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catic resistance to the Thirty is self-evident; no wonder that Thrasyboulos proposed giving citizenship to all who had helped. His first proposal was blocked, however, and the foreigners had to be content with the lesser (though still considerable) rewards once recorded on IG 2² 10.

Davidson College

ON THE ANALYSIS OF PROTAGORAS 351B-360E

GEORGE KLOSKO

HAVING SECURED PROTAGORAS' ABSENT to the identity of piety, justice, wisdom, and temperance, Socrates attempts to complete his proof of the unity of the virtues by demonstrating the identity of courage and wisdom. After an initial foray in this direction (the "fourth argument") is countered by Protagoras, who accuses him of committing a simple fallacy (349el-351b2), Socrates launches into the lengthy and complex final argument of the Protagoras (the "fifth argument"). This argument, which contains Plato's fullest single statement of the Socratic paradoxes, has received a good deal of attention in recent years, but its most important segment, Socrates' attempt to prove the non-existence of moral weakness, or akrasia (a word not used in the Protagoras), is still the subject of much controversy. In particular, there is widespread disagreement about his proofs (a) that the belief of the many—that people perform certain actions, while knowing them to be wrong, though they don't have to do them, because they are "overcome by pleasure"—is absurd; and (b) that the actions are really due to ignorance. In light of this widespread disagreement, these points, which are central not only to the interpretation of the Protagoras but to Plato's early dialogues as a whole, deserve to be examined anew.

The position taken in this paper is that Socrates' interpretation of akrasia in the Protagoras is dependent on a certain view of human motivation, which we may call Egoism—its precise nature is discussed below. In particular, I will argue that Socrates is able to reduce the many's account of akrasia to absurdity by showing that it conflicts with the obvious truth of Egoism. While some semblance of this view has been argued before, most notably by Santas,² it has recently come under attack by C. W. Taylor, in his extremely helpful commentary on the Protagoras.² The purpose of this paper is to defend the Egoism-view. I will attempt to show not only that Socrates' argument depends upon

¹This and the other earlier arguments are analyzed (as intentionally fallacious) in my paper, "Toward a Consistent Interpretation of the Protagoras," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 61 (1979) 125–142, which includes numerous references.


³C. W. Taylor, *Plato's Protagoras* (Oxford 1976) 161–212. Works mentioned in notes 2 and 3 will be cited by author's name below.

Egoism, but also exactly how he introduces Egoism into his proof and argues for it, and, to point out the crucial dialectical moves through which he is able to prove that akrasia is really the product of ignorance. Moreover, it will be seen that the Egoism-view defended here allows a far more plausible reading of the argument as a whole than the other main interpretation yet proffered.

II

This paper takes its stand upon the obvious point that Socrates' arguments concerning akrasia must be understood in the context of the fifth argument as a whole and of the Protagoras as a whole. In order to understand these facets of the general argument, we must pay special attention to the use to which they are put by Socrates in his debate with Protagoras.

The fifth argument as a whole may be divided as follows:

1. prelude (351b3–353b6)
2. hedonism-proof (353c1–355a5)
3. akrasia-proof (355a5–357e8)
4. conclusions (358a1–358a4)
5. courage-proof (358a5–360a5).

The two points with which this paper is especially concerned (a and b, above) make up the substance of section III, the akrasia-proof, which clearly requires the interchangeability of "pleasure" and "good," which is established in II. What is not always given sufficient attention is the fact that II and III exist in a context. From II and III, a number of conclusions are drawn (in IV), which are utilized in V, the courage-proof, through which Protagoras is finally refuted. Thus sections II and III must be understood as being utilized to establish these conclusions. The most important advantage of the Egoism-view defended here is that it makes sense of Socrates' strategy throughout these early stages of the argument. It shows Socrates as directly concerned throughout the hedonism and akrasia proofs to establish the conclusions he needs for his courage-proof. (We shall see that one major drawback of the other main interpretation is that it does not depict Socrates doing this, but has him


5. Exactly how the argument should be divided is controversial, See Manuwald, ibid. 24 n. 10, for an indication of the views of a number of scholars.

6. For the sake of convenience, 351b3-c7 will be discussed as part of II.

Interpreting II and III in their context makes it clear that the limitations that Santas places on them (266–270) have no warrant.

establishing his important conclusion, fallaciously, at the very end of III.)

The courage-proof is relatively straightforward and can be treated briefly. Socrates proves that courage is wisdom, by first proving that cowardice is ignorance. This is accomplished—as are Socrates' other demonstrations concerning akrasia—by construing the moral agent (be he the coward or the brave man) as placed in the position of having to choose between two courses of action, both of which entail consequences that are mixed, partly good and partly bad. An example, offered by Protagoras (359c1–4), is choosing whether to go into battle. Both the brave man and the coward feel fear at this prospect, while fear has been defined as an "expectation of evil" (προδοκίαν...καισι, 358d6–7). The brave man and the coward react differently, the former going into battle, the latter not going. What the brave man does is kallon (359e4–5). If it is kallon, it must be good (agathos) (359e5–7); and also pleasant (360a2–3). Thus the brave man does what is good and the coward what is shameful (asichron) and bad (bakon; 360b6–7). Presumably, in order to avoid what he fears, the coward chooses the lesser good instead of the greater good. This choice must be accounted for as caused by ignorance (360a4–6, 360b4–7). (Since courage is the opposite of cowardice, what causes courage must be the opposite of what causes cowardice, and so courage is caused by wisdom—and is wisdom: 360c1–d5.)

Socrates is able to conduct this argument smoothly. All points are accepted without controversy. The two crucial—and highly questionable—points on which the argument ultimately rests are accepted by Protagoras as having been established in the earlier stages of the fifth argument. These are:

(i) the "kallon-theorie": what is kallon is good

and, what is especially important, "Egoism," the basic assertion that individuals pursue what they believe to be good for themselves or beneficial. As we shall see, early in the fifth argument, Socrates is able to secure the agreement of the many to a rough form of Egoism—in a formulation similar to that we have just presented (354c3–5)—and this proves to be crucial to his case.

Egoism is a thesis about human choices, human intentions. Precisely formulated, it is as follows:

(ii) Egoism: any agent who chooses between two goods, p and q, will choose (to get, to do) the one he holds to be greater (better for himself).

We will see that various forms of this basic thesis are utilized by Socrates

8. As Taylor points out (201), the equivalence of "good" and "pleasant" is not required for the courage-proof.
in his argument. Two are worth mentioning here. First, Egoism has an
important corollary:

(iii) the "ignorance-theorem: if any agent chooses between goods p and q, with
a greater than q, so as to get/do q instead of p, he does so out of ignorance (he
makes a mistake in estimating the relative values of p and q).

The ignorance-theorem, treated as closely connected with Egoism, is also
central to the courage-proof.

In addition, Egoism is closely related to another thesis about human
motivation, Hedonistic-Egoism, or psychological hedonism. Since it is
established in the pleasure-proof that the good is pleasure (or the
pleasant), we are justified in substituting "pleasures" for "goods" in
our formulation of Egoism, which would give us psychological hedonism
(and the substitution would hold for the ignorance-theorem as well).

Thus, for the courage-proof, and for the success of the fifth argument
as a whole, Socrates requires that stages I-III of the argument yield the
kalon-thesis and Egoism. And these are the most important of the con-
cclusions asserted to by Protagoras and the company present in IV. It
therefore stands to reason that an account of stages I-III according to
which it is seen that the establishment of Egoism and the kalon-thesis is
Socrates' primary concern throughout these sections has a strong pre-
sumption of being a correct interpretation—i.e., that an account of the
argument must depict Socrates as acting in this way, as a necessary con-
dition for being correct. And so we must explain just how Socrates
establishes Egoism and the kalon-thesis and their role in the early stages
of the argument.

III

Socrates argues for Egoism through a procedure that is at first sight
unusual but quite common throughout the early dialogues. He is able to
secure the many's assent to it, because it is a position they already hold;
Socrates' argument has Egoism as a premise as well as a conclusion. The
substance of Egoism is a thoroughly common, thoroughly plausible view
about the nature of human choices that is, at least apparently, so
obviously true that the many cannot help but believe it. However, the
many subscribe to a rough, unsystematic form of Egoism, without being
fully aware either of holding this view or of its implications. And so
Socrates' strategy throughout the early stages of the argument is to make
the many fully conscious of views—and the implications of views—they
already hold. An overall strategy such as this is clearly seen in Socrates' hedonism-proof.

For reasons of space, this and other complex but relatively unimportant difficulties of translation cannot be discussed here. They are discussed fully by Taylor.

Socrates argues for the identity of pleasure and good (the hedonism-
thesis) in two stages. The precise thesis that he is attempting to estab-
lish is not at all clear, and at different stages of the argument, it is given
different formulations. The lack of precision here is important to note, as
a similar lack of precision is seen in many places throughout the fifth
argument as a whole. It is clear, however, that Socrates wishes to estab-
lish a relationship between "good" and "pleasure" that will enable
him to interchange these terms, in order to effect the akrasia-proof in
III. To simplify matters, it seems that Socrates wishes to prove that
pleasure and only pleasure is good. Thus he must prove by the end of II:

II.1 All pleasure is good, and
II.2 Only pleasure is good.

The fifth argument as a whole begins with the argument for II.1.
Socrates secures Protagoras' assent that living pleasurably is living well,
and so that pleasure is good (the tacit assumption being that whatever
makes for living well is good) (351b3-6). Protagoras, however, protests
that not all pleasures are necessarily good, that only kalon pleasures are
good (351c1-2). Socrates' argument for II.1 is in reply to Protagoras' ob-
jection, but it should be noted that Socrates misinterprets (or mis-
represents) this objection as a restatement of the common view of
the many that, simply, not all pleasures are good/pains are evil (351c2-3).

In arguing that all pleasures are good, Socrates studiously ignores the
relationship between "kalon" and other moral terms. "Kalon" is never
mentioned, but later in the argument, Socrates seems to believe that he
has established, among his conclusions in IV, the propositions (a) that all
pleasures are kalon, and (b) that what is kalon is good (358b5-6).

Socrates establishes II.1 by showing that instances of what appear to
the many to be counter-examples actually confirm it. Things that appear
to be bad though pleasant are shown to cause more pain than pleasure,
and to be bad for that reason. The opposite is shown to be true of
apparently good unpleasant things, and the many are unable to name any
respect in which these things are good or bad, other than pleasure and
pain (353c3-354c2).

In the course of arguing for II.1, Socrates proves II.2 as well. Because
the many are repeatedly unable to name any respect in which things are

11Whether Socrates is depicted as sincerely holding this thesis in the Protagoras is a
question we cannot pursue here; for the views of numerous scholars, see M. J. O'Brien,
The Socratic Paradoxes and the Greek Mind (Chapel Hill 1967) 138 n. 52.
12For example, 351d1-2, 351e3-6, 354b7-2, 355a3-5, 355b4-7. See Taylor
168-170, 177-181. Taylor gives an exhaustive discussion of many complicated, though
relatively unimportant, difficulties in II that cannot be discussed below.
13It should be noted that Protagoras, too, reformulates his objection in this fashion
(351c7-8).
14See below, 320-321.
good or bad except in regard to pleasure and pain. Socrates concludes that only pleasure and pain are good and evil. This proposition is stated provisionally; i.e., it holds only as long as the many can name no other good or evil (354e8–355a5). But until they can do so, they are shown to be committed to the thesis that only pleasure is good.

As we have said, what especially interests us in the present context is the means through which Socrates establishes the hedonism-thesis. He is able to show that the many subscribe to the doctrine of evaluative hedonism (i.e., that pleasure and only pleasure is good) on the basis of an examination of their deeply held convictions. Though the many believe that some pleasures are bad and some pains are good, Socrates is able to show that this belief represents a confusion on their part. When one examines their beliefs, it is seen that they are able to adduce no standard according to which pleasures are bad and pains good other than pleasure and pain. And so when their moral beliefs are analyzed and systematized, the many can be shown to be evaluative hedonists.

Socrates establishes Egoism through a similar strategy. Like evaluative hedonism, it is established upon the basis of what the many really believe. Though they appear to believe that Egoism does not hold in all cases, an examination of these special cases will show that they are not really counter-examples: not only can they be construed so as to support Egoism, but the many will be able to present no other explanation.

The examples of situations that seem to refute Egoism are situations of akrasia. A situation of akrasia is described as consisting of three elements:16

1. A man does evil
2. Knowing it is evil
3. And he is not compelled to do it

and the many’s explanation for his conduct is:

E because he is “overcome by pleasure.”

Stage III of the argument is Socrates’ akrasia-proof, in which he establishes two things: (a) that the many’s account of akrasia is absurd; and (b) what really happens in ostensible cases of akrasia. (a) is proved by showing that the many’s view of akrasia conflicts with the obvious truth of Egoism; then in (b), situations of akrasia are reinterpreted so as to be made consistent with Egoism.

Thus we see that, in his proofs of both evaluative hedonism and Egoism, Socrates begins with the many confused: they hold a doctrine on the one hand, but can name apparent counter-instances on the other. In each case, Socrates shows that the apparent counter-instances can be reduced to conformity with the doctrine. What is interesting to note is that Socrates uses the same counter-instances to establish both doctrines. For both doctrines, Socrates examines an overall situation of akrasia (see 355c1–9). Evaluative hedonism is established by showing that, even though what the agent does appears to be pleasant and bad, it is really painful (and so bad). (Then Socrates discusses converse instances.) Egoism is established by showing that, even in this case, the agent can be seen to be doing what he believes to be in his own best interest.

It is possible that one reason Socrates so closely links his proofs of evaluative hedonism and Egoism is the fact that he is not fully aware of the distance between the questions that these two doctrines address. The link between evaluative hedonism and Egoism is found in the form of Egoism that Socrates defends in the fifth argument, Hedonistic Egoism, or psychological hedonism. A number of commentators note that Socrates makes no clear distinction between evaluative hedonism and psychological hedonism;17 this is not necessarily to say that he confuses the two, but clearly, Socrates does move from talking about the one to talking about the other, without alerting the reader. This causes some problems in interpreting his arguments.

Psychological hedonism is introduced into the argument, quite in passing, in 354c3–5, in the hedonism-proof. This is the first appearance of Egoism in the argument, and the very off-handedness of its introduction is of some interest.

As we have said, the bulk of the hedonism-proof consists of the reduction of apparent counter-instances to accord with evaluative hedonism. Having completed the two sets of reductions, Socrates interjects the following sentence, before formally drawing his conclusion: “So you pursue pleasure as the good and shun pain as the bad.”18 The inference here (συνειδήσει) clearly has the following structure. Since it has been demonstrated that pleasure is the good and pain is the bad, granted the obvious truth (Egoism) that people pursue that which they believe to be good and avoid that which they take to be bad, it follows that people pursue pleasure and shun pain—as the good and the evil. Not only is Egoism undoubtedly assumed here, but it is taken to be such an obvious truth that it is not mentioned and remains a tacit assumption. Only now does Socrates formally conclude (ἀπαθίς 354c5) that the many hold pleasure to

16See 353d6–7, 355a7–8, 355b1–3, 355d1–3; there are also descriptions of akrasia in which D is not made explicit: 352e6–353a2, 353e6–8, 355e6–355a1 (using D for “description,” and E for “explanation”).


18For the translation, see Taylor 177.
be the good and pain the evil (354c5–d3). This inference returns us to the context of evaluative hedonism, which II as a whole is designed to establish. The connective between 354c5-5 and the following sentences apparently lies in the fact that psychological hedonism lends some additional support to the truth of evaluative hedonism; i.e., the kind of things that people pursue as good is additional evidence as to exactly what they believe to be good.18 In any event, Socrates clearly secures the assent of the many that psychological hedonism is a true account of how people behave, in addition to their belief that evaluative hedonism is a true account of what is good and evil.

The psychological hedonism that the many are seen to hold (as a specification of their general belief in Egoism) is the basis for Socrates' proof that their view of *abraia* is absurd. Socrates begins section III by declaring that the establishment of evaluative hedonism allows the inter-substitution of the words "good" and "pleasant," "bad" and "painful" (355a5–b7). The account of the many, which is declared to be absurd, falls under the description: *DI*: A man does evil *D2*: knowing it is evil *D3*: he is not compelled to do it. And the explanation for this, which, formerly, was *E*: because he is "overcome by pleasure," now reads: *E1*: because he is "overcome by good" (355c7–d3)

This is the only substitution necessary for Socrates' refutation of the many's view of *abraia.*

The precise nature of the absurdity here is controversial. This is largely due to the fact that Socrates does not stop to point it out before continuing with his tasks at hand. The evidence of the dramatic context suggests that the absurdity is developed by 355e4, for, as Vlastos notes, Socrates introduces the ironic device of "an arrogant questioner," who characterizes the position of the many as "ridiculous nonsense" (γελοιον, 355d1), proceeds to develop an argument against it, and is not heard from after 355e4.18 Indeed, there is an absurdity contained in 355d1–e4, centering on the conflict between the many's view of *abraia* and the obvious truth of Egoism.

The arrogant questioner shows that the agent follows the course of action that yields him "fewer good things at the cost of greater evils" (355d3–e4).18 In addition, in the process of redescribing the situation of *abraia,* the questioner reformulates the many's explanation for it:

18Similarly, 355a2-3 contains an additional test for 11.2.

17Cf. Taylor 185. The second substitution (355e4–355a1), noted by Taylor, is difficult to explain. Though it need not be read as part of the reduction to absurdity itself, but rather as part of a reinterpretation of *abraia* as ignorance after the reducito has been completed (see below, 317–320), this remains the only one of Taylor's objections to the Egoist-view that is not easily rebutted.

10Vlastos 78 #; the questioner is introduced at 355c2-3 and becomes ἔφθασαν at c8.

1On the translation of this clause, see J. Stocks, Q27 (1912) 100–104; Taylor, 186–187.

E2c: "It's clear, then, . . . what you mean by being overcome is taking (λαμβάνεις) fewer good things at the cost of greater evils." (355c2–4).

As Santas has shown, "taking" here refers to an intentional act on the part of the agent, and not to any process of receiving goods apart from his intentions. This must be true if E2 is to function as an explanation for the case of *abraia,* and not merely as a repetition of the former description. And so, in this context, "choosing" would be an accurate translation of λαμβάνειν.

It seems clear that this interpretation of "overcome" is the crucial move in the argument. In the first place, it yields the absurdity that the arrogant questioner seeks. Putting all of our elements together, the situation is as follows: *DI*: a man does evil (which has been shown to mean "the greater evil") *D2*: knowing it is evil *D3*: he is not compelled to do it *E2*: because he takes fewer good things at the cost of greater evils. *E2* has been shown to mean:

*E1*: because he chooses fewer good things at the cost of greater evils or *E4*: he chooses the lesser good/greater evil.

*E4* is simply an explicit statement of the content of *E3.* If we combine *E4* with *D2*—to yield: the agent knowingly chooses the lesser good/greater evil—we have our absurdity. For this clearly conflicts with the obvious truth of Egoism, asserted to in 354c3–5.18

Socrates' strategy is clear. Egoism is a thesis about intentions, while the many's view of *abraia* has moral agents behaving in apparent contradiction to Egoism. But the contradiction is only apparent, since,

18Santas, 279–280; Taylor agrees (187).

19Taylor (185) has no warrant to demand that the absurdity be contained in *E4* alone.

As Taylor convincingly argues (189–190, 182), the much-discussed verbal adjectives in 356b (μισεῖς, 356b4; παρεὶροι, 356b8; παρεῖρε, 356c1) should probably be read as (a) commendatory rather than as (b) necessary (i.e., as implying what one ought to do, rather than what one must as a matter of psychological necessity do). However, this point is not crucial to the interpretation of the argument as a whole. Taylor is incorrect in assuming that, in order for the *abraia*-proof to rest upon psychological hedonism, the verbs must bear sense (b), for there is additional evidence of psychological hedonism in the fifth argument, i.e., 354c3–5.

It seems to me that Santas incorrectly interprets the verbal adjectives as entailing necessity (380 n. 21). D. Gallop, "The Socratic Paradox in the *Protagoros,*" Phronesis, 9 (1964) is also most probably wrong in reading them as ambiguous between the two senses (128–129).

As N. Gully points out (The Philosophy of Socrates [London 1968], 210 n. 14), the language used by Socrates is similar to that of Aristotle in a well-known passage in *De Meta Animism* (701a7 ff.). However, the verbal adjectives used there, in conclusions of the practical syllogism, have a purely *commendatory* sense—as action follows only "unless there is some hindrance or compulsion." The "necessity" of the action described in EN 1147a24–31 also holds conditionally.
in describing ἄκρασία, the many describe only the agent’s observed behavior, without making any reference to his intentions. And so Socrates makes the crucial assumption that the agent’s behavior is intentional. It is clear that “overcome” must be interpreted as entailing intentional behavior on the part of the agent, or the contradiction would not develop.

Socrates’ assumption that the agent’s behavior is intentional carries through the remainder of the fifth argument. Throughout the remainder of the argument, the moral agents Socrates discusses—whether they are described as performing intentional actions or as merely acting—must be understood as acting intentionally. This appears to be the cash value of Socrates’ repeated proviso, expressed in D1, that the agent is not compelled to perform the action in question. Apparently, if he acts even though he is not forced to, he must be acting intentionally.

There are some difficulties that must be met in defending the view of the absurdity we have outlined. First, it is peculiar that Socrates pauses neither to indicate clearly nor to explain this absurdity. However, this objection is easily countered, for Socrates does not point out any other absurdity either. On any reading of the argument, III contains an absurdity that is not pointed out by Socrates. And so the fact that Socrates does not indicate the above absurdity carries no more weight against this interpretation than against any alternative account. Moreover, this is not the only instance in III in which Socrates neglects to identify the conclusion of one of his arguments. For, by the end of III, he is able to assert that the many have agreed ἰδον, that making a wrong choice of pleasures and pains is caused by ignorance (357d1–6). But not only were the many not clearly seen to agree to this anywhere in the text, but it is not clear whether this agreement took place or exactly how Socrates managed to complete his argument for it.

A more serious objection to our interpretation of the absurdity could, perhaps, be raised in reference to our handling of Socrates’ account of what it is to be “overcome.” In moving from E2 to E4, we could, perhaps, be accused of unfairly reading into Socrates’ argument. However, Socrates clearly does make the moves that we attribute to him. The ensuing paragraphs leave no doubt that he interprets being “overcome by pleasure” as a process of making a choice between different amounts of pleasure. The kind of choice he has in mind is one based on a thoroughly rational process of weighing or calculating, analogous to the kinds of measurement operations applied to such things as weights and numbers, thicknesses and sounds. Thus, in interpreting being “overcome by pleasure” in this fashion, Socrates depicts an agent in the process of being “driven and dazed by his pleasures” (355a8–b1) as making a paradigmatically rational calculation as to how he can maximize his pleasures. This is, to say the least, odd, and Santas is doubtless correct in viewing Socrates’ account of “overcome” as a major weakness in the argument.

Thus the movement of Socrates’ argument is from (a) being “overcome” to (b) “choosing” to (c) employing the suitable measuring technique. It is to be noted that Socrates never argues for the movement from (a) to (b) to (c). It is true that the many never protest, but they are hardly to be commended for not doing so. Any attempt to defend these moves would be at least difficult and quite probably an impossible task.

Having reduced the view of the many to absurdity, Socrates proceeds to give a new account of ἄκρασία. In order to make this phenomenon consistent with Egoism, he argues that the agent does not choose wrongly knowingly, but does so out of ignorance—as the result of a failure of measurement. To make this position plausible, Socrates proceeds to examine a series of measurement operations (356c4–357c1). He argues that the measurement of certain entities is often difficult, because of the occurrence of errors of perspective (356c4–8). But various arts of measurement can overcome “the power of appearance to deceive.” In the case of pleasure and pain, a special art of measurement would provide this service (356e4–357a5–b3). Socrates declares that the precise nature of this art need not be discussed at present, for enough has been granted by the many already to allow the completion of the proof at hand. For, Socrates asserts, addressing them, “you have admitted that it is from defect of knowledge that men err, when they do err, in their choice of pleasures and pains—that is, in the choice of good and evil,” and the knowledge they lack is of the art of measurement (357b5–d7).

Exactly how the many have agreed to this is, as we have said, not clear, but the argument can be reconstructed. It too will be seen to rely on psychological hedonism.

Taylor interprets the argument differently. According to him, through 356e–357d, Socrates has convinced the many that, because of the power of appearance to deceive, making correct choices in regard to pleasures and pains requires the possession of the art of measurement. Thus, if an agent is to make correct choices regularly, he must have this art. Now, as Taylor points out, Socrates argues as if he has proved a
stronger thesis: if an agent chooses correctly on any given occasion, he must possess the measuring art. The move from choosing regularly to any given choice is probably an error on the part of Socrates. He could be taken to be assuming that appearances have so formidable a power to deceive that, unless the agent possessed the requisite knowledge, he would (inevitably?) choose wrongly on every occasion. However, stated in this fashion, this assumption is one that Socrates would undoubtedly repudiate. In any event, we shall set aside the problem of negotiating the gap between choosing correctly on a regular basis and choosing correctly on any given occasion.

Using "C" for "... chooses correctly" and "K" for "... has knowledge (of the art of measurement)," according to Taylor, Socrates succeeds in proving only (x)(Cx → Kx), that to choose correctly (regularly/ever), one must know the measuring art. Socrates’ conclusion, however, is that if ever one chooses wrongly, he does not have the measuring art, i.e., that wrong choices of pleasures and pains are always caused by ignorance. (This is the ignorance-theorem.) Taylor objects to this conclusion as established through the simple fallacy of denying the antecedent; i.e., according to Taylor, Socrates illicitly moves from (x)(Cx → Kx) to (x)(¬Cx → ¬Kx) (i.e., from “choosing correctly entails the possession of knowledge” to “choosing incorrectly entails an absence of knowledge”). In practical terms, according to Taylor, the move is fallacious, because the agent’s failure to choose correctly does not necessarily imply “failure to employ a technique, since it may equally well consist in failure to act on the result which is reached by correct employment of the technique.”

Thus, according to Taylor, Socrates’ proof of the ignorance-theorem depends on a simple and obvious fallacy. To make matters worse, according to Taylor, the many’s account of akrasia is taken by Socrates to be absurd on the basis of a conflict between their description of the agent as simultaneously ignorant (here) and as having knowledge (above, 314–315, esp. D2). Thus Socrates’ reduction of the view of the many to absurdity also depends on this fallacy. Taylor leaves us with an interpretation of the argument, then, according to which both Socrates’ refutation of the many’s view of akrasia and his reinterpretation of akrasia as resting on ignorance depend upon a simple fallacy. And, equally serious, according to this interpretation, Socrates’ argument cannot be seen to establish the strong view of Egotism that is asserted in IV and used by Socrates in the courage-proof.

I believe that one significant advantage of the view of the argument defended in this paper is that it enables us to avoid these severe difficulties in Taylor’s interpretation. Our view of the argument allows for the establishment of the ignorance-theorem without having to introduce a fallacy, and it also establishes the Egotism asserted in IV.

To recount, Socrates can be seen to establish (x)(Cx → Kx) (“choosing correctly entails the possession of knowledge”) relatively clearly, but the move to the ignorance-theorem, (x)(¬Cx → ¬Kx) (“choosing incorrectly entails an absence of knowledge”), requires explanation, and Taylor is forced to conclude that the move is effected fallaciously. What is important to see is that psychological hedonism allows Socrates to derive the ignorance-theorem non-fallaciously. In practical terms, it eliminates any possible counter-examples. If our agent possessed the measuring art, he would know how to maximize his pleasure on any occasion. Now, if psychological hedonism were true, he would wish to maximize his pleasures, and there would be no conceivable circumstance under which he would wish to go against the art of measurement. And so all actions that do not maximize the agent’s pleasures—understanding “actions” as intentional actions, or actions based on choices—cannot be caused by anything other than ignorance. Knowledge, which has been seen to be a necessary condition for correct choices, would also be a sufficient condition. Psychological hedonism provides a theory of motivation according to which the agent would always choose in keeping with the measuring art.

Granted psychological hedonism, the position that Socrates leaves us with here is closely related to that concerning the possessor of the techne of justice in the Hippias Minor. The thinly veiled conclusion of that work is that the just man would never abuse his art of justice, because he would never wish to do so. Similarly, the possessor of the art of measurement in the Protagoras would always choose properly. And if an individual chooses wrongly, the only possible explanation is that he lacks the measuring art—that he is, in other words, ignorant.

In addition to justifying the establishment of the ignorance-theorem, psychological hedonism justifies the strong statement of Egotism asserted by Socrates in IV. We have seen how Socrates tailors his argument to accomplish this. We have seen that the many have committed themselves to psychological hedonism at 354c3–5, which confronted Socrates with a potential problem. For, in addition to subscribing to psychological hedonism, the many were seen to hold that there are occasions on which agents behave in apparent violation of psychological hedonism. As we have seen, these are instances of akrasia. And so by interpreting the

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39Ibid. 192.

40Ibid. 182, 185–186. This is also the view of Gallop (above, note 24) 120–122.

41Taylor 203; H. von Arnim, Platon und seine Zeit: die Enzyklopädie des Phaidros (Leipzig 1914), for one, holds a similar view (20–21).
agent's actions that go against his best interests as intentional actions, Socrates is able to show (a) that the many's view of akrasia is absurd, and (b) that apparent instances of akrasia can be reinterpreted so as not to conflict with psychological hedonism. This train of argument allows Socrates to secure the many's agreement to the strong statement of Egoism asserted to in IV, and this is justified on the basis of the fact that the many's major reservation to Egoism was seen to be removed by the argument.

IV

It seems, then, that the view of Socrates' akrasia-proof defended above has a number of significant advantages. It allows us to identify the absurdity in the many's view of akrasia that is indicated by the arrogant questioner. It allows us to see how Socrates is able to establish the ignorance-theorem (without a fallacy), i.e., how he is justified in moving from (x)(Cx → Kx) to (x)(¬Cx → ¬Kx). And it allows us to see exactly how he goes about arguing for the strong view of Egoism that is the most significant of his conclusions in IV.

In light of the fact that our view of the argument has these advantages, I think it is reasonable to prefer it to alternative accounts. And so the conclusion of this paper is that Socrates' akrasia-proof must be interpreted as resting heavily on the Egoism/psychological hedonism asserted to by the many in 354c3-5.

In closing, I will comment briefly on the two major weaknesses in the fifth argument. This brings us back to the two highly questionable moves on which the courage-proof has been seen to rest (above, 309-310), for, clearly, the two most serious weaknesses in Socrates' argument as a whole are (a) his interpretation of "overcome" and (b) his "proof" of the kalon-thesis.

To begin with (b), it has been noted that Socrates does not prove this, and so, at the very least, he is not justified in taking it to be one of his conclusions in IV. It is also worth pointing out that, at least as asserted in the Protagoras, the idea that "what is kalon is good" rests on a highly questionable network of assumptions.

As we have noted, early in II, Protagoras protests that not all pleasures are good, that only kalon pleasures are good. As we have seen, Socrates construes this as the demand to prove II.1, that all pleasures are good.

And, in order to do so, Socrates reduces apparent counter-instances to conformity with this doctrine. What is to be noted is that Socrates treats examples of only one type, those in which the agent's long-range interest (which is to maximize his pleasure) is clearly identifiable. For instance, in the case of a good pain, taking medicine is good though unpleasant, because it clearly produces more pleasure than pain in the long run.

The example discussed in the courage-proof is quite different. In the case of the soldier going into battle, it is not clear that his interest actually lies in fighting. If we assume that, in general, the word "kalon" is used by the many in reference to what benefits the community as a whole, what is kalon will not be beneficial to the moral agent, unless the individual's interest and society's interest coincide. In obvious cases, such as robbing a bank (and not being caught), it is clear that the agent, in doing what is (at least arguably) in his own interest, is not doing what is kalon. The question of exactly what is in the agent's true interest is, of course, a central concern of Plato's Socratic ethics — as is the question of what is really kalon. But, as far as the Protagoras is concerned, Socrates has no warrant to assimilate the case of the soldier deciding whether to go into battle to the case of the patient deciding whether to take medicine. In doing this, Socrates argues unfairly; he is guilty of playing on a network of equivocations and ambiguities that lie at the heart of his moral arguments in many of the early dialogues.

The other major weakness in Socrates' argument, which has been noted, is his interpretation of "overcome." In assuming that the person in the process of being overcome chooses, and then in assimilating this choice to the kind of decision that is made by the practitioner of a purely technical art of measurement, Socrates makes unjustified, and probably unjustifiable, moves. In order to elaborate upon exactly where Socrates goes wrong, we would have to commit ourselves to some view of what really happens to an agent who is "overcome by pleasure," which it is beyond the scope of this paper to do. However, at the very least, it is clear that, even if the agent can be said to choose, Socrates seriously misconstrues the nature of this choice. To utilize the distinction sug-

And so certain examples of good pains used by Socrates (warfare, 354a4; and "safety of the city and rule over others and wealth," 354b4-5) are somewhat anomalous, in that their end seems to be the good of the community, not of the individual; cf. Taylor 175.

Of these, we should note the common, equivocal use of the adverb, eu, in the phrase, eu pratein (e.g., Chrm 172al-3; Grg 507c5-3; sec also the equivocal use of epohemima, agetoun, and akeon in the refutation of Polus in the Gorgias (474c-477a); on this, see E. A. Dodds, Plato's Gorgias (Oxford 1959) 249-352).


Cf. the explication of "choosing" given by T. F. Daventry, Mind 73 (1964) 515-536; cf. also the very different explication of being "carried away by pleasure or distracted by passion," in Timaeus 86b4-5 et seq.

Cf. von Arnim (above, note 32) 19-23; Naviswald (above, note 4) 39-41.
gested by Mounce, there is an obvious difference between errors made in
two different kinds of choices: (a) a choice made under the influence of
passion; and (b) one made independently of passion. Socrates clearly
assimilates an error made in (a) (e.g., the dieting man, who succumbs
to temptation, tells himself that one little pastry won’t hurt, and eats it)
to the kind of error made in (b) (e.g., an error in “an intricate calculation
in higher mathematics”49). Whereas the error made in (b) could have been
avoided by showing the mathematician where he was going wrong (by
providing him with τις ἑρμηνευτικής, 357a3)—which would, presumably,
prevent further errors of the same kind in the future—it is not clear
that the hedonic calculus alone would have saved our dieting friend—
or would save him in the future. Thus, in arguing that an art of measure-
ment alone would conquer abstruse, Socrates neglects the role of various
psychic forces—desire, passion, emotion—in certain kinds of choices. In
addition to the art of weighing pleasures, our heavy friend would require
the fortitude to use it.41 And so, to conclude, in the fifth argument of the
Protagoras, Socrates can be seen to make the kind of error that his-
torians of philosophy generally attribute to “Socrates.” To quote the
Magnus Moralia:

According to Socrates, all the virtues arise in the reasoning part of the soul, from
which it follows that in making the various virtues branches of knowledge, he
ignores the irrational part of the soul, and thus ignores passion and the moral
character (1182a18–22).45

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41See 15.
49Cf. the definition of courage given in Republic 429b7–d1, 430a3–b5, 442b11–c3,
445d1–3.
41I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to Mr. Kevin McTighe and to the journal’s
anonymous readers for their valuable criticisms and suggestions.

THE PROSECUTION OF C. MANILIII IN 66 B.C. AND
CICERO’S PRO MANILIO

John T. Ramsey

The prosecution of the ex-tribune C. Manilius in December of 66 is
presented by our sources as an indirect attack on Pompey, who had
been given the command in the war against Mithridates by a preference
of Manilius sponsored while tribune in 66. The Optimates lost no
time in prosecuting the offending tribune. Soon after he ceased to hold
office on December 10th, which had rendered him immune from prosecu-
tion earlier, Manilius was indicted for repetundae in the court over which
Cicero presided as praetor. Normally praetors granted a minimum of ten
days to a defendant for preparing his case, but on this occasion Cicero
took the unusual step of allowing Manilius only one day. Manilius’
supporters responded in a hostile manner, and the tribunes summoned a
meeting of the people at which Cicero was asked to justify his decision to
deny Manilius’ request for a delay.4 In defending his action, Cicero
asserted that he was well-disposed towards the defendant and had wished
to insure a fair hearing of the case by preventing it from being deferred
until the following year when another praetor would preside over the
extortion court. He argued that under the circumstances he had been
forced to grant less time than usual since only one day remained before
his praetorship expired.4 Apparently this explanation satisfied the

4The evidence for the following account is to be found in Plutarch Cic. 5.4–6 and Dio
36.44.1–2. A list of modern works which will henceforth be cited by author’s name is
provided here for the reader’s convenience: W. Durrant, Geschichte Rom. 5 (2nd ed.
P. Grobe (Leipzig 1910); M. Giez, Cicero: ein biographischer Versuch (Wiesbaden
1969); E. Gruen, The Last Generation of the Roman Republic (Berkeley 1974); R. Heinze,
Cicero politische Anflüge, Akhileia 27 (1969) 945–1010; T. N. Mitchell, Cicero,
The Ascending Years (New Haven 1979); E. J. Phillips, “Cicero and the Prosecution of
C. Manilius,” Latomus 29 (1970) 593–607; R. Seager, “The First Catilinarian Con-
spiracy,” Historia 13 (1964) 338–347; A. Ward, “Politics in the Trials of Manilius and
Cornelius,” TAP 4 101 (1970) 545–556; Marcus Crassus and the Late Roman Republic
(Columbia, Mo. 1977).
4On the immunity from prosecution that tribunes shared with other Roman magistrates,
see E. J. Weinrib, “The Prosecution of Roman Magistrates,” Phoenix 22 (1968) 32–56,
esp. 33–35.
4We are not told whether this consilium took place on the day Manilius was charged or on
the day he was scheduled to appear before Cicero’s court. Cicero (Cat. 1.15), however,
informs us that on December 29th of 66 Catiline was observed with a weapon in the
comitium, and a likely context for Catiline’s presence in the vicinity of the rostra on
this date is the assembly convened by the tribunes to protest Cicero’s treatment of Manilius.
4Plutarch indicates that Cicero set a hearing for the last day of his praetorship,