PROTAGORAS: Reading Selection #2

Head-note: These two introductory pages list the principal Protagorean material stripped of context. "Text #" refers to item numbers in the selection from Graham's edition/translation that follows.

FRAGMENTS

Fragment 1. Man-Measure (Texts 1, 16-19)
Of all things the measure is man, of things that are that they are, of things that are not that they are not.
[πάντων χρημάτων εἶναι μέτρον τὸν ἄνθρωπον, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστιν, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν]

Fragment 2. Appearance (Text 21)
The being of things that are consists in being manifest. . . It is manifest to you who are present that I am sitting, but to one who is absent it is not manifest that I am sitting; it is non-evident whether I am sitting or not. *[And all things that are consist in their being manifest]* For instance, I see the moon, another does not; it is non-evident whether it is or is not.

Fragment 3. Concerning the Gods (Texts 3, 29-31)
Concerning the gods I cannot ascertain whether they exist or whether they do not exist, or what form they might have, for there is much to prevent one's knowing: the obscurity of the subject and the shortness of man's life.
[περὶ μὲν θεῶν οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι, οὔθ' ὡς εἰσὶν οὔθ' ὡς οὐκ εἰσὶν οὔθ' ὁποῖοί τινες ἰδέαν. πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ κωλύοντα εἰδέναι ἥ τ' ἀδηλότης καὶ βραχὺς ὢν ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.]

Fragment 4. On Pericles (Text 39)
Although his sons were young and noble, and both died in a period of eight days, he [Pericles] bore up without grieving. For he maintained his peace of mind, from which he benefited greatly every day in good fortune, freedom from sorrow, and a good reputation among the people (τὴν ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖσι δόξαν). For everyone who saw him bearing his own suffering patiently judged him to be noble, courageous, and self-controlled (μεγαλόφρονά τε καὶ ἀνδρεῖον ἐδόκει εἶναι κιὰ ἑαυτοῦ κρείσσω), as they were vividly aware of his plight in his present misfortunes.

Fragments 5-7 On Eduction, Natural Ability, Practice (Texts 40-42)
Teaching requires natural ability and practice (φύσεως καὶ ἀσκήσεως διδασκαλία δεῖται). . . They must learn starting young

Tekhnê without practice or practice without *tekhnê* is worthless.
[μηδὲν εἶναι μήτε τέχνην ἄνευ μελέτης μήτε μελέτην ἄνευ τέχνης]

Education does not spring up in the soul unless one descends to a great depth.

TITLES, DOCTRINES, SUBJECTS OF INTEREST

A. "It is not possible to think what is not" (Source: Socrates speaking for Protagoras in Plato, *Theaetetus* 167a7)

B. Titles of Works by Protagoras (Texts 13, 14, 22)
Titles of works by Protagoras include:

Art of Eristical Arguments (Τέχνη ἐριστικῶν)
On Wrestling
On Mathematics
On Government (Περὶ πολιτείας)
On Ambition (Περὶ φιλοτιμίας)
On Virtues (Περὶ ἀρετῶν)
On the Original State of Things
. . . .
Leadership (Προστακτικός)
Trial for a Fee (Δίκη ὑπερ μισθοῦ)
Opposed' Arguments 1 and 2 ('Αντιλογιῶν α' β')

[Elean Visitor]: Furthermore, discussions of all arts and of each individual art which are needed to contradict (ἀντειπεῖν) any particular craftsman (δημιουργός) have been published in writings for anyone who wants to study them.

[Theaetetus]: You seem to be referring to Protagoras' writings *On Wrestling* and other arts. . **(Text 13: Plato, *Sophist* 232d-3)**

C. "Impossible to contradict" (Text 20)

D. "Make the weaker [*logos,* argument] stronger" (Texts 27, 28, 43)

E. "An argument (*logos)* can be opposed to any argument *(logos)"* (Texts 1, 25, 26)

F1. "Correct speaking (Correct diction or use of words)" (Texts 33, 34)

F2. "Most accurate account" (Text 7)

F3. Gender of nouns, agreement in grammatical gender, correct grammar (Texts 35-38)

The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy

The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of the Major Presocratics

PART 2

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15 Protagoras

Introduction

Protagoras was one of the first sophists. He became a leading intellectual, and in his travels he carried his ideas around Greece. Although we can describe the breadth of his interests, it is more difficult to determine what his philosophical position was.

He was born in Abdera around 490 BC. He apparently spent time in Athens in the 440s, and returned around 433. Plato portrays him at the later time as a kind of senior statesman of the sophistic movement. He died at around seventy years of age, full of honor, as Plato says (6). He made good money as an itinerant teacher, and probably opened the door for later educators. The sophists filled a need for higher education in a time when there was no formal education beyond primary school. They tended to teach practical subjects, especially public speaking, political science, and estate management (the forerunner of economics), and if we can believe Plato, this is all that Protagoras taught (despite his interests in other areas as indicated by his writings).

An innovative teacher, he seems to have been the first to teach students to argue both sides of a case. This causes him to be considered a mercenary by critics, but his practice is now standard in law schools. He not only presented public declamations, but also displayed his prowess in question-and-answer sessions. Plato's *Protagoras* depicts him (and other sophists) using different pedagogical techniques and dealing with different subject matters.

We know that Protagoras propounded some important doctrines, but it is difficult to construct a systematic theory for him. His most famous doctrine is that of relativism, presented in 16 [F1]. The formulation he gives there is perfectly general, and can be applied to almost any domain. In the *Theaetetus*, Plato interprets it first as applying to perception, but as having relevance to ethics as well. He presents it as a sophisticated view, but one which ultimately defeats itself. How generally Protagoras meant to apply it is not clear. In the *Protagoras* Plato represents him as defending views of ethics and moral education which do not draw on relativism. Indeed, Protagoras seems to make morality, or at least a moral sense, innate. At the same time, he seems to accept the conventional morality of the *polis* as the standard to be instilled in the young. Protagoras seems to have offered refutations of monistic (presumably Eleatic) ontologies, and hence to have entered into mainline philosophical debates; unfortunately we are not informed about his arguments. Protagoras was also famous, or infamous, for the agnostic position he assumed at the outset of his treatise *On the Gods*, but again

we are told little more about the content of that work than the opening sentence. He was a leading researcher in language, for the first time exploring the moods of verbs and grammatical gender. According to Plato, Protagoras saw himself as part of a great intellectual tradition extending back to the epic poets. Insofar was we view sophistic as an effort to understand the world, including areas of practical interest, using the tools of knowledge developed by philosophy, we can assent to the judgment: Protagoras was the scion of a great intellectual tradition.

Our best view of Protagoras comes from Plato, who gives us vignettes of the sophist as a teacher and performer. Plato's dialogues are works of fiction, but historical fiction that captures the spirit of the fifth century. In the dialogue named after Protagoras, Plato is unusually respectful of the sophist, even as he reveals his weaknesses. He shows Protagoras holding fairly conventional views about virtue and its teaching, and avoiding extravagant claims for his own unique abilities. At the same time, he puts in the sophist's mouth a more plausible view of moral education than that defended by Socrates. He portrays Protagoras invoking a kind of practical relativism in the dialogue (46) but not applying it to ethics. We also see the sophist's broad interests, including a commitment to a general kind of education in letters, in his foray into literary criticism. Yet what Protagoras sees as an opportunity to display his breadth and culture, Socrates (and Plato) sees as a digression from the main inquiry.

Plato takes Protagoras' relativism seriously in the *Theaetetus*, giving it a general formulation and a detailed analysis and refutation. More importantly, he even introduces, for the first time in the philosophical record, an appeal to the principle of charity in interpreting an opponent's views, in the voice of Protagoras (167d–168c). Plato seems committed here to giving Protagoras a fair hearing.

It remains difficult to unify the views we get of Protagoras from Plato and other witnesses. Does Protagoras have a thoroughgoing relativistic theory, or only a dialectical technique? Is he a relativist in ethics, or does he believe that virtue comes by nature, or by convention? More generally, does he have a unified theory, or just a set of argumentative commonplaces? In the state of our evidence only tentative reconstructions are possible. But Protagoras clearly was capable of inspiring his students with new ideas, and presenting to them penetrating insights that were at least suggestive of important philosophical theories.

Texts

Texts

1 Diogenes Laertius 9.50–56 (A1)

Πρωταγόρας Ἀρτέμωνος ἢ, ὡς Ἀπολλόδωρος καὶ Δίνων[1] ἐν Περσικῶν ἑ,[2] Μαιανδρίου,[3] Ἀβδηρίτης, καθά φησιν Ἡρακλείδης ὁ Ποντικὸς ἐν τοῖς Περὶ νόμων, ὃς καὶ Θουρίοις νόμους γράψαι φησὶν αὐτόν· ὡς δ' Εὔπολις ἐν Κόλαξιν, Τήιος· φησὶ γάρ· "ἔνδοθι[4] μέν ἐστι Πρωταγόρας ὁ Τήιος." οὗτος καὶ Πρόδικος ὁ Κεῖος λόγους ἀναγινώσκοντες ἠρανίζοντο· καὶ Πλάτων ἐν τῶι Πρωταγόραι φησὶ βαρύφωνον εἶναι τὸν Πρόδικον. διήκουσε δ' ὁ Πρωταγόρας Δημοκρίτου. (ἐκαλεῖτό τε Σοφία, ὥς φησι Φαβωρῖνος ἐν Παντοδαπῆι ἱστορίαι.)

(51) καὶ πρῶτος ἔφη **δύο λόγους εἶναι περὶ παντὸς πράγματος ἀντικειμένους** ἀλλήλοις· οἷς καὶ συνηρώτα, πρῶτος τοῦτο πράξας. ἀλλὰ καὶ ἤρξατό που τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον· **[F1a]. πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος,[5] τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστι, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν.** ἔλεγέ τε μηδὲν εἶναι ψυχὴν παρὰ τὰς αἰσθήσεις, καθὰ καὶ Πλάτων φησὶν ἐν Θεαιτήτωι, καὶ πάντα εἶναι ἀληθῆ. καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ δὲ τοῦτον ἤρξατο τὸν τρόπον· **[F3].** (52) διὰ ταύτην δὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ συγγράμματος ἐξεβλήθη πρὸς Ἀθηναίων, καὶ τὰ βιβλία αὐτοῦ κατέκαυσαν ἐν τῆι ἀγορᾶι ὑπὸ κήρυκι[6] ἀναλεξάμενοι παρ' ἑκάστου τῶν κεκτημένων.

οὗτος πρῶτος μισθὸν εἰσεπράξατο μνᾶς ἑκατόν· καὶ πρῶτος μέρη χρόνου διώρισε καὶ καιροῦ δύναμιν ἐξέθετο καὶ λόγων ἀγῶνας ἐποιήσατο[7] καὶ σοφίσμα[8] τοῖς πραγματολογοῦσι προσήγαγε· καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν ἀφεὶς πρὸς τοὔνομα διελέχθη καὶ τὸ νῦν ἐπιπόλαιον γένος τῶν ἐριστικῶν ἐγέννησεν· ἵνα καὶ Τίμων φησὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ· "Πρωταγόρης τ' ἐπίμεικτος[9] ἐριζέμεναι εὖ εἰδώς." (53) οὗτος καὶ τὸ Σωκρατικὸν εἶδος τῶν λόγων πρῶτος ἐκίνησε. καὶ τὸν Ἀντισθένους λόγον τὸν πειρώμενον ἀποδεικνύειν ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντιλέγειν, οὗτος πρῶτος διείλεκται, καθά φησι Πλάτων ἐν Εὐθυδήμωι. καὶ πρῶτος κατέδειξε τὰς πρὸς τὰς θέσεις ἐπιχειρήσεις, ὡς φησιν Ἀρτεμίδωρος ὁ διαλεκτικὸς ἐν τῶι Πρὸς Χρύσιππον. καὶ πρῶτος τὴν καλουμένην τύλην, ἐφ' ἧς τὰ φορτία βαστάζουσιν, εὗρεν, ὥς φησιν Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τῶι Περὶ παιδείας· φορμοφόρος γὰρ ἦν, ὡς καὶ Ἐπίκουρός πού φησι, καὶ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον ἤρθη πρὸς Δημοκρίτου[10] ξύλα δεδεκὼς[11] ὀφθείς.

[1] Menagius: δίων BPFD.
[2] Diels: περσικῶν ἐν P¹Q: περσικοῖς FP⁴: περσικοῖς ἐν BD.
[3] PF: μεανδρίου BD: μαιανδρίδου ἢ νεανδρίου *Suda*.
[4] D: ἔνδο⁰ BPF: ἔνδον Cobet.
[5] μέτρον ἄνθρωπος FP⁴: τῶν ἐν ανθρώποις D: μέτρον ἀνθρώποις BP¹Q.
[6] Φ: κήρυκα BPFD. [7] BP¹Q: ἐθεάσατο FDP⁴.
[8] σοφίσματα Aldobr., Cobet et edd. rec. [9] Diels: ἐπίμικτος codd.
[10] Diels: δημόρκιτον codd. [11] Casaubon: δεδοκὼς B: δεδωκὼς PFD.

I. Life

1 Protagoras, son of Artemon; or, as Apollodorus and Dinon – in the five books of his *Persian History* – say, son of Maeandrius; of Abdera, as Heraclides of Pontus says in his *Laws*, and he also says he composed the laws for Thurii. But Eupolis in his *Flatterers* says he is a Tean, for he says, "Protagoras of Teos is inside." He and Prodicus of Ceos charged fees for their lectures. And Plato in the *Protagoras* says Prodicus had a deep voice. Protagoras was a student of Democritus. (He was nicknamed Wisdom, as Favorinus says in his *Miscellaneous Studies*.)

(51) And he first said that **there are two opposing arguments on every subject.** By means of these he asked a series of questions, being the first to use this method. He also began one work in this way: **[F1a] Of all things the measure is man, of things that are that they are, of things that are not that they are not.** He said there was no soul apart from the senses, as Plato states in the *Theaetetus* [152 ff.], and all opinions are true. And in another work he began with these words: **[F3].** (52) Because of this introduction to his treatise, he was exiled by the Athenians, who burned his books in the marketplace after the herald had confiscated them from each of their owners.

He first earned a fee of one hundred pounds. And he first defined the tenses of verbs and expounded the importance of the proper timing, arranged debates, and formulated sophistical arguments for debaters. And he abandoned the sense of words in favor of the letter in his arguments, and begat the current race of contentious arguments. So Timon says of him, "Gregarious Protagoras, skilled in disputation." (53) He first invented the Socratic form of argument. And he first used the argument made famous by Antisthenes purporting to prove that it is not possible to disagree with anyone, as Plato says in the *Euthydemus* [20]. And he first developed a system for objecting to any proposition, as Artemidorus the dialectician says in *Against Chrysippus*. He first invented the "shoulder-pad," on which porters bear burdens, as Aristotle says in *On Education*. For he was a basket-carrier, as Epicurus says somewhere, and in this way he came to the notice of Democritus, who observed how he bound sticks.

διεῖλέ τε τὸν λόγον πρῶτος εἰς τέτταρα, εὐχωλήν, ἐρώτησιν, ἀπόκρισιν, ἐντολήν· (54) (οἱ δέ, εἰς ἑπτά, διήγησιν, ἐρώτησιν, ἀπόκρισιν, ἐντολήν, ἀπαγγελίαν,[1] εὐχωλήν, κλῆσιν), οὓς καὶ πυθμένας εἶπε λόγων. (Ἀλκιδάμας δὲ τέτταρας λόγους φησί, φάσιν, ἀπόφασιν, ἐρώτησιν, προσαγόρευσιν.) πρῶτον δὲ τῶν λόγων ἑαυτοῦ ἀνέγνω τὸν Περὶ θεῶν, οὗ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄνω παρεθέμεθα· ἀνέγνω δ' Ἀθήνησιν ἐν τῇι Εὐριπίδου οἰκίαι ἤ, ὥς τινες, ἐν τῇι Μεγακλείδου· ἄλλοι ἐν Λυκείωι, μαθητοῦ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶι χρήσαντος Ἀρχαγόρου τοῦ Θεοδότου. κατηγόρησε δ' αὐτοῦ Πυθόδωρος Πολυζήλου, εἷς τῶν τετρακοσίων· Ἀριστοτέλης δ' Εὔαθλόν φησιν. (55) . . .

γέγραφε δὲ καὶ Πλάτων εἰς αὐτὸν διάλογον. φησὶ δὲ Φιλόχορος πλέοντος αὐτοῦ εἰς Σικελίαν τὴν ναῦν καταποντωθῆναι· καὶ τοῦτο αἰνίττεσθαι Εὐριπίδην ἐν τῶι Ἰξίονι. ἔνιοι κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν τελευτῆσαι αὐτόν, βιώσαντα ἔτη πρὸς τὰ ἐνενήκοντα. (56) Ἀπολλόδωρος δέ φησιν ἑβδομήκοντα, σοφιστεῦσαι δὲ τεσσαράκοντα[2] καὶ ἀκμάζειν κατὰ τὴν τετάρτην καὶ ὀγδοηκοστὴν Ὀλυμπιάδα.

2 Philostratus *Lives of the Sophists* 1.10.1–4 (A2)

Πρωταγόρας δὲ ὁ Ἀβδηρίτης σοφιστὴς [καὶ][3] Δημοκρίτου μὲν ἀκροατὴς οἴκοι ἐγένετο, ὡμίλησε δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἐκ Περσῶν μάγοις κατὰ τὴν Ξέρξου ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἔλασιν. πατὴρ γὰρ ἦν αὐτῶι Μαιάνδριος[4] πλούτωι κατεσκευασμένος παρὰ πολλοὺς τῶν ἐν τῇι Θράικηι, δεξάμενος δὲ καὶ τὸν Ξέρξην οἰκίαι τε καὶ δώροις τὴν ξυνουσίαν τῶν μάγων τῶι παιδὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ εὕρετο. οὐ γὰρ παιδεύουσι τοὺς μὴ Πέρσας Πέρσαι μάγοι, ἢν μὴ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐφῆι. (2) τὸ δὲ ἀπορεῖν φάσκειν, εἴτε εἰσὶ θεοὶ εἴτε οὐκ εἰσί, δοκεῖ μοι Πρωταγόρας ἐκ τῆς Περσικῆς παιδεύσεως παρανομῆσαι· μάγοι γὰρ ἐπιθειάζουσι μὲν οἷς ἀφανῶς δρῶσι, τὴν δὲ ἐκ φανεροῦ δόξαν τοῦ θείου καταλύουσιν οὐ βουλόμενοι δοκεῖν παρ' αὐτοῦ δύνασθαι. (3) διὰ μὲν δὴ τοῦτο πάσης γῆς ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων ἠλάθη ὡς μέν τινες, κριθείς, ὡς δὲ ἐνίοις δοκεῖ, ψήφου ἐπενεχθείσης μὴ κριθέντι. νήσους δὲ ἐξ ἠπείρων ἀμείβων καὶ τὰς Ἀθηναίων τριήρεις φυλαττόμενος πάσαις θαλάτταις ἐνεσπαρμένας κατέδυ πλέων ἐν ἀκατίωι μικρῶι. (4) τὸ δὲ μισθοῦ διαλέγεσθαι πρῶτος εὗρε, πρῶτος δὲ παρέδωκεν Ἕλλησι, πρᾶγμα οὐ μεμπτόν· ἃ γὰρ σὺν δαπάνηι σπουδάζομεν, μᾶλλον ἀσπαζόμεθα τῶν προῖκα. γνοὺς δὲ τὸν Πρωταγόραν ὁ Πλάτων σεμνῶς μὲν ἑρμηνεύοντα, ἐνυπτιάζοντα δὲ τῇι σεμνότητι καί που καὶ μακρολογώτερον τοῦ συμμέτρου, τὴν ἰδέαν αὐτοῦ μύθωι μακρῶι ἐχαρακτήρισεν.

[1] DP²: ἐπαγγελίαν BP¹F *Suda* π 3122: εἰσαγγελίαν *Suda* π 2958.
[2] BP: σοφιστεῦσαι αὐτὸν μ' ἔτη FD.
[3] secl. Friedl. [4] Diels: μαίανδρος codd.

He first distinguished four kinds of sentence: wish, question, answer, command (54) (but some [say] seven kinds: explanation, question, answer, command, report, wish, call) which he called the foundations of speech. (But Alcidamas says there are four kinds of sentence: assertion, denial, question, address.) He first read his speech *On the Gods*, the beginning of which we quoted above; and he read it in Athens in the house of Euripides, or, as some say, of Megaclides; others say he read it in the Lyceum, with his student Archagoras son of Theodotus reading for him. And Pythodorus son of Polyzelus, one of the Four Hundred, brought the accusation against him; but Aristotle says it was Euathlus. (55) . . .

Plato wrote a dialogue on him. Philochorus says when he was sailing to Sicily his ship sank; and Euripides alludes to this in his *Ixion*. Some say he died en route, having lived about ninety years. (56) But Apollodorus says he lived seventy years, having practiced as a sophist for forty and flourished in the 48th Olympiad [444–441].

2 Protagoras of Abdera, a sophist, student of Democritus, lived at home, but conversed with the magi of Persia during the invasion of Greece by Xerxes. His father was Maeandrius, a man who amassed wealth beyond all others in Thrace, who was host to Xerxes himself, and by his gifts he secured the association of the magi for his son from him. For the Persian magi do not educate non-Persians unless the king consents. (2) In claiming that he did not know whether there were gods or not Protagoras seems to derive his heresy from the teaching of the magi. For the magi pray to the gods in their secret rituals, but in public they dismiss the glory of divinity, not wishing to seem to get their power from it. (3) Because he made this claim, Protagoras was banished by the Athenians from their whole land, as some think, after being condemned, or, as others say, after a decree in the absence of a trial. Passing over to the islands from the mainland and trying to avoid the Athenian cruisers that were scattered in all the seas, he sank while sailing in a small boat. (4) He first invented conversing for pay, and first handed down the practice to the Greeks, no mean feat. For what we earnestly seek for money we value more than what comes to us for free. Plato, knowing that Protagoras had a grandiloquent manner of expression, that he reveled in his grandiloquence, and that he was more verbose than was appropriate, depicted his style in a lengthy myth [see 45].

3 Hesychius from scholium on Plato *Republic* 600c (A3)

Πρωταγόρας Ἀρτέμωνος Ἀβδηρίτης. οὗτος φορτοβαστάκτης ἦν, ἐντυχὼν δὲ Δημοκρίτωι ἐφιλοσόφησε καὶ ἐπὶ ῥητορείαν ἔσχε. καὶ πρῶτος λόγους ἐριστικοὺς εὗρε καὶ μισθὸν ἔπραξε τοὺς μαθητὰς μνᾶς ῥ΄. διὸ καὶ ἐπεκλήθη Λόγος. τούτου μαθητὴς Ἰσοκράτης ὁ ῥήτωρ καὶ Πρόδικος ὁ Κεῖος. ἐκαύθη δὲ τὰ τούτου βιβλία ὑπ᾽ Ἀθηναίων. εἶπε γάρ· περὶ θεῶν οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι οὔτε ὡς εἰσὶν οὔτε ὡς οὐκ εἰσίν. ἔγραψε δὲ εἰς αὐτὸν ὁ Πλάτων διάλογον. πλέοντος δὲ αὐτοῦ εἰς Σικελίαν ἐτελεύτησε ναυαγήσας ἐτῶν <ὢν>[1] ἐνενήκοντα, σοφιστεύσας ἔτη τεσσαράκοντα.

4 Plato *Protagoras* 317b3–c3, 318a6–9, 318d9–319a7, 349a1–4 (A5)

[ΠΡΩΤΑΓΟΡΑΣ] ἐγὼ οὖν τούτων τὴν ἐναντίαν ἅπασαν ὁδὸν ἐλήλυθα, καὶ ὁμολογῶ τε σοφιστὴς εἶναι καὶ παιδεύειν ἀνθρώπους . . . καίτοι πολλά γε ἔτη ἤδη εἰμὶ[2] ἐν τῇι τέχνηι· καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὰ ξύμπαντα πολλά μοί ἐστιν – οὐδενὸς ὅτου οὔ, πάντων ἂν ὑμῶν καθ᾽ ἡλικίαν πατὴρ εἶην . . .

ὦ νεανίσκε, ἔσται τοίνυν σοι, ἐὰν ἐμοὶ συνῆις, ἧι ἂν ἡμέραι ἐμοὶ συγγένηι, ἀπιέναι οἴκαδε βελτίονι γεγονότι καὶ ἐν τῇι ὑστεραίαι ταὐτὰ ταῦτα· καὶ ἑκάστης ἡμέρας ἀεὶ ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ἐπιδιδόναι . . . οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι λωβῶνται τοὺς νέους· τὰς γὰρ τέχνας αὐτοὺς πεφευγότας ἄκοντας πάλιν αὖ ἄγοντες ἐμβάλλουσιν εἰς τέχνας, λογισμούς τε καὶ ἀστρονομίαν καὶ γεωμετρίαν καὶ μουσικὴν διδάσκοντες (καὶ ἅμα εἰς τὸν Ἱππίαν ἀπέβλεψεν), παρὰ δ᾽ ἐμὲ ἀφικόμενος μαθήσεται οὐ περὶ ἄλλου του ἢ περὶ οὗ ἥκει. τὸ δὲ μάθημά ἐστιν εὐβουλία περὶ τῶν οἰκείων, ὅπως ἂν ἄριστα τὴν αὑτοῦ οἰκίαν διοικοῖ, καὶ περὶ τῶν τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως τὰ τῆς πόλεως δυνατώτατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν . . .

[ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ] δοκεῖς γάρ μοι λέγειν τὴν πολιτικὴν τέχνην καὶ ὑπισχνεῖσθαι ποιεῖν ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας.

[ΠΡΩ.] αὐτὸ μὲν οὖν τοῦτό ἐστιν, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, τὸ ἐπάγγελμα ὃ ἐπαγγέλλομαι . . .

[ΣΩ.] σύ γ᾽ ἀναφανδὸν σεαυτὸν ὑποκηρυξάμενος εἰς πάντας τοὺς Ἕλληνας, σοφιστὴν ἐπονομάσας σεαυτόν, ἀπέφηνας παιδεύσεως καὶ ἀρετῆς διδάσκαλον, πρῶτος τούτου μισθὸν ἀξιώσας ἄρνυσθαι.

5 Ibid. 329b1–5 (A7)

Πρωταγόρας δὲ ὅδε ἱκανὸς μὲν μακροὺς λόγους καὶ καλοὺς εἰπεῖν, ὡς αὐτὰ δηλοῖ, ἱκανὸς δὲ καὶ ἐρωτηθεὶς ἀποκρίνασθαι κατὰ βραχὺ καὶ ἐρόμενος περιμεῖναί τε καὶ ἀποδέξασθαι τὴν ἀπόκρισιν, ἃ ὀλίγοις ἐστὶ παρεσκευασμένα.

[1] suppl. Friedländer. [2] εἰ μὴ B.

3 Protagoras son of Artemon, of Abdera. He was a porter, but when he met Democritus he learned to philosophize and became a rhetorician. He first invented contentious speeches and earned a fee of 100 pounds from his students. So he was nicknamed "Speech." Isocrates the orator and Prodicus of Ceos were students of his. His books were burned by the Athenians because he said, **Concerning the gods, I cannot ascertain whether they exist or whether they do not** [F3]. Plato wrote a dialogue about him. Sailing to Sicily he died in a shipwreck, <being> ninety years old, having practiced as a sophist for forty years.

4 [Protagoras addresses Socrates and his young friend Hippocrates, a prospective student.] Thus I have pursued the contrary path [to that of earlier sophists], and I openly profess to be a sophist and to educate men . . . And indeed I have practiced this profession for many years, for in fact I am quite aged: and there is not a single one of this group of whom I am not old enough to be the father . . .

[To Hippocrates] Well, young man, if you study with me, on the very first day you come, you will go home a better man, and likewise on the following day. And each day you will improve . . . The other sophists mistreat the youth: after the youth have escaped certain disciplines the sophists lead them back willy nilly to pursue them, teaching them arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music (as he shot a glance at Hippias), but if he studies with me he will learn nothing but what he came to learn. The subject I teach is discernment in household management, that he may direct his household as well as possible, and also in city affairs, that he may be as powerful as possible in acting and speaking . . .

[Socrates] It seems to me that you profess the political art, and you promise to make men good citizens.

[Pr.] This, Socrates, is the very profession that I make . . .

[Soc.] You publicly advertise yourself to all the Greeks, calling yourself a sophist and declaring yourself to be an instructor of education and excellence, the first who claimed to make a living from this profession.

5 Protagoras here is able to make excellent long speeches, as his recent performance shows, and he is also able to give succinct answers to questions posed to him, and when he poses questions to await and respond to answers, which is a skill possessed by few.

6 Plato *Meno* 91d2–5, e3–9 (A8)

οἶδα γὰρ ἄνδρα ἕνα Πρωταγόραν πλείω χρήματα κτησάμενον ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς σοφίας ἢ Φειδίαν τε, ὃς οὕτως περιφανῶς καλὰ ἔργα ἠργάζετο, καὶ ἄλλους δέκα τῶν ἀνδριαντοποιῶν . . . Πρωταγόρας δὲ ἄρα ὅλην τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐλάνθανεν διαφθείρων τοὺς συγγιγνομένους καὶ μοχθηροτέρους ἀποπέμπων ἢ παρελάμβανεν πλέον ἢ τετταράκοντα ἔτη. οἶμαι γὰρ αὐτὸν ἀποθανεῖν ἐγγὺς καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα ἔτη γεγονότα, τετταράκοντα δὲ ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ ὄντα. καὶ ἐν ἅπαντι τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἔτι εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν ταυτηνὶ εὐδοκιμῶν οὐδὲν πέπαυται.

7 Plutarch *Pericles* 36.3 (A10)

πεντάθλου γάρ τινος ἀκοντίῳ πατάξαντος Ἐπίτιμον τὸν Φαρσάλιον ἀκουσίως καὶ κτείναντος, ἡμέραν ὅλην ἀναλῶσαι μετὰ Πρωταγόρου διαποροῦντα, πότερον τὸ ἀκόντιον ἢ τὸν βαλόντα μᾶλλον ἢ τοὺς ἀγωνοθέτας κατὰ τὸν ὀρθότατον λόγον αἰτίους χρὴ τοῦ πάθους ἡγεῖσθαι.[1]

8 Athenaeus 5.59, 218b–c (A11)

ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ὁ ἐν τῷ Πρωταγόραι διάλογος μετὰ τὴν Ἱππονίκου τελευτὴν γενόμενος παρειληφότος ἤδη τὴν οὐσίαν Καλλίου, τοῦ Πρωταγόρου <μέμνηται>[2] παραγεγονότος τὸ δεύτερον οὐ πολλαῖς πρότερον ἡμέραις. ὁ δ' Ἱππόνικος ἐπὶ μὲν Εὐθυδήμου ἄρχοντος στρατηγῶν παρατέτακται μετὰ Νικίου πρὸς Ταναγραίους καὶ τοὺς παραβοηθοῦντας βοιωτῶν καὶ τῇ μάχῃ νενίκηκε, τέθνηκε δὲ πρὸ τῆς ἐπ' Ἀλκαίου διδασκαλίας τῶν Εὐπόλιδος Κολάκων οὐ πολλῷ χρόνῳ κατὰ τὸ εἰκός . . . ἐν οὖν τούτῳ τῷ δράματι Εὔπολις τὸν Πρωταγόραν ὡς ἐπιδημοῦντα εἰσάγει, Ἀμειψίας δ' ἐν τῷ Κόννῳ[3] δύο πρότερον ἔτεσιν διδαχθέντι οὐ καταριθμεῖ αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ τῶν φροντιστῶν χορῷ· δῆλον οὖν ὡς μεταξὺ τούτων τῶν χρόνων παραγέγονεν.

9 Athenaeus 11.113, 505f–506a

ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐ δύνανται οὐδὲ[4] Πάραλος καὶ Ξάνθιππος οἱ Περικλέους υἱοὶ τελευτήσαντος[5] τῷ λοιμῷ Πρωταγόραι διαλέγεσθαι, ὅτε <τὸ>[6] δεύτερον ἐπεδήμησε ταῖς Ἀθήναις, οἱ ἔτι πρότερον τελευτήσαντες.

10 Eustathius *Odyssey* 1547.53, Eupolis fr. 157 Kassel–Austin

ἐμφαίνειν Εὔπολις λέγεται τὸν φυσικὸν Πρωταγόραν διακωμωιδῶν ἐν τῷ "ὃς ἀλαζονεύεται μὲν ἁλιτήριος περὶ τῶν μετεώρων, τὰ δὲ χαμᾶθεν ἐσθίει."

11 Eupolis fr. 158

πίνειν γὰρ αὐτὸν Πρωταγόρας ἐκέλευ', ἵνα πρὸ τοῦ κυνὸς τὸν πνεύμον' ἔκκλυστον[7] φορῇ.

[1] Y: γενέσθαι S. [2] suppl. Casaubon. [3] Casaubon: κοινῷ cod. [4] CE: om. A.
[5] Brinkman: τελευτήσαντες codd. [6] suppl. Kaibel. [7] Reiske: ἔκλυτον Ath.: ἔκλυρον Plu.

6 I know one man named Protagoras who made more money from this profession than Phidias, who was so famous for his works of art, and any other ten statue-makers . . . [Socrates defends Protagoras ironically:] So we are to believe Protagoras deceived the whole of Greece, corrupting his students and sending them home worse than they were when they came to him, for more than forty years. For I believe he died near the age of seventy, after forty years in the profession. And in this whole time and down to the present day his reputation has never been impugned.

7 When a certain pentathlete accidentally struck Epitimus the Pharsalian with his javelin and killed him, [Pericles] spent the whole day with Protagoras investigating whether the javelin, the thrower, or the officials should be considered responsible for the mishap, according to the most accurate account.

8 Nevertheless the conversation in the *Protagoras*, which takes place after the death of Hipponicus, when Callias had already inherited his fortune, <refers to> Protagoras having come to visit Athens a second time not many days before. When Euthymus was archon [426],[1] Hipponicus as general marshaled his men with Nicias against Tanagra and their Boeotian allies, and won the battle; but he probably died not much before the production of the *Flatterers* by Eupolis, when Alcaeus was archon [421] . . . In this drama Eupolis introduces Protagoras as being in town. But Ameipsias in his *Connus*, produced two years earlier [423] does not count him in the chorus of wise men. So it is clear that he came in the time between these dramas.

9 Nevertheless Paralus and Xanthippus, the sons of Pericles who died in the plague, could not have been present to converse with Protagoras, when he came to Athens for <the> second time, since they were already dead.

10 Eupolis is said to have the natural philosopher Protagoras appear when he makes fun of him in the line "who criminally carries on about heavenly phenomena, but he eats things from the ground."

11 "Protagoras bid [Callias] drink, that he might have his lung cleaned out before the dog days."

[1] codd. have Euthydemus, archon in 431; see commentary.

12 Plato *Greater Hippias* 282d8–e4

ἀφικόμενος δέ ποτε εἰς Σικελίαν, Πρωταγόρου αὐτόθι ἐπιδημοῦντος καὶ εὐδοκιμοῦντος καὶ πρεσβυτέρου ὄντος πολὺ νεώτερος ὢν ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ πάνυ πλέον ἢ πεντήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν μνᾶς ἠργασάμην, καὶ ἐξ ἑνός γε χωρίου πάνυ σμικροῦ, Ἰνυκοῦ, πλέον ἢ εἴκοσι μνᾶς.

13 Diogenes Laertius 9.55 (A1)

ἔστι δὲ τὰ σωιζόμενα αὐτοῦ βιβλία τάδε·***[1] Τέχνη ἐριστικῶν,[2] Περὶ πάλης, Περὶ τῶν μαθημάτων, Περὶ πολιτείας, Περὶ φιλοτιμίας, Περὶ ἀρετῶν, Περὶ τῆς ἐν ἀρχῇι καταστάσεως, Περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου, Περὶ τῶν οὐκ ὀρθῶς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πρασσομένων, Προστακτικός, Δίκη ὑπὲρ μισθοῦ, Ἀντιλογιῶν α′ β′. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν αὐτῶι τὰ βιβλία.

14 Plato *Sophist* 232d5–e1 (B8)

[ΧΕΝΟΣ] τά γε μὴν περὶ πασῶν τε καὶ κατὰ μίαν ἑκάστην τέχνην, ἃ δεῖ πρὸς ἕκαστον αὐτὸν τὸν δημιουργὸν ἀντειπεῖν, δεδημοσιωμένα που καταβέβληται γεγραμμένα τῶι βουλομένωι μαθεῖν.

[ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ] Τὰ Πρωταγόρειά μοι φαίνηι περί τε πάλης καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τεχνῶν εἰρηκέναι.

15 Porphyry *Philologus* I, cited in Eusebius *Preparation for the Gospel* 10.3.25–26 (B2)

"σπάνια δὲ τὰ τῶν πρὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος γεγονότων βιβλία· ἐπεὶ ἴσως πλείους ἄν τις ἐφώρασε τοῦ φιλοσόφου <κλοπάς>.[3] ἐγὼ δ' οὖν ἦι κατὰ τύχην περιπέπτωκα Πρωταγόρου τὸν Περὶ τοῦ ὄντος ἀναγινώσκων λόγον πρὸς τοὺς ἐν τὸ ὂν εἰσάγοντας τοιαύταις αὐτὸν εὑρίσκω χρώμενον ἀπαντήσεσιν· ἐσπούδασα γὰρ αὐταῖς λέξεσι τὰ ῥηθέντα μνημονεύειν." (26) καὶ ταῦτ' εἰπὼν διὰ πλειόνων τίθησι τὰς ἀποδείξεις.

16 Sextus Empiricus *Against the Professors* 7.60 (B1)

καὶ Πρωταγόραν δὲ τὸν Ἀβδηρίτην ἐγκατέλεξάν τινες τῶι χορῶι τῶν ἀναιρούντων τὸ κριτήριον φιλοσόφων, ἐπεί φησι πάσας τὰς φαντασίας καὶ τὰς δόξας ἀληθεῖς ὑπάρχειν καὶ τῶν πρός τι εἶναι τὴν ἀλήθειαν διὰ τὸ πᾶν τὸ φανὲν ἢ δόξαν τινὶ εὐθέως πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ὑπάρχειν. ἐναρχόμενος γοῦν τῶν Καταβαλλόντων ἀνεφώνησε·

[F1b] πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστιν, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν.

[1] lacunam coniecit Diels. [2] ἐριστικόν BP[3]W. [3] suppl. Viger.

12 [Hippias] Once when I arrived in Sicily and found Protagoras visiting there, though he was famous and older, and I much younger, in a short time I made much more than a hundred and fifty pounds, and from one very small town, Inycus, more than twenty.

II. Works

13 The following books of his are extant:****The Art of Contentious Arguments, On Wrestling, On Mathematics, On Government, On Ambition, On Virtues, On the Original State of Things, On Those in Hades, On Human Wrongdoing, Leadership, Trial for a Fee, Opposed Arguments* I and II. These are his books.

14 [Visitor from Elea] Furthermore, discussions of all arts and of each individual art which are needed to contradict any particular craftsman have been published in writings for anyone who wants to study them.

[Theaetetus] You seem to be referring to Protagoras' writings *On Wrestling* and other arts. [Criticisms of universal expertise follow.]

15 "Books by authors earlier than Plato are rare; otherwise perhaps one would have observed more <plagiarisms> by that philosopher. For instance when I by chance came across the speech by Protagoras *On Being*, as I read it I found him giving the same kind of replies to those who advocate the view that what-is is one. For I made an effort to memorize his words verbatim." Having said this he [Porphyry] rehearses the arguments at length.

III. Philosophy

A. Man the measure

16 And some have included Protagoras of Abdera in the chorus of philosophers denying that there is a standard of truth, since he says all appearances and opinions are true, and truth is relative, because everything that appears or seems to someone really exists for him. Thus at the beginning of the *Refutations* he pronounced these words:

[F1b] Of all things the measure is man, of things that are that they are, of things that are not that they are not.

17 Plato *Theaetetus* 151e8–152a8, b2–c3 (B1)

[ΣΩ]ΚΡΑΤΗΣ] κινδυνεύεις μέντοι λόγον οὐ φαῦλον εἰρηκέναι περὶ ἐπιστήμης, ἀλλ' ὃν ἔλεγε καὶ Πρωταγόρας. τρόπον δέ τινα ἄλλον εἴρηκε τὰ αὐτὰ ταῦτα. φησὶ γάρ που

[F1c] πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπον εἶναι, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστι, τῶν δὲ μὴ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν.

ἀνέγνωκας γάρ που;

[ΘΕΑΙΤΗΤΟΣ] ἀνέγνωκα καὶ πολλάκις.

[Σω.] οὐκοῦν οὕτως πως λέγει, ὡς οἷα μὲν ἕκαστα ἐμοὶ φαίνεται, τοιαῦτα μὲν ἔστιν ἐμοί, οἷα δὲ σοί, τοιαῦτα δὲ αὖ σοί· ἄνθρωπος δὲ σύ τε κἀγώ; . . . ἆρ' οὐκ ἐνίοτε πνέοντος ἀνέμου τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὁ μὲν ἡμῶν ῥιγῶι,[1] ὁ δ' οὔ; καὶ ὁ μὲν ἠρέμα, ὁ δὲ σφόδρα; . . . πότερον οὖν τότε αὐτὸ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα ψυχρὸν ἢ οὐ ψυχρὸν φήσομεν; ἢ πεισόμεθα τῶι Πρωταγόραι ὅτι τῶι μὲν ῥιγῶντι[2] ψυχρόν, τῶι δὲ μὴ οὔ; . . . οὐκοῦν καὶ φαίνεται οὕτως ἑκατέρωι; . . . τὸ δέ γε φαίνεται αἰσθάνεται ἔστιν[3];

[ΘΕ.] ἔστιν γάρ.

[Σω.] φαντασία ἄρα καὶ αἴσθησις ταὐτὸν ἔν τε θερμοῖς καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς τοιούτοις. οἷά γε[4] αἰσθάνεται ἕκαστος, τοιαῦτα ἑκάστωι καὶ κινδυνεύει εἶναι.

18 Plato *Cratylus* 385e6–386a3 (A13)

ὥσπερ Πρωταγόρας ἔλεγεν λέγων **[F1d] πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον εἶναι ἄνθρωπον**, ὡς ἄρα οἷα μὲν ἂν ἐμοὶ φαίνηται τὰ πράγματα εἶναι, τοιαῦτα μὲν ἔστιν ἐμοί· οἷα δ' ἂν σοί, τοιαῦτα δὲ σοί.[5]

19 Sextus Empiricus *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.216–19 (A14)

καὶ ὁ Πρωταγόρας δὲ βούλεται **[F1e] πάντων χρημάτων εἶναι μέτρον τὸν ἄνθρωπον, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστιν, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν**, μέτρον μὲν λέγων τὸ κριτήριον, χρημάτων δὲ τῶν πραγμάτων, ὡς δυνάμει φάσκειν πάντων πραγμάτων κριτήριον εἶναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστιν, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τίθησι τὰ φαινόμενα ἑκάστωι μόνα, καὶ οὕτως εἰσάγει τὸ πρός τι. (217) διὸ καὶ δοκεῖ κοινωνίαν ἔχειν πρὸς τοὺς Πυρρωνείους. διαφέρει δὲ αὐτῶν, καὶ εἰσόμεθα τὴν διαφοράν, ἐξαπλώσαντες συμμέτρως τὸ δοκοῦν τῶι Πρωταγόραι.

[1] edd.: ῥιγοῖ βTW Berl. [2] edd.: ῥιγοῦντι βTW Berl.
[3] Faehse: αἰσθάνεται Berl.: αἰσθάνεσθαί ἐστιν βTW. [4] δ' ἄρ', γ' ἄρ' edd.
[5] T: τοιαῦτα δ' αὖ σοί W: τοιαῦτα αὖ σοί Q: τοιάδε B.

17 [Socrates] You have hit on a clever account of knowledge which was also held by Protagoras. In a different way he has said the very same thing. He says somewhere:

[F1c] Of all things the measure is man, of things that are that they are, of things that are not that they are not.

Have you ever read it?

[Theaetetus] Often.

[Soc.] So he means something like this: that as each thing *appears* to me so it *is* to me, and as it appears to you, so in turn it is to you; for you and I are men? . . . Isn't it true that sometimes when the same wind is blowing one of us feels cold, one does not? And one feels a little cold, another very much so? . . . Shall we say then that the wind itself by itself is cold or not cold, or shall we agree with Protagoras it is cold for the one who feels cold, not cold for the one who does not feel cold? . . . Therefore it appears to each person in this way? . . . To have an appearance is to perceive?

[Th.] It is.

[Soc.] Then appearance and perception are the same thing concerning the hot and all such qualities. Thus according as each person perceives, so it happens to be to him.

18 Just as Protagoras said with the words **[F1d] Of all things the measure is man**, as if to say, as things *seem* to be to me, so they *are* to me; as they seem to you, so they are to you.

19 And Protagoras maintains, **[F1e] Of all things the measure is man, of things that are that they are, of things that are not that they are not**, by 'measure' meaning the standard, and by 'things' objects, as if potentially to claim that man is the standard of all objects, of things that are that they are, of things that are not that they are not. And for this reason he posits only appearances for each subject, and thus he introduces what is relative. (217) That is why he seems to have something in common with the followers of Pyrrho; but he differs from them, as we shall see when we have correctly explained Protagoras' theory.

φησὶν οὖν ὁ ἀνὴρ τὴν ὕλην ῥευστὴν εἶναι, ῥεούσης δὲ αὐτῆς συνεχῶς προσθέσεις ἀντὶ τῶν ἀποφορήσεων γίγνεσθαι καὶ τὰς αἰσθήσεις μετακοσμεῖσθαί τε καὶ ἀλλοιοῦσθαι παρά τε <τὰς>[1] ἡλικίας καὶ παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας κατασκευὰς τῶν σωμάτων. (218) λέγει δὲ καὶ τοὺς λόγους πάντων τῶν φαινομένων ὑποκεῖσθαι ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ, ὡς δύνασθαι τὴν ὕλην ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτῇ πάντα εἶναι ὅσα πᾶσι φαίνεται. τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους ἄλλοτε ἄλλων ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι παρὰ τὰς διαφόρους αὐτῶν διαθέσεις· τὸν μὲν γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν ἔχοντα ἐκεῖνα τῶν ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ καταλαμβάνειν ἃ τοῖς κατὰ φύσιν ἔχουσι φαίνεσθαι δύναται, τὸν[2] δὲ παρὰ φύσιν ἃ τοῖς παρὰ φύσιν. (219) καὶ ἤδη παρὰ τὰς ἡλικίας καὶ κατὰ τὸ ὑπνοῦν ἢ ἐγρηγορέναι καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον εἶδος τῶν διαθέσεων ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος. γίνεται τοίνυν κατ' αὐτὸν τῶν ὄντων κριτήριον ὁ ἄνθρωπος. πάντα γὰρ τὰ φαινόμενα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἔστιν, τὰ δὲ μηδενὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων φαινόμενα οὐδὲ ἔστιν.

ὁρῶμεν οὖν ὅτι καὶ περὶ τοῦ τὴν ὕλην ῥευστὴν εἶναι καὶ περὶ τοῦ τοὺς λόγους τῶν φαινομένων πάντων ἐν αὐτῇ ὑποκεῖσθαι δογματίζει, ἀδήλων ὄντων καὶ ἡμῖν ἐφεκτῶν.

20 Plato *Euthydemus* 286b8–c4 (A19)

οὐ γάρ τοι ἀλλὰ τοῦτόν γε τὸν λόγον πολλῶν δὴ καὶ πολλάκις ἀκηκοὼς ἀεὶ θαυμάζω. καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἀμφὶ Πρωταγόραν σφόδρα ἐχρῶντο αὐτῷ καὶ οἱ ἔτι παλαιότεροι. ἐμοὶ δὲ ἀεὶ θαυμαστός τις δοκεῖ εἶναι καὶ τούς τε ἄλλους ἀνατρέπων καὶ αὐτὸς αὑτόν.

21 [F2] Didymus the Blind *On the Psalms* pt. 3, p. 380 Gronewald, 222.20–25

εἰς δόξαν ἑτέραν οἱ περὶ Πρωτάγοραν (σοφιστὴς δὲ ἦν ὁ Πρωτάγορας). λέγει ὅτι **τὸ εἶναι τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν τῶι φαίνεσθαί ἐστιν.** [λ]έγει ὅτι **φαίνομαι σοὶ τῶι παρόντι καθήμενος· τῶιδέ ἀπόντι οὐ φαίνομαι καθήμενος· ἄδηλον εἰ κάθημαι ἢ οὐ κάθημαι.** καὶ λέγουσιν ὅτι πάντα τὰ ὄντα ἐν τῶι φαίνεσθαί ἐστιν. **οἷον ὁρῶι τὴν σελήνην, ἄλλος δὲ οὐκ ὁρᾶι· ἄδηλον εἰ ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν.** ἐμοὶ τῶι ὑγιαίνοντι ἀντίλημψις γίνεται τοῦ μέλιτος ὅτι γλυκύ, ἄλλωι δὲ ὅτι πικρόν, ἐὰν πυρέττηι· ἄδηλον οὖν εἰ πικρὸν ἢ γλυκύ ἐστιν. καὶ οὕτω τὴν ἀκαταληψίαν θέλουσιν δογματίζειν.

22 Diogenes Laertius 3.37, 57 (B5)

Εὐφορίων δὲ καὶ Παναίτιος εἰρήκασι πολλάκις ἐστραμμένην εὑρῆσθαι τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς Πολιτείας, ἣν Πολιτείαν Ἀριστόξενός φησι πᾶσαν σχεδὸν ἐν τοῖς Πρωταγόρου γεγράφθαι Ἀντιλογικοῖς . . . ἣν καὶ εὑρίσκεσθαι σχεδὸν ὅλην παρὰ Πρωταγόραι ἐν τοῖς Ἀντιλογικοῖς φησι Φαβωρῖνος ἐν Παντοδαπῆς ἱστορίας δευτέρωι.

[1] suppl. Mutschmann. [2] T (Lat.): τοὺς gr. codd.

Now this man says matter is in flux, and as it is in continual flux new material replaces what is emitted and the senses are changed and altered with age and other conditions of the body. (218) He says also that the grounds for all appearances are contained in the underlying matter, so that matter, in its own right, is able to be all things that it seems to anyone to be. And men receive different perceptions at different times according to their different dispositions. He who is in a natural state comprehends those things in matter which are able to appear to one in a natural state, while he who is in an unnatural state comprehends things which are able to appear to those in an unnatural state. (219) And the same account applies in relation to one's age, and whether one is asleep or awake, and according to each kind of disposition. So man proves to be the standard for himself of the things that are. For all things that appear to men also exist, while what appears to no man does not exist.

Thus we see that in holding that matter is in flux and that the grounds of all appearances are contained in matter he is a dogmatist – even though these are obscure subjects concerning which we should withhold judgment.

20 Although I have heard many making this assertion repeatedly [that it is not possible to contradict anyone], I am always amazed at it. For in fact the followers of Protagoras insisted on this, and others still earlier. But I am always amazed at how this argument can undermine itself at the same time it is undermining other arguments.

B. Appearance

21 [F2] The followers of Protagoras come to another doctrine (Protagoras was a sophist). He says that **the being of things that are consists in being manifest.** He says that **it is manifest to you who are present that I am sitting, but to one who is absent it is not manifest that I am sitting; it is non-evident whether I am sitting or not.** And they say that all things that are consist in their being manifest. **For instance, I see the moon, another does not; it is non-evident whether it is or not.** An apprehension of honey, that it is sweet, comes to me when I am healthy, but to another that it is bitter, if he has a fever. Thus it is not evident whether it is sweet or bitter. And in this way they mean to assert dogmatically the absence of a self-evident apprehension. (After Woodruff.)

C. Opposed arguments

22 Euphorion and Panaetius have said the beginning of [Plato's] *Republic* was found having been rewritten many times, which work Aristoxenus says was written almost complete in Protagoras' *Opposed Arguments* . . . Favorinus says in his *Miscellaneous Studies* II [that the *Republic*] was found almost complete in the *Opposed Arguments* of Protagoras.

23 Cicero *Brutus* 12.46 (B6)

scriptasque fuisse et paratas a Protagora rerum inlustrium disputationes, quae nunc communes appellantur loci.

24 Quintillian 3.1.12 (B6) = Prd12

25 Clement *Miscellanies* 6.65 (A20)

Ἕλληνές φασι Πρωταγόρου προκατάρξαντος παντὶ λόγωι λόγον ἀντικεῖσθαι.

26 Seneca *Letters* 88.43

Protagoras ait de omni re in utramque partem disputari posse ex aequo et de hac ipsa, an omnis res in utramque partem disputabilis sit.

27 Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1402a24–7 (A21)

καὶ τὸ τὸν ἥττω δὲ λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν τοῦτ' ἐστίν. καὶ ἐντεῦθεν δικαίως ἐδυσχέραινον οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸ Πρωταγόρου ἐπάγγελμα· ψεῦδός τε γάρ ἐστιν καὶ οὐκ ἀληθὲς ἀλλὰ φαινόμενον εἰκός, καὶ ἐν οὐδεμιᾶι τέχνηι ἀλλ' ἐν ῥητορικῆι καὶ ἐριστικῆι.

28 Stephanus of Byzantium s.v. Abdera

Πρωταγόρας, ὃν Εὔδοξος ἱστορεῖ τὸν ἥσσω καὶ κρείσσω λόγον πεποιηκέναι καὶ τοὺς μαθητὰς δεδιδαχέναι[1] τὸν αὐτὸν ψέγειν καὶ ἐπαινεῖν.

29 Eusebius *Preparation for the Gospel* 14.3.7; Diogenes Laertius 9.51(= 1); Hesychius (= 3) (B4)

ὁ μὲν γὰρ Δημοκρίτου γεγονὼς ἑταῖρος ὁ Πρωταγόρας ἄθεον ἐκτήσατο δόξαν· λέγεται γοῦν τοιᾶιδε κεχρῆσθαι εἰσβολῆι ἐν τῶι Περὶ θεῶν συγγράμματι· **[F3] περὶ μὲν θεῶν οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι,[2] οὔθ' ὡς εἰσὶν οὔθ'[3] ὡς οὐκ εἰσὶν οὔθ' ὁποῖοί τινες ἰδέαν.[4] πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ κωλύοντα εἰδέναι ἥ[5] τ' ἀδηλότης καὶ βραχὺς ὢν ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.[6]**

30 Plato *Theaetetus* 162d5–e2 (A23)

ὦ γενναῖοι παῖδές τε καὶ γέροντες, δημηγορεῖτε συγκαθεζόμενοι θεούς τε εἰς τὸ μέσον ἄγοντες,[7] οὓς ἐγὼ ἔκ τε τοῦ λέγειν καὶ τοῦ γράφειν περὶ αὐτῶν, ὡς εἰσὶν ἢ ὡς οὐκ εἰσίν, ἐξαιρῶ.

31 Cicero *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.24.63

Abderites quidem Protagoras . . . sophistes temporibus illis vel maximus, cum in principio libri sic posuisset **de divis neque ut sint neque ut non sint habeo dicere**, Atheniensium iussu urbe atque agro est exterminatus librique eius in contione combusti.

[1] Coraes: δεδειχέναι cod. [2] ἔχω εἰδέναι D.L. Hsch.: οἶδα Eus.: cf. Cic. 31.
[3] οὔθ' . . . οὔθ' D.L. BP: εἴθ' . . . εἴθ' D.L. FD. [4] οὔθ' ὁποῖοί τινες ἰδέαν om. D.L., Hsch.
[5] εἴ D.L. F. [6] πολλὰ . . . ἀνθρώπου om. Eus. [7] TW: λέγοντες β.

23 [Aristotle says that] arguments about notable topics were written and prepared by Protagoras, which are now called commonplaces.

24 = Prd12.

25 The Greeks, starting with Protagoras, say that an argument can be opposed to any argument.

26 Protagoras says it is possible to argue every position pro and con with equal plausibility – including the very question whether every position can be argued pro and con.

27 And this is what it means **to make the weaker case the stronger**. Hence men were rightly indignant at this profession of Protagoras. For it promotes what is false and not true, but speciously plausible, and it is found in no other art but rhetoric and the study of contentious arguments.

28 Protagoras, who Eudoxus reports **made the weaker case even stronger** and taught his students to criticize and support the same position.

D. On the gods

29 Protagoras, a follower of Democritus, got the reputation of being an atheist. For he is said to have started his treatise *On the Gods* with this introduction: **[F3] Concerning the gods, I cannot ascertain whether they exist or whether they do not, or what form they have; for there are many obstacles to knowing, including the obscurity of the question and the brevity of human life.**

30 [Socrates speaking for Protagoras] Noble youth and elders, you sit around arguing to the masses by calling on the gods, about whom in my speeches and writings on them I refuse to speculate whether they are or are not.

31 Protagoras of Abdera . . . the greatest sophist of those times, because he wrote at the beginning of his book, **Concerning the gods, I cannot ascertain whether they exist or whether they do not [F3]**, was by command of the Athenian government banished from their city and territory, and his books were burned in the marketplace.

32 Aristotle *Metaphysics* 997b35–998a4 (B7)

οὔτε γὰρ αἱ αἰσθηταὶ γραμμαὶ τοιαῦταί εἰσιν οἵας λέγει ὁ γεωμέτρης (οὐθὲν γὰρ εὐθὺ τῶν αἰσθητῶν οὕτως οὐδὲ στρογγύλον· ἅπτεται γὰρ τοῦ κανόνος οὐ κατὰ στιγμὴν ὁ κύκλος, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ Πρωταγόρας ἔλεγεν ἐλέγχων τοὺς γεωμέτρας).

33 Plato *Protagoras* 338e6–339a3 (A25)

ἡγοῦμαι . . . ἐγὼ ἀνδρὶ παιδείας μέγιστον μέρος εἶναι περὶ ἐπῶν δεινὸν εἶναι· ἔστιν δὲ τοῦτο τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν ποιητῶν λεγόμενα οἷόν τ' εἶναι συνιέναι ἃ τε ὀρθῶς πεποίηται καὶ ἃ μή, καὶ ἐπίστασθαι διελεῖν τε καὶ ἐρωτώμενον λόγον δοῦναι.

34 Plato *Phaedrus* 267c4–7 (A26)

[ΦΑΙΔΡΟΣ] Πρωταγόρεια δέ, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐκ ἦν μέντοι τοιαῦτ' ἄττα;
[ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ] ὀρθοέπειά γέ τις, ὦ παῖ, καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ καὶ καλά.

35 Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1407b6–9 (A27)

τέταρτον, ὡς Πρωταγόρας τὰ γένη τῶν ὀνομάτων διήιρει, ἄρρενα καὶ θήλεα καὶ σκεύη· δεῖ γὰρ ἀποδιδόναι καὶ ταῦτα ὀρθῶς· "ἡ δ' ἐλθοῦσα καὶ διαλεχθεῖσα ὤιχετο."

36 Aristotle *On Sophistical Refutations* 173b17–22 (A28)

σολοικισμός . . . ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο καὶ ποιεῖν καὶ μὴ ποιοῦντα φαίνεσθαι καὶ ποιοῦντα μὴ δοκεῖν, καθάπερ ὅ[1] Πρωταγόρας ἔλεγεν, εἰ ὁ μῆνις καὶ ὁ πήληξ ἄρρενά[2] ἐστιν· ὁ μὲν γὰρ λέγων "οὐλομένην" σολοικίζει μὲν κατ' ἐκεῖνον, οὐ φαίνεται δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις,[3] ὁ δὲ "οὐλόμενον" φαίνεται μέν, ἀλλ' οὐ σολοικίζει.

37 Aristotle *Poetics* 1456b15–18 (A29)

τί γὰρ ἄν τις ὑπολάβοι ἡμαρτῆσθαι ἃ Πρωταγόρας ἐπιτιμᾶι, ὅτι εὔχεσθαι οἰόμενος ἐπιτάττει εἰπών "μῆνιν ἄειδε θεά"; τὸ γὰρ κελεῦσαι, φησί, ποιεῖν τι ἢ μή, ἐπίταξίς ἐστιν.

38 Scholium on *Iliad* 21.240 from Ammonius, Oxyrrhynchus Papyri 221.xii.20–29 (A30)

Πρωταγόρας φησὶν πρὸς τὸ διαλαβεῖν τὴν μάχην τὸ ἐπεισόδιον γεγονέναι τὸ ἑξῆς τῆς Ξάνθου καὶ θνητοῦ μάχης ἵν' εἰς τὴν θεομαχίαν μεταβῆι, τάχα δὲ ἵνα καὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλέα αὐξήσηι καὶ προκατα τῶν η[·····] τοῖς κινδύνοις τῶι ησ[·····]ς καταλαμβάνοντα τα[····· ἐπ]ήδα δὲ οὐκ ἐν τῶι ῥείθρωι ἔτι ἀλλ' ἐν τῶι πεδίωι.

[1] Ross: om. u: ὁ cett. [2] Ross: ἄρρεν codd. [3] πολλοῖς Λ.

E. On mathematics

32 Nor are perceptible lines such as the geometer represents them (for no perceptible line is so straight or so round; for the circle touches the ruler not at a point, but as Protagoras said in criticizing the geometers).

F. Language, literature, education

33 [Protagoras] I consider . . . the greatest part of a man's education to be having skill in poetry; specifically, to be able to discern what has been rightly expressed and what not in the words of the poets, and to know how to analyze their words and answer questions about them. [Discussion of a poem of Simonides follows.]

34 [Phaedrus] Wasn't there a similar Protagorean term?
[Socrates] **Correct diction**, my boy, and many other fine terms.

35 Fourth, we must like Protagoras distinguish the gender of nouns: **masculine**, **feminine**, and **neuter**. For we must also express gender correctly: "Having come [fem.] and spoken [fem.], she left."

36 Solecism: [here, errors of noun–adjective agreement] there is a difference between committing this, not committing it but seeming to, and committing it but not seeming to, as Protagoras used to say. For instance "wrath" and "helmet" are masculine in sense [but grammatically feminine in Greek]. He who says wrath is "destructive" [fem.] really commits an agreement error according to him, but does not seem to, to others; whereas he who says it is "destructive" [masc.] seems to commit an error, but does not really do so.[1]

37 For why should one understand what Protagoras criticizes to be an error: that in intending to pray [Homer] uses a command form, saying, "Sing the wrath, goddess"? For to bid someone to do something or not, he says, is a command.[2]

38 Protagoras says the following episode of a mortal [Achilles] fighting with the stream Xanthus is designed to set off this battle [from the battle of mortals] so that [Homer] can make a transition to the battle of gods, and perhaps so that he might build up Achilles . . . [text damaged] dangers . . . capturing . . . he leapt not in the stream but in the plain.

[1] Referring to the opening lines of the *Iliad*.
[2] And not a "prayer" or wish or entreaty, appropriate for addressing deity. See Diogenes Laertius 9.53–4, text 1 above, on kinds of sentence. (This also refers to the opening lines of the *Iliad*.)

39 [F4] Plutarch *Letter to Apollonius* 118e–f (B9)[1]

τῶν γὰρ υἱέων νεηνιῶν ὄντων καὶ καλῶν, ἐν ὀκτὼ δὲ ταῖς πάσηισιν ἡμέρηισιν ἀποθανόντων, νηπενθέως ἀνέτλη· εὐδίης γὰρ εἴχετο,[2] ἐξ ἧς πολλὸν ὤνητο κατὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέρην εἰς εὐποτμίην καὶ ἀνωδυνίην καὶ τὴν ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖσι δόξαν· πᾶς γάρ τίς μιν ὁρῶν τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πένθεα ἐρρωμένως φέροντα, μεγαλόφρονά τε καὶ ἀνδρεῖον ἐδόκει εἶναι καὶ ἑαυτοῦ κρείσσω, κάρτα εἰδὼς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐν τοιοῖσδε πράγμασιν ἀμηχανίην.

40 [F5] Paris Anecdotes 1.171.31 (B3)

ὅτι ἐν τῶι ἐπιγραφομένωι Μεγάλωι λόγωι ὁ Πρωταγόρας εἶπε· **[F5a]** φύσεως καὶ ἀσκήσεως διδασκαλία δεῖται καὶ **[F5b]** ἀπὸ νεότητος δὲ ἀρξαμένους δεῖ[3] μανθάνειν. οὐκ ἂν δὲ ἔλεγε τοῦτο, εἰ αὐτὸς ὀψιμαθὴς ἦν, ὡς ἐνόμιζε καὶ ἔλεγεν Ἐπίκουρος περὶ Πρωταγόρου.

41 [F6] Stobaeus 3.29.80 (B10)

Πρωταγόρας ἔλεγε μηδὲν εἶναι[4] μήτε τέχνην ἄνευ μελέτης μήτε μελέτην ἄνευ τέχνης.

42 [F7] [Plutarch] *On Practice* 178.25 (B11)[5]

Protagoras hat gesagt: **"Nicht sprosst Bildung in der Seele, wenn man nicht zu vieler Tiefe kommt."**

43 Aristophanes *Clouds* 112–15 (C2)

[ΣΤΡΕΨΙΑΔΗΣ] εἶναι παρ' αὐτοῖς φασὶν ἄμφω τὼ λόγω,
τὸν κρείττον', ὅστις ἐστί, καὶ τὸν ἥττονα.
τούτοιν τὸν ἕτερον τοῖν λόγοιν, τὸν ἥττονα,[6]
νικᾶν λέγοντά φασι τἀδικώτερα.

44 Ibid. 658–79 (C3)

[ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ] ἀλλ' ἕτερα δεῖ σε πρότερα τούτου μανθάνειν,
τῶν τετραπόδων ἅττ' ἐστιν ὀρθῶς ἄρρενα.
[ΣΤ.] ἀλλ' οἶδ' ἔγωγε τἄρρεν', εἰ μὴ μαίνομαι· 660
κριός, τράγος, ταῦρος, κύων, ἀλεκτρυών.
[Σω.] ὁρᾶις ἃ πάσχεις; τήν τε θήλειαν καλεῖς
ἀλεκτρυόνα κατὰ ταὐτὸ καὶ τὸν ἄρρενα.
[ΣΤ.] πῶς δή, φέρε;

[1] Following codd.; some editors have restored Ionic forms.
[2] Turnebus, Vulcobius: ἐχεῖτο codd.
[3] C: δεῖν Pz. [4] SA Max.: εἰδέναι M.
[5] From a German translation of a Syriac MS of the 8–9th centuries: J. Gildenmeister and F. Bücheler, "Pseudo-Plutarchus *Peri askēseōs*," *Rheinisches Museum* 27 (1872): 526.
[6] 114 om. RV.

39 [F4] [On Pericles' reaction to the death of his sons] **Although his sons were young and noble, and both died in a period of eight days, he bore up without grieving. For he maintained his peace of mind, from which he benefited greatly every day in good fortune, freedom from sorrow, and a good reputation among the people. For everyone who saw him bearing his own suffering patiently judged him to be noble, courageous, and self-controled, as they were vividly aware of his plight in his present misfortunes.**

40 [F5] In the work entitled *The Great Speech* Protagoras said: **[F5a] Instruction requires natural ability and practice** and **[F5b] Men must learn starting from childhood.** He would not have said these things if he himself had been a late learner, as Epicurus thought and said about Protagoras.

41 [F6] Protagoras said that **art without practice or practice without art is worthless.**

42 [F7] **Education does not spring up in the soul unless one descends to a great depth.**

IV. Reception

43 [Strepsiades] They say there are two speeches among them,
the stronger, whichever it is, and **the weaker.**
Of these speeches one, the weaker,
speaking, they say, what is more unjust, always wins.

44 [Socrates] But you must learn other things before these,
such as which of the quadrupeds are rightly masculine.
[Strepsiades] But I know which are masculine, if I am not mad: 660
ram, billy-goat, bull, dog, chicken.
[Soc.] But don't you see what happens? You call the female
"chicken" and the male the same.
[Str.] How so? Tell me!

[Σω.] πῶς; ἀλεκτρυὼν κἀλεκτρυών.
[ΣΤ.] νὴ τὸν Ποσειδῶ. νῦν δὲ πῶς με χρὴ καλεῖν; 665
[Σω.] ἀλεκτρύαιναν, τὸν δ' ἕτερον ἀλέκτορα.
[ΣΤ.] ἀλεκτρύαιναν; εὖ γε νὴ τὸν Ἀέρα·
ὥστ' ἀντὶ τούτου τοῦ διδάγματος μόνου
διαλφιτώσω σου κύκλωι τὴν κάρδοπον.
[Σω.] ἰδοὺ μάλ' αὖθις, τοῦθ' ἕτερον. τὴν κάρδοπον 670
ἄρρενα καλεῖς θήλειαν οὖσαν . . .
[ΣΤ.] ἀταρ τὸ λοιπὸν πῶς με χρῆ καλεῖν;
[Σω.] ὅπως; 678
τὴν καρδόπην, ὥσπερ καλεῖς τὴν Σωστράτην.
[ΣΤ.] τὴν καρδόπην θήλειαν;
[Σω.] ὀρθῶς γὰρ[1] λέγεις.

pp. 712-717 is from "Great Speech" in Plato's Protagoras. Can skip

45 Plato *Protagoras* 320c8–322d5 (C1)

[7]Ην γάρ ποτε χρόνος ὅτε θεοὶ μὲν ἦσαν, θνητὰ δὲ γένη οὐκ ἦν. ἐπειδὴ δὲ καὶ τούτοις χρόνος ἦλθεν εἱμαρμένος γενέσεως, τυποῦσιν αὐτὰ θεοὶ γῆς ἔνδον ἐκ γῆς καὶ πυρὸς μείξαντες καὶ τῶν ὅσα πυρὶ καὶ γῆι κεράννυται. ἐπειδὴ δ' ἄγειν αὐτὰ πρὸς φῶς ἔμελλον, προσέταξαν Προμηθεῖ καὶ Ἐπιμηθεῖ κοσμῆσαί τε καὶ νεῖμαι δυνάμεις ἑκάστοις ὡς πρέπει. Προμηθέα δὲ παραιτεῖται Ἐπιμηθεὺς αὐτὸς νεῖμαι, "Νείμαντος δέ μου," ἔφη, "ἐπίσκεψαι·" καὶ οὕτω πείσας νέμει.[2]

νέμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν ἰσχὺν ἄνευ τάχους προσῆπτεν, τοὺς δ' ἀσθενεστέρους τάχει ἐκόσμει· τοὺς δὲ[3] ὥπλιζε, τοῖς δ' ἄοπλον διδοὺς φύσιν ἄλλην τιν' αὐτοῖς ἐμηχανᾶτο δύναμιν εἰς σωτηρίαν. ἃ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν σμικρότητι ἤμπισχεν, πτηνὸν φυγὴν ἢ κατάγειον οἴκησιν ἔνεμεν· ἃ δὲ ηὔξε μεγέθει,[4] τῶιδε αὐτῶι αὐτὰ ἔσωιζεν· καὶ τἆλλα οὕτως ἐπανισῶν ἔνεμεν. ταῦτα δὲ ἐμηχανᾶτο εὐλάβειαν ἔχων μή τι γένος ἀϊστωθείη· ἐπειδὴ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀλληλοφθοριῶν διαφυγὰς ἐπήρκεσε, πρὸς τὰς ἐκ Διὸς ὥρας εὐμάρειαν ἐμηχανᾶτο ἀμφιεννὺς αὐτὰ πυκναῖς τε θριξὶν καὶ στερεοῖς δέρμασιν, ἱκανοῖς μὲν ἀμῦναι χειμῶνα, δυνατοῖς δὲ καὶ καύματα, καὶ εἰς εὐνὰς ἰοῦσιν ὅπως ὑπάρχοι τὰ αὐτὰ ταῦτα στρωμνὴ οἰκεία[5] τε καὶ αὐτοφυὴς ἑκάστωι· καὶ ὑποδῶν[6] τὰ μὲν ὁπλαῖς, τὰ δὲ [θριξὶν καὶ][7] δέρμασιν στερεοῖς καὶ ἀναίμοις. τοὐντεῦθεν τροφὰς ἄλλοις[8] ἄλλας ἐξεπόριζεν, τοῖς μὲν ἐκ γῆς βοτάνην, ἄλλοις δὲ δένδρων καρπούς, τοῖς δὲ ῥίζας· ἔστι δ' οἷς ἔδωκεν εἶναι τροφὴν ζώιων ἄλλων βοράν· καὶ τοῖς μὲν ὀλιγογονίαν προσῆψε, τοῖς δ' ἀναλισκομένοις ὑπὸ τούτων πολυγονίαν, σωτηρίαν τῶι γένει πορίζων.

[1] ὀρθότερον EKNΘ. [2] TW: νεῖμαι B.
[3] τοὺς δ' ἀσθενεστέρους . . . τοὺς δὲ TW: τὰ δ' ἀσθενέστερα . . . τὰ δὲ codd. recc.
[4] TW: μεγέθη B. [5] W: οἰκεῖά T: οἰκία B. [6] Cobet: ὑπὸ ποδῶν codd.
[7] secl. Ast. [8] T: ἀλλήλοις B.

[Soc.] How? "Chicken" and "chicken."
[Str.] Yes, by Poseidon. What then should I call them? 665
[Soc.] One "chick," the other "chickman."
[Str.] "Chick,"? Very good, by Air,
so that for this single lesson
I will fill your pan with barley meal.
[Soc.] There, you've done it again! You make 670
"pan" masculine though it is feminine[1] . . .
[Str.] But how shall I say it then?
[Soc.] How?
"Panny," just as you say "Fanny." 678
[Str.] The feminine is panny?
[Soc.] You've got it right.

45 [Protagoras recounts a myth.] Once upon a time there were gods, but no mortal species. When the appointed time came for them to be born, the gods formed them in the earth by making a mixture from earth, fire and the things that are blended from these. When they were about to bring them to light, they appointed Prometheus and Epimetheus to arrange things and distribute to each creature powers appropriate to it. Epimetheus asked Prometheus to let him make the distribution. "I will distribute," he said, "and you check my work," and having convinced Prometheus he set to work.

In his distribution he bestowed on some strength without speed, while the weaker animals he endowed with speed. To some he gave armor, to some to whom he gave a nature without armor he devised a different means of preservation: to those which he endowed with small size, he distributed winged flight or an earthly abode; those to which he gave large size he protected by this very fact. And he made a distribution of the other gifts in this equitable manner. He made these arrangements with care so that no species would become extinct. When he had provided them protection against their natural enemies, he devised means of comfort in the different the seasons sent by Zeus, clothing them with thick fur or tough skin, which was adequate to ward off the cold and strong enough to protect against the heat. And these same coverings would provide proper and self-grown bedding for each creature as it lay down to sleep. And he shod some with hooves, some with tough skin devoid of blood. Next he set about supplying different food to each: to some vegetation from the earth, to others fruit from trees, to others roots; and to some he granted to devour other animals. Some he made to have few offspring, others which were consumed by these he made to have many, so that the species might be preserved.

[1] *Kardopos* is feminine in Greek though most nouns ending in *-os* are masculine.

ἅτε δὴ οὖν οὐ πάνυ τι σοφὸς ὢν ὁ Ἐπιμηθεὺς ἔλαθεν αὐτὸν καταναλώσας τὰς δυνάμεις εἰς τὰ ἄλογα.[1] λοιπὸν δὴ ἀκόσμητον[2] ἔτι αὐτῷ ἦν τὸ ἀνθρώπων γένος, καὶ ἠπόρει ὅτι χρήσαιτο. ἀπορουῦντι δὲ αὐτῷ ἔρχεται Προμηθεὺς ἐπισκεψόμενος τὴν νομήν, καὶ ὁρᾶι τὰ μὲν ἄλλα ζῷα ἐμμελῶς πάντων ἔχοντα, τὸν δὲ ἄνθρωπον γυμνόν τε καὶ ἀνυπόδητον καὶ ἄστρωτον καὶ ἄοπλον· ἤδη δὲ καὶ ἡ εἱμαρμένη ἡμέρα παρῆν,[3] ἐν ᾗι ἔδει καὶ ἄνθρωπον ἐξιέναι ἐκ γῆς εἰς φῶς. ἀπορίαι οὖν σχόμενος ὁ Προμηθεὺς ἥντινα σωτηρίαν τῶι ἀνθρώπωι εὕροι, κλέπτει Ἡφαίστου καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς τὴν ἔντεχνον σοφίαν σὺν πυρί (ἀμήχανον γὰρ ἦν ἄνευ πυρὸς αὐτὴν κτητήν τωι ἢ χρησίμην γενέσθαι) καὶ οὕτω δὴ δωρεῖται ἀνθρώπωι. τὴν μὲν οὖν περὶ τὸν βίον σοφίαν ἄνθρωπος ταύτηι ἔσχεν, τὴν δὲ πολιτικὴν οὐκ εἶχεν· ἦν γὰρ παρὰ τῶι Διί. τῶι δὲ Προμηθεῖ εἰς μὲν τὴν ἀκρόπολιν τὴν τοῦ Διὸς οἴκησιν οὐκέτι ἐνεχώρει εἰσελθεῖν – πρὸς δὲ καὶ αἱ Διὸς φυλακαὶ φοβεραὶ ἦσαν – εἰς δὲ τὸ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς καὶ Ἡφαίστου οἴκημα τὸ κοινόν, ἐν ὧι ἐφιλοτεχνείτην, λαθὼν εἰσέρχεται, καὶ κλέψας τήν τε ἔμπυρον τέχνην τὴν τοῦ Ἡφαίστου καὶ τὴν ἄλλην τὴν τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς δίδωσιν ἀνθρώπωι, καὶ ἐκ τούτου εὐπορία μὲν ἀνθρώπωι τοῦ βίου γίγνεται, Προμηθέα δὲ δι' Ἐπιμηθέα ὕστερον, ἤιπερ λέγεται, κλοπῆς δίκη μετῆλθεν.

ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὁ ἄνθρωπος θείας μετέσχε μοίρας, πρῶτον μὲν διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ συγγένειαν ζώιων μόνον θεοὺς ἐνόμισεν, καὶ ἐπεχείρει βωμούς τε ἱδρύεσθαι καὶ ἀγάλματα θεῶν· ἔπειτα φωνὴν καὶ ὀνόματα ταχὺ διηρθρώσατο τῆι τέχνηι, καὶ οἰκήσεις καὶ ἐσθῆτας καὶ ὑποδέσεις καὶ στρωμνὰς καὶ τὰς ἐκ γῆς τροφὰς ηὕρετο. οὕτω δὴ παρεσκευασμένοι κατ' ἀρχὰς ἄνθρωποι ᾤκουν σποράδην, πόλεις δὲ οὐκ ἦσαν· ἀπώλλυντο[4] οὖν ὑπὸ τῶν θηρίων διὰ τὸ πανταχῆι αὐτῶν ἀσθενέστεροι εἶναι, καὶ ἡ δημιουργικὴ τέχνη αὐτοῖς πρὸς μὲν τροφὴν ἱκανὴ βοηθὸς ἦν, πρὸς δὲ τὸν τῶν θηρίων πόλεμον ἐνδεής· πολιτικὴν γὰρ τέχνην οὔπω εἶχον, ἧς μέρος πολεμική· ἐζήτουν δὴ ἀθροίζεσθαι καὶ σώιζεσθαι κτίζοντες πόλεις· ὅτ' οὖν ἀθροισθεῖεν, ἠδίκουν ἀλλήλους ἅτε οὐκ ἔχοντες τὴν πολιτικὴν τέχνην, ὥστε πάλιν σκεδαννύμενοι διεφθείροντο.

Ζεὺς οὖν δείσας περὶ τῶι γένει ἡμῶν μὴ ἀπόλοιτο πᾶν, Ἑρμῆν πέμπει ἄγοντα εἰς ἀνθρώπους αἰδῶ τε καὶ δίκην, ἵν' εἶεν πόλεων κόσμοι τε καὶ δεσμοὶ φιλίας συναγωγοί. ἐρωτᾶι οὖν Ἑρμῆς Δία τίνα οὖν τρόπον δοίη δίκην καὶ αἰδῶ ἀνθρώποις· "Πότερον ὡς αἱ τέχναι νενέμηνται, οὕτω καὶ ταύτας νείμω; νενέμηνται δὲ ὧδε· εἷς ἔχων ἰατρικὴν πολλοῖς ἱκανὸς ἰδιώταις, καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι δημιουργοί· καὶ δίκην δὴ καὶ αἰδῶ οὕτω θῶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἢ ἐπὶ πάντας νείμω;" "Ἐπὶ πάντας," ἔφη ὁ Ζεύς, "καὶ πάντες μετεχόντων· οὐ γὰρ ἂν γένοιντο πόλεις, εἰ ὀλίγοι αὐτῶν μετέχοιεν ὥσπερ ἄλλων τεχνῶν· καὶ νόμον γε θὲς παρ' ἐμοῦ τὸν μὴ δυνάμενον αἰδοῦς καὶ δίκης μετέχειν κτείνειν ὡς νόσον πόλεως."

[1] εἰς τὰ ἄλογα om. B. [2] TW: διακοσμητὸν B.
[3] παρῆι B. [4] ἀπώλυντο W: ἀπόλλυντο BT.

Now since he was not altogether prudent, Epimetheus failed to notice that he had used up all the gifts on the animals. He left the human race without any gift, and he wondered what to do. As he was wondering, Prometheus came to inspect the distribution, and he saw that the other animals were adequately taken care of in everything, but man was naked, unshod, without bedding or armor; and already the appointed day was at hand, on which the creatures including man should go out from earth into the light. So being at a loss as to how to preserve man, Prometheus stole from Hephaestus and Athena knowledge of the crafts together with fire (for without fire it was impossible for anyone to obtain or practice the crafts), and thus he provided an endowment for man. Now in this way man obtained the art to earn a livelihood, but not the political art; for that was still with Zeus. And Prometheus no longer had access to the citadel where Zeus dwelt (moreover the guards of Zeus were terrible). But he had been able to sneak into the common house of Athena and Hephaestus, where they practiced the crafts, to steal the craft of working things with fire from Hephaestus, and the rest of the skill from Athena, to give them to man. From then on man enjoyed plenty in his livelihood, but justice, as they say, later overtook Prometheus for the theft he committed to help out Epimetheus.

Since man had a share of the divine, in the first place because of his kinship to the gods he alone of the animals recognized the gods, and he undertook to build altars and set up statues of the gods. Further, he soon constructed meaningful sounds and words by art, invented dwellings, clothing, footwear, and beds, and discovered how to raise food from the earth. Being thus supplied men dwelt in scattered habitations in the beginning, and there were no cities. Consequently, men were killed by beasts as they were in every way weaker; and the productive crafts which were sufficient for obtaining food were of no use in the conflict with the beasts. For men still lacked the political art, of which the art of war is a part. They did indeed try to gather together for their mutual protection by founding cities. But whenever they gathered together, they would wrong each other because they lacked the political art, so that they would once more be scattered and perish.

So Zeus, fearing that our whole race would be destroyed, sent Hermes to men to bring them justice and a sense of shame, that there might be order in cities and bonds of friendship to unite people. So Hermes asked Zeus in what way he should give justice and shame to men. "Should I distribute them as the arts were distributed – like this? One practitioner of medicine is adequate for many patients, and so with other craftsmen. Is this how I should convey justice and respect to men, or should I distribute them to all?" "To all," said Zeus, "and let all have a share of them. For there would be no cities if only a few had a share of these things like the other arts. And lay this down as a law from me, that anyone who is not able to have a share of respect and justice should be put to death as a menace to society."

46 Ibid. 327e1–328c2

νῦν δὲ τρυφᾶις, ὦ Σώκρατες, διότι πάντες διδάσκαλοί εἰσιν ἀρετῆς καθ' ὅσον δύνανται ἕκαστος, καὶ οὐδείς σοι φαίνεται· εἶθ',[1] ὥσπερ ἂν εἰ ζητοῖς τίς διδάσκαλος τοῦ ἑλληνίζειν, οὐδ' ἂν εἷς φανείη, οὐδέ γ' ἄν οἶμαι εἰ ζητοῖς τίς ἂν ἡμῖν διδάξειεν τοὺς τῶν χειροτεχνῶν υἱεῖς αὐτὴν ταύτην τὴν τέχνην ἣν δὴ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς μεμαθήκασιν, καθ' ὅσον οἵός τ' ἦν ὁ πατὴρ καὶ οἱ τοῦ πατρὸς φίλοι ὄντες ὁμότεχνοι – τούτους ἔτι τίς ἂν διδάξειεν, οὐ ῥάιδιον οἶμαι εἶναι, ὦ Σώκρατες, τούτων διδάσκαλον φανῆναι, τῶν δὲ ἀπείρων παντάπασι ῥάιδιον – οὕτω δὲ ἀρετῆς καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων· ἀλλὰ κἂν εἰ ὀλίγον ἔστιν τις ὅστις διαφέρει ἡμῶν προβιβάσαι εἰς ἀρετήν, ἀγαπητόν. ὧν δὴ ἐγὼ οἶμαι εἷς εἶναι, καὶ διαφερόντως ἂν τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων ὀνῆσαί[2] τινα πρὸς τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν γενέσθαι, καὶ ἀξίως τοῦ μισθοῦ ὃν πράττομαι καὶ ἔτι πλείονος, ὥστε καὶ αὐτῶι δοκεῖν τῶι μαθόντι.

διὰ ταῦτα καὶ τὸν τρόπον τῆς πράξεως τοῦ μισθοῦ τοιοῦτον πεποίημαι· ἐπειδὰν γάρ τις παρ' ἐμοῦ μάθηι, ἐὰν μὲν βούληται, ἀποδέδωκεν ὃ ἐγὼ πράττομαι ἀργύριον· ἐὰν δὲ μή, ἐλθὼν εἰς ἱερόν, ὀμόσας ὅσου ἂν φῆι ἄξια εἶναι τὰ μαθήματα, τοσοῦτον κατέθηκε.

47 Ibid. 334a3–c6

ἀλλ' ἔγωγε πολλὰ οἶδ' ἃ[3] ἀνθρώποις μὲν ἀνωφελῆ ἐστι, καὶ σιτία καὶ ποτὰ καὶ φάρμακα καὶ ἄλλα μυρία, τὰ δέ γε ὠφέλιμα· τὰ δὲ ἀνθρώποις μὲν οὐδέτερα, ἵπποις δέ· τὰ δὲ βουσὶν μόνον, τὰ δὲ κυσίν· τὰ δέ γε τούτων μὲν οὐδενί, δένδροις δέ· τὰ δὲ τοῦ δένδρου ταῖς μὲν ῥίζαις ἀγαθά, ταῖς δὲ βλάσταις πονηρά, οἷον καὶ ἡ κόπρος πάντων τῶν φυτῶν ταῖς μὲν ῥίζαις ἀγαθὸν παραβαλλομένη, εἰ δ' ἐθέλοις ἐπὶ τοὺς πτόρθους καὶ τοὺς νέους κλῶνας ἐπιβάλλειν, πάντα ἀπόλλυσιν· ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ ἔλαιον τοῖς μὲν φυτοῖς ἅπασίν ἐστιν πάγκακον καὶ ταῖς θριξὶν πολεμιώτατον ταῖς τῶν ἄλλων ζώιων πλὴν ταῖς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ταῖς δὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀρωγὸν καὶ τῶι ἄλλωι σώματι. οὕτω δὲ ποικίλον τί ἐστιν τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ παντοδαπόν, ὥστε καὶ ἐνταῦθα τοῖς μὲν ἔξωθεν τοῦ σώματος ἀγαθόν ἐστιν τῶι ἀνθρώπωι, τοῖς δ' ἐντὸς ταὐτὸν τοῦτο κάκιστον· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οἱ ἰατροὶ πάντες ἀπαγορεύουσιν τοῖς ἀσθενοῦσιν μὴ χρῆσθαι ἐλαίωι ἀλλ' ἢ ὅτι σμικροτάτωι ἐν τούτοις οἷς μέλλει ἔδεσθαι, ὅσον μόνον τὴν δυσχέρειαν κατασβέσαι τὴν ἐπὶ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι ταῖς διὰ τῶν ῥινῶν γιγνομένην ἐν τοῖς σιτίοις τε καὶ ὄψοις.

[1] B: εἰθ' T: εἶναι Heindorf: εἷς Hermann.
[2] Dobree: νοῆσαι codd. [3] Coisl.: οἶδα BT.

46 As things are, Socrates, you demur; because everyone is a teacher of virtue to the best of his ability, you think no one is. Similarly, if you should inquire who was someone's instructor in Greek, you would not find a single one. And even if you should inquire for us who taught the sons of craftsmen that very art which they had learned from their fathers, insofar as each father and his fellow craftsmen were able to impart it – anyway, as to who taught them, I don't think it would be easy to say, Socrates, who their teacher was (though of the incompetent it would be quite easy to point out their teacher), and so it is with virtue or anything else. But if there is any one of us who is even a little better than others in leading people to virtue, he should be valued. This is what I profess to be, one who is better than other men in helping someone to improve his character, and worth the fee I charge, and even more, as my students themselves think.

Accordingly, this is the policy I have established concerning my fee: when someone has been instructed by me, if he is satisfied, he pays the money I charge. If not, he may go to a temple and declare under oath how much he considers my lessons to be worth, and pay that amount.

47 But I know many things that are harmful to men: food, drink, drugs, and countless other things, while some are beneficial. And some that are neither to men, but to horses; some to cattle only, some to dogs; some to none of these, but to trees; some things are good for the roots of trees, but bad for the sprouts; for instance dung is good when it is put on the roots of all trees, but if you try to put in on the shoots and new twigs, it kills them all. Olive oil is terrible for all plants and very damaging to the hair of all other animals except humans, but it is helpful for the hair of humans, and for the rest of the body. So complex and various is the good, that in some cases while oil is good for the external parts of the human body, it is extremely harmful for the internal parts. That is why doctors universally forbid their patients from consuming it except in the smallest amount in what they are going to eat, enough only to suppress the disagreeable smell arising from the bread and meat.

Commentary

1–12. Although we lack precise dates for Protagoras, they can be inferred from the material we have. Plato confirms that he was from Abdera (*Protagoras* 309c). He is dead at the dramatic dates of the *Meno* and the *Theaetetus* (late in Socrates' life); he was a boy at the time of the Persian invasion of 480 (2). We know nothing about his education. The fact that he was one of the first sophists suggests that he was self-educated. He lived to be about seventy, according to the *Theaetetus*. Thus, he lived roughly 490–420. Plato's assertion that he enjoyed a good reputation until the end contradicts the story of his being condemned in Athens and hunted down. He may, however, have died in a shipwreck en route to Sicily, as Philochorus, a reliable source, reports (1.55, with no implication that he was a fugitive). In 415 Athens sent a major expedition against Syracuse, which would have made a voyage to Sicily ill-advised; Protagoras' voyage must have taken place later – if he were still alive then. That Protagoras had earlier taught in Sicily is seen in 12. The government of the Four Hundred was organized and came to an end in 411 BC; if, as 1.54 implies, the charges against Protagoras were brought by a member of that government, this event happened in 411. But at that time the Athenians had their hands full fighting the Spartans and their allies and presumably did not have the leisure to marshal their forces against an errant intellectual. It is conceivable that Protagoras might have been condemned in absentia or posthumously, and his books burned as a measure to counteract liberal thinking.

On the one hand Protagoras is said to be a son of one of the richest men in Thrace (2); on the other hand he is said to have been a porter discovered by Democritus (1.53, 3). The former story is consistent with a birth date around 490 and historically possible (a similar, but chronologically implausible, story is told about Democritus: Dmc4.34). The latter seems to originate from Epicurus, who regularly disparages his predecessors, and to be unreliable (see a judgment by Epicurus about Protagoras in 40). This story is also wildly anachronistic: Democritus seems to have been born at least twenty years after Protagoras (see on Dmc1–6), and by Plato's chronology the sophist was practicing his trade at thirty years of age, i.e. when Democritus was at most ten years old. He criticized Protagoras' theories (Dmc4.42, 13).

The fact that he was chosen to write the constitution for the colony of Thurii, which Athens sponsored (founded 444), shows that Protagoras was on good terms with Pericles (suggested also by Plutarch in 7). While the story of a prosecution of Protagoras in 2 is overblown, the fact that Aristotle knows of an accusation (1.54) indicates that he may have left Athens at one point to avoid a trial.

Athenaeus makes good use of literary sources to identify Protagoras' visit to Athens described in the *Protagoras* (8–9) as around 423; but it is likely the intended dramatic date is rather around 433 (see Morrison 1941), at which time he seems to be at least fifty years old. In 8 Hipponicus is identified as being general in the

archonship of Euthydemus (431/0), but he was rather elected in the archonship of Euthymus (426/5), and the battle of Tanagra took place in 426 (Thucydides 3.91).

The story of the sophist's charging a fee of one hundred pounds (1.52, 3) is absurd in a time that fees were in the range of three to five pounds (Plato *Apology* 20b, Isocrates *Against the Sophists* 3). The number might, however, reflect a total amount paid by a cohort of students, as it does in Hippias' anecdote (12).

In 4 Protagoras claims to be one of a long line of sophists who often hid their general expertise under the guise of some special skill. He, however, makes an open profession of his abilities. Here we seem to see the evolving use of the term "sophist," which originally applied to "those who in one way or another function[ed] as the Sages, the exponents of knowledge in early communities" (Kerferd 1950). As Kerferd points out, Plutarch recognizes this development (*Themistocles* 2.3–4), which in Athens Plutarch traces back to Solon. The early "sophists" were sages but not professional teachers; thus in a sense Protagoras can trace his intellectual roots back to earlier times, but can also rightly claim that he represents something new as a professional wise man rather than a layman. The early sages did not, however, dissemble, nor did they need to, since they were not advertising their ability to educate anyone who could pay. (See also Kerferd 1981a.)

13–15. The list in 13 omits famous works such as *On Truth* and *On the Gods*, and must have a lacuna.

16–20. Plato plausibly interprets Protagoras' doctrine to invoke the following scheme: 'If *x* seems *F* to *S*, then *x* is *F* to/for *S*.' This scheme provides a kind of criterion for relativism, and also a basis for its analysis. For different values of *F* we can get different kinds of relativism; for instance, for perceptual predicates like "hot" and "cold," we get perceptual relativism, the kind of theory Plato considers first. For predicates of value like "good," "bad," "right," "wrong," we get ethical relativism. We can also vary the subject according to which the judgment is made: if *S* is a person, we get subjective relativism; if a social group, cultural relativism; if a species, species relativism, and so on.

According to this view, if an individual asserts "*x* is *F*," for instance, "the air is cold," he is really saying "*x* is *F for me*." On this view no conflict of opinions is possible, because if *A* says, "the air is cold" and *B* says, "the air is hot" – or better, "the air is not cold," – then the two statements say: "the air is cold for *A*"and "the air is not cold for *B*." The statements, suitably filled out, are different and no contradiction can result. Hence all opinions are true.

In the *Theaetetus* Plato explores a number of problems for this view, the most important and telling of which is that the statement "All statements are relative," if true, must itself be relativized for the speaker. All statements are relative for Protagoras, but they are not relative for Plato. On this interpretation, Protagoras has not even succeeded in uttering a general philosophical claim. If, on the other hand, the statement is a general and not a relative truth, then it itself falsifies its own claim. Aristotle also takes on Protagoras' theory in *Metaphysics* IV.5–6.

In general one can keep statements from being contradicted by other statements if one relativizes them with a phrase such as "for *S*," but one then runs the risk of trivializing all discourse and making all communication self-referential. See Burnyeat 1976 on Plato's refutation of Protagoras.

In 19 Sextus takes Protagoras as having a positive physical theory on which his theory of perception is based – perhaps influenced by Plato's free-wheeling reconstruction in the *Theaetetus*. But we have no strong confirmation of this. Protagoras seems to be radical precisely in rejecting a physical basis for perception. As Guthrie observes, "No natural philosopher went as far as this [rejection of a naturalistic theory of perception], for it is a denial of the very meaning of *physis*" (*HGP* 3.186). (On the other hand, it has been claimed that Protagoras is not so much a relativist about perception as an "extreme realist"; see Bett 1989.)

21 [F2]. A new fragment (or testimony) of Protagoras was discovered by Gronewald 1968. Protagoras seems to approximate Berkeley's axiom for physical objects: to be is to be perceived. Protagoras further claims that a state of affairs which is manifest to one person will not necessarily be manifest to another. Hence it will be non-evident, where presumably Protagoras means not evident *to everyone*. But presumably it is evident to one who perceives the state of affairs. Is this an attempt to point out that on the basis of subjective experiences we cannot ascend to intersubjective agreement? On this passage, see Mejer 1972; Decleva Caizzi 1976; Mansfeld 1981; Woodruff 1985. Woodruff points to the application of the point made here to theology: unless a god manifests himself to Protagoras, the existence of gods is non-evident to him (see 29 [F3]). I have in general followed his suggestions for reconstructing the fragment.

22–28. The practice Protagoras introduced of training students to argue both sides of a case seemed to many ancient critics to be the height of sophistry, in the negative sense of the term. Yet this training teaches the student to anticipate an opponent's position and now serves as a standard practice of debate and forensic training. Arguably, the truth can emerge from the conflict of opposed opinions. What Protagoras' justification for this practice was, however, is uncertain. Besides the practical advantage of being able to anticipate an opponent's arguments, the study of opposed arguments could help one formulate one's own opinion. But if Protagoras takes relativism as a fundamental principle, he cannot believe that argument establishes objective truths. A sample of opposed arguments is found in the *Debated Questions* (*Dissoi Logoi*, DsL) below.

29 [F3]–31. The term *atheos* was used more broadly than our "atheist." Protagoras was an agnostic rather than an atheist in the modern sense. His candor on this point is striking, and implies a freedom of speech for the age. Unfortunately we do not know what else Protagoras had to say in his treatise *On the Gods*. For all we know, the opening could be, as it was for some early modern skeptics, a premise for accepting religious traditions. Schiappa 2003, 148, suggests it was an introduction for an anthropological account of the gods.

32. Protagoras seems to distrust the abstraction of the mathematician. His work provides evidence that mathematics was not yet seen as highly specialized and as

providing an ideal of scientific rigor. On the imperfection of the drawn circle, see also Plato *Letter VII*, 343a.

33–38. Protagoras made important advances by identifying features of language such as grammatical gender and the mood of sentences (or verbs, as we would now say). See 1.53–54 for a list of moods, corresponding roughly to optative, subjunctive, indicative, and imperative moods of the verb, here perhaps being formally distinguished for the first time. The "correct diction," *orthoepeia*, he seeks to inculcate seems to involve word choice, grammatical agreement of terms, or broadly semantics and morphology, and to embody good principles of composition. The attempt to correct grammar, however, by appeal to sense (36–37) is an ill-conceived enterprise. From 38 it appears that Protagoras had some intelligent observations to make about literature. Plato portrays Protagoras as eager to discourse on poetry and using logical tools in literary criticism (*Protagoras* 339a–d). In the same passage we see Protagoras as more of a dilettante than a philosopher: unlike Socrates, he does not wish to stick with a philosophical inquiry but turns from the question at hand to literary questions. From another point of view, we might say that he was more interested in a liberal education than in technical studies.

39–42 [F4–7]. Like other sophists, Protagoras seems to require good character, teaching, and practice to produce the proper results in a student.

43–44. Aristophanes sees the method of arguing both sides as deceptive manipulation (42), as appears in a sample debate between the Stronger Argument and the Weaker, personified (889–1104); the latter of course wins. In 43 Aristophanes is able to make fun of Protagoras' revisionary grammar.

45. Plato puts in the mouth of Protagoras an elegant myth designed to illustrate the principles of moral education. Many scholars think Plato is borrowing an actual story from Protagoras, presumably from *On the Original State of Things*, while others think Plato is inventing it. The myth allows Protagoras to say, on the one hand, that everyone has a kind of moral instinct, while he implies, on the other hand, that everyone can profit from instruction. The political art is a special art that all must share in. Man's great endowment consists of technology and morality. The former is useless without the latter.

One striking feature is the difficulty in determining from the story what part of moral education is innate (planted by Zeus or Hermes) and what instilled. Here Protagoras seems to miss the opportunity to exploit the nature–convention (*nomos–phusis*) distinction which became prominent in the late fifth century. Could this story antedate the distinction?

A similar account of divine providence appears in Herodotus 3.108, in a book that elsewhere has possible connections to Protagorean political theory (see Morrison 1941).

46. Protagoras' stance allows him to advertise himself as a moral educator while recognizing that many others also contribute to the education of the young (thus disarming the resentment of traditionalists). Morality can exist without the sophist, but the sophist has a useful role to play in improving citizens. Anyone

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can teach morality to those who are deficient (for instance children), but some are especially gifted in imparting moral education. Protagoras also states his money-back guarantee.

Protagoras seems to anticipate Aristotle's emphasis on habituation as moral training: everyone contributes to the proper behavior of the young by correcting them. The analogy with language learning (second sentence) is suggestive: as philosophers of language and linguists have pointed out, children learn how to express themselves in language starting from an impoverished environment. They seem to have some innate facility for language which, however, is adapted to some particular language: English or Greek or Chinese. Similarly, children have an innate facility for moral and social behavior, but we educate them in the customs and mores of our particular society.

The analogy between morality and a craft reminds one of the Socratic craft analogy. Here, however, it seems potentially confusing because the moral endowment ("respect and justice") are allegedly universal, unlike craft skills. But Protagoras probably wants to focus on the practical and situation-oriented nature of craft learning: as the apprentice learns a craft by practicing it under the tutelage of a master, so a potential moral agent learns morality by performing moral acts under the tutelage of a moral agent (as in Aristotle's theory). How exactly this improvement takes place remains obscure (even in Aristotle), but that it does take place can be argued on the basis of experience.

47. A number of lists like this one are found in the *Dissoi Logoi*. At one level they provide grounds for a debater to disagree with an absolute statement made by an opponent, and thus offer a useful tool to the sophist. Indeed, at some practical level we must all take into account relativizing conditions such as those Protagoras mentions. In the dialogue the audience wildly applauds Protagoras' speech, at least indicating the popularity of its distinctions among intellectuals of the time. The immediate context is value judgments; but how broadly Protagoras means his point to be taken is not clear, and in any case he does not exploit his distinctions further in the present dialogue. Here we get a kind of practical relativism rather than the high-powered theoretical relativism of 16–20. The general point that different things are good and bad in different situations is present already in Heraclitus: Hct79[F49].

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