Socrates and Callicles on Pleasure

SCOTT BERMAN

1. Egoism

Socrates argues in Plato's *Gorgias* at 468-508 that doing injustice is worse than suffering injustice. The reason that we should care about Socrates' argument is that if he is successful, he will have shown that my doing injustice to others is actually incompatible with my being happy.[1] This result would be an important one when considering whether Egoism (or Prudence) is a plausible alternative to traditional conceptions of morality as a guide to action. Egoism, as I take it, is the view that an action ought to be done if, and only if, it benefits the agent. Traditional conceptions of morality, on the other hand, usually *proscribe* such actions if others are harmed in the process, e.g. stealing or killing. However, if Socrates' argument in the *Gorgias* to the effect that it is worse to do injustice than to suffer injustice is successful, then Egoism is not necessarily a *competing* guide to action. Rather, Egoism would then *coincide* with this traditional conception of morality *to the extent* that it also proscribes harming others. For example, Egoism would proscribe stealing because it is *in fact* impossible for a person to be made happy by stealing from others. Why stealing from others is in fact incompatible with happiness – if it is – depends upon the nature of happiness, that is, what happiness really is.[2]

In this paper, I look at a very small portion of Socrates' argument for the incompatibility of doing injustice with happiness. Specifically, I want to

[1] Socrates' argument will show this if we grant – and I think we should – that my suffering injustice is incompatible with my being happy. In other words, if my suffering injustice is incompatible with my happiness, and doing injustice is in fact even worse for me than suffering it, then my doing injustice must also be incompatible with my happiness. (Cf. *Gorgias* 468E-474B). See also Berman (1991).

[2] For Socrates' position to be a starter, truths about the nature of happiness have to be similar to truths about the nature of health, namely, objective and discovered, not subjective and created (or invented).

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examine both why Socrates commits his opponent on this issue in the *Gorgias* (namely Callicles) to a form of hedonism and what that form of hedonism is. I shall argue that it is against *this* form of hedonism that Socrates' argument is directed and not against hedonism in general. No commentator of the *Gorgias* can hope to understand Socrates' arguments against Callicles' position without first being clear about what that position is. I hope to set out what Callicles' position on pleasure is and how this pleasure is supposed to relate to happiness and why this supports Callicles' view, contra Socrates, that it is suffering injustice and not doing injustice which is actually the worse thing. One of the advantages of the position that I shall attribute to Callicles is that it will make sense of Socrates' trying to refute it while being himself a hedonist.[3] The issue between Socrates and Callicles is over the nature of pleasure. Unfortunately, I shall only have time here to sketch what I take Socrates' position on pleasure to be. I reserve for another place a fuller examination of Socrates' position. Before I examine these issues, though, it is necessary to consider their background in the dialogue. Considering this background is necessary because White (1990) has written on these same issues in this journal but goes awry, in my opinion, because he failed to appreciate fully the Power Argument at 466a-468e. I turn now to that argument.

2. *The Power Argument*

At 466a-468e in Plato's *Gorgias*, Socrates argues to the effect that orators and tyrants have no power in the city. This seems blatantly false to Socrates' interlocutor Polus – and most likely to us also. It seems false because if

(1) power is the ability to do what you want,

and, for example,

(2) the tyrant *wants* to kill his prime minister,

and

(3) the tyrant has the *ability* to kill his prime minister,

then

(4) the tyrant has the *power* to kill his prime minister.[4]

The way that Socrates meets this argument is by looking at what the object of desire is, that is, what the identity conditions are of the action desired. White (1990) has claimed that Socrates thinks that we *never* want or desire

[3] This may or may not be considered an advantage depending upon whether one thinks that Socrates is a hedonist. I do think that Socrates is a hedonist but I shall not have time to argue this here. But see notes 18 and 31.

[4] This example and the following analysis comes from Penner (1988).

the means but only the end. (See especially page 119). This reading seems justified in light of 467c5-e1. However, concerning the object of desire (βούλεσθαι), the conclusion he and Polus *actually* reach is:[5]

> "Then when we slaughter or banish from the city or deprive of property, we do not thus *simply* (ἁπλῶς) want these acts. But if they are beneficial, we want them; if harmful we do not . . ." (468c2-5; after Penner (1988)).

This passage does *not* say that humans never want an action but only its good end. Rather, it says that we want some action *if it is beneficial* and do not want that action *if it is harmful*. Socrates' point here is that we *never* want an action for its own sake (ἁπλῶς). Moreover, Socrates also thinks that we *do* want an action, that is, a means, if it is beneficial, that is, if it leads to some good end; and we *do not* want an action, that is, a means, if it is harmful, that is, if it leads to some bad end. In other words, no human being wants to do some particular action *independent* of whether that action is in fact beneficial or harmful to him or her. Socrates' theory concerning the object of desire, then, is that what we want is the best means available to us in the circumstances we find ourselves in that in fact leads to the best outcome we can achieve given where we are starting from. Thus we do not know whether we want to do some action until we know whether that means did in fact help us to get to the best possible outcome. To claim, as White does, that the object of desire is only the end and never the means is to mis-read the text in a crucial way. It is crucial because it hides from White the difference between Socrates and Callicles on the nature of pleasure; specifically, Socrates thinks, I shall argue, that pleasures have structures and Callicles thinks that pleasures do not have structures.

So, following Penner (1988), Socrates gets Polus to agree that the action the tyrant really *wants* is the killing of the prime minister which *in fact* leads to the tyrant having more time for drinking and carousing,[6] that is, what the tyrant wants is the following:

> (A1) the tyrant kills his prime minister;
> as a result his throne is preserved in the best way possible;
> as a result, he gets leisure to hunt, feast and carouse;

[5] "Οὐκ ἄρα σφάττειν βουλόμεθα οὐδ' ἐκβάλλειν ἐκ τῶν πόλεων οὐδὲ χρήματα ἀφαιρεῖσθαι ἁπλῶς οὕτως, ἀλλ' ἐὰν μὲν ὠφέλιμα ᾖ ταῦτα, βουλόμεθα πράττειν αὐτά, βλαβερὰ δὲ ὄντα οὐ βουλόμεθα." [N.B. All translations are mine except where noted.]

[6] Let us assume for the sake of the argument that drinking and carousing really will make the tyrant happy. As Malcolm Schofield has pointed out to me, and I agree, this is an assumption that Socrates would not accept.

as a result, he is happier than he would be if he undertook any other action available to him in the situation he then found himself.

However, the action the tyrant has the *ability* to do – given the way the world is – is the killing of the prime minister which *in fact* leads to the tyrant being put in prison and tortured for the rest of his life, that is,

(A2) The tyrant kills his prime minister;
as a result, he loses his throne;
as a result, he is tortured, blinded and thrown into a brutal prison;
as a result, he lives more more miserably ever after than he would have done had he not had his prime minister killed.

So, if the tyrant kills the prime minister, the tyrant does only what *seems best* but not what *is* best. Hence, the tyrant does not have any power because the action the tyrant wants to do, i.e., (A1), is not the action the tyrant has the ability to do, i.e., (A2); they are two *different* actions. And therefore, in the argument stated above, the action referred to in (2) is not the same action referred to in (3). This is sufficient to block the inference to (4); that is, since the actions referred to in (2) and (3) are different actions, the tyrant does not have the ability to do what the tyrant wants; hence, the tyrant does not have power. Hence, the only 'power' the tyrant has is the ability to do what *seems* best, not what *is* best.

One of the crucial things that I want to take away from this argument is Socrates' way of identifying an action.[8] The only way Socrates' argument at 466a-468e can work is if actions are individuated more widely than simply (ἁπλῶς) "killing the prime minister". Rather, an action has to be individuated in such a way that it includes how its effects affect the agent. For example, the tyrant does not want to kill the prime minister *simpliciter*, i.e., regardless of its consequences. (Cf. 468c2-5.) Instead, the tyrant wants the killing of the prime minister which prevents the revolution which protects his throne so that he can continue to enjoy his carousing. If killing the prime minister hastens the revolution which causes him to lose his throne and puts him in prison to be tortured for the rest of his life, he does not want that action. In other words, the tyrant only wants to do the action which *in fact* turns out to be best for him. If the tyrant does something which is in fact bad for him, he did not want to do that action.

[7] A much fuller account and defense of this argument is to be found in Penner (1988).
[8] What follows has some sympathy with Anscombe's "wanting to do action under a description". The difference will be that for Anscombe, all desire is for the apparent goods while according to Socrates, all desire is for the real good.

The important point here is that actions have *structures*. The structure of an action is the means/end hierarchy leading from what the tyrant can do now through its short-range effects and all the way to its long-range effects, e.g. (A1) and (A2). The structure of the action the tyrant *wants* to do ultimately leads to more carousing. The structure of the action the tyrant has the *ability* to do – given the way the world is of which the tyrant is ignorant – ultimately leads to lots of pain. If the tyrant does the action he has the ability to do, namely, the action which leads to lots of pain, then the tyrant does only what seems best to do, not what he wants to do.

3. Polus' Move

Polus, however, is not moved. He thinks that Socrates would nevertheless envy the person who has the liberty (ἐξεῖναι) to do anything that seems best. The reason that Socrates would do so, Polus thinks, is because that person is happy. (468e-469a with 469c and 470d-471d.) This view is the same view many people espouse today, that is, your happiness is merely a matter of being able to achieve whatever you value.[9] But *why* is happiness merely a matter of being able to do anything that seems best? Surely some of these things which *seem* best are not *in fact* best.[10] In other words, given that sometimes what seems best to do turns out not in fact to be the best thing to do at all, how could happiness nevertheless reside in being able to do *whatever* seems best? Plato has Callicles answer this question in the *Gorgias*.

4. Callicles' Theory

The answer that Callicles will give is that if Bob, say, is able to do whatever seems best to him, he will be having a very pleasant life. To put this another way, all that matters with respect to Bob's happiness, Callicles claims, is that if X seems best to Bob to do, then it is necessary that he be able to do X. Why is this necessary? Because if X seems best to Bob and he is able to do X, then he will experience the immediate pleasure of doing X no matter what the means/end hierarchical structure of X is.[11] How does Callicles come up with this position?

[9] I take it, following a suggestion of Terry Penner, that to value X is to think-good X where 'think-good X' does not invite the question "Well, is X really good" – since 'good' have qualifies 'think', not 'X'.

[10] This could only be false if we reject any distinction between appearance and reality in matters of value.

First, Callicles states that it is natural for the superior and better men (οἱ κρείττους καὶ οἱ βελτίους) to rule over (ἄρχειν) and have more than (πλέον ἔχειν) the inferior and worse men (οἱ ἥττονες καὶ οἱ χείρονες). (491c6-d3.) Socrates then tries to get Callicles to say what these superior and better men have more *of* as opposed to the inferior and worse men. It is after being unsuccessful in this direct line of questioning that Socrates asks Callicles whether these superior and better men rule over others only, or whether they rule over themselves also, that is, do these men rule over (ἄρχοντα) the pleasures (τῶν ἡδονῶν) and desires (ἐπιθυμιῶν) that are within themselves?[12] Putting this question in terms of virtue, Socrates asks: "Are these men temperate, i.e., selfmastering (ὄντα σώφρονα καὶ ἐγκρατῆ αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ)"[13] (491d4-e1). Callicles scoffs at the idea that a man could be happy (εὐδαίμων) if he is a slave (δουλεύων) to anyone at all (ὁτῳοῦν). (491e5-6.) Let us call this Callicles' thesis. Callicles' thesis is as follows:

(C) temperance is incompatible with happiness.

Callicles thinks that (C) is true because of the following: A slave is someone who is prevented from doing whatever seems best to him, that is, someone else is telling him what to do. Temperance then, would be that thing in oneself which would restrict in some way what one does, i.e., temperance would not give one the freedom to do whatever seems best. Rather,

[11] This thesis also makes sense of Polus' response to Socrates when the latter asks the former whether the things that seem best to do are just or unjust. Polus thinks that it is irrelevant to the agent's happiness whether the action is just or unjust. (Cf. 469a1.) In either case, Polus must be thinking, if the action seems best to the agent and the agent is able to do it, then the agent will experience the pleasure of being able to do whatever seems best. Butler (1726) has this sort of view with respect to desire and pleasure in mind in his attempted refutation of psychological egoism.

[12] For a discussion of what this ruling amounts to, see §7. However, Socrates' question here comes up rather abruptly. The discussion between Socrates and Callicles was centered on something you would expect of a Socratic inquiry, namely, even if we grant that the superior person rules over and has more than others, what does the superior person have more *of*? Their discussion then shifts from what the superior have more of to whether or not the superior rule over themselves. I think that the reason for this shift is that Socrates wants to try a new angle for discovering what the superior have more of, since directly asking Callicles what these things are never got an answer. Callicles' answer to *this* question will in fact give Socrates what the superior have more of, namely, pleasure. No interpretation of the discussion with Callicles can be authoritative without being able to explain this apparently abrupt shift. It is because of a failure to see the importance of this shift that Nussbaum (1986; p. 460, n. 24) and Kahn (1983; p. 102-3) go awry.

[13] I take the connective "and" (καὶ) to be epexegetical.

temperance would prevent one from doing whatever seems best. But if something prevents one from doing whatever seems best, then this thing cannot be any part of achieving happiness. As Callicles puts it:

> "the beautiful and the just in accordance with nature is this: it is necessary (δεῖ) for the man who lives correctly (ὀρθῶς) to permit (ἐᾶν) his desires (τὰς μὲν ἐπιθυμίας τὰς ἑαυτοῦ) to be as great as possible (ὡς μεγίστας εἶναι) and to not restrain them (μὴ κολάζειν), and through courage and wisdom to be capable (ἱκανὸν) of ministering (ὑπηρετεῖν) to these desires when they are as great as possible, and to always satisfy (ἀποπιμπλάναι) [each] desire with *whatever* the desire is for as it occurs." (491e6-492a3; my italics)

Later, in the same speech to Socrates, Callicles summarizes his position. He says:

> "But the truth, Socrates, which you say you pursue, is the following: luxury (τρυφὴ) and unrestraint (ἀκολασία) and freedom (ἐλευθερία), if sufficiently aided (ἐὰν ἐπικουρίαν ἔχῃ), this is both virtue and happiness. . ." (492c3-6).

Callicles, then, is asserting that in order for Bob to be happy, he must be free to get whatever he desires. There must be no obstacles in his way when he pursues these things. The way to get rid of these obstacles is by being courageous and wise. However, it is very important with respect to Bob's happiness that he not be restrained, i.e., temperate. If Bob restrained himself, he would be preventing himself from getting what he desired or wanted; and to be prevented from doing this is to be prevented from doing what will make him happy. This is so because according to Polus and Callicles, as long as Bob is able to do whatever he desires or wants, Bob is happy. Bob cannot be happy if he is restrained by either himself or others from doing whatever he desires. A Socratic theorist, given the power argument we just considered, will read Bob's desire to do X, here, as being a desire to do what seems best *regardless* of whether X is really best.

But *why* is being able to do whatever one desires or wants so important to being happy? What we need is some sort of theory about what happiness is and why being able to do whatever one desires or wants is integral to it. A first approximation might be this:

> (TH1) happiness is having all of my desires (ἐπιθυμίαι) satisfied.

This seems to be, at least at first glance, a rather innocuous theory of happiness. How could anyone think that this is false? However, (TH1) does not say *why* having all of my desires satisfied makes for a happy life. Does (TH1), then, fully capture what Callicles has in mind?

In order to see whether (TH1) does capture Callicles' theory of happiness, we need to examine why it is important to Callicles that my desires "be as great as possible" (ὡς μεγίστας εἶναι). In other words, what difference would it make to my happiness how "great" my desires are, as long as I satisfy them? Could I live happily if I have no desires? Could I live happily if I have only one desire and it is satisfied? An affirmative answer to the first question is perhaps consistent with (TH1) and an affirmative answer to the second question is most definitely consistent with (TH1). However, if (TH1) is consistent with both of these answers, then it seems that an important part of Callicles' theory of happiness is left without force, namely, Callicles' insistence that my desires be "as great as possible". We must examine, then, what difference this insistence makes with respect to his theory of happiness.

We get a clue about all of this when Callicles responds to the claim that people who need nothing (οἱ μηδενὸς δεόμενοι) are happy. If it were correct to say this, Callicles remarks,

> "Stones and corpses would then be the happiest." (492e5-6.)

What this tells us is that, according to Callicles, the state of having all of one's desires *satisfied* is not what happiness is. Stones and corpses want or need or lack nothing. Yet it *could* be said that they are in a state in which they have everything they desire. However, Callicles thinks that it would be unreasonable to say that stones and corpses are happy. *If* this analysis about stones and corpses is correct, then we were incorrect to attribute (TH1) to Callicles because (TH1) would makes stones and corpses the happiest of all. However, stones and corpses do not *have* desires *to be satisfied*. Therefore, it seems unconvincing to reject or revise (TH1) for this reason.

Callicles' remark about corpses and stones, though, prompts Socrates to relate two myths (492e7-493d2 and 493d5-494a5); both of these myths are intended to persuade Callicles to think that an orderly or structured (κοσμίως) life is happier than an unrestrained (ἀκολάστως) one.[14] It is from Callicles' response to the second myth that we see what he thinks happiness is and why there is a difference with respect to happiness between a person having desires not much greater than a stone and a person having desires much greater than a stone.

The second myth has to do with two men. Each of them has jars within which are various liquids. These liquids, though, are scarce and discoverable only with much hard work. The first man, the orderly one, after

[14] The antithesis between an orderly as opposed to an unrestrained, i.e., unorderly, life is a theme which I think runs throughout the *Gorgias*. See §7.

having filled these jars, brings no more and is at rest. The second man, the unrestrained one, has leaky jars and thus spends all of his time filling them while expending much energy in the process. Socrates fails to convince Callicles that the first man's life is better than the second man's because[15]

> "there is no longer any pleasure to the man who has filled [his jars], but this is, as I was now saying, to live just as a stone, *when filled* there is no longer any feeling of joy or pain. But in this is the pleasant life: in the most inflow possible." (my italics)

Now we see why (TH1) is not a correct representation of Callicles' theory of happiness. In this passage, Callicles is saying that the first man's life cannot be happier than the second man's life because the latter feels more *pleasure* in his life than the former even though the former's desire has been satisfied. And it is in virtue of this difference that the latter leads a *happier* life than the former.

Callicles' "Inflow Theory", then, makes one's degree of happiness positively correlated with one's experiencing pleasure. That is, the greater one's experience of pleasure is, the greater is one's degree of happiness. And the smaller one's experience of pleasure is, the smaller is one's degree of happiness.[16] However, Callicles needs to tie one's degree of happiness to the amount of pleasure which arises *when getting* X and not the amount of pleasure which results from X *in the future*.[17] Callicles can only say that the second man is happier than the first if long-term pleasure and pain are left out of the account. For it seems as if the first man *would* have a greater potential for pleasure over the course of his life were he able to refrain from ceaselessly acquiring the difficult to procure liquids. The reason Callicles

[15] "τῷ μὲν γὰρ πληρωσαμένῳ ἐκείνῳ οὐκέτ' ἔστιν ἡδονὴ οὐδεμία, ἀλλὰ τοῦτ' ἔστιν, ὃ νυνδὴ ἐγὼ ἔλεγον, τὸ ὥσπερ λίθον ζῆν, ἐπειδὰν πληρώσῃ, μήτε χαίρουντα ἔτι μήτε λυπούμενον. ἀλλ' ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν τὸ ἡδέως ζῆν, ἐν τῷ ὡς πλεῖστον ἐπιρρεῖν." (494a6-b2).

[16] An example of how the Inflow Theory might work would be helpful here. Take Hitler's desire to take over Poland. Hitler wanted to take over Poland and when he succeeded in doing so, he probably felt a great rush of pleasure. [Of course he did not, according to a Socratic theory of desire, want *simply* to take over Poland; he wanted to take over Poland which would then led to his systematically taking over the rest of the world and so live happily ever after. The action that was open to him, not surprisingly, was his taking over Poland which then led to his suicide. Hence, he was really not successful at getting what he wanted.] Again, Hitler could have wanted, say, to swim in the Rhine and if he succeeded in doing so, he would have probably experienced some pleasure, but not as great as compared to the taking over of Poland.

[17] See the emphasis Callicles gives to occurrent mental states in the passage (491e6-492a3) quoted above. Specifically: ". . . and through courage and wisdom to be capable of ministering to these desires *when they are as great as possible*, and to always satisfy [each] desire with whatever the desire is for *as it occurs*."

has to leave long-term pleasures out of his account, of course, is that Callicles has denied that a person can be happy if he or she is temperate, namely, (C).

In the *Protagoras*, temperance is the art which measures the magnitudes of pleasures taking into consideration their nearness and farness, i.e., whether a pleasure is to be had in the present or in the future. The pleasure and pains to be had in the distant future need to be "weighted heavier" than they seem at the moment when comparing them to the pleasures and pains to be had in the present. Temperance, i.e., the measuring art, is that thing in a person which correctly estimates the relative sizes of immediate versus future pleasures and pains. Therefore, to deny that temperance is compatible with happiness *is* also to deny the relevance of future pleasures to happiness. Callicles, then, does not commit himself to a *cognitive* form of hedonism as Socrates does in the *Protagoras*.[18] Rather, Callicles commits himself to a *non-cognitive* form of hedonism which deems the consequences of an immediate pleasure irrelevant.[19] It is, of course, *in this very way* that Callicles can maintain that being able to do whatever one desires or wants is what being happy is. That is, if I am able to do *whatever* I want, then no matter what happens later, I experience pleasure *at the moment* I am doing *whatever* I want. And, being able to get this pleasure is all that I need to concern myself with in my pursuit of happiness. Hence, Callicles *must* ignore future pleasures if he is to successfully explain how being able to do whatever one wants, i.e., whatever seems best, is the way to be happy. For if Callicles admits that future pleasures and pains are relevant, it will be possible that a person can get what seems best but not get what is really best. Callicles needs to claim that all there is to what is really best is whatever seems best.

In sum, to have a care only that one be able to do whatever seems best, i.e., not to care whether it is really best, i.e., not to care whether the action that seems best has the correct means/ends hierarchy, is to ignore what the structure of the action that seems best is; it is to ignore what it is you actually want, that is, the thing which will in fact be best for you. However, it is quite

[18] I think that since Socrates uses this cognitive sort of hedonism as a premiss in the *Protagoras* in his argument for the Unity of Virtue doctrine – the latter of which he certainly thinks is true – then Socrates must himself think that the form of hedonism there used is true. Commentators who argue that Socrates is merely pointing out an inconsistency in the position of "the many" are unconvincing. I am in agreement, then, with Gosling and Taylor (1982) on pages 54-5 at 3.1.9.

[19] Why these two forms are called 'cognitive' and 'non-cognitive' will be explained in §§5-7.

possible that Polus and Callicles are carving out a position such that *all there is* to what is in fact best for you *is* whatever it is that seems best to you. In other words, Polus and Callicles think that there is nothing more to doing what is in fact best for you than merely doing whatever seems best, i.e., doing what you value. Being able to do what you value is all there is to doing what is in fact best for you. This is so because all there is to living happily is living pleasantly and you will live pleasantly if you are able to do whatever seems best.

We are getting, I think, more insight into what Callicles thinks happiness is and how he thinks happiness is best achieved. Being happy, according to Callicles, is *not* a matter of having certain things which are in fact good for one to have. Rather, being happy is a matter of having *whatever* things one happens to think-good to have. The reason this is what happiness is is because one will experience pleasure *when getting* the things one values, i.e., thinks-good, and this (kind of pleasure) is all that one need concern oneself with. Therefore, we now can state more fully what Callicles thinks happiness is. He thinks that

> (TH2) the degree of happiness one has depends upon the extent to which one experiences the immediate pleasure arising from getting *whatever* one desires, that is, whatever seems best.

If this theory of happiness is correct, then Callicles will have successfully explained how a person can be happy just by being able to do whatever seems best. Such a person will be happy because pleasure will occur when this person is successful in doing whatever seems best. And it takes courage and wisdom to be able to succeed in doing this. Hence for Socrates to ask Polus whether the thing that seems best to Bob to do is just or unjust before Socrates can say whether he would envy Bob were Bob able to do X is irrelevant to whether doing X makes Bob happy or not. For example, if X seems best to Bob and he is able to do X, then Bob will get pleasure when doing X *regardless* of whether X is just or unjust, and so according to (TH2), Bob will be that much happier.

Socrates then tests Callicles' resolve for (TH2) by asking whether in fact a man lives happily (εὐδαιμόνως) if all he desires is to scratch[20] and is able to do so throughout his life. (494c6-8.) Callicles responds that this man will indeed live pleasantly (ἡδέως). (494d6.) But Socrates was asking whether this man lives happily. So he asks Callicles whether to live pleasantly is to

[20] Cf. *Philebus* 46a5-47b9 for this same example.

live happily.[21] (494d7.) Callicles agrees that to live pleasantly is to live happily. (494d8.) Socrates then tightens the screws further and asks Callicles if the life of a catamite[22] is a happy one when the catamite is able to satisfy his needs?[23] (494e1-6.)

There are two possibilities here: On the one hand, if a catamite can be happy, then Callicles is committed to (TH2). That is, I can be happy no matter what I desire because happiness has nothing to do with *what* I desire but requires only *that I get* what I desire, whatever that is. In other words, if a catamite can be happy, then all pleasures are on equal footing with respect to happiness. Any pleasure whatsoever is a good one because any pleasure whatsoever, if felt throughout a life, makes for a happy life.[24] The pleasure arising from the activity of a catamite is as good, with respect to happiness, as the pleasure arising from the activity of a warrior or a scholar or a merchant or whatever. Socrates emphasizes that this is what Callicles is committed to after Callicles rebukes Socrates for leading the discussion onto topics such as the life of a catamite. At 494e9-495a4, Socrates says:[25]

> "Is it I who leads it there, my noble friend, or the man who says without qualification that those who enjoy themselves, *in whatever manner* they might enjoy, are happy, and does not distinguish between the good and bad kinds of pleasure? But tell me even now whether you say that pleasant and good are the same thing, or that there is some pleasure which is not good?" (my italics)

[21] Socrates himself seems to hold that this is true in the *Protagoras* at 351b-c.

[22] "ὁ τῶν κιναίδων βίος". A κίναιδος is in *LSJ* a "catamite or more generally, a lewd fellow" (p. 951). A catamite is in *OED* "a boy kept for unnatural purposes". Adkins (1960) glosses this passage as having to do with the life of a "pervert" (p. 271). Whatever the case, Socrates thinks that clearly Callicles cannot think that such a life is happy even if the catamite lives pleasantly through satisfying all of his desires.

[23] One can hardly help but think about Mill's objection to Bentham's utilitarianism; specifically, Mill's objection that the life of a satisfied pig would not be better than the life of a dissatisfied human being. Mill's point, I take it, is that all pleasures are not on equal footing. Mill argues that there is a difference between what he calls "higher pleasures" and what he calls "lower pleasures". This difference, though, is not Socratic. Mill cashes out the difference in terms of preference whereas Socrates would not consider this the correct way to differentiate pleasures. Rather, as we shall partly see in this paper, Socrates thinks that pleasures differ with respect to their factual goodness relative to making a person happy. This method even allows Socrates to claim that some pains are better than others whereas Mill can make no such argument since he individuates actions more narrowly than Socrates.

[24] See 494e9-495a4 and especially 494e10-11.

[25] "Ἦ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄγω ἐνταῦθα, ὦ γενναῖε, ἢ ἐκεῖνος ὃς ἂν φῇ ἀνέδην οὕτω τοὺς χαίροντας, ὅπως ἂν χαίρωσιν, εὐδαίμονας εἶναι, καὶ μὴ διορίζηται τῶν ἡδονῶν ὁποῖαι ἀγαθαὶ καὶ κακαί; ἀλλ' ἔτι καὶ νῦν λέγε πότερον φῂς εἶναι τὸ αὐτὸ ἡδὺ καὶ ἀγαθόν, ἢ εἶναί τι τῶν ἡδέων ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγαθόν;"

It will be in this way that it could be true that satisfying any desire is good with respect to being happy. If pleasure is never a bad thing then it is always good to do what seems best because the satisfying of any desire will always carry with it some experience of pleasure, i.e., a good thing.

On the other hand, if Callicles denies that a catamite can be happy, then he is not committed to (TH2). Such a denial would commit Callicles to the position that some pleasures are better than others, because someone who grants that a catamite can feel pleasure often and in great quantity, and yet not be happy, must deny that all pleasures are the same with respect to living happily. There must be some other dimension to pleasure that needs to be taken into consideration in order to determine whether a life is a happy one.

The issue, then, is whether Callicles thinks that every pleasure is good, that is, if pleasant and good are the same thing. If Callicles thinks that some pleasures are not good, then he can deny that catamites live happily. If, on the other hand, Callicles admits that all pleasures are good, i.e. that

(PG) pleasure is identical to the good,

then he must admit that catamites can be happy because any pleasure whatsoever is good with respect to happiness. In fact, this is exactly what Callicles does. That is, Callicles asserts (PG)[26] and bites the bullet concerning catamites.[27] (495a6-c2.)

[26] Though it is not explicit in this passage, I think it is safe to assume that someone who is committed to (PG) will also be committed to (PB), i.e., that pain is identical to the bad, i.e., that all pains are bad.

[27] Nussbaum (1986; pp. 142-4) and Kahn (1983; p. 107) think that Callicles is not committing himself to the possibility of a catamite being happy. Their evidence, so far as I can see, is that Callicles is shocked at Socrates bringing in the talk about catamites at 494e7-8. What they ignore is where Socrates confronts Callicles at 495b4-6 with the news that if Callicles assents to (PG) and (PB), "many shameful things now just hinted at [e.g., that catamites can live the good life] appear to follow . . . as well as many others." Callicles responds defiantly: "So *you* think, Socrates." Now Callicles is either calling into question Socrates' opinion that these things follow from (PG) and (PB) or calling into question that these things are shameful. The reason I opt for the latter alternative is that *Callicles* has no non-ad hoc way of preventing the inference. All he can do, given (PG) and (PB), is deny that the life of a catamite is, after all, shameful. The only reason this is important to clarify is that to take the former alternative, as Nussbaum and Kahn do, makes Callicles' position from the start incoherent. They both attribute to Callicles some pleasure-independent goods, that is, things which are good-in-themselves.

5. *Socrates' Theory*

A problem with the way I have set all of this up is that (in my view) Socrates himself is a hedonist. That is, I think that Socrates himself believes that to the extent a thing is pleasant it is to that extent good and to the extent a thing is painful it is to that extent bad.[28] The difference between Callicles and Socrates on pleasure and the good is that Callicles does not take into consideration the structures of the pleasures he pursues or the pains he avoids whereas Socrates thinks that you have to take into consideration these structures. In other words, Callicles thinks that it is better to do injustice than suffer it because he thinks, and Socrates agrees, that suffering injustice is more painful than doing it. Socrates, however, thinks that even if he grants that suffering injustice is more painful than doing it, the long-range hedonistic consequences of doing injustice are worse, i.e., more painful for the agent, than the long-range consequences of suffering injustice. It is because Callicles rejects temperance as being compatible with happiness, i.e., (C), that he is forced to ignore the long-range hedonistically-relevant consequences of the actions he does or suffers. It is exactly this virtue which would give him the ability to take into consideration whether actions have better or worse long-range consequences in addition to their immediate, i.e., short-range, effects. And the life without this measuring art of pleasures, the life without a knowledge of their natures, that is, what their structures are, is a life which is destined to be frustrated with respect to achieving happiness. Hence, I am claiming that Socrates is a hedonist who is pro-temperance.

Callicles, on the other hand, thinks that one can infer from the fact that suffering injustice is more immediately painful than doing injustice that suffering injustice is worse than doing injustice with respect to happiness. Socrates tries to show Callicles that this inference is incorrect. And the way that Socrates will show Callicles that the inference is incorrect is by arguing that one needs to *know* the nature, i.e., the structure, of the pleasure or pain one is pursuing or avoiding. (Hence Socrates' cognitive form of hedonism.) According to Callicles, one need not examine or know the nature of any pleasure; they are all good. (Hence, Callicles' non-cognitive form of hedonism.) According to my reading of Socrates, one needs to examine the nature of every pleasure so as to find out whether it is a *true* pleasure. A true

[28] Cf. *Protagoras* 351c4-6: "ἐγὼ γὰρ λέγω, καθ' ὃ ἡδέα ἐστίν, ἆρα κατὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἀγαθά . . . καὶ αὖθις αὖ τὰ ἀνιαρὰ ὡσαύτως οὕτως οὐ καθ' ὅσον ἀνιαρά, κακά;"

pleasure is a pleasure that is taken in an action which has a means/ends hierarchical structure such that it in fact leads to the best possible outcome for the agent over the course of a life-time. A false pleasure is a pleasure that is taken in an action which does not have this structure. Therefore, Socrates thinks that to the extent a thing is pleasant, that is, *truly* pleasant, to that extent it is good.

The reason I think I am justified in making this claim about Socrates on pleasure partly comes from, of all places, the *Philebus*. I say "of all places" because the *Philebus* is a late dialogue, that is, not one of the Socratic dialogues. One would think that a late dialogue could not be used as a source for explaining a Socratic position. The reason that I am doing so is that in this late dialogue, Plato still believes in pleasures whose endorsement is completely consistent with the Socratic positions of the early dialogues. Of course, Plato also believes in *another* kind of pleasure which Socrates would not believe in. Nevertheless, I think Plato is actually developing in the *Philebus* a deeper account of the very pleasures Socrates believes in.

The kind of pleasure which Socrates and Plato both believe in comes into the discussion at *Philebus* 36cff. It is in this passage that Socrates suggests that just as opinions can be true or false, so can pleasures (or fears or expectations) be true or false. The way that an opinion is false is if, say, it refers to a state of affairs which is not a fact either in the past, present or future. (40c8-10). A false pleasure, then, is to take delight in a state of affairs which is not a fact either in the past, present or future. With respect to true desire, that is, a desire for what is in fact best, the pleasure the tyrant takes in "killing his prime minister" is false if he delights in doing (A2) because the action the tyrant thinks he is delighting in is (A1). On the other hand, if (A1) was the action the tyrant did, then the pleasure he took in doing (A1) would be a true pleasure because the tyrant would be delighting in the action he thinks he is doing, namely, (A1), and (A1) is the action he truly wants to do.

The point I want to emphasize here is that I read Socrates to be saying that his version of hedonism in the *Gorgias* depends upon not just maximizing pleasure *simpliciter* but maximizing *true* pleasures. That is, Socrates thinks that one needs to pursue only those pleasures which delight in actions having a structure such that they do in fact lead to what is best for one. What is best for one? A life where there is the best possible surplus of pleasure over pain that one can achieve given the way the world is. (Cf. *Protagoras* 353c1-354e2.) In other words, since Socrates individuates actions to include their whole means/end hierarchical structure, and does not individuate

actions more narrowly to take into account only the short-range end, a pleasure taken in doing injustice will be a false pleasure because, according to Socrates, this action does not lead to what is in fact best for the agent. Socrates grants, of course, that suffering injustice does not lead to what is in fact best for the suffer,[29] but, the outcome of suffering injustice is less bad than the outcome of doing injustice. That is, the structure of doing injustice has more falsity in it than the structure of suffering injustice has. Much more needs to be said about what it is to have more or less falsity in an action-structure, and I shall attempt this in the next section.

For now, it is only important to be able to see what Socrates' strategy is for defeating (TH2). He must first show that a hedonist needs to recognize *that* pleasures have structures, i.e, pleasures have cognitive components. Callicles asserts that this is false. If Socrates is successful in showing this much, his next step is to show that given these structures, it is necessary to be temperate if one wants to be happy. The first step is fought over the issue of whether all pleasures are good. Socrates denies this and Callicles affirms it. That is, Socrates thinks that only true pleasures are good whereas Callicles thinks that all pleasures *whether true or false* are good. The second step is fought over what is necessary for happiness. Socrates thinks that temperance, the measuring art, is what is necessary for pursuing the true pleasures and avoiding the false ones.[30] Let us leave Socrates' argument on the first step for another place and instead go into more detail concerning his view on pleasure.

6. *What are Good and Bad Pleasures?*

So, leaving Socrates' arguments *that* pleasures have structures for another place, the next step in the argument with Callicles is to show him that (C) is false. Callicles had originally said that

(C) temperance is incompatible with happiness.

His reason for saying this had to do with, let us suppose for the moment, a false theory of pleasure. So, if Socrates can show Callicles that pleasures are

[29] Cf. 469b12-c1.

[30] I should say something about true and false pains. I take a true pain to be a pain which is experienced in virtue of an action which has a means/end hierarchy such that it ultimately leads to what is in fact best for the agent. A false pain, on the other hand, is a pain which is experienced in virtue of an action which has a means/end hierarchy such that it ultimately leads to what is in fact worst for the agent. Plato himself, Terry Penner informed me, never talks about true and false pains. This is an extrapolation on my part.

in fact structured, because, let us suppose, they map onto actions which have structures, then proving that temperance is actually necessary for happiness will be straightforward.

In the next part of the *Gorgias*, then, Socrates elicits from Callicles with the greatest of ease an account of good and bad pleasures together with an account of good and bad pains. The good pleasures and pains, Socrates tells us, are the pleasures and pains which are helpful (ὠφέλιμοι), that is, the ones which do some good (αἱ ἀγαθόν τι ποιοῦσαι). And the bad pleasures and pains are the pleasures and pains which are harmful (βλαβεραί), that is, the ones which do some bad (αἱ κακόν τι). (499d1-e3.) For example,

> "the bodily pleasures of eating or drinking . . . are good if they produce health in the body or strength or any other virtue of the body, but are bad if they produce the opposites of these." (499d4-e1.)

In other words, the pleasures *themselves* are good or bad depending upon what the actions one takes pleasure in produce, that is, what the long-range effects of the actions actually are.

Santas (1979) complains that this interpretation of good and bad pleasures is "non-hedonistic" (p. 285). He is correct *only if* Socrates has no hedonistic reason for relativizing the goodness of a pleasure to health. Moreover, Santas *is* correct that this passage in the *Gorgias* does not tell us why producing health or strength makes a pleasure good or why producing sickness or weakness makes a pleasure bad, but we do find an answer in the *Protagoras*. At 353c1-354e2, Socrates explains to Protagoras that the reason the many call some pains good is that they lead (ἀποτελευτᾷ) to health and other virtues of the body and wealth. And the *only* (μόνον) reason the many can find for calling these bodily states good is that these states lead to (ἀποτελευτᾷ) pleasure. Alternatively, the reason the many call some pleasures bad is that they lead to (ἀποτελευτᾷ) sickness and poverty; which themselves lead to pain. In other words, whatever has as its result more pains than pleasures is bad; and, whatever has as its result more pleasures than pains is good. The many think that health and wealth result in more pleasures than pains and that sickness and poverty result in more pains than pleasures. Whether they are right about wealth and poverty is another matter. What concerns us here is to get a way to understand why it makes sense for Socrates in the *Gorgias* to call good pleasures and pains good in virtue of their producing health, etc., and bad pleasures and pains bad in virtue of their producing sickness, etc. Clearly this passage in the *Protagoras* provides us with an explanation.[31] And the explanation is purely

[31] It could be objected here that it is *the many* who cannot find any other reason for

hedonistic! Pleasures and pains taken in actions which produce health result in more pleasures than pains. Pleasures and pains taken in actions which produce sickness result in more pains than pleasures. Hence Santas is wrong to complain that Socrates' explanation of good and bad pleasures is non-hedonistic because the most likely motivation for appealing to health and sickness is that the former will result in more pleasure over a lifetime and the latter will result in more pain over a lifetime.

Socrates then asks Callicles whether it is possible for every person to pick out for themselves (ἐκλέξασθαι) which sort (ποῖα) of the pleasures are good and which sort (ὁποῖα) are bad, or must a person be skillful (τεχνικοῦ)? (500a4-6.) Callicles responds that a person must be skillful (500a6). This answer prompts Socrates to say to Callicles:

> "Let us remember, then, the things I was saying to Polus and Gorgias. I said, if you remember, that there are, on the one hand, undertakings which limit (μέχρι) their aim to providing only (μόνον) pleasure, although being ignorant (ἀγνοοῦσαι) of the better and the worse, and, on the other hand, undertakings which know (γιγνώσκουσαι) the good and the bad." (500a7-b3).

I read this as saying that some undertakings try to provide pleasures while *ignoring* their structures, i.e., whether the pleasures taken in various actions in fact lead to what is best or not, and some undertakings try to provide pleasures while *knowing* their structures, i.e., whether the pleasures taken in various actions in fact lead to what is best or not. The first type of undertaking is called a "knack" (ἐμπειρία) and the second is called a "skill" (τέχνη) or "science" (ἐπιστήμη) or "craft" (τέχνη). The difference between a knack and a science is explained as follows:[32]

> "[a science such as] medicine, for example, has carefully examined the nature of the thing for which it cares and the cause of the things it does, and can give an account of each of these. But the knack of pleasure, towards which all of its care is aimed, goes after this altogether unskillfully, not at all considering its nature or cause . . .".

calling health good except for it resulting in more pleasure than pain, and not Socrates. Why am I attributing this view to Socrates? Socrates holds this view, I think, because it is crucial in his argument against the possibility of knowledge-akrasia. Since he cares a great deal about that conclusion, it seems exegetically justifiable to attribute the view to him. See further support for this view in Gosling and Taylor (1982), pp. 51-55, and especially pp. 54-5. See note 18.

[32] "λέγων ὅτι ἡ μὲν τούτου οὗ θεραπεύει καὶ τὴν φύσιν ἔσκεπται καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν ὧν πράττει, καὶ λόγον ἔχει τούτων ἑκάστου δοῦναι, ἡ ἰατρική· ἡ δ' ἑτέρα τῆς ἡδονῆς, πρὸς ἣν ἡ θεραπεία αὐτῇ ἐστιν ἅπασα, κομιδῇ ἀτέχνως ἐπ' αὐτὴν ἔπχεται, οὔτε τι τὴν φύσιν σκεψαμένη τῆς ἡδονῆς οὔτε τὴν αἰτίαν,. . . .". (501a1-6.)

In other words, a science or skill will have knowledge of the objects with which it deals and a knack will not. Moreover, when skillful or knowledgeable people use their skill or knowledge, for example a painter, builder or shipwright,[33]

> ". . . each one makes what he makes have a certain structure, and forces one thing to be fitting and to harmonize with another thing until the whole composite has order and structure . . .".

Socrates then elicits from Callicles that things which have order and structure are good and things which lack these are bad. For example, a ship which has order and structure is good. Socrates does not say *why* a ship with order and structure is good, but it is clear that one which is ordered and has structure will be better at doing what ships are for, namely, staying afloat and transporting cargo or people across the water. A ship without order and structure will be worse at doing what ships are for.

Now what does all of this have to do with good and bad pleasures? I think that, according to Socrates, if one is to be happy, one must examine the natures of the pleasures one pursues. What it is to do this is to examine the structures of these pleasures, i.e., whether the pleasure taken in some action *in fact* leads to more pleasure than pain or not. If there is an order and structure to the action that one takes pleasure in such that the action does lead to more pleasure than pain, then the pleasure is a good pleasure. For example, if Bob takes pleasure in treating Julie unjustly, what he is taking pleasure in is the whole action,[34] that is, unjustly taking her possessions which leads to his being wealthier which leads to his spending more money on getting drunk which leads to his being sick which leads to his feeling more pain than pleasure over all. Hence the pleasure Bob takes in doing an injustice is a bad pleasure. And as I have said before, a bad pleasure is bad because it is false, i.e., the pleasure does not correspond to the way the world is. In this example, Bob's pleasure is false because the pleasure does not correspond to the action which Bob wants to be pleased by, namely, the treating of Julie unjustly which leads in fact to his feeling more pleasure than pain over all in his lifetime. In other words, Bob needs to skillfully make sure that all of the things in the means/end hierarchy are in the correct order so that the action which he takes pleasure in has order and structure.

[33] ". . . ὡς εἰς τάξιν τινὰ ἕκαστος ἕκαστον τίθησιν ὃ ἂν τιθῇ, καὶ προσαναγκάζει τὸ ἕτερον τῷ ἑτέρῳ πρέπον τε εἶναι καὶ ἁρμόττειν, ἕως ἂν τὸ ἅπαν συστήσηται τεταγμένον τε καὶ κεκοσμημένον πρᾶγμα· . . .". (503e7-504a2).

[34] The argument at 466-8 showed that actions have to be individuated quite widely. That is, to include the whole means/end hierarchy.

An action which does not have order and structure will be an action which has an incoherent structure, that is, an action whose means/end hierarchy of what leads to what has some things in it which are different from the way that the world is. In other words, Bob is mistaken or has false beliefs about what leads to what. Bob wants to do the action whose structure is the way the world is *and* which in fact leads to what is best for him. In order to do this action, Bob will need to get the whole structure correct, that is, Bob will need to have no false beliefs about what in fact leads to what. And likewise with a ship: in order for a boat to succeed in doing what it is supposed to do, it needs to have an order and a structure which is correct.

An important point to emphasize here is that order and structure are only important relative to a certain goal or end. For example, order and structure in ships is not good for its own sake but good relative to the goal or end of making a ship, namely, safe passage across water. And it is similar with respect to actions, that is, order and structure in actions is not good for its own sake but good relative to the goal or end of doing actions, namely, the agent's happiness.

The reason that this is important is because Socrates gets Callicles to agree that a person's body is good if it has the order and structure appropriate (οἰκεῖος) to it, that is, health (504a3-5 with b2-3, 7-9, c7-10 and 506e1-4). But, having a healthy body is not good for its own sake, rather it is good relative to what a body is for. Therefore, I think that when Socrates claims that the soul is good if it has the order and structure appropriate to it, that is, justice and temperance,[35] he is claiming that the soul is good relative to what a soul is for (504b4-6, d1-e5 and 506e1-507a7). And what is a soul for? At 353d3-10 in the *Republic* Book One, Socrates says that the function or characteristic work (ἔργον) of the soul is "to care or manage (ἐπιμελεῖσθαι) and to rule (ἄρχειν) and to deliberate (βουλεύεσθαι) and most especially to live (ζῆν)". Socrates adds to this that if the soul of a person can do these things, that is, if this soul has the virtue appropriate to a soul, that person will do well and will therefore be happy. But if the soul of a person cannot do these things, that is, if this soul does not have the virtue appropriate to a soul, that person will do badly and will therefore be miserable (*Republic* 353d11-354a3).

What all of this shows is that (C) must be false. If a soul will not be able to succeed in its characteristic work, i.e., attain happiness, unless it has

[35] Callicles agrees with Socrates that the order and structure appropriate to the soul is called justice and temperance. Thrasymachus disagrees with this characterization in *Republic* Book One. I shall not, unfortunately, be able to deal with Socrates' argument against Thrasymachus in this paper.

structure and order, and if structure and order in the soul is called temperance, then Socrates will have shown not only that temperance is compatible with happiness but that temperance is actually necessary for happiness and that it is intemperance – the very thing Callicles praises – which is in fact incompatible with happiness (508a8-b2).

7. *Temperance as Ruling or Controlling One's Desires and Pleasures*

I need to say something about what Socrates thinks when he describes temperance as ruling or controlling one's desires and pleasures. The standard interpretation of what this amounts to would have Socrates arguing for a rational part of our soul "controlling" or "keeping down" the desires of an non-rational part of our soul.[36] I shall propose that what Socrates has in mind by "controlling one's desires" is not "keeping down" non-rational desires, but making sure that the rational desires one has have a structure such that the means/end hierarchy is coherent and correct. In other words, to control one's desires is to make sure that they are well-fitted, that is, their parts are put together in the appropriate way.

Let us look more closely, then, at what Socrates has in mind by "doing what is fitting" in the *Gorgias*. The reason that Socrates claims the temperate person would do what is just is because "it is impossible for the temperate person to do what is not fitting" (507a7-b4). This issue is closely bound with the issue of what Socrates has in mind by "controlling one's desires". Temperance is, after all, self-control. The standard interpretation, which I shall be arguing against, is exemplified by Irwin (1977) when he writes that

> "The *Gorgias* not only fails to argue, as the *Protagoras* did, against the existence of non-rational desires, but even seems to recognize them. For the insatiable part of the soul needing *control* and *restraint* should consist of non-rational desires; *why else would the control and restraint be needed?* (Cf. 493a1-b3). Socrates advocates self-control (491d4-e1) and temperance; Callicles' view is rejected partly because it allows freedom to the non-rational desires which a prudent man would restrict. The account of virtue assumes the existence of non-rational desires; a virtuous man needs order in his soul, producing s-justice and s-temperance, *to control* his non-rational desires and achieve his own good." (p. 128; my italics)

And on the next page he says:

> "Whatever goals someone pursues, he has reason to want a healthy body; and Socrates believes – though his reasons only become clear later, in the discussion with Callicles – that someone with any rational plan has equal reason to want a

[36] Cf. Bluck (1963).

> healthy soul, with rational desires *controlling* non-rational desires". (p. 129; my italics).

The picture is clear. What temperance is is the ability to restrain and hold back oneself from indulging in one's non-rational desires, e.g., restraining oneself from satisfying a desire for drink *simpliciter*.

What I want to argue here is that Socrates does not have this picture in mind when he talks about self-control and restraining one's desires. Rather, Socrates is thinking about making sure that the object of Julie's desire is well-ordered or well-structured, that is, the object of her desire, that is, her *rational* desire, has the correct means/end hierarchical structure. What it is for the object to have the correct means/end hierarchy is for this structure to have no falsity in it. In other words, Julie is not mistaken about any of the relations between which means lead to which ends. This amounts to a considerable grasp on the way the world is. What Socrates thinks this grasp is is knowledge. And when Socrates says that the temperate person does what is fitting, he is thinking quite literally that the temperate person knows what means fit together with what ends, which in turn fit in the right way as a means to some further end, until you get to the best possible outcome for that person, given the way the world really is. This explanation, moreover, coheres quite nicely with the view in the *Protagoras* that temperance is the measuring art where one needs to take the future and well as the present into consideration in order to do what is in fact best for oneself.

Let us consider a passage we looked at in §6. This passage, I think, confirms my interpretation of what it is to control one's desires. At 503e7-504a2, Socrates talks about what a skillful or knowledgeable person does, namely, that such a person takes the relevant things and

> ". . . forces one thing to be fitting (πρέπον) and to harmonize (ἁρμόττειν) with another thing until the whole composite has order and structure".

The shipwright does not have to "control" or "restrain" in the sense of "tame" the parts of the ship to give it order and structure. Rather, the shipwright needs to fit together certain specific things in the correct way in order for the ship to function properly. For example, he needs to make the hull out of something that will not leak; he needs to make sure that the ship is not top heavy; and etc.. If one's object is not a ship but a means/end hierarchy, then one needs to make sure that the thing one chooses as a means to some further end is the best thing to serve such a purpose. And further, one needs to make sure that the end one aims at does in fact serve as a means to some further end and that all of these means and ends do in fact

lead to what is best for oneself.[37] The ability to do this takes knowledge of how the world is and not the "keeping down" of one's non-rational desires. Hence I would not attribute to Socrates a belief in non-rational desires at all. Rather, what he thinks he has done is shown Callicles that there are no non-rational desires. In other words, the whole point of forcing Callicles to see that pleasure is not the good is to show him that desires and hence pleasures have structure. Non-rational desires and pleasures do not have structure. Hence if all desires and all pleasures have structures, then there are no non-rational desires and pleasures, i.e., no unstructured desires and pleasures.

8. Conclusion

I have argued in this paper that Callicles believes pleasure to be non-rational and that Socrates believes pleasure to be rational. For Callicles, pleasure is merely the occurrent feeling one has when getting *whatever* one wants. For Socrates, pleasure *maps onto* an action. An action, according to Socrates, is a structured object and hence can have or lack a coherent order. If Socrates is correct about pleasure, then he will have a way to block the inference from the fact that suffering injustice is more painful than doing injustice to the conclusion that suffering injustice is worse than doing injustice. He can block this inference because the pains which are being compared are individuated too narrowly, that is, the comparison does not take into consideration whether the pains are true pains or false pains. And which *kind* of pain the doer and sufferer of injustice have makes all the difference in determining whether doing or suffering injustice is worse. That is, Socrates thinks that one needs to consider the long-range hedonistically relevant consequences of doing and suffering injustice. I leave for another place such an examination.[38]

St. Louis University

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[37] If one gets all of these means and ends hooked up correctly, I imagine that what one has done is make all of these things harmonize (ἁρμόττειν).

[38] I would like to thank Paula Gottlieb, Malcolm Schofield and especially Terry Penner for making this paper a better one.

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