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Whatever its authorship, the Socratic dialogue known to us as *Alcibiades I* shares one prominent feature with some key dialogues generally recognized as written by Plato: within it an allusion is made to a primary principles of being or knowledge, which allusion is supported not by the extended argument one might expect given the importance of the subject, but by some schematic and obscure remarks. The prime example of this in the Platonic writings is of course the allusion to the Form of the Good within the *Republic* (504b6–507e2); although Socrates indicates the nature of the Form of the Good by the extended comparison with the sun, he proclaims both his inability to give and the inability of his interlocutors to understand an adequate philosophic account of its true nature (506c2–e2). Similar remarks apply to the allusion to the Form of the καλόν in the *Symposium* (210e1–212a7) and «the Precise Itself» in the *Statesman* (284c1–2). In *Alcibiades I* such an allusion is made to a principle called «the Self Itself»: at 129b1 and 130d4 Socrates identifies the knowledge of this as a prerequisite for an adequate account of human nature, «what we ourselves are». So little is said about the «Self Itself» that any account of its meaning and philosophical importance in *Alcibiades I* must be even more speculative than accounts of the nature of the Good, the Beautiful, the Precise Itself, or the metaphysical principles that are identified in Aristotle's reports of Plato's oral teachings. But because of the manifest importance the Socrates of *Alcibiades I* takes the Self Itself to have, the author of this dialogue is apparently inviting the reader to make such speculations. I here begin this enterprise, drawing attention to indications of the author's meaning in both what is explicitly said about «the Self Itself» as well as other parts of the dialogue, fully aware that my account can be at best probable. I shall argue

in favor of R. E. Allen's proposal that the Self Itself is the Form of the Self, and shall explore (as Allen does not) the philosophical significance of this. I shall suggest that this form is here taken to be an ontological principle on account of which each thing is the self it is as well as a principle of knowledge, by virtue of which anything is recognized as a self. I compare the form of the αὐτό alluded to in *Alcibiades I* with the form of the αὐτό (the Form of the Same) discussed in the *Sophist* and argue that the mutual interdependence of the Same and the Different recognized in the *Sophist* could be one philosophical motivation for the revised account of the ontological constitution of soul presented in the *Timaeus:* no longer is the ultimate constituent of soul taken to be a single form of the αὐτό, but the forms of both the αὐτό and the ἕτερον.

The whole of the *Alcibiades I* is a discussion of Socrates and the young Alcibiades, in which the latter is shown to be ignorant of the things he needs to know in order to successfully pursue his ambitions to lead the Athenian community. In a recent paper[1], Julia Anna has shown how the theme of self-knowledge unites this discussions's long string of apparently disjointed arguments. In the course of the first part of the dialogue, Socrates shows Alcibiades that the latter does not possess an understanding of the good for either the community or the individual (106c4–127d8); in revealing to Alcibiades his own ignorance of this Alcibiades is in effect coming to know himself, and is already improving his lot, since the greatest of all evils, according to Socrates, is ignorance of one's ignorance (116e5–118c2).

After bidding Alcibiades to attend to himself (127d9–e7), Socrates begins questioning Alcibiades on what Alcibiades' self is, as contrasted with whatever belongs to his self (128d9–129a1). Socrates asks: «Come then, in what way might the Self Itself (αὐτὸ ταὐτό) be discovered? For thus we might at some point discover whatever we are, but perhaps it is impossible while we are ignorant of this», to which Alcibiades (surely not in a better position than we to grasp Socrates' meaning) responds: «What you say is correct» (129b1–4). Socrates then argues that the self is the soul on the basis of the principle that that which employs an instrument is always different from the instrument that is employed. The human self is either soul, body, or a complex of the two; since a human being employs the body as an instrument, the body cannot be the

[1] Self-knowledge in Early Plato, in: Platonic Investigations, D. J. O'Meara, ed. (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1985), pp. 111–38.

self, nor can the soul/body complex, since one of the elements of that complex does not engage in the activity of ruling that must be characteristic of the self. This leaves the soul as the self, and the body as that which belongs to the self. Socrates concludes: «Do you need it further demonstrated in some clearer way that the soul is a human being?» Alcibiades responds: «By Zeus, it seems to me to be sufficiently demonstrated.» (129b5–130c7) Socrates continues: «It is enough for us if it is demonstrated not precisely (ἀκριβῶς) but suitably (μετρίως) for we will know precisely when we discover what we have now passed over on account of the length of the inquiry.» – «What is that?», Alcibiades asks. «What we just mentioned, that we ought to first investigate what the self itself is,» Socrates responds. «But now instead of the Self Itself we investigated what each thing is (νῦν δὲ ἀντὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ αὐτὸ ἕκαστον ἐσκέμμεθα τι ἐστι)[2]. And perhaps that will suffice, for we can say that nothing is more authoritative over ourselves (ἡμῶν αὐτῶν) than the soul» (130c5–d7).

This is all that is explicitly said of «the Self Itself» in the dialogue. The Self Itself is here posited as an object of knowledge, to be discovered by inquiry and then to serve as the basis for a «demonstration» of the nature of the human self. Like an Aristotelian ἀρχή (principle), it is to render intelligible derivative truths to which it is epistemically prior. But there is no evidence at all that the author of the *Alcibiades I* conceives of «demonstrations» as logical deductions from indemonstrable premises and there is no direct evidence here that a principle such as a definition of the Self Itself is taken to be an expression of a fact with causal as well as epistemic priority, as is the case with Aristotelian first principles.'

What might this principle called «the Self Itself» be?

A neoplatonic interpreter would expect Plato to say that an adequate account of the human self can be grounded only on that of the most authoritative element of the human soul. Neoplatonic commentaries of which we have evidence do indeed interpret «the Self Itself» in this

[2] I read τι ἐστι with manuscript T, instead of ὅτι ἐστί with B, Stobaeus, and Burnet.

way[3], and this has been the conventional interpretation for many years[4]. It has recently been defended by Annas (131–132). But in spite of its distinguished history I take this interpretation to be mistaken.

R. E. Allen has argued that the formulation «the x itself» (x αὐτό), as contrasted with «each x» (x ἕκαστον) indicates that the author wishes to contrast a form, as opposed to a particular partaking of that form[5]. Annas claims that any reference to the «theory of Forms» here «would be wildly out of place» and suggests that the second αὐτό in the phrase αὐτὸ ταὐτό simply signifies «the real...» The Self-Itself would be the real self, «soul conceived of impersonally, a[n]... impersonal self which, like a Form, is the same in all its instances» (Annas 131). As Annas reads the dialogue, the conclusion that Socrates and Alcibiades reach, that the real self is the soul only tells us what the each individual human being is. Socrates takes it to be provisional because he is demanding an account of the human self that tells us what there is in the soul that transcends each soul's particularity. This will be «the Self Itself,» what the soul really is , that aspect of the soul that is shared by all rational souls. But it is not clear how the adjective αὐτό («itself»), even in contrast to ἕκαστον, can be give the sense of «impersonal.» Why the contrast between αὐτὸ τὸ x and ἕκαστον τὸ x should be the contrast between what a thing really is and what it is in its *particularity* is scarcely intelligible in the absence of an account of why a particular x is not the real x. Indeed in this case the contrast, as understood in this way, is on the face of it even more implausible, since what is being sought is the real *self,* the real particular thing as it is. Why should what x shares with another be more the self of x than what x does not share?

[3] There was a dispute among the neoplatonists as to exactly what αὐτὸ ταὐτό is. Proclus took it to be the rational part of the soul, which is such as to use the body as an instrument. Damascius took it to be intellect, pure of all association of the body. This controversy is discussed in: A. Ph. Segonds, éd., and tr., Proclus: Sur le Premier Alcibiade de Platon (Paris: Société d'Edition «Les Belles Lettres», 1985), I, liii–lxii. For the evidence, see G. Kroll, ed., Proclus: In Platonis Rem Publicam Commentarii (Leipzig: Teubner, 1899), 1.171.23–172.6, and L. G. Westerink, ed., Olympiodorus: Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato (Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1982), 203.20–205.7. (The Olymiodorus text is reprinted, with translation and notes, in: Segonds II, 374–75, 460–61.)

[4] W. Jaeger, Aristotle, trans. R. Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd. ed. 1948), p. 165, n. 1; R. S. Bluck, The Origin of the Greater Alcibiades, *Classical Quarterly* n.s. 3 (1953) p. 46.

[5] R. E. Allen, Note on Alcibiades I, 129B1, in: *American Journal of Philology* 82 (1962), pp. 87–90.

Plato provides such an account of why this should be the case in other dialogues when he argues for the forms as grounding the intelligibility of things. More precisely, he provides several such accounts, for there is more than one philosophical motivation for positing the forms. In the *Euthyphro* the holy itself is identified as that by which all holy things are holy, the *cause* of any particular's being holy (*Euthyphro* 6d10–e1). In the *Symposium* the beautiful itself is identified as that whose beauty is not restricted to any given perspective, that which truly is intrinsically beautiful, not merely appearing beautiful on account of the percipient's being related to it in a certain way. In the *Republic* both strategies are employed, along with Parmenidean considerations of the atemporality of the verb «to be.» It is not clear which strategy would be employed here to argue for a form of the αὐτό. But some such account must be implied or alluded to for there to be any plausibility to the suggestion that the real self is that which all selves have in common. This is why I take Allen to be correct in taking the Self Itself to be a Form of the self.

Of course in such dialogues as the *Euthyphro,* it is not at all clear whether that form that is denoted as an x itself is taken to have an ontological status independent from that of the particular x's that partake of it. Since a metaphysical account of the nature of the forms is absent in *Alcibiades I,* too, the case is similar here. All we can say at this point is that the form of the αὐτό is that which is expressed in an adequate definition of the self. It is that whose apprehension allows us to fully recognize an αὐτό as an αὐτό and that on account of which an αὐτό really is an αὐτό. The αὐτό itself is to be taken as having both epistemic and causal priority, though it may or may not have ontological independence.

What, then, would the form of the αὐτό be? This depends on the sense given to the second αὐτό in αὐτό ταὐτό. One could take αὐτό not as «self» but simply as the third person personal pronoun. Socrates would then be claiming that the answer «who are we?» is to be attained through discovering the «it itself,» where «it» (αὐτό) is a variable standing for any attribute or thing. This is apparently the line of thinking that led Friedländer to take αὐτό ταὐτό as «the self in respect to its essence» («das Selbst seinem Wesen nach»)[6], which he interprets not as

[6] See: Der Grosse Alcibiades, Ein Weg zu Plato, 2 vols. (Bonn: F. Cohen, 1921, 1923), II, p. 17, where Friedländer consistently translates the first αὐτό in αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό as «es».

a single form of selfhood[7], but as an allusion to «die Sphäre des An-Sich,» that is, to the whole realm of the forms, here «von fern in den Blick gebracht»[8]. But in presenting the inquiry in such an indeterminate fashion, Socrates would in effect be looking for a swarm of answers, seeking a form for anything that we can call an «it.» This hardly seems an appropriate prerequisite for the task of self-knowledge proposed as necessary for someone in Alcibiades' place. Perhaps Friedländer reads Socrates as saying that self-knowledge must rest on an awareness that there *is* such a thing as a realm of forms (as opposed to some specific form) but the text cannot support the weight of such an interpretation.

A second option is taken by Allen (188–189): The second αὐτό in αὐτό τὸ αὐτό here is «self». What is being demanded is not an apprehension of a form for everything that we can call an αὐτό but a single form responsible for the fact that anything that we can call an αὐτό is, in fact, the self that it is. I accept this interpretation as the most reasonable of those available. But Allen does not speculate on the philosophical meaning of the passage, and remains silent on the issues of the nature of the form of the Self envisaged here and how the apprehension of this would aid in the acquisition of self-knowledge.

Let us assume that here, as in the recognized early and middle Platonic dialogues, a form of x is both a causal principle that makes an x an x and an epistemic principle on the basis of which we truly recognize an x as being an x. If αὐτό ταὐτό is a form of the self, it will consequently be a causal principle that makes every self a self and allows us to know that every self is the self. The role played by such a principle would be similar to that played by the form of the αὐτό, discussed in the *Sophist*[9]. In contrast to the form of the αὐτό in *Alcibiades I,* αὐτό is there taken as

[7] This is how ALLEN, art. cit., p. 189, n. 6, interprets Friedländer, thus taking Friedländer to anticipate his own proposal.

[8] P. FRIEDLÄNDER, Plato, 2 vols., trans. H. MEYERHOFF (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), II, p. 242. See also Friedländer (1923), II, p. 18, where the phrase αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό is taken to be an «allgemeinster Hinweis auf die ideelle Sphäre», and II, p. 62, where the reference is called an «ablehnende Hindeutung auf die eigentliche Seinsphäre.»

[9] I here leave open the question of whether forms in Alcibiades I and the Sophist are taken to ontologically independent of what participates in them, as they are often said to be in the middle dialogues.

relational: («... the same as...»)[10]. An x is said to be the same as a y by virtue of the participation of both x and y in this form (254d14–255c7). But the only value of «y» that will be such as to render «x is the same as y» true will be one that refers to the same thing to which «x» refers. The form of «... the same as...» will consequently be the cause of each thing's being itself. Because the discussion in the *Sophist* has as its aim an analysis of the truth and falsity of statements, the Eleatic stranger never considers whether the form of the αὐτό has a role in making an individual what it is. The Socrates of *Alcibiades I,* in contrast, is explicitly inviting us to speculate on how the form of the αὐτό makes a self.

But what is a self? Here the text gives us no help, and we can only speculate on the line of thought of the author of *Alcibiades I.* A self is anything that can be referred to by some form of αὐτός, the third person pronoun. Hence any being is a self. (A similar point is made by Plato in the *Sophist* when it is indicated that anything that partakes in Being will partake in «... the same as...» in respect to itself [256a12–b1, cf. 254d14–15]). It follows that the form of the Self is that which will be responsible for any thing's being the very thing it is. It will also be that principle the apprehension of which is in every case necessary in order that one know a thing to be the self it is.

The parallels to the form of the Good as described in the *Republic* should be clear. Just as the Self Itself is a principle that makes anything the self it is, and is thus responsible for its very being, the form of the Good is responsible for the being of the forms (509a9–b10), which in turn is responsible for there being images of that form. And just as the Self Itself must be known to know each thing as the self it is, so the form

[10] See F. Cornford, Plato's Theory of Knowledge (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1957), p. 285, and K. Sayre, Plato's Analytic Method (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 194, n. 67. This is denied by J. Duerlinger, in: «The Ontology of Plato's Sophist: The Problems of Falsehood, Non-Being, and Being», *The Modern Schoolman* 65 (1988) p. 170 n. 18. For Duerlinger, to be the same is in the Sophist always «to be the same in respect to itself», a self-identity that properly only holds of forms. But there is no hint in the Sophist that Plato is here concerned with the falsity of those particulars that are imperfect images of the forms, the exemplars. The falsity with which he is concerned is the falsity of propositions, which, like «Theaetetus flies» (263a8), need not concern forms.

Interestingly, at 255c12–d8 «the Different» (τὸ θάτερον) is said to be different from being (τὸ ὄν) on account of the fact that the latter is said in itself (καθ' αὐτό) and in respect to another (πρὸς ἕτερον), while the former is said only in a relational way. In not employing this argument in respect to the same (τὸ αὐτό) Plato seems to me to be implying that the Same, like Being, is said both in itself and in respect to another. In Alcibiades I the form of the αὐτό is considered only καθ' αὐτό.

of the Good must be apprehended to ground those «hypotheses» that serve as the bases for our understanding of the various things there are, allowing one to be able to distinguish each form (510b2–511d5, 533b1–534d2). Further, in both cases the apprehension of the principle is a necessary foundation for the art of ruling. Alcibiades must grasp the form of the self before he can know himself, and he must know himself before he knows what he must learn to rule (127d4–129a10). Later in the dialogue such self-knowledge is identified as σωφροσύνη (131b4, 133c18–19) and its political importance is argued for on other grounds: without a knowledge of himself (which must rest on a knowledge of the Self Itself) Alcibiades will be unable to know which things belong to himself (that is, the body) and will therefore be ignorant of material goods, the things that belong to what belongs to himself. It follows that he will be ignorant of the things that belong to others in the same respects, the material goods that are the usual concern of political deliberation[11]. Further, without the virtue of σωφροσύνη that is self-knowledge, Alcibiades will be unable to impart this virtue to his subjects, and hence improve their selves (133c18–134c8). Similarly, in the *Republic,* the rulers of the polis must apprehend the form of the Good if they are to know what is good and what is not in their city (534b8–d2, 540a6–b5).

The account of the form of the Good is, of course, much more elaborate; though deliberately couched in metaphorical terms, its dis-

[11] Presumably Socrates is not saying that all of the various τεχναί that improve the body or produce material goods themselves require a knowledge of the self. It is their proper use that requires a knowledge of the self, for without this knowledge one would be unaware of the relation these things have to the self, and hence of the circumstances in which they could benefit or improve the self. This is what Socrates means when he affirms that the self-knowledge that is σωφροσύνη is necessary for us to know which of our things are good or bad (133c21–24). σωφροσύνη is here implicitly identified as the knowledge of what is good or bad for the self, which is the implicit teaching of the Charmides (174a10–d7. See T. Irwin, Plato's Moral Theory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 76, 88, 299 n. 46.) This understanding of σωφροσύνη escapes the objections Socrates poses in the Charmides against Critias' identification of σωφροσύνη as self-knowledge (164d3–174b10), for these hold only if the ἐπιστήμη that is σωφροσύνη is taken to be similar in function and structure to the various particular ἐπιστήμαι or τεχναί. See G. Klosko, The Technical Conception of Virtue, in: *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 18 (1981), p. 102; D. L. Roochnik, Terence Irwin's Reading of Plato, in: C. L. Griswald, Jr, ed., Platonic Writings/Platonic Readings, (New York: Routeledge, 1988), pp. 191–92. In Alcibiades I, the further claim is made that adequate self-knowledge or σωφροσύνη must rest on a theoretical understanding of the nature of our selves, our souls. For without this we are unable to fully understand what is good for us.

cussion justifies certain claims about it that cannot at this point be asserted of the form of the Self. Not only must the Good be known for anything else to be truly known, it functions as a source of intellectual light, bestowing intelligibility as well as being on anything that is knowable (507c6–509a5). In addition, the forms are explicitly posited in *Republic* V as the only intelligible entities. Even if the forms are implicitly present in *Alcibiades I,* as I believe they are, the discussion in this dialogue has as its aim the knowledge of Alicibiades' own self, provisionally identified as his soul. It is not at all clear that Alcibiades' soul would be taken to truly be or be knowable according to the metaphysical and epistemological accounts given in the *Republic.*

Further, as G. Santas has argued[12], Plato conceives of the form of the Good as that form responsible for the «ideal attributes» of the forms, those attributes such as immutability, independent existence, and intelligibility that inhere in a form not by virtue of that of which the form is a form, but by virtue of its being a form at all. This function seems to be absent from the Self Itself, unless one is to say that the only true self is a form. To say this would be consonant with *Republic* V, according to which any x other than the form of x is not x as well as x, but there is no hint of this in *Alcibiades I.* After all, unless Alcibiades' soul is the form of Alcibiades, *Republic* V would have Alcibiades' soul be both Alcibiades' self and not his self, contradicting the express though provisional identification in *Alcibiades I* of the self of a particular human as the particular soul.

To sump up, when Socrates says that a precise understanding of who we ourselves are must rest on an apprehension of the Self Itself, he is identifying the Form of the Self as that which must be apprehended for there to be adequate understanding of what any particular thing (or self) is. If the form of the Self conforms to the understanding of forms put forward in Plato's middle dialogues, we can conclude that such a form not only allows us to know other forms, but is responsible for the fact that any other thing is the self it is. I have indicated the respects in which this is similar to the form of the Good as described in the *Republic* and the respects in which the comparison may not hold.

[12] The Form of the Good in Plato's Republic, in: J. Anton and A. Preus, eds., Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy, vol. 2, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), pp. 232–63.

Admittedly, the evidence on which these speculations rest is thinner than one might hope. As Socrates indicated at 130c8–d7, it was enough for his immediate purpose (having Alcibiades act in accordance with σωφροσύνη by primarly caring for the soul, not the body and what belongs to it) to have identified the self with the soul, without investigating what the soul really is. But within the rest of the dialogue there are more indications that the author of *Alcibiades I* subscribed to a metaphysics along these lines. These indications further support the interpretation suggested above.

After having determined that the person is the soul, Socrates and Alcibiades turn to the issue of how knowledge of oneself, σωφροσύνη, is possible. Socrates remarks that just as the eye cannot see itself but needs a mirror or other reflecting surface, so the soul can only know itself as reflected in something else. Among human beings, the eye is best reflected within the best part of other peoples' eyes, their pupils, the parts responsible for the *arete* of eyes, the ability to see (132c7–133b6). So among human beings one's soul is best reflected in the most divine part of another soul: that responsible for the ability to think and know (τὸ εἰδέναι τε καὶ φρονεῖν) (133c1–2). By doing so one comes to know all that is divine, God and thought (θεόν τε καὶ φρόνησιν)... and oneself (133c4–6). Here the dramatic context of the dialogue mirrors the philosophic teaching, for it is through engaging in precisely the kind of discussion represented in the dialogue that Alcibiades will come to see the nature of his own soul through the medium of the thought of Socrates. Further, the imagery of eye looking into eye reflects the erotic nature of the new relationship between Socrates and Alcibiades[13], which Socrates had earlier described as based on a love between soul and soul, not soul and body (131e10–11).

There follows a disputed passage, found only in a quotation from the Christian writer Eusebius, in which Socrates claims that, just as the eye will best see itself not in another eye, but in a pure and shining mirror, so a soul will best see itself not in another human soul but in that pure and shining mirror which is ὁ θεός, the god (133c8–17). The dialogue concludes with the aforementioned application of these results to Alcibiades' political ambitions: one must know oneself before one can take good care of others and the things that belong to others.

[13] See S. Forde, On the Alcibiades I, in: T. Pangle, ed., The Roots of Political Philosophy, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 236.

Although there are internal considerations that support the authenticity of the passage from Eusebius, scholarly debate has not resolved the question[14]. If the passage is genuine, we see Socrates again making the claim that fully adequate self-knowledge must rest on our apprehending some single principle other than ourselves considered in our particularity. This divine principle is not only said to have an affinity with the soul (on account of their both having an intellectual nature); the true human self is said to be best known through knowledge of the latter. This again indicates that the human soul is what it is through some kind of unity with a single divine principle. As earlier, such a principle is identified as knowable, and the knowledge of this is again identified as necessary for fully adequate self-knowledge. The full metaphysical role of this divine principle is left unclear; there is no suggestion here, as there is in the *Republic* for the form of the Good (509a9–b10), that this principle is responsible for the *being* (or self hood) of the forms, or anything else, for that matter. Nonetheless, an identification of the Self Itself and ὁ θεός is at least invited[15]. Were this identification to be what the author has in mind, we would have here an anticipation of the neoplatonic doctrine that the primal source of the soul is also the primal source of all other things (i.e. all other selves).

On the other hand, even if we reject the disputed lines, we still have the finest part of the soul, that which thinks, labelled «divine,» considered knowable, and such that knowledge of it provides access to knowledge of God and φρόνησις (133c1–7). This indicates that attribute by virtue of which we are human thinking souls is shared by a divinity, and that the knowledge of what is divine is required for

[14] The phrase τὸ θεῖον καὶ λαμπρόν at 134d5 apparently refers back to this passage; nowhere else is the pupil said to be shining. See R.S. Bluck, The Origin of the Greater Alcibiades, art. cit., p. 46, n. 2; P.M. Clark, The Greater Alcibiades, *CQ* n.s. 5 (1955), pp. 23–37. Friedländer (1964), p. 351, n. 14, argues that the comparison of the eye to a mirror is sufficient to ground Socrates' assertion Alcibiades must look to what is λαμπρόν.

[15] This helps resolve the conceptual difficulty Annas, art. cit. (131 n. 51), finds with the disputed passage. She remarks that earlier in the dialogue God is said to be found within one's soul, through the medium of the another's soul. In this passage, on the other hand, God is posited as knowable directly, as an entity exterior to the soul. But if God is the Form of the Self, God will be recognized both mediately, within the human soul (as the principle of sameness that makes possible the recognition of any being as the self it is as well as the principle responsible for the fact that the soul is the self it is) and (perhaps) immediately, outside the soul, as that principle responsible for *each* thing's being the self it is.

adequate self-knowledge. The identification of a single divine principle with the Self Itself is still hinted at, albeit more faintly[16].

Alcibiades is portrayed at the very beginning of his philosophical apprenticeship to Socrates, so it should not be surprising that the goal of philosophical inquiry, as the Socrates of this dialogue understands it, should be merely indicated. Yet the indications point in a definite direction. I have here tried to summon all of those indications which render plausible the view that what is being indicated is a principle of being and knowledge playing a role in several important respects like that of the form of the Good of the *Republic.*

It should be noted that the imagery with which the fundamental principles of the two dialogues are described differs in important respects. The form of the *Good* is described as though it an object of vision, like the sun, discovered by looking outward[17]. This well suits the general terms in which philosophical inquiry is described in the *Republic:* one must travel out from one's habitual ways of thinking and acting to perceive the truth that is always present in the world, regardless of people's beliefs. There σωφροσύνη is taken to be a state of harmony reason imposes on the rest of the soul by virtue of the external truths it grasps (442c10–d3, 485d10–e6, 500c4–d9, 592b2–6). According to the imagery of *Alcibiades I,* on the other hand, the Self Itself is discovered by looking inward, through the intermediacy of the soul of the beloved in an erotic activity that leads to, not, as in other erotic activity, away from, the self-mastery that is σωφροσύνη. Like the theory that learning is recollection as presented in the *Meno, Phaedo,* and *Phaedrus,* the account of learning as an erotic process, by which one sees one's inmost self through the true self of the other, serves to indicate the affinity one's soul has to the objects of knowledge and the ultimate principles of being.

Up until now I have been silent on the issue of the authorship of *Alcibiades I.* In respect to this issue, Annas has persuasively made three points: that the arguments against the authenticity of the dialogue are inconclusive and largely amount to a verdict of taste, that even if the

[16] This part of the text, read with or without the disputed lines, indicates that the Self Itself, the apprehension of which Socrates takes to be necessary for real self-knowledge, is not just a definition of a term, but a grasp of the being of some *thing* (whether subsisting apart from the individual selves or not).

[17] See the analogy of the cave in the beginning of Bk. 7, and especially 518c4–d2.

dialogue is not by Plato, it is still of philosophical interest and for that reason alone is worthy of study, and that if we entertain the hypothesis that the dialogue *is* by Plato we may well shed light on aspects of the accepted Platonic canon (114–115, 133). In the final part of this paper I would like to show how, if my interpretation of the Self Itself is correct, and if the dialogue is taken to be by Plato, an interesting development can be discerned in Plato's thoughts on the ontological constitution of the soul.

I have argued that within *Alcibiades I* the form of the Self is identified as an important constituent of the individual human soul, and that it serves as the ground of both the selfhood of all individuals (including the individual human souls) and the soul's ability to recognize things or kinds as the selves they are. But of course *Alcibiades I* is not the only dialogue in which the problem of the nature of the soul is raised. One of the major interpretive puzzles such dialogues as the *Phaedo,* the *Phaedrus,* and the *Republic* present concerns the nature of the soul as Plato conceives it. Is it in time, akin to the realm of becoming, as it would seem it must be if it is to function as a source of motion? Or is it out of time, akin to realm of the forms, as it would seem it must be if it is to know them? This puzzle is explicitly addressed in the *Timaeus'* account of the generation of the World Soul at 34c5–35a8. I quote the translation of Cornford[18], whose interpretation of this difficult passage, which follows that of Proclus[19] and Grube[20], is now generally accepted.

> The things of which he composed soul and the manner of its composition were as follows: (1) Between the indivisible Existence (οὐσία) that is ever in the same state and the divisible Existence that becomes in bodies, he compounded a third form of Existence composed of both. (2) Again, in the case of Sameness and in that of Difference (τῆς τε ταὐτοῦ φύσεως αὖ πέρι καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἑτέρου), he also on the same principle made a compound intermediate between that kind of them which is indivisible and the kind that is divisible in bodies. (3) Then, taking the three, he blended them all into a unity, forcing the nature of Difference, hard as it was to mingle, into union with Sameness, and mixing them together with Existence.

[18] F. M. Cornford, Plato's Cosmology, (London: Routeledge and Kegan Paul, 1937), pp. 59–60.

[19] Proclus, In Platonis Timaeum Commentari, ed. E. Diehl (Leipzig: Teubner, 1904), II, p. 155.

[20] G. M. A. Grube, The Composition of the World Soul in Timaeus 35 A–B, in: *Classical Philology* 27 (1932), pp. 80–82.

Plato here presents a mythical account of the creation of the World Soul. It is to be analyzed as a mixture of three constituents: an οὐσία intermediate between indivisible οὐσία and divisible οὐσία, a Sameness intermediate between divisible sameness and indivisible sameness, and a Difference intermediate between divisible difference and indivisible difference. The fact that the soul's οὐσία is said to be a mixture of, and is intermediate between, the οὐσία of the realm of forms and that of the realm of becoming is clearly intended by Plato to be a recognition, if not resolution, of the aforementioned difficulty. As interesting as this issue is, I would like to here focus on the second part of this passage and how it relates to *Alcibiades I.*

The second two constituents of the World Soul are a Sameness which is a blend between the Sameness found in the Intelligible realm and that found in the realm of becoming and a Difference which is likewise a blend between the two kinds of difference. It is now generally agreed that the intelligible Sameness and Difference are the forms of the Same and the Different; this view, though bolstered by taking the *Timaeus* to postdate the *Sophist,* does not rest on it[21]. So we again see the form of the Same, analogous to what in *Alcibiades I* is called the Self Itself, posited as a basic constituent of soul. But here it is not the only basic constituent of soul; it is accompanied by some constituents of the realm of becoming (the realm of what in *Alcibiades I* is called «each self») as well as by two other aspects or parts of the intelligible realm, the forms of Being and of Difference.

Plato later indicates that it is only by virtue of the forms of the Being, the Same, and the Different, which have been posited as constituents of the soul, that the soul is able to render the world intelligible. The soul can recognize true beings, the forms, only by having intelligible being within it. The soul can recognize that one form is the same as another only by means of having within it the form of the Same. Similarly, the soul can recognize that one form is different from another only by having within it the form of the Different (37a2–b3). As Aristotle recognized (DA I 2 404b16–18), this is an application of the Empedo-

[21] Cornford (1937), pp. 64–66, takes the passage, as interpreted in this way, to presuppose the Sophist. G. E. L. Owen, The Place of the Timaeus in Plato's Dialogues *Classical Quarterly* n.s. 3 (1953), p. 88, and T. M. Robinson, Plato's Psychology (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), pp. 72–74 argue that this need not be so. Grube, art. cit., p. 80, does not take a stand, but argues that the consonance of this interpretation with the Sophist serves to support it.

clean principle «like perceives like», which is employed later in the *Timaeus* to account for vision (45c1–d3). With this we can contrast the doctrine of *Alcibiades I* that there is a single form of the Same or the Self that will make possible the soul's recognition of the various selves in the world. Though *Alcibiades I* does not exclude a doctrine of recollection, according to which all forms are present in the soul, the form of the αὐτό is there given a unique privileged status not present in the account of the *Timaeus*.

It is hard not to see the new account of the *Timaeus* as resulting from (or at least an anticipation of) the results of the investigations of the *Sophist,* according to which, if the forms are to be intelligible, and if one is to escape the sorts of aporiai that arise in the second part of the *Parmenides* from taking certain forms to have predicated of them only themselves, the forms must result from an interweaving of the five great Forms: Being, Motion, Rest, the Same, and the Different. Because all Forms have the Same and the Different irreducibly present within them, the soul that is to apprehend and distinguish the Forms must likewise have within it the Form of the Different, as well as the Form of the Same.

The authenticity of *Alcibiades I* has somestimes been rejected on the grounds that within it are presented implausible anticipations of the doctrines of post-Platonic thought[22]. I have here made the case that, if the Self Itself is interpreted as the Form of the Self, the dialogue can be taken as suggesting philosophically interesting metaphysical and psychological views consonant with those of Plato's middle period, and that we can see how the metaphysics and psychology of the *Sophist* and *Timaeus* could well have developed out of them[23].

[22] See, for example, Jaeger (1948), p. 165 n. 1 and Bluck, art. cit., pp. 46–52.

[23] Earlier versions of this paper were read at a meeting of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy at Baruch College in October, 1989 and the Thirteenth Annual Workshop in Ancient Philosophy at the University of Texas at Austin in February, 1990. I have profited from the comments and suggestions made at that time. I am also indebted to two of my students, William Lentz and Amy Whitworth, whose work in a graduate course on Plato provided the impetus for the last part of this paper.