

Hedonism in the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias*

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Socrates' attitude to the hedonism in the *Protagoras* is quite different from his attitude in the *Gorgias*. In the *Protagoras*, he himself takes up a theory of hedonism (hedonism(P)) and tries to build the definition of courage on the base of it. But in the *Gorgias*, he severely criticizes the Calliclean version of hedonism (hedonism(C)). How can we resolve this apparent incoherence? Interpretation(1) assumes that hedonism(P) and hedonism(C) are different theories and the severe criticism to hedonism(C) does not entail the rejection of hedonism(P). In this interpretation, Plato turns out to be a sophisticated hedonist. On the other hand, Interpretation(2) assumes that Plato is full-blooded anti-hedonist so the agreement to the hedonism in the *Protagoras* is merely apparent. In this paper, I try to interpret both dialogues in favor of Interpretation(2).

First (in chapter 2), I examine the theoretical features of hedonism(P) in the *Protagoras*. The base of this theory is the thesis that the pleasure and the good are identical. It bears two claims. One is the claim that pleasures and pains are commensurable and so we can calculate the net sum of them. The other is the psychological and ethical hedonism, which claims that the object of human desires is pleasure and we should act so that we can get pleasures as much as possible. Is this theory Socratic? The hedonistic theory like this is severely criticized in the *Phaedo*, so we cannot attribute it to Socrates. Rather I think it would be better to assume that this hedonistic theory is the one that Protagoras would accept as the behavior theory of the mass. This hedonism is deeply concerned with Protagoras' sophistic education.

Next (in chapter 3), I examine the hedonism presented by Callicles in the *Gorgias*. Critics assume that Calliclean hedonism is sybaritic and does not take long term pleasures into consideration. But I think this interpretation is mistaken. In fact, Calliclean hedonism is an ideal theory for the stronger people. It aims to continue getting the strongest pleasures for a long time. If so, hedonism(C) and hedonism(P) are not different sorts of hedonism. Rather, hedonism(C) is the ideal form of hedonism(P). Socratic position in the *Gorgias* is quite different from such a hedonism. He introduces the principle of "structure and order"(504b5). This principle is the criterion of the good so we must evaluate pleasure and pain on the basis of this principle.

Despite the apparent difference, hedonism(P) and hedonism(C) are deeply interrelated. *Protagoras* and *Gorgias* are dialogues which criticize the hedonistic thought of sophists and the rhetoricians from different points of view.