alcibiades II*, called the *Second Alcibiades* to tell it from the longer dialogue of the same name, is a conversation between Socrates and Alcibiades, son of Cleinias (141b), on the way to pray. Socrates meets the young man on his way to pray to the god (138a), with a gloomy face and his eyes on the ground, and the question of the whole conversation is the one his errand raises: what a man should pray for. No one else speaks, there is no narrator, and the setting is no more than the meeting itself. At the end Alcibiades puts off his sacrifice and puts on Socrates' head the wreath he has with him, saying that the gods shall have wreaths later (151a–b). The dialogue runs from page 138 to page 151 in the pages of Stephanus' edition, by which Plato is still cited, and fills twenty-one pages of Burnet's Oxford text.

The ancient arrangement of Plato's works by Thrasyllus, which Diogenes Laertius preserves (3.59), places it second in the fourth tetralogy, after the *Alcibiades I* and before the *Hipparchus* and the *Lovers*, and Burnet's second volume prints the four in that order. Thrasyllus gives it the subtitle "On prayer" and classes it, like the *Alcibiades I*, as "maieutic", a dialogue that brings a thought to birth. Its authorship was questioned already in antiquity: Athenaeus, writing about AD 200, reports that some said it was by Xenophon (11.506c). It is now generally held not to be Plato's, and no date for it is certain; most of those who have studied it place it after his death, in the generations of his successors (see "What is most exposed", below).

THE QUESTION AND THE ANSWERS

Socrates begins with a fact and a danger. The gods give some of the things men pray for and not others, and to some men and not to others; so great forethought is needed, "lest one should, without noticing it, pray for things that are very bad while thinking them good", and the gods should then give them (138b). His example is Oedipus, who prayed that his sons might divide their in-

heritance “with the bronze” (138c). Alcibiades answers that Oedipus was mad, and the first part of the dialogue follows the word. Madness is the opposite of being intelligent; there is no third condition between intelligence and unintelligence; one thing cannot have two opposites; so unintelligence and madness look to be the same (138c–139c). But then most of the city is mad, and Socrates and Alcibiades, living among so many madmen, would long ago have been “struck and pelted” (139c–d). The conclusion is withdrawn, and replaced by a division: as fever and ophthalmia are diseases but not all disease, and shoemakers and carpenters craftsmen but not all craftsmen, so men “have divided unintelligence among them too”: those who have the largest part of it are called mad, those who have a little less idiots and thunderstruck, and those who wish to name them “by the most auspicious names” call them great-souled, simple, innocent, inexperienced and tongue-tied (139d–140d).

The argument then starts again from “who on earth the unintelligent and the intelligent are” (140d). The intelligent are “those who know what they must do and say”; those who know neither “will, without noticing it, both say and do what they must not” (140e). Oedipus was one of them, and so are many who think they are praying for good things. If the god offered Alcibiades the tyranny of Athens, of all the Greeks and of all Europe, he would “go away overjoyed”; yet he would not wish to have the land and the tyranny of all the Greeks and barbarians in exchange for his soul, nor if he were going to use them badly (141a–c). Tyrants have been murdered for their tyranny, as Archelaus of Macedon was by his beloved; of the generals some are in exile, and some of those thought to fare best are so besieged by informers that they pray “to be men who were never generals”; parents pray for children who bring them grief (141d–142c). The many pray for these things and, after waiting a little, sometimes “sing a palinode, unpraying whatever they prayed for at first” (142d). Socrates quotes Zeus in the *Odyssey*, that men blame the gods for the sorrows their own recklessness brings them, and the prayer of a poet whom he takes to be an intelligent man: “King Zeus, the good things, he says, both when we pray and when we pray not, give us; but the wretched things, even when we pray, ward off” (142d–143a). Alcibiades draws the moral: ignorance is the cause of many bad things for men, since because of it, without noticing it, they both do and, “what is most extreme”, pray for the worst things for themselves (143a–b).

THE ARGUMENT'S MAIN STRETCH

Socrates complicates the moral. Ignorance of some things, for some people in some state, is good (143c). Orestes would not have killed his mother if he had been intelligent and had known what was best for him to do; and if Alcibiades should come to think it better to take a dagger to Pericles, his guardian, and were ignorant of him when he found him, he would not kill him (143c–144c). So ignorance of the best is a bad thing (143e), but for a man so disposed, to be ignorant of such things is better (144c).

From this comes the dialogue's main claim, that "the possession of the other kinds of knowledge, if someone possesses it without the best, looks as though it seldom benefits and for the most part harms the one who has it" (144d). Orators advise the city on war and peace, walls and harbors, knowing or thinking they know (144d–145a). But a man is intelligent only if "the knowledge of the best accompanies him", and this is the same as "the knowledge of the beneficial" (145c); the horseman, the boxer and the flute-player know their crafts, but are not on that account intelligent (145c–e). A commonwealth of archers, athletes, soldiers and orators "without the knowledge of the best and without the one who knows when it is better to use each one of these" would be "full of great confusion and lawlessness" (145e–146b). The many have "missed the best" and "trusted opinion without sense", and it profits them "neither to know anything nor to think they know", if they will be the more eager to act on what they know or think they know and be harmed by it more often than benefited (146c–d). A city or a soul that is going to live rightly must hold fast to the knowledge of the best, as the sick hold fast to a doctor and one who would sail safely to a pilot: without it, the more strongly the wind of fortune blows fair, for money or strength of body, the greater the mistakes, and the man of "much learning and much craft" who lacks it will meet "a great storm" (146e–147b). The poet of the *Margites*, Socrates says, meant the same when he wrote of his hero that "he knew many works, but badly"; and he explains how the line should be read (147b–d).

THE ENDING

Alcibiades agrees, and at once wavers. Socrates, seeing him shift "up and down", asks again what he would do if the god appeared and offered him a choice before he prayed (147e–148a). Alcibiades answers that it is "a madcap thing, and truly in need of much

caution" (148a–b). Socrates then tells two stories. The Spartans, in private and in public, ask the gods only to give them "the fine things on top of the good", and have not been less fortunate for it (148b–d). And once, when Athens kept losing to Sparta, the Athenians sent to the oracle of Ammon to ask why the gods gave victory to the Spartans, who neglect them, rather than to the Athenians, who offer the most and finest sacrifices of the Greeks; the prophet answered only that Ammon "would rather have the Spartans' auspicious speech than all the rites of the Greeks together" (148d–149b). By the auspicious speech, Socrates thinks, the god means their prayer; the other Greeks pray "for whatever comes, whether good or bad", and the gods, hearing them speak ill-omened words, do not accept their costly processions and sacrifices (149b–c). Homer's Trojans sacrificed in vain to gods who hated them; the way of the gods, Socrates thinks, is not such as "to be led astray by gifts, like a bad moneylender", and they look to the soul, whether a man is holy and just; and "justice and intelligence are held in especial honor both by gods and by men who have sense" (149c–150b).

So it is not safe for Alcibiades to pray, and he must wait "until one learns how one must be disposed toward gods and toward men" (150c–d). Asked who will teach him, Socrates says only, "The man who cares about you", who must first take the mist from his soul, as Athena took it from the eyes of Diomedes (150d–e). Alcibiades will refuse nothing that man orders, puts off the sacrifice, and crowns Socrates with his wreath; Socrates accepts it and, as Creon in Euripides took Teiresias' garlands of victory as an omen, takes Alcibiades' "opinion" as an omen, hoping to be "the fair victor over your lovers" (150e–151c).

WHAT IS MOST EXPOSED

Four things in this dialogue are likely to trouble a first-time reader, and they are best stated plainly.

First, it is almost certainly not Plato's. The doubt reported by Athenaeus has been shared by nearly all modern scholars. Their reasons are of several kinds: its close likeness to the *Alcibiades I*, whose persons and offer of power from a god it repeats and on which it seems to draw; turns of argument looser than Plato's (below); a vocabulary that differs from that of the dialogues no one doubts; ideas that some have traced to the Stoics or to the later Academy; and a slip in the history. Socrates speaks of the murder of Archelaus of Macedon as recent news "yesterday and the day be-

fore" (141d); Archelaus died in 399 BC, the year of Socrates' own death and five years after Alcibiades', while Pericles, who died in 429, is spoken of as living (144a). Some scholars put the dialogue in the later fourth century, others in the third or later. This edition calls it Plato's only in the sense of the tradition that handed it down among his works.

Second, the argument's steps are not all sound, and the dialogue sometimes says so. The proof that unintelligence is madness (139a–c) rests on the rule that one thing has one opposite, and is dropped as soon as its consequence is drawn; the division of unintelligence that replaces it rests only on an analogy with diseases and crafts. The knowledge of the best, on which everything turns from 144d, is never defined beyond being "the same as the knowledge of the beneficial" (145c), and the dialogue does not say who has it. Alcibiades himself, once the argument about the *Margites* is done, finds that "it seems the other way to me again" (147e), which Socrates at once takes as one more shift.

Third, some of its claims are startling, and are meant to be. Ignorance can be good, so that a would-be murderer is saved by failing to know his victim (143c–144c); it profits the many "neither to know anything nor to think they know", if knowing only makes them readier to act to their harm (146d); and the Athenians' magnificent worship counts for less with the gods than the Spartans' plain prayer (149a–b). The dialogue does not soften them.

Fourth, its stories and quotations are not all found elsewhere. The consultation of Ammon is known from no other ancient source. Of the five lines of the *Iliad* that Socrates quotes at 149d–e, only one stands at that place in the manuscripts of Homer; the others are known only from this passage, though the last recurs elsewhere in the *Iliad*. Socrates' reading of the *Margites* (147b–d), by which "he knew many works, but badly ... he knew them all" is made to say that "he knew many works, but it was bad for him to know them all", is offered as an interpretation of a riddling poet, and is one. And the dialogue's readers knew how Alcibiades' life went: he was suspected of aiming at tyranny, held a generalship, was exiled and died by violence, so that its warnings against praying for tyranny and generalship, which it shows ending in exile and death, can be read as pointed at him.

THE MANNER

The dialogue's comedy is gentler than the *Alcibiades I's*, and much of it lies in the logic itself. When the argument has made the many

mad, Socrates observes that he and Alcibiades would long ago “have paid the penalty, struck and pelted and all the other things madmen are in the habit of doing” (139c–d). The polite names for stupidity are a joke in a list (140c–d), and Socrates comes back to it at the end, when he says that Alcibiades will not use the Spartans’ modest prayer “because of your greatness of soul—for this is the finest of the names in unintelligence, at least” (150c). The generals who “pray to be men who were never generals rather than men who have been” (142a–b) are a joke against the Athenian democracy, and Alcibiades’ cry when Socrates mentions Orestes, “Speak auspiciously, for Zeus’ sake, Socrates!”, is turned against him at once: it is not the one who says Alcibiades would not kill his mother who should be told to speak auspiciously, “but much rather anyone who might say the opposite” (143d). The *Margites* is solemnly reconstrued, “putting *badly* in place of *bad*, and *knew* in place of *to know*” (147d), and Alcibiades’ answer, that the question of what to pray for is “a madcap thing” (148a), uses the word from which *Margites* is named. The gods are not to be bought “like a bad moneylender” (149e); a careless prayer may bring a man “something else besides” (150c); and the last words make the wreath a victory over Alcibiades’ lovers (151c). The translation tries to keep all of this and to add nothing. Where the English cannot carry a joke, a note says what it was.

ON READING THIS EDITION

Each left-hand page is a page of Burnet’s Oxford text, line for line, with his apparatus at the foot; each right-hand page translates it, with the Stephanus section letters in the margin so that any passage can be found on both sides. Words in angle brackets < > in the Greek are not in the two principal manuscripts and have been supplied, by a scholar’s conjecture, from a later manuscript or from the text of the poet quoted; they are translated. Words in square brackets [] are ones Burnet thought spurious; they are not translated. Burnet letterspaces the words Socrates takes from a poet, or sets them as verse, and the English marks exactly those words: verse he sets as verse is set as verse in the English too, except at 146a, where the lines of Euripides are woven into Socrates’ sentence and stand in quotation marks. The Key Words of the Dialogue, which follow, explain the words on which the argument turns and how they are rendered. At the back, the Outline gives the argument’s joints by Stephanus page, the Editorial Note sets out the conventions of both pages and explains the abbreviations of the apparatus,

the Glossary lists the renderings for reference, and the Note on this Edition says how the volume was made and where a reader should be careful.

A NOTE ON THE PERSONS

The dialogue itself establishes little about Alcibiades beyond his name and his father's, "Alcibiades son of Cleinias" (141b), and that Pericles is his "own guardian and friend" (144a). He is on his way to pray (138a), and at the end has a wreath with him to give (151a); Socrates supposes that he would gladly be tyrant of Athens and of all Europe (141a-b), and teases him for his "greatness of soul" (150c). Of Socrates it says little: that he knows the fortunes of the city's generals at first hand ("having been there ourselves", 141e), that he once heard the story of Ammon "from certain people" (148d), and, in the last sentence, that he would like to be "the fair victor over your lovers" (151c), which makes him their rival.

The rest comes from other sources and from the *Alcibiades I*, which this dialogue seems to presuppose. Alcibiades (about 451–404 BC), a kinsman of Pericles through his mother, was brought up in Pericles' house; he was one of the generals of the expedition against Syracuse in 415, was recalled to stand trial for profaning the Mysteries, escaped to Sparta, later returned to Athens, and was killed in exile about 404. Socrates (469–399 BC) was tried and executed in 399. Pericles died in 429 in the plague. The dialogue's details cannot all be true at one date: Pericles spoken of as living (144a) puts the conversation before 429, and the death of Archelaus as recent news (141d) puts it in 399, when Alcibiades had been dead some five years. In the *Alcibiades I* Socrates is the lover who did not go away; in the *Symposium* (212c–222b) Plato has Alcibiades tell how Socrates' talk enthralled him and how he once tried and failed to win him.

KEY WORDS OF THE DIALOGUE

These notes are for orientation, not reference: each explains a word the argument leans on, what it meant in the Athens of Socrates, and what the dialogue does with it. The Glossary at the back lists the renderings with the places where they matter.

PRAY, PRAYER (EUCHESTHAI, EUCHE)

The verb is the ordinary Greek for praying, vowing and wishing, and its noun *euchē* covers both the prayer and the vow; the compound *proseuchesthai* is to pray to a god (138a). Prayer in Greece was spoken aloud, with the hands raised, often with a sacrifice, and it asked for definite things: victory, health, children, a good harvest. That is what the dialogue questions. It is rendered “pray” and “prayer” throughout, in some forty places, so that the reader can follow one word through the argument: the danger of praying for bad things (138b, 143a–b, 148b, 150c), the prayer that turns to a curse (138c, 143b), the many who pray and then “unpray” (142d, 148b), the poet’s prayer for good things “both when we pray and when we pray not” (143a), and the Spartans’ prayer, whose “auspicious speech” Ammon prefers to “all the rites of the Greeks together” (148c, 149b). *Aneuchesthai*, “to unpray”, is known to the lexicon only from this dialogue (142d, 148b); *palinōidein*, “to sing a palinode”, is to take back in a second song what a first one said. Oedipus’ curse is *katarasthai*, “call down”, a verb built on *ara*, which means both prayer and curse (138c, with the note).

INTELLIGENT, UNINTELLIGENT (PHRONIMOS, APHRŌN); INTELLIGENCE, UNINTELLIGENCE (PHRONĒSIS, APHROSYNĒ)

Phronēin is to have one’s wits about one, to think sensibly; *phronimos* is the man who does, and *phronēsis* the quality. The English “intelligent” is used here, as in the *Alcibiades I* of this series, so that the family stays one family, and the reader should hear it as sound practical judgment, not cleverness: the argument of 144d–146e is precisely that skill and knowledge of many things, the cleverness of orators and craftsmen, are not *phronēsis* without the knowledge of the best. The intelligent are “those who know what they must do

and say" (140e), and near the end Socrates repeats it, adding "both toward gods and toward men" (150b). The opposite, *aphrosynē*, is "unintelligence"; Alcibiades first takes Oedipus' prayer for madness, and the argument makes madness the largest part of unintelligence (139c–140d). *Sophia*, "wisdom", is kept apart (143b, 147c), and so is *nous*, "sense" (146a, 150b).

MADNESS, AND THE NAMES OF UNINTELLIGENCE (MANIA; ĒLITHIOS, EMBRONTĒTOS, MEGALOPSYCHOS, EUĒTHĒS)

To call a man mad (*mainesthai*) was in Athens, as in English, both a diagnosis and an insult. The dialogue uses it of Oedipus (138c), argues briefly that all the unintelligent are mad, and then divides unintelligence as disease and craft are divided: those who have the largest part of it are called mad; those who have a little less, idiots and "thunderstruck"; and "those who wish to name them by the most auspicious names" call them great-souled, simple, innocent, inexperienced and tongue-tied (140c–d). The joke is that the auspicious names are words of praise: *megalopsychos*, "great-souled", is high praise, and *euēthēs*, "simple", means literally "of good character". Both come back. At 149e Socrates calls the Athenians' boast of their sacrifices "a simple argument", and at 150c he says that Alcibiades will not use the Spartans' modest prayer "because of your greatness of soul—for this is the finest of the names in unintelligence, at least". "Most auspicious" keeps the word in the family of *euphēmia* (below), as "kindest" would not.

IGNORANCE, BE IGNORANT (AGNOIA, AGNOEIN)

Agnoein is not to know, not to perceive, and also not to recognize a person. The dialogue uses both senses on purpose. Alcibiades concludes that ignorance is the cause of men's praying for the worst things (143a–b); Socrates answers that ignorance of some things is good, and proves it with Orestes and with Pericles: if Alcibiades, meaning to kill his guardian, "were ignorant of him and thought he was someone else", he would not kill him, nor would Orestes have attacked his mother (144b–c). The English keeps "ignorance" and "be ignorant (of)" throughout, also where "fail to recognize" would be more natural, so that the argument's one word stays one word. The ignorance that is always bad is "ignorance of the best, and being ignorant of the best" (143e); the knowledge of particular things without that of the best is what the next part of the dialogue attacks. Homer, Socrates says, cannot have been "ignorant that it

was impossible to know badly" (147c).

THE BEST, AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE BEST (TO BELTISTON; HĒ TOU
BELTISTOU EPISTĒMĒ)

Beltistos, one of the superlatives of *agathos*, "good", is "best", and its comparative *beltiōn* "better". From 143e the dialogue's whole weight falls on "the best" and "the knowledge of the best". The orators know how to advise, the general how to make war, the craftsmen their crafts; none of them is intelligent unless he also knows "when it is better" and "for as long a time as is better" (145b), unless, that is, "the knowledge of the best accompanies him", which Socrates says "was the same as the knowledge of the beneficial" (145c). Without it, "the possession of the other kinds of knowledge" seldom benefits and mostly harms (144d, 146e). A city and a soul must hold fast to it as the sick hold fast to a doctor and the sailor to a pilot (146e–147a). *Epistēmē* is "knowledge", and in the plural "kinds of knowledge"; *polymathia* and *polytechnia*, "much learning" and "much craft", are the possessions it should steer (147a). The verb for missing the best is *diamartanein*, "miss" (146a, 146c); the related *hamartēma* at 147a, and the verb at 150a, are "mistake" and "make mistakes".

BENEFIT AND HARM, PROFIT (ŌPHELEIN, BLAPTEIN; LYSITELEIN)

These are the measures of the knowledge of the best. *Ōphelein* is to help or be of use, *blaptein* to damage or hinder, and the pair was common coin in Athenian talk of right and wrong: Polemarchus in the *Republic* defines justice as benefiting friends and harming enemies (334b), and in the *Meno* Socrates argues that boldness without sense harms and with sense benefits (88b), a close parallel to the argument here. Things that are "present" may "harm more than they benefit" (142d); the possession of other knowledge "seldom benefits and for the most part harms" (144d, 146e); and the knowledge of the best is "the knowledge of the beneficial" (145c). At 146b Socrates turns the adverb into a noun, "the *beneficially*", to say that a man must not only do what he knows but do it beneficially; the English keeps his odd phrase. *Lysitelein*, "to profit", literally "to pay the costs", is kept apart from benefit (146b, 146d): "it profits the many neither to know anything nor to think they know" (146d). The words are rendered the same way throughout, and "harm" is never "injure".

GOOD AND BAD (AGATHOS, KAKOS)

Agathos is the common word for good, of men and of things; *kakos*, its opposite, is "bad", never "evil". Of a man *kakos* could mean cowardly, worthless or base; of things, as in this dialogue, it means what turns out badly for someone, harm and misfortune, and the English "evil", with its suggestion of wickedness and of a power at work in the world, would say more than the Greek says here. The things men pray for are "good things" and "bad things" (*tagatha, ta kaka*); men blame the gods for their "bad things" (142d); and Alcibiades is to "know both bad and good" (150e), where "good" renders Homer's *esthlon*, as "the good things" of the poet's prayer render *esthla* (143a). The Spartans' prayer asks for "the fine things on top of the good" (148c): *kalos*, "fine", adds beauty and honor to plain goodness, and the prayer asks for it only in addition to the good. In the poet's prayer the bad things are *deila*, "the wretched things" (143a, 148b), Buttmann's correction for *deina*, "the dreadful things", which the manuscripts have at 143a and T at 148b. At 141b an earlier state of this edition had "the greatest of goods" for "the greatest of good things", and at 142b it used "good" for two other words, *chrēstos* and *mochthēros*, which are now "worthy" and "worthless".

SENSE, OPINION (NOUS, ANOËTOS; DOXA)

Nous is mind, and in "having *nous*" good sense; the English keeps "sense" for it, as in the *Alcibiades I*, and "senseless" for *anoētos* (142e); only in the idioms "pay attention" (140a) and "in your mind" (143a, 150b) does *nous* go into other English. The craftsman in the commonwealth of experts "has trusted opinion without sense" (146a), and so have the many (146c); near the end "justice and intelligence are held in especial honor both by gods and by men who have sense" (150a-b). At 142b, where an earlier state of this edition had "it would make some sense", the Greek has *logos*, not *nous*, and the English is now "there would be some reason in it". *Doxa*, from *dokein*, "to seem", is what seems so to a man, his opinion, and also what others think of him, his reputation. In the dialogue it is what a man thinks without knowing (144a, 146a). At 151b Socrates takes "this opinion from you" as an omen: the opinion is taken here to be the good opinion Alcibiades has formed of Socrates' advice (151a), which the wreath shows; Ast and Buttmann would read "gift" (see the note).

AUSPICIOUS SPEECH, ILL-OMENED WORDS (EUPHĒMIA, BLASPHEMEIN)

At a sacrifice the herald called for *euphēmia*, literally “good speech”, which meant silence or words of good omen, since a word of bad omen could spoil the rite; *blasphēmein* was to speak such a word. In Euripides the herald Talthybius proclaims *euphēmia* and silence to the army before Iphigenia is sacrificed (*Iphigenia at Aulis* 1563–1564), and when a servant lets fall an ill-omened word at a libation, Ion has the wine poured on the ground and a fresh bowl filled (*Ion* 1187–1193). The dialogue plays on the family from 140c to 150c. The polite names for unintelligence are “the most auspicious names” (140c); Alcibiades’ cry at the mention of matricide is “Speak auspiciously” (143d); Ammon prefers “the Spartans’ auspicious speech”, which Socrates explains as their prayer (149b); and the other Greeks, praying for whatever comes, are heard by the gods to “speak ill-omened words” (149c), as Alcibiades might be if he went to pray (150c). “Auspicious” is kept in every place, so that the family can be seen. *Blasphēmein* is never “blaspheme”, which in English means speaking against God.

SACRIFICES, OFFERINGS, GIFTS (THYSIA, ANATHĒMATA, POMPAI, DŌRA)

The Athenians’ complaint to Ammon is a list of Athenian worship: the most and finest sacrifices (*thysiai*, from *thyein*, to offer to the gods by burning), temples adorned with offerings (*anathēmata*, gifts dedicated and set up in a sanctuary), the most costly processions (*pompai*), and money paid out (148e–149a). Ammon answers only that he prefers the Spartans’ auspicious speech (149b); Socrates draws the lesson that the gods are not “takers of gifts” (*dōrodokoi*, the ordinary word for those who take bribes), and that their way is not “to be led astray by gifts, like a bad moneylender” (149e–150a). The same thought appears in Plato: the *Republic* will not have its guardians be *dōrodokoi*, nor let them sing that gifts persuade gods and revered kings (390d–e), and the *Laws* counts as a form of impiety the belief that the gods can be won over by sacrifices and prayers (885b). The words are rendered the same way throughout the passage so that the reader can see the list come back at 149c and 150a. *Ta hiera* is “temples” where they are adorned (148e) and “rites” where Ammon compares them with the Spartans’ speech (149b).

PERPLEXITY (APORIA, APOREIN)

Aporia, literally “no way through”, is the state of having no way or means. In ordinary Athenian speech it could be want of money or of anything else, as well as the helplessness of a man who does not know what to do; in Plato’s dialogues it is above all the state of one who cannot go on in an argument, the numbness that Meno blames on Socrates as if he were a torpedo fish (*Meno* 80a–b). It is “perplexity”, and the verb “be at a loss”. Alcibiades is at a loss about disease (139e), Socrates about the gods (142d), the Athenians about how to escape their defeats (148d); and at 147e Socrates names the perplexity Alcibiades shares, in which he shifts “up and down” and slips out of what he thought most firmly. At 150b–c Socrates recalls it as Alcibiades’ own: “you were in great perplexity, lest you should, without noticing it, pray for bad things while thinking them good”. In the *Meno* Socrates argues that a man brought to perplexity is better off than one who wrongly thinks he knows (84a–c), and the close of this dialogue, where Alcibiades agrees to wait for a teacher, can be read in that light.

POET, RIDDLE (POIĒTĒS, AINITTETHAI)

Poiētēs is literally a “maker”, and became the word for a poet, the maker of verses. Athenian boys learned the poets by heart at school (*Protagoras* 325e–326a), rhapsodes recited Homer at the festivals, and men quoted the poets as authorities on how to live. The dialogue quotes Homer four times (141d, 142d–e, 149d–e, 150d), an unnamed poet’s prayer (143a), the comic *Margites*, commonly ascribed to Homer in antiquity (147b–d), and Euripides (146a, 151b). Socrates’ account of how to read them is that “all poetry is by nature riddling” (*ainigmatōdēs*), and that a poet, especially a grudging one, hides his wisdom (147b–c). He then construes the line of the *Margites* to say what his argument needs, by a rearrangement he admits “falls outside the meter” (147d), a construction that can be read as playful. Plato’s Socrates treats Simonides in the same way in the *Republic*, where the poet, he says, spoke in riddles, poet-fashion (332b). *Ainittesthai*, from *ainos*, a tale or fable, is “speak in riddles” throughout.

COMMONWEALTH, CRAFT (POLITEIA; TECHNĒ, DĒMIOURGOS)

Politeia is a city’s constitution, and also the city as a body of citizens with its way of life; “commonwealth” is used for it at 145e–

146b, where Socrates imagines one made up of experts. *Technē* is “craft”, any skill that can be taught and has rules, from shoemaking to rhetoric; *dēmiourgos*, the man who works for the public, is “craftsman” (140b–c), and so is *technitēs*, the man of a craft (145e). The dialogue uses both to make a point that runs through Plato’s dialogues: craftsmen know what is better “according to that craft” (145d), but not whether and when it is better to use it, and a city of craftsmen without the knowledge of the best is “a sorry one” (146a). In the *Apology* Socrates finds that the craftsmen, because they practised their crafts well, thought themselves wisest in the greatest matters too (22d–e). Teiresias won his garlands “because of his craft” (151b).

ΑΛΚΙΒΙΑΔΗΣ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΣ

ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ ΑΛΚΙΒΙΑΔΗΣ

St. II
p. 138

ΣΩ. ὦ Ἀλκιβιάδη, ἀρά γε πρὸς τὸν θεὸν προσευξόμενος a
πορεύῃ;

ΑΛ. Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ὦ Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Φαίνῃ γέ τοι ἐσκυθρωπακέναι τε καὶ εἰς γῆν b
βλέπειν, ὥς τι συννοούμενος. 5

ΑΛ. Καὶ τί ἄν τις συννοοῖτο, ὦ Σώκρατες;

ΣΩ. Τὴν μεγίστην, ὦ Ἀλκιβιάδη, σύννοιαν, ὥς γ' ἐμοὶ b
δοκεῖ. ἐπεὶ φέρε πρὸς Διός, οὐκ οἶει τοὺς θεοὺς, ἃ
τυγχάνομεν εὐχόμενοι καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ, ἐνίοτε τούτων
τὰ μὲν δίδόναι, τὰ δ' οὐ, καὶ ἔστιν οἷς μὲν αὐτῶν, ἔστι
δ' οἷς οὐ;

ΑΛ. Πάνυ μὲν οὖν. 5

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν δοκεῖ σοι πολλῆς προμηθείας γε προσδεῖσθαι,
ὅπως μὴ λήσεται αὐτὸν εὐχόμενος μεγάλα κακά, δοκῶν δ'
ἀγαθά, οἱ δὲ θεοὶ τύχῳσιν ἐν ταύτῃ ὄντες τῇ ἕξει, ἐν ᾗ
διδόασιν αὐτοῖς ἅ τις εὐχόμενος τυγχάνει; ὥσπερ τὸν Οἰ-
δίπου αὐτίκα φασὶν εὐξασθαι χαλκῷ διελέσθαι τὰ πατρῶα c
τοὺς υἱεῖς· ἐξὸν αὐτῷ τῶν παρόντων αὐτῷ κακῶν ἀποτροπὴν

a1 προσευξόμενος πορεύῃ T: πορευόμενος προσεύξει B a6 τις T: τι B
b7 λήσεται] λήσει τις Bekker c1 τὰ πατρῶα τοὺς υἱεῖς B: τοὺς υἱεῖς τὰ
πατρῶα T c2 παρόντων αὐτῷ B: παρόντων T

soc. Alcibiades, are you on your way to pray to the god? 138

ALC. Certainly, Socrates.

soc. You do appear to be wearing a gloomy face and keeping your eyes on the ground, like a man pondering something.

ALC. And what would anyone be pondering, Socrates?

soc. The greatest pondering of all, Alcibiades, as it seems to me b
at least. For come, by Zeus: don't you think that the gods, of the things we in fact pray for, both in private and in public, sometimes give some and not others, and give them to some of us and not to others?

ALC. Certainly.

soc. Then don't you think a great deal of forethought is needed, lest one should, without noticing it, pray for things that are very bad while thinking them good, and the gods should in fact be in the very state in which they themselves give whatever one in fact prays for? Just as Oedipus, for instance, they say, prayed that his sons might divide their inheritance with the bronze;¹ when it was c
open to him to pray for some way out of the bad things he had,

1. Oedipus' curse on his sons Eteocles and Polynices, that they should divide their inheritance "with the bronze", that is, with the sword, was a theme of Theban legend and of tragedy (Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes* 785–790; Euripides, *Phoenician Women* 66–68; in both the weapon is iron). The brothers killed each other at the gates of Thebes.

τινα εὔξασθαι, ἕτερα πρὸς τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν κατηρᾶτο· τοι-
γαροῦν ταυτὰ τε ἐξετελέσθη, καὶ ἐκ τούτων ἄλλα πολλὰ καὶ 5
δεινά, ἃ τί δεῖ καθ' ἕκαστα λέγειν;

ΑΛ. Ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν, ὦ Σώκρατες, μαινόμενον ἄνθρωπον
εἴρηκας· ἐπεὶ τίς ἄν σοι δοκεῖ τολμῆσαι ὑγιαίνων τοιαυτ'
εὔξασθαι;

ΣΩ. Τὸ μαίνεσθαι ἄρά γε ὑπεναντίον σοι δοκεῖ τῷ
φρονεῖν; 10

ΑΛ. Πάννυ μὲν οὖν.

ΣΩ. Ἄφρονες δὲ καὶ φρόνιμοι δοκοῦσιν ἄνθρωποι εἶναι d
τινές σοι;

ΑΛ. Εἶναι μέντοι.

ΣΩ. Φέρε δὴ, ἐπισκεψώμεθα τίνες ποτ' εἰσὶν οὗτοι. ὅτι
μὲν γάρ εἰσὶ τινες, ὡμολόγηται, ἄφρονές τε καὶ φρόνιμοι, 5
καὶ μαινόμενοι ἕτεροι.

ΑΛ. Ὁμολόγηται γάρ.

ΣΩ. Ἔτι δὲ ὑγιαίνοντές εἰσὶ τινες;

ΑΛ. Εἰσὶν.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἀσθενοῦντες ἕτεροι; 10

ΑΛ. Πάννυ γε. 139

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν οὐχ οἱ αὐτοί;

ΑΛ. Οὐ γάρ.

ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν καὶ ἕτεροί τινες εἰσιν, οἳ μηδέτερα τούτων
πεπόνθασιν; 5

ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα.

ΣΩ. Ἀνάγκη γάρ ἐστιν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα ἢ νοσεῖν ἢ μὴ
νοσεῖν.

ΑΛ. Ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ.

ΣΩ. Τί δέ; περὶ φρονήσεως καὶ ἀφροσύνης ἄρά γε τὴν 10
αὐτὴν ἔχεις σὺ γνώμην;

ΑΛ. Πῶς λέγεις;

c 4 τε T: om. B c 9 ἄρα γε T: ἄρα B a 7 γάρ ἐστιν T: ἄρ' B a 11 ἔχεις σὺ
γνώμην scripsi: ἔχει συγγνώμην B: ἔχεις γνώμην Tb

he called down others on top of those he had already.¹ And so these were fulfilled, and from them many other dreadful things as well; but what need is there to tell them one by one?

ALC. But you, Socrates, have spoken of a madman; for who do you think would dare, if he were healthy, to pray for such things?²

SOC. Do you think that being mad is the opposite of being intelligent?

ALC. Certainly.

SOC. And do you think some men are unintelligent and some intelligent?

ALC. They are indeed.

SOC. Come, then, let us look into who on earth these are. For that there are some, unintelligent and intelligent, and others who are mad, has been agreed.

ALC. Yes, it has been agreed.

SOC. And again, are there some who are healthy?

ALC. There are.

SOC. And others who are sick?

ALC. Certainly.

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SOC. And they are not the same people?

ALC. No.

SOC. Are there, then, some others besides, who are in neither of these conditions?

ALC. Certainly not.

SOC. For a man, being a man, must either be ill or not be ill.

ALC. I think so.

SOC. What, then? About intelligence and unintelligence, do you hold the same view?

ALC. What do you mean?

1. The verb is *katarasthai*, “to curse”, built on *ara*, which means both prayer and curse. In the prologue of Euripides’ *Phoenician Women* Jocasta says that Oedipus “cursed curses” (*aras arātai*) on his sons, and three lines later calls them “prayers” (*euchai*) that the gods might fulfil (67–70).

2. *Hygiainōn*, “healthy”, is also “of sound mind”; Socrates takes the word up in its bodily sense (138d).

ΣΩ. Εἰ δοκεῖ σοι οἷόν τε εἶναι ἢ φρόνιμον ἢ ἄφρονα, ἢ ἔστι τι διὰ μέσου τρίτον πάθος, ὃ ποιεῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον μῆτε φρόνιμον μῆτε ἄφρονα;

b

ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα.

ΣΩ. Ἀνάγκη ἄρ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἕτερον τούτων πεπονθέναι.

ΑΛ. Ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν μέμνησαι ὁμολογήσας ὑπεναντίον εἶναι 5
μανίαν φρονήσει;

ΑΛ. Ἐγώ γε.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν καὶ μηδὲν εἶναι διὰ μέσου τρίτον πάθος, ὃ ποιεῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον μῆτε φρόνιμον μῆτε ἄφρονα εἶναι;

ΑΛ. Ὁμολόγησα γάρ.

10

ΣΩ. Καὶ μὴν δύο γε ὑπεναντία ἐνὶ πράγματι πῶς ἂν εἴη;

ΑΛ. Οὐδαμῶς.

ΣΩ. Ἀφροσύνη ἄρα καὶ μανία κινδυνεύει ταῦτόν εἶναι.

c

ΑΛ. Φαίνεται.

ΣΩ. Πάντας οὖν ἂν φάντες, ὧ Ἀλκιβιάδη, τοὺς ἄφρονας μαίνεσθαι ὀρθῶς ἂν φαίημεν· αὐτίκα τῶν σῶν ἡλικιωτῶν εἴ τινες τυγχάνουσιν ἄφρονες ὄντες, ὥσπερ εἰσὶ, καὶ τῶν 5
ἔτι πρεσβυτέρων. ἐπεὶ φέρε πρὸς Διός, οὐκ οἶε τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει ὀλίγους μὲν εἶναι τοὺς φρονίμους, ἄφρονας δὲ δὴ τοὺς πολλούς, οὓς δὴ σὺ μαινομένους καλεῖς;

ΑΛ. Ἐγώ γε.

ΣΩ. Οἶε ἂν οὖν χαίροντας ἡμᾶς εἶναι μετὰ τοσούτων 10
μαινομένων πολιτευομένους, καὶ οὐκ ἂν παιομένους καὶ βαλ- d
λομένους, καὶ ἅπερ εἰώθασιν οἱ μαινόμενοι διαπράττεσθαι, πάλαι δὴ δίκην δεδωκέναι; ἀλλὰ ὅρα, ὦ μακάριε, μὴ οὐχ οὕτως ταῦτ' ἔχει.

ΑΛ. Πῶς ἂν οὖν ποτ' ἔχοι, ὦ Σώκρατες; κινδυνεύει γὰρ 5
οὐχ οὕτως ἔχειν ὥσπερ ᾤκηθην.

a13 εἰ δοκεῖς οἷόν τε B: δοκεῖ σοι οἷόν τε T: δοκεῖ σοι ἀναγκαῖον Ast: δοκεῖ σοι μόνον τινὰ ci. Stallbaum a14 ποιεῖ B: ἐποίει T c3 πάντας T: πάντες B c7 δὲ δὴ B: δὲ T d3 δὴ B: om. T ἀλλὰ ὅρα B: ἀλλ' ὅρα T

soc. Whether you think it possible to be either intelligent or unintelligent, or whether there is some third condition between them, which makes a man neither intelligent nor unintelligent?¹ b

alc. Certainly not.

soc. Then one must be in one or the other of these conditions.

alc. I think so.

soc. Now, do you remember agreeing that madness is the opposite of intelligence?

alc. I do.

soc. And also that there is no third condition between them, which makes a man be neither intelligent nor unintelligent?

alc. Yes, I agreed.

soc. And surely, how could two things be the opposite of one thing?

alc. In no way.

soc. Then it looks as though unintelligence and madness are the same. c

alc. It appears so.

soc. So if we said, Alcibiades, that all the unintelligent are mad, we would be right to say it: for instance, of those your own age, if any are in fact unintelligent, as some are, and of those older still. For come, by Zeus: don't you think that of those in the city the intelligent are few, while the many, of course, are unintelligent, the very ones you call mad?

alc. I do.

soc. Do you think, then, that we would go on living as citizens with impunity among so many madmen, and would not long ago have paid the penalty, struck and pelted and all the other things madmen are in the habit of doing? But see, my dear fellow: perhaps this is not so. d

alc. How on earth could it be, then, Socrates? For it looks as though it is not as I thought.

1. So Burnet's text, which keeps "possible"; the sense seems to want "necessary", the reading Ast proposed (apparatus a13; Stallbaum conjectured "only"). Alcibiades' "Certainly not" answers the second question.

ΣΩ. Οὐδ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ. ἀλλὰ τῇδέ πη ἀθρητέον.

ΑΛ. Πῇ ποτε λέγεις;

ΣΩ. Ἐγὼ δὴ σοί γε ἐρῶ. ὑπολαμβάνομέν γέ τινας εἶναι νοσοῦντας· ἢ οὐ;

10

ΑΛ. Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.

ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν δοκεῖ σοι ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι τὸν νοσοῦντα ποδαγρᾶν ἢ πυρέττειν ἢ ὀφθαλμῶν, ἢ οὐκ ἂν δοκεῖ σοι καὶ μὴδὲν τούτων πεπονθὼς ἑτέραν νόσον νοσεῖν; πολλὰ γὰρ δήπου γέ εἰσι, καὶ οὐχ αὐταὶ μόναι.

e

ΑΛ. Ἐμοιγε δοκοῦσιν.

5

ΣΩ. Ὀφθαλμία σοι οὖν δοκεῖ πᾶσα νόσος εἶναι;

ΑΛ. Ναί.

ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν καὶ πᾶσα νόσος ὀφθαλμία;

ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα ἔμοιγε· ἀπορῶ μέντοι γε πῶς λέγω.

ΣΩ. Ἄλλ' ἐὰν ἔμοιγε προσέχῃς τὸν νοῦν, σύν τε δύο σκεπτομένῳ τυχὸν εὐρήσομεν.

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ΑΛ. Ἀλλὰ προσέχω, ὦ Σώκρατες, εἰς δύναμιν τὴν ἐμήν.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν ὠμολογήθη ἡμῖν ὀφθαλμία μὲν πᾶσα νόσος εἶναι, νόσος μέντοι οὐκ εἶναι πᾶσα ὀφθαλμία;

5

ΑΛ. Ὁμολογήθη.

ΣΩ. Καὶ ὀρθῶς γέ μοι δοκεῖ ὀμολογηθῆναι. καὶ γὰρ οἱ πυρέττοντες πάντες νοσοῦσιν, οὐ μέντοι οἱ νοσοῦντες πάντες πυρέττουσιν οὐδὲ ποδαγρῶσιν οὐδέ γε ὀφθαλμῶσιν, οἶμαι· ἀλλὰ νόσος μὲν πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτόν ἐστι, διαφέρειν δέ φασιν οὓς δὴ καλοῦμεν ἰατροὺς τὴν ἀπεργασίαν αὐτῶν. οὐ γὰρ πᾶσιν οὔτε ὅμοιαι οὔτε ὁμοίως διαπράττονται, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν αὐτῆς δύναμιν ἐκάστη· νόσοι μέντοι πᾶσαί εἰσιν. ὥσπερ δημιουργοὺς τινας ὑπολαμβάνομεν· ἢ οὐ;

b

5

ΑΛ. Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν τοὺς σκυτοτόμους καὶ τέκτονας καὶ ἀν-

d 9 γέ τινας T: τινας B e 4 γε T: τέ B e 6 σοι οὖν B: οὖν σοι T e 9 μέντοι γε T: μέντοι B a 2 τυχὸν B: σχεδὸν T a 9 ποδαγρῶσιν B: ποδαγριῶσιν T b 2 δέ recc.: δὴ BT b 3 πᾶσιν B: πᾶσαι T ὅμοιαι T: ὅμοιοι B: ὁμοια J. G. Schneider

soc. Nor do I think so. But we must look at it somehow this way.

alc. What way on earth do you mean?

soc. I will tell you. We suppose that there are some people who are ill; or not?

alc. Certainly.

soc. Do you think, then, that one who is ill must have gout or fever or ophthalmia, or don't you think that one might be in none of these conditions and be ill with another disease? For there are many, surely, and not these alone.¹

alc. I think there are.

soc. Do you think, then, that all ophthalmia is disease?

alc. Yes.

soc. And is all disease ophthalmia, then?

alc. Not to my mind, no; but I am at a loss what I mean.

soc. Well, if you pay attention to me, perhaps the two of us together, looking into it, will discover it.²

alc. Well, I am paying attention, Socrates, to the best of my power.

soc. Then it was agreed between us that all ophthalmia is disease, but that not all disease is ophthalmia?

alc. It was agreed.

soc. And rightly agreed, I think. For all who have fever are ill, but not all who are ill have fever, or gout, or ophthalmia either, I think; rather, everything of that kind is disease, but those we call doctors say that the diseases differ in what they bring about. For they are neither alike in all people nor do they act alike, but each according to its own power; yet they are all diseases. Just as we suppose there are craftsmen; or not?

alc. Certainly.

soc. Then shoemakers and carpenters and

1. Ophthalmia is an inflammation of the eyes.

2. The words echo a tag from the *Iliad* (10.224), where Diomedes, volunteering to steal into the Trojan camp by night, asks for a companion, since when "two go together" one sees before the other; here "looking into it" takes the place of "going". Plato's Socrates quotes the tag in the *Protagoras* (348d) and adapts it in the *Symposium* (174d).

δριαντοποιούς καὶ ἑτέρους παμπληθείς, οὓς τί δεῖ καθ' ἕκαστα λέγειν; ἔχουσι δ' οὖν διειληφότες δημιουργίας μέρη, καὶ πάντες οὗτοί εἰσι δημιουργοί, οὐ μέντοι εἰσὶ τέκτονές γε c οὐδὲ σκυτοτόμοι οὐδ' ἀνδριαντοποιοί, οἱ σύμπαντές εἰσι δημιουργοί.

ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα.

ΣΩ. Οὕτως μὲν τοίνυν καὶ τὴν ἀφροσύνην διειληφότες 5 εἰσὶ, καὶ τοὺς μὲν πλείστον αὐτῆς μέρος ἔχοντας μαινομένους καλοῦμεν, τοὺς δ' ὀλίγον ἔλαττον ἡλιθίους τε καὶ ἐμβροντήτους· οἱ δὲ ἐν εὐφημοτάτοις ὀνόμασι βουλόμενοι κατονομάζειν οἱ μὲν μεγαλοψύχους, οἱ δὲ εὐήθεις, ἕτεροι δὲ ἀκάκους καὶ ἀπείρους καὶ ἐνεούς· εὐρήσεις δὲ καὶ ἕτερα d πολλὰ ἀναζητῶν ὀνόματα. πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἀφροσύνη ἐστίν, διαφέρει δέ, ὥσπερ τέχνη τέχνης ἡμῖν κατεφαίνετο καὶ νόσος νόσον· ἢ πῶς σοι δοκεῖ;

ΑΛ. Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὕτως.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν ἀπ' ἐκείνου πάλιν ἐπανέλθωμεν. ἦν γὰρ 5 δῆπου καὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ λόγου, σκεπτέον εἶναι τοὺς ἄφρονάς τε καὶ φρονίμους, τίνες ποτ' εἰσίν. ὠμολόγητο γὰρ εἶναί τινας· ἢ γὰρ οὐ;

ΑΛ. Ναί, ὠμολόγηται.

ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν τούτους φρονίμους ὑπολαμβάνεις, οἱ ἂν e εἰδῶσιν ἅττα δεῖ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν;

ΑΛ. Ἔγωγε.

ΣΩ. Ἄφρονας δὲ ποτέρους; ἄρά γε τοὺς μηδέτερα 5 τούτων εἰδότες;

ΑΛ. Τούτους.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν οἱ γε μὴ εἰδότες μηδέτερα τούτων λήσουσιν αὐτοὺς καὶ λέγοντες καὶ πράττοντες ἅττα μὴ δεῖ;

ΑΛ. Φαίνεται.

ΣΩ. Τούτων μέντοι ἔλεγον, ὦ Ἀλκιβιάδη, καὶ τὸν 10

c2 οὐδὲ T: καὶ B οἱ T: om. B d7 καὶ B: om. T d9 οὐ del. Hirschig
d10 ὠμολόγητο Stephanus e8 λέγοντες καὶ πράττοντες Stobaeus: λέγοντας
καὶ πράττοντας BT

sculptors and a great many others—but what need is there to tell them one by one? At any rate, they have divided the parts of craftsmanship among them, and all of these are craftsmen; but those who are craftsmen all together are not carpenters, nor shoemakers, nor sculptors. c

ALC. Certainly not.

soc. In the same way, then, men have divided unintelligence among them too: those who have the largest part of it we call mad, those who have a little less, idiots and thunderstruck; and those who wish to name them by the most auspicious names call them, some, great-souled, others simple, others again innocent and inexperienced and tongue-tied; and if you search you will find many other names as well. All of these are unintelligence, but they differ, as craft appeared to us to differ from craft, and disease from disease. Or how does it seem to you?¹ d

ALC. That is how it seems to me.

soc. Then let us go back and start again from there. For at the beginning of the argument too, surely, it was this: that we must look into who on earth the unintelligent and the intelligent are. For it had been agreed that there are some; or was it not?

ALC. Yes, it has been agreed.

soc. Do you suppose, then, that the intelligent are those who know what they must do and say? e

ALC. I do.

soc. And which are the unintelligent? Is it those who know neither of these?

ALC. Those.

soc. Then those who know neither of these will, without noticing it, both say and do what they must not?

ALC. It appears so.

soc. Now it was among these, Alcibiades, that I was saying

1. The most auspicious names are the joke: *megalopsychos*, “great-souled”, is a word of high praise; *euēthēs*, “simple”, means literally “of good character”, and in the *Republic* (400e) Plato’s Socrates says that its noun, *euēthēia*, is the pet name we give to senselessness (*anoia*); *enēos*, “tongue-tied”, is properly “speechless”. “Thunderstruck” (*embrontētos*) is the Greek for stupefied.

Οιδίπουν εἶναι τῶν ἀνθρώπων· εὐρήσεις δ' ἔτι καὶ τῶν νῦν 141
 πολλοὺς οὐκ ὀργῇ κεχρημένους, ὥσπερ ἐκείνον, οὐδ' οἰο-
 μένους κακὰ σφισιν εὔχεσθαι, ἀλλ' ἀγαθὰ. ἐκεῖνος μὲν
 ὥσπερ οὐδ' ἠῦχeto, οὐδ' ᾤετο· ἕτεροι δέ τινές εἰσιν οἱ
 τάναντία τούτων πεπόνθασιν. ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ οἶμαι σε 5
 πρῶτον, εἴ σοι ἐμφανὴς γενόμενος ὁ θεὸς πρὸς ὃν τυγχάνεις
 πορευόμενος, ἐρωτήσῃεν, πρὶν ὅτιοῦν εὐξασθαί σε, εἰ ἐξαρ-
 κέσει σοι τύραννον γενέσθαι τῆς Ἀθηναίων πόλεως· εἰ
 δὲ τοῦτο φαῦλον ἡγήσαιο καὶ μὴ μέγα τι, προσθείη καὶ
 πάντων τῶν Ἑλλήνων· εἰ δέ σε ὀρώη ἔτι ἔλαττον δοκοῦντα b
 ἔχειν, εἰ μὴ καὶ πάσης Εὐρώπης, ὑποσταίῃ σοι καὶ τοῦτο,
 (καὶ τοῦτο) μὴ μόνον ὑποσταίῃ, (ἀλλ') αὐθημερόν σου βου-
 λομένου ὡς πάντας αἰσθήσεσθαι ὅτι Ἀλκιβιάδης ὁ Κλεινίου
 τύραννός ἐστιν· αὐτὸν οἶμαι ἂν σε ἀπιέναι περιχαρῇ 5
 γενόμενον, ὡς τῶν μεγίστων ἀγαθῶν κεκυρηκότα.

ΑΛ. Ἐγὼ μὲν οἶμαι, ὦ Σώκρατες, κἂν ἄλλον ὄντιν οὖν,
 εἴπερ τοιαῦτα συμβαίῃ αὐτῷ.

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ μέντοι ἀντί γε τῆς σῆς ψυχῆς οὐδ' ἂν τὴν c
 πάντων Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ βαρβάρων χώραν τε καὶ τυραννίδα
 βουλευθείης σοι γενέσθαι.

ΑΛ. Οὐκ οἶμαι ἔγωγε. πῶς γὰρ ἂν, μὴθέν γέ τι μέλλων
 αὐτοῖς χρήσεσθαι; 5

ΣΩ. Τί δ' εἰ μέλλοις κακῶς τε καὶ βλαβερῶς χρήσθαι;
 οὐδ' ἂν οὕτως;

ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα.

ΣΩ. Ὅρᾳς οὖν ὡς οὐκ ἀσφαλές οὔτε τὰ διδόμενα εἰκῇ
 δέχεσθαί τε οὔτε αὐτὸν εὔχεσθαι γενέσθαι, εἴ γέ τις 10
 βλάπτεσθαι μέλλοι διὰ ταῦτα ἢ τὸ παράπαν τοῦ βίου d
 ἀπαλλαγῇ. πολλοὺς δ' ἂν ἔχομεν εἰπεῖν, ὅσοι τυραν-

a1 δ' ἔτι καὶ τῶν νῦν B: δὲ καὶ τῶν νῦν ἔτι T a2 ἐκείνον T: κείνον B
 b1 ὀρώη B: ἐρώη T b2 καὶ τοῦτο bis scripsit Sauppe b3 ἀλλ' add. Do-
 bree b4 αἰσθήσεσθαι B: αἰσθέσθαι T b5 αὐτὸν] αὐτῶν· Dobree: πρῶτον
 Schanz c2 τε καὶ β. B: καὶ β. T c5 χρήσεσθαι B: χρήσθαι T c6 μέλλοις B:
 μέλλεις T c10 τε οὔτε T: τε οὐδὲ B: γε οὔτε corr. Coisl.: σε οὔτε vulg.: οὔτε J. G.
 Schneider

Oedipus too belonged; and you will still find many even of the people of today, not in the grip of anger as he was, who do not think they are praying for bad things for themselves, but for good ones. He, just as he did not pray for good things, so did not think he did either; but there are some others who are in the opposite condition. For I think that you, first—if the god to whom you are in fact on your way were to appear to you and ask you, before you prayed for anything at all, whether it would suffice you to become tyrant of the city of the Athenians; and if you thought this a trivial thing and nothing great, he were to add all the Greeks as well; and if he saw that you thought you would still have too little unless it were of all Europe too, he were to promise you that as well—and not only promise it, but that very day, if you wished, so that all would perceive that Alcibiades son of Cleinias is tyrant—you yourself, I think, would go away overjoyed, as one who had won the greatest of good things.¹

ALC. I think I would, Socrates, and anyone else at all too, if such things happened to him.

soc. And yet in exchange for your soul you would not wish even the land and the tyranny of all the Greeks and barbarians to be yours.²

ALC. I don't think so. How could I, if I were not going to use them at all?

soc. And what if you were going to use them badly and harmfully? Not then either?

ALC. Certainly not.

soc. You see, then, that it is not safe either to accept at random what is given, or to pray oneself that it come about, if one is going to be harmed by it or to lose one's life altogether. We could name many who

1. The god's offer recalls the *Alcibiades I* (105a–c), where Socrates imagines a god asking Alcibiades whether he would rather live with what he has or die at once if he may gain no more, and then telling him he may rule in Europe but not cross into Asia. In “and not only promise it, but”, the words “and ... it” and “but” are two conjectures Burnet prints: Sauppe's repetition of *kai touto* and Dobree's *all'* (apparatus b2, b3).

2. *Psychē*, “soul”, is also life itself, and Alcibiades' answer seems to take it so: with his life gone, he could not use what he had gained. The series keeps “soul” throughout.

νίδος ἐπιθυμήσαντες ἤδη καὶ σπουδάσαντες τοῦτ' αὐτοῖς
 παραγενέσθαι, ὡς ἀγαθὸν τι πράξαντες, διὰ τὴν τυραννίδα
 ἐπιβουλευθέντες τὸν βίον ἀφῆρέθησαν. οἶμαι δέ σε οὐκ 5
 ἀνήκοον εἶναι ἑνία γε χθιζά τε καὶ πρωϊζὰ γεγενημένα,
 ὅτε Ἀρχέλαον τὸν Μακεδόνων τύραννον τὰ παιδικά, ἐρα-
 σθέντα τῆς τυραννίδος οὐθὲν ἦττον ἤπερ ἐκείνος τῶν παι-
 δικῶν, ἀπέκτεινε τὸν ἐραστήν ὡς τύραννός τε καὶ εὐδαίμων
 ἀνὴρ ἐσόμενος· κατασχὼν δὲ τρεῖς ἢ τέτταρας ἡμέρας τὴν e
 τυραννίδα πάλιν αὐτὸς ἐπιβουλευθεὶς ὑφ' ἐτέρων τινῶν
 ἐτελεύτησεν. ὁρᾷς δὴ καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων πολιτῶν—ταῦτα
 γὰρ οὐκ ἄλλων ἀκηκόαμεν, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ παρόντες οἶδαμεν—
 ὅσοι στρατηγίας ἐπιθυμήσαντες ἤδη καὶ τυχόντες αὐτῆς οἱ 142
 μὲν ἔτι καὶ νῦν φυγάδες τῆσδε τῆς πόλεως εἰσιν, οἱ δὲ
 τὸν βίον ἐτελεύτησαν· οἱ δὲ ἄριστα δοκοῦντες αὐτῶν πρᾶτ-
 τειν διὰ πολλῶν κινδύνων ἐλθόντες καὶ φόβων οὐ μόνον
 ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ στρατηγίᾳ, ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῶν κατῆλθον, 5
 ὑπὸ τῶν συκοφαντῶν πολιορκούμενοι πολιορκίαν οὐδὲν
 ἐλάττω τῆς ὑπὸ τῶν πολεμίων διετέλεσαν, ὥστε ἐνίους
 αὐτῶν εὐχεσθαι ἀστρατηγήτους εἶναι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐστρατηγη-
 κέναι. εἰ μὲν οὖν ἦσαν οἱ κίνδυνοί τε καὶ πόνοι φέροντες b
 εἰς ὠφέλειαν, εἶχεν ἄν τινα λόγον· νῦν δὲ καὶ πολὺ τοῦ-
 ναντίον. εὐρήσεις δὲ καὶ περὶ τέκνων τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον,
 εὐξαμένους τινὰς ἤδη γενέσθαι καὶ γενομένων εἰς συμφοράς
 τε καὶ λύπας τὰς μεγίστας καταστάντας. οἱ μὲν γὰρ 5
 μοχθηρῶν διὰ τέλους ὄντων τῶν τέκνων ὅλον τὸν βίον
 λυπούμενοι διήγαγον· τοὺς δὲ χρηστῶν μὲν γενομένων,
 συμφοραῖς δὲ χρησαμένων ὥστε στερηθῆναι, καὶ τούτους c
 οὐδὲν εἰς ἐλάττονας δυστυχίας καθεστηκότας ἤπερ ἐκείνους
 καὶ βουλομένους ἂν ἀγέννητα μᾶλλον εἶναι ἢ γενέσθαι.
 ἀλλ' ὅμως τούτων τε καὶ ἐτέρων πολλῶν ὁμοιοτρόπων τού-
 τοις οὕτω σφόδρα καταδήλων ὄντων, σπάνιον εὐρεῖν ὅστις 5

d 4 πράξαντες BT: πράζοντες recc. e 4 οἶδαμεν] εἶδομεν Hirschig a 5 ταύτῃ]
 αὐτῇ Dobree (Ficinus) a 6 πολιορκίαν recc.: πολιορκία BT b 2 εἶχεν] εἶχον
 Cobet c 3 καὶ T: om. B ἀγέννητα T: ἀγέννητα B

before now have desired a tyranny and striven to get it, as though they had achieved something good, and have then been plotted against because of the tyranny and robbed of their lives. And I think you have not failed to hear of some things that happened “yesterday and the day before”, when the beloved of Archelaus, the tyrant of the Macedonians, in love with the tyranny no less than Archelaus was in love with him, killed his lover, thinking he would be a tyrant and a happy man; but after holding the tyranny e for three or four days he was in his turn plotted against by certain others and died.¹ You see, too, among our own citizens—for these things we have not heard from others, but know, having been there ourselves—how many who before now desired a generalship 142 and obtained it are, some of them, exiles from this city even now, while others have come to the end of their lives; and those of them thought to fare best, having gone through many dangers and fears, not only in that generalship but when they came back to their own country, have gone on being besieged by the informers with a siege no less than the enemy’s, so that some of them pray to be men who were never generals rather than men who have been.² Now if the dangers and labors led to benefit, there would be some reason in it; but as it is, quite the opposite. You will find the same about children too: some who before now prayed for them to be born, and once they were born fell into the greatest misfortunes and griefs. For some, their children being worthless to the end, spent their whole lives in grief; and others, whose children turned out worthy but met with misfortunes so that they were bereaved of them, you c will find these too in no smaller ill fortune than the first, and who would wish their children unborn rather than born. But nevertheless, though these and many other things like them are so very plain, it is rare to find anyone who

1. “Yesterday and the day before” is a tag from the *Iliad* (2.303), where Odysseus recalls the omen at Aulis as though it were recent. Archelaus, king of Macedon, died in 399 BC. Diodorus says his beloved Craterus struck him by accident in a hunt (14.37.6), but Aristotle tells of a deliberate attack by Crataeus, a favorite who resented their intimacy, with Hellanocrates of Larisa (*Politics* 5.10, 1311b8–20). Alcibiades had died in 404, so Socrates could not have told him of it as recent news; the anachronism is one reason the dialogue is thought not to be Plato’s.

2. Socrates names no one, but a reader would think of Thucydides, general in 424, who spent twenty years in exile (*History* 5.26.5), and, with an irony the dialogue leaves unspoken, of Alcibiades himself, condemned in his absence in 415. Of the eight generals condemned after the victory at Arginusae in 406, the six who had come home were put to death (Xenophon, *Hellenica* 1.7.2, 1.7.34). The informers (*sykophantai*) were men who brought prosecutions for gain or spite. The word for “never generals”, *astratēgētoi*, is rare.

ἂν ἢ διδομένων ἀπόσχοιτο ἢ μέλλων δι' εὐχῆς τεύξεσθαι
 παύσαιτο ἂν εὐχόμενος· οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ οὔτε ἂν τυραννίδος
 διδομένης ἀπόσχοιτο ἂν οὔτε στρατηγίας οὐδ' ἐτέρων
 πολλῶν, ἃ παρόντα βλάπτει μᾶλλον ἢ ὠφελεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ
 εὗξαιτο ἂν γενέσθαι, εἴ τω μὴ παρόντα τυγχάνει· ὀλίγον
 δὲ ἐπισχόντες ἐνίοτε παλινωδοῦσιν, ἀνευχόμενοι ἅττ' ἂν
 τὸ πρῶτον εὗξωνται. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ἀπορώ μὴ ὥς ἀληθῶς
 μάτην θεοὺς ἀνθρωποὶ αἰτιῶνται, ἐξ ἐκείνων φάμενοι
 κακὰ σφισιν εἶναι· οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ σφῆσιν εἴτε ἀτα-
 σταλίσιν εἴτε ἀφροσύναις χρή εἰπεῖν, ὑπὲρ μόρον
 ἄλλε' ἔχουσι. κινδυνεύει γοῦν, ὦ Ἀλκιβιάδη, φρόνιμός
 τις εἶναι ἐκεῖνος ὁ ποιητής, ὃς δοκεῖ μοι φίλοις ἀνόητοις
 τισὶ χρησάμενος, ὁρῶν αὐτοὺς καὶ πράττοντας καὶ εὐχο-
 μένους ἅπερ οὐ βέλτιον ἦν, ἐκείνοις δὲ ἐδόκει, κοινῇ ὑπὲρ
 ἀπάντων αὐτῶν εὐχὴν ποιήσασθαι· λέγει δέ πως ὡδί—

Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ, τὰ μὲν ἐσθλά, φησί, καὶ εὐχομένοις

καὶ ἀνεύκτοις

ἄμμι δίδου, τὰ δὲ δειλὰ καὶ εὐχομένοις ἀπαλέξειν
 κελεύει. ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν καλῶς δοκεῖ καὶ ἀσφαλῶς λέγειν ὁ
 ποιητής· σὺ δ' εἴ τι ἐν νῷ ἔχεις πρὸς ταῦτα, μὴ σιώπα.

ΑΛ. Χαλεπόν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἐστὶν ἀντιλέγειν πρὸς τὰ
 καλῶς εἰρημένα· ἐκεῖνο δ' οὖν ἐννοῶ, ὅσων κακῶν αἰτία ἢ
 ἄγνοια τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ὅποτε, ὥς ἔοικε, λελήθαμεν ἡμᾶς
 αὐτοὺς διὰ ταύτην καὶ πράττοντες καὶ τό γε ἔσχατον εὐχο-
 μένοι ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς τὰ κάκιστα. ὅπερ οὖν οὐδεὶς ἂν οἰηθείη,
 ἀλλὰ τοῦτό γε πᾶς ἂν οἶοιτο ἱκανὸς εἶναι, αὐτὸς αὐτῷ τὰ
 βέλτιστα εὗξασθαι, ἀλλ' οὐ τὰ κάκιστα. τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ
 ὥς ἀληθῶς κατάρρα τινὶ ἀλλ' οὐκ εὐχῇ ὅμοιον ἂν εἴη.

c6 μέλλων B: μέλλον T c8 οὐδ'] οὐθ' Bekker d3 παλινωδοῦσιν T: πάλιν
 ὁδοῦσιν B ἀνευχόμενοι T: ἂν εὐχόμενοι B d6 αὐτοὶ σφῆσιν rec. t: αὐτοῖς
 φησιν B: αὐτοὶ σφίσιν T d7 ἀφροσύναις T: ἀφρονίσιν B: ἀφραδίαις Hermann
 e1 γοῦν B: γὰρ T a3 δειλὰ Buttman: δεινὰ BT: λυγρὰ Proclus (cf. 148b, 6)
 a4 κελεύει secl. Köppen a7 ὅσων κακῶν corr. Coisl.: ὅσον κακὸν BT b2 ἂν
 add. Priscianus: om. BT b3 ἱκανὸς B: ἱκανὸς T

would either keep from what is given or, when he was going to obtain it through prayer, would stop praying. The many would not keep from a tyranny if it were given, nor from a generalship, nor from many other things which, when present, harm more than they benefit; rather, they would even pray for them to come about, if they are in fact not present for someone. But after waiting a little they sometimes sing a palinode, unpraying whatever they prayed for at first.¹ For my part, then, I am at a loss: it may truly be in vain that men “blame” the gods, saying that their “bad things” come from them; “but they themselves too, by their own”—whether one should say “recklessness” or unintelligence—“have sorrows beyond their lot”.² It looks, at any rate, Alcibiades, as though that poet is an intelligent man, who, I think, having some senseless friends, and seeing them both doing and praying for what was not better, though it seemed so to them, made a prayer in common on behalf of them all. And he says it somehow like this:

*King Zeus, the good things, he says, both when we pray and when
we pray not,
give us; but the wretched things, even when we pray, ward off,* 143

he bids.³ Now to me the poet seems to speak well and safely; but if there is anything in your mind to set against this, do not keep silent.

ALC. It is hard, Socrates, to speak against what has been well said. But this, at any rate, I take in: of how many bad things ignorance is the cause for men, since, as it seems, without noticing it we, because of it, both do and, what is most extreme, pray for the worst things for ourselves.⁴ That is something no one would think; rather, this at least everyone would think he was good enough to do: to pray for the best things for himself, and not the worst. For that would truly be like some curse and not a prayer.

1. To sing a palinode (*palinōidein*) is to unsay in a second song what the first said, as the poet Stesichorus did of his song against Helen (*Phaedrus* 243a–b). *Aneuchesthai*, “to unpray”, is known to the lexicon only from this dialogue (here and 148b).

2. Zeus in the *Odyssey* (1.32–34): “Ah, how mortals blame the gods! For from us, they say, come bad things; but they themselves too, by their own recklessness, have sorrows beyond their lot.” Burnet spaces the poet’s words; “or unintelligence” is Socrates’ own.

3. The couplet is also in the *Greek Anthology* (10.108), without its author’s name, and in Proclus’ commentary on the *Republic*, which quotes this passage; both have *lygra*, “the baneful things”. Burnet prints Buttmann’s *deila*, “the wretched things”; the manuscripts of Plato have *deina*, “the dreadful things” (apparatus a3).

4. So Burnet, with *hosōn kakōn*, a correction in the Coislinianus 155; B and T have *hoson kakon*, “how great a bad thing” (apparatus a7).

ΣΩ. Ἄλλ' ἴσως, ὦ βέλτιστε, φαίη ἂν τις ἀνὴρ, ὃς ἐμοῦ τε καὶ σοῦ σοφώτερος ὢν τυγχάνοι, οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἡμᾶς λέγειν, οὕτως εἰκῇ ψέγοντας ἄγνοιαν, εἴ γε μὴ προσθεῖημεν τὴν ἔστιν ὢν τε ἄγνοιαν καὶ ἔστιν οἷς καὶ ἔχουσί πως ἀγαθόν, ὥσπερ ἐκείνοις κακόν.

ΑΛ. Πῶς λέγεις; ἔστι γὰρ ὅτιοῦν πρᾶγμα ὅτῳ δὴ ὅπως οὖν ἔχοντι ἄμεινον ἀγνοεῖν ἢ γινώσκειν;

ΣΩ. Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ· σοὶ δ' οὐ;

ΑΛ. Οὐ μέντοι μὰ Δία.

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲ ἐκείνῳ σου καταγνώσομαι, ἐθέλειν ἂν σε πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα διαπεπράχθαι ἅπερ Ὅρέστην φασὶ καὶ τὸν Ἀλκμέωνα καὶ εἰ δὴ τινες ἄλλοι ἐκείνοις τυγχάνουσι ταῦτα διαπεπραγμένοι.

ΑΛ. Εὐφήμει πρὸς Διός, ὦ Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Οὗτοι τὸν λέγοντα, ὦ Ἀλκιβιάδη, ὥς οὐκ ἂν ἐθέλοις σοι ταῦτα πεπράχθαι, εὐφημεῖν δεῖ σε κελεύειν, ἀλλὰ μάλλον πολὺ, εἴ τις τὰ ἐναντία λέγοι, ἐπειδὴ οὕτω σοι δοκεῖ σφόδρα δεινὸν εἶναι τὸ πρᾶγμα, ὥστ' οὐδὲ ῥητέον εἶναι οὕτως εἰκῇ. δοκεῖς δ' ἂν τὸν Ὅρέστην, εἰ ἐτύγχανε φρόνιμος ὢν καὶ εἰδὼς ὅτι βέλτιστον ἦν αὐτῷ πράττειν, τολμῆσαι ἂν τι τούτων διαπράξασθαι;

ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα.

ΣΩ. Οὐδέ γε ἄλλον οἶμαι οὐδένα.

ΑΛ. Οὐ μέντοι.

ΣΩ. Κακὸν ἄρα, ὥς ἔοικεν, ἐστὶν ἡ τοῦ βελτίστου ἄγνοια καὶ τὸ ἀγνοεῖν τὸ βέλτιστον.

ΑΛ. Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἐκείνῳ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἅπασιν;

ΑΛ. Φημί.

ΣΩ. Ἐτι τοῖνυν καὶ τόδε ἐπισκεψώμεθα· εἴ σοι αὐτίκα

b7 τυγχάνοι Stephanus: τυγχάνει BT c4 ὅτῳ δὴ rec. t: ὅτῳ δεῖ BT c9 ἂν t: ἔάν BT σε|σοι Cobet ἑαυτοῦ BT: σαντοῦ al. d3 ἐθέλοις T: ἐθέλοι B d5 ἐπειδὴ <δὲ> Buttmann: ἔπειτα Stallbaum d7 δ' ἂν BT: δᾶν Schanz e8 ἐπισκεψώμεθα recc.: ἐπισκεψόμεθα BT

soc. But perhaps, my excellent friend, some man who is in fact wiser than both you and me might say that we do not speak rightly in finding fault with ignorance so at random, unless we were to add that there is ignorance of some things, and for some people in some state, that is a good thing, just as for those others it is a bad thing. c

alc. What do you mean? Is there any thing whatever which it is better for anyone whatever, in any state whatever, to be ignorant of than to know?

soc. I think so. And you do not?

alc. No indeed, by Zeus.

soc. But surely I will not charge you with this either: that you would be willing to have done to your own mother what they say Orestes did, and Alcmaeon, and whoever else has in fact done the same as they.¹ d

alc. Speak auspiciously, for Zeus' sake, Socrates!²

soc. It is not the one who says that you would not be willing to have done these things, Alcibiades, whom you should bid speak auspiciously, but much rather anyone who might say the opposite, since the thing seems to you so very dreadful that it must not even be spoken of so at random. Do you think Orestes, if he had in fact been intelligent and had known what was best for him to do, would have dared to do any of these things?

alc. Certainly not.

soc. Nor, I think, would anyone else. e

alc. No indeed.

soc. Then ignorance of the best, and being ignorant of the best, is, as it seems, a bad thing.

alc. I think so.

soc. Both for him and for all the rest?

alc. I say so.

soc. Then let us look into this further as well: if

1. Orestes killed his mother Clytemnestra to avenge his father Agamemnon; Alcmaeon killed his mother Eriphyle, who for the gift of a necklace had sent his father Amphiaras to his death in the war against Thebes.

2. *Euphēmei*, “speak auspiciously”, is the cry that silences ill-omened words, as at a sacrifice; it is the verb of *euphēmos*, the adjective behind “the most auspicious names” (140c).

μάλα παρεσταίῃ, οἰηθέντι βέλτιον εἶναι, Περικλέα τὸν
 σεαυτοῦ ἐπίτροπόν τε καὶ φίλον, ἐγχειρίδιον λαβόντα, 10
 ἐλθόντα ἐπὶ τὰς θύρας, εἰπεῖν εἰ ἔνδον ἐστί, βουλόμενον 144
 ἀποκτείνειν αὐτὸν ἐκείνον, ἄλλον δὲ μηδένα· οἱ δὲ φαίεν
 ἔνδον εἶναι—καὶ οὐ λέγω ἐθέλειν ἄν σε τούτων τι πράττειν·
 ἀλλ' εἰ, οἶμαι, δόξει σοι, ὅπερ οὐθὲν κωλύει δήπου τῷ γε
 ἀγνοοῦντι τὸ βέλτιστον παραστήναί ποτε δόξαν, ὥστε 5
 οἰηθῆναι καὶ τὸ κάκιστόν ποτε βέλτιστον εἶναι· ἢ οὐκ ἂν
 δοκεῖ σοι;

ΑΛ. Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.

ΣΩ. Εἰ οὖν παρελθὼν εἴσω καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἐκείνον
 ἀγνοήσais τε καὶ οἰηθείης ἂν ἄλλον εἶναί τινα, ἄρ' ἔτι ἂν b
 αὐτὸν τολμήσais ἀποκτείνειν;

ΑΛ. Οὐ μὰ τὸν Δία, οὐκ ἂν μοι δοκῶ.

ΣΩ. Οὐ γὰρ δήπου τὸν ἐντυχόντα, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐκείνον
 ὄν ἡβούλου. ἢ γάρ; 5

ΑΛ. Ναί.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν καὶ εἰ πολλάκις ἐγχειροῖς, αἰεὶ δὲ ἀγνοοῖς
 τὸν Περικλέα, ὅποτε μέλλοις τοῦτο πράττειν, οὔποτε ἂν
 ἐπίθω αὐτῷ.

ΑΛ. Οὐ δηῖτα. 10

ΣΩ. Τί δέ; τὸν Ὀρέστην δοκεῖς ἂν ποτε τῇ μητρὶ
 ἐπιθέσθαι, εἴ γε ὡσαύτως ἡγνόησεν;

ΑΛ. Οὐκ οἶμαι ἔγωγε. c

ΣΩ. Οὐ γὰρ δήπου οὐδ' ἐκείνος τὴν προστυχοῦσαν γυ-
 ναῖκα οὐδὲ τὴν ὅτουοῦν μητέρα διανοεῖτο ἀποκτείνειν, ἀλλὰ
 τὴν αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ.

ΑΛ. Ἔστι ταῦτα. 5

ΣΩ. Ἀγνοεῖν ἄρα τά γε τοιαῦτα βέλτιον τοῖς οὔτως
 διακειμένοις καὶ τοιαύτας δόξας ἔχουσιν.

e 9 παρεσταίῃ BT: παρασταίῃ t
 Buttmann b 1 ἂν secl. Struve
 Schleiermacher b 12 γε T: δὲ B

a 3 ἂν secl. Sauppe a 4 δόξει BT: δόξειέ
 b 3 οὐκ ἂν μοι δοκῶ T: om. B b 5 ὄν secl.

it should suddenly occur to you, having thought it better, to take up a dagger and go to the doors of Pericles, your own guardian and friend, and ask whether he is in, wishing to kill him himself and no one else; and they should say he is in—and I do not say that you would be willing to do any of these things; but if, I think, it will seem so to you; and surely nothing prevents such an opinion from occurring at some time to one who is ignorant of the best, so that he thinks even what is worst to be at some time best; or don't you think so?¹ 144

ALC. Certainly.

soc. If, then, having gone inside and seen him himself, you were ignorant of him and thought he was someone else, would you still dare to kill him? b

ALC. No, by Zeus, I don't think I would.

soc. For it was not, surely, the first man you met, but him himself, whom you wished to kill. Isn't that so?

ALC. Yes.

soc. Then even if you made the attempt many times, but were always ignorant of Pericles whenever you were about to do this, you would never attack him.

ALC. Certainly not.

soc. What, then? Do you think Orestes would ever have attacked his mother, if he had been ignorant of her in the same way?

ALC. I don't think so. c

soc. For he too, surely, did not have it in mind to kill the first woman he met, nor the mother of anyone at all, but his own.

ALC. That is so.

soc. Then to be ignorant of such things, at least, is better for those so disposed and holding such opinions.

1. Pericles was Alcibiades' guardian: his father Cleinias, who fell at Coronea, had left Pericles as guardian to him and his brother (*Alcibiades I* 104b, 112c).

ΑΛ. Φαίνεται.

ΣΩ. Ὅρᾳς οὖν ὅτι ἡ ἔστιν ὧν τε ἄγνοια καὶ ἔστιν οἷς καὶ ἔχουσί πως ἀγαθόν, ἀλλ' οὐ κακόν, ὥσπερ ἄρτι σοι ἐδόκει; 10

ΑΛ. Ὡοικεν.

ΣΩ. Ἐτι τοῖνυν εἰ βούλει τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπισκοπεῖν, d
ἄτοπον ἂν ἴσως ἂν σοι δόξειεν εἶναι.

ΑΛ. Τί μάλιστα, ὦ Σώκρατες;

ΣΩ. Ὅτι, ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, κινδυνεύει τό γε τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν κτῆμα, ἐάν τις ἄνευ τοῦ βελτίστου κεκτημένος 5
ἦ, ὀλιγάκις μὲν ὠφελεῖν, βλάπτειν δὲ τὰ πλείω τὸν ἔχοντα αὐτό. σκόπει δὲ ὧδε. ἄρ' οὐκ ἀναγκαῖόν σοι δοκεῖ εἶναι, ὅταν τι μέλλωμεν ἥτοι πράττειν ἢ λέγειν, οἰηθῆναι δεῖν πρῶτον ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι ἢ τῷ ὄντι εἰδέναι τοῦθ' ὃ ἂν προχει-
ροτέρως μέλλωμεν ἢ λέγειν ἢ πράττειν; e

ΑΛ. Ὡμοιγε δοκεῖ.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν οἱ ῥήτορες αὐτίκα ἥτοι εἰδότες συμβουλεύειν ἢ οἰηθέντες εἰδέναι συμβουλεύουσιν ἡμῖν ἐκάστοτε, οἱ μὲν περὶ πολέμου τε καὶ εἰρήνης, οἱ δὲ περὶ τειχῶν οἰκοδομίας 5
ἢ καὶ λιμένων κατασκευῆς· ἐνὶ δὲ λόγῳ, ὅσα δὴ ποτε ἢ πόλις πράττει πρὸς ἄλλην πόλιν ἢ αὐτὴ καθ' αὐτήν, ἀπὸ 145
τῆς τῶν ῥητόρων συμβουλῆς πάντα γίνεται.

ΑΛ. Ἀληθῇ λέγεις.

ΣΩ. Ὅρα τοῖνυν καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τούτοις.

ΑΛ. Ἄν δυνηθῶ. 5

ΣΩ. Καλεῖς γὰρ δήπου φρονίμους τε καὶ ἄφρονας;

ΑΛ. Ὡγωγε.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν τοὺς μὲν πολλοὺς ἄφρονας, τοὺς δ' ὀλίγους φρονίμους;

c9 τε B: γε T d2 ἂν ἴσως ἂν B: ὄν ἴσως ἂν T: δὴ ἴσως ἂν Schanz d5 τοῦ] τῆς τοῦ Dobree d6 ἦ] ἢ pr. B: ἦν pr. T d7 αὐτό Schneider: αὐτά BT d8 μέλλωμεν T: μέλλων μὲν B οἰηθῆναι B: ἢ οἰηθῆναι T δεῖν] δὴ Dobree d9 προχειροτέρως] προχείρως Sauppe e1 μέλλωμεν B: μέλλωμέν τι T e3 συμβουλεύειν T: συμβουλεύουσιν B e4 ἦ T: om. B e6 ἢ καὶ T: ἢ B a2 πάντα T: ἅπαντα B

ALC. It appears so.

soc. Do you see, then, that there is ignorance of some things, and for some people in some state, that is a good thing and not, as it seemed to you just now, a bad thing?

ALC. It seems so.

soc. Further, then, if you wish to look into what comes after this, d it might perhaps seem strange to you.

ALC. What in particular, Socrates?

soc. That, so to speak, the possession of the other kinds of knowledge, if someone possesses it without the best, looks as though it seldom benefits and for the most part harms the one who has it.¹ Look into it this way. Doesn't it seem necessary to you, whenever we are about to do or to say something, that we must first think we know, or really know, whatever we are rather readily about to say e or do?

ALC. I think so.

soc. Then the orators, for instance, advise us on each occasion either knowing how to advise or thinking they know: some about war and peace, others about the building of walls or again the construction of harbors; in a word, whatever the city does toward another city, or by itself on its own, all comes about from the orators' advice. 145

ALC. What you say is true.

soc. See, then, what follows this as well.

ALC. If I can.

soc. For surely you call people both intelligent and unintelligent?

ALC. I do.

soc. And the many unintelligent, and the few intelligent?

1. So Burnet's text, "without the best". Dobree proposed *iēs tou*, "without that of the best", that is, without the knowledge of the best, as Socrates puts it when he restates the claim at 146e (apparatus d5).

- ΑΛ. Οὕτως. 10
- ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν πρὸς τι ἀποβλέπων ἀμφοτέρους;
- ΑΛ. Ναί.
- ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν τὸν τοιοῦτον συμβουλεύειν εἰδότα, χωρὶς b
τοῦ πότερον βέλτιον καὶ ὅτε βέλτιον, φρόνιμον καλεῖς;
- ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα.
- ΣΩ. Οὐδέ γε οἶμαι ὅστις τὸ πολεμεῖν αὐτὸ οἶδε χωρὶς
τοῦ ὁπότε βέλτιον καὶ τοσοῦτον χρόνον ὅσον βέλτιον. ἦ 5
γάρ;
- ΑΛ. Ναί.
- ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν οὐδὲ εἴ τις τινα ἀποκτείναναι οἶδεν οὐδὲ
χρήματα ἀφαιρῆσθαι καὶ φυγάδα ποιεῖν τῆς πατρίδος, χωρὶς
τοῦ ὁπότε βέλτιον καὶ ὄντινα βέλτιον; 10
- ΑΛ. Οὐ μέντοι.
- ΣΩ. Ὅστις ἄρα τι τῶν τοιούτων οἶδεν, ἐὰν μὲν παρέπηται c
αὐτῷ ἢ τοῦ βελτίστου ἐπιστήμη—αὕτη δ' ἦν ἢ αὕτη δῆπου
ἥπερ καὶ ἢ τοῦ ὠφελίμου· ἦ γάρ;—
- ΑΛ. Ναί.
- ΣΩ. Φρόνιμόν δέ γε αὐτὸν φήσομεν καὶ ἀποχρῶντα σύμ- 5
βουλον καὶ τῇ πόλει καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτῷ· τὸν δὲ μὴ τοιοῦτον
τάναντία τούτων. ἦ πῶς δοκεῖ;
- ΑΛ. Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὕτως.
- ΣΩ. Τί δ' εἴ τις ἱππεύειν ἢ τοξεύειν οἶδεν, ἢ αὖ πυ-
κτεύειν ἢ παλαίειν ἢ τι τῆς ἄλλης ἀγωνίας ἢ καὶ ἄλλο τι 10
τῶν τοιούτων ὅσα τέχνη οἶδαμεν, τί καλεῖς ὃς ἂν εἰδῇ τὸ d
κατὰ ταύτην τὴν τέχνην βέλτιον γιγνόμενον; ἄρ' οὐ τὸν
κατὰ τὴν ἱππικὴν ἱππικόν;
- ΑΛ. Ἐγώ γε.
- ΣΩ. Τὸν δέ γε οἶμαι κατὰ τὴν πυκτικὴν πυκτικόν, τὸν 5

b 2 ὅτε corr. Ven. 184: ὃ γε t: ὁ BT: ὁπότε Baiter c 2 αὐτῷ B: om. T c 5 δέ γε] τέ
γε Sauppe c 6 καὶ τῇ πόλει καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτῷ B: καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτῷ καὶ τῇ πόλει T
τοιούτου J. G. Schneider: ποιῶντα BT c 9 πυκτεύειν ἢ παλαίειν B: παλαίειν ἢ
πυκτεύειν T d 1 τέχνη T: τέχνην B d 2 κατὰ ταύτην] κατ' αὐτὴν Apelt: κατὰ
Schanz ἄρ' T: om. B

ALC. Just so.

soc. And in both cases you are looking to something?

ALC. Yes.

soc. Do you, then, call such a man intelligent, one who knows how to advise, but apart from whether it is better and when it is better?¹

ALC. Certainly not.

soc. Nor, I think, the one who knows waging war itself, apart from when it is better and for as long a time as is better. Isn't that so?

ALC. Yes.

soc. Nor, then, anyone who knows how to kill someone, or to take away his property and make him an exile from his fatherland, apart from when it is better and whom it is better to?

ALC. No indeed.

soc. Whoever, then, knows any of these things, if the knowledge of the best accompanies him—and this, surely, was the same as the knowledge of the beneficial; isn't that so?—

ALC. Yes.

soc. —we shall say that he is intelligent, and a sufficient adviser both to the city and to himself; and the one who is not such, the opposite of these. Or how does it seem?²

ALC. That is how it seems to me.

soc. What if someone knows how to ride or to shoot with the bow, or again to box or to wrestle, or anything in the other contests, or anything else of the kind that we know by craft: what do you call the one who knows what turns out better according to that craft? Don't you call the one in horsemanship a horseman?

ALC. I do.

soc. And the one in boxing, I think, a boxer, and the one

1. So Burnet, with a correction in a Venice manuscript (Venetus 184), *hote*, “when”; B and T have *ho*, which would give “whether it is better and what is better” (apparatus b2).

2. “Such” is J. G. Schneider’s correction (*toiouton*), which Burnet prints; B and T have *poiounta*, “doing” (apparatus c6).

δὲ κατ' αὐλητικὴν αὐλητικόν, καὶ τᾶλλα δήπου ἀνὰ λόγον
τούτοις· ἢ ἄλλως πως;

ΑΛ. Οὐκ, ἀλλ' οὕτως.

ΣΩ. Δοκεῖ οὖν σοι ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι τὸν περὶ τούτων τι
ἐπιστήμονα ὄντα ἄρα καὶ ἄνδρα φρόνιμον εἶναι, ἢ πολλοῦ 10
φῆσομεν ἐνδεῖν; e

ΑΛ. Πολλοῦ μέντοι νῆ Δία.

ΣΩ. Ποῖαν οὖν οἶε πολιτείαν εἶναι τοξοτῶν τε ἀγαθῶν
καὶ αὐλητῶν, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἀθλητῶν τε καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τεχνι- 5
τῶν, ἀναμειγμένων δ' ἐν τούτοις οὓς ἄρτι εἰρήκαμεν τῶν
τε αὐτὸ τὸ πολεμεῖν εἰδότην καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἀποκτείνουσαι, πρὸς
δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν ῥητορικῶν πολιτικὸν φύσημα φυσῶντων,
ἀπάντων δὲ τούτων ὄντων ἄνευ τῆς τοῦ βελτίστου ἐπιστή-
μης καὶ τοῦ εἰδότος, ὅποτε βέλτιον ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ τούτων
χρησθαι καὶ πρὸς τίνα; 146

ΑΛ. Φαύλην τινὰ ἔγωγε, ὦ Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Φαίης γε ἂν οἶμαι ὁπότεν ὁράῃς ἕνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν
φιλοτιμούμενόν τε καὶ νέμοντα τὸ πλείστον τῆς πολιτείας
τούτῳ μέρος, 5

ἢν αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ τυγχάνει κράτιστος ὢν·

λέγω δὲ τὸ κατ' αὐτὴν τὴν τέχνην βέλτιστον γιγνόμενον·
τοῦ δὲ τῇ πόλει τε καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτῷ βελτίστου ὄντος τὰ
πολλὰ διημαρτηκότα, ἅτε οἶμαι ἄνευ νοῦ δόξῃ πεπιστευκότα.
οὕτως δὲ τούτων ἐχόντων, ἄρα οὐκ ἂν ὀρθῶς λέγοιμεν b
φάντες πολλῆς ταραχῆς τε καὶ ἀνομίας μεστήν εἶναι τὴν
τοιαύτην πολιτείαν;

δ6 καὶ ταλλα B: καὶ κατ' ἄλλα T d9 περὶ secl. Cobet τι T: om. B
d10 ἐπιστήμονα T: ἐπιστήμονα εἶναι B ἄρα] ἄμα Cobet e1 ἐνδεῖν] δεῖν
Baier e4 δὲ καὶ T Stobaeus: δὲ B τε καὶ T Stobaeus: καὶ B e5 δ' BT: om.
Stobaeus τούτοις Stobaeus: τοιούτοις BT οὓς (vel ὢν) Dobree: οἷς BT Sto-
baeus e7 ῥητορικῶν B: πολιτικῶν T a2 τινα B: om. T a3 ἕνα T: ἕνα καὶ B
a6 τυγχάνει in Gorgia 484 e T: τυγχάνη hic BT in Gorgia loc. cit. B: τυγχάνοι ci.
Hermann κράτιστος] βέλτιστος Gorg. loc. cit. a8 ὄντος recc.: οὕτως BT

in flute-playing a flute-player, and the rest, surely, in proportion to these; or is it somehow otherwise?

ALC. No, it is so.

soc. Does it seem necessary to you, then, that the one who has knowledge about some one of these is also, it follows, an intelligent man, or shall we say he falls far short of it? e

ALC. Far short indeed, by Zeus.

soc. What sort of commonwealth, then, do you think it would be, one of good archers and flute-players, and of athletes besides and the other craftsmen, and, mixed in among these, those we spoke of just now, who know waging war itself and killing itself, and besides these men of rhetoric blowing a political blast, but all of these being without the knowledge of the best and without the one who knows when it is better to use each one of these, and in relation to whom?¹ 146

ALC. A sorry one, I think, Socrates.

soc. You would say so, I think, when you saw each one of them striving for honor and assigning the largest “part” of the commonwealth “to that, in which he himself is in fact at his strongest”—I mean what turns out best according to the craft itself—while he has in most things missed what is best for the city and for himself, since, I think, he has trusted opinion without sense.² This being so, would we not be right to say that such a commonwealth is full of great confusion and lawlessness? b

1. So Burnet, with Stobaeus’ “these” (where B and T have “such”) and Dobree’s *hous*, “whom”, which makes “those we spoke of just now” the men who know war and killing (145b); with *hois*, the reading of B, T and Stobaeus, they would be the craftsmen of this sentence (apparatus e5).

2. From Euripides’ lost *Antiope*; Callicles quotes the lines in the *Gorgias* (484e), where each man gives “the largest part of the day” to that in which he is at his best. “Of the commonwealth” stands in place of “of the day”, and “strongest” in place of “best”. Burnet prints *tynchanei*, “is in fact”, as the *Gorgias* has it in T; the manuscripts here have the subjunctive *tynchanei* (apparatus a6).

ΑΛ. Ὅρθῳς μέντοι νῆ Δία.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν ἀναγκαῖον ἡμῖν ἐδόκει οἰηθῆναι δεῖν πρῶ- 5
τον ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι ἢ τῷ ὄντι εἰδέναι τοῦτο ὃ ἂν προχείρως
μέλλωμεν ἢ πράττειν ἢ λέγειν;

ΑΛ. Ἐδόκει.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν καὶ μὲν πράττη ἅ τις οἶδεν ἢ δοκεῖ εἰδέναι,
παρέπεται δὲ τὸ ὠφελίμως, καὶ λυσιτελοῦντως ἡμᾶς ἔξειν 10
καὶ τῇ πόλει καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτῷ;

ΑΛ. Πῶς γὰρ οὐ;

ΣΩ. Ἐὰν δέ γ' οἶμαι τάναντία τούτων, οὔτε τῇ πόλει
οὔτ' αὐτὸν αὐτῷ;

ΑΛ. Οὐ δῆτα. 5

ΣΩ. Τί δέ; καὶ νῦν ἔτι ὡσαύτως σοι δοκεῖ ἢ ἄλλως πως;

ΑΛ. Οὔκ, ἀλλ' οὕτως.

ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν ἔφησθα καλεῖν τοὺς μὲν πολλοὺς ἄφρονας,
τοὺς δ' ὀλίγους φρονίμους;

ΑΛ. Ἐγωγε. 10

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν φαμεν πάλιν τοὺς πολλοὺς διημαρτηκένας
τοῦ βελτίστου, ὥς τὰ πολλά γε οἶμαι ἄνευ νοῦ δόξῃ πε-
πιστευκότας.

ΑΛ. Φαμὲν γάρ. d

ΣΩ. Λυσιτελεῖ ἄρα τοῖς πολλοῖς μήτ' εἰδέναι μηδὲν μήτ'
οἰεσθαι εἰδέναι, εἴπερ γε μᾶλλον προθυμήσονται πράττειν
μὲν ταῦτα ἅττ' ἂν εἰδῶσιν ἢ οἰηθῶσιν εἰδέναι, πράττοντες 5
δὲ βλάπτεσθαι τὰ πλείω μᾶλλον ἢ ὠφελεῖσθαι.

ΑΛ. Ἀληθέστατα λέγεις.

ΣΩ. Ὅρᾳς οὖν, ὅτε γ' ἔφην κινδυνεύειν τό γε τῶν ἄλλων
ἐπιστημῶν κτῆμα, ἐάν τις ἄνευ τῆς τοῦ βελτίστου ἐπιστήμης e
κεκτημένος ἦ, ὀλιγάκις μὲν ὠφελεῖν, βλάπτειν δὲ τὰ πλείω
τὸν ἔχοντα αὐτό, ἄρ' οὐχὶ τῷ ὄντι ὀρθῳς ἐφαινόμην λέγων;

b 5 ἡμῖν ἐδόκει B: ἐδόκει ἡμῖν εἶναι T b 9 ἢ T: ἢ ἂ B: ἢ ἂ b b 10 παρέπεται B:
παρέπεται T δὲ T: om. B d 3 πράττειν μὲν B: μὲν πράττειν T d 7 ὅτε γ' T:
ὅτε B: ὅτ' Stobaeus κινδυνεύειν Stobaeus: κινδυνεύει BT e 2 ὀλιγάκις] ὀλίγα
Cobet

ALC. Rightly indeed, by Zeus.

soc. Now, did it not seem necessary to us that we must first think we know, or really know, whatever we are readily about to do or say?

ALC. It did.

soc. Then if one does what he knows or seems to know, and the *beneficially* accompanies it, we shall be in a profitable state both for the city and for oneself? c

ALC. Of course.

soc. But if, I think, the opposite of these, neither for the city nor for oneself?

ALC. Certainly not.

soc. What, then? Does it still seem the same to you now too, or somehow otherwise?

ALC. No, it is so.

soc. Did you say, then, that you call the many unintelligent, and the few intelligent?

ALC. I did.

soc. Then we say again that the many have missed the best, since, I think, they have in most things trusted opinion without sense.

ALC. We do say so. d

soc. Then it profits the many neither to know anything nor to think they know, if indeed they will be more eager to do whatever they know or think they know, and in doing it to be harmed for the most part rather than benefited.

ALC. What you say is most true.

soc. Do you see, then: when I said that the possession of the other kinds of knowledge, if someone possesses it without the knowledge of the best, looks as though it seldom benefits and for the most part harms the one who has it, was I not really shown to be speaking rightly? e

ΑΛ. Καὶ εἰ μὴ τότε, ἀλλὰ νῦν μοι δοκεῖ, ὦ Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Δεῖ ἄρα καὶ πόλιν καὶ ψυχὴν τὴν μέλλουσιν ὀρθῶς
βιώσεσθαι ταύτης τῆς ἐπιστήμης ἀντέχεσθαι, ἀτεχνῶς 5
ὥσπερ ἀσθενοῦντα ἰατροῦ ἢ τινος κυβερνήτου τὸν ἀσφαλῶς
μέλλοντα πλεῖν. ἄνευ γὰρ ταύτης, ὅσῳ περ ἂν λαμπρό- 147
τερον ἐπουρίσῃ τὸ τῆς τύχης ἢ περὶ χρημάτων κτήσιν ἢ
σώματος ῥώμην ἢ καὶ ἄλλο τι τῶν τοιούτων, τοσοῦτ' αὖ μείζω
ἀμαρτήματα ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστιν, ὥς ἔοικε, γίνεσθαι.
ὁ δὲ δὴ τὴν καλουμένην πολυμαθίαν τε καὶ πολυτεχνίαν 5
κεκτημένος, ὀρφανὸς δὲ ὢν ταύτης τῆς ἐπιστήμης, ἀγό-
μενος δὲ ὑπὸ μᾶς ἐκάστης τῶν ἄλλων, ἄρ' οὐχὶ τῷ ὄντι
δικαίως πολλῶ χειμῶνι χρήσεται, ἅτε οἶμαι ἄνευ κυβερνήτου
διατελῶν ἐν πελάγει, χρόνον οὐ μακρὸν βίου θέων; ὥστε b
συμβαίνειν μοι δοκεῖ καὶ ἐνταῦθα τὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ, ὃ λέγει
κατηγορῶν πού τινος, ὥς ἄρα πολλὰ μὲν ἡπίστατο
ἔργα, κακῶς δέ, φησὶν, ἡπίστατο πάντα.

ΑΛ. Καὶ τί δὴ ποτε συμβαίνει τὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ, ὦ Σώ- 5
κρατες; ἐμοὶ μὲν γὰρ οὐδ' ὅτι οὖν δοκεῖ πρὸς λόγον εἰρηκέναι.

ΣΩ. Καὶ μάλα γε πρὸς λόγον· ἀλλ' αἰνίττεται, ὦ βέλ-
τιστε, καὶ οὗτος καὶ ἄλλοι δὲ ποιηταὶ σχεδόν τι πάντες.
ἔστιν τε γὰρ φύσει ποιητικὴ ἡ σύμπασα αἰνιγματώδης καὶ
οὐ τοῦ προστυχόντος ἀνδρὸς γνωρίσαι· ἔτι τε πρὸς τῷ c
φύσει τοιαύτη εἶναι, ὅταν λάβηται ἀνδρὸς φθονεροῦ τε καὶ
μὴ βουλομένου ἡμῖν ἐνδείκνυσθαι ἀλλ' ἀποκρύπτεσθαι ὅτι
μάλιστα τὴν αὐτοῦ σοφίαν, ὑπερφυνῶς δὴ τὸ χρῆμα ὥς
δύσγνωστον φαίνεται, ὅτι ποτὲ νοοῦσιν ἕκαστος αὐτῶν. 5

e 3 δοκεῖ] δοκεῖς Sauppe a 1 ἄνευ γὰρ ταύτης huc transposuit Lennep: ante
ἢ περὶ χρημάτων habent BT λαμπρότερον Lennep: λαβρότερον Sauppe:
μὴ πρότερον BT a 2 ἐπουρίσῃ T: ἐπουρήσῃ B τύχης ci. Stallbaum:
ψυχῆς BT a 4 ἀμαρτήματα T: ἀμάρτημα B a 5 πολυμαθίαν T: φιλομαθίαν B
πολυτεχνίαν B: πολυτεχνίαν T πολυ B 1 βίου Stephanus: βίον BT θέων Stephanus:
θεων B: θεῶν T: πλέων Schanz b 8 ἄλλοι scripsi: ἄλλοι B: οἱ ἄλλοι T c 1 τε B:
δὲ T c 2 τοιαύτη T: τοιαύτην B c 4 δὴ T: δὲ B c 5 νοοῦσιν T: νομίζεται B

ALC. Even if not then, at any rate now it seems so to me, Socrates.

soc. Then both a city and a soul that is going to live rightly must hold fast to this knowledge, exactly as one who is sick holds fast to a doctor, or one who is going to sail safely to some pilot. For without it, the more strongly the wind of fortune blows fair, whether for the getting of money, or for strength of body, or for anything else of that kind, the greater the mistakes that must, it seems, come from them.¹ And the man who possesses what is called much learning and much craft,² but is an orphan of this knowledge and is led by each one of the others, will he not really, and justly, meet with a great storm, since, I think, without a pilot he goes on at sea, running a course of life that will not be long?³ So that I think the poet's words fit here too, which he speaks somewhere in accusing someone: that "he knew many works, but badly", he says, "he knew them all".⁴

ALC. And how on earth do the poet's words fit, Socrates? For to me he seems to have said nothing at all to the point.

soc. Very much to the point indeed. But he is speaking in riddles, my excellent friend, he and pretty well all the other poets too. For all poetry is by nature riddling, and not for the first man who comes along to make out; and besides being such by nature, when it takes hold of a grudging man, who does not wish to show us his wisdom but to hide it as much as he can, it appears prodigiously hard to make out what on earth each of them means.

1. The sentence rests on three corrections that Burnet prints: Lennep moved "for without it" to this place and read "the more strongly", where the manuscripts have "not sooner", and Stallbaum conjectured "fortune", where they have "soul" (apparatus a1–a2).

2. Burnet prints *polymathia*, "much learning", from T, where B has *philomathia*, "love of learning", and *polytechnia*, "much craft", from B, where T has *philotechnia*, "love of craft", with *poly-* written over it (apparatus a5).

3. Burnet prints Stephanus' *biou*, "of life", and *theōn*, "running". B and T have *bion*, "life", in the accusative; B gives *theōn* without an accent, and T accents it as "of gods"; Schanz reads *pleōn*, "sailing" (apparatus b1).

4. From the *Margites*, a comic poem commonly ascribed to Homer in antiquity, as by Aristotle (*Poetics* 1448b30) and by Socrates below (147c); its hero is a fool who knows many things and all of them badly. Burnet spaces the poet's words.

οὐ γὰρ δήπου "Ομηρόν γε τὸν θειότατόν τε καὶ σοφώτατον ποιητὴν ἀγνοεῖν δοκεῖς ὡς οὐχ οἶόν τε ἦν ἐπίστασθαι κακῶς—ἐκεῖνος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ λέγων τὸν Μαργίτην πολλὰ μὲν ἐπίστασθαι, κακῶς δέ, φησί, πάντα ἠπίστατο—ἀλλ' αἰνίττεται οἶμαι παράγων τὸ κακῶς μὲν ἀντὶ τοῦ κακοῦ, τὸ δὲ ἠπίστατο ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐπίστασθαι· γίνεται οὖν συντεθὲν ἔξω μὲν τοῦ μέτρου, ἔστι δ' ὃ γε βούλεται, ὡς πολλὰ μὲν ἠπίστατο ἔργα, κακὸν δ' ἦν ἐπίστασθαι αὐτῷ πάντα ταῦτα. δῆλον οὖν ὅτι εἶπερ ἦν αὐτῷ κακὸν τὸ πολλὰ εἰδέναι, φαῦλός τις ὢν ἐτύγχανε, εἶπερ γε πιστεύειν δεῖ τοῖς προειρημένοις λόγοις.

ΑΛ. Ἄλλ' ἐμοὶ μὲν δοκεῖ, ὦ Σώκρατες· ἡ χαλεπῶς γ' ἂν ἄλλοις τισὶ πιστεύσαιμι λόγοις, εἶπερ μὴδὲ τούτοις.

ΣΩ. Καὶ ὁρθῶς γέ σοι δοκεῖ.

ΑΛ. Πάλιν αὖ μοι δοκεῖ.

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ φέρε πρὸς Διός—ὁρᾷς γὰρ δήπου τὴν ἀπορίαν ὅση τε καὶ οἶα, ταύτης δὲ καὶ σύ μοι δοκεῖς κεκοινωνηκέναι· μεταβαλλόμενός γέ τοι ἄνω καὶ κάτω οὐδ' ὅτιοῦν παύῃ, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἂν μάλιστα σοι δόξῃ, τοῦτο καὶ ἐκδεδυκέναι αὐ καὶ οὐκέτι ὡσαύτως δοκεῖν—εἰ οὖν σοί γ' ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐμφανὴς γενόμενος ὁ θεὸς πρὸς ὃν τυγχάνεις πορευόμενος ἐρωτήσῃ, πρὶν ὅτιοῦν εὐξασθαί σε, εἰ ἐξαρκέσει σοι ἐκεῖνων τι γενέσθαι ὧν περ καὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐλέγετο, εἴτε καὶ αὐτῷ σοι ἐπιτρέψειεν εὐξασθαι, τί ποτ' ἂν οἶε ἢ τῶν παρ' ἐκείνου διδομένων λαμβάνων ἢ αὐτὸς εὐξάμενος γενέσθαι τοῦ καιροῦ τυχεῖν;

ΑΛ. Ἀλλὰ μὰ τοὺς θεοὺς, ἐγὼ μὲν οὐθὲν ἂν ἔχομί σοι εἰπεῖν, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὕτως· ἀλλὰ μάργον τί μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι,

c7 ὡς B: ὅτι T c8 κακῶς B: καλῶς T μαργίτην T: μαργείτην B d1 ἠπίστατο Bekker: ἐπίστασθαι BT d2 κακοῦ] κακόν Cobet d3 ἠπίστατο B: ἐπίστατο T d4 ὃ γε corr. Par. 1812: ὅτε B: ὅτι T d7 δεῖ T: δέοι B e6 δέ T: δὴ B καὶ σύ μοι δοκεῖς B: μοι δοκεῖς καὶ σὺ T e8 ὅτι B: ὅπερ T a3 ἐξαρκέσει T: ἐξαρκέσει B a4 ἀρχῇ T: ἀρχῇ τι B εἴτε καὶ T: καὶ B a9 μάργον T: μαργόν B: μέγα ἔργον Dobree

For surely you do not think that Homer, the most divine and wisest of poets, was ignorant that it was impossible to know badly—for it is he who says that Margites knew many things, but badly, he says, d knew them all—but he is speaking in riddles, I think, putting *badly* in place of *bad*, and *knew* in place of *to know*. Put together, then, it falls outside the meter, but it is what he means: that he knew many works, but it was bad for him to know them all. It is clear, then, that if knowing many things was bad for him, he was in fact a sorry fellow, if indeed we must trust the arguments already stated.

ALC. Well, I think so, Socrates; truly, I would hardly trust any e other arguments, if not even these.

soc. And you are right to think so.

ALC. It seems the other way to me again.¹

soc. But come, by Zeus—for surely you see the perplexity, how great it is and of what kind, and you too seem to me to have had a share in it: at any rate, shifting up and down, you never stop at all, but whatever you think most firmly, that too you seem to have slipped out of again and no longer to think the same—if, then, even 148 now the god to whom you are in fact on your way were to appear to you and ask you, before you prayed for anything at all, whether it would suffice you that one of those things should come about that were spoken of at the beginning, or else were to leave it to you yourself to pray, how on earth do you think you would hit the right mark, either by taking what he gives or by praying yourself for something to come about?

ALC. But by the gods, Socrates, I would have nothing to say to you offhand like this; but it seems to me a madcap thing,²

1. *Palin au moi dokei*: *palin* can mean “back” as well as “again”, and the words are here read as Alcibiades turning round once more, as Socrates at once says he keeps doing; they can also be read as a further assent, “So it seems to me again”.

2. *Margos*, “madcap”, is the word from which Margites, the poem’s hero, takes his name; its use here can be read as a pun on the poem just discussed.

καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς πολλῆς φυλακῆς, ὅπως μὴ λήσῃ τις αὐτὸν b
 εὐχόμενος μὲν κακά, δοκῶν δὲ τάγαθά, ἔπειτ' ὀλίγον ἐπισχών,
 ὅπερ καὶ σὺ ἔλεγες, παλινωδῇ, ἀνευχόμενος ἅττ' ἂν τὸ
 πρῶτον εὖξῃται.

ΣΩ. Ἄρ' οὖν οὐχὶ εἰδῶς τι πλεόν ἡμῶν ὁ ποιητής, οὐ 5
 καὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ λόγου ἐπεμνήσθην, τὰ δειλὰ καὶ εὐχομένοις
 ἀπαλέξειν ἐκέλευεν;

ΑΛ. Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ.

ΣΩ. Τοῦτον μὲν τοίνυν, ὦ Ἀλκιβιάδη, καὶ Λακεδαι-
 μόνιοι τὸν ποιητὴν ἐξηλωκότες, εἴτε καὶ αὐτοὶ οὕτως ἐπε- c
 σκεμμένοι, καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ ἐκάστοτε παραπλησίαν
 εὐχὴν εὖχονται, τὰ καλὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τοὺς θεοὺς διδόναι
 κελεύοντες αὐτὸ σφίσιν αὐτοῖς· πλείω δ' οὐδεὶς ἂν ἐκείνων
 εὐξαμένων ἀκούσειεν. τοιγαροῦν εἰς τὸ παρήκον τοῦ χρόνου 5
 οὐδένων ἦττον εὐτυχεῖς εἰσιν ἄνθρωποι· εἰ δ' ἄρα καὶ συμ-
 βέβηκεν αὐτοῖς ὥστε μὴ πάντα εὐτυχεῖν, ἀλλ' οὖν (οὐ) διὰ
 τὴν ἐκείνων εὐχὴν, ἐπὶ τοῖς θεοῖς δ' ἐστὶν ὥστε οἶμαι καὶ d
 διδόναι ἅττ' ἂν τις εὐχόμενος τυγχάνῃ καὶ τάναντία τούτων.
 βούλομαι δέ σοι καὶ ἕτερόν τι διηγήσασθαι, ὃ ποτε ἤκουσα
 [τῶν πρεσβυτέρων] τινῶν, ὡς Ἀθηναίοις καὶ Λακεδαιμονίοις
 διαφορᾶς γενομένης συνέβαινεν αἰὲ τῇ πόλει ἡμῶν ὥστε 5
 καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν ὅποτε μάχῃ γένοιτο
 δυστυχεῖν καὶ μηδέποτε δύνασθαι κρατῆσαι· τοὺς οὖν Ἀθη-
 ναίους ἀγανακτοῦντας τῷ πράγματι καὶ ἀπορουμένους τίνοι
 χρὴ μηχανῇ τῶν παρόντων κακῶν ἀποτροπὴν εὑρεῖν, βου- e
 λενομένοις αὐτοῖς δοκεῖν κράτιστον εἶναι πέμψαντας πρὸς

b1 λήσῃ Buttman: λήσῃ BT b2 τὰ ἀγαθὰ B: ἀγαθὰ T b3 παλινωδεῖ
 ἀνευχόμενος t: παλινωδιαν εὐχόμενος BT ἅττ' ἂν B: ἅττα T b5 πλεόν B:
 πλείων T b6 δειλὰ Buttman: δεινὰ T: δηλα B b8 ἔμοιγε B: ἐμοὶ μὲν τοι T
 b9 λακεδαμόνιοι B: λακεδαμόνιοι οἱ T c2 καὶ ἰδίᾳ T: ἰδίᾳ B c4 αἰ] αἰ
 Buttman πλείω scripsi: πλείων B: πλείον T c6 οὐδένων T: οὐδὲν ὦν B c7 οὐ
 add. corr. Laur. lxxxv. 6 d1 ὥστε οἶμαι B: οἶμαι ὥστε T d4 τῶν πρεσβυτέρων
 seclusi: τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἢ τινων B: πρεσβυτέρων τινῶν T: τῶν πρεσβυτέρων
 τινὸς Cobet d6 ὅποτε B: ὅπότ' ἂν T

and truly in need of much caution, lest one should, without noticing it, pray for bad things while thinking them the good things, and then, after waiting a little, as you too were saying, sing a palinode, unpraying whatever he prayed for at first.¹

soc. Is it not, then, because he knew something more than we do that the poet, whom I mentioned at the beginning of the argument too, bade Zeus ward off the wretched things even when we pray?²

ALC. I think so.

soc. This poet, then, Alcibiades, the Spartans too have emulated, or else they have looked into it in this way themselves, and both in private and in public they pray on each occasion a like prayer, bidding the gods give them in their turn the fine things on top of the good; and no one would hear them pray for more. And so up to the present time they are no less fortunate than any people; and if it has after all happened to them not to be fortunate in everything, still it is not because of their prayer; it lies with the gods, I think, both to give whatever one in fact prays for and the opposite of it.³ I wish to tell you something else too, which I once heard from certain people:⁴ how, when a quarrel arose between the Athenians and the Spartans, it always happened to our city, whenever a battle took place by land or by sea, to be unfortunate and never able to win; so the Athenians, vexed at the matter and at a loss by what device they should find a way out of the bad things they had, deliberated, and it seemed best to them to send to

1. Burnet prints a later hand's correction in T, "sing a palinode, unpraying", the words of 142d, but with the verb in the subjunctive that "lest" requires, where that hand has the indicative; B and T have "praying a palinode" (apparatus b3).

2. Buttmann's *deila*, "the wretched things", as at 143a; T has *deina*, "the dreadful things", and B *dēla*, "the plain things" (apparatus b6).

3. Plutarch reports the same prayer among the customs of the Spartans: that the gods give "the fine things on top of the good", and nothing more (*Instituta Laconica*, "Spartan Customs", 27, *Moralia* 239a). The "not" is a correction written into a Florentine manuscript (apparatus c7).

4. Burnet brackets "the older men" here as an addition: B has "from the older men or from certain people", T "from certain older men" (apparatus d4).

Ἄμμωνα ἐκείνον ἐπερωτᾶν· ἔτι δὲ πρὸς τούτοις τάδε, [καί] 5
 ἀνθ' ὅτου ποτὲ Λακεδαιμονίοις οἱ θεοὶ μᾶλλον νίκην διδόασιν
 ἢ σφίσιν αὐτοῖς, οἳ πλείστας, φάναι, μὲν θυσίας καὶ καλ- 5
 λίστας τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἄγομεν, ἀναθήμασί τε κεκοσμήκαμεν
 τὰ ἱερὰ αὐτῶν ὥς οὐδένες ἄλλοι, πομπάς τε πολυτελεστάτας
 καὶ σεμνοτάτας ἐδωρούμεθα τοῖς θεοῖς ἀν' ἕκαστον ἔτος, καὶ 149
 ἐτελοῦμεν χρήματα ὅσα οὐδ' ἄλλοι σύμπαντες Ἕλληνες·
 Λακεδαιμονίοις δέ, φάναι, οὐδεπώποτ' ἐμέλυσεν οὐδὲν τού-
 των, ἀλλ' οὕτως ὀλιγώρως διάκεινται πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς, ὥστε
 καὶ ἀνάπηρα θύουσιν ἐκάστοτε καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα οὐκ ὀλίγω 5
 ἐνδεεστερώς τιμῶσιν ἢπερ ἡμεῖς, χρήματα οὐδὲν ἐλάττω
 κεκτημένοι τῆς ἡμετέρας πόλεως. ἐπεὶ δὴ εἰρηκέναι ταῦτα
 καὶ ἐπερωτῆσαι τί χρὴ πράττοντας αὐτοὺς τῶν παρόντων
 κακῶν ἀπαλλαγὴν εὑρεῖν, ἄλλο μὲν οὐθὲν ἀποκριθῆναι τὸν 5
 προφήτην—τὸν γὰρ θεὸν οὐκ ἔαν δῆλον ὅτι—καλέσαντα δὲ
 αὐτόν, Ἀθηναίοις, φάναι, τάδε λέγει Ἄμμων· φησὶν ἂν 5
 βούλεσθαι αὐτῷ τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων εὐφημίαν εἶναι μᾶλλον
 ἢ τὰ σύμπαντα τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἱερά. τοσαῦτα εἰπεῖν, οὐκέτι
 περαιτέρω. τὴν γ' οὖν εὐφημίαν οὐκ ἄλλην τινά μοι δοκεῖ 5
 λέγειν ὁ θεὸς ἢ τὴν εὐχὴν αὐτῶν· ἔστι γὰρ τῷ ὄντι πολὺ
 διαφέρουσα τῶν ἄλλων. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι Ἕλληνες οἱ 5
 μὲν χρυσόκερως βοῦς παραστησάμενοι, ἕτεροι δ' ἀναθήμασι
 δωρούμενοι τοὺς θεοὺς, εὐχονται ἅττ' ἂν τύχῃ ταῦτα, ἄντε
 ἀγαθὰ ἄντε κακὰ· βλασφημούντων οὖν αὐτῶν ἀκούοντες οἱ 5
 θεοὶ οὐκ ἀποδέχονται τὰς πολυτελεῖς ταυτασὶ πομπάς τε
 καὶ θυσίας. ἀλλὰ δοκεῖ μοι πολλῆς φυλακῆς δεῖσθαι καὶ
 σκέψεως ὅτι ποτὲ ῥητέον ἐστὶ καὶ μῆ.

e 3 ἔτι T: τι B τάδε Cobet: ταδ ει και B: τάδε και T: και τάδε Stallbaum e 4 ποτὲ T: om. B e 5 αὐτοῖς secl. Cobet e 6 ἀναθήμασι T: ἀναθέμασι B a 1 ἄλλοι scripsi: ἄλλοι B: οἱ ἄλλοι T a 4 ὀλίγω t: ὀλίγως BT a 5 ἢπερ recc.: ἢ εἴπερ BT χρήματα οὐδὲν ἐλάττω B: οὐδὲν ἐλάττω χρήματα T a 6 ἐπειδὴ B: ἐπεὶ T: ἐπεὶ δ' Schanz a 7 καὶ B: τε καὶ T b 2 ἀθηναίοις φάναι T: φάναι ἀθηναίοις φάναι B: Ἀθηναίους φάναι Hemsterhuis b 5 γοῦν BT: δ' οὖν Sauppe b 6 ἔστι T: ἔτι B c 5 ταυτασὶ B: ταύτας T

Ammon and ask him; and further, besides these things, this: why on earth the gods give victory to the Spartans rather than to themselves, we who, he said, offer the most and the finest sacrifices of the Greeks, and have adorned the gods' temples with offerings as no others have, and every year presented the gods with the most costly and most solemn processions, and paid out as much money 149 as not even all the other Greeks together did; but the Spartans, he said, have never cared about any of this; no, they are so neglectfully disposed toward the gods that they even sacrifice maimed victims on each occasion, and in all else honor them by no small amount less fully than we, though they possess no less money than our city.¹ When he had said this and asked what they must do to find a release from the bad things they had, the prophet answered nothing else—for the god, evidently, did not allow it—but called him and said: Thus says Ammon to the Athenians: he says he would rather have the Spartans' auspicious speech than all the rites of the Greeks together. This much he said, and nothing further. Now by the auspicious speech the god, I think, means nothing other than their prayer; for it really is very different from the others'. For c the other Greeks, some having brought forward oxen with gilded horns, others presenting the gods with offerings, pray for whatever comes, whether good or bad; so the gods, hearing them speak ill-omened words, do not accept these costly processions and sacrifices. But it seems to me to need much caution and looking into, what on earth one should say and what not.²

1. Ammon was Zeus Ammon, whose oracle stood at the oasis of Siwa in the Libyan desert. No other ancient author tells of this consultation. Plutarch tells of others: Cimon sent to Ammon in secret during his last campaign (*Cimon* 18.6–7), and before the Sicilian expedition an oracle was brought from Ammon that the Athenians would take all the Syracusans, while contrary oracles were hidden for fear of ill-omened speech (*Nicias* 13.1).

2. *Euphēmia*, "auspicious speech", and *blasphēmein*, "to speak ill-omened words", are opposites from the language of worship, where ill-omened words were forbidden (see 140c, 143d).

Εὐρήσεις δὲ καὶ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ ἕτερα παραπλήσια τούτοις εἰρημένα. φησὶν γὰρ τοὺς Τρῶας ἔπαυλιν ποιουμένους d

ἔρδειν ἀθανάτοισι τελεέσσας ἐκατόμβας·

τὴν δὲ κνῖσαν ἐκ τοῦ πεδίου τοὺς ἀνέμους φέρειν οὐρανὸν εἴσω

ἡδεῖαν· τῆς δ' οὐ τι θεοὺς μάκαρας δατέεσθαι, 5

οὐδ' ἐθέλειν· μάλα γάρ σφιν ἀπήχθετο Ἴλιος ἱρή

καὶ Πριάμος καὶ λαὸς ἐνμμελίῳ Πριάμοιο· e

ὥστε οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς ἦν προύργου θύειν τε καὶ δῶρα τελεῖν μάτην, θεοῖς ἀπηχθημένους. οὐ γὰρ οἶμαι τοιοῦτόν ἐστι τὸ τῶν θεῶν ὥστε ὑπὸ δώρων παράγεσθαι οἶον κακὸν τοκιστήν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡμεῖς εὐήθη λόγον λέγομεν, ἀξιοῦντες 5

Λακεδαιμονίων ταύτη περιεῖναι. καὶ γὰρ ἂν δεινὸν εἶη εἰ πρὸς τὰ δῶρα καὶ τὰς θυσίας ἀποβλέπουσιν ἡμῶν οἱ θεοὶ ἀλλὰ μὴ πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν, ἂν τις ὅσιος καὶ δίκαιος ὦν τυγχάνῃ. πολλῶ γε μᾶλλον οἶμαι ἢ πρὸς τὰς πολυτελεῖς 150 ταύτας πομπάς τε καὶ θυσίας, αἷς οὐδὲν κωλύει πολλὰ μὲν εἰς θεοὺς, πολλὰ δ' εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἡμαρτηκότητας καὶ ιδιώτην καὶ πόλιν ἔχειν ἀν' ἕκαστον ἔτος τελεῖν· οἱ δέ, ἅτε οὐ δωροδόκοι ὄντες, καταφρονοῦσιν ἀπάντων τούτων, ὥς φησιν 5 ὁ θεὸς καὶ θεῶν προφήτης. κινδυνεύει γοῦν καὶ παρὰ θεοῖς καὶ παρ' ἀνθρώποις τοῖς νοῦν ἔχουσι δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ φρόνησις διαφερόντως τετιμῆσθαι· φρόνιμοι δὲ καὶ b δίκαιοι οὐκ ἄλλοι τινές εἰσιν [ἦ] τῶν εἰδότεων ἃ δεῖ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν καὶ πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους. βουλοίμην δ' ἂν καὶ σοῦ πυθέσθαι ὅτι ποτ' ἐν νῶ ἔχεις πρὸς ταῦτα.

ΑΛ. Ἄλλ' ἐμοὶ μέν, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐκ ἄλλη πη δοκεῖ ἢ 5 ἥπερ σοί τε καὶ τῷ θεῷ· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν εἰκὸς εἶη ἀντίβηφον ἐμὲ τῷ θεῷ γενέσθαι.

e 2 ἦν προύργου B: προύργου ἦν T a 1 γε B: om. T a 6 (ὁ) θεῶν Buttmann προφήτης T: προφήταις B: προφήται Baiter b 2 ἦ del. Winckelmann b 3 λέγειν καὶ T: λέγειν B b 5 μέν T: om. B b 6 ἥπερ t: εἴπερ BT b 7 γενέσθαι B: γίγνεσθαι T

And you will find other things like these said in Homer too. For d
he says that the Trojans, making their camp,

offered the immortals perfect hecatombs,

and that “the winds carried the savor from the plain into the
heaven”,

*sweet; but the blessed gods took no share of it,
nor were willing to; for greatly hateful to them was holy Ilium,
and Priam, and the people of Priam of the good ash spear;* e

so that it was of no use to them to sacrifice and to pay gifts in vain,
hated as they were by the gods.¹ For I do not think the way of the
gods is such as to be led astray by gifts, like a bad moneylender; no,
we too are making a simple argument when we claim to surpass
the Spartans in this.² For it would be a dreadful thing if the gods
looked to our gifts and sacrifices and not to the soul, whether some- 150
one is in fact holy and just: much more, I think, than to these costly
processions and sacrifices, which nothing prevents a private per-
son and a city alike from being able to pay every year, though they
have made many mistakes against gods and many against men; but
the gods, since they are not takers of gifts, despise all this, as the
god and the prophet of the gods say. It looks, at any rate, as though
justice and intelligence are held in especial honor both by gods and b
by men who have sense; and the intelligent and the just are no oth-
ers than those who know what they must do and say, both toward
gods and toward men. I should like to find out from you too what
on earth you have in your mind to set against this.

ALC. Well, Socrates, to me it seems no other way than it does to
you and to the god; for it would not be fitting for me to cast my
vote against the god.

1. *Iliad* 8.548–552, the Trojans camped on the plain. Of these lines only the one Socrates turns into prose (549) stands at this place in the manuscripts of Homer; the others are not there, though 552 recurs elsewhere in the *Iliad* (4.47, 4.165, 6.449). Burnet spaces the words of 549 that Socrates keeps. The Trojans’ “perfect” hecatombs can be read as answering the Spartans’ “maimed” victims.

2. *Euēthēs*, “simple”, was one of the most auspicious names for the unintelligent at 140c.

ΣΩ. Οὐκοῦν μέμνησαι ἐν πολλῇ ἀπορίᾳ φάσκων εἶναι, ὅπως μὴ λάθῃς σεαυτὸν εὐχόμενος κακά, δοκῶν δὲ ἀγαθὰ;

ΑΛ. Ἐγωγε.

ΣΩ. Ὅρᾳς οὖν ὡς οὐκ ἀσφαλές σοί ἐστιν ἐλθεῖν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εὐξομένῳ, ἵνα μὴδ' ἂν οὕτω τύχῃ, βλασφημοῦντός σου ἀκούων οὐθὲν ἀποδέξεται τῆς θυσίας ταύτης, τυχὸν δὲ καὶ ἕτερόν τι προσαπολαύσης. ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν δοκεῖ βέλτιστον εἶναι ἡσυχίαν ἔχειν· τῇ μὲν γὰρ Λακεδαιμονίων εὐχῇ διὰ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν—τοῦτο γὰρ κάλλιστον τῶν ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ γε ὀνομάτων—οὐκ ἂν οἶμαί σε ἐθέλειν χρησθαι. ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἐστὶ περιμένειν ἕως ἄν τις μάθῃ ὡς δεῖ πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους διακεῖσθαι.

ΑΛ. Πότε οὖν παρέσται ὁ χρόνος οὗτος, ᾧ Σώκρατες, καὶ τίς ὁ παιδεύσων; ἥδιστα γὰρ ἂν μοι δοκῶ ἰδεῖν τοῦτον τὸν ἄνθρωπον τίς ἐστιν.

ΣΩ. Οὗτος ᾧ μέλει περὶ σοῦ. ἀλλὰ δοκεῖ μοι, ὥσπερ τῷ Διομήδει φησὶν τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν Ὅμηρος ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀφελεῖν τὴν ἀχλύν,

ὅφρ' εὖ γινώσκοι ἡμὲν θεὸν ἡδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα, οὕτω καὶ σοὶ δεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πρῶτον τὴν ἀχλὺν ἀφελόντα, ἣ νῦν παρούσα τυγχάνει, τὸ τηνικαῦτ' ἥδη προσφέρειν δι' ὧν μέλλεις γνῶσεσθαι ἡμὲν κακὸν ἡδὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν. νῦν μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν μοι δοκεῖς δυνηθῆναι.

ΑΛ. Ἀφαιρείτω, εἴτε βούλεται τὴν ἀχλὺν εἴτε ἄλλο τι ὡς ἐγὼ παρεσκεύασμαι μὴθὲν ἂν φυγεῖν τῶν ὑπ' ἐκείνου προσταττομένων, ὅστις ποτ' ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, εἴ γε μέλλοιμι βελτίων γενέσθαι.

c4 εὐξομένῳ recc.: εὐχομένῳ B: εὐξαμένῳ T c6 βέλτιστον B: κράτιστον T
c8 ἐν] ἐπ' Sauppe c9 γε T: om. B d6 ᾧ μέλε παρὰ σοί Naber e1 σοὶ B:
σοῦ T τὴν ἀχλὺν ἀφελόντα B: ἀφελόντα τὴν ἀχλὺν T e3 μέλλεις B:
μέλλει T e6 παρεσκεύασμαι T: παρασκεύασμαι B φυγεῖν B: φεύγειν T
e7 προσταττομένων T: πραττομένων B ἄνθρωπος Schanz: ἄνθρωπος B:
ὁ ἄνθρωπος T μέλλοιμι T: μέλλοι μὴ B

soc. Then do you remember saying that you were in great perplexity, lest you should, without noticing it, pray for bad things while thinking them good? c

ALC. I do.

soc. You see, then, that it is not safe for you to go to the god to pray, in case, as may happen, he hears you speaking ill-omened words and accepts nothing of this sacrifice of yours, and you even come in, perhaps, for something else besides. So I think it best to keep quiet; for the Spartans' prayer, I think, you would not be willing to use, because of your greatness of soul—for this is the finest of the names in unintelligence, at least.¹ So it is necessary to wait until one learns how one must be disposed toward gods and toward men. d

ALC. When, then, will that time be here, Socrates, and who is to educate me? For I think I should most gladly see who this man is.

soc. The man who cares about you.² But I think that, just as Homer says Athena took the mist from the eyes of Diomedes,

so that he might know well both god and man,

so he must first take from your soul the mist that is in fact present in it now, and then at last apply the things through which you are going to know both bad and good. For as things are, I think, you would not be able to.³ e

ALC. Let him take it away, the mist or anything else he wishes; for I am prepared to shrink from none of the things he orders, whoever on earth the man is, if only I am to become better.

1. At 140c "great-souled" was the first of "the most auspicious names" for the unintelligent.

2. Socrates does not say who this is. It can be read as Socrates himself, who in the *Alcibiades I* tells Alcibiades that his distinction will come to him "through no one else but me" (124c), and is the one lover who does not "go away" (131d–e); Alcibiades, ready to obey the man whoever he is (150e), crowns Socrates at 151a–b.

3. *Iliad* 5.127–128, where Athena says to Diomedes, "I have taken from your eyes the mist that was on them before, so that you may know well both god and man." Socrates gives the line in the third person, and its formula again in "both bad and good".

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ μὴν κάκεῖνος θαυμαστὴν ὅσῃν περὶ σέ 151
προθυμίαν ἔχει.

ΑΛ. Εἰς τότε τοῖνυν καὶ τὴν θυσίαν ἀναβάλλεσθαι
κράτιστον εἶναί μοι δοκεῖ.

ΣΩ. Καὶ ὀρθῶς γέ σοι δοκεῖ· ἀσφαλέστερον γάρ ἐστιν 5
ἢ παρακινδυνεύειν τοσοῦτον κίνδυνον.

ΑΛ. Ἀλλὰ πῶς, ὦ Σώκρατες; καὶ μὴν τουτονὶ τὸν
στέφανον, ἐπειδὴ μοι δοκεῖς καλῶς συμβεβουλευκέναι, σοὶ
περιθήσω· τοῖς θεοῖς δὲ καὶ στεφάνους καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα b
τὰ νομιζόμενα τότε δώσομεν, ὅταν ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν
ἐλθοῦσαν ἴδω. ἤξει δ' οὐ διὰ μακροῦ τούτων θελόντων.

ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ δέχομαι καὶ τοῦτο, καὶ ἄλλο δὲ ἂν τι τῶν
παρὰ σοῦ δοθέντων ἡδέως ἴδοιμι δεξάμενον ἐμαντόν. ὥσπερ 5
δὲ καὶ ὁ Κρέων Εὐριπίδῃ πεποιήται τὸν Τειρεσίαν ἰδὼν
ἔχοντα τὰ στέφη καὶ ἀκούσας ἀπὸ τῶν πολεμίων ἀπαρχὰς
αὐτὸν εἰληφέναι διὰ τὴν τέχνην,

οἶωνόν ἐθέμην, φησί, καλλίνικα (σὰ) στέφη·

ἐν γὰρ κλύδωνι κείμεθ', ὥσπερ οἶσθα σύ· 10

οὕτω δὲ καγὼ παρὰ σοῦ τὴν δόξαν ταύτην οἶωνόν τίθεμαι.
δοκῶ δέ μοι οὐκ ἐν ἐλάττονι κλύδωνι τοῦ Κρέοντος εἶναι, c
καὶ βουλοίμην ἂν καλλίνικος γενέσθαι τῶν σῶν ἐραστῶν.

a1 κάκεῖνος T: ἐκεῖνος B a8 συμβεβουλευκέναι B: σε συμβουλευκέναι T
b4 ἂν τι corr. Coisl.: ἀντὶ BT b7 ἀπὸ T: ὑπὸ B b9 σὰ Euripides Phoen. 858:
om. BT b10 κείμεθα B: διακείμεθα T b11 δόξαν] δωρεὰν Ast: δόσιν Buttmann
c2 ἂν T: om. B

soc. And indeed he too has a wonderful eagerness about you. 151

ALC. Then I think it best to put off the sacrifice too until then.

soc. And you are right to think so; for it is safer than to run so great a risk.

ALC. But how, then, Socrates? And now this wreath here, since I think you have advised me well, I will put on you; and to the gods we shall give wreaths and all the other customary things then, when I see that day come. And it will come before long, if they are willing. b

soc. Well, I accept this too, and I would gladly see myself accept anything else that you gave. And just as Creon in Euripides, seeing Teiresias wearing his garlands and hearing that he had received first-fruits from the enemy, because of his craft,

*I took as an omen, he says, your garlands of fair victory;
for we lie in a rough sea, as you know;*

so I too take this opinion from you as an omen.¹ And I think I am in no less rough a sea than Creon, and I should like to be the fair victor over your lovers. c

1. Euripides, *Phoenician Women* 858–859, from which Burnet supplies “your” (apparatus b9). Teiresias has come from Athens, where, as he tells Creon, he made the Athenians victors over Eumolpus, and he wears the crown he received as first-fruits of the spoils (852–857). *Doxa*, “opinion”, is here taken as Alcibiades’ good opinion of Socrates’ advice (151a), which the wreath shows; Ast and Buttmann would read “gift” (apparatus b11).

OUTLINE

The divisions follow the argument. References are to Stephanus pages and sections, which stand in the margins of both pages of the text.

I. THE ERRAND AND THE DANGER (138A–C)

- 138a** Socrates meets Alcibiades “on your way to pray to the god”, with a gloomy face and his eyes on the ground: he is pondering, Socrates says, “The greatest pondering of all”.
- 138b** The gods give some of the things we pray for and not others, and to some of us and not to others; so forethought is needed, “lest one should, without noticing it, pray for things that are very bad while thinking them good”, and the gods should give it.
- 138c** Oedipus prayed that his sons might divide their inheritance “with the bronze”: when he could have prayed for a way out of the bad things he had, “he called down others on top of those he had already”.

II. MADNESS AND UNINTELLIGENCE (138C–140D)

- 138c–139a** Alcibiades: “But you, Socrates, have spoken of a mad-man”. Being mad is the opposite of being intelligent. Some men are intelligent, some unintelligent, others mad, as some are healthy and others sick, with none in neither condition.
- 139a–c** Nor is there a third condition between intelligence and unintelligence; and one thing cannot have two opposites. “Then it looks as though unintelligence and madness are the same.”
- 139c–d** But the many are unintelligent, and living among so many madmen we would long ago have been “struck and pelted”. “But see, my dear fellow: perhaps this is not so.”
- 139d–140c** All ophthalmia is disease, but not all disease ophthalmia, and the diseases differ in what they bring about; shoemakers, carpenters and sculptors are all craftsmen, but the craftsmen are not all carpenters.
- 140c–d** “In the same way, then, men have divided unintelligence among them too”: madness, idiots and thunderstruck, and “the

most auspicious names", great-souled, simple, innocent, inexperienced and tongue-tied.

III. WHO ARE THE INTELLIGENT? (140D–141D)

- 140d–e** Starting again: the intelligent are "those who know what they must do and say"; those who know neither "will, without noticing it, both say and do what they must not".
- 140e–141a** Oedipus was one of these; and many today, not in anger as he was, pray for bad things while thinking them good.
- 141a–b** If the god offered Alcibiades the tyranny of Athens, then of all the Greeks, then of all Europe, "that very day", he would "go away overjoyed".
- 141c–d** Yet not "in exchange for your soul", nor if he were going to use it badly: "it is not safe either to accept at random what is given, or to pray oneself that it come about".

IV. PRAYERS THAT HARM (141D–143B)

- 141d–e** Tyrants plotted against and killed; the beloved of Archelaus, tyrant of Macedon, "yesterday and the day before".
- 141e–142b** Generals in exile or dead, or besieged by the informers, so that "some of them pray to be men who were never generals rather than men who have been".
- 142b–c** Parents who prayed for children and then grieved for them.
- 142c–d** Few refuse what is given or stop praying; the many pray for what harms them, and then "sing a palinode, unpraying whatever they prayed for at first".
- 142d–e** Homer's men who "blame" the gods; "whether one should say 'recklessness' or unintelligence".
- 142e–143a** The intelligent poet's prayer for his senseless friends: "King Zeus, the good things, he says, both when we pray and when we pray not, give us; but the wretched things, even when we pray, ward off".
- 143a–b** Alcibiades: ignorance is the cause of many bad things for men; a prayer for the worst things "would truly be like some curse and not a prayer".

V. IGNORANCE THAT IS GOOD (143B–144C)

- 143b–c** A wiser man might say that "there is ignorance of some things, and for some people in some state, that is a good thing".

- 143c–e** Orestes and Alcmaeon. Alcibiades: “Speak auspiciously, for Zeus’ sake, Socrates!” Socrates: had Orestes been intelligent, he would not have dared it; “ignorance of the best ... is, as it seems, a bad thing”.
- 143e–144c** The dagger at Pericles’ door: if Alcibiades were ignorant of his guardian, he would not kill him, nor Orestes his mother; “to be ignorant of such things, at least, is better for those so disposed”.

VI. KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE BEST (144D–146E)

- 144d** The claim: “the possession of the other kinds of knowledge, if someone possesses it without the best, looks as though it seldom benefits and for the most part harms the one who has it”.
- 144d–145a** We act on what we know or think we know; the orators advise the city on war and peace, walls and harbors.
- 145a–c** The intelligent man knows also “when it is better”, in advice, in war, in killing; that is, “the knowledge of the best accompanies him”, which “was the same as the knowledge of the beneficial”.
- 145c–e** The horseman, the boxer and the flute-player know their crafts, but fall “far short” of being intelligent.
- 145e–146b** A commonwealth of experts “without the knowledge of the best and without the one who knows when it is better to use each one of these”: “A sorry one”. Each assigns the largest “part” of it “to that, in which he himself is in fact at his strongest”; it is “full of great confusion and lawlessness”.
- 146b–d** Knowledge profits only if “the *beneficially* accompanies it”; the many have “missed the best”, and it profits them “neither to know anything nor to think they know”.
- 146d–e** Socrates, recalling his claim of 144d: “was I not really shown to be speaking rightly?” Alcibiades: “Even if not then, at any rate now it seems so to me”.

VII. THE PILOT AND THE POET (146E–147E)

- 146e–147b** A city and a soul must hold fast to this knowledge as the sick to a doctor and the sailor to a pilot; without it, the man of “much learning and much craft” will “meet with a great storm”.
- 147b–d** The *Margites*: “he knew many works, but badly”. All poetry is riddling; Homer was “putting *badly* in place of *bad*, and *knew* in place of *to know*”, so that “it was bad for him to know them all”, and *Margites* “was in fact a sorry fellow”.

147e Alcibiades agrees, and then: "It seems the other way to me again."

VIII. WHAT TO PRAY FOR: THE SPARTANS AND AMMON (147E–149C)

147e–148a Socrates names the perplexity: if the god appeared again and offered a choice, "how on earth do you think you would hit the right mark"?

148a–b Alcibiades: "a madcap thing, and truly in need of much caution". Socrates: the poet knew more than we.

148b–d The Spartans' prayer, "the fine things on top of the good", and their good fortune.

148d–149a Athens, always defeated, sends to Ammon to ask why the gods favor the Spartans, who neglect them, over the Athenians and their sacrifices.

149b Ammon's answer: "he would rather have the Spartans' auspicious speech than all the rites of the Greeks together".

149b–c The auspicious speech is their prayer; the other Greeks "pray for whatever comes", and the gods hear them "speak ill-omened words".

IX. THE GODS AND GIFTS (149C–150B)

149c–e Homer's Trojans, whose hecatombs the gods would not share, "hated as they were by the gods".

149e–150a The gods are not "led astray by gifts, like a bad moneylender", but look to the soul, "whether someone is in fact holy and just"; they are "not takers of gifts".

150a–b "justice and intelligence are held in especial honor"; the intelligent and the just know "what they must do and say, both toward gods and toward men". Alcibiades agrees: "it would not be fitting for me to cast my vote against the god".

X. WAITING FOR THE TEACHER (150B–151C)

150b–d Socrates recalls Alcibiades' perplexity: it is not safe for him to pray, for the god may hear ill-omened words. The Spartans' prayer he would not be willing to use, Socrates says, "because of your greatness of soul"; he must wait "until one learns how one must be disposed toward gods and toward men".

150d–e Who will teach him? "The man who cares about you", who must first take the mist from his soul, as Athena took it from the eyes of Diomedes.

- 150e–151a** Alcibiades will shrink from nothing that man orders, and puts off the sacrifice.
- 151a–c** The wreath: Socrates accepts it and, as Creon in Euripides took Teiresias' garlands as an omen, takes "this opinion from you as an omen"; he would be "the fair victor over your lovers".

EDITORIAL NOTE

The Greek text. The Greek is John Burnet's, from the second volume of his Oxford Classical Text of Plato (1901), in which the *Alcibiades II* follows the *Alcibiades I*. The copy reproduced is the one used for the *Alcibiades I* of this series: a later impression, undated, printed at Oxford by John Johnson as Printer to the University and published by Humphrey Milford, and so made between 1925 and 1945. It carries Burnet's preface of March 1901 and a short addendum of April 1910 that concerns the *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*. The text is reproduced page for page and line for line: each left-hand page of this edition is one page of Burnet, with his line-ends, his marginal section letters and line numbers, and his apparatus criticus at the foot. The line numbers were counted afresh and agree with his, except in section 146: its first three lines stand on page 14, so that the first line of page 15 should be e4, but Burnet's count there starts at 3 (his 5 stands against the third line, and his apparatus keys $\delta\omicron\kappa\epsilon\iota$ in the first line as e3); since his margin and his apparatus keys both follow his count, the edition follows it too. The words were taken from the Perseus Digital Library's digital transcription of Burnet, and every line was then checked against the photographs of this copy; where the two differ, this edition prints what Burnet printed. Burnet's paragraphing (a new, indented paragraph at each change of speaker, and once within a speech, at 149c), his abbreviations of the speakers' names ($\Sigma\Omega$. for Socrates, $\Lambda\Lambda$. for Alcibiades), his capitals at the openings of speeches and paragraphs, his letterspacing of quoted words, and his setting of quoted verse as verse (143a, 146a, 149d–e, 150d, 151b) are kept. In his text, square brackets [] enclose words he believed spurious: his own deletion at 148d4 (*seclusi*), and two scholars' deletions that he accepts, Cobet's of $\kappa\alpha\iota$ at 148e3 and Winckelmann's of $\tilde{\eta}$ at 150b2. Angle brackets < > enclose words that B and T lack and that he supplies, by conjecture (Sauppe's repeated $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron$ and Dobree's $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda'$ at 141b2–3), from a corrector of a later manuscript ($\omicron\upsilon$ at 148c7), or from the text of the poet quoted ($\sigma\acute{\alpha}$ at 151b9, from Euripides). A word that B and T lack but an ancient author's quotation preserves is printed without brackets ($\acute{\alpha}\nu$ at 143b2, from Priscian).

Reading the apparatus. The notes at the foot of each Greek page are Burnet's, unaltered, including what appear to be faults of printing: T's οἰόν at 139a13 lacks the circumflex that B's οἶόν has in the same entry. Entries are keyed by section letter and line as numbered in the margin, so that "a 4" is the fourth line of section a. The section letters begin again with each Stephanus page, so that on page 2, which runs from 138c to 139a, "a 7" after "c 9" belongs to 139a. A further entry on the same line follows after a wider space without repeating the key. Usually the reading printed in the text comes first, followed by the witnesses that have it; a colon separates it from the alternatives, each followed by its witnesses. Where the text's reading is followed by a square bracket, the witnesses for the text are not listed and only the alternatives are given. An entry with no colon reports a single proposal without listing the witnesses for the text: an alternative (ὡμολόγητο Stephanus, 140d10), a deletion (140d9), a repetition (141b2) or an addition (141b3). Where Burnet adopts such a proposal the text shows it, in angle brackets for an addition (141b2–3, 148c7) and in square brackets for a deletion (150b2); otherwise the text keeps the manuscripts' words (140d9, 140d10, 143a4). Where the text joins readings of different witnesses, the entry lists only theirs: at 139a13 Burnet prints εἰ δοκεῖ σοι οἶόν τε, B's εἰ with T's δοκεῖ σοι. The apparatus reports each witness's own spelling, which may differ from the text's without being a different reading (νίεις in the entry at 138c1 against the text's ὑείς in the next line; ξυμβεβουλευκέναι at 151a8 against the text's συμβεβουλευκέναι). A word of the text is sometimes shortened to its first letter when the variants concern only the words beside it: at 141c2 "τε καὶ β." is τε καὶ βαρβάρων. Punctuation inside an entry belongs to the reading reported: Dobree's αὐτῶν· at 141b5 also puts a stop after the word. Letters printed small above a word stand above it in the manuscript: in T, πολυ over the φιλο of φιλοτεχνίαν at 147a5, and a δ over the last letter of ἐπεί at 149a6. A dot over a letter reproduces a dot in the manuscript, the usual sign that the letter is to be deleted: B's προφήταις at 150a6 has one over its final letter. *Huc transposuit*, "moved here", and *ante ... habent*, "have before ...", report a change in the order of words (147a1).

Names and abbreviations. Stephanus is Henri Estienne, whose edition of 1578 supplies the page numbers by which Plato is cited; the *Alcibiades II* fills pages 138–151 of his second volume. The other names, apart from the ancient authors and Ficino (below), are of modern scholars, cited for the reading of their editions or for a conjecture: editors of Plato's works (Bekker, Ast, Stallbaum,

Baiter, Winckelmann, Hermann and Schanz); Schleiermacher, Plato's German translator; Buttmann, whose edition of four dialogues, the *Meno*, the *Crito* and both *Alcibiades*, included this one; and others who proposed corrections (Hemsterhuis, Lennep, Dobree, Hirschig, Köppen, Sauppe, Schneider, J. G. Schneider, Struve, Cobet, Naber and Apelt), some of whom also edited dialogues of Plato. Burnet keeps apart men of the same surname: J. G. Schneider from Schneider here, and, elsewhere in the volume, G. Hermann from Hermann. Priscianus and Ficinus are the Latin forms of the names of Priscian and Marsilio Ficino. A scholar's name standing alone after a reading marks that scholar's reading, from his edition or a study: at 140d10 the pluperfect *ὡμολόγητο* is the reading of Stephanus' edition, at 138b7 *λήσει τις* Bekker's. *ci.* marks a conjecture he proposed (Stallbaum at 139a13). *scripsi*, "I have written", marks Burnet's own correction (139a11), and *seclusi*, "I have bracketed", his own deletion (148d4). *add.*, "added", marks an addition: a scholar's (Dobree's *ἀλλ'* at 141b3), a corrector's in a later manuscript (the *οὐ* at 148c7), or an ancient author's (*add. Priscianus* at 143b2, the *ἄν* that Priscian's quotation has and B and T lack); Burnet prints all three, the first two in angle brackets. *bis scripsit*, "wrote twice", marks a repetition (Sauppe's *καὶ τοῦτο* at 141b2, which Burnet prints in angle brackets). *del.*, "deleted", marks a scholar's deletion: Burnet keeps the *οὐ* that Hirschig would delete at 140d9, and brackets the *ἦ* that Winckelmann deletes at 150b2. *secl.*, "bracketed", marks a scholar's judgement that words are spurious; Burnet reports six (143a4, 144a3, 144b1, 144b5, 145d9, 148e5) and follows none, so that *κελεύει*, which Köppen brackets at 143a4, stands in his text. Words in angle brackets inside an entry are a scholar's supplement (Buttmann's *δὲ* at 143d5 and *ὁ* at 150a6), and *vel*, "or", gives a second proposal (Dobree's *οὐς* or *ὦν* at 145e5). *om.* means that a witness leaves the words out. *cf.*, "compare", points to a related place (148b6 at 143a3). At 146a6, where the verse is also quoted in the *Gorgias*, *hic* is "here", in *Gorgia* 484 e "in the *Gorgias* at 484e", and in *Gorgia loc. cit.* and *Gorg. loc. cit.* "in the *Gorgias* at the place cited". A name in parentheses after a conjecture gives a witness that supports it: at 142a5 Dobree's *αὐτῇ* is supported by Marsilio Ficino's Latin translation of Plato (1484).

The witnesses. Burnet's apparatus to this dialogue rests on two manuscripts: B, the Bodleian Plato (MS. E. D. Clarke 39, written in 895), and T, the Venice manuscript (Marcianus, Append. Class. 4, cod. 1). W, the Vienna manuscript, which his list of sigla also gives

and which he cites in the *Alcibiades I*, does not appear here. Later hands in B and T are marked b and t, as the list says: b at 139a11 (in "Tb", T together with a later hand in B) and 146b9, t at 143c9, 143e9, 145b2, 148b3, 149a4 and 150b6. "rec. t" (142d6, 143c4), which the list does not explain, appears to mark a still later hand in T; *pr.* is a manuscript's first hand, before correction (144d6). Letters written together share a reading, so that "BT" is B and T. *recc.* (*recentiores*) are later manuscripts in general (140b2, 141d4, 142a6, 143e8, 146a8, 149a5, 150c4), *al.* (*alii*) other manuscripts (143c9), and *vulg.* (*vulgata*) the text of the early printed editions (141c10). Four later manuscripts are named for a corrector's reading (*corr.*): the Coislinianus 155 in Paris (141c10, 143a7, 151b4), the Venetus 184 (145b2), the Parisinus 1812 (147d4) and a manuscript of the Laurentian Library at Florence, Laur. lxxxv. 6 (148c7). Burnet's preface says that the men who corrected the Coislinianus 155 and the Venetus 189 were learned readers after the revival of letters who anticipated many emendations of Heindorf and others, and that their readings rest on conjecture, not on tradition; it does not name the other three. Of ancient authors Burnet cites the anthologist Stobaeus (fifth century AD) for readings at 140e8, 145e4–5 and 146d7; the Neoplatonist Proclus (fifth century), whose commentary on the *Republic* quotes 142e–143a (I 187.26–188.8 in Kroll's edition), for his *λυγπά*, "baneful", in the couplet at 143a3; and the Latin grammarian Priscian (about AD 500), whose quotation of 143b2 has the *ἄν* that B and T omit. At 146a6 he cites the *Gorgias* (484e), where the same line of Euripides' *Antiope* is quoted, and at 151b9 he supplies *σά* from the text of Euripides (*Phoenician Women* 858) that Socrates quotes.

The English. The translation is new. It aims to be exact, with every clause answering to a clause of the Greek, and to keep Socrates' manner: his irony, his patience with a proud young man, and the timing of the short exchanges. Nothing is added to make it livelier; where a joke depends on the Greek, a note explains it. Each speech opens with the speaker's name in small capitals. Words that Burnet brackets as spurious are not translated; words he prints in angle brackets are, without the brackets. The reading Burnet prints is translated, including his conjectures; where his choice changes the sense, a note says so. Quotation marks in the English answer to Burnet's own marking of a quotation, his letterspacing or his setting of verse, so that at 142d they enclose only the words Socrates takes from Homer, and at 146a they take in "part", which belongs to Euripides' line.

Each right-hand page translates the Greek page opposite. When a sentence runs over the turn of Burnet's page, the English breaks at the nearest point English word order allows. The Stephanus section letters in the margin of the English mark where each section begins.

Key terms. The words on which the argument turns have one rendering each throughout, and the Key Words of the Dialogue explain the chief of them; the Glossary at the back lists them all. As in the *Alcibiades I* of this series, *phronimos* is "intelligent", *aphrōn* "unintelligent", *phronēsis* "intelligence" and *aphrosynē* "unintelligence", so that the family stays one family; *euchesthai* and *euchē* are "pray" and "prayer"; *agnoia* is "ignorance", also where it means failing to recognize someone (144b); *kakos* is "bad", never "evil"; and Socrates' verbs of inquiry are "look into". Where the Greek idiom *tynchanein* with a participle says that something is so, the English has "is in fact".

The notes. The notes identify persons, places and quotations, explain what the English cannot carry, and mark the places where Burnet's choice of reading changes the sense or the words. Interpretations are labelled as such. They are numbered afresh on each page.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

The English words on which the argument depends, in alphabetical order, with the Greek they render and the places where they matter, by Stephanus page. Where a word has a longer entry in the Key Words of the Dialogue, the Glossary says so.

accept, δέχεσθαι, ἀποδέχεσθαι (*dechesthai, apodechesthai*). What the god gives, 141c; the gods do not accept the processions and sacrifices of the other Greeks, 149c, and might accept nothing of Alcibiades' sacrifice, 150c; Socrates accepts the wreath, 151b.

advise, adviser, advice, συμβουλεύειν, σύμβουλος, συμβουλή (*sympouleuein, symboulos, symboulē*). The orators, and "a sufficient adviser both to the city and to himself": 144e–145c; Socrates has "advised me well", 151a.

agree, ὁμολογεῖν (*homologeîn*). The partners' assent, with its tenses kept: 138d, 139b, 140a, 140d.

auspicious: the most auspicious names, εὐφημότατα ὀνόματα (*euphēmōtata onomata*), 140c; **speak auspiciously**, εὐφημεῖν (*euphēmein*), 143d; **auspicious speech**, εὐφημία (*euphēmia*), 149b. See **ill-omened words** and Key Words, *Auspicious speech, ill-omened words*.

bad, bad things, κακός, τὰ κακά (*kakos, ta kaka*). Never "evil": 138b–c, 141a, 141c (*badly*), 142d, 143a–144c, 147b–d (*badly, bad*), 148b, 148e–149a, 149c, 149e, 150c, 150e. See **good** and Key Words, *Good and bad*.

be disposed, διακεῖσθαι (*diakeisthai*). 144c ("those so disposed"), 149a ("neglectfully disposed"), 150d ("how one must be disposed toward gods and toward men").

be ignorant (of), ignorance, ἀγνοεῖν, ἀγνοία (*agnoein, agnoia*). 143a–144c, 147c; of a person, 144b–c. See Key Words, *Ignorance, be ignorant*.

benefit, beneficial, the beneficially, ὠφελεῖν, ὠφέλεια, ὠφέλιμος, ὠφελίμως (*ōphelein, ōpheleia, ōphelimos, ōphelimōs*); **harm**, βλάπτειν, βλαβερῶς (*blaptein, blaberōs*). 141c–d, 142b, 142d, 144d, 145c, 146b, 146d–e. See **profit** and Key Words, *Benefit and harm, profit*.

best, the best, τὸ βέλτιστον (*to beltiston*); **better**, βέλτιον, ἄμεινον (*beltion, ameinon*); **the knowledge of the best**, ἡ τοῦ βελτίστου

- ἐπιστήμη (*hē tou beltistou epistēmē*). 142e, 143b–144a, 144c–d, 145b–146a, 146c, 146e, 150c, 150e. **Best** also renders κράτιστον (*kratiston*), 148e, 151a, and ἄριστα (*arista*) in “fare best”, 142a; **strongest** is κράτιστος in the verse at 146a. See Key Words, *The best, and the knowledge of the best*.
- caution**, φυλακή (*phylakē*), 148b, 149c; **forethought**, προμήθεια (*promētheia*), 138b.
- commonwealth**, πολιτεία (*politeia*). The city of experts: 145e–146b. See Key Words, *Commonwealth, craft*.
- craft**, τέχνη (*technē*); **craftsman**, δημιουργός, τεχνίτης (*dēmiourgos, technitēs*); **craftsmanship**, δημιουργία (*dēmiourgia*). 140b–d, 145d–146a, 151b. **Much craft** is πολυτεχνία (*polytechnia*), 147a. See Key Words, *Commonwealth, craft*.
- curse**, κατὰρα (*katara*), 143b; **call down**, καταρᾶσθαι (*katarasthai*), 138c, with the note. See Key Words, *Pray, prayer*.
- dreadful**, δεινός (*deinos*). 138c, 143d, 149e. See **wretched**.
- fortunate, unfortunate**, εὐτυχής, εὐτυχεῖν, δυστυχεῖν (*eutychēs, eutychein, dystychein*); **ill fortune**, δυστυχία (*dystychia*); **fortune**, τύχη (*tychē*). 142c, 147a, 148c–d. Kept apart from **misfortune**, συμφορά (*symphora*), 142b–c.
- gift**, δῶρον (*dōron*); **takers of gifts**, δωροδοκοί (*dōrodokoi*); **present** (the gods with), δωρεῖσθαι (*dōreisthai*). 148e, 149c, 149e–150a. See Key Words, *Sacrifices, offerings, gifts*.
- give**, διδόναι (*didonai*). What the gods give: 138b, 141c, 142c, 143a, 148a, 148c–e; what Alcibiades will give the gods, and Socrates would accept from him, 151b.
- good, good things**, ἀγαθός, ἀγαθά (*agathos, tagatha*). 138b, 141a–b, 141d, 143c, 144c, 148b–c, 149c, 150c; **the fine things on top of the good**, 148c. At 143a “the good things” renders the poet’s ἐσθλά (*esthla*), and at 150e “good” Homer’s ἐσθλόν (*esthlon*). See **bad** and Key Words, *Good and bad*.
- great-souled**, μεγαλόψυχος (*megalopsychos*), 140c; **greatness of soul**, μεγαλοψυχία (*megalopsychia*), 150c. See Key Words, *Madness, and the names of unintelligence*.
- healthy**, ὑγιαίνειν (*hygiainein*); **ill, disease**, νοσεῖν, νόσος (*nosein, nosos*); **sick**, ἀσθενεῖν (*asthenein*); **condition**, πάθος, πάσχειν (*pathos, paschein*). 138c–140d, 141a, 146e; ὑγιαίνων is also “of sound mind”, 138c, with the note.
- ill-omened words, speak**, βλασφημεῖν (*blasphēmein*). 149c, 150c. See **auspicious** and Key Words, *Auspicious speech, ill-omened words*.
- in fact**: τυγχάνειν (*tynchanein*) with a participle, wherever it occurs

- (138b, 139c, 141a, 142d, 143b, 143d, 146a, 147d, 148a, 148d, 150a, 150e); never “happens to”.
- intelligent, unintelligent**, φρόνιμος, ἄφρων (*phronimos, aphrōn*); **intelligence, being intelligent**, φρόνησις, φρονεῖν (*phronēsis, phronein*); **unintelligence**, ἀφροσύνη (*aphrosynē*). 138c–140e, 142d–e, 143d, 145a–146c, 150b–c. See Key Words, *Intelligent, unintelligent; intelligence, unintelligence*.
- knowledge, kinds of knowledge**, ἐπιστήμη, ἐπιστήμαι (*epistēmē, epistēmai*); **one who has knowledge**, ἐπιστήμων (*epistēmōn*). 144d–147a. **Much learning** is πολυμαθία (*polymathia*), 147a. See **best** and Key Words, *The best*.
- look into**, σκοπεῖν, ἐπισκοπεῖν, σκέπτεσθαι, σκέψις (*skopein, episkopein, skeptesthai, skepsis*). 138d, 140a, 140d, 143e, 144d, 148c, 149c. **Look at** is ἀθρεῖν (*athrein*), 139d.
- mad, be mad, madness, madman**, μαίνεσθαι, μανία (*mainesthai, mania*). 138c–140c. The other names of unintelligence at 140c–d are **idiots**, ἡλίθιοι (*ēlithioi*), **thunderstruck**, ἐμβρόντητοι (*em-brontētoi*), **innocent**, ἄκακοι (*akakoi*), **inexperienced**, ἄπειροι (*apeiroi*), and **tongue-tied**, ἐνεοί (*eneoi*); see **great-souled** and **simple**. See Key Words, *Madness, and the names of unintelligence*.
- madcap**, μάργος (*margos*). 148a, with the note; compare Margites, 147b–d.
- miss**, διαμαρτάνειν (*diamartanein*), 146a, 146c; **mistake, make mistakes**, ἀμαρτήμα, ἀμαρτάνειν (*hamartēma, hamartanein*), 147a, 150a. See Key Words, *The best, and the knowledge of the best*.
- opinion**, δόξα (*doxa*). 144a, 144c, 146a, 146c, 151b. See Key Words, *Sense, opinion*.
- perplexity**, ἀπορία (*aporia*), 147e, 150b; **be at a loss**, ἀπορεῖν, ἀπορεῖσθαι (*aporein, aporeisthai*), 139e, 142d, 148d. See Key Words, *Perplexity*.
- poet**, ποιητής (*poiētēs*); **poetry**, ποιητική (*poiētikē*). 142e–143a, 147b–c, 148b–c. See **speak in riddles** and Key Words, *Poet, riddle*.
- pray, prayer**, εὐχεσθαι, εὐχή (*euchesthai, euchē*); **pray to**, προσεύχεσθαι (*proseuchesthai*); **unpray**, ἀνεύχεσθαι (*aneuchesthai*); **when we pray not**, ἀνευκτος (*aneuktos*); **sing a palinode**, παλινωδεῖν (*palinōidein*). 138a–c, 141a–c, 142a–143b, 148a–d, 149b–c, 150c; the palinode at 142d and 148b. See Key Words, *Pray, prayer*.
- profit**, λυσιτελεῖν (*lysিতেleîn*); **in a profitable state**, λυσιτελούντως ἔχειν (*lysitelountōs echein*). 146b, 146d. See **benefit** and Key Words, *Benefit and harm, profit*.
- sacrifice**, θυσία, θύειν (*thysia, thyein*); **offerings**, ἀναθήματα

(*anathēmata*); **processions**, πομπαί (*pompai*); **temples, rites**, ἱερά (*hiera*); **pay**, τελεῖν (*telein*). 148e–150a, 150c, 151a. See Key Words, *Sacrifices, offerings, gifts*.

sense, νοῦς (*nous*); **senseless**, ἀνόητος (*anoētos*). 142e, 146a, 146c, 150a–b. See Key Words, *Sense, opinion*.

simple, εὐήθης (*euēthēs*). 140c, 149e, with the note. See Key Words, *Madness, and the names of unintelligence*.

sorry, φαῦλος (*phaulos*), of a commonwealth, 146a, and of a person, 147d; **trivial**, of a thing, 141a.

soul, ψυχή (*psychē*). 141c, with the note, 146e, 149e, 150e.

speak in riddles, αἰνίττεσθαι (*ainittesthai*); **riddling**, αἰνιγματώδης (*ainigmatōdēs*). 147b–d. See Key Words, *Poet, riddle*.

think (one knows), οἶσθαι (*oiesthai*); **seem (to know)**, δοκεῖν (*dokein*). Kept apart in “think we know, or really know” and “what he knows or seems to know”: 144d–146d.

tyrant, tyranny, τύραννος, τυραννίς (*tyrannos, tyrannis*). 141a–e, 142c.

wisdom, wise, σοφία, σοφός (*sophia, sophos*). 143b, 147c. Kept apart from **intelligence**.

wish, βούλεσθαι (*boulesthai*). 140c, 141b–c, 142c, 144a–b, 144d, 147c, 148d, 150e. In set phrases it is “what he means” (147d), “would rather” (149b) and “I should like” (150b, 151c). **Be willing** is ἐθέλειν (*ethelein*), 143c–144a, 149d, 150c, 151b.

without noticing it, λανθάνειν (*lanthanein*) with a participle. 138b, 140e, 143a, 148b, 150c.

wretched, the wretched things, δειλά (*deila*). The poet’s prayer, 143a, 148b, with the notes. See **dreadful** and Key Words, *Good and bad*.

NOTE ON THIS EDITION

HOW THE VOLUME WAS MADE

The Greek was taken from the Perseus Digital Library's digital transcription of Burnet and cut into Burnet's lines by reading every line-end from the photographs of his page, in the impression described in the Editorial Note. Accents, breathings and iota subscripts were read on the sharpest image of each page that the scan provides, and a doubtful mark was settled by setting it beside sure examples of each form on the same page. The section letters and line numbers in the margin were computed from the Stephanus divisions rather than copied, and were then compared with Burnet's: across the 585 lines of the dialogue they fall where he prints them, except in section 146e, where his count on page 15 starts a line too low and is followed. Burnet's apparatus was transcribed from the same images, with the marks of the manuscripts it reproduces: letters written over a word and a dot over a letter. Where the digital text differs from Burnet's page (*εἶναι* for his *εἶναι* at 138d1, *πρωῖζα* without the diaeresis at 141d6, *φρόνιμον* with one accent for his *φρόνιμόν* at 145c5, three dots before the lines of Euripides at 146a, and small letters at the openings of speeches and of the paragraph at 149c, where Burnet prints capitals), this edition follows Burnet.

The work was done in three blocks of seven pages, each finished and checked before the next was begun. Each block was checked by four independent reviewers: two, dividing its pages between them, compared the Greek and the apparatus with the page images letter by letter, one compared the English with the Greek clause by clause, and one checked every fact and reference in the notes. Each finding was examined again against the evidence before it was adopted, and not all were adopted. What each block's check caught is recorded at the end of this Note.

When the last block was done the volume was read through as one text, since a check made page by page cannot see some kinds of error: a word rendered one way in one block and another way in the next, a sentence broken badly at a page turn, a recapitulation that states a step in other words than the step itself. The translator read the whole volume, and four further reviewers read it indepen-

dently: one for the consistency of terms across the whole book, two for sense, omissions and continuity in its two halves, and one for the Editorial Note against the scan of Burnet's volume. The Introduction, the Key Words of the Dialogue, the Outline and the Glossary were then written from the finished text, and their claims and references were checked against it by three more reviewers.

WHAT THE FINAL READING CAUGHT

It found some forty faults that the three block checks had passed, most of them small and several substantive. They fall into a few classes.

The most serious were sense errors in constructions that read plausibly on their own. At 138b the danger Socrates names is two things together, that a man should pray for bad things and that the gods should then give them; the English had made the gods' part a separate statement, and it is now governed by "lest", as at 150c; at 148b, where the English had made the same construction a clause of purpose ("so that one does not ... pray"), it now reads "lest one should ... pray" too. At 145e the commonwealth of experts lacks both the knowledge of the best and "the one who knows when it is better" to use each expert; the English had made the man depend on the knowledge. At 146e Socrates asks whether he was not "really shown to be speaking rightly", not merely whether he appeared so, and Alcibiades' answer, that "now it seems so to me", grants less. At 140d a "too" that Burnet prints and the manuscript T omits had been left out, so that the English followed T's text; at 141a a "still" had been dropped; at 144c "as it seemed to you just now" had been placed so that it could attach to the wrong half of the sentence.

Next came renderings that had drifted from the edition's rulings or from one another. The gods "grant" at 138b but "give" everywhere else, including the passage that recalls 138b (148d); they now give there too. *Boulesthai* was "want" twice in the first block, where it is "wish" elsewhere except in idioms ("I should like", "would rather"); Socrates' *oimai* was once "I imagine" against "I think" everywhere else; *hora* was "look" at 139d, where "look" belongs to Socrates' verbs of inquiry; the key word "good" stood for two other Greek words at 142b, "the greatest of goods" for "the greatest of good things" at 141b, and "given me good advice" for "advised me well" at 151a; "make some sense" at 142b put the word for *nous* on another Greek word; and two notes called the manuscripts' *deina* "terrible" where the text has "dreadful". At

147d *phaulos*, said of Margites, is “a sorry fellow”, as of the commonwealth at 146a, and no longer “a nobody”, which in English means a man of no standing.

Some faults concerned who says what and how. At 138c Alcibiades’ retort is now aimed at Socrates, as the Greek has it (“But you, Socrates, have spoken of a madman”); at 141b he answers for himself before he answers for everyone; at 142e the poet “is” intelligent, as the present tense has it; at 142d the words of the *Odyssey* in the text now agree with the note that translates them; and at 146a the quotation marks take in “part”, which Burnet’s verse layout gives to Euripides. Smaller corrections were made at 138a, 140e, 144b, 145a, 145d, 147c, 149e, 150a, 150b, 150e and 151b, and the Stephanus letters at 138b and 142b now stand at the first whole word of their sections.

In the notes, Oedipus’ curse is now said to concern his sons’ inheritance, and the tragedians’ weapon is iron, not the dialogue’s bronze; Euripides’ “prayers” stand three lines after Jocasta’s “curses”, not two; the note on the soul at 141c says how Alcibiades’ answer takes the word; the note on the names of unintelligence at 140c uses the text’s “most auspicious names”, and calls the *Republic*’s *anoia* “senselessness”; the note at 147b says that the manuscripts have *bion* in the accusative; the note on the palinode at 148b says that Burnet prints the corrector’s verb in the mood his sentence needs; and two notes were added, on “simple” at 149e, which recalls the names of 140c, and on “The man who cares about you” at 150d, which it suggests may be Socrates himself.

The Editorial Note was provisional, and was completed. It had described every word in angle brackets as a conjecture, though one comes from a corrector of a later manuscript (148c7) and one from the text of Euripides (151b9); it now says which deletions and additions Burnet adopts, lists the witnesses with their places, locates Proclus’ quotation in Kroll’s edition, and corrects three of its examples. The title page had kept a working label from the blocks, and now describes the complete dialogue.

Two proposals were not adopted: a note at 147a on earlier uses of “much learning”, for which the page has no room, and a note at 150b observing that the word “perplexity” there is Socrates’ and not Alcibiades’.

WHAT REMAINS UNDONE

Two of Burnet’s ancient witnesses are not located: the passages of Stobaeus’ *Anthology* behind his readings at 140e8, 145e4–5 and

146d7, which a search of Hense's edition did not find, and the place in Priscian's *Institutiones* that quotes 143b2.

A few marks lie at the limit of what the scan can show, and are printed as read. In the apparatus: T's οἶόν at 139a13, without a circumflex; B's ἄρα at 138c9, whose breathing, fused with its accent, is taken as smooth; the first hand of B's ἦ at 144d6; and B's ᾶ at 146b9. In the text: ἦ at 140d4 and 141d1, where breathing and grave run together, and the damaged sort over the ι of εἶναι at 139e1. They should be checked against another copy of the volume. Burnet's extra space above and below the lines of Euripides at 146a is not reproduced.

The apparatus is Burnet's alone. It has not been collated against the manuscripts, and readings proposed since 1901, including those of Carlini's edition (1964), are not reported. The translation follows Burnet's text even where later scholars would print something else.

The notes are a reader's aid, not a commentary. They were chosen to explain what the English cannot carry and to mark the dramatic irony, and they label the more doubtful interpretations as such. The question of who wrote the dialogue, and when, is set out in the Introduction but not argued; a reader who wants the scholarly debate will need a commentary.

The checks described above were made by independent reviewers working from the same page images. The volume has not been read by a specialist outside the project, and a reader who finds an error is asked to report it.

THE RECORD OF THE BLOCKS

The notes that follow were written as each block was finished, and are kept as a record of what each check found. Where the final reading changed something they report, the text above says so.

BLOCK I (138A–142C)

How it was made. The first seven pages of Burnet's text (scan pp. 369–375). The line-ends were read from enlarged images of the scan, and the margin numbers computed from the Stephanus divisions and compared with Burnet's: all 200 lines agree. The digital text lacks the diaeresis of Burnet's πρωῒζα at 141d6, which is restored, and lower-cases the openings of speeches, where Burnet's capitals are restored.

What verification caught. Four independent reviewers checked

the block: two compared the Greek and the apparatus with the page images letter by letter, one compared the English with the Greek clause by clause, and one checked every fact and reference in the notes and in the Editorial Note. The Greek text was confirmed letter by letter. In the apparatus two readings were corrected on page 6: Dobree's ἀντῶν at 141b5 carries a raised point, which records his repunctuation of the sentence, and B's οὐδε at 141c10 has no accent. Burnet's raised points and angle brackets had dropped out of the typeset pages, because the Greek type has no such characters; they are now set from type that has them. Two marks are kept as printed: a damaged sort over the ι of εἶναι at 139e1, and T's οἶόν at 139a13, which has a breathing and no accent.

In the English, Socrates' question at 139a13 had been printed as a statement, and is now a question again. At 142a the generals who "ended their lives" have now "come to the end of their lives", since the English idiom suggests suicide. Quotation marks that Burnet does not print were removed at 141a ("all the Greeks as well") and 141d ("yesterday and the day before"). At 138b the gods' being in the very state in which they give whatever is prayed for is now part of the danger, as in the Greek, and not a condition of it; at 139d Socrates' suspicion reads "perhaps this is not so", which Alcibiades takes up at once; at 140b it is the diseases, not the doctors, that differ in what they bring about; the sentence on Archelaus at 141d now keeps the Greek's order and makes plain who loved whom; and at 142b the condition is in the present, answering "as it is". At 139c the many are the subject, as in the Greek: "the many, of course, are unintelligent". The turn from page 1 to page 2 now falls after "he had", four section letters were moved to the word where the section begins (138c, 140c, 141b, 141d), Alcibiades' Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ is "I think so" as in the *Alcibiades I*, and φανῶλος of a thing is "trivial", as there. Smaller corrections of particle, mood and reference were made at 138d, 139b, 140b, 140d, 141a, 141c, 141d, 142a and 142c, and a note now explains that the word for "healthy" at 138c also means "of sound mind".

In the notes, the lines of the *Phoenician Women* on Oedipus' curses are given to Jocasta, who speaks them; the *Iliad's* tag at 140a is set in its place, Diomedes asking for a companion before he goes into the Trojan camp by night, and the *Symposium* is said to adapt it; the death of Archelaus is told from both sources, Diodorus' accident in a hunt and Aristotle's deliberate attack; the exiled and executed generals at 142a are offered as the reader's association, since Socrates names no one, with the generals of Arginusae

counted exactly (eight condemned, six put to death); the word for “never generals” is called rare, not coined; and the note on Ast’s reading at 139a13 is labelled as a judgement. The Editorial Note now dates the impression by its publisher, Humphrey Milford, to between 1925 and 1945; it explains the entries with no colon, the entry at 139a13 that combines two witnesses, the witnesses’ own spellings, the abbreviated word at 141c2 and Burnet’s misprints; it identifies the scholars named in the apparatus; and it gives Burnet’s view that the corrections in the Coislinianus are conjectures.

BLOCK II (142C–146E)

How it was made. Burnet pages 8–14 (scan pp. 376–382), made as Block I: the line-ends read from enlarged images of the scan, and the margin numbers computed and compared with Burnet’s, all of which agree. Two quotations of verse are set as Burnet sets them: the couplet at 143a, whose first line runs over into a short second line, and the lines of Euripides at 146a, the first of them only a half-line set far to the right. The digital text adds three dots before the Euripides, which Burnet does not print and which are removed; it prints Burnet’s *φρόνιμόν* at 145c5 with one accent instead of two; and it lower-cases the openings of speeches, where Burnet’s capitals are restored.

What verification caught. Four reviewers checked the block as before. The Greek text was confirmed letter by letter. Burnet letterspaces more of the *Odyssey* at 142d than the first transcription showed: *κακά* and *οἱ δὲ* are spaced as well as the words around them, so that every word he takes from Homer is marked; the punctuation after a spaced word is now set close, as he sets it. In the apparatus, B’s form at 146b9 has a smooth breathing and no accent (*ἀ*), not a grave. The indents of the verse lines were brought closer to Burnet’s measure, and an apparatus key is no longer parted from the reading it introduces at the end of a line.

In the English, the quotation marks at 142d now follow Burnet’s spacing exactly, taking in “blame” and “bad things”; and in Block I the words “yesterday and the day before” at 141d, which Burnet also spaces, are again in quotation marks. “Sing a palinode” now stands in the text as in its note. At 143d Alcibiades’ cry is “for Zeus’ sake”, an appeal, as in the *Alcibiades I*, and not an oath. At 144a the future *δόξει* is translated as Burnet prints it (“if it will seem so to you”), not as the optative that Buttmann proposed. At 146b the adverb that “accompanies” the action is given its article (“the

beneficially”), and at 146d–e Socrates’ closing question is a question again. Renderings were aligned with the *Alcibiades I*: ἐθέλειν “be willing”, νοῦς “sense”, ἰκανός “good enough”, ἐννοεῖν “take in”, and the answer “Of course”; the recapitulation at 146b now recalls 144d in the same words, and nine section letters were moved to the word where the section begins. The couplet at 143a is “King Zeus”, not “Zeus our king”, and “the wretched things”, not “the wretched”, which could be taken for people.

In the notes, the lines of the *Odyssey* are quoted more exactly; the note on the couplet adds that the *Greek Anthology* and Proclus both read “the baneful things”; the note on Dobree’s proposal at 144d says that he would add only an article; the note on Pericles cites the *Alcibiades I* for Cleinias’ death as well as for the guardianship; and the note on Euripides records that Burnet prints the indicative from the *Gorgias*. New notes mark four places where Burnet’s choice of reading changes the sense: 143a (ὅσων κακῶν), 145b (ὅτε), 145c (τοιούτου) and 145e (οὐς). A few phrases that followed an existing English translation too closely were rewritten. The Editorial Note now explains *add.* as used of an ancient author’s quotation (Priscian at 143b2), the hand marked “rec. t”, the Venetus 184, and the ancient authors Burnet cites in this block, with Proclus’ place identified; and its list of scholars no longer sorts them more precisely than the evidence allows. The section letters in the margin of the English, which had sometimes slipped from their lines, now stand beside them.

BLOCK III (146E–151C)

How it was made. Burnet pages 15–21 (scan pp. 383–389), to the end of the dialogue, made as the earlier blocks: the line-ends read from enlarged images of the scan, and the margin numbers computed and compared with Burnet’s. They agree everywhere but in section 146e, where Burnet’s count on page 15 starts a line too low; his count is kept, since his apparatus keys follow it. The verse is set as Burnet sets it: the lines of the *Iliad* at 149d–e, with the line that Socrates turns into prose letterspaced inside his sentence; the half-line from the *Iliad* at 150d; and the two lines of Euripides at 151b. Two marks of the manuscripts that Burnet prints in his apparatus are reproduced: letters written over a word (147a5, 149a6) and a dot over a letter (150a6). The digital text again lower-cases the openings of speeches, where Burnet’s capitals are restored.

What verification caught. Four reviewers checked the block as before, and the Greek text was confirmed letter by letter. In the

apparatus, the later hand's ὀλίγω at 149a4 has no iota subscript; T's ἐπει at 149a6 has no accent, and its δ stands over the last letter, as T's πολυ at 147a5 stands over the first letters of φιλοτεχνίαν, not before the word; and B's προφήταις at 150a6 carries a dot over its final letter. The comma after ἔργα at 147b4 is now set close, outside the spacing; the indents of the verse lines were brought to Burnet's measure; and a reading is no longer parted from its witness at the end of a line of the apparatus.

In the English, the wind of fortune at 147a blows "more strongly", not "more brilliantly", and the *hamartēmata* there and at 150a are "mistakes". Alcibiades' *palin au moi dokei* at 147e now has a note saying how it is read. At 148a his *margin* is "madcap", which keeps the play on the *Margites*. At 148b the English names Zeus as the one whom the poet bade ward off the wretched things. The word that Burnet supplies at 148c is translated without his angle brackets, as elsewhere. The Athenians' question at 148e keeps its "besides these things" and its turn into the first person ("we who ... offer"), and the money they paid out is "as much as not even all the other Greeks together" paid. Ammon at 149b "says he would rather"; an altar the Greek does not mention was removed at 149c; at 149e it is "the way of the gods" that is not led astray by gifts; at 150a the gods, named, are the ones who take no gifts, and "the god and the prophet of the gods say". Socrates' aside at 150c is again a reason ("for this is the finest of the names in unintelligence, at least"). At 151b Creon's "he says" stands inside the verse, as in the Greek, Teiresias' garlands are first-fruits "because of his craft", and Socrates takes as an omen Alcibiades' "opinion", with a note on the word. Smaller corrections were made at a dozen places, among them "cared about", "neglectfully disposed", "maimed victims", "find out" and "savor".

In the notes, the *Margites* is said to have been commonly ascribed to Homer in antiquity, as by Aristotle and by Socrates himself; Plutarch's *Spartan Customs* is cited by its Latin title as well; the note on Ammon says that no other ancient author tells of this consultation, and gives the two consultations of Ammon that Plutarch reports, Cimon's and the one before the Sicilian expedition; the note on the lines of the *Iliad* says exactly which of them stand in the manuscripts of Homer and which recur elsewhere, and marks the contrast between perfect and maimed victims as a reading; Athena's words to Diomedes are quoted in full; and the note on Teiresias gives his own account in Euripides of the crown he wears. New notes mark four places where Burnet's choice of

reading changes the sense or the words: 147a5 (*πολυμαθίαν* and *πολυτεχνίαν*), 148b3 (the later hand's palinode), 148b6 (*δειλά* again) and 148d4 (the words he brackets). The Editorial Note now counts the lines of 146e correctly, places Winckelmann among the editors of Plato, describes the letters written over others and the dot over a letter, and gives the deletion at 150b2 and the addition at 148c7 as examples.