Plato on Pleasure, Intelligence and the Human Good: An Interpretation of the *Philebus*

by

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Abstract

The *Philebus* is devoted to the question what constitutes *the good* for a human being. Although Socrates initially favors a life of pure intelligence against the hedonist’s life of pure pleasure, he quickly concedes that *some* pleasures actually enhance the life of intelligence. In order to determine which pleasures deserve a place in the best life, Socrates undertakes a lengthy investigation into the nature of pleasure. Commentators have long been frustrated in their attempt to uncover a single, unified account that explains in a plausible way the extraordinary variety of pleasures analyzed in the dialogue. I argue that this search for a generic account of pleasure is misguided, because one of the main purposes of Socrates’ division of pleasure is to expose its essentially heterogeneous nature. Pleasures can be bodily or psychic, pure or mixed with pain, truth apt or not, healthy or diseased, and inherently measured or unmeasured, and there are no essential properties which all of these diverse phenomena share.

The inclusion of some pleasures in the final ranking of the goods at the end of the *Philebus* represents a dramatic shift in Plato’s attitude towards certain pleasures, and so it is not surprising that many scholars misinterpret the force of this conclusion. Even in the *Republic* where the pleasures of reason are favorably compared to the pleasures of spirit and appetite, intellectual
pleasures are judged to be more pleasant and real than other pleasures, but are nowhere judged to be *better* or praised as genuine goods. In the *Philebus*, not only are some pleasures unambiguously ranked among the highest goods, but Socrates gives no indication that these pleasures are good only in some qualified or extrinsic way. Instead, certain pleasures make their own positive contribution to the goodness of the best human life, making the mixed life more valuable and choiceworthy than the unmixed life of intelligence.
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Introduction

The Philebus is not an easy dialogue. For one thing, it contains lengthy and obscure discussions of philosophical methodology and metaphysics that have no clear relevance to the ostensible topic of the dialogue, which is the relative contribution of pleasure and intelligence to the best human life.\(^1\) Although a large portion of the contemporary scholarship on the Philebus focuses on these discussions,\(^2\) which Frede (1993) refers to as a kind of “purgatory” (xiii), it is rare to find even two interpretations which are in even general agreement. Perhaps as a result of the dialogue’s apparent lack of unity and coherence, most of the contemporary scholarship on the Philebus focuses on individual passages in isolation from the text as a whole. For example, a disproportionately large amount of secondary literature attempts to explain Socrates’ notorious claim that pleasures, like judgments, can be false.\(^3\) The study of the Philebus has been aided by a number of good commentaries,\(^4\) but there are very few book length interpretations of the dialogue that attempt to give a unified reading of how all of the pieces of the dialogue fit together.\(^5\) The payoff for such a reading would be substantial, for the Philebus presents some of Plato’s most considered views about crucial issues, such as the relationship between the soul and the body and the nature of the cosmos and a human being’s place in it.

In this thesis, I do not aim directly at providing such a comprehensive reading, which would be an ambitious undertaking considering the complexity of the dialogue and the secondary literature it has inspired. Instead, I focus on the analysis and evaluation of pleasure in the dialogue, and in particular the relationship between pleasure and other forms of cognition. However, as will

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1. Guthrie (1978) complains that “at places in the Philebus the threads get bewilderingly entangled” and that Plato’s “language seems almost intentionally mystifying” (223). Its choppy character was recognized in antiquity, and Galen even wrote a (now lost) treatise entitled “On the Transitions in the Philebus”.


4. In English, the most recent and useful commentaries are Frede (1993), Gosling (1975) and Hackforth (1945); Frede also has a longer and more detailed commentary in German (1997), and there is also a commentary in Italian (Migliori, 1997). Although not technically a commentary, Delcomminette recently published a lengthy book on the Philebus in French which follows the argument of the dialogue quite closely (2006). We also have one ancient commentary by Damascius (Westerink 1959).

5. In addition to Delcomminette’s lengthy book (2006), Hampton has a short monograph (1990); a number of articles specifically tackle the question of the dialogue’s unity, e.g. Ionescu (2007), Isenber (1940) and Sayre (1987).
quickly become apparent, understanding the early methodological passages, and especially the fourfold division of being and the classification of pleasure and intelligence within this new metaphysical framework, is crucial for grasping the distinctions Socrates draws between different types of pleasure and the ultimate role these pleasures play in the best human life. Near the beginning of the dialogue, Socrates and Protarchus agree that the best human life is a mixed life, which contains both pleasure and intelligence, rather than an unmixed life devoted wholly to either one or the other. The inclusion of a select group of pleasures in the final ranking of goods at the end of the dialogue (66c), as well as Socrates’ explicit reaffirmation of the superiority of the mixed life (60c-61a), suggests that the early recommendation of the mixed life is sincere and that at least some pleasures are intrinsically good and make a positive contribution to the best human life.

Although in many ways the most natural reading of the dialogue, some scholars object that this conclusion conflicts with claims made elsewhere in the dialogue. For example, Frede (1993) and Evans (2007b) both point out that Socrates attributes the pleasureless life of intelligence to the gods (Philebus 22c5-6 and 33b10). This raises a puzzle, for it implies either that the unmixed life of intelligence is better than the mixed life after all, or that the best life of a human being is better than the life of a god. Frede and Evans both resolve this tension by arguing that the unmixed life of intelligence is in fact better than the mixed life, but it is unattainable for human beings. As a result, human beings should strive to attain such a life to the best of their abilities, and yet a human life inevitably contains some pleasure due to the limitations and imperfections inherent in human nature.

Interpreters have similarly drawn attention to a passage which apparently contradicts the conclusion that some pleasures are intrinsically good, rather than good in some qualified or

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6 It is not clear whether the passage is intended to establish the superiority of the mixed life, or whether it merely shows that the unmixed life of pleasure cannot be the good. Socrates endorses Protarchus’ rejection of the unmixed life of intelligence in the case of all animals (including humans) and even plants (22b5), but he suggested that it may not apply to “divine reason” (θεῖον…νοῦν, 22c6). However, Socrates predicted at the beginning of this passage that some third thing, other than pleasure or intelligence, would turn out to be the good (20b6-9; cf. 11d11), and he lent this prediction authority by claiming that he heard it in a dream, and that this dream had a divine source (20b). The question remains whether we should identify this mysterious “third thing” with the mixed life or something else, such as limit itself, which gains first place in the final ranking of the goods. See Chapters 1 and 5 for more detailed discussion of these and related issues.

7 The latter result would be extremely paradoxical, given the role of the gods as normative standards for human beings in the late dialogues. Cf. Symposium 207c-209e, Theaetetus 176a-177a, Timaeus 90a-c and Laws IV, 716c; see Annas (1999a), ch. 3, Armstrong (2004) and Sedley (2000) and (1997).
contingent sense. At the end of the analysis of different sorts of pleasure, Socrates reports the view of some “subtle thinkers” (κομψοὶ, 53c6) who identify pleasure as a type of “becoming” (γένεσις) and conclude as a result that it cannot be good (53c-55c, esp.54d1-2). If Socrates endorses this argument, as some have argued, why does he include some pleasures in the final ranking of goods? Singpurwalla (2009) interprets the fact that pleasure gains merely fifth place in the final ranking of goods as a sign “that there is something wrong with pleasure” (80). However, as Vogt (2007) points out, “we should think that pleasure, by gaining fifth rank, fared extremely well…To gain fifth rank with such competitors is not to come in last and accept a lowly status. To gain fifth rank among such competitors is to be praised” (251). If there were really something wrong with pleasure, as Singpurwalla supposes, then Socrates need not have ranked it at all. However, in order to maintain that the identification of pleasure with γένεσις and the inference that pleasure is not good represents Plato’s own considered view, interpreters must argue that pleasure is good in a less strict sense than the other items included in the final ranking of goods. Since there is textual support for both interpretations of the value of pleasure and its role in the mixed life, the only way to adjudicate the dispute is to examine Socrates’ own detailed analysis of different types of pleasure (31b-52d) in order to determine whether this analysis is consistent with the view that pleasure is a type of γένεσις.

As it turns out, however, Socrates does not provide a general account of the nature of pleasure which clearly applies to all of the pleasures discussed in the dialogue. Instead of listing the essential features which all pleasures share, Socrates proceeds in his analysis by emphasizing the striking and fundamental respects in which pleasures differ from one another. The best candidate for a unified account of pleasure is the initial identification of pleasure with a process of restoration (32a-b), and by far the most common interpretation is that this account applies to all of the pleasures analyzed in the dialogue. However, Gosling and Taylor have observed that

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9 Guthrie (1978) remarks, “Plato nowhere defines pleasure, and indeed the word’s field of reference changes during the discussion” (199).

10 E.g. Butler (2007), Carpenter (2011), Evans (2007c), Frede (1993) and (1992), Ionescu (2007) and Tuozzo (1994). Carpenter (2011) offers a slightly modified version of this view, which however yields the same conclusion: that all pleasures share the same nature: “Restoration, taken in its most obvious sense, may well not capture every sort of pleasure. It is, however, one way in which to model the relation of dependency that all pleasures have on the more ‘cognitive’ functions of soul” (25). However, she also recognizes that “hope and fear seem very difficult to characterize as refillings or depletions of any kind, and Plato does not try to do so”; she also says, “the restoration conception seems limited, and Plato is aware of its limits” (19).
Socrates does not explain how this account applies to pleasures that belong to the soul alone, such as the pleasures of expectation. They go so far as to conclude, “it seems clear that in the *Philebus* Plato has no general formula to encapsulate the nature of pleasure” (136). Gosling and Taylor argue that in denying that pleasures share a single nature, Plato improves upon the account of pleasure in the *Republic*, where he implausibly attempts to account for all pleasures as “replenishment of natural needs” (ibid.). Although they suggest that Plato limits this model to a subset of pleasures in the *Philebus*, Gosling and Taylor fail to give an account of the precise scope of pleasures to which it applies. They note that “no replenishment analysis seems appropriate for malicious pleasure” (ibid.), and while the replenishment model “seems” to apply to the pleasures of smell, “the partially aesthetic pleasures of sight and hearing look far less likely candidates for such treatment” (138). Gosling and Taylor fail to provide positive evidence for their provocative proposal that the “replenishment” account applies to only a subset of pleasures, except for Socrates’ reticence about how it extends to certain types of pleasure, and their own judgment that such an extension seems unlikely in several cases. Furthermore, they present Plato as “skeptical” about the possibility of giving a general account of pleasure, rather than arguing that such account is impossible due to the nature of pleasure (140).

Fortunately, Socrates’ analysis of different types of pleasure provides a much more precise account of the ways in which pleasures differ from one another than is suggested by these rather tentative claims. A close examination of this analysis confirms that the initial identification of pleasure with a process of restoration applies exclusively to bodily pleasures and not to those pleasures which belong to the soul alone, which include not only the pleasures of expectation and the mixed psychic pleasures such as malice and anger, but also the pure and true pleasures of sight, hearing and learning. Socrates supports this distinction both by providing a sophisticated account of the types of cognition required for bodily and psychic pleasures respectively, and by situating different types of pleasure, intelligence, the living body and the mixed life itself within an entirely new and comprehensive metaphysical framework. Socrates ultimately concludes that different types of pleasure belong to fundamentally different classes of being. This shows that Plato does not merely suspect that pleasures lack generic unity in the *Philebus*, as Gosling and Taylor hesitantly maintain. On the contrary, the analysis of pleasure, which extends from the

11 I will use the phrase the “pure and true pleasures” throughout to refer to the group of pleasures Socrates discusses at 51a-52c, which include certain pleasures of sight, hearing and learning. Although these pleasures are described as both “pure” (*καθαρὰς*, 52c2) and “true” (*ἀληθεῖς*, 51b1), in this context the predicate “true” is synonymous with “pure”. See 53a-b and my discussion of this sense of “true” on pages 129-130 below.
discussion of bodily pleasures beginning at 31b through the account of the pure and true pleasures at 51a-52d, reveals that different types of pleasure have radically different natures, and, despite the assumptions of hedonists and anti-hedonists alike, the word “pleasure” does not refer to a single, unified class of psychic phenomena.

The primary strategy Socrates uses for distinguishing between different types of pleasure is to highlight the relationship between pleasure and other forms of cognition. By describing a life of pleasure without any form of intelligence, including memory, judgment and expectation, Socrates reveals the extent to which many types of pleasure depend on these other forms of cognition. In Chapter 1, I show how Socrates uses this thought experiment to convince Protarchus that pleasure and intelligence are intimately connected with one another, rather than separate conditions of the soul which they can isolate and evaluate independently. Furthermore, Protarchus’ rejection of the unmixed life of pleasure reveals his deep-seated preference for the cognitively demanding pleasures available in a mixed life over the very limited pleasures of a mollusk. Before analyzing specific types of pleasure, Socrates launches into an expansive metaphysical discussion in which he divides everything that exists into four classes. In Chapter 2, I examine the significance of this division for determining the nature and value of pleasure and intelligence. Although Socrates initially agrees to the classification of pleasure in the unlimited class (at the suggestion of Philebus, of all people), he revises this classification at the end of the dialogue by assigning the pure and true pleasures to the mixed class. Unless pleasure is a unified class that cuts across the most fundamental division of all being, which is an assumption that Socrates here rejects, this classification reveals pleasure to be essentially heterogeneous.

Socrates provides psychological as well as metaphysical grounds for denying that pleasures share a single nature. In Chapters 3 and 4 I examine the relationship between pleasure and other forms of cognition, such as perception, memory, judgment and knowledge. I argue that different types of pleasure not only have different cognitive requirements, as Socrates showed in his description of the unmixed life of pleasure, but that they are themselves different forms of cognition. When Socrates contrasts the pleasures common to all animals with those distinctive of human beings, he reveals that pleasures do not differ merely in their sources or the types of activities they accompany, so that humans simply have more ways of producing essentially the same type of experience enjoyed by mollusks; on the contrary, some pleasures have the same intentional structure as judgments, and so are completely inaccessible to non-rational animals. Furthermore,
pleasure is not a particular state of the soul, as Socrates characterizes it at the beginning of the dialogue (11d); instead, the pleasures of wise people and those of fools stem from opposite psychic conditions.

The detailed analysis of the natures of different types of pleasure in the Philebus ultimately reveals that pleasure is essentially heterogeneous. Thus, the lack of a general account of pleasure is a positive result of the dialogue, rather than representing some sort of failing or oversight on Plato’s part. In Chapter 5, I show how this insight into the nature of pleasure (or lack thereof) fits into the overall argumentative strategy of the dialogue. Plato shows that hedonists and anti-hedonists make the same mistake when they generalize about the value of pleasure as a whole based on the characteristics of particular types of pleasure. I also show how recognizing the fundamental differences between the natures of different types of pleasure resolves the textual puzzles outlined above about the value of pleasure and its role in the best life. Socrates expresses approval towards the theorists who claim that pleasure is a γένεσις because to a certain extent he agrees with them, and yet only with respect to the bodily pleasures, which he identifies with processes of restoration. Socrates denies that the gods experience this kind of pleasure, for every process of restoration follows a process of destruction, and gods are completely stable and perfect beings; however, only bodily pleasures are restorative in nature. In contrast, pure and true pleasures not only arise independently of painful destruction, but they actually presuppose the natural, harmonious condition of the body and soul. These pleasures belong to the mixed class, gain fifth place in the final ranking of goods, and make a positive contribution to the goodness of the mixed life, which is the best sort of life for both humans and gods.

Although I draw primarily on internal evidence to support my interpretation of the account of pleasure in the Philebus, I have also made substantial use of very detailed psychological theory in the Timaeus. In particular, I rely heavily on the extensive account of both the psychological and physiological processes underlying sense perception found in the Timaeus. Some may view my strategy of using the Timaeus to illuminate key passages in the Philebus with suspicion, but given the number of thematic connections between the two dialogues, I believe it is justified. In fact, I consider it an added attraction of my view that it takes into account the discussions of sense perception and bodily pleasure in the Timaeus. Stylometry firmly places both the Philebus and Timaeus within a group of late dialogues, which also contains the Sophist, Politicus and
In addition to the many similarities in the psychological theories in the two dialogues, which will become evident in my analysis of the relationship between pleasure and αἰσθησις in Chapter 3, both dialogues offer elaborate, and in many ways parallel, accounts of the structure of the cosmos and the relationship between humans, animals and gods. In fact, Migliori (2010) has argued that it is not only natural and instructive to read these two dialogues together, but that “Plato wrote these two dialogues in a framework of unitary allusions, thus giving us some indications of the opportunity of reading them in close connection, as they complement each other” (115).

One striking difference between the two dialogues is the prominence of the tripartite division of the soul in the Timaeus and the complete absence of explicit reference to tripartition in the Philebus. Instead of concluding that Plato radically changes his view about the soul between writing the two dialogues, Hackforth (1945) suggests that he “does not want to go over familiar ground again” (9). An important function of the division of the soul into three parts in the Timaeus is to distinguish between more and less sophisticated forms of cognition. In comparing the psychological theories presented in the two dialogues, I have found impressive agreement in the accounts of individual cognitive capacities, as well as the interactions between these different forms of cognition. In the Philebus, Plato still manages to distinguish between more and less complex psychic phenomena, and yet he does so by means of a new interest in animal psychology rather than distinguishing between rational and non-rational parts of the soul. I see no reason to suppose that Plato has abandoned his view that the soul has three parts by the time he writes the Philebus just because he does not elaborate this theory in the dialogue. If Plato meant the Timaeus and the Philebus to be read together, as their many thematic connections and complimentary accounts of psychological phenomena strongly suggest, then a discussion of the tripartite structure of the soul in the Philebus would have been unnecessarily repetitive. As it is, the two dialogues represent a division of labor: the Timaeus provides an account of the nature

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12 Owen (1953) argues that the Timaeus precedes the Parmenides despite the linguistic evidence because it contains clear references to forms, but see Cherniss (1957) for a convincing reply. Some have suggested that the common stylistic features of late dialogues may be deliberate, rather than unconscious changes in writing style that can tell us something about the chronology of the dialogues. However, as Irwin (2008) points out “the features of Plato’s late style are constant across dialogues that are otherwise quite different. Their constancy makes it unlikely that they are the result of conscious decisions to adopt a style” (82). Cf. Brandwood (1992), 113-115 and Kahn (2002).

13 So far I have drawn attention only to the parallels in the philosophical content of the two dialogues. Migliori (2010) provides a list of eleven parallels between the two dialogues, including the fact that they are both named after fictitious characters, that they both refer to a previous discussion, and that they both end abruptly (115).
and structure of the soul and the *Philebus* determines the roles of pleasure and intelligence in the best human life.

My thesis that Plato repudiates the unitary nature of pleasure in the *Philebus* explains many otherwise puzzling features of the dialogue, but it also constitutes an independently interesting critique of the concept of pleasure. One of the attractive features of hedonism as an ethical theory is its simplicity, since one thing, pleasure, serves as the source of all value. Pleasure is a flexible concept, for as the *Philebus* shows there are many types of pleasure, and one can take pleasure in any number of activities. The dialogue ultimately calls into question the common assumption that what we call pleasure in all of these cases really is single thing. If “pleasure” instead refers to a diverse range of essentially different psychological phenomena, then this implies that hedonists are actually pluralists in disguise, who use the ambiguity of the concept of pleasure to lend their theory the superficial appearance of simplicity.

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14 In *Posterior Analytics* II.13 Aristotle gives a similarly structured analysis of the concept of “pride” (μεγαλοψυχία), arguing that the word refers to two separate phenomena (97b15-26). See also Ryle (1959), where he distinguishes between seven very different referents of the word “feeling” and speculates about the genealogical relationships between them.

15 Cicero presents a similar criticism of Epicurus, arguing that he holds that pleasure is the highest good, but fails to give an adequate account of its nature (*De Finibus* II.6-12).
Chapter 1
The Choice of Lives and the Nature of Pleasure

In the *Philebus*, Plato defends an intermediate position between strict hedonism and strict anti-hedonism. He rejects the thesis that pleasure is the sole human good, while also holding that some pleasures are good and make a positive contribution to the best human life. Although pleasure and intelligence (φρόνησις)\(^{16}\) are presented as rival candidates for the human good at the beginning of the dialogue, Socrates soon changes the terms of the debate by introducing another possibility: “that there is some third thing which is different and superior to both of them”\(^{17}\) (ἀλλὰ ἄλλο τι τρίτον, ἕτερον μὲν τούτων, ἄμεινον δὲ ἀμφοῖν, 20b8-9). This third thing is the mixed life of pleasure and intelligence (22a1-4). By means of a brief and seemingly simple thought experiment, which I will refer to as the Choice of Lives, Socrates manages to extract an extremely significant concession from his hedonistic interlocutor: that neither pleasure nor intelligence is the human good, but rather the life which contains them both.

Beginning with Aristotle (*EN* 10, 1172b27-35), the Choice of Lives has attracted the attention of several prominent philosophers interested in the role of pleasure in the good human life. Most famously, G. E. Moore cites this argument in his *Principia Ethica* as an original and effective attack on hedonism (90-92).\(^{18}\) According to his interpretation, the hedonist’s rejection of the unmixed life of pleasure demonstrates that we do not value pleasure apart from our consciousness of it. Instead of a refutation of hedonism as such, a number of commentators interpret the Choice of Lives as the moment when Protarchus acknowledges the intrinsic value of

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16 In some passages in the *Philebus* φρόνησις seems to have a broader scope than that implied by the translation “intelligence”, referring to a wide array of cognitive capacities, including memory and judgment. Ultimately, Socrates identifies φρόνησις with νοῦς, and both seem to refer to an intellectual virtue, such as “wisdom” or “intelligence”. Since the more generic use of φρόνησις is less common and seems to play a particular dialectical role in the Choice of Lives passage (20b-22c), I will translate φρόνησις “intelligence” unless otherwise noted. See Menn (1992) for a plausible defense of the identification of φρόνησις and νοῦς in the *Philebus* and other late Platonic dialogues, as well as compelling reasons for thinking they refer to an intellectual virtue, as opposed to a more general cognitive capacity or the mind as a whole.

17 All translations are from Frede (1993) unless otherwise noted.

18 I understand hedonism as the view according to which pleasure is the sole source of value in a human life. As G. E. Moore argues in *Principia Ethica*, “the doctrine that pleasure, among other things, is good as an end, is not Hedonism...Nor again is the doctrine that other things, beside pleasure, are good as means, at all inconsistent with Hedonism” (64). Thus, Protarchus can admit with perfect consistency that intelligence is good as a means to certain kinds of pleasure without abandoning his commitment to hedonism. He would only contradict his commitment to hedonism if he were to concede that something other than pleasure, such as intelligence, is good as an end or in itself.
intelligence and thus abandons his initial commitment to hedonism. I argue in this chapter that the Choice of Lives represents neither a refutation of hedonism nor Protarchus’ personal conversion from hedonism; instead, the thought experiment forces Protarchus, and any other reflective hedonist, to reconsider the nature of pleasure and its relationship to other forms of cognition. More specifically, the Choice of Lives calls into question the strict dichotomy between pleasure and intelligence accepted by both Socrates and Protarchus at the beginning of the dialogue. In this way, the argument undermines Protarchus’ conviction that all pleasures share the same nature and are equally valuable, even if they come from different sources.

1 Overview of the Choice of Lives Thought Experiment

Socrates first proposes an alternative to pleasure and intelligence, the two initial candidates for the human good, in response to Protarchus’ desperate plea for some way out of the challenging task of dividing pleasure and intelligence into their respective kinds (εἴδη, 19b2). Socrates immediately signals the importance of this alternative candidate for the human good by claiming that he heard about it in a dream and suggesting that this dream had a divine source (20b3-6). Instead of identifying the mysterious “third thing” which is “different and superior to both [pleasure and intelligence]” (τι τρίτον, ἕτερον μὲν τούτων, ἄμεινον δὲ ἀμφοῖν, 20b8-9), Socrates proposes three criteria for the good they are seeking. The first two are that it must be τέλεον, (“complete” or “perfect”, 21d1-3) and ἱκανὸν (“sufficient” or “adequate”, 20d4-6). Both of these criteria bring out that they are not just seeking one good among others, but rather the good which lacks nothing and to which nothing can be added to make it better. Finally, Socrates proposes not only that the good is desirable, i.e. something that should be desired, but that it is what all creatures actually do desire.


20 Socrates refers to this good as the “real good” (τὸ ὄντως…ἀγαθόν, 21a1-2). This terminology is misleading, because Socrates clearly does not mean to rule out the possibility of a plurality of other goods, and even of other intrinsic goods. However, the “real good” seems to play a foundational role in relation to other goods, being the cause of their goodness, just as it is the cause of the goodness of a human life. Given Socrates’ system of ranking the goods, which he refers to throughout the dialogue (e.g. 22c-e, 66a-c), a more appropriate label for the good they are looking for is the “highest” good.

21 Frede (1993) distinguishes between these first two criteria by pointing out that “perfection (τέλεον) stresses that no further additions are possible, sufficiency (ἰκανὸν) that nothing is lacking” (14, n. 2).
Socrates here claims that the good they are seeking is something which *all* creatures desire and hunt for, or at least all creatures which are capable of recognizing it (*γιγνῶσκον*). This third criterion is later expressed more succinctly as the requirement that the good should be choiceworthy (*αἱρετὸ*, 21d3, e4).²²

Socrates does not provide an argument for these three criteria; instead, he simply appeals to Protarchus’ intuitions about the nature of the good they are seeking. The first two criteria are crucial for the setup of Socrates’ thought experiment, since the Choice of Lives is specifically designed to test the perfection and sufficiency of the lives of pleasure and intelligence respectively (20e4-21a2). The third criterion justifies Protarchus’ role in evaluating the unmixed lives of pleasure and intelligence; after all, if neither of these lives is desirable for Protarchus, who presumably has the intelligence required for recognizing the good, then neither of them meets the third criterion. Protarchus first says that neither of the unmixed lives seems worthy of choice “to me” (*ἔμοιγε*, 21e3), but he almost immediately draws the more general conclusion that they are not worthy of choice “for either man or animal” (22b1-2).

In order to test pleasure and intelligence against these three criteria, Socrates asks Protarchus to compare a whole *life* of pleasure with a life of intelligence, rather than focusing on individual experiences of pleasure. When introducing the debate about the human good at the beginning of

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²² The translation “choiceworthy” suggests that the third criterion is a normative criterion, expressing what animals *should* pursue rather than what they actually do pursue. The quoted passage (20d7-10) suggests that animals actually do pursue the good, and yet the criterion retains its normative force, because this is only true for animals capable of recognizing it.

The third criterion bears a remarkable similarity to one of Eudoxus’ arguments for the identification of pleasure with the good. As Aristotle reports, Eudoxus held that “the object of choice (*τὸ αἱρετὸν*) is what is excellent and that which is most the object of choice [is] the greatest good”. He also observed that “all things, both rational and irrational, seek (*ἐφιέμενα*) [pleasure]” (*EN* 1172b9-11), thus concluding that pleasure is the good. The verb *ἐφίημι* (“desire” or “seek”) appears in both the *Philebus* passage and Aristotle’s description of Eudoxus’ view, and although *αἱρετὸς* does not occur in this initial description of the third criterion, Socrates uses this very adjective to refer to the third criterion when he asks Protarchus to evaluate the two unmixed lives (21d3, e4) and when he summarizes the results of this evaluation (22b5). Gosling and Taylor (1982) have argued that Eudoxus’ defense of hedonism was one of Plato’s main targets in the *Philebus*, so it seems fitting that Plato would use one of Eudoxus’ own principles to undermine his thesis that pleasure is the good. As in the *Philebus*, Eudoxus stresses that the good is what animals actually do pursue, otherwise observing that all animals pursue pleasure would not provide any evidence in support of his view that pleasure is the good. One crucial difference between the third criterion for the good in the *Philebus* and Eudoxus’ principle is the condition that it only holds true for those creatures capable of recognizing (*γιγνῶσκον*) the good. Cf. Gosling (1975) *ad loc.*
the dialogue, Socrates tells Protarchus, “each of us will be trying to prove some possession or state of the soul to be the one that can render life happy for all human beings” (ἡμῶν ἑκάτερος ἔξιν ψυχῆς καὶ διάθεσιν ἀποφαίνειν τινὰ ἐπιχειρήσει τὴν δυναμένην ἄνθρωπος πᾶσι τὸν βίον εὐδαίμονα παρέχειν, 11d4-6). In the Choice of Lives, instead of conceiving of the human good as a psychic condition which renders a human life happy, Socrates equates the good with the happy life itself. Socrates and Protarchus must still identify the ingredients of the happy life, but looking at the question from the perspective of a whole life arouses different intuitions. Instead of evaluating particular instances of pleasure, Socrates asks Protarchus to judge whether a life which contains pleasure alone, without any form of intelligence, is complete, sufficient and worthy of choice (21a9-e4). At first Protarchus agrees without hesitation that the life of pleasure fulfills these criteria (21b2-5), but he changes his mind as soon as Socrates describes what a life of pleasure without intelligence would be like (21d4-5). As it turns out, pleasure is a much more plausible candidate for the human good when considered on the scale of a few moments rather than an entire lifetime.23

Among the cognitive capacities Socrates removes from the life of pleasure are reason (νοῦς), memory, knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and true judgment (21b6-9), all of which Socrates associates with intelligence (φρόνησις) (cf. 11b6-c1). Protarchus does not object to Socrates’ removal of any of these forms of cognition, suggesting that he conceives of pleasure as completely separable and independent of all of them. Socrates first points out that the removal of knowledge includes knowledge of pleasure; as a result, the subject of the life of pleasure would experience great pleasures, but would be ignorant (ἀγνοεῖν) of this very fact (21b7-8). Protarchus readily accepts this consequence, but then Socrates goes on to list a number of other effects of the removal of intelligence, including a radical narrowing of the subject’s time perspective.24 Both the memory

23 Protarchus does not object to this shift in perspective, and thus tacitly agrees with Socrates’ identification of the human good with happiness evaluated on the scale of an entire life. See Irwin (1991) “Aristippus Against Happiness” for a discussion of the Cyrenaic position, which apparently rejects this eudaimonist assumption. Irwin argues that the Cyrenaics not only reject the assumption that happiness is a “temporally extended collection” of goods, but also that “it is a temporally extended good for one temporally extended person” (66).

24 There is some tension between this narrowing of the subject’s time perspective and the eudaimonist assumption that the good is an entire happy life, which Protarchus accepts without argument and upon which the entire thought experiment is based (after all, they are explicitly evaluating the lives of pleasure and intelligence, not pleasure and intelligence per se). Without memory, there is nothing to connect discrete experiences of pleasure, and so nothing to bind these experiences together into a single whole, which casts into doubt not only the unity of such a life. Protarchus’ acceptance of eudaimonism may partially explain his rejection of the unmixed life of pleasure (see below for my discussion of the related interpretation that Protarchus rejects this life because it is not a human life). In contrast, the Cyrenaics may have endorsed such an existence (see previous note and below). For a general discussion of eudaimonism as a starting point for ethical reflection and a common way of structuring ethical theories...
of past pleasures and the expectation of and calculation for future pleasures would be impossible in such a life. Moreover, Socrates says that if he were living such a life Protarchus would not realize (δοξάζειν) he was experiencing pleasure, even at the moment he was experiencing it. As a final blow, Socrates says that Protarchus would not be living a human life, but that of a mollusk.

At this point, Protarchus relinquishes his commitment to the life of pleasure, saying that Socrates’ description has left him speechless (Εἰς ἀφασίαν παντάπασί με, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὗτος ὁ λόγος ἐμβέβληκε τὰ νῦν, 21d4-5). As Dorothea Frede (1993) points out, this is the only real example of an elenchus in the entire dialogue (xxxii). Although Socrates does not explicitly remove any forms of pleasure from the life of pleasure, the only pleasures that plausibly remain in this life after the removal of all forms of intelligence are the simplest bodily pleasures, such as those associated with food and sex. It is worth noting that such a life would not necessarily be unappealing to every type of hedonist. For example, the Cyrenaics famously identified pleasure as the good, but they placed particular value on the pleasures of the moment, in contrast with those which involve reflection upon the past or anticipation of the future (Diogenes Laertius, II.87-8). Furthermore, they especially praised the pleasures of the body, perhaps because pleasant bodily sensations are never directed towards the past or future, but are always confined to the present, whereas pleasures of the mind can be directed at the past, present or future (Manneback (1961), frs. 181A-183D). Philebus himself, who remains silent during this portion of the discussion, may represent this sort of hedonism. At the very beginning of the dialogue he announces, “To my mind pleasure wins and always will win, no matter what” (Ἐμοὶ μὲν πάντως νικᾶν ἡδονὴ δοκεῖ καὶ δόξει, 12a7). In his stubborn refusal to listen to rational argument, Philebus shows himself to be unsuitable as an interlocutor.  

Socrates next describes the life of intelligence, and he has no difficulty convincing Protarchus that such a life would be insufficient without any pleasure. Even though Protarchus has judged the life of pleasure to be lacking, he has not wavered in his conviction that pleasure is good and that any life would be improved by its addition. Some commentators have questioned the

in the ancient world, see Annas (1993), Chapter 1, Section 1, “Making Sense of My Life as a Whole”.

25 Cf. Cicero De Finibus I.55: “For with the body we can be aware of nothing except the present and what is here now (quod adest), but with the mind we can be aware of both things past and things future.”

significance of Protarchus’ rejection of the life of intelligence, since it hardly comes as a surprise that a hedonist would reject a life devoid of pleasure. In fact, Dorothea Frede (1993) argues that the rest of the dialogue undermines the conclusion of the Choice of Lives that neither pleasure nor intelligence is sufficient in isolation. She argues instead that pleasure is merely a “remedial” good, a byproduct of a human being’s imperfect nature, and that an unmixed life of intelligence would be preferable if it were possible. However, there is a tension between this solution and the conclusion of the dialogue. Not only does Socrates affirm that the mixed life is better than either of the unmixed alternatives at the end of the dialogue (60d, 61a), but he even includes a certain class of pleasures in the final ranking of goods (66c). Furthermore, he gives no indication that these pleasures are good in any less robust sense than knowledge or the mixed life itself.\(^{27}\)

The Choice of Lives evidently succeeds in convincing Protarchus that the mixed life is superior to either of the unmixed alternatives, but what is the significance of this concession? Does Protarchus change his mind about the nature or value of either pleasure or intelligence, and if so, does he have compelling reasons for adjusting his views, reasons which other hedonists might share? One key to answering these questions is to understand the consequences of Socrates’ removal of all forms of intelligence from the life of pleasure. The interpretation of this passage is complicated by the difficulty of determining the precise meanings of the words Socrates uses for different forms of cognition. According to the most extreme view, in addition to judgment, memory and calculation, Socrates removes the bare awareness or consciousness of pleasure from the life of pleasure. Some commentators view the subtraction of consciousness from the life of pleasure as unfair, since consciousness is necessary for pleasure to occur, and there is no justification for classifying consciousness as a form of intelligence in the first place. As we shall see in the next section, G. E. Moore seems to understand the removal of intelligence from the life of pleasure in this extreme way, and yet he praises rather than criticizes Plato’s strategy of separating pleasure from consciousness.

\(^{27}\) In a commentary on the *Philebus*, Damascius provides his own reasons for thinking that the separation of lives is as devastating for knowledge as it is for pleasure, and that Socrates agrees with Protarchus’ rejection of it (Westerink (1959) *Lectures on the Philebus*, sections 86-7). For one, he argues, if knowledge were isolated from pleasure there would be neither love of knowledge nor joy in its attainment (Section 86). He also suggests that the separation of knowledge from pleasure is only a theoretical, not an actual, possibility, due to the very Aristotelian sounding rule that “any undisturbed, i.e. natural, activity is attended by pleasure, so that this must be true of cognitive activity too” (Section 87).
2 Pleasure and Consciousness

G. E. Moore quotes the Choice of Lives passage from the *Philebus* at length in order to support an argument of his own against hedonism. According to Moore, hedonism conflates pleasure and the consciousness of pleasure, but as soon as one distinguishes between pleasure and the consciousness of it, hedonism loses its intuitive appeal. “Should we think,” Moore asks, “that the attainment of pleasure, of which we never were and never could be conscious, was something to be aimed at for its own sake?” (90). Moore does not clearly articulate what he means by the consciousness of pleasure, and in particular he does not say whether he means by “consciousness” 1) the bare awareness of pleasure 28 or 2) the second order awareness of an experience, which is conscious in the first sense, as pleasant. On either interpretation, it is not clear how Moore’s distinction between pleasure and consciousness constitutes a compelling refutation of hedonism, as he claims it does. If he means to distinguish between pleasure and consciousness in the sense of bare awareness, then he begs the question against those hedonists who can insist that pleasure is necessarily a conscious experience. If he means by consciousness of pleasure the second order recognition or judgment that a particular experience is pleasant, then his distinction between pleasure and the consciousness of pleasure becomes more plausible, but it is difficult to see why hedonists make a mistake when they attribute value to pleasure rather than the consciousness of it. Hedonists can just respond that what they value is the bare awareness of pleasure, i.e. how pleasure feels, and this experience seems to retain its intuitive appeal regardless of whether the subject judges that it is pleasant.

Although Moore does not give an example of pleasure that is divorced from consciousness, he claims, “there is certainly much reason to believe that it is not only possible but very common” (90). He may have in mind the type of experience Justin Gosling (1969) describes in his monograph on pleasure and desire, in which one is so absorbed in an activity that one is not aware of it as pleasant, but can only identify it as such in retrospect (44-6). 29 However, in such a situation, it would be wrong to say that the pleasure is entirely divorced from consciousness, because one is conscious of the activity, just not of the fact that the activity is pleasant. In this case, the pleasure is integrally bound up in engaging in the relevant activity, rather than resulting

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28 By the “bare awareness of pleasure” I mean a pleasant experience or a form of awareness that is pleasurable, not a form of awareness that has pleasure as its object.

from reflection on the activity. Even if one were to grant that one lacks the consciousness of pleasure in such a case, we still value experiences of this sort, which contradicts Moore’s claim that we do not value pleasure divorced from consciousness. Indeed, some of our most pleasant and fulfilling activities are precisely those which absorb us in this way, and the hedonist can reasonably claim that we value these experiences because they are pleasant, even if we are not aware that they are pleasant at the time.

However, Moore seems to have something stronger in mind when he distinguishes pleasure from the consciousness of pleasure. He claims that even if pleasure were not possible without consciousness, the hedonist would still be making a mistake in assigning all value to pleasure and none to the consciousness of it. Moore’s conception of the nature of pleasure may be the ultimate source of this objection. To the question “What is pleasure?” he responds, “It is certainly something of which we may be conscious, and which, therefore, may be distinguished from our consciousness of it” (90). In this passage, Moore talks about pleasure as though it were an object of consciousness rather than a particular type of conscious experience. If he thought of pleasure as itself a form or quality of conscious experience, rather than one of many other objects of consciousness, then perhaps he would not insist on the possibility of unconscious pleasures. Even if pleasure were an object of consciousness in the way that color is an object of sight, in order to coherently distinguish between pleasure and the consciousness of pleasure, Moore would need to give an account of what pleasure is, apart from the conscious experience of it. In considering the possibility that pleasure never in fact occurs apart from consciousness, even though the two are conceptually distinct, Moore seems to be interpreting “consciousness” as the bare awareness of pleasure, rather than the second order recognition that an experience is pleasant, for few would insist that pleasure never occurs apart from consciousness in this second sense. Although some may object to even a conceptual distinction between pleasure and consciousness in the sense of bare awareness, at least this stronger interpretation of Moore’s distinction has the advantage of constituting a more compelling challenge to hedonism.

Putting aside the question of whether Moore’s distinction between the value of pleasure and that of the consciousness of pleasure constitutes a good objection against hedonism, does the Choice of Lives passage illustrate a similar point? It does so only if one identifies consciousness (in the sense of bare awareness) as one of the forms of intelligence that Socrates removes from the life.

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30 Cf. Bernard Williams’ characterization of pleasure as “one mode or species of attention” (1959, 71).
of pleasure. Unfortunately, it is not easy to determine precisely which forms of intelligence Socrates removes, since Plato’s extensive vocabulary for different types of cognition is notoriously difficult to interpret. For example, the verb γιγνώσκω has a wide range of possible meanings. It can mean “to know”, “to judge” or “to think”, or it can refer to a much more basic cognitive capacity, in which case it is more accurately translated as “to recognize”, “to come to perceive” or even “to be aware of” something (LSJ). The infinitive ἀγνοεῖν which appears in the description of the unmixed life of pleasure is cognate with γιγνώσκω, and so it has a similarly broad range of possible meanings. Thus, Philebus 21b7-8 can be translated either “is it not necessary that you would be ignorant (ἀγνοεῖν) of this very thing, i.e. about whether you were enjoying yourself or not?” or “is it not necessary that you would be unaware (ἀγνοεῖν) of this very thing, i.e. whether you were enjoying yourself or not?” (τοῦτο αὐτό, εἰ χαίρειν μὴ χαίρεις, ἀνάγκη δήπου σε ἀγνοεῖν). The second translation implies that Socrates removes even the bare awareness of pleasure from the life of pleasure, and not just the ability to know or judge that pleasure is occurring.

Curiously, Moore seems to interpret Socrates as making the strong claim that a life without intelligence would lack the bare awareness of pleasure, and yet he translates 21b7-8 “you would…necessarily be without the knowledge whether you were pleased or not”. In fact, nothing in Moore’s translation of the Choice of Lives passage seems to exclude consciousness from the life of pleasure. Hackforth (1945) shares Moore’s view that Socrates separates pleasure from the consciousness of pleasure in his description of the life of pleasure, and yet he recognizes that such an interpretation depends on the assumption that τοῦτο αὐτό...ἀγνοεῖν “expresses the absolute unawareness of pleasure” (33). Hackforth could hardly be clearer that he takes Socrates to be separating pleasure from consciousness in the sense of bare awareness, and yet a few lines later he writes, “Plato recognizes mere feeling, in the sense of pleasure and pain, as other than consciousness of such feeling” (33). Here Hackforth distinguishes between a

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31 This provides further evidence that Moore blurs the distinction between two distinct senses of “consciousness”, using it in the sense of “bare awareness” of pleasure in his argument against hedonism, but elsewhere meaning the second order judgment that an experience is pleasant. One could take this translation as evidence that Moore has the second sense of consciousness in mind throughout, though this does not explain his consideration of the possibility that pleasure never actually occurs independently of consciousness, nor his insistence that hedonists are mistaken to value pleasure apart from the consciousness of it. Another possibility is that Moore has a very broad notion of “knowledge” in mind here, which includes the bare awareness of pleasure. Hackforth (1945) also takes Moore to be separating pleasure from consciousness in the sense of bare awareness (33).

32 Another oddity of Moore’s translation is the question “Would you not even care to keep your sight?”, which he places just after 21b1, but which does not correspond to anything in the Greek text.
feeling and consciousness, and yet he does not explain what an unconscious feeling consists in or how one could possibly identify a feeling, such as a pleasure or a pain, of which the subject is “absolutely unaware”.

Hackforth argues that the distinction between pleasure and consciousness of pleasure in the Philebus stems in part from the account of bodily pleasure as “necessarily accompanying, and indeed hardly to be distinguished from, the physiological process of ‘replenishment’ following upon ‘depletion’” (33). He notes that physiological processes of this type might easily occur in the absence of consciousness, which implies that pleasure itself can occur independently of consciousness. However, although in the initial description of bodily pleasure and pain at Philebus 31d-32b Socrates associates pleasure with certain types of bodily changes, such as filling or warming, he later refines this account by noting that some bodily changes are so small and gradual that they completely escape our notice (τά γε τοιαύτα λέληθε πάνθε ήμας, 43b5-6), and thus produce neither pleasure nor pain in the soul (43b-c). This passage demonstrates that Plato does not equate bodily pleasure and pain with bodily changes, but rather with the soul’s awareness of these changes.\(^{33}\)

Hackforth considers the possibility that the phrase τοῦτο αὐτό...ἀγνοεῖν does not refer to the absolute unawareness of pleasure, but instead signifies “a condition in which one is aware that one has a feeling but does not know it for pleasure” (33). He himself raises a textual consideration which supports this less radical interpretation about which forms of cognition Socrates removes from the life of pleasure. He observes that Plato writes εἰ χαίρεις μὴ χαίρεις instead of ὅτι χαίρεις at 21b7-8. If Socrates meant to remove even the bare awareness of pleasure from the life of pleasure, he would not say that in such a life Protarchus would be unaware “whether he was enjoying himself or not”, but simply that he would be unaware “that he was enjoying himself”. Socrates’ wording suggests that what the subject of the unmixed life of pleasure lacks is not bare awareness, but the ability to discriminate between different conscious experiences, and thus to identify a particular experience as pleasant or not.\(^{34}\)

\(^{33}\) Cf. Timaeus 64a-c, where in the context of his account of bodily pleasure and pain Timaeus distinguishes between those disturbances which pass through the body and reach the rational part of the soul (τὸ φρόνιμον, 63b5) and those which fail to pass on their motions to the living being as a whole and thus go unperceived (ἀναίσθητον, 64c3). As Carpenter (2010) puts it, “There is no ‘unconscious’ perception (αἴσθησις), because having a sensation is being aware of a bodily event,” (292). In Chapter 3 I argue that bodily pleasure and pain are partly constituted by bodily changes, but only those that are large enough to produce a joint movement of the body and the soul.
If the subject of the unmixed life of pleasure still possesses the bare awareness of pleasure, even after the removal of knowledge, judgment, memory and the other forms of cognition associated with intelligence, then the Choice of Lives does not constitute a refutation of hedonism as such. After all, it is conceivable that some hedonists may choose such a life, and in fact there is some evidence that the Cyrenaics were hedonists of just this type. However, Protarchus does end up rejecting the life of pleasure, and not because this life lacks the bare awareness of pleasure. The natural alternative is to assume that Protarchus rejects the unmixed life of pleasure because of some sort of non-hedonic value, such as the value of intelligence. In the next section, I examine three interpretations of this type.

3 The Value of Intelligence

Some interpreters argue that the Choice of Lives effectively converts Protarchus from his strictly hedonistic position by forcing him to acknowledge the intrinsic value of intelligence. One problem with this reading is that it lessens the impact of Protarchus' rejection of the life of pleasure considerably; instead of casting doubt on hedonism as such, as on Moore's interpretation, the thought experiment reveals that Protarchus was never really a hedonist to begin with. Furthermore, the view that Protarchus abandons hedonism when he concedes that

34 Socrates provides a further clue about what the removal of intelligence from the life of pleasure entails by identifying this life with that of a mollusk (πλεύμωνες). Bury (1897) notes that a πλεύμων (Latin pulmo) was "proverbial for insensibility or dullness" (32, n.2). He cites Hesychius as evidence for this assertion, who in his extensive lexicon of unusual and obscure Greek words gives the following entry for πνεύμωνες, an alternate form for πλεύμωνες "they say that mollosks and sea creatures are insensitive living things" (λέγονται πυγμαῖοι καὶ θαλάτται εἴδη ταῦτα άναίσθητα, alphabetic letter pi, entry 2643). However, the word is rare enough, that the Philebus itself is a likely source of Hesychius' definition, which undermines Bury's suggestion that Plato's identification of the life of pleasure with the mollusk reflects a proverbial view about the limited cognitive resources of these sea creatures. Hesychius' mention of θαλάτται, another rare word which also appears in the Philebus passage, makes a reference to Plato's use of the word even more likely. Whether or not the notion that mollusks are insensitive predates or derives from a particular reading of the Choice of Lives passage, it is unlikely that Plato shared this view. Presumably Plato associates the life of pleasure with mollusks because of their limited psychic capacities, but there is no reason to suppose that he would deny that they possess bare consciousness. Elsewhere Plato is surprisingly generous in his allocation of psychic capacities to non-human organisms. For example, in the Timaeus he even attributes pleasant and painful sensation (αἴσθησις) to plants (77b5-6). In fact, at the end of the Choice of Lives passage, Socrates draws the conclusion that neither of the unmixed lives would be choiceworthy "for any of the plants and animals that can sustain them" (22b5-6). If Plato viewed plants and some simple sea creatures as incapable of the bare awareness of pleasure, not only would a life of pleasure without any form of intelligence be sufficient for them, but they would not be capable of any other sort of life.

35 Guthrie (1978) makes just this point when he complains, "the hard-line hedonist Philebus had to be replaced by a pliable youth who only thought he was a hedonist...The whole argument is based on premises both intellectual and moral which a Callicles or Philebus would deny." I argue below that Protarchus’ rejection of the unmixed life of pleasure is consistent with hedonism, although it does reveal something about his conception of pleasure that a hedonist like Philebus might reject.
the mixed life is superior to the unmixed life of pleasure is not consistent with Protarchus’
attitude towards pleasure in the rest of the dialogue. After agreeing that neither pleasure nor
intelligence is the good, Socrates and Protarchus immediately launch into a debate about whether
pleasure or intelligence is the cause (τὸ αἴτιον) of the good (22d). Although he has conceded that
the unmixed life of pleasure fails to meet the three criteria for the good, Protarchus is still intent
on defending pleasure’s status as the ingredient in the mixed life that is responsible for its
goodness (23a-b).

Terence Irwin (1995) subscribes to the interpretation that Protarchus rejects the unmixed life of
pleasure due to the intrinsic value of intelligence, and he argues that the description of the life of
pleasure should persuade any rational agent to reject such a life (333-335). According to his
view, all rational agents “value the exercise of rational agency as a part of [their] good in its own
right, not simply as a means to pleasure” (334). Presumably he thinks Protarchus qualifies as a
rational agent, and so recognizes the value of his rational agency, although other more stubborn
hedonists, like Philebus himself, may not. Despite his claim that the Choice of Lives should
convince any rational agent of the superiority of the mixed life, Irwin’s interpretation still limits
the impact of the thought experiment. If the Choice of Lives is only meant to convince people
who value their rational agency, then it is useful to Socrates only as a way of making a small
class of interlocutors realize that on one level they already agree with him. As Irwin himself puts
it, “[Plato] plainly does not mean to accept the choice of someone who has been told about his
rational agency but is unconcerned about it” (335). Surely Socrates could have devised a much
simpler way of telling Protarchus about his rational agency, if this were his sole objective. In the
description of the unmixed life of pleasure, Socrates does not merely list the forms of
intelligence this life lacks, but he specifically draws attention to the ways in which the absence of
intelligence affects a subject’s relationship to and experience of pleasure. As Gosling puts this
point in his (1975), “Protarchus is not asked to contemplate with horror a life where he cannot do
mathematics, but one where he cannot remember or recognize or predict his enjoyments” (183).
Furthermore, Socrates does not need to convince Protarchus that any form of intelligence is good
to get him to reject the unmixed life of pleasure, but simply that these capacities are in some way
necessary (21a14-b1).

The thought experiment leaves open the possibility that intelligence functions simply as a means to pleasure, but pleasure is not assigned a similarly instrumental role in the description of the life of intelligence. Thus, the characterization of pleasure and intelligence in the Choice of Lives is not strictly symmetrical: the rejection of the life of intelligence implies that it lacks something of independent value, rather than something that is merely
Chris Bobonich (1995) offers a different interpretation, and yet still one that highlights the value of intelligence. He interprets the Choice of Lives as showing “that pleasure is a dependent good, i.e., it is good for its possessor only if she possesses something else” (122). If pleasure is a dependent good, then this not only implies that something other than pleasure has intrinsic value, but it undermines pleasure’s own claim to intrinsic value. According to Bobonich, the Choice of Lives does not show that all forms of intelligence are good due to the fact that the goodness of pleasure depends on intelligence, but he does think that in rejecting the unmixed life of pleasure Protarchus implicitly acknowledges the value of at least the knowledge of pleasure (122). Bobonich’s interpretation is structurally similar to G. E. Moore’s, for he likewise argues that the value of pleasure depends on something else, except he identifies this other thing as knowledge instead of the bare awareness of pleasure.

According to Bobonich, Protarchus views the life of pleasure as one in which “one has the greatest goods, but is not aware that one has them” (120). However, the problem with the life of pleasure is not that the mollusk is unable to conceptualize its pleasures, but that this life lacks some of the pleasures available in a life that contains intelligence. Although in this sense Bobonich’s view gives the pleasures of the mollusk more credit than they are worth, in another sense it gives them too little credit by claiming that they are completely undesirable when unaccompanied by intelligence. He sees Protarchus’ reaction to the life of pleasure as evidence of the more general thesis that “possession of a good without being aware that what one has is good is undesirable” (121). However, Protarchus nowhere admits that the very limited pleasures of the mollusk are undesirable. Rather, he rejects the life of pleasure because these pleasures are not sufficient to render a human life happy (22a9-b2). Surely Protarchus would still evaluate the maximally pleasant life of a mollusk as better than the life of a mollusk that is continuously in pain. From Protarchus’ perspective, pleasure adds value to life, even in the case of creatures that lack intelligence. Furthermore, Protarchus may consistently think that a life containing those pleasures which require some form of intelligence is better than the life of pleasure devoid of intelligence, and yet still evaluate the mollusk’s pleasures as good.

Evans (2007b) provides yet another interpretation of Protarchus’ rejection of the unmixed life of pleasure. According to him, Protarchus does not reject this life because it lacks certain goods, whether forms of intelligence or anything else, but rather because it is “not livable by us” (340).
In other words, he argues that Protarchus is sensitive to the consideration that “the best human life has some features which are not goods, but which any life must have in order to be the life of a human person” (347). Although Evans claims that on this reading Protarchus has what he calls a “limiting” reason for rejecting the unmixed life of pleasure (i.e. because it is not livable for a human being) rather than a “valuing” reason (i.e. because it lacks some goods) (340), these two types of reasons are not so easy to pull apart. Evans attributes to Protarchus a preference for living a human life, rather than the life of a mollusk or any other animal, and yet it seems that Protarchus must have some valuing reasons for having this very preference. Perhaps Evans thinks that Protarchus would reject any non-human life, because in any non-human life Protarchus as a subject would be destroyed. However, it is anachronistic to assume without direct evidence that Protarchus ties his personal identity so closely to his humanity, since Plato himself entertains the possibility of the reincarnation of human souls in non-human bodies in the Timaeus, and the description of this process suggests that these souls retain their identity (91d-92c). Even if choosing the unmixed life of pleasure means choosing the life of a mollusk, there is no indication that Protarchus views this as an impossible choice or considers such a life unlivable by him. If Evans is right that Protarchus prefers to live a human life, then he must have some valuing reason for this preference, since the alternative of living a non-human life is a real option. A natural conclusion to draw would be that he values one or more of the features which are only present in such a life, such as judgment or intelligence. On this line of reasoning Evans’ interpretation represents just one more version of the view that Protarchus (knowingly or not) acknowledges the intrinsic value of some form of intelligence in choosing the mixed life over the unmixed life of pleasure.

Evans’ interpretation of the Choice of Lives argument is no more persuasive than either of the other interpretations discussed in this section according to which Protarchus acknowledges the

37 Cf. Kolb (1986): “Plato is trying to show the inconsistency of the picture of a life containing nothing but pleasures which can still be called my life in any meaningful sense” (504).

38 Evans’ interpretation requires placing quite a bit of weight on Socrates’ identification of the unmixed life of pleasure with that of a mollusk. The mollusk comment does not appear to add anything to the argument; instead, it seems to function merely as a rhetorical flourish, and there is no reason to suppose that Protarchus would have chosen differently had Socrates left it out. Socrates could just as easily have identified the unmixed life of pleasure as the life of a particularly damaged human being who has lost the cognitive capacities associated with intelligence. Furthermore, if Protarchus rejected the unmixed life of pleasure simply because Socrates identified it as a mollusk life, then this would completely undermine the results of the thought experiment, for it would show that Protarchus gave up on the unmixed life due to feelings of shame rather than a new understanding about the nature of pleasure, intelligence, or the relationship between the two.
value of intelligence. For one thing, the conclusion of the Choice of Lives argument tells strongly against Evans’ interpretation. After Protarchus’ rejection of the two unmixed lives, Socrates concludes that “neither the one nor the other contained the good” (οὐδέτερος αὐτοῖν ἔχε τἀγαθόν, 22b3-4). If Protarchus had no valuing reason for rejecting the unmixed life of pleasure, then Socrates would be wrong to draw this conclusion, for it could still be the case that the unmixed life of pleasure contained the good and Protarchus rejected it for a limiting reason. Furthermore, both Protarchus and Socrates extend the result to non-human animals, and Socrates even extends it to plants (22a9-b2, 22b5). This suggests that Protarchus did not reject the unmixed life of pleasure due to some fact peculiar to human nature or the type of life livable by a human being, but for a more general reason that would apply to any type of animal. Finally, Socrates says that “if anyone among us should choose otherwise, then he would do so involuntarily, in opposition to what is by nature truly choiceworthy, from ignorance or some unfortunate necessity” (εἰ δέ τις ἄλλα ἠρεῖθ’ ἡμῶν, παρὰ φύσιν ἄν τὴν τοῦ ἄληθῶς αἱρετοῦ ἐλάμβανεν ἄκων ἄκων ἐξ ἀγνοίας ἤ τινος ἀνάγκης οὐκ εὐδαίμονος, 22b6-8). If such a life were unlivable for a human being, then Socrates would not consider the possibility that some people might choose it.

Evans’ suggestion that Protarchus rejects the unmixed life of pleasure because it is not a human life draws attention to a particularly unappealing feature of this life, which is that it lacks psychological unity and coherence. The unmixed life of pleasure is nothing more than a series of discrete moments, and thus in some sense it is wrong to describe it as a life at all. Protarchus may find this type of existence unattractive in itself, even if he does not necessarily ascribe intrinsic value to the forms of intelligence, such as memory and judgment, which would turn such an existence into what could properly be called a life. In this case, he may ascribe primary value to the psychological unity of a life and value to intelligence only insofar as it contributes to this end. Protarchus’ implicit acceptance of Socrates’ assumption that the human good is a particular sort of life provides some evidence that he is sensitive to considerations of this sort.

Protarchus may have more than one reason for rejecting the unmixed life of pleasure, and he may not even be fully aware of them all; however, if there is not at least the possibility that he rejects this life for a reason that some committed hedonists might accept, then the thought experiment merely begs the question against hedonism and shows that Protarchus is not a faithful and consistent representative of the view. In the next section, I argue that the text at least leaves open
the possibility that Protarchus rejects the unmixed life of pleasure on purely hedonistic grounds. The problem with the unmixed life of pleasure, I argue, is not that it lacks consciousness, intelligence, or even psychological coherence, but the fact that it lacks some of the greatest pleasures. Thus, the thought experiment reveals that pleasure and intelligence are much more intricately connected than either Socrates or Protarchus initially supposed.

4 The Nature of Pleasure

Choosing the mixed life does not force Protarchus to recognize the value of intelligence, nor does it require him to relinquish his commitment to pleasure. What the thought experiment establishes is that neither the life of pleasure nor the life of intelligence constitutes the ultimate end for human beings, since neither life is complete, sufficient and choiceworthy. As Socrates is quick to point out, if the mixed life is the good, they still need to determine what makes it good (22d3-4). If what makes the mixed life good is the pleasure it contains, then the view that mixed life is the good for human beings is consistent with hedonism. The superiority of the mixed life does imply that intelligence has some sort of value, but it is possible that it is valuable only as a means to pleasure. Therefore, the Choice of Lives does not constitute a refutation of hedonism as such, nor does Protarchus’ preference for the mixed life require that he abandon his hedonistic commitments.

If Socrates succeeds neither in refuting hedonism, nor in persuading Protarchus to abandon his commitment to it, what does the Choice of Lives accomplish? Although he does not change Protarchus’ views about the value of pleasure or intelligence, Socrates does succeed in changing his views about the relationship between pleasure and intelligence. In particular, by choosing the mixed life over the unmixed life of pleasure, Protarchus must give up the notion that all pleasures have the same nature and are equally valuable, regardless of their source. When he hears Socrates’ description of the life of pleasure without intelligence, Protarchus realizes that some pleasures, perhaps even the greatest pleasures (ἡδονὰς τὰς μεγίστας, 21a9), require intelligence.

39 Technically, the thought experiment does not establish that the mixed life of pleasure and intelligence is the good Socrates and Protarchus are looking for, just that it is preferable to either of the unmixed lives. Cf. Gosling (1975), 181.
One of the claims that Protarchus defends most obstinately at the beginning of the dialogue is that pleasures are all alike, and that differences in the sources of two pleasures has no effect on their nature or value. Socrates attempts to persuade Protarchus that pleasures can differ from, or even be opposed to, one another by contrasting the pleasures of a wise and temperate person with the pleasures of a fool. He concludes that “anyone who said that these pleasures are like one another would rightly be regarded as a fool” (12d4-6). Nevertheless, Protarchus does not budge from his view and continues to insist that “the pleasures come from opposite things. But they are not at all opposed to one another” (Εἰσὶ μὲν γὰρ ἀπ’ ἐναντίων… αὐταί πραγμάτων, οὐ μὴν αὐταί γε ἀλλήλαις ἐναντίαι, 12d7-8). However, the outcome of the Choice of Lives reveals that Protarchus is not as indifferent about the source of pleasure as he claims. Instead of contrasting wise and foolish pleasures, by separating pleasure from all forms of intelligence, Socrates contrasts the most basic physical pleasures with the more sophisticated pleasures that require other forms of cognition. If Protarchus truly thought that all pleasures were alike and interchangeable insofar as they were pleasures, then he would have no reason for rejecting the unmixed life of pleasure. The thought experiment is effective not because it proves that pleasure is impossible without intelligence, but precisely because the life of pleasure contains the maximum amount of one kind of pleasure and yet Protarchus nevertheless judges it to be insufficient.

According to this interpretation, Protarchus rejects the life of pleasure on purely hedonistic grounds because it lacks certain pleasures. The thought experiment should be persuasive to at least some hedonists, because the unmixed life of pleasure also lacks certain types of pleasure as a direct consequence of the removal of all forms of intelligence. He does not remove pleasure directly, but the analysis of different types of pleasure later in the dialogue confirms the intuition most of us probably share that the activities of remembering, recognizing and anticipating pleasures can themselves be pleasant (e.g. 32b-c, 35e-b). Understood in this way, the thought experiment may not persuade all hedonists that the mixed life is better than the unmixed life of pleasure, but it should at least persuade any hedonist who recognizes the value of those pleasures which require some form of intelligence, such as memory, judgment or knowledge.

As Gosling (1975) concludes, the Choice of Lives commits Protarchus to the position that “the simple fact that a life is all pleasant and in no way distressing is insufficient to make it good” (183). I would add simply that it is insufficient to make it the good, which leaves a human being nothing to be desired.

Gosling (1975) considers something similar to my interpretation: “The admission that intelligence is needed…is extracted on straight hedonistic grounds, or can be interpreted so…Protarchus could be admitting intelligent
One might agree that Protarchus rejects the life of pleasure on hedonistic grounds, and yet deny that this reveals anything significant about the nature of pleasure. On this interpretation, the mixed life includes additional pleasures, such as those derived from the activities of remembering, recognizing and anticipating experiences of pleasure, but these pleasures do not differ at all from the mollusk’s pleasures, either in quality or intensity. Thus, Protarchus prefers the mixed life because it contains a greater number of pleasures, but not because these pleasures are in any way different from or superior to the mollusk’s pleasures. For example, the subject of the mixed life could simultaneously enjoy mollusk pleasures and the second order pleasure of realizing that she is enjoying them, and so would have twice as much pleasure, even if these two pleasures were alike in every evaluatively relevant respect. 42

Both the framing of the thought experiment and Protarchus’ attitude towards pleasure elsewhere in the dialogue tell against this reading. Even though Protarchus insists that all pleasures are alike insofar as they are pleasures early in the dialogue (12d7-8), he does not deny that they vary in intensity. Before describing the unmixed lives of pleasure and intelligence, Socrates asks Protarchus, “Would you find it acceptable to live your whole life in enjoyment of the greatest pleasures?” (Δέξαι ἄν, Πρώταρχε, σὺ ζῆν τὸν βίον ἡδονὰς τὰς μεγίστας; 21a8-9), and Protarchus immediately assents. Note that Socrates does not put the point in terms of the number of pleasure a particular life contains, but rather in terms of their size. Although Protarchus agrees to evaluate the unmixed lives of pleasure and intelligence according to Socrates’ three criteria for the good (20e-21a), we have no reason to suppose that he ignores his own hedonistic criterion, to which Socrates alludes in this question. If Protarchus has this criterion in mind while Socrates describes the two unmixed lives, which he no doubt does after Socrates’ reminder, then it is reasonable to suppose that he rejects the unmixed life of pleasure not because it is insufficient and incomplete in some vague sense, but because it lacks the greatest pleasures in particular. Furthermore, although the unmixed life of pleasure only contains those pleasures available to a mollusk, Socrates places no limit on the number of pleasures available in such a life. My interpretation also better explains Protarchus’ stunned reaction to the description of this life: it is not the realization that mollusks possess fewer pleasures than other

activities simply in so far as they either constituted or were a good means of obtaining them” (183). In Chapter 4 I argue that certain types of pleasures are actually constituted by intelligent activities, rather than these activities serving merely as means to pleasure.

42 I would like to thank both Eric Brown and Willie Costello for alerting me to this alternative interpretation.
animals that renders Protarchus speechless, but rather his conviction that a mollusk’s pleasures are not the greatest ones possible.

One objection to the interpretation that Protarchus rejects the life of pleasure because it lacks certain desirable pleasures is that it contradicts Socrates’ initial statement that the life of pleasure includes the greatest pleasures (21a8-9, 21b3-4). Terence Irwin (1995) and John Cooper (2004) both argue that this is a stipulation which Socrates cannot take back without being inconsistent and violating the integrity of the argument.43 However, Socrates seems to have made two incompatible stipulations, because he also stipulated that they must remove every form of intelligence from the life of pleasure (20e4-5). If the greatest pleasures require some form of intelligence, then it is impossible to satisfy both conditions. Furthermore, the two lines Irwin and Cooper cite are not actually stipulations that the life of pleasure must include the greatest pleasures. Rather, both are questions Socrates addresses to Protarchus. Socrates first asks Protarchus if he would choose to live his whole life in the enjoyment of the greatest pleasures, but he never explicitly identifies the maximally pleasant life with the unmixed life of pleasure (21a8-9). Socrates then asks Protarchus to consider whether the life of pleasure devoid of intelligence contains the greatest pleasures.

Οὐκοὖν οὕτω ζῶν ἀεὶ μὲν διὰ βίου ταῖς μεγίσταις ἡδοναῖς χαίροι ἄν;

But in living this way always throughout your life, would you enjoy the greatest pleasures? (Philebus 21b3-4)

In asking Protarchus to consider whether the life of pleasure contains the greatest pleasures, Socrates explicitly calls into question the identification of the life that contains the greatest pleasures and the life of pleasure devoid of intelligence.44 According to my interpretation, the description of the life of pleasure is specifically designed to reveal the incompatibility of these two conditions: (1) that a life contains the greatest pleasures and (2) that it does not contain any

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44 Richardson Lear (2004) interprets 21b3-4 along similar lines. She points out that “it is not clear whether Socrates is stipulating in 21b3-4 that the life of pleasure alone contains the greatest pleasures or whether he is instead asking Protarchus to think again about whether such a life really does contain the greatest pleasure” (54-5, n. 14). She argues further that Socrates’ argument against hedonism in this passage can only be successful if it is ad hominem, in the sense that it shows the hedonist Protarchus that “the life of pleasure he has been imagining includes as an essential ingredient the satisfaction of our rational nature” (55). I would only refine this last claim slightly, insisting that the life of pleasure Protarchus has been imagining includes the satisfaction of our hedonic nature, which includes our capacity for experiencing cognitively sophisticated pleasures. As I read the passage, Socrates does not refute hedonism as such, but rather a specific view about the nature of pleasure.
forms of intelligence. The argument is powerful, because it appeals to the hedonist’s own intuitions about the goodness of certain pleasures, and in the process it reveals the extent to which many pleasures depend on various forms of intelligence, such as memory and judgment.\footnote{Butler (2007) agrees that Protarchus rejects the life of pleasure because he realizes that without cognitive capacities the life of pleasure lacks pleasure. As he puts it, “Protarchus rejected the life of pleasure [because] ‘intellection, memory, knowledge, and true opinion’ (all psychic operations) are necessary for present-tense enjoyment” (108). However, he not only thinks the life of pleasure lacks the greatest pleasures, despite Socrates’ initial stipulation, but that it lacks all pleasures. In the course of his article, Butler argues for the provocative thesis that “every pleasure is an instance of knowledge” (91). In Chapter 4 I argue that some pleasures are also instances of knowledge, but, as I show in Chapter 3, others are merely forms of αἴσθησις.}

**Conclusion**

The Choice of Lives is not an attack on hedonism, but rather a thought experiment which forces the hedonist and intellectualist alike to reconsider the relationship between pleasure and intelligence. Regardless of whether pleasure or intelligence is the source of value in a human life, the Choice of Lives undermines the assumption, which remains unchallenged at the beginning of the dialogue, that they are completely independent psychological conditions. Socrates’ description of the life of pleasure reveals that many pleasures, including some of the greatest ones, require some form of intelligence. Ultimately, the significance of Protarchus’ concession that the mixed life is superior to the unmixed life of pleasure is not that he recognizes the value of intelligence or renounces his commitment to pleasure, but that he gives up his initial claim that all pleasures are alike and equally valuable. By rejecting the unmixed life of pleasure, he exposes his own deep-seated preference for some types of pleasure over others.

Differentiating between different types of pleasure which require different forms of intelligence and have fundamentally different natures is one of Socrates’ main strategies for challenging hedonism in his detailed account of pleasure later in the dialogue. Thus, the Choice of Lives passage fulfills an important dialectical function in the dialogue: for Socrates’ strategy to get off the ground, he must convince Protarchus that differentiation among pleasures is possible in the first place.
Chapter 2
The Metaphysical Framework

After agreeing that pleasure and intelligence are both necessary ingredients in the best human life, Socrates and Protarchus decide to investigate the natures of pleasure and intelligence in order to determine their respective contributions to the goodness of this life (22c-d). Before the analysis of pleasure, Socrates introduces several methodological tools, including a method of division\(^{46}\) used to solve various one-many problems and a completely new ontology.\(^{47}\) Socrates divides all being into four classes, 1) the unlimited, 2) limit, 3) the mixtures of the unlimited and limit, and 4) the cause of these mixtures. The relation of the long methodological section to the ostensible topic of the *Philebus* is not obvious, especially the tool of division and collection, which Socrates immediately dismisses as unnecessary for their purposes as soon as he has finished describing it (20b).\(^{48}\) The connection of the fourfold division to the analyses of pleasure and knowledge is easier to see, since Socrates explicitly classifies pleasure and reason (νοῦς) within this scheme, assigning them to the first and fourth categories respectively (27c-31a). Most scholars either discuss the methodological section of the dialogue\(^ {49} \) or the analysis of pleasure (especially false pleasure)\(^ {50} \) in isolation. The commentators who do consider the interrelation

\(^{46}\) Like most commentators, I interpret the passage as a discussion of Plato’s method of division, which first appears in the *Phaedrus*, and is later developed and exemplified in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* (see Trevaskis (1960) for challenges to this interpretation).

\(^{47}\) The Choice of Lives thought experiment is actually situated between these two sections.

\(^{48}\) I will not join the debate about the relevance of the divine method here, but see Chapter 5, Section 1 for my interpretation of how it fits into the dialogue’s larger argumentative structure. As a brief aside, I do think Socrates goes on to differentiate among different types of pleasure and knowledge, even if he denies that such a differentiation is necessary (20c4-5) and instead follows the simpler method of putting the lives of pleasure and knowledge on trial (20e1-2). Frede (1993) suggests that the fourfold division is itself an example of the application of the divine method, and that this provides a loose connection between it and the rest of the dialogue (xxxviii). Striker (1970) argues instead that the passage is a general discussion without an integral role in the dialogue as a whole (9).

\(^{49}\) For example, Shiner (1974) is completely silent about the introductory section and the analysis of pleasure, which together make up almost half of the dialogue (11a-14b, 31b-53b). Sayre (1987) argues for the unity of the methodological and ethical portions of the dialogue, but downplays the lengthy and detailed analysis of pleasure, which he describes as “the least satisfying part of the dialogue” (63). The comments he does make about pleasure are puzzling, especially his claim that pleasure belongs to the mixed class based on 31c, despite the explicit classification of pleasure (and pain) as members of the unlimited class at 27e-28a (64). Frede (1993) warns against just this confusion (30, n. 2). See section 2 below for more on the significance of the classification of pleasure and pain.

\(^{50}\) The literature on false pleasures in the *Philebus* is vast, but some noteworthy contributions include Gosling (1959) and (1961), Kenny (1960), Penner (1970), Frede (1985), Mooradian (1996), and Harte (2004).
between the two sections of the dialogue do little more than note the way pleasure and knowledge are classified, without delving into the problems or implications of this classification.\(^{51}\) I argue in what follows that it is impossible to fully understand the nature of either phenomenon within the context of the dialogue without understanding the way they fit into the metaphysical framework provided by the fourfold division of being. This division plays an essential role in determining the nature and value of pleasure and intelligence, and Socrates does not forget its importance after the initial classification; in fact, “what is somehow connected with measure” (\(\pi ē \ περὶ \ μέτρου\)) takes the first prize in the final ranking of the goods (66a6-8).

In this chapter I raise several puzzles about how we are to understand the classification of pleasure and \(νοῦς\) in this fourfold division, as well as some of the implications of this classification for the way Socrates conceives of the nature of pleasure, intelligence, and the relationship between the two. The classification of pleasure in particular raises questions, since the classification of the pure pleasures near the end of the dialogue flatly contradicts the initial assignment of pleasure to the unlimited class. I argue that Socrates’ inability to fit all pleasures into one of the four classes of being reveals that pleasure is not a unitary class of psychic phenomena. As a result, grouping all of the diverse psychic phenomena commonly called “pleasure” under one heading is deeply misleading, since these phenomena do not even fit into the same class in the most generic fourfold division of all being.

1 Outline of the Fourfold Division

Socrates introduces the fourfold division of being as a tool for proceeding in the examination of pleasure and intelligence immediately after the Choice of Lives thought experiment.\(^{52}\) The debate between Socrates and Protarchus has a new goal, which consists in determining whether pleasure or thought is more responsible for the goodness of the best life, which they agree is a mixture of the two. At first, Socrates proposes dividing what exists into two kinds, the unlimited and limit, but then he almost immediately introduces the mixture of these two as the third kind and the cause of the mixture as the fourth (23c-d). In this section I outline the main features of these four

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\(^{51}\) Brief discussions about the classification of pleasure and \(νοῦς\) can be found in Cooper, N. (1968) and Russell (2005, 171-4). Another exception is Cooper, J. (1977), who examines in particular the role of the fourfold division in determining the relative contributions of pleasure and knowledge to the human good.

\(^{52}\) See Chapter 1 for my discussion of the significance of this passage.
kinds before raising several puzzles about the way this classification scheme is applied to pleasure and thought.

The first examples of the unlimited kind are the hotter and the colder. The feature which is emphasized in these first examples is that members of the unlimited kind “admit of more and less” (24a). One interpretive question in relation to the unlimited class is whether its members are merely characteristics of things, or whether the class includes the things that are so characterized, such as particular hot objects. This question is relevant for determining more precisely the scopes of the unlimited and mixed classes, and in particular for determining which class contains unharmonious mixtures, if such things exist.

The class of limit seems to include all different kinds of proportions and ratios. The first examples given are “the equal” and “double”, and the category is generalized to include “all that is related as number to number or measure to measure” (25a-b). It is important to note that Socrates does not say that the limit includes all number or definite quantity; instead, all of his examples are *relations* between numbers and measures. This becomes even clearer when Socrates describes the members of mixed class, which result from the imposition of limit on the unlimited. Obtaining any definite temperature is not sufficient for imposing a limit on the hot and cold: imposing a limit is rather getting the heat right for the object in question (e.g., the natural heat of a living body, 98.6 degrees for human beings). All of Socrates’ examples of members from the mixed class, such as health and harmonious intervals in music, have a specific proportion of the relevant unlimited elements, and in the case of each mixture this proportion is essential to the kind of thing it is (25e7-26c2). Limits can be more complex than simple proportions; for example, the sum of all of the correct proportions which make a living body or even a whole life also belongs to this class. In fact, the class of limit includes any and all the structure behind any ordered thing in the cosmos.

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53 At 24c Socrates contrasts the members of the unlimited class, which are always more or less, with ποσόν, which refers to a definite quantity, but not necessarily any particular ratio. Hackforth (1945) explains that Plato thinks of every definite quantity as a ratio of two opposite properties; for example, any particular temperature is “a mixture of ‘the Hot’ and ‘the Cold’ in a certain proportion, so many ‘parts’ of the one to so many of the other” (42). This interpretation implies that every definite temperature is a ratio between hot and cold in the relevant sense, which makes the class of limit an extremely broad category. This interpretation also does not explain how sensible objects could fail to instantiate some limit or other, since every object will at any given moment in time have some definite quantity or other. From the examples given, a limit does not seem to be any ratio between two unlimited properties, but rather the particular ratio that is appropriate to the kind of entity in question. For example, not every definite temperature creates health in a human being, but only 98.6 degrees. It may be true that Plato thought of the limit as a ratio of unlimited elements, but not any ratio of these elements would do.
The third kind of being is called both common (κοινόν, 30a10, 31c4, 8) and mixed (μεῖξις, 47d5; σύμμειξις, 23d7; 64c5; 65a4). Socrates explicitly states that this is a distinct class apart from the limits and unlimited elements from which it is mixed. He states, “I treat all the joint offspring of the other two kinds as a unity, a coming-into-being created through the measures imposed by the limit” (ἐν τούτο τιθέντα τὸ τούτων ἔκγονον ἄπαν, γένεσιν εἰς οὐσίαν ἐκ τῶν μετὰ τοῦ πέρατος ἀπειρασμένων μέτρων, 26d7-9). Note that a mixture is here described both as a “unity” (ἓν) and as something that has been born or generated (ἔκγονον).54 This characterization of the mixed class implies that it includes all sensible particulars, whereas limit and the unlimited are the ingredients which do not “come to be” independently of one another.

The members of the mixed class are described as “all sorts of fine things” (26b1) and examples are seasons, health, which is accompanied by beauty and strength, and “a host of other excellent qualities in the soul” (26b). The mixed class seems to be confined to good mixtures, which one might expect if they are inherently ordered and proportionate from having limit as one of their ingredients. It is not clear in what sense limit would be present in any kind of unharmonious mixture. Proportion is either present in a mixture or not; it is not the sort of thing that can be present to more or less perfect degrees.55 On the contrary, the fact that limit does not admit of the more and less is one of the few common characteristics ascribed to all the members of the class. At the same time, Socrates emphasizes the abundance of things in the mixed class (26c-d). I am inclined to interpret this more as a reflection of Plato’s views about the ordered nature of the cosmos rather than a loosening of the standards for what constitutes a mixture. However, the suggestion that the mixed class includes everything that is generated raises the question of the breadth of this category, which I will discuss in more detail below.

Socrates initially describes the fourth class as the cause of the mixture of the unlimited and limit (23d7-8). When he comes back to offer a fuller explanation of this class he refers to it as “the craftsman who produces all these things” (27b1). As it turns out, the fourth kind does not include just any cause that brings about the combination of the unlimited and limit; after all, limit and the

54 See also 27a1-3, which refers to a mixture both as “what is made” (τό γε ποιούμενον) and “what comes into being” (τό γεγονόμενον), in contrast to the fourth class, which is called both the maker and the cause (26e6-8).

55 This interpretation of the nature of mixtures is confirmed at 64d9-e3 where Socrates states, “That any kind of mixture that does not in some way or other possess measure or the nature of proportion will necessarily corrupt its ingredients and most of all itself. For there would be no blending in such cases at all but really an unconnected medley, the ruin of whatever happens to be contained in it.”
unlimited might combine through chance, and Socrates would not thereby place chance in the fourth class. Instead, mixtures only come to be as a result of intelligent planning and design, which provides another reason for thinking only good or harmonious mixtures belong to the third class. In the section where he discusses the fourfold division, Socrates passes over this class very briefly without providing examples. A fuller description of what the cause of the mixture is and how it causes mixtures must await the classification of thought. As it turns out, only νοῦς,\(^{56}\) human and divine, belongs to the fourth class (28c, 30d-e).\(^{57}\)

If the mixed class only contains good, harmonious mixtures, two puzzles remain, one about how to distinguish between harmonious and unharmonious mixtures, and the other about how to classify the latter in the fourfold scheme. Frede (1993) discusses two possible solutions to the first problem of what distinguishes harmonious mixtures from all others. First, harmonious mixtures could be marked by greater stability and less susceptibility to Heraclitean flux (Frede (1993), xxxv; cf. Philebus 24e7-25a2). This interpretation is supported by Socrates’ reference to the best kind of mixture as “the most stable” at 64a1. However, Socrates explicitly acknowledges that the harmonious condition of an animal, which is a member of the third class, is itself subject to constant flux (43a-c). It may be the case that the harmonious condition of an animal is still more stable than unharmonious ones, but if stability is a matter of degree, this still does not provide a reliable method of identifying harmonious mixtures.

The second possibility, which Frede prefers, is that members of the unlimited class have a definite quantity, just as harmonious mixtures do, but this quantity is not essential to it being the kind of thing it is. As Frede puts it, “such entities [i.e. unlimited ones] have no intrinsic degree qua fever, avarice or frost. They could have other degrees and still be fever, avarice, and a cold wave” (xxxv). The difference between quantities which are definite but not essential is easy to see with an example: a fever in a human being can be either 101 or 102 degrees, whereas a healthy, natural temperature is 98.6 degrees and cannot increase or decrease without becoming something different, i.e. a fever or a chill.

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\(^{56}\) See section 4 below for a discussion of the meaning of νοῦς in the Philebus. The frequent pairing of νοῦς and φρόνησις, especially at 28d in the midst of the cosmological section of the dialogue, suggests that νοῦς is a virtue rather than a faculty. See Menn (1995) for additional arguments for the identification of νοῦς as a virtue rather than a faculty or type of soul (Chapter 3, “What does ‘Nous’ Mean”, 14-18).

\(^{57}\) See section 4 below for a more detailed discussion of the classification of νοῦς as a member of the fourth class.
Either strategy for marking off harmonious mixtures from the rest raises the question of how to classify unharmonious mixtures. Sayre (1987) argues that the mixed class includes all types of mixtures, good and bad alike (57-8). One of his reasons for thinking this is the characterization of health as “the right combination” of limit and the unlimited at 25e7 (57), which he takes to imply a distinction between right and wrong mixtures. He does not consider, however, that only right combinations of limit and the unlimited might belong to the mixed class. Sayre also points out that Socrates thinks humans should aim at “the best sort of mixture” at 63e8-64a1, implying that there must be both good and bad, harmonious and unharmonious, mixtures (58). However, Sayre does not mention that Socrates further characterizes the best mixture as the most stable one (64a1; cf. 63e8). Even if all mixtures are harmonious and good, there may still be other criteria, such as stability or the value of the unlimited and limited ingredients, which allow one to make evaluative judgments between them, so the suggestion that some mixtures are better than others does not necessarily imply that some mixtures are in fact bad. Moreover, νοῦς is identified as the cause of all mixtures, not just the subset of mixtures that are good. If some mixtures are bad, then this implies that νοῦς is responsible for them as well. However, νοῦς is associated with “the best” (τὸ βέλτιστον) from the first reference to it in the Phaedo (98a6-b3) through the late dialogues (cf. Timaeus 302-3).

A passage from the end of the dialogue characterizes unharmonious mixtures as follows.

{ΣΩ.} Ὅτι μέτρου καὶ τῆς συμμέτρου φύσεως μὴ τυχοῦσα ἡττοσον καὶ ὅπωσόν σύγκρασιν πᾶσσα εἴ ἀνάγκης ἀπόλλυσι τά τε κεραυνήματα καὶ πρώτην αὐτήν' οὐδὲ γὰρ κράσις ἀλλά τῆς ἄκρατος συμπεφορημένη ἀληθῶς ἡ τοιαύτη γίγνεται ἐκάστοτε ὄντως τῶν κεκτημένων συμφορά.

That any kind of mixture that does not in some way or other possess measure or the nature of proportion will necessarily corrupt its ingredients and most of all itself. For there would be no blending in such cases at all but really an unconnected medley, the ruin of whatever happens to be contained in it. (Philebus 64d9-e3)

This passage suggests, against Sayre’s interpretation, that an unharmonious mixture is not properly a mixture at all (οὐδὲ γὰρ κράσις ἀλλά), but rather some unmixed jumble (τις ἄκρατος...συμφορά). It is precisely the absence of “measure or the nature of proportion” (μέτρου καὶ τῆς συμμέτρου φύσεως, 64d9), i.e. members of the limited class, which prevents true blending from occurring. This passage shows that Frede’s two suggestions for how to
differentiate between harmonious and unharmonious mixtures are both correct, in a way. The fact that such a medley of unlimited elements without any limited ingredient will “corrupt its ingredients and most of all itself” shows that it is unstable. However, this instability is not just a matter of having a greater degree of instability than harmonious mixtures do. On the contrary, mixtures without any limit actively corrupt themselves and their ingredients in a way that harmonious mixtures do not.

This passage also makes the further point that unharmonious mixtures are not, properly speaking, mixtures at all; after all, lack of harmony results from the absence of limit, and members of the mixed class are necessarily mixtures of both unlimited elements and some limit. One alternative to classifying unharmonious mixtures in the mixed class seems to be to classify them as unlimited, since they do not include the appropriate limit. However, all the examples of members of the unlimited class are properties such as hot and cold rather than sensible particulars, such as feverish or chilled bodies. Furthermore, the classification of all “generated” things in the mixed class problematizes the classification of unharmonious mixtures in the unlimited class, since feverish and chilled bodies belong to the class of generated things just as much as bodies which possess an inherent limit in respect to temperature.

Fortunately there is a third, much more attractive, possibility. In the initial description of the mixed class, one of the distinguishing features of a harmonious mixture is its unity. This suggests that an unharmonious mixture is not a unified entity, and so it is simply a mistake to try to assign it to any of the four classes of being. When limit is removed from a harmonious mixture, this mixture is destroyed, and all that remains are the components of this mixture, which are no longer associated with one another. For example, although a corpse is no longer a unified, harmonious mixture, this does not mean that the material components which make up a corpse lack proportion. In the Timaeus, the four basic material elements, fire, air, water and earth, are among the things generated by the Demiurge by imposing order on the confused pre-cosmic chaos, and they all possess specific geometric proportions which are responsible for their particular properties (52d4-54b5). Although a corpse does not belong to any of the four classes of being, its basic material components all belong to the class of harmonious mixtures.

One potential confusion concerning the mixed class is the appearance of both technical and non-technical uses of the term “mixture” (μεῖξις) in the Philebus. The description of the third
category of the fourfold division of being as the “mixed” class is a technical use of this term, indicating not just that members of this class are mixtures of various elements, but that they are certain types of mixtures, i.e. good ones. It is in this normative sense that Socrates insists at 64d that mixtures without limit are not properly called mixtures. Another prominent use of the noun “mixture” (μεῖξις) and the verb “to mix” (μίγνυμι) in the dialogue is in reference to the mixed pleasures (46b-d, 47b-d, 50c2, 62c7).\(^5\) In reference to these pleasures, “mixed” is the contrary of “pure”, which is confirmed by the fact that the mixed pleasures are also referred to as “impure” (ἀκάθαρτος, 52c2). Pleasures are mixed or impure if there is some pain present in them. Thus, the word mixture has very different connotations in these two contexts, applying to members of a class of harmonious and measured mixtures of unlimited and limit on the one hand, and to the impurity of certain types of pleasures on the other.\(^5\)

2 The Two Classes of Pleasure

The idea that pleasure and pain belong to the unlimited class comes as no surprise to most commentators on the *Philebus*, and few have questioned this classification despite the suspicious way in which it comes about in the dialogue and the difficulty of understanding exactly what it entails about the nature of pleasure and pain.\(^60\) First of all, Socrates does not himself assign pleasure to the unlimited class, but instead he asks Philebus, who has long since passed on his role of advocating for pleasure as the human good to Protarchus (27e). Socrates asks, “Do pleasure and pain have a limit, or are they the sort that admit the more and less?” (27e5-6). Philebus responds “Certainly the sort that admits the more, Socrates! For how could pleasure be all that is good if it were not by nature boundless in plenty and increase?” (27e7-9). Philebus’

\(^5\) The adjective μεικτός only appears five times in the dialogue, all with reference to the mixed class. However, the participle μειχθείσας from μείγνυμι is applied to pleasure at 50e5.

\(^5\) “Pure” and “impure” are evaluatively loaded terms throughout the dialogue, and purity is closely linked with truth (53b). For example, at 63c Socrates asks Protarchus whether they should mix the “pure” kinds of knowledge with the “inferior” (ἐνδεεστέραν) ones. See Chapter 4, Section 4 for my discussion of the meaning of “pure” as applied to pleasure, knowledge, and their objects.

\(^60\) Sayre (1987) states that pleasure and pain “belong to the class of Mixture by their very manner of generation,” citing 31b-c as evidence (64). At 31b Socrates asks “in what kind of thing” each of them (pleasure and intelligence) reside (ἐν ᾧ τέ ἐστιν ἑκάτερον αὐτοῖν), and at 31c he states that pleasure and pain “seem to me by nature to arise together in the common kind” (Ἐν τῷ κοινῷ μοι γένεται ἡ ὅπως ἕκαστον κατὰ φύσιν γίγνεται κατὰ φύσιν). However, Socrates just reiterated the classification of pleasure in the unlimited class at 31b: “pleasure itself is unlimited and belongs to the kind that in and by itself neither possesses nor will ever possess a beginning, middle, or end” (31b). Frede (1993) warns against confusing the kind in which pleasure arises and the kind to which it belongs, noting that, although pleasure and pain belong to the unlimited class, they “are not independent phenomena, but occur in things that represent a harmonious mixture” (30).
response shows that he is not interested in the abstract, theoretical question about the nature of pleasure which he was asked. Instead, he fixates on the word “more” and takes the opportunity to insist on the potential for boundless increase in the amount and degree of pleasure one can experience. Socrates immediately points out a flaw in Philebus’ way of connecting the goodness of pleasure with its unlimited character, for pain too is unlimited, and yet this does not make it good (28a1-3). Philebus’ poor understanding of the four kinds of being and his erroneous inference from the unlimited character of pleasure to its goodness do not prevent Socrates from immediately accepting and reasserting his classification (28a3-4). It is also noteworthy that Socrates moves freely from the question of how to classify of the life of pleasure (27e1-2) to pleasure and pain themselves (27e5). Philebus does not object to the coupling of pleasure and pain in this second question, and perhaps he does not even notice it, since he only mentions pleasure in his response. Nevertheless, Socrates explicitly applies Philebus’ classification of pleasure to pain as well (notice the dual τούτω in 28a3). The fact that Socrates accepts Philebus’ answer without question implies either that his classification is correct, although not for the reasons Philebus thinks, or that Socrates accepts this view as part of a dialectical strategy. I will argue in favor of the second reading, which explains Socrates' distinction between two classes of pleasure later in the dialogue (52c-d). First, however, I will examine the plausibility of the initial classification of pleasure and pain given Socrates' characterization of the members of the unlimited class.

There is a striking dissimilarity between pleasure and pain and the other members of the unlimited class. Take “hot” as an example. When limit is imposed on heat, a measured, proportionate quantity of heat results and you have a perfect spring day or a living organism at its natural, healthy temperature. Whereas heat serves as the unlimited ingredient in many types of mixtures, according to the account of pleasure and pain presented at 32a-b, pleasure is always connected with the natural, harmonious condition of a living organism. However, pleasure only arises as a result of the process of restoration of the harmonious condition, and whenever an organism achieves this condition, the pleasure inevitably ceases. An organism in the harmonious condition not only lacks a measured quantity of pleasure or pain, but, on the contrary, neither pleasure nor pain is present at all. The description of the relationship of the

61 Gosling and Taylor (1982) make a similar observation that Philebus does not answer the same question Socrates asks him (216). Gosling also notes the inadequacy of Philebus’ reply in his commentary ((1975), 97).

62 See my detailed discussion of physiological account of pleasure at Philebus 31b-32b in Chapter 3.
unlimited class to limit is not entirely consistent, for at 24a-d the unlimited is described as being destroyed by limit, much in the way pleasure and pain are destroyed by the attainment of the harmonious condition. However, the predominant description of the composition of the mixed class is as a mixture of the unlimited and limit, suggesting that the unlimited and limited elements of any mixture are ingredients which in some way survive the mixing process. 63 This is how Socrates initially introduces the classification (23c-d), and this is also how he describes the members of the mixed class in his more detailed account of them (25e-26b). In what sense are pleasure and pain the ingredients of any mixture if they cease to exist at the moment the mixture is achieved? Ultimately, I argue, this peculiarity of bodily pleasure and pain results from the fact that they are conscious experiences and not simply properties of bodies.

Another peculiarity of pleasure and pain, in addition to the fact that they do not exist as ingredients in the harmonious condition of the body, is that they arise only when some other unlimited ingredient in the body exceeds its proper limit. A living body is a very complex example of a harmonious mixture. The fact that the harmony of a living body can be disrupted in many different ways (for example, by becoming empty or too dry or too cold) suggests that it involves multiple limits or proportions as well as many properties from the unlimited class, such as hot and cold, wet and dry. The description of bodily health in the Timaeus as a combination of hot and cold and many other opposite elements confirms this assumption (82a-81e). Unlike all the other unlimited elements contained in a living body, pleasure and pain are not present in the harmonious mixture of an animal and they arise whenever the harmonious mixture is destroyed, no matter the particular properties or proportions involved. Whether the animal becomes too hot or too cold, too full or too empty, too wet or too dry, in all of these cases the animal feels pleasure or pain, depending on whether the animal is moving towards or away from its natural condition of harmony. Thus, pleasure and pain have a peculiarly broad scope compared to the other examples of the unlimited class, in addition to the fact that they only exist once the harmonious condition has been destroyed, and not as ingredients of this mixture.

These peculiarities of pleasure and pain are both explained by the most significant way in which they differ from all the other members of the unlimited class mentioned in the dialogue. Pleasure and pain are conscious experiences of a soul rather than properties of objects. Only living

63 Gosling (1975) lists this inconsistency as one of the difficulties in the passage which any interpretation should explain (186).
creatures can experience pleasure and pain, and pleasure and pain do not exist independently of conscious subjects. All the other examples of members of the unlimited class are properties that exist independently of the souls perceiving them. An inanimate object can be hot or cold, and this temperature can causally affect other objects in the environment, as by warming or cooling them, all without the awareness of any subject. Pleasure and pain, on the other hand, are private experiences which alert the soul about any disruption of the harmonious condition of the organism. Despite the ways in which pleasure and pain differ from other members of the unlimited class, the fact that they arise whenever one of the body's unlimited ingredients exceeds the limit imposed upon it seems to support rather than call into question the initial classification of pleasure and pain in the unlimited class. After all, pleasure and pain still resemble the members of the unlimited class more closely than the members of any of the other classes of being. As long as all pleasures and pains fall under the account presented at 32a-b, there is no reason to doubt the classification of pleasures and pains in the unlimited class. However, if it turns out that the soul experiences some pleasures concurrently with the harmonious condition of the organism, this would raise legitimate questions both the characterization of all pleasures as unlimited, as well as the underlying assumption that all pleasures share the same nature and belong to the same class of being.

In the passage where Socrates questions Philebus about the classification of pleasure, Socrates does not distinguish between different kinds of pleasures; instead, they are treated as a homogenous set of phenomena, at least to the extent that all varieties fall within the same class of being. However, the introduction of pure pleasures later in the dialogue suggests that things are not so simple. After describing these pleasures, Socrates explicitly contradicts the general classification of pleasure as part of the unlimited class by assigning a group of pleasures to what he calls “the class of things that possess measure” (τῶν ἐμμέτρων, 52d1). He explains, “We will assign those pleasures which display high intensity and violence, no matter whether frequently or rarely, to the class of the unlimited, the more and less, which affects both body and soul. The other kinds of pleasures we will assign to the class of things that possess measure” (52c4-d1). Gosling and Taylor (1982) explain that the pure pleasures belong to a different class because they are not mixed with distress (216), but why should the pure or impure nature of a pleasure

64 Cooper (1997) recognizes this exception to what seemed like a general classification of pleasure at 27e7-9, and he argues that the measured pleasures, which are the ones included in the mixed life, are genuinely good (718-19). He concludes that “all the forms of pleasure and knowledge that do go into the mixture [of the good life] are good things, each of which makes its own special contribution to the goodness of the whole” (719).
influence its classification?65 The mark of members of the unlimited class, which is repeated by Socrates throughout the description of the fourfold division, and which is even repeated in this passage, is that they “admit of the more and less” (24a9, b5, e7). Nowhere earlier in the dialogue is purity or impurity mentioned as a criterion for inclusion or exclusion from the unlimited or any other class of being. Instead, the separation of two groups of pleasure into distinct classes of being reflects fundamental differences between their natures. Ultimately, Philebus was not entirely wrong to place pleasure in the unlimited class, since Socrates reaffirms this classification at 52c, at least in regard to some pleasures. Philebus' mistake was to assume that all pleasures were alike and that Socrates' question, “Do pleasure and pain have a limit, or are they of the sort that admit the more and less?” (27e5-6) had a single answer. However, in order to correct this basic assumption about the nature of pleasure, Socrates must first give a detailed account of the different kinds of pleasure, which explains his provisional acceptance of Philebus' classification.

Before determining whether Socrates' separation of pleasure into two classes of being is justified, it is first necessary to identify the two classes to which he assigns them. Socrates’ reference to “the class of things that possess measure” (τῶν ἔμμετρων) does not unambiguously pick out any of the four classes of being. The context makes it clear that this phrase does not refer to the unlimited class, since that is the class with which it is contrasted. Furthermore, there is nothing in the language that suggests it refers to the mixed class. The only remaining candidates are the class of limit and the mixed class. The adjective ἔμμετρος makes a reference to the mixed class likely, even though Socrates does not explicitly refer to it as the common or mixed class in this passage. The adjective ἔμμετρος and its cognates occur only four times in the dialogue, twice in this passage (τῶν ἔμμετρων at 52d1 and the cognate ἔμμετρίαν at 52c4), once at the end of dialogue where Protarchus states that reason is “more measured” (ἔμμετρωτέρον, 65d10) than pleasure, and once in the initial description of the fourfold classification at 26a7. This first occurrence is worth quoting in full.

Καὶ μὴν ἔν γε χειμῶναν καὶ πνίγεσιν ἐγγενομένη τὸ μὲν πολὺ λίαν καὶ ἄπειρον ἀφεῖλετο, τὸ δὲ ἔμμετρον καὶ ἀμα σύμμετρον ἀπηργάσατο.

And once engendered in frost and heat, limit takes away their excesses and unlimitedness, and establishes moderation and harmony in that domain. (26a6-8)

65 The impure pleasures are also described as “mixed” in the sense that they are experienced simultaneously with pain. As noted above, one must be careful to distinguish this non-technical sense of “mixed” from the technical sense in which it refers to the mixed class of being.
Limit is not itself described as moderate and harmonious in this passage, but rather as the thing which establishes moderation and harmony in other things.⁶⁶ Socrates next identifies the mixture of the unlimited and limit with “seasons and all sorts of fine things of that kind”, which help to clarify that τὸ δὲ ἐμμετρὸν καὶ ἀμα σύμμετρον describes a member of the mixed class.

Furthermore, σύμμετρον occurs five additional times in the dialogue, once in reference to the result of the imposition of limit on the unlimited (25e1), once specifically in reference to a member of the mixed class (64d9), once in connection with beauty and virtue (65a2), both of which are identified as members of the mixed class (26b), once in reference to the second rank of goods (66b1), and once as one of three aspects of the good (65a2), which are together “responsible for what is in the mixture, for its goodness is what makes the mixture itself a good one” (65a3-4). All but this last occurrence suggest that σύμμετρον is an epithet appropriate to mixtures rather than limits, and this last passage is difficult to interpret, since beauty is also listed as one of the aspects of the form of the good, even though it was earlier identified as a member of the mixed class. Thus, the textual evidence overwhelmingly supports interpreting “the class of things which possess measure” as the mixed class.

What does Socrates’ classification of some pleasures in the mixed rather than the unlimited class imply about their nature? The pure pleasures are contrasted with impure pleasures just before Socrates assigns pleasures to two separate classes of being.

⁶⁶ Note the causal language in the description of limit in this passage. Although Socrates has a separate category for the cause of mixtures, he often describes limit itself as that which establishes harmony in mixtures. As I interpret the distinction between limits and causes, Socrates has in mind something similar to Aristotle’s distinction between formal and efficient causation. Just because Socrates assigns the causes of mixtures to a separate class, this does not mean that the other classes are completely causally inert. Even members of the unlimited class can function as causes, turning a harmonious mixture into an “unconnected medley” (τις ἄκρατος) in the absence of limit (Philebus 64d9-e3).
The other kinds of pleasures we will assign to the class of things that possess measure. 

*(Philebus 52c1-d1)*

In the first sentence of this passage, Socrates makes two distinctions between different kinds of pleasures. He distinguishes the “pure” (*καθαρὰς*) from the “impure” (*ἀκαθάρτους*) pleasures, and then he distinguishes between the “violent pleasures” (*ταῖς μὲν σφοδραῖς ἡδοναῖς*) and those that are not violent (*ταῖς δὲ μὴ*), assigning immoderation and moderation respectively to these last two groups. The frequent description of mixed (i.e. impure) pleasures as *σφοδρός* (violent or intense) earlier in the dialogue suggests that there really are just two groups of pleasures in this passage which are called by different names. The two groups are mentioned twice in a chiastic arrangement, so that the violent pleasures correspond to those first called impure and the ones that are not violent correspond to those called pure. The violent, mixed pleasures are appropriately assigned to the unlimited class, which was itself related to the “violent and gentle” (*τὸ σφόδρα καὶ ἠρέμα*) as well as the “more or less” earlier in the dialogue (24c-d). In fact, Socrates says that whenever the adverbs *σφόδρα* and *ἦρέμα* apply: “they prevent everything from adopting a definite quantity; by imposing on all actions the qualification ‘stronger’ relative to ‘gentler’ [*σφοδρότερον ἡσυχαιτέρον*] or the reverse, they procure a ‘more and less’ while doing away with all definite quantity (24c3-6). This statement provides a clear justification for the assignment of certain pleasures to the unlimited class. Socrates does not assign pleasures to the unlimited class merely on the basis that they are mixed with pain, as Gosling and Taylor suggest; instead, it is the violent (*σφόδρος*) character of certain pleasures which accounts for their unlimited character. Socrates makes the further qualification that pleasures with the slightest tendency towards violence, even if very rarely realized, also belong to the unlimited class (*καὶ πολλάκις καὶ ὀλιγάκις γενομένας τοιαύτας*, 52c5-6).

The description of mixed pleasures earlier in the dialogue reveals that Socrates' identification of mixed or impure pleasures with the violent pleasures that are assigned to the unlimited class is far from arbitrary. Pleasures that are mixed with pain seem to have a consistent tendency towards violence and intensity. For example, the pleasures of sick people, which “exceed by their force and intensity” (*τῷ σφόδρα δὲ καὶ τῷ μᾶλλον ὑπερεχούσας*, 45d3-4), are identified as mixed

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67 Socrates uses the adjective *σφόδρος* or the adverb *σφόδρα* to qualify the mixed pleasures 5 times (42b5, 45a1, 45c6, 45d3, 45e3).

68 Socrates also introduces the second distinction by suggesting that he and Protarchus “add to the account” (*προσθῶμεν τῷ λόγῳ*) of the first one.
pleasures at 46a-c. The particular intensity of the pleasures of sick people is explicitly ascribed to the fact that they are mixed with pain (46c-47b). The simultaneous experience of pain intensifies the feeling of pleasure, making it seem greater than it actually is.

{ΣΩ.} Νῦν δὲ γε αὔταὶ διὰ τὸ πόρρωθέν τε καὶ ἐγγύθεν ἐκάστοτε μεταβαλλόμεναι θεωρεῖσθαι, καὶ ἐμὰ τιθέμεναι παρ’ ἀλλήλας, αἱ μὲν ἡδοναὶ παρὰ τὸ λυπηρὸν μεῖζους φαίνονται καὶ σφοδρότεραι, λύπαι δὲ αὐ διὰ τὸ παρ’ ἡδονᾶς τοιναντίων ἐκείναις.

Soc.: It is because they [i.e. pleasure and pain] are alternatively looked at from close up or far away, or simultaneously put side by side, that the pleasures seem greater compared to pain and more intense, and pains seem, on the contrary, moderate in comparison with pleasures. (Philebus 42b2-6)

This passage shows that the mixed pleasures only seem (φαίνονται) greater and more intense (μεῖζους...καὶ σφοδρότεραι) than unmixed ones. In fact, much of their intensity is caused by the simultaneous experience of pain. The same tendency towards apparent intensity, caused by the juxtaposition of pain, no doubt applies to all types of mixed pleasures, not just the bodily pleasures of those who suffer from bodily disease. In addition to the mixed pleasures that “have their origin in the body and are confined to the body” (μείξεις αἱ μὲν κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἐν αὐτοῖς τοῖς σώμασιν, 46b8-c1), which include the pleasures of those suffering from bodily disease, Socrates identifies two additional classes of mixed pleasure, 1) those that are “found in the soul and are confined to the soul” (αἱ δ’ αὐτῆς τῆς ψυχῆς ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, 46c1) and 2) those that are “in both the soul and the body” (τὰς δ’ αὖ τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ σώματος, 46c1-2). Examples of the latter include bodily pains mixed with psychic pleasures of anticipation (47c-d), and examples of the former include emotions such as wrath, fear, longing, grief, love, jealousy and malice (47e). Socrates only analyzes grief and malice (φθόνος) in detail, as displayed by spectators of tragedies and comedies respectively, but he seems to consider all of these experiences mixtures of psychic pleasure and psychic pain.

In general, all of the bodily pleasures seem to belong to the unlimited class. At 31b-32b Socrates provides an account of both bodily pleasure and bodily pain, whereby bodily pains are identified with processes of destruction in a living body, such as emptying or freezing, and bodily pleasures

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69 When Socrates says that pleasures and pains are in the body, he means only that they are caused by bodily changes, not that they leave the soul unaffected. Socrates’ claim at 43b-c that some bodily changes are too small or gradual to cause pleasure or pain shows that the soul is necessarily involved in every pleasure or pain, even those caused by the body.
are caused by the corresponding restorations, such as filling or thawing. Typically, subjects experience bodily pleasure and pain independently, even though a process of destruction necessarily precedes every process of restoration, and so, at least usually, bodily pain precedes bodily pleasure. In this respect, normal bodily pleasures should be distinguished from the mixed pleasures of the body experienced by those suffering from disease, which involve the *simultaneous* experience of both pleasure and pain (45a-47b). However, even though healthy bodily pleasures and pains do not normally occur simultaneously, the comparison with visual illusions at 41e-42a suggests that the mere *proximity* of pain can distort the experience of pleasure. Thus, just as a tall object appears shorter than it is when it is seen at a distance (41e-42a), juxtaposition with pain, even at a temporal distance, can make the pleasure appear greater and more intense than it actually is.

Even the contrast with those pleasures which occur in proximity with pain, which includes all bodily pleasures, does not fully account for the special status of the pleasures which Socrates describes as “measured”. For one thing, the “class of things that possess measure” seems to contain only a select group of pure pleasures. When Socrates first introduces the pleasures of anticipation at 32c3-8, they are described as “pure” (εἰλικρινέσιν) and “unmixed” (ἀμείκτοις), and yet he would hardly assign mundane pleasures of anticipation to the mixed class alongside the divine pleasures of sight, hearing and learning. Although the pleasures of anticipation belong to the soul alone and have no intrinsic connection with pain, they often arise in the context of bodily pain, and so belong to the class of mixed pleasures that involve both the body and the soul. However, the pleasures of anticipation need not always occur simultaneously with bodily pain. Socrates himself gives the example of a person who anticipates with great pleasure acquiring an enormous amount of gold (40a), and there is no indication that this pleasant anticipation arises from any bodily pain or desire. One possibility is that such pleasures of anticipation for the most part occur simultaneously with *psychic* pain, such as longing for wealth.

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70 See Chapter 3 for a more detailed analysis of this account of bodily pleasure and pain, which I argue are both types of αἴσθησις.

71 Later Socrates gives the pleasures of smell as examples of bodily pleasures that are not preceded by bodily pain, since the destructions involved are too small and gradual to be perceived (51e).

72 The phrase ἀμείκτος λύπης τε καὶ ἡδονῆς at 32c8 is curious, since the verb μίγνυμι, which is cognate with ἀμείκτος, usually takes a dative or a dative and accusative (i.e. “to mix one thing with another”, μίγνυμι τί τωι, Liddell and Scott), but never the genitive. Fortunately, the meaning is clear. Pleasures of expectation arise unmixed with any pain and pains of anticipation arise unmixed with any pleasure.
or jealousy of those who already possess it. After all, Socrates does not distinguish the pure pleasures from those which are always mixed with pain, but rather with those which have a tendency to arise in conjunction with pain, however often or rarely this tendency is realized (καὶ πολλάκις καὶ ὀλιγάκις γεγονόμενα τοιαύτας, 52c5-6). Nevertheless, the question remains: What makes the particular pure pleasures distinguished at 51b ff. less likely to arise in conjunction with pain?

The measured pleasures possess certain essential features that pleasures of anticipation lack, even those pleasures of anticipation which arise independently of both bodily and psychic pain. Socrates’ description of the pure pleasures which he assigns to the mixed class picks out an extremely specific group of pleasures. Not only are the pure pleasures of anticipation excluded, but Socrates does not even include all of the pleasures connected with sight or hearing. Socrates narrows the scope of this new class of pleasures by limiting them to a very particular set of objects. Socrates’ initial description of the objects of these pleasures gives the impression that they include the majority of pleasures of sight, hearing and sound. He describes them as “those that are related to those colors which are called beautiful and to shapes and to most smells and sounds” (Τὰς περὶ τὲ τὰ καλὰ λεγόμενα χρώματα καὶ περὶ τὰ σχήματα καὶ τῶν ὀσμῶν τὰς πλείστας καὶ τὰς τῶν φθόγγων, 51b3-5). The only element of this description which limits the scope of the pure sensory pleasures described in this passage is the qualification that they are related to beautiful colors. Socrates even says that they are related to most (πλείστας) sounds and smells, emphasizing the breadth of their objects.

However, it quickly becomes clear in Socrates’ more detailed description of the objects of the pure pleasures sight and hearing that he has a very specific set of pleasures in mind. He says that the pure pleasures of sight are not taken in any shape, or even any beautiful shape, but only those shapes which are “not beautiful in a relative sense, as others are, but are by their very nature forever beautiful by themselves” (ταῦτα γὰρ οὐκ εἶναι πρὸς τι καλὰ λέγω, καθάπερ ἄλλα, ἄλλ’ ἀεὶ καλὰ καθ’ αὐτὰ πεφυκέναι, 51c6-7). These are geometrical shapes, such as perfect circles.

Cf. the detailed discussion of the mixed psychic pleasure of malice at 48b-50a. Socrates describes the types of characters in comedies or in life that provoke malicious laughter as people who are ignorant about certain aspects of themselves. Among the examples, he mentions people who think they are richer than they are (48e1-2). The man who anticipates acquiring a large amount of gold more likely qualifies as an object of malice, rather than someone who feels malice towards others. Nevertheless, this person’s anticipatory pleasure may still qualify as one of the mixed pleasures of the soul, such as longing (πόθος), which is given as an example of a mixed psychic pleasure at 47e1.
and squares, which Socrates contrasts with the irregular and complex shapes that make up living beings or pictures (ἡ ζώον ἤ των ζωγραφημάτων, 51c2-3). The pure pleasures of hearing are related to a similarly restricted set of sounds, which are beautiful in an absolute sense (51d2-3, d7-9). Although Socrates does not necessarily contradict his initial statement that pure pleasures of hearing are related to most sounds, he clarifies that they only accompany these sounds when they arise pure, rather than in conjunction with one another (51d6-7). According to these descriptions, the class of pure pleasures introduced at 51b is extremely select, including only very specific and uncommon pleasures. Far from including all of the pleasures of sight and hearing, this class does not even include all those pleasures which derive from the appreciation of beauty, such as those pleasures taken in visual art or music. As a result, this class does not include the vast majority of the pleasures of sight and sound, nor does it include those with the most widespread appeal.

Socrates’ revision of the classification of all pleasures in the unlimited class explains the dubious way in which that original classification came about. The fact that the pure pleasures fall into a different class than all other pleasures implies that “pleasure” does not pick out a unified set of psychic phenomena. The disunity of pleasure is even more radical than Socrates suggested at the beginning of the dialogue, when he argued that pleasures can be unlike one another or even opposites (13c).

Plato’s evident recognition of the value of certain pleasures of sight and hearing in the Philebus stands in stark contrast with his harsh criticism of the lovers of sights and sounds in the Republic. In the Republic, Plato sharply distinguishes the beauty one can perceive through the senses and the beautiful itself, whereas in the Philebus he recognizes the possibility of grasping the nature of the beautiful itself (ἀεὶ καλὰ αὐτὰ πεφυκέναι, 51c6-7) through the perception of certain pure and simple sounds, colors and shapes. This does not necessarily imply that these pleasures of sight and hearing are any more common or accessible to the majority of subjects than the pleasures a philosopher derives from grasping the beautiful itself in the Republic. On the contrary, enjoying pure pleasure of sight and hearing is an immense cognitive achievement in the Philebus, for it requires not only the perception of certain very specific objects, but also the ability to recognize and appreciate absolute beauty.

Cf. 12c where Socrates says, “But as to pleasure, I know that it is complex (ποικίλον) and, just as I said, we should make it our starting point to consider carefully what sort of nature it has. If one just goes by the name it is one single thing, but in fact it comes in many forms (μορφὰς...παντοίας) that are in some ways even quite unlike each other (των τρόπων ἁμαρτίας ἄλλαξας)” (12c4-8). I will say more about the significance of Socrates’ initial

74 Socrates’ emphasis on the absolute beauty of the objects of the pleasures described in this passage suggests that these objects are not the shapes, colors and notes that a subject literally perceives with her senses, since all perceptible shapes, colors and notes are inevitably imperfect and impure. Instead, a subject takes the type of pure pleasure Socrates describes in this passage only when she abstracts perfect shapes and pure colors and sounds from the objects of the senses. This, I take it, is the force of Socrates’ distinction between the beauty of a shape and the beauty of a living being or a picture.

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shapes or colors can be opposed to one another (12c-13a), but they do not even belong to the same category in the most fundamental division of being. Another indication of the radical separation of the pure pleasures described at 51b-53b from the pleasures which belong to the unlimited class is their inclusion in the final ranking of human goods. Socrates anticipated the outcome that some pleasures would turn out to be genuinely good from the beginning of the dialogue (13b), and his initial contrast between the pleasures of an intemperate person (τὸν ἀκολασταῖνοντα) and those of someone who exercises self-control (τὸν σωφρονοῦντα) (12c-d) foreshadows the contrast between moderate and immoderate pleasures at 52c.

Considering Socrates’ revised view about the nature of the pure pleasures at 52c, his comment to Philebus about the connection between pleasure and the good in the original classification of pleasure takes on a new aspect (28a). Philebus assumes that the goodness of pleasure is somehow connected with its unlimited character, but since pain is also unlimited, and yet not good, Socrates suggests, “we have to search for something besides its unlimited character that would bestow on pleasures a share of the good” (ὡς παρέχεται τι μέρος ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ἀγαθοῦ, 28a1-3). The pure pleasures described at 52c belong to the mixed class or “the class of things that have measurement”, and it is from their inherently measured nature that they derive their goodness. If all pleasure belonged to the unlimited class, then no pleasures could be good, since all the goods ranked at the end of the dialogue have some connection with limit, the most highly ranked good. Socrates’ cautionary statement at 28a about the relationship between pleasure and goodness anticipates the account of pure pleasures, suggesting that Socrates himself never assumes that all pleasures belonged to the same class of being. He tacitly agrees with Philebus’ classification of pleasure as unlimited, but only as a provisional assessment of the nature of pleasure, and this classification is consistent with the account of pleasure and pain presented at 32b. However, the detailed analysis of the different kinds of pleasure which takes up much of the dialogue ultimately reveals that some pleasures have a radically different nature from those which arise from the disruption of the harmonious condition of an organism; in fact, their nature is so different that they do not even belong to the same class in the most fundamental division of being.

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77 See Chapter 5, Section 4 for a more detailed discussion of the value of the pleasures that belong to the mixed class.
3 The Relationship between the Body and the Soul

Socrates explicitly identifies the living body, at least when it is in the harmonious condition, as a member of the mixed or common class (31c-d). The properties such as hot and cold are the unlimited ingredients of this harmonious condition, and bodily pleasure and pain are caused by the fluctuation of any of these properties. As I showed in the previous section, bodily pleasure and pain both belong to the unlimited class and are conscious experiences caused by fluctuations in the unlimited elements in the body. The pure and true pleasures introduced at 51a-52c belong to a different class altogether, the mixed or measured class. In this section I will argue that bodily pleasures differ not just from the pure and true pleasures, but from psychic pleasures in general in that they are constituted by the restoration and destruction of the harmony of a living organism. In contrast, psychic pleasures do not involve the disturbance of the harmonious condition of an organism, which is why they can arise unmixed with pain and are not even necessarily preceded by pain. Of course, many psychic pleasures, such as those of anticipation, often occur simultaneously with pain, but psychic pleasures are not caused by restorations, and so have no necessary connection with destruction or pain. Unlike psychic pleasures, bodily pleasures directly reflect the condition of an animal’s body, and as such they play an important role in the life of every animal, being essential to their preservation and well-being.

It is a remarkable fact of the psychology of the *Philebus* that all animals, including the most basic, have an innate awareness of their own physical constitution and of whether the harmonious condition of their body is destroyed or preserved. Even though I refer to this awareness as bodily pleasure and pain, it is the soul that perceives the disruption of harmony (experienced as pain) and, at least in animals with the necessary psychic capacities, it is the soul that strives to restore it.

A living body is a very sophisticated type of harmonious mixture. Unlike the limit in more simple examples of mixtures, such as intervals in music, the limit instantiated by the harmony of a living body must be complex, consisting of many different limits and proportions in the

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78 Ganson (2001) makes a similar observation about the role of appetitive desires in the *Philebus*, which he identifies as cravings for bodily pleasure. As he puts it, “appetitive desires are ordered to the natural or healthy state of the body. What we come to desire in our appetites are affections that help to maintain the body’s proper functioning” (230). He makes the interesting observation that the natural, healthy condition of the body is the “common aim” of appetitive desires, unifying this class of desires in a way they were not unified in the *Republic*. He notes that in the *Timaeus* as well the desires of the appetitive soul are said to be for food, drink and “as many other things as it needs because of the nature of the body” (*Timaeus* 70d).

79 Plato is not alone in attributing to all animals an innate awareness of their bodily condition. O’Shaughnessay (1989) similarly claims that all animals necessarily possess this type of awareness, which he calls “body-sense” (51).
different bodily organs and parts. The great number of ways in which the harmony of a living body can be disrupted provides evidence for the complexity of the limit instantiated by a healthy body. Even if this limit could be specified by means of a list of the exact proportion of each element in each part of the body, a specific proportion in a particular part of the body may be disrupted without disrupting the entire system of proportions that gives structure to the living body as a whole. The soul seems like the best candidate for the complex limit which unifies the unlimited elements in the body.\footnote{Cf. Zeyl (2000), who characterizes souls as “systems of geometrical and harmonic proportions” in the Timaeus (lxxxvii). See also Carone (2005b), who describes the soul in the Timaeus as “not some ghost in the machine, but the principle of organization of the body” (235). My interpretation of the soul as the limit of the living body in the Philebus is consistent with this picture of the soul in the Timaeus.} However, the soul is a very unique kind of limit, just as bodily pleasure and pain are unique members of the unlimited class. When the harmonious condition is being destroyed, the soul is not itself necessarily destroyed, but it perceives this destruction and motivates the animal to restore its natural harmony. Certainly if the harmonious mixture of the body is damaged enough, the animal will die, but usually any deviation from a harmonious mixture signifies the destruction of a limit. If the soul really is the limit of the harmonious condition of the living body, it is a type of limit that persists in some form even when it is partially distorted.\footnote{The complexity of the soul as a limit, since it is not just one proportion, but a combination of many different proportions in different parts, may help explain why the disruption of one of the proportions in the body, such as one part becoming excessively hot or cold, does not destroy the soul as a whole.} Socrates makes the following comment about the limit of a living body, which supports my identification of this limit with the soul.

\[\varepsilon\mu\circ\ \mu\varepsilon\ \gamma\alpha\rho\ \kappa\alpha\theta\sigma\pi\varepsilon\iota\ \kappa\omicron\omicron\omicron\ \tau\iota\ \\alpha\sigma\omicron\omega\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\sigma\delta\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\xi\omega\ i\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\omega\ \\epsilon\mu\psi\nu\chi\omicron\ \sigma\omega\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\ \delta\ \nu\nu\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\sigma\ \\alpha\pi\varepsilon\iota\rho\gamma\alpha\omicron\sigma\acute{\theta} \iota\ \phi\acute{\iota}\nu\eta\eta\tau\iota.\]

To me at least it seems that our discussion has arrived at the design of what might be called an incorporeal order that rules harmoniously over a body possessed by a soul.\footnote{Cf. Zeyl (2000), who characterizes souls as “systems of geometrical and harmonic proportions” in the Timaeus (lxxxvii). See also Carone (2005b), who describes the soul in the Timaeus as “not some ghost in the machine, but the principle of organization of the body” (235). My interpretation of the soul as the limit of the living body in the Philebus is consistent with this picture of the soul in the Timaeus.} (Philebus 64b6-8)

This “incorporeal order” (\(\kappa\omicron\omicron\omicron\ \tau\iota\ \\alpha\sigma\omicron\omega\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\sigma\delta\iota\)) is presumably the limit which brings order and harmony to the unlimited elements in a living body. Here Socrates characterizes this limit as something that has some agency in relation to the body, and so can “rule” over it (\(\acute{\alpha}\rho\xi\omega\iota\)). Nowhere else in the dialogue is agency attributed to the limit of a harmonious mixture, and this type of agency seems to belong in particular to the limit of ensouled bodies (\(\epsilon\mu\psi\nu\chi\omicron\ \sigma\omega\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\)), and not the limit of inanimate mixtures. Descriptions of the soul in other late dialogues help to explain how the ordering principle of a body can at the same time causally affect this body. The
soul is characterized not as an inert structure, the way the limit instantiated in a perfectly tuned instrument is inert, but rather as a principle of motion \((\textit{Phaedrus} \ 245c \text{ ff.,} \textit{Timaeus}, \ 34b, \ 40a-b, \textit{Laws} \ 897c5-6)\).\(^82\) According to the account of the soul in the \textit{Timaeus}, the motion of the soul, and in particular the motions of the rational part of the soul, originally consists of perfectly circular orbits which become distorted by motions from without (42a-d). Even when the motion of the soul is disturbed by motions from without, such as those responsible for bodily pleasure and pain, it continues despite having lost its perfectly circular path. This account of the soul provides a model by which it is possible to grasp the sense in which the inherent order in a living body can be disturbed without being completely destroyed.\(^83\) If the soul functions as a dynamic structuring principle of a living body in Plato’s late dialogues, then this suggests that there is a very different and much closer relationship between the body and the soul in the late dialogues than in earlier dialogues such as the \textit{Phaedo}.\(^84\)

Several passages in the \textit{Philebus} and the \textit{Timaeus} seem to support a different interpretation, i.e. that the soul belongs to the mixed class rather than the class of limit. For example, in the \textit{Philebus} Socrates assigns certain excellent psychic conditions to the mixed class, which lends some support to the interpretation that the soul itself is a harmonious mixture instead of the limit of a living body. After all, if the soul were a limit, it is not clear how its states or conditions could be mixtures of limited and unlimited elements. What would be the source of the unlimited components of these mixtures, and if they belonged to something other than the soul, then it is not clear that these mixtures would be correctly identified as conditions of the soul alone rather than some combination of the soul with something else. In the course of giving examples of members of the mixed class Socrates says,

\(^{82}\) It is perhaps surprising that the soul is not described as a type of movement in the \textit{Philebus}, but this can be explained by the fact that the soul is nowhere the direct topic of discussion. Nothing in the \textit{Philebus} contradicts this characterization of the soul.

\(^{83}\) Aristotle recognizes the possibility of a flexible type of proportion or limit. At \textit{NE}, \ 10.3, \ 1173b23-8, in the course of arguing that pleasures are not necessarily indeterminate, he compares pleasure to health, saying “Again, just as health admits of degrees without being indeterminate (\textit{ὡρισμένη οὖσα δέχεται τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἦττον}), why should not pleasure? The same proportion (\textit{ἡ αὐτὴ σθμμετρία}) is not found in all things, nor a single proportion always in the same thing (\textit{οὐδὲ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ μία τις ἄει}), but it may be relaxed and yet persist up to a point (\textit{ἀνιεμένη διαμένει ἕως τινός}), and it may differ in degree.”

\(^{84}\) Scholars who have noted the close association of the soul and body in Plato’s late dialogues include Carone (2005a), (2005b), Sedley (1997), (2000), Gill (2000), Johansen (2000), and Ostenfeld (1982), 244-246 and (1987), 70.
Socrates: And there are countless other things I have to pass by in silence: With health there come beauty and strength, and again in our soul there is a host of other excellent qualities (Philebus 26b5-7).

Although Socrates seems to present excellent bodily and psychic qualities as independent examples of harmonious mixtures in this passage, what he actually says is that excellent qualities of both the body and the soul accompany health (μεθ’ ὑγιείας). Just as the proper mixture of the body and the soul manifests itself in physical beauty and strength, psycho-somatic health also results in many excellent psychic qualities. Of course, one could describe beauty and strength independently as examples of harmonious mixtures, and yet Socrates clearly has the beauty and strength of living bodies in mind, and these are no more conditions of the body alone, independent of the soul, than health itself. More radical, perhaps, is the thought that excellent qualities in the soul go along with excellent qualities in the body; however, this is exactly the result one would expect if one took seriously the view that the soul is the structuring principle of the body.

Other passages in the Philebus, as well as the lengthy account of bodily and psychic disease in the Timaeus, likewise suggest that the condition of the body is inextricably linked to that of the soul and vice versa. In both the Philebus and the Timaeus defective conditions of the soul are identified as diseases that are ultimately caused by the defective condition of the body. For example, in both dialogues excessive pleasures and pains are said to cause the psychic disease of madness (μανία, Philebus 45e3, Timaeus 86b4). According to the Timaeus, ignorance and certain kinds of badness or vice (κακία, 87b8) are also caused by bodily diseases (86b-88b).85 In the Timaeus, not only do bodily diseases influence the condition of the soul, but the condition of the soul also affects the body. At 87e-88a one type of psychic disease in which the soul is disproportionately powerful in relation to the body “churns the whole being and fills it from inside with disease” (διασείουσα πᾶν αὐτὸ ἐνδοθεν νόσων ἐμπίμπλησι, 88a1-2). These passages suggest that psychic qualities such as those mentioned in this passage are not entirely independent of the body in Plato’s late dialogues. This would imply that neither excellent

85 Cf. Sophist 228 where Socrates identifies “wickedness” (πονηρία) as “discord and sickness of the soul” (στάσιν ἄρα καὶ νόσου τῆς ψυχῆς, 228b).
psychic qualities nor the soul itself belong to the mixed class of being; instead, excellent psychic qualities are really excellent *psychosomatic* conditions.\(^{86}\)

The description of the composition of the soul in the *Timaeus* may also seem, at least on the surface, to contradict my claim that the soul belongs in the class of limit rather than the mixed class of being. Timaeus describes the soul as “mixed” (συγκραθεῖσα) from sameness, difference and being (37a2-4), and the Demiurge is said to form the soul into circles and put them in motion (36b6-7). However, the soul is not a mixture in the technical sense in which this term is used in the *Philebus*, since the “ingredients” of this mixture are very different from the examples of unlimited elements in the *Philebus*. The soul seems to be a combination of different types of ratios and limits, instead of a mixture of limited and unlimited elements, which suggests that it belongs to the class of limit after all. Even if the soul is an incorporeal mixture with incorporeal unlimited elements, this “mixture” is never destroyed, even when the orbits of the soul are distorted. Instead, the soul is said to be a mixture that can never be destroyed except by the cause that created it (43d6-7), i.e. the Demiurge. In other words, even if the soul is a mixture independent of the body, it is a special type of mixture that is permanent, and as such it functions as the limit of a living body. The mixture of the soul itself cannot be affected (i.e. the proportions of sameness, difference and being), but only the movements of the soul, which are described in the *Timaeus* as spatial movements which affect and are affected by the movements of bodily elements.\(^{87}\) As a result, the soul is never distorted in a way that does not affect the body-soul mixture as a whole. This implies that psychic disorder is not independent of disorder in the whole living organism, and that the association between the body and the soul is so close that it is best thought of as a single harmonious mixture.\(^{88}\)

\(^{86}\) Another piece of evidence that psychic conditions are really conditions of a living organism as a whole is the claim that a human head is spherical in order to accommodate the circular motion of the rational soul (43a-b), while some other animals have elongated heads, indicating that the orbits of their rational soul have been distorted (*Timaeus* 91e-92a). Carone (2005b) points out that “the kind of body we get in the *Timaeus* depends on whether that body has soul and on what kind of soul it has” (234). The condition of the soul also seems to have a direct relationship with the physical condition of the body at *Laws* II, 654e-655a, where a brave person is said to differ from the cowardly even judging from the color of their complexions. These passages support my claim that the psychic excellences described as members of the mixed class at *Philebus* 26b5-7 are qualities that, properly speaking, belong to a living organism as a whole.

\(^{87}\) Sensation and nourishment are both said to involve motions which affect the orbits of the immortal soul at 43a6-44c2 and at 91e-92a the elongated heads of certain types of animals is explained by the distorted motions of the soul. Commentators who think Plato views the motions of the soul in the *Timaeus* as literal, spatial motions include Sorabji (2003), Sedley (1997), and Carone (2005a) and (2005b).

\(^{88}\) This interpretation of the relationship between the body and the soul is supported by the account of bodily and psychic disease and the treatment of both types of disease in the *Timaeus* (81-90). Bodily and psychic diseases are
The classification of the soul has important consequences for understanding the nature of psychic pleasures. If the soul belongs to the class of limit, then this implies that the restoration account of pleasure introduced at 32b only applies to bodily pleasures, since according to this account pleasure arises from the restoration of “the natural combination of limit and unlimitedness that forms a living organism” (τὸ ἐκ τῆς ἀπείρου καὶ πέρατος κατὰ φύσιν ἐμψυχὸς εἶδος, 32a9-b1). Since the soul is not itself an example of a mixture that can be destroyed or restored independently of the body, every destruction or restoration suffered by a living organism is necessarily a destruction or restoration of the organism as a whole.\(^9\) Since psychic pleasures, such as the pleasures of expectation, do not involve the body at all, the restoration account of pleasure introduced at Philebus 32b and refined at 43a-c cannot apply to them, but only to bodily pleasures and pains. Therefore, if the soul is the limit of the harmonious condition of an organism rather than an example of a harmonious mixture itself, this would imply that the restoration account does not serve as a general account of all pleasures and pains in the Philebus, as commonly argued.\(^90\)

The context of the introduction of the restoration account supports the interpretation that it applies only to bodily pleasures and pains, thus indirectly supporting my classification of the soul in the class of limit rather than the mixed class. When Socrates begins his analysis of pleasure, he does not immediately clarify that he is only speaking about a particular type of pleasure and pain, the bodily ones, yet when he introduces the pleasures and pains of expectation, Protarchus observes that this is “a different kind of pleasure and pain, namely the expectation that the soul experiences by itself, without the body” (32c3-5). As Protarchus emphasizes in his comment, the most notable difference between the pleasures and pains of expectation and the pleasures and pains discussed up to this point in the dialogue is their purely both caused by bodily defectiveness, and the treatment for both types of disease focuses on establishing a proportionate relationship between the body and the soul (87c-90d). See Gill (2000), 64 and 69.

\(^9\) The only exceptions to this rule are the bodily destructions and restorations that are too small or gradual to affect the condition of the soul; for example, destructions of the hair or nails or the bodily changes involved in growth (Philebus 43a-b; cf. Timaeus 64b-c). Properly speaking, these are not really destructions or restorations of the living organism itself. It seems right to say that when I cut my hair or my nails I am not as a living organism affected. A sign that growth involves the change rather than the destruction or restoration of an organism is that it does not affect the organism’s health.

\(^90\) Supporters of the view that the restoration account is a general account which applies to all of the pleasures described in the dialogue include Butler (2007), Evans (2007a), Tuozzo (1994) and Frede (1992) and (1993). A common way of trying to extend the restoration account to psychic pleasures is by appealing to psychic restorations, without giving an account of the nature of the soul that would justify this appeal (Evans (2007a), 86 and Tuozzo (1994), 508). See below for further arguments against this widespread view.
psychic nature. Nowhere does Socrates apply the restoration account to the pleasures of expectation. In fact, the potential purity of the pleasures of expectation (32c), at least when they arise unmixed with bodily pains, serves as positive evidence that they are not caused by any sort of restoration. It is due to the fact that bodily pleasures are restorations that they are inherently linked with bodily pain, since every restoration is necessarily preceded by destruction.\(^9\) The purity of psychic pleasures of expectation alone is enough to suggest that the restoration account does not apply to them.

Tuozzo (1994) argues that the definition of pleasure and pain as the restoration and destruction, respectively, of the harmonious condition of the living organism (32b) is a general account, which applies to both bodily and psychic pleasures and pain. Butler (2007) also, though without argument, interprets this definition as a general account of pleasure and pain (107). However, although Socrates does not explicitly refer to these pleasures and pains (i.e. the ones caused by bodily restorations and destructions) as bodily in this passage, later in the dialogue he repeats this account in very similar terms and defines the neutral condition as that in which “nothing of that sort [destruction or restoration] happens to our body” (περὶ τὸ σῶμα, 42d5). Socrates also describes the harmonious condition as “the natural combination of limit and unlimitedness that forms a live organism” (τὸ ἐκ τῆς ἀπείρου καὶ πέρατος κατὰ φύσιν ἐμψυχὸν γεγονὸς εἶδος). This formulation strongly suggests that Socrates has the entire living organism in mind, body and soul combined, since the phrase ἐμψυχὸν γεγονὸς εἶδος could hardly be taken to refer to the soul alone.

The identification of the whole animal, including both its body and its soul, as the relevant harmonious mixture, which is subject to destruction and restoration (31d, 32b) further supports both my classification of the soul in the class of limit and my interpretation of the scope of the restoration account. For a purely psychic pleasure to count as a restoration, the soul by itself would have to qualify as a harmonious mixture of unlimited elements with the proper limit, and I have already given reasons above for thinking that it does not. In the case of the harmonious condition of the body, Socrates specifically identifies health as “the right combination of opposites” (25e), and he even gives an account of the composition of animal bodies, which are

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\(^9\) This link between bodily pleasure and pain explains why Socrates tells Protarchus, “we will not be able to provide a satisfactory examination of pleasure if we do not study it together with pain” (31b5-6). If they were only aiming to examine the nature of the pure pleasure, they would have no need to study the nature of pain.
composed of the four elements, fire, water, air and earth (29a). The unlimited elements, which are prone to excess and deficiency, turn out to be properties of the four kinds of matter, such as heat and cold or dryness and moisture (32a). After a series of examples, Socrates restates the restoration account as follows.

τὸ ἐκ τῆς ἀπείρου καὶ πέρατος κατὰ φύσιν ἐμψυχον γεγονὸς εἴδος, ὃπερ ἔλεγον ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν, ὅταν μὲν τούτῳ φθείρηται, τὴν μὲν φθορὰν λυπήν εἶναι, τὴν δ’ εἰς τὴν αὐτῶν οὐσίαν ὀδὸν, ταύτην δὲ αὖ πάλιν τὴν ἀναχώρησιν πάντων ἧδονήν.

When the natural combination of limit and unlimitedness that forms a live organism, as I explained before, is destroyed, this destruction is pain, while the return towards its own nature, this general restoration, is pleasure. (Philebus 32a9-b4)

Here Socrates identifies the harmonious mixture relative to which pain is a destruction and pleasure a restoration as a “living form” (τὸ... ἐμψυχον ... εἴδος), which is generated (γεγονὸς) according to nature (κατὰ φύσιν) from limit and unlimitedness (ἐκ τῆς ἀπείρου καὶ πέρατος).

Elsewhere, Socrates refers to the harmonious condition as “the harmony in living creatures” (τῆς ἁρμονίας...ἐν τοῖς ζῴοις), further supporting the idea that the harmonious mixture which undergoes destruction and restoration is the natural condition of a living body, instead of a condition of either the body or the soul alone. The soul plays an essential role in correcting imbalances in the composition of the body, but the unlimited elements it must keep in balance are decidedly physical.

Socrates’ classification of the living body as a harmonious mixture has important consequences for the examination of pleasure in the dialogue, and in particular the differences between the pleasures which involve the body and those that belong to the soul alone. In fact, psychic pleasures have an entirely different nature from bodily ones. The fact that psychic pleasures are not caused by restorations of any sort, bodily or psychic, even has implications for something as fundamental as their temporality. Restorations are discrete movements that necessarily take place over time, suggesting that the bodily pleasures caused by these restorations likewise take place over a fixed length of time. However, psychic pleasures do not have any maximum duration as bodily pleasures do, meaning that one can continue to experience a psychic pleasure indefinitely.

92 One might think that the soul itself possesses a relevant set of opposites, at least according to the account of the composition of the soul in the Timaeus, since it is mixed from Sameness and Difference. However, as argued above, both of these elements are described as types of ratios or proportions, and so neither ingredient is a good candidate for the unlimited element in the soul. Furthermore, Timaeus claims that this mixture can never be destroyed once created (43d6-7). Therefore, even if the soul were a mixture of limited and unlimited elements, since it is never destroyed or restored, there must be some other explanation for purely psychic pleasures and pains.
whereas bodily pleasures come to an inevitable end once the restoration of the organism is complete. While a person can only enjoy eating a meal for so long before they are satiated, one can anticipate with pleasure a future meal for days, weeks or even years. I will discuss the nature of psychic pleasures in more depth, as well as the ways in which they differ from bodily ones, in subsequent chapters.

4 The Role of Human and Cosmic Νοῦς

One final classification in the fourfold division which has implications for the natures of different types of pleasure is the classification of human and divine νοῦς, which Socrates assigns to the fourth class which is “the cause of everything” (τοῦ πάντων αἴτιον, 30e1). The cosmological section of the dialogue, in which Socrates draws an analogy between the body and soul of an individual animal and the body and soul of the universe, provides some evidence for the relationship between the soul and νοῦς.

This cause is recognized as all-encompassing wisdom, since it imports the soul and provides training for the body and medicine for its ailments and in other cases order and restitution. (Philebus 30b1-)

This “all-encompassing wisdom” (πάσαν καὶ παντοίαν σοφίαν), which belongs to the fourth category (i.e. the class of the cause of harmonious mixtures), refers to cosmic νοῦς rather than the νοῦς of an individual human being. Even if the νοῦς of an individual human being, for example that of a doctor, could provide (παρέχων) training and medicine to the body, it could not provide the soul itself (ἐν μὲν τοῖς παρ’ ἡμῖν ψυχήν τε παρέχων καὶ σωμασκίαν ἑμποιοῦν καὶ πταίσαντος σώματος ἱατρικὴν καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ἄλλα συντιθέν καὶ ἀκούμενον πάσαν καὶ παντοίαν σοφίαν ἐπικαλεῖσθαι).

This cause is recognized as all-encompassing wisdom, since it imports the soul and provides training for the body and medicine for its ailments and in other cases order and restitution. (Philebus 30b1-)

Socrates assigns human and divine νοῦς to the fourth class, which is the cause of the mixture. Frede argues that human and divine νοῦς are not just members of the fourth class, but exclusive members, citing 30b-c as her evidence (xxxv). Νοῦς is the cause of all mixtures, including the harmonious condition of a living body; however, it is cosmic νοῦς that is responsible for the
mixture of the living body rather than the νοῦς of an individual human being. In the Timaeus, non-human animals possess the rational part of the soul, but their reason has become inactive due to its erratic motions (91e), in which case their own reason or νοῦς could not be the cause of the harmonious condition of their body. Instead, this condition must be due to the purposeful design of divine νοῦς, which constructs animals in such a way that their souls have an innate awareness and drive towards their own bodily harmony.

If divine νοῦς causes the bodily harmony of animals, it makes sense that it is also responsible for the bodily harmony of human beings, for infants already have the same capacity as animals for preserving their bodily harmony before the development of reason. Even as adults, in healthy individuals the general maintenance of the physical body does not usually require any special attention or rational thought. The attribution of bodily pleasure and pain to plants at Timaeus 77c confirms that cosmic νοῦς must be the cause responsible for the ability of any living thing to monitor and regulate its own bodily condition, since plants only possess the third type of soul associated with appetite (77b). However, the harmonious condition of a living body is not the only, or even the most important, harmonious mixture discussed in the Philebus. The more important harmonious mixture Protarchus and Socrates seek to uncover is the mixture of the good human life, and in relation to this mixture the νοῦς of an individual human being arguably plays a more significant role.

One consequence of the narrow scope of human νοῦς relative to divine νοῦς is that human beings are not responsible for the restoration of the organism when its harmony has been disrupted, and as a result they are not responsible for the bodily pleasure caused by this restoration. For this reason, not only bodily pain, but also bodily pleasure is grouped among the αἰσθήσεις which disturb the orbits of the rational part of the soul in the Timaeus (42a-b). The soul is described as completely passive in relation to these “forceful disturbances” (βιαίων παθημάτων, 42a5-6). In contrast, psychic pleasures, and in particular the pure pleasures described at Philebus 51b-52b, are products of the soul’s own motions and activities, and as such they are necessarily voluntary. Some psychic pleasures, such as the pleasant expectation of a meal when one is hungry, are direct responses to bodily pains, and so they are in part at least caused by these pains. However, the pure and true pleasures introduced at 51c do not seem to have any cause outside of the subject’s own soul. Whereas bodily pleasures are simply ways in which the soul is affected by bodily disturbances, the pure pleasures of sight and hearing involve not only the perception of
beautiful objects, but also the appreciation of their beauty, and as such they cannot be forced upon the soul from without. Instead, the pure pleasures seem to be more akin to those activities of the soul by which a person “[drags] the massive accretion of fire-water-air-earth into conformity with the revolution of the Same and uniform within him, and so subdued that turbulent, irrational mass by means of reason” in the *Timaeus* (42c4-d1) than the disturbances which distort the revolutions of the rational soul in the first place. Another indication of this difference between bodily and pure pleasures is the fact that all animals, and even plants in the *Timaeus* (77b) share in bodily pleasure and pain, while only humans, and possibly also the gods, can experience the pure pleasures.93

5 The Fourfold Division and the Good Life

The classification of pleasure and νοῦς in the fourfold division clarifies the relationship between Protarchus and Socrates’ respective candidates for the feature of the good life that is responsible for its goodness. By means of the Choice of Lives thought experiment, Socrates and Protarchus come to the conclusion that the mixed life, which includes both pleasure and intelligence, is preferable to a life containing either one in isolation. After introducing the fourfold division of being, and before classifying either pleasure or intelligence, Socrates explicitly identifies the good life as a harmonious mixture (27d). However, pleasure and intelligence are not technically ingredients of this mixture, in the sense that they are the unlimited and limited elements from which it is mixed. Although some types of pleasure may plausibly be interpreted as among the many unlimited elements present in the good life, which no doubt is a very complex example of a mixture, the pure pleasures presented at the end of the dialogue belong to the mixed rather than the unlimited class. Intelligence likewise functions as the cause of the good life rather than either a limited or an unlimited ingredient.

Before assigning pleasure and intelligence to their respective classes, Socrates first classifies the mixed life (27d). He acknowledges that the good life is a particularly complicated example of a mixture, adding, “it is not a mixture of just two elements but of the sort where all that is unlimited is tied down by limit” (27d8-10). It is not immediately clear what it means for a whole

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93 Although in the *Philebus* the gods are said to live a neutral life free from both pleasure and pain (33b-c), this claim arises in the context of bodily, rather than pure, pleasures. Furthermore, Socrates refers to the pure pleasures as “divine” (*θεῖον*, 51e1). See chapter 5 for a more detailed consideration of this question.
life to belong to the third category of harmonious mixtures.\textsuperscript{94} A life is much more complex than a living body, and even the latter is a very complex example of a harmonious mixture. While one can examine a living body at a particular moment in time and determine whether it is in a harmonious condition or not, it is not clear that there is any vantage point from which one can examine whether a whole life is harmonious or unharmonious. Also, what are all the unlimited factors which must be in the correct proportion for a life to be harmonious? Surely a whole life contains more unlimited elements than a body, and no number of physical properties, such as hot and cold and wet and dry, can possibly provide an adequate account of what makes a life good.

Despite these puzzles, it is undeniable that Socrates assigns the good life to the mixed class, and there is no indication anywhere in the dialogue that he ever reconsiders this classification. However, neither intelligence nor all pleasures serve as the unlimited or limited ingredients of this mixture. As argued in Section 2 above, there are two types of pleasures in the \textit{Philebus}, and they belong to two distinct categories of being. The pure pleasure discussed at 51-3 belongs to the third class of being, which includes measured, harmonious mixtures. Since these pleasures do not belong to either the unlimited class or the class of limit, then they are not the right type of beings to qualify as ingredients in harmonious mixtures. These pleasures are included in the best kind of human life, but if anything they are partly constitutive of the harmoniously mixed life, rather than ingredients in the way the members of the first two classes of being are ingredients.

The only pleasures which plausibly function as ingredients in the good life are the small subset of unlimited pleasures which are described as “the pleasures of health and of temperance” (τὰς μὲν ὑγιείας καὶ τὸν σωφρονεῖν, 63e4-5).

Intelligence (φρόνησις) is not itself classified in the fourfold division, and yet Socrates assigns νοῦς to the fourth class, the cause of the mixture. When Socrates turns to classify his own candidate, he defines it much more specifically than he did at the beginning of the dialogue. Initially, Socrates argues not just on behalf of understanding (τὸ νοεῖν), but also on behalf of remembering, judgment and calculation.

\textit{τὸ δὲ σαρ' ἡμῶν ἄμφισβήτημα ἔστι μὴ ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ τὸ νοεῖν καὶ μεμνῆσθαι καὶ τὰ τούτων αὐτούς ἄμφισβήτημα, δοξάν τε ὁρθήν καὶ ἀληθείς λογισμοὺς, τῆς γε ἡδονῆς ἀμείνω...}

\textsuperscript{94} Gosling (1975) notes the oddity in the classification of the good life as a member of the mixed class. The way he presents the difficulty, the good life differs from all the other members of the mixed kind (including fine days, healthy bodies, the cycle of seasons, etc.) in that they are all observable phenomena (186).
We contend that not these, but knowing, understanding, and remembering, and what belongs with them, right judgment and true calculations, are better than pleasure… *(Philebus 11b6-9)*

Likewise, in the Choice of Lives Socrates includes as many psychic capacities as possible on the side of intelligence rather than pleasure in order to present the life of pleasure in the bleakest possible light (21b-c). However, when Socrates prepares to assign his candidate to one of the four classes of being, he only mentions “intelligence, knowledge and reason” (φρόνησις δὲ ἐπιστήμην καὶ νοῦν, 28a4). Throughout most of the dialogue up to this point, intelligence (φρόνησις, τὸ φρονεῖν) has been the most prominent representative of Socrates’ candidate for the good, and so the prominence of νοῦς in this passage comes as a bit of a surprise. However, in several key passages Socrates seems to equate φρόνησις and νοῦς. Although νοῦς is predominately used in the discussion of the fourth kind, when Socrates asks Protarchus whether he thinks the universe as a whole is ordered or random, he asks whether or not it is “governed by reason and by the order of a wonderful intelligence” (νοῦν καὶ φρόνησίν τινα θαυμαστὴν συντάττουσαν διακυβερνᾶν, 28d8-9). This passage strongly suggests that φρόνησις and νοῦς are very closely connected, if not the same thing. Furthermore, φρόνησις and νοῦς both receive third place in the final ranking of the goods (66b6). One possibility is that νοῦς refers to a faculty, and φρόνησις refers to the activity of this faculty. However, Menn (1992) gives good reasons for thinking that φρόνησις and νοῦς are synonymous and both refer to an intellectual virtue in Plato’s later dialogues. Another possibility is that φρόνησις is ambiguous and has both a broad and a more specific meaning, so that it is sometimes synonymous with νοῦς and at other times refers to a broader class cognitive capacities or virtues, which includes νοῦς. This would explain why it is the main word used to refer to Socrates’ candidate for the good in human life in general, which at least in the beginning of the dialogue includes memory, judgment and calculation, in addition to νοῦς. The potentially broad scope of φρόνησις would also explain why it occurs more often in reference to human reason, whereas νοῦς is more common in passages concerning the intelligence of the cosmos as a whole.

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95 Socrates refers to his candidate solely as φρόνησις in the following passages: 11d9, 12a1-3, 14b4, 18e3, 19b4, 20b7, 20e2-4, 27c5, 28a9, 33a8, 55a7, 60b4, 60c8, 60e2-5, 61c6, 61d1, 63a9, 63b4, 65a8, 65d5. φρόνησις is listed first in a series of cognitive capacities championed by Socrates in the following passages: 13e4, 21a14, 21d9. φρόνησις and cognate forms appear 51 times in the dialogue.

96 Armstrong (2004) makes a similar point (175).
The stated purpose of the *Philebus* is to determine the best life for a human being, and in particular to determine the extent to which this life contains pleasure and thought. I have argued above that cosmic rather than human νοῦς is ultimately responsible for the harmonious condition of a living body, since all living beings, including plants and non-rational animals, have a natural tendency to perceive and, if possible, to seek the natural, harmonious condition of the body. For some living beings, this harmonious condition of the body may be identical to the best sort of life. For example, the best sort of life for a plant or cognitively limited animal, such as a mollusk, may just be bodily health. However, one of the conclusions of the dialogue is that the best human life requires more than bodily health: it also requires the activities and the pleasures associated with φρόνησις. This suggests that the best human life is a harmonious mixture necessarily caused by human, rather than cosmic, reason. If I am right that human φρόνησις is present in the good human life not just as an ingredient, but as the cause of the goodness of this life, then humans are responsible for creating their own happiness in the strongest sense.

**Conclusion**

In the present chapter I examined the role of the fourfold division of being in the *Philebus*. I hope to have shown the importance of this metaphysical framework, which, far from being a digression, actually pervades the dialogue and provides many insights into the nature of pleasure, the living body, intelligence and the good life itself. However, the relationship between different kinds of pleasure and other forms of cognition remains unclear, and it is this question that I will take up in the next two chapters. In Chapter 3, I examine the relationship between pleasure and αἴσθησις, which is the only form of cognition Socrates does not associate with φρόνησις at the beginning of the dialogue, and thus does not remove from the life of pleasure in the Choice of Lives thought experiment. I argue that bodily pleasure, which is the most cognitively minimal form of pleasure, just is a type of αἴσθησις. Some of the pure and true pleasures are also related to αἴσθησις, since they are taken in the objects of sight and hearing; however, unlike bodily pleasures, these pleasures are purely psychic and require much more sophisticated forms of cognition. In Chapter 4, I examine the relationship between pleasure and the forms of cognition associated with φρόνησις, including memory, desire, judgment and knowledge.

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97 One exception is *Philebus* 28d5-9, where Socrates asks whether the universe is ruled by “unreason and irregularity” (τὴν τοῦ ἄλογου καὶ εἰκῇ δύναμιν) or “governed by reason and by the order of a wonderful intelligence” (νοῦν καὶ φρόνησιν τῶν θαυμαστὴν συγκυβερνῶν).
Chapter 3
Pleasure and Αἴσθησις

In this chapter I examine the different ways in which pleasure is related to αἴσθησις, referring to the detailed treatment of αἴσθησις in the *Timaeus* in order to illuminate the account of αἴσθησις and the pleasures associated with it in the *Philebus*. I argue that Plato distinguishes between two distinct types of αἴσθησις and that different types of pleasure are related to these two types of αἴσθησις in different ways. Bodily pleasures just are examples of one type of αἴσθησις. Some of the pure and true pleasures also involve αἴσθησις, but their relationship to αἴσθησις is relational and by no means one of identity. The pure and true pleasures of sight and hearing are responses to the second type of αἴσθησις; like judgments, they are purely psychic and they are produced by the soul’s own rational activity rather than motions which impinge on the soul from without. For this reason, the pure and true pleasures of sight and hearing do not differ essentially from those pure and true pleasures which occur independently of αἴσθησις, such as the pleasures of learning.

Although there is a unified account of αἴσθησις in several late Platonic dialogues, I argue that at least in the *Timaeus* and *Philebus* there is a distinction between two types of αἴσθησις, 1) pleasant or painful αἴσθησις, which does not have an object and 2) object-directed, hedonically neutral αἴσθησις. In the *Timaeus* these two types of αἴσθησις, which I will refer to as mean-state and like-to-like αἴσθησις respectively, are given different physiological explanations and even involve different parts of the human soul. Since αἴσθησις is a broad category which covers the

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98 The pure pleasures of learning do not involve αἴσθησις at all. I will argue in section 4 below that those pure pleasures which involve αἴσθησις are not essentially different from those which do not. According to my interpretation, all pure pleasures are psychic rather than bodily, even those which are responses to certain types of αἴσθησις. The pure pleasures of smell are the one exception, and yet Socrates himself hesitates to include pleasures of smell in the class of pure pleasures, and he calls them a “less divine class of pleasures” (ἡττον μὲν τούτων θεῖον γένος ἡδονῶν, 51e1-2).

99 This first type of αἴσθησις is close to what some modern philosophers call “raw feels” in that it does not involve intentionality. In other words, pleasant or painful αἴσθησις does not involve an awareness “of” anything. This does not mean that this type of αἴσθησις has no qualitative features at all, but rather that these features do not represent any object analogous to the objects of sight, hearing or other examples of object-directed αἴσθησις. In what follows, I will also refer to pleasant and painful αἴσθησις as bodily pleasure and pain, since, like all types of αἴσθησις it is constituted in part by bodily changes or affections (παθήματα). This type of pleasure and pain is explicitly contrasted with purely psychic pleasure and pain at *Philebus* 32c.
semantic ranges of both “sensation” and “perception”, I leave the Greek term untranslated throughout. Ultimately, I argue that there are two quite different processes which affect both the body and the soul, and as a result there are two types of perceptual experience. Although Plato does not have the philosophical vocabulary to make a clear terminological distinction between these two types of αἴσθησις, he does make a clear conceptual distinction by means of various kinds of periphrasis.

Unlike these two types of αἴσθησις, bodily and pure pleasures are not species of a single genus, and there is no general account that encompasses both. The fact that these two types of pleasure are related in different ways to different types of αἴσθησις is a symptom of the essential differences between them. These differences ultimately explain the different ways in which Socrates evaluates bodily and pure pleasures at the end of the dialogue.

The distinctions I draw in this chapter explain the ambivalence of Plato’s attitude towards both αἴσθησις and pleasure in many of the later dialogues, including the Timaeus and Philebus. For example, in the Timaeus αἴσθησις is the first capacity embodied human souls have, and it “arises out of forceful disturbances” (42a). At the same time, it is through αἴσθησις, and in particular

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100 For example, in the Theaetetus αἴσθησις includes things like “feeling cold” (ὁ μὲν ἡμῶν ῥίγῳ, 152b3). Cf. also the list of αἴσθησεις at 156b, which include pleasures and pains and feeling cold and hot (ψύξεις τε καὶ καύσεις, 156b4) in addition to sights, sounds and smells.

101 Both types of αἴσθησις I distinguish in this chapter are described as ways of being passively affected by the movements of physical objects (originating either in the body or in objects external to the body). In the late dialogues, Plato seems to consistently distinguish between αἴσθησις and judgment (δόξα) about the objects of αἴσθησις, at least in his description of the psychological processes involved, if not in his colloquial uses of the verb αἴσθάνομαι (see especially Theaetetus 186c and Philebus 38b-39c). Plato clearly does not have the same concept of “perception” as philosophers who think of it as something that implicitly involves judgment. Nevertheless, he does distinguish between a type of αἴσθησις by which we acquire information about the external world and another type of αἴσθησις by which the soul is affected by the condition of the body. Therefore, “perception” and “sensation” still seem to be the best terms in English for capturing the conceptual contrast that comes out of the discussions of αἴσθησις in the Timaeus and Philebus.

102 Hamlyn (1958) argues that Plato assimilates perception to sensation in his use of αἴσθησις in the late dialogues, especially the Theaetetus (22). In his discussion of Plato’s account of αἴσθησις in Sensation and Perception: A History of the Philosophy of Perception (1961) he again focuses on the Theaetetus, especially the physiological explanation of αἴσθησις presented by Socrates at 156a ff in response to Protagoras’ measure doctrine. He claims that this theory resembles the account of αἴσθησις provided in the Timaeus, citing 67c (13). I will not go into the differences between the account of αἴσθησις in the Timaeus and the “twins account” in the Theaetetus here, but see Fine (1988) for some of them (20-21). I am in agreement with Fine that the Timaeus presents Plato’s own account of αἴσθησις, and that this account differs significantly from the “twins account” in the Theaetetus (156a-157a). Hamlyn does not notice the conceptual distinction between two types of αἴσθησις in Plato because he does not look in the right place for it. In the Theaetetus Plato discusses αἴσθησις in the context of an epistemological inquiry, whereas only in the Timaeus and Philebus does he attempt an explanation of the physiological and psychological processes which underlie it.
through sight and hearing, that it is possible for human beings to restore the rational orbits of their soul (47a-e), and ultimately become like gods. Furthermore, in the Philebus, some pleasures are false or harmful, causing disease and madness (e.g. 40e-42c, 45a-46a), while others are intrinsically good features of the best human life (51b-53c, 66c). Whereas some forms of pleasure and αἴσθησις pose a threat to reason, others either leave the rational part of the soul unaffected or actually promote psychic order and rationality.

1 The General Account of Αἴσθησις in Plato’s Late Dialogues

In the Philebus, Timaeus and Theaetetus, αἴσθησις involves a movement (κίνησις) of both the body and the soul. There is an explicitly causal connection between the material change in the body and the psychic effect of this change in any αἴσθησις.¹⁰³ If a bodily change occurs without any effect on the soul, or if the soul experiences the same kind of effect from a different cause,¹⁰⁴ then no αἴσθησις is produced. The general accounts of αἴσθησις in the late dialogues do not attribute any other necessary features to αἴσθησις except that it is a movement (κίνησις) or affection (πάθος) of both the body and the soul. In particular, these accounts do not identify intentionality or the property of being directed at an object as an essential feature of αἴσθησις.

In the Philebus Socrates gives the following characterization of αἴσθησις in the course of distinguishing between bodily pleasures and the pleasures that belong to the soul alone.

\[ \{ \Sigma \Omega \} \text{ Τὸ δ’ ἐν ἑνὶ πάθει τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὸ σῶμα κοινῇ γιγνόμενον κοινῇ καὶ κανεῖσθαι, ταύτην δ’ ἀν τὴν κίνησιν ὀνομάζων αἴσθησιν ὅπερ ἀπὸ τρόπου φθέγγοι' ἂν.} \]

Soc.: But when the soul and the body are jointly affected and moved by one and the same affection, if you call this motion perception, you would say nothing out of the way. (Philebus 34a3-5)

Socrates identifies αἴσθησις in this passage as a particular type of movement (κίνησις). He describes this movement both as “common” (κοινόν) to the body and the soul and as “one affection” (ἐνὶ πάθει), implying that αἴσθησις is partly constituted by a bodily movement. At the

¹⁰³ Evans (2007, 77-8) and Tuozzo (1994, 501) both draw attention to the causal force of the verbs “accomplish” (ἀπεργάζονται) and “produce” (ποιοῦσιν) in Socrates’ distinction between perceptible and imperceptible bodily changes at Philebus 43b-c.

¹⁰⁴ For example, the lingering motions in the soul which cause dreams at Timaeus 46a do not qualify as αἰσθῆσεις. These motions form representations (φαντάσματα, 46a2), and these representations, “though formed within, are recalled upon waking as external objects.”
very least, the adjective κοίνον describes a close relationship of causation between the psychic and bodily movements, which are both necessary for the production of αἴσθησις. Even if the movement of the body is partly constitutive of αἴσθησις, as this description implies, Socrates’ distinction between αἴσθησις and ἀναισθησία (34a1) shows that this applies only to those bodily movements which are also movements of the soul, for some bodily movements leave the soul unaffected (cf. 33d and 43c).\textsuperscript{105}

On the surface, the account of ἀναισθησία seems to conflict with Socrates’ description of αἴσθησις as a single affection of the body and the soul, for bodily movements fail to produce αἴσθησις when they are “extinguished within the body before they reach the soul, leaving it unaffected” (τὰ μὲν ἐν τῷ σώματι κατασβεννύμενα πρὶν ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν διεξελθεῖν ἀπαθή ἔκεινην ἔσαντα, 33d3-4). Other movements “pass through both [the body and the soul]” (τὰ δὲ δὲ άμφοῖν ἰόντα, 33d4), and yet Socrates says that a movement of this kind is “peculiar” (ἵδιον) as well as common to each (ἵδιόν τε καὶ κοινὸν ἑκατέρῳ, 33d5-6). When taken literally, the description of the movement failing to “penetrate through to the soul” (ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν διεξελθεῖν) in the case of ἀναισθησία implies that there is a spatial distinction between the body and the soul in the Philebus. This suggests that the body and the soul are clearly distinguishable entities, one dwelling somewhere within the other, and that they have their own distinct movements (cf. Timaeus 43c and Theaetetus 186b-c). The description of the relationship between the soul and the body in the Timaeus confirms that there is a spatial distinction between the soul and the body, but only in a limited respect. Timaeus associates the soul very closely with marrow (μυελός, 73b2), claiming that “life’s chains, as long as the soul remains bound to the body, are bound within the marrow” (οἱ γὰρ τοῦ βίου δεσμοί, τῆς ψυχῆς τῷ σώματι συνδουμένης, ἐν τούτῳ διαδούμενοι, 73b3-4). In the context of describing the formation of the human body, Timaeus notes that the god wrapped the “most ensouled” (ἐμψυχότατα, 74e1) bones with a very thin layer of flesh, which explains the relative sensitivity and intelligence of the head (ἐνασθητοτέρα μὲν καὶ φρονιμωτέρα, 75c6).\textsuperscript{106} The “most ensouled”, and thus most sensitive and intelligent, bones are presumably those which contain the most marrow. The claim that some bodily parts are more

\textsuperscript{105} The description of αἴσθησις as a single affection of the entire organism, including both the body and soul, supports my interpretation of the living body as a single mixture of limit and unlimited and the related argument that bodily pleasure and pain are restorations and destructions of the entire organism, rather than either the body or the soul alone (Chapter 2, Section 3). See also Section 2 below for my argument that bodily pleasure and pain just are types of αἴσθησις, rather than responses to αἴσθησις or distinct psychic phenomena that merely accompany it on some occasions. Thus, restorations and destructions are the common movements of the body and soul which constitute bodily pleasure and pain respectively.
or less ensouled than others suggests an alternative interpretation of the spatial distinction between the body and the soul; instead of imagining a movement that penetrates through the body and strikes the soul, conceived as a spatially distinct entity, Plato may intend rather that the movement passes from less to more ensouled parts of the body, i.e. from the outer flesh and sinews to the marrow that lies within. Since marrow is itself bodily, it is appropriate to describe this movement identified with αἰσθήσις as “common” to both the body and the soul.

In the *Timaeus*, αἰσθήσις is a direct result of the embodiment of human souls in mortal bodies. The initial attitude towards αἰσθήσις in the *Timaeus* is negative, precisely because αἰσθήσις is one of the consequences of embodiment (42a), something that distinguishes humans from gods, and the cause of disorderedly motions in human souls (43c-e). In this context, Timaeus gives the following etymology of αἰσθήσις.

ὑπὸ πάντων τούτων διὰ τοῦ σώματος αἱ κινήσεις ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν φερόμεναι προσπάπτοντες, αἱ δὴ καὶ ἐπείτα διὰ ταύτα ἐκλήθησάν τε καὶ νῦν ἐτὶ αἰσθήσεις συνάπασαι κέκληται.

The motions produced by all these encounters [between the body and objects in the environment] would then be conducted through the body to the soul, and strike against it. (That is no doubt why these motions as a group came afterward to be called “sensations,” as they are still called today.) (*Timaeus* 43c4-7)

This description of the movements which produce αἰσθήσις shares the essential features of the account of αἰσθήσις in the *Philebus*, since here it is likewise a movement (κίνησις) that affects the soul (ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν φερόμεναι) through the body (διὰ τοῦ σώματος). Unlike the account in the *Philebus*, this account of αἰσθήσις recognizes that the motions of the body are ultimately caused by the motions of objects in the environment. The negative portrayal of αἰσθήσις can be seen in the participle φερόμεναι, which when taken with the preposition ἐπὶ has a violent connotation, meaning something like “strikes” or “attacks”. The etymology of the name αἰσθήσις is obscure, but Zeyl (2000) suggests that Plato thinks αἰσθήσις is related to the verb αἴσσειν, which means “to shake” (*ad loc*). This proposal is supported by the fact that the motions which move both the body and the soul are described as a kind of “shaking” (ὡςπερ σεισμὸν, 33d) in the *Philebus*. In addition to emphasizing the negative impact of αἰσθήσις on the soul, the

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106 Timaeus identifies the whole brain as μυελός (73c8-d1), and so the term has a much broader meaning than suggested by the translation “marrow”. The brain is where the gods place “the divine seed” (τὸ θεῖον σπέρμα, 73c7), and yet they also bind the mortal parts of the soul to marrow that is located in other parts of the body (73d2-e1).
etymology of αἴσθησις also confirms that this is a description of αἴσθησις in general rather than one that only applies to a particular type of αἴσθησις.

Essentially the same definition of αἴσθησις appears again in the *Theaetetus*. The objects of αἴσθησις play a big role in this part of the dialogue, for this is where Socrates famously distinguishes between the properties of objects that are directly perceived through the senses and those that are judged by the soul alone. Socrates says the following about the first group of properties.

\{ ΣΩ. \} Ούκοὖν τὰ μὲν εὐθὺς γενομένοις πάρεστι φύσει αἰσθάνεσθαι ἀνθρώπους τε καὶ θηρίους, ὅσα δὲ τοῦ σώματος παθήματα ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τείνει·

Soc.: And thus there are some things which all creatures, man and animals alike, are naturally able to perceive as soon as they are born; I mean the experiences which reach the soul through the body. (*Theaetetus* 186b11-c2)

In the first half of this sentence, τὰ seems to refer to the objects of αἴσθησις, i.e. the things which humans and animals are able to perceive from birth. However, ὅσα...παθήματα picks up this τὰ in the second half of the sentence, and this refers to the motions that reach the soul through the body, rather than the external objects which are the ultimate causes of these motions. What is “ready at hand” (πάρεστι) for all animals and humans as soon as they are born is the awareness of the motions that affect both the body and the soul, but the passage does not explain how these motions involve an awareness of external objects or whether all such motions are directed at objects in this way.\(^\text{107}\)

Interestingly, none of these passages identify intentionality, or the property of being directed at an object, as a necessary feature of αἴσθησις. As a matter of fact, the account of αἴσθησις in the *Philebus* as a joint movement of the body and the soul actually discourages thinking about αἴσθησις as a faculty that is directed at the external world. Although external objects are mentioned in the *Timaeus* and *Theaetetus* as the ultimate causes of αἴσθησις, there is nothing to indicate that the movements identified with αἴσθησις produce or constitute any awareness of

\(^{107}\) When compared with the definitions of perception in the *Philebus* and *Timaeus*, there is something awkward and circular about the claim in the *Theaetetus* that animals and humans perceive (αἰσθάνεσθαι) the παθήματα that affect both the body and the soul, since these παθήματα were identified with perception rather than the objects of perception in the *Philebus* and *Timaeus*. Since the phrasing in the *Theaetetus* is otherwise so close to that of the other two definitions, I think the discrepancy is due to a rather loose way of speaking rather than any substantive difference in the characterization of perception. After all, Socrates' aim in this passage is not just to define perception, but rather to contrast the faculties of perception (αἴσθησις) and calculation (λόγισμος).
these objects in the soul. As they stand, these descriptions of αἴσθησις leave open but do not commit Plato to the possibility that αἴσθησις either sometimes or always involves intentionality.

In the remainder of this chapter, I argue that there are two types of αἴσθησις in Plato’s later dialogues, which I call mean-state and like-to-like αἴσθησις respectively. These two types of αἴσθησις are partly constituted by different types of bodily movements, and yet they both fall under the general descriptions of αἴσθησις outlined here. Although these passages do not specify the way in which the movements that constitute αἴσθησις produce awareness of external objects in the soul, they are sufficiently general to leave open such an account. However, I argue that this generality is necessary, because mean-state αἰσθήσεις are not directed at the external world and in fact have no object at all. In the following section I argue that bodily pleasures and pains just are αἰσθήσεις of this sort, rather than a distinct type of psychic phenomena that merely accompany certain αἰσθήσεις.

2 Bodily Pleasure and Pain and Mean-State Αἴσθησις

According to the Philebus, bodily pleasure and pain are caused by movements relative to the natural, harmonious condition of a living body. In both the Timaeus and the Philebus αἰσθήσεις are described as disturbances (βιαιῶν παθημάτων, Timaeus 42a5-6; ὥσπερ σεισμὸν, Philebus 33d5), and these disturbances are also contrasted with the natural, undisturbed condition of the body and soul, which in the Philebus is identified as a harmonious mixture (Timaeus 64d1-2, 66c5, 67a5-6, Philebus 25e, 31c-d, 32e, 44d-43d). At 25e Socrates classifies health as one of the members of the third class in his fourfold division of being, which is the class of proportionate mixtures produced by the imposition of limit upon unlimited elements. Socrates applies the definition of a mixture to health by asking Protarchus, “Is it not true that in sickness the right combination of opposites establishes the state of health?” (25e7-8). The “right” combination (ὀρθὴ κοινωνία) refers to the proper limit or proportion of the various elements that make up the body and the “opposites” (τούτων, referring back to τάναντιά at 25e1) refers to the unlimited elements themselves. Throughout the rest of the dialogue, Socrates refers to this third class of being, which includes health and harmony, both as the “mixed” class and as the

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108 See Chapter 2, Section 3 for my argument that the relevant harmonious mixture is the whole living organism, including both its body and its soul.

109 Τρίτον τὸ μεικτὸν ἐκ τούτων, 25b5; τρίτον μεικτὴν καὶ γεγενημένην οὐσίαν, 27b8-9; σύμμειξις, 23d7; 64c5; 65a4.
“common kind”. He also refers to the healthy condition of the living body as a harmony and as an animal’s nature or natural condition.

Before defining αἴσθησις, Socrates first illustrates the relationship between the harmonious condition of a living body and bodily pleasure and pain. He identifies bodily pain and pleasure with the destruction and restoration of the harmonious condition of the living body respectively (31d4-10). Later, in the course of an account of the psychic pleasures and pain of expectation, Socrates gives a general definition of αἴσθησις, according to which αἴσθησις is any affection or change (πάθος) which moves both the body and the soul. Bodily pleasure and pain qualify as types of αἴσθησις, for as restorations and destructions of a living body, they are both joint movements of the body and the soul. In a later passage Socrates specifically notes that some bodily changes are too small to penetrate through the body and affect the soul (43b-c), and so do not cause pleasure or pain, confirming that bodily pleasure and pain necessarily involve movements that are common to both the body and the soul.

The harmonious condition itself is neither pleasant nor painful (42d-e), and the experiences of bodily pleasure and pain differ from one another as a result of their different relationships (restoration and destruction respectively) to this neutral condition. Some bodily changes are too small or gradual to disrupt the harmonious condition, and since these bodily changes do not affect the soul, they are neither pleasant nor painful. The example Socrates gives of such a bodily change is growth (43b). However, not only is growth neither pleasant nor painful, but it is completely imperceptible, at least while it is occurring. As Protarchus points out, “Almost all of these processes totally escape our notice (λέληθε)” (43b5-6). This same verb (λανθάνειν) was used to distinguish αἴσθησις from ἀναισθησία earlier in the dialogue (33e10-34a1). These two passages suggest that bodily pleasure and pain are αἰσθήσεις involving deviations from the harmonious condition, and since this condition serves as a kind of mean state relative to the deviations that produce bodily pleasure and pain, I will refer to bodily pleasure and pain as mean-state αἰσθήσεις. The

110 ἐν τῷ κοινῷ...γένει, 31c2.
111 τῆς ἁρμονίας μὲν λυομένης...ἐν τοῖς ζῴοις, 31d4-5; Πάλιν δὲ ἁρμοττομένης τε καὶ εἰς τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν ἀπιούσης, 31d8-9.
112 τὸ ἐκ τῆς ἀπέρου καὶ πέρατος κατὰ φύσιν ἐμμιγχον γεγενός ἔδος, 31a9-b1; λύσιν τῆς φύσεως, 31d5; εἰς τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν ἀπιούσης, 31d8-9; τῆς φύσεως ἐκάτω διαφθειρομένης, 42c9; Εἰς δὲ γε τὴν αὐτῶν φύσιν ὅταν καθιστήται, 42d5.
imperceptibility of the harmonious condition as opposed to the painful and pleasant \textit{αἰσθήσεις} associated with large bodily changes (43c-d) demonstrates that at least one type of movement that affects both the body and the soul is movement relative to the mean condition.

In the \textit{Timaeus}, bodily pleasure and pain are likewise associated with the restoration and destruction of the natural condition of the body and soul (64c-d, 65a-b, 81d). As in the \textit{Philebus}, Timaeus characterizes \textit{αἰσθήσεις} as a movement which penetrates through the body and affects the soul (\textit{Timaeus} 43c). The first discussion of \textit{αἰσθήσεις} in the \textit{Timaeus} occurs in the context of Timaeus’ description of the binding together of the soul and the body (43-7). Even though the \textit{Timaeus} passage does not explicitly identify the harmonious condition of the body as an imperceptible mean-state in relation to perceptible deviations from this state, throughout the detailed analysis of the various perceptible properties at \textit{Timaeus} 61-69, and especially in the description of pleasant and painful \textit{αἰσθήσεις} at 64a-65b, Timaeus repeatedly refers to the changes that produce \textit{αἰσθήσεις} as various types of restoration and destruction.\footnote{Restorations: “the equally intense departure, leading back to the natural state” (τὸ δὲ εἰς φύσιν ἀπίον πάλιν ἀδρόν, 64d1-2), “return to its former state” (πάλιν ἐπὶ ταῦταν ἀπίοισις ἐδω, 64e1), “reconstituted” (συγκρίσει, 64e4), “when they are once again restored to [their natural condition]” (καθιστάμενα δὲ εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ πάλιν, 65a1), “replenishments” (πληρώσεις, 65a3), “restorations to their former states” (εἰς ταὐτὸν πάλιν ἐπίσης καθάσταται, 65a7-b1), “they decisively restore all those parts back to their natural position” (πάνθ᾽ ὃ μᾶλλον ὑδής κατὰ φύσιν, 66c5), “the former soothes that area and welcomes it back to its natural state” (τὸ δὲ ταῦταν τούτῳ καταπραῖνον καὶ πάλιν ἧ ἐπέθεκεν ἀγαπητῶς ἀποδιδὸν, 67a5-6).}

Matthew Evans has recently offered several objections to the view that bodily pain is a type of \textit{αἰσθήσεις} in the \textit{Philebus}.\footnote{Evans, M. (2007), “Plato and the Meaning of Pain,” \textit{Apeiron} 40: 71-93. Although Evans focuses on bodily pain, he intends this account to apply to bodily pleasure as well.} Evans’ first objection is that the identification of bodily pain as

\footnote{Destructions: “anything that is being unnaturally compressed” (τὸ δὲ παρὰ φύσιν συναγόμενον, 62b2-3), “unnatural disturbance” (τὸ μὲν παρὰ φύσιν καὶ βίαιον...πάθος, 64c8-d1), “cuttings and burnings” (τομαὶ καὶ κάυσεις, 66d7-8), “severed” (διακρίσει, 64e4), “when they are alienated from their natural condition” (ἀλλοτριούμενα, 65a2), “contractions and dilations” (διὰ συγκρίσεων τὲ τινῶν καὶ διακρίσεων, 65c4-5), “violent disturbances” (τῶν βιαιῶν παθημάτων, 66c6-7) “the latter of these irritates and violates the whole upper body” (τὸ μὲν τραχῦν τὸ κύτου ἀπεπέθεκε καὶ βιαζόμενον τὸ κύτου ἀπαν, 67a4). In fact, Plato often describes restorations by periphrasis as returns to the natural condition (e.g. 64d1-2, 66c5, 67a5-6).}
αἴσθησις contradicts Socrates’ statement at 32b2-3 that pain is a destruction (τὴν μὲν φθορὰν λύπην ἐλναι). Evans himself identifies the destruction referred to here as a psychic destruction; however, all of Socrates’ examples of destruction up to this point in the dialogue have been destructions of the body. For example, hunger and thirst are described as “disintegration” (λύσις, 31e6) and a state of being “dried out” (τὸ ξηρανθὲν, 32a1) respectively. While it is possible that λύσις is used here in some metaphorical sense to refer to a psychic condition, it is highly doubtful that Socrates would refer to the soul as dried out, even metaphorically. “The unnatural coagulation of fluids (τῆς υγρότητος τῆξις) in an animal through freezing” (32a6-7) is another destruction identified with pain, which cannot be taken as a psychic destruction, unless one conceives of the soul as a material entity at least partly composed of some type of fluid. Although it makes better sense of Socrates’ examples, the problem with interpreting the destruction in the identity thesis as a bodily destruction is that bodily destructions are often too minor or gradual to produce αἴσθησις (43c).

Each of these interpretations, that the destruction mentioned at 32b2-3 is either entirely bodily or entirely psychic, presents difficulties, and yet there is a third possibility that Evans does not consider. τὴν μὲν φθορὰν could refer to the destruction of the condition of the living body, including both the body and the soul. This reading is supported by the description that of the relevant destruction as a process which occurs “in an animal” (τοῦ ζώου, 32a6), not in either the body or the soul alone. If this interpretation is correct, then in this passage Socrates emphasizes the sense in which αἴσθησις in general is a movement that is “common” (κοινόν) to the soul and the body. In Section 1 above I argued that the description of αἴσθησις as a single affection shows that αἴσθησις is partly constituted by bodily movements. Just as αἴσθησις is a common movement of the soul and body, bodily pain is the destruction of an animal as a whole, including both the body and the soul. This interpretation makes sense both of Socrates’ identification of pain with a certain type of destruction and of the examples he uses to illustrate this account.116

116 Evans makes another objection to the view that bodily pleasure and pain are examples of αἴσθησις that is closely related to this one. He rejects the thought that bodily pleasure and pain necessarily involve bodily changes, which is my interpretation of the reason they are called “common” movements of the body and soul. Evans argues that the identification of bodily pleasure and pain with αἴσθησις fails to explain the existence of what he calls “phantom pains”. By phantom bodily pains he means instances in which “the psyche of some bodily undamaged animal is affected, via some deviant causal chain, in just the way it would be affected if it were being affected by bodily damage” (80, original emphasis). According to Evans, a defender of the interpretation that bodily pain is a type of αἴσθησις must deny either that an animal is in pain when it undergoes a phantom bodily pain, or that phantom bodily pains are possible (80). However, there is a third possible explanation of phantom bodily pains, which is that phantom pains are not bodily pains at all, but rather psychic ones. If I am correct that bodily pain is a type of αἴσθησις, then like all αἴσθησις it is necessarily caused by some movement or change in the body, otherwise there
Evans also objects that identifying bodily pain as a type of \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma \) fails to explain the “distinctive causal power of pain” (81). This objection rests on the assumption that intentionality is a necessary feature of \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma \) and that those who claim that bodily pain is an \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma \) characterize it as an \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma \) that has a bodily destruction as its object. If bodily pain is an \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma \) of bodily destruction, Evans argues that there is no way to distinguish it from non-painful ways of perceiving this same destruction, such as seeing or touching it. Evans’ objection in fact points to an interesting distinction between pleasant and painful \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma\)s that are directed at the external world, and yet his solution is to deny that bodily pain is a type of \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma \) rather than to consider whether there is some difference in the physiological process underlying these two types of \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma \) which might explain their distinctive features.

Visual \( \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\varsigma\)s differ from bodily pains in two important ways: 1) they have an intentional object (in this case, bodily destruction) which they represent clearly and in detail, and 2) they do not by themselves (independently of reason) cause animal movement. Bodily pain on the other hand does not involve any direct and specific awareness of bodily damage, and yet any creature experiencing bodily pain responds instantly, without any need for reflection. These differences are best illustrated with an example. Suppose someone without the capacity to feel bodily pain unknowingly touches a hot stove. She would not remove her hand until she saw red blisters forming, and thus realized that bodily damage was occurring. She would remove her hand only because she happened to know that blisters are a sign of damage to her hand. One can imagine a less cognitively sophisticated animal with this same inability to experience bodily pain failing to realize that these changes were detrimental, and so failing to respond. By contrast, anyone with the normal capacity for experiencing bodily pain would remove her hand instantly from a hot stove, before the bodily destruction causing the pain was even visually perceptible. The fact that even the most cognitively limited animal would react similarly shows that this movement is caused solely by the inherent motivational force of the experience itself and not by any direct awareness of bodily damage.

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would be no movement that could be described as “common” (κοινόν) to both the body and the soul. Since they do not involve any bodily movement, phantom pains are analogous to the experiences we have in dreams that seem like perceptual experiences but are in reality some other type of psychic phenomenon. Plato provides an explanation for the pseudo-perceptual experiences we have in dreams at Timaeus 46a.
The descriptions of bodily pleasure and pain in the late dialogues show that Plato was alive to a
distinction between two types of αἴσθησις, one that has no object and is inherently motivating (i.e.
bodily pleasure and pain), and another that is directed at external objects and which lacks any
inherent motivational force (i.e. sights and sounds that are not physically pleasant or painful). In
the Philebus, bodily pleasure and pain are nowhere characterized as intentional psychic
experiences, and there is some textual evidence that they do not possess the structure of
intentionality. I have argued so far in this section that bodily pleasure and pain qualify as
αἰσθήσεις, and in Section 1 I showed that none of the general definitions of αἰσθήσεις in the late
dialogues identify intentionality as a necessary feature. The language Socrates uses to describe
bodily pleasure or pain characterizes them merely as movements, rather than suggesting any
relationship of intentionality. This is not because Plato did not have a way of describing the
relationship of intentionality, since Socrates clearly indicates that desire has an intentional object
by describing it as “for” something (34e-35c). Socrates indicates the intentionality of desire by
putting the object of the desire in the genitive, either with the noun (e.g. desire “for the filling with
drink”, πληρώσεως πώματος, 35a1), or with the verb (e.g. “he who has a desire desires
something”, ὦ γε ἐπιθυμῶν τινὸς ἐπιθυμεῖ, 35b1). On the contrary, neither bodily pleasure nor pain
takes a grammatical object, nor is the intentionality of bodily pleasure indicated through any other
syntactical means.\footnote{There is one possible exception at 35a, where Socrates envisions a case of a subject who is emptied for the first
time, and so is not “in touch with filling, either through sensation or memory” (ἐἴτ’ αἰσθήσει πληρώσεως ἐφάπτεσθαι ἂν εἴτε μνήμῃ, 35a6-7). The verb ἐφάπτεσθαι is part of the vocabulary Plato uses to describe the relationship of
intentionality, and yet it is important to note that here he is primarily discussing the intentionality of desire, rather
than that of memory or ἄσθησις. According to my interpretation, ἄσθησις is one way that desire can be “in touch”
with filling, not because the filling is the object of ἄσθησις in the case of bodily pleasure, but rather because bodily
pleasure is identical with the filling (or any other type of restoration) of the living body, i.e. the body-soul
compound. I would like to thank Verity Harte for bringing this passage to my attention.}
Instead, pleasure and pain are often described as simply “being generated” or
“arising” (31c3, 31d6).\footnote{Evans (2007) argues that bodily pain and pleasure are intentional precisely by identifying bodily pain and desire
(87-8). He bases this claim on the fact that Socrates at one point calls hunger and thirst bodily pains (31e6, 31e10)
and at another identifies them as desires (34d10-c1). However, the analysis of desire differs substantially from that
of bodily pain. For one thing, desire requires the ability to recall previous experiences of pleasure (35b11-c2), while
bodily pain does not. Socrates even says that a creature experiencing bodily pain for the first time would not have
desire, since it would lack the memory of the corresponding pleasure (35b6-10). It is true that Socrates uses “thirst”
(δίψος) as an example both in the analysis of bodily pain and in that of desire; however, this can be explained by the
progression of the dialogue and by the natural ambiguity of the word. In English as well as in Greek it is perfectly
possible to use “thirst” to refer either to the pain of being thirsty or to the desire for drink.}
Gosling and Taylor (1982) recognize the difficulty of trying to identify the intentional object of bodily pleasure or pain (180-3). One possibility they consider is that bodily restoration (or destruction) is the intentional object of bodily pleasure (or pain). However, when subjects experience bodily pleasure or pain, they are not aware of the change in their body in the same way that they are aware of the objects of sight or hearing (182). Gosling and Taylor suggest that perhaps the natural aversion to pain signals some dim awareness that the object of pain is a bodily destruction. Unfortunately, this solution does not explain the difference between the way bodily pain is related to its supposed “object” and the much more straightforward relationship between other types of αἰσθήσεις and their objects; in most cases the subject is directly aware of the object of αἰσθήσεις and not just “dimly” aware of it. If bodily pleasure and pain are intentional in some less perfect sense than other types of αἰσθήσεις, then there must be some explanation for this difference. Gosling and Taylor end up suggesting that Plato had “not thought through the question of what bodily pleasure is a perception of, or he assumed that it is of replenishment” (182). This explanation is uncharitable and unlikely given the careful and detailed analysis of bodily pleasure and pain in both the Timaeus and Philebus. The best way to avoid the difficulty of identifying the intentional object of bodily pleasure is not to assume it has one.

The account of bodily pleasures and pains in Plato’s Philebus nowhere suggests that they have intentional objects, unlike types of αἰσθήσεις, such as sights and sounds, which are manifestly directed at specific features of external objects. Bodily pleasures and pains do not involve any awareness of specific changes in the body, let alone objects external to the body. On the contrary, bodily pleasures and pains are not described as an awareness of anything in particular, rather than simply positively and negatively valenced psychic experiences (i.e. experiences that cause responses of attraction or aversion). Tuozzo (1994) goes even further, claiming that all pleasures, including both bodily and psychic ones, lack intentional objects (497). One possible motivation for Tuozzo’s strategy of separating pleasure itself, even psychic pleasure, from all

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119 Tuozzo clarifies in a footnote that what he calls “reflective” psychic pleasures are caused by propositional content, although they do not themselves have any object or propositional content (497, n. 9). Instead, he states that they are “psychic epiphenomena…of certain cognitive activities” (497). According to his view, bodily and psychic pleasures do not essentially differ, except with respect to their causes. Tuozzo summarizes the general account of pleasure he extracts from the dialogue as follows: “pleasure may be caused by the image as well as by the reality of bodily or psychic restoration” (513). By contrast, I will argue that the identification between pleasure and restoration applies only to bodily pleasures and not to psychic ones. See Chapter 2, Section 3 for my criticism of the tendency of scholars to appeal to “psychic restorations” in their interpretation of the account of pleasure in the Philebus. I argue that according to the metaphysics introduced before the discussion of pleasure in the dialogue (23c-27c), the soul is not the type of thing that can undergo destruction and restoration independently of the body.
other cognitive processes, including thoughts and judgments in the case of psychic pleasures, is
to support his theory that all pleasures fall under a single, general account in the *Philebus*.\(^{120}\)
Regardless of his full theory, Tuozzo agrees with the view that bodily pleasure and pain are types
of awareness, but not awareness of the particular conditions of the body that cause them, let
alone any objects external to the body. Tuozzo illustrates this point by referencing one of
Socrates’ own examples of bodily pleasure, which is the pleasure an animal experiences when its
body warms up after being excessively cold: “The pleasure caused by such a restoration can
scarcely involve an awareness that one’s frozen internal moisture is melting; the doctor or natural
philosopher is the one who has such knowledge, not the person feeling the pleasure” (505). In
other words, if the condition of the body were the intentional object of bodily pleasure or pain,
then Socrates’ theory about the specific bodily processes involved in these experiences would be
self-evident to every perceiver. Instead, Socrates argues for an unintuitive, theoretical account of
bodily pleasure, which is supported by a very complex and obscure metaphysical framework.

In this section I have argued that bodily pleasure and pain belong to a category of \(a\iota\sigma\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\) which
I have called mean-state \(a\iota\sigma\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\), since they are caused by deviations from the harmonious
condition of a living organism. I have also argued that mean-state \(a\iota\sigma\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\) lacks intentionality,
although it still falls under the general definition of \(a\iota\sigma\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\), since it is a joint movement of the
body and the soul. My thesis that bodily pleasure and pain are non-intentional \(a\iota\sigma\theta\varepsilon\sigma\varsigma\) not only
makes the best sense of Socrates’ account of these psychic phenomena, but it also helps to
explain the ultimate inclusion of these pleasures in the good human life. Since bodily pleasure
and pain are non-intentional, they cannot be classified as true or false, for they have no object
which they can correctly or incorrectly represent.\(^{121}\) The distinction between true and false
pleasures plays a critical role in Socrates’ evaluation of different kinds of pleasures in the
dialogue. Most commentators on the *Philebus* assume that the distinction between true and false
pleasures is exhaustive of all pleasures in the dialogue.\(^{122}\) However, bodily pleasures are not

\(^{120}\) In this respect, the views of Tuozzo and Evans represent opposite extremes, although they both agree that all of
the pleasures discussed in the dialogue fall under a single account. Tuozzo argues that all pleasures are psychic
epiphenomena that lack intentional objects, while Evans argues that all pleasures are intentional and representational
psychic phenomena.

\(^{121}\) Socrates argues for the existence of false pleasure by drawing an analogy between pleasure and belief (36c-40e).
This analogy depends on the fact that pleasure and belief both have objects (37a-b), and so it would not apply to
bodily pleasure or pain if they lack intentionality.

\(^{122}\) E.g. Frede (1992), Gosling (1975), Hackforth (1945).
included among the true pleasures, and these commentators are forced to assume that they are in some way false. Cooper (1997) recognizes the difficulty that if bodily pleasures are false, it is not clear why Socrates would include them in the best human life, and what principled reason he could have for including them while rejecting all other types of false pleasures (723-728). However, if bodily pleasures and pains are not in themselves true or false, as I have argued, then bodily pleasures are correctly described by Socrates as a “harmless” (ἀβλαβές, 63a4) addition to the best life.

3 Like-to-Like Αἴσθησις and Perceiving External Objects

I argued in the previous section that bodily pleasure and pain are caused by movements relative to the harmonious condition of a living body, and yet this same physiological account does not explain αἴσθησις that is hedonically neutral and directed at objects in the external world. In this section I argue that hedonically neutral and object-directed αἴσθησις is a distinct type of αἴσθησις that has a different physiological explanation. In the Philebus Socrates never gives an account of this second type of αἴσθησις, and yet examples of it appear in the dialogue, both in the account of false pleasure at 38b-39c\(^ {123}\) and in the account of the pure and true pleasures at 51b-53c. The Timaeus actually provides a physiological explanation for this second type of αἴσθησις which accounts both for the fact that it is directed at an object and that it is neither pleasant nor painful.

As in the Philebus, in the Timaeus bodily pleasures and pains are αἴσθησις caused by the restoration and destruction of the natural condition of living body (64a2-6, 64c8-d3). In the Philebus, Socrates distinguished between two types of bodily affections, those that affect the soul and those that, because of their smallness, leave the soul unaffected (43c). However, in the Timaeus the size of the bodily affection is not the only factor that determines whether a bodily affection impacts the soul. Timaeus distinguishes material elements in the body that are “easily moved by nature” (τὸ μὲν γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν εὐκίνητον, 64b3) and those that are “the opposite” (τὸ δ’ ἐναντίον, 64b5-6). He gives as examples of the former air and fire, which are the physical elements involved in sight and hearing. By contrast, Timaeus claims that bones and hair are made mostly of earth, and so are hard to move (64c). As a result, even very large disturbances to bones or hair do not affect the soul and so escape our awareness. Timaeus goes on to describe the

\(^{123}\) The αἴσθησις described in this passage is explicitly hedonically neutral. Socrates is describing the way in which we come to false judgments about our perceptions, and he only compares this account of true and false judgment with psychic pleasure, and in particular the pleasure of anticipation, at 39d.
circumstances in which bodily disturbances cause pleasant and painful \(aισθήσεις\) in particular. Timaeus gives sight as an example of a type of \(aισθήσεις\) which is neither pleasant nor painful, despite the fact that it involves fire, which is one of the most readily moved material elements (64d-e). The explanation seems to be that the particles of fire involved in the physical process that causes sight are too easily moved to disrupt the mean-state of the body as a whole and so cause bodily pleasure or pain. Visual \(aισθήσεις\) is “more vivid and clear the more it [the ray of sight] is affected and the greater number of things it encounters and makes contact with [\(εφάπτηται\)], for there is absolutely no violence involved when it is severed and reconstituted” (64e1-4). The explanation for why the destructions and restorations involved in sight do not cause pleasure or pain becomes clearer in the following description of why other types of destructions and restorations do cause pleasure and pain.

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τὰ δ’ ἐκ μειζόνων μερῶν σῶματα μόγις ἐκοντα τῷ δρόμῳ, διαδιδόντα δὲ εἰς ὅλον τὰς κινήσεις, ἦδονα ὑσχει καὶ λύπας, ἀλλοτριούμενα μὲν λύπας, καθιστάμενα δὲ εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ πάλιν ἦδονα.
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Bodies consisting of larger parts, on the other hand, won’t easily give way to what acts upon them. They pass on the motions they receive to the entire body [\(εἰς ὅλον\)], and so they do get pleasures and pains—pains when they are alienated from their natural condition and pleasures when they are once again restored to it. (Timaeus 64e4-65a1)

While certain parts of the body are too difficult to move at all, such as those composed mainly of earth, other parts are very easily moved, and yet the particles involved are too fine and light to pass on their movements to the rest of the body. This passage implies that bodily pleasure and pain are caused by the widespread movement of the body as a whole, and not just isolated parts of it; apparently, isolated disturbances do not disrupt the mean-state of a living body as a whole. However, if sight is not explained by the destruction and restoration of the mean-state of the body, then there must be some other way of accounting for it; otherwise, it is not clear why isolated disturbances should be any more perceptible than those disturbances which are too small or gradual to affect the soul.

Fortunately, the Timaeus does present an alternative explanation for hedonically neutral \(aισθήσεις\). The most detailed account of hedonically neutral \(aισθήσεις\) appears in the account of sight at 45b-46a. Sight is explained by the motions produced in a specific type of matter – the fire that streams from our eyes – which are also caused by the same type of matter – external fire, such as daylight (45c). In other words, vision requires that “like makes contact with like”
(τότε ἐκπίπτον ὁμοίως πρὸς ὁμοίων, 45c3-4). In contrast, bodily pleasure and pain merely require a sufficiently large bodily change, and the properties of the external object that ultimately caused these bodily changes are irrelevant. Despite this difference, like-to-like αἴσθησις is similar to mean-state αἴσθησις in that it is identified as a movement that affects both the body and the soul (45c-d). As a result, both types of psychic experiences qualify as αἰσθήσεις, according to the general definition of αἴσθησις outlined in Section 1 above. Like-to-like αἴσθησις seems to differ from mean-state αἴσθησις in that the transmission of the motions in the fire particles through the body to the soul (45d2) does not necessarily imply the transmission of these motions to the entire body. The only explanation is that isolated disturbances in the body affect the soul, or at least part of the soul, without also affecting the living body as a whole.\textsuperscript{124}

Instead of producing bodily pleasure or pain, the motions involved in like-to-like αἴσθησις produce representations (φαντάσματα)\textsuperscript{125} in the soul of the external objects which caused them (46a). Timaeus gives a very detailed description of how different kinds of representations are produced in sight, which are explained by analogy with the way in which images are produced in a mirror (46a-c). The important point for the purposes of my argument is that the physiological account of like-to-like αἴσθησις not only explains how we come to perceive objects external to the body, but also how these are represented in the soul, so that one can later recall or dream about objects that were first perceived through the body.

One question about the two types of αἴσθησις in the Philebus and Timaeus is whether the same bodily motions can cause both types of αἴσθησις simultaneously, or whether they always occur independently. The possibility of mixed bodily pleasures in the Philebus, which occur, for example, when the body is pained on the outside but pleased within (46b-d), demonstrates that it is at least possible for one subject to experience two distinct αἰσθήσεις simultaneously. The physiological account of sight as an interaction of like elements in the body and environment which does not disturb the mean-state of the body can be extended most easily to auditory

\textsuperscript{124} I will argue below that αἰσθήσεις which affect the living body as a whole just are those αἰσθήσεις which affect the mortal parts of the soul as well as the rational part. According to this interpretation, mean-state αἰσθήσεις are those that affect the appetitive part of the soul and like-to-like αἰσθήσεις are those that affect the rational part.

\textsuperscript{125} I translate φαντάσματα “representations” here instead of “images” in order to leave open the possibility of generalizing the physiological account used to describe sight to any of the senses. The motions involved in hearing, taste, smell and touch likewise produce representations in the soul, since we receive information about external objects through all of these senses.
Even smells, tastes and tactile αἰσθήσεις are sometimes hedonically neutral, or even if they are always pleasant or painful to some extent, they are still often intentional. This suggests that not only the interactions of air or fire in the body with air or fire in the environment cause like-to-like αἰσθήσεις, but the interaction of any of the four elements present in the body with like elements in the environment. By contrast, mean-state αἴσθησις is produced by the movement of parts of the body composed at least partially of water and earth, since these are the only elements that are large enough to affect the organism as a whole.

If mean-state and like-to-like αἴσθησις are often experienced simultaneously, this raises the worry that these two types of αἴσθησις are not really distinct. However, there are circumstances in which each of the two types of αἴσθησις occurs independently. Even when they co-occur, there is evidence in the Timaeus that these two types of αἴσθησις occur in different parts of the soul. For example, most visual and auditory αἰσθήσεις are examples of like-to-like αἴσθησις that occurs independently of mean-state αἴσθησις. Due to the distinctive properties of fire and air particles (i.e. that they are small and fast moving), motions which affect fire and air in the body do not disturb the harmonious condition of the body as a whole, and so they do not cause bodily pleasure or pain. Nevertheless, these motions do affect the soul, and the rational part of the soul in particular.

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126 Since hearing is in most cases neither pleasant nor painful, it cannot be explained by the destruction or restoration of the mean-state of the body, as bodily pleasure and pain are. The description of the physiological process underlying hearing at 67b-c suggests that different types of sounds are caused by different types of motion, just as the motions that cause sight represent the character of the external objects that caused them. For example, rapid and slow motions produce high and low pitched sounds respectively.

127 This is supported by the description of the objects of touch and taste at Theaetetus 185c.

128 However, although earth is evidently involved in certain types of like-to-like αἴσθησις, apparently this is the case only when it is mixed with other types of matter, such as air in the case of taste (66a4). For this reason, hair and bones, which are composed mostly of earth, are completely insensitive (64b6-c5).

129 Although there is no mention of soul parts in the Philebus, the way these two types of perception affect the different soul parts in the Timaeus reveals something about the psychic capacities required for these perceptions, which is relevant to the distinction between the pleasures that are related to these perceptions in the Philebus. Even if Plato has in the Philebus given up the idea that the human soul has parts, he still recognizes that different types of living beings have different cognitive capacities, and the absence or presence of certain cognitive capacities has consequences for the types of pleasure these beings can experience. This can be seen in Socrates' description of the life of pleasure without thought and his conclusion that it is the life of a mollusk and not of a human being (21b-c). See Chapter 1 for my discussion of the significance of the separation of the life of pleasure and the life of thought for the ultimate analysis of different types of pleasure in the dialogue.

130 See my discussion of the role of the rational part of the soul in like-to-like αἴσθησις below.
The existence of living beings which do not possess reason, such as plants or mollusks and other cognitively limited animals, confirms that mean-state αἴσθησις can also occur independently of like-to-like αἴσθησις. It is possible that in human beings every sufficiently large motion of the body, regardless of the type of matter involved, causes like-to-like αἴσθησις, and hence results in some kind of psychic representation of an external object. However, in the Timaeus, pleasant and painful αἴσθησις is attributed not only to humans and other animals, but also to plants (77b5-6). Timaeus describes the type of soul that belongs to a plant as “completely passive” (πάσχον...πάντα, 77b6-7) and without “a natural ability to discern and reflect upon any of its own characteristics” (τῶν αὐτοῦ τι λογίσασθαι κατιδόντι φύσει, 77c2). This description suggests that plants are incapable of like-to-like αἴσθησις, although they are capable of mean-state αἴσθησις. Like-to-like αἴσθησις requires the soul to reflect upon its own motions, for only in this way could the soul recognize the way in which its motions were affected by external motions, and only by becoming aware of these motions would the soul be able to infer anything about the objects in the world which caused them. Since mean-state αἴσθησις occurs independently of like-to-like αἴσθησις in plants, these two types of αἴσθησις must be truly distinct.

The fact that plants are capable of mean-state αἴσθησις but not like-to-like αἴσθησις in the Timaeus also implies that these two types of αἴσθησις affect different parts of the human soul in different ways. Plants only possess the third type of soul, which is located in the midriff, is associated with appetites in humans, and is incapable of reflecting upon itself (77b). Timaeus’ attribution of pleasure and pain along with “irrational sense-perception” (αἰσθήσει ἀλόγῳ, 69d4)

Carpenter (2010) considers some of the possible reasoning and observations behind Plato’s attribution of not only bodily pleasure and pain, but also desire, to plants (296-7). Taking into account the state of natural science at the time Plato was writing the Timaeus, his attribution of sensation and desire to plants is neither philosophically inane nor particularly surprising. In 1880 Charles Darwin published the work The Power of Movement in Plants, and in the last sentence he writes, “It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the tip of the radicule thus endowed [with sensitivity] and having the power of directing the movements of the adjoining parts, acts like the brain of one of the lower animals; the brain being situated within the anterior end of the body, receiving impressions from the sense-organs, and directing the several movements.” More recently, Stephano Mancuso, who runs the only laboratory dedicated to the study of plant intelligence, has contributed to the growing body of research showing that plants have biochemistry, cell biology and electrophysiology similar to the human nervous system. See, for example, František Baluška, Stefano Mancuso, Dieter Volkmann (eds) (2006) Communication in Plants: Neuronal Aspects of Plant Life (Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg). In the preface, they write “Plants are extremely mechanosensitive. Their roots exhibit thigmotropism, which enables them to explore, with an animal-like curiosity, their environment in a continual search for water and solutes, and their shoots sometimes seek support by means of tendrils, assisted in this task by volatiles such as jasmonates” (vi). While these contemporary researches do not straightforwardly attribute sensation and desire to plants, they do attribute capacities that are at least functionally equivalent.

The claim in the Laws that “first childish perceptions are pleasure and pain” (τῶν παιδῶν παιδικὴν ἡδονὴν καὶ λύπην, 6535-6) also suggests that mean-state perception and like-to-like perception are distinct, the former developing before the latter even in human beings.

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132 The claim in the Laws that “first childish perceptions are pleasure and pain” (τῶν παιδῶν παιδικὴν ἡδονὴν ἤνων πρῶτην αἴσθησιν γῆσει καὶ λύσει, 6535-6) also suggests that mean-state perception and like-to-like perception are distinct, the former developing before the latter even in human beings.
to “the mortal kind” of soul (τὸ θνητὸν γένος, 69d5) suggests that bodily pleasure and pain are located in the appetitive part of the soul in humans and other animals as well as in plants.\(^\text{133}\) The fact that bodily pleasure and pain are located in the appetitive part of the soul does not show that mean-state αἰσθήσις affects this part of the soul exclusively. On the contrary, from the moment human souls are put into bodies, αἰσθήσεις, including bodily pleasures and pains, affect the motions of the rational soul (42a-b).\(^\text{134}\) However, according to Timaeus’ account, the human body was specifically designed to limit the effect of the movements of the mortal parts of the soul on the orbits of reason.

\[\text{καὶ διὰ τά ταῦτα δὴ σεβόμενοι μιαίνειν τὸ θεῖον, ὅτι μὴ πάσα ἢν ἀνάγκη, χωρὶς ἔκεινον κατουκάζονσιν εἰς ἄλλην τοῦ σώματος αὐξήσας τὸ θητὸν, ἵσθικόν καὶ ὄρον διοικοδομήσαντες τῆς τε κεφαλῆς καὶ τοῦ στήθους, αὐχένα μεταζύ τιθέντες, ἵν τε ἐκῃ χωρὶς.}\]

In the face of these disturbances,\(^\text{135}\) they [the lesser gods] scrupled to stain the divine soul only to the extent that this was absolutely necessary, and so they provided a home for the mortal soul in another place in the body, away from the other, once they had built an isthmus as a boundary between the head and the chest by situating a neck between them to keep them apart. (\textit{Timaeus} 69d6-e3)\(^\text{136}\)

Despite the gods’ best efforts, the motions associated with bodily pleasure and pain do have an impact on the orbits of reason, at least when the gods first implant the soul in a mortal body (42a, 43a-44c). The impact the motions of bodily pleasure and pain have on the rational soul varies depending on each person’s psychological condition. For example, the rational soul of a newborn is particularly susceptible to disruption by motions coming both from the mortal parts of the soul

\(^{133}\) Timaeus also attributes boldness, fear, anger and expectation to the mortal soul, and yet this is before he distinguishes between the spirited and appetitive parts, and so need not imply that all of these capacities belong to plants which only possess the “third kind of soul” (τοῦ τρίτου ψυχῆς εἴδους, 77b3-4), i.e. the appetitive one.

\(^{134}\) In addition, at \textit{Timaeus} 87a excessive bodily pains are said to affect “the three regions of the soul” (τοῖς τρεῖς τόπους ἐνεχθεῖτα τῆς ψυχῆς), confirming that the effects of bodily pleasure and pain are not confined to the appetitive part of the soul.

\(^{135}\) Referring back to the “dreadful and necessary disturbances” (δεινὰ καὶ ἀναγκαῖα...παθήματα) of the mortal kind of soul, which include pleasure, pain, irrational αἰσθήσις, boldness, fear, anger and expectation (69d1-6).

\(^{136}\) Cf. \textit{Timaeus} 70e-71a where the lesser gods are said to have positioned the appetitive soul around the navel so that it would be as far as possible from the rational soul and so it would “[make] as little clamor and noise as possible, thereby letting the supreme part take its counsel in peace about what is beneficial for one and all” (70-e7-71a2).
and from outside the body, which explain why infants at first lack intelligence (44a-b).

However, the rational part of the soul can become immune to these motions, mastering them instead of being mastered by them (42b-d, 44b-c, 47c, 90c-d). The possibility of restoring the rational soul to its own proper motions suggests that the disturbance of the rational part of the soul is not a necessary part of the psychological process involved in bodily pleasure and pain. Whether or not bodily pleasure and pain affect the motion of the rational part of the soul does not seem to make any difference with respect to whether or not the subject experiences these particular types of αἴσθησις. However, though the rational part of the soul does not appear to play an essential role in the experience of mean-state αἴσθησις, it does play an essential role in like-to-like αἴσθησις, which explains why plants are not capable of experiencing it.

The role of the rational part of the soul in αἴσθησις is outlined in the following passage.

τὸ μὲν γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν εὐκίνητον, ὅταν καὶ βραχὺ πάθος εἰς αὐτὸ ἐμπίπτῃ, διαδίδοσιν κύκλῳ μόρια ἑτερα ἑτερᾳ, ἕως ὅτι πάθος ἐν αὐτῷ πάθος ἐν αὐτῷ ἐλθόντος τῆς δύναμις· τὸ δ’ ἐναντίον ἐδραῖον ὅπερ ἡ γνώμη τὰς ὑπό τινας δύναμις, ἄλλο δὲ οὐ κυνεῖ τῶν πληθών, ὅστε οὐ διαδίδονται μορίων μορίῳ ἄλλων ἄλλως τὸ πρῶτον πάθος ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀκίνητον εἰς τὸ πάν ξρόν γενόμενον ἀναίσθητον παρέσχεν τὸ πάθόν.

When even a minor disturbance affects that which is easily moved by nature, the disturbance is passed on in a chain reaction with some parts affecting others in the same way as they were affected, until it reaches the center of consciousness and reports the property that produced the reaction. On the other hand, something that is hard to move remains fixed and merely experiences the disturbance without passing it on in any chain reaction. It does not disturb any of its neighboring parts, so that in the absence of some parts passing on the disturbance to others, the initial disturbance affecting them fails to move on into the living thing as a whole and renders the disturbance unperceived.

(Timaeus 64b3-c3)

According to this passage, when motions are produced in “that which is easily moved by nature” (τὸ μὲν γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν εὐκίνητον, 64b3), they pass through the body until they reach τὸ φρόνιμον (64b5), which Zeyl (2000) translates as “the center of consciousness”. This translation is seriously misleading, since it suggests that τὸ φρόνιμον, whichever faculty this refers to, is responsible for every type of conscious experience. I interpret τὸ φρόνιμον as a reference to

137 Cf. Aristotle’s explanation of the fact that infants have bad memories at De Memoria 453b4-7: “Infants and very old persons have bad memories, owing to the amount of movement going on within them; for the latter are in process of rapid decay, the former in the process of vigorous growth.”

138 Although, see O’Brien (1997) for an argument in favor of such a view (298-303). O’Brien does not interpret τὸ φρόνιμον as a reference to any particular part of the soul. I am sympathetic with many of O’Brien’s arguments
the rational type of soul, which is located in the head, especially since the head is elsewhere in the Timaeus described as “more intelligent” (φρονημωτέρα) than any other part of the body (75c6).\footnote{This is the most widespread interpretation; cf. Ganson (2005), 9; Brisson (1997), 159-60. However, O’Brien (1984) interprets τὸ φρόνιμον as a part or function of the mortal soul (140, n. 33).}

On the surface, this passage seems to prove too much, attributing to τὸ φρόνιμον an indispensable role in every αἴσθησις, rather than in like-to-like αἴσθησις in particular.\footnote{Brisson (1997) argues extensively for this reading, and it is also endorsed by Carpenter (2010) and (2008). However, Carpenter (2010) raises a puzzle about the necessary role of τὸ φρόνιμον in every instance of αἴσθησις. As she points out, Timaeus also attributes αἴσθησις to plants, and so the question arises, do plants also possess τὸ φρόνιμον? She considers several solutions to this puzzle, including interpreting τὸ φρόνιμον as “bare consciousness” rather than intelligence, and yet she ultimately draws the conclusion that plants are in fact intelligent. She summarizes her argument as follows: “If to phronimon retains its connection to phronēsis … and if the process of a bodily change causing a sensation to arise goes via this phronimon; and if plants have sensation – then, plants have a phronimon, and so are intelligent, in some sense,” (296). Carpenter does not consider the possibility that τὸ φρόνιμον has no necessary role in αἴσθησις at all, as I argue below. She acknowledges that her conclusion is unpalatable (284, 296), and that it conflicts with Timaeus’ claim that plants possess neither νοῦς, λογισμός nor δόξα (298); ultimately, she is forced to describe a sense in which plants “both have and lack intelligence” (298). The supposed tension on Carpenter’s reading between the account of αἴσθησις and the cognitive capacities of plants provides yet further textual support for my interpretation, on which the initial puzzle does not arise.} As a result, it presents a challenge to my claim that bodily pleasure and pain are examples of αἴσθησις which occur in the appetitive part of the soul. However, this is only the case if one assumes that the passage gives an exhaustive account of the types of bodily movements involved in αἴσθησις. Timaeus distinguishes between two types of matter found in the human body, one which is “easily moved by nature” (τὸ μὲν γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν εὐκίνητον, 64b3) and the other which is “the opposite” (τὸ δ’ ἐναντίον, 64b5-6). Timaeus gives bones and hair as examples of the second type, and he gives air and fire as examples of the first, which are the material elements involved in sight and hearing in particular (64c). The reference to sight and hearing is the first indication that this passage does not refer to the conditions for αἴσθησις in general, rather than a particular type of αἴσθησις. Although Timaeus cites fire and air as types of matter that move easily enough to cause αἴσθησις (sight and hearing respectively), these are by no means the only types of matter in the body that can do so. In fact, all four elements are involved in some type of

against the conclusion that the rational part of the soul plays a necessary role in every genuine instance of αἴσθησις, as Brisson (1997) argues; however, there is some tension between his view that τὸ φρόνιμον is the single source of awareness or consciousness (what he calls “la source de la conscience”, 301-303) in the soul, and his claim that it does not belong to any particular soul part. Ultimately, I agree with Brisson that τὸ φρόνιμον refers to the rational part of the soul, and I also agree with O’Brien that some αἰσθήσεις occur independently of the rational part of the soul.
αἰσθήσις.\(^{141}\) The relative immobility of bone and hair, and hence the fact that movements of these parts do not cause αἰσθήσις, is explained by the fact that they are “mostly earth-made parts” (γῆινα τὸ πλεῖστον, 64c5). However, particles of earth also play a role in the sense of taste (μέρεσιν γεώδεσιν, 66a4). This passage cannot outline the whole story of αἰσθήσις, since not every αἰσθήσις involves the movement of the bodies that are easily moved, such as fire and air. On the contrary, some types of αἰσθήσις necessarily involve the movement of parts of the body composed of water and earth.

The context of the passage mentioning τὸ φρόνιμον (64b3-c3) is another indication that it does not provide a general account of what makes any αἰσθήσις possible rather than a particular type of αἰσθήσις. Timaeus makes the distinction between bodily parts that are easily moved and those that are not in the context of explaining the cause of pleasure and pain (τὸ τῶν ἡδέων καὶ τῶν ἀλγεινῶν αἵτιν, 64a3). After the τὸ φρόνιμον passage, Timaeus goes on to say that the παθήματα involved in sight are usually neither pleasant nor painful, precisely because sight is constituted in part by the movements of fire particles, which are too small and easily moved to produce pleasure or pain (64d3-e4). Although the τὸ φρόνιμον passage shows that fire, because it is easily moved, is perfectly suited to transmit motions to the rational part of the soul, it is not suited for producing the experiences of pleasure or pain. On the contrary, pleasure and pain require the movement of “the entire body” and not the rational soul alone, and such movement is only achieved by elements composed of larger parts.

\[\text{τὰ δ ἐκ μειζόνων μερῶν σώματα μόνες εἶκοντα τῷ δρόντι, διαδιδόντα δὲ εἰς ὅλον τὰς κινῆσεις, ἠδονᾶς ἱσχει καὶ λύπας, ἀλλοτριούμενα μὲν λύπας, καθιστάμενα δὲ εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ πάλιν ἠδονᾶς.}\]

Bodies consisting of larger parts, on the other hand, won’t easily give way to what acts upon them. They pass on the motions they receive to the entire body, and so they do get pleasures and pains—pains when they are alienated from their natural condition and pleasures when they are once again restored to it. (Timaeus 64e4-65a1)

This passage implies that bodily pleasure and pain require the motion of the mortal part of the soul rather than the rational part. After all, Timaeus has just stated that sight, which involves the

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\(^{141}\) Earth is involved in taste (65d2, 66a4), water in smell (66e1), air in smell (66e1) and hearing (67b3) and fire in sight (67c6). Pleasure and pain are both said to be caused by “bodies consisting of larger parts” (τὰ δ ἐκ μειζόνων μερῶν σώματα) than fire (64e4-65a1), for only larger bodies will pass motions on to the whole animal (εἰς ὅλον, 64e5-6). Since air was coupled with fire earlier as one of the most easily moved types of matter (64c5-7), which are also the types made up of smallest particles (52a-b), the bodies with larger parts must refer to particles of water or earth.
motion of the rational part of the soul (τὸ φρόνιμον) in particular, is neither pleasant nor painful. Here he adds that pleasure and pain involve the motion of “the entire body” (ἐις ὅλον, 645-6), which must include the mortal part of the soul, since pleasure and pain are types of αἰσθήσεις, and so necessarily involve the movement of some part of the soul. Furthermore, the pleasures of smell are explicitly attributed to the mortal part of the soul in the next sentence (65a5-6) and pleasant and painful αἰσθήσεις is attributed “the third kind of soul” possessed by plants (77b). In fact, at the very beginning of the discussion of the “perceptible affections” (τὰ παθήματα ὅσα αἰσθητικὰ, d1), Timaeus claims that it is impossible to give an account of these παθήματα without giving an account of the mortal part of the soul (ψυχῆς τε ὅσον θνητόν, c7-8) and vice versa (64c6-d2). Therefore, the distinction between the παθήματα that transmit motions to τὸ φρόνιμον and those that fail to pass motions on to “the whole animal” (ἐις τὸ πᾶν ζῷον, 64c3) at 64b3-c3 leaves out those παθήματα of larger, less easily moved bodies which are able to transmit motions to the entire animal, including the mortal part of the soul.

The description of what happens when motions are transmitted to the rational part of the soul at 64b3-6 gives another indication that this passage is not a generic account that applies to every αἰσθήσεις. When a motion reaches the rational soul, it is said to “report the power of the agent” (ἐξαγγείλῃ τοῦ ποιήσαντος τὴν δύναμιν, 64c6). This phrase indicates that the rational part of the soul receives some information about whatever caused the αἰσθήσεις (τοῦ ποιήσαντος) through the αἰσθήσεις itself. Thus, when motion is transmitted through the body to the rational part of the soul, a person apparently becomes aware of something in the outside world through this motion. In other words, this passage describes the process that underlies the type of αἰσθήσεις that is intentional or object-directed. In section 2 I argued that bodily pleasure and pain qualify as types of αἰσθήσεις, and yet they differ from other types of αἰσθήσεις in that they are not directed at an external object, so that they are more like what we might call “sensations” or “raw feels”. If 64b3-6 were a description of the process underlying every type of αἰσθήσεις, then this would imply that every αἰσθήσεις is intentional and “reports” to the rational part of the soul the properties of the object in the external world that caused it. Given the other difficulty of accounting for bodily pleasure and pain on this interpretation, since they manifestly involve the motion of the mortal part of the soul, the τὸ φρόνιμον passage is best interpreted as an account of

142 See my discussion of the general account of αἰσθήσεις in Plato’s later dialogues in Section 1 above.
the psychological process underlying a particular type of αἴσθησις, which is both intentional and hedonically neutral. This is the type of αἴσθησις I labeled like-to-like αἴσθησις above.\footnote{Ganson (2005) also distinguishes between the type of αἴσθησις that belongs to the appetitive part of the soul and the type that reaches τὸ φρόνιμον (9). According to him, reason is necessary for any αἴσθησις that “extends beyond the limits of the body”. In contrast, he takes “irrational” αἴσθησις to be “sensory cognition limited to alterations in the subject’s body” (9). Ganson seems to differentiate the two types of αἴσθησις simply based on the nature of their objects (the body and the external world respectively). According to my interpretation, the difference between these two types of αἴσθησις is much more fundamental, since one involves the awareness of an object, whether the body or the external world, and the other lacks an object altogether.}

Brisson (1997) recognizes that the mortal parts of the soul play a role in αἴσθησις, particularly in pleasure and pain (162), and yet he regards any αἴσθησις that fails to reach the rational part of the soul (τὸ φρόνιμον) as an “incomplete process” (163). According to Brisson’s summary of the psychological process involved in αἴσθησις, the bodily movements or παθήματα are transmitted “through the body as a whole to the mortal parts of the soul first and after to the rational part called phronimon” (162). Thus, he concludes that αἴσθησις refers to the process as a whole, which is why αἴσθησις in plants is called “irrational” (ἄλογος) and should be thought of as incomplete.\footnote{Thus, according to Brisson (1997), “the mortal parts of the soul seem to perceive the pathemata, but appear to be unable to think about them or to give them a name” (161).} However, Brisson’s interpretation cannot take into account the fundamental difference in the psychological processes involved in painful or pleasant αἴσθησις and hedonically neutral αἴσθησις, which I have labeled mean-state and like-to-like αἴσθησις respectively. First of all, sight is a direct counterexample to his account of the psychological process involved in every αἴσθησις, since in the case of sight a πάθος is transmitted to the rational part of the soul (64c), and yet the mortal part of the soul remains entirely unaffected (64d-e). The account of hearing provides another counterexample. Hearing does seem to involve motion of the liver, which is the seat of the appetitive part of the soul (71b).\footnote{Timaeus 67b4-5: “hearing is the motion caused by the percussion that begins in the head and ends in the place where the liver is situated.”} However, unlike bodily pleasure and pain, the motions that cause hearing are said to affect the head (and so presumably the orbits of reason located there) before they are transmitted to the liver.\footnote{Timaeus 67b2-4: “In general, let us take it that sound is the percussion of the air by way of the ears upon the brain and the blood and transmitted to the soul.” The motion caused by this percussion is only later said to pass to the liver from the head, after it has already affected the head and the soul. Although Timaeus does not specify which part of the soul is affected by this motion, the fact that the soul is mentioned right after the brain suggests that the rational soul located in the head is meant. This also agrees with my thesis that the rational part of the soul is necessarily involved in like-to-like αἴσθησις, which include sight and hearing.
Even if all or most of the αἰσθήσεις which affect the mortal part of the human soul are ultimately passed on to the rational part, there is still a fundamental distinction between the type of αἰσθήσεις experienced by the appetitive part of the soul and the type which is transmitted directly to reason. Bodily pleasure and pain necessarily involve the movement of the appetitive part of the soul, and any αἰσθήσεις that is directed at an object requires the rational part of the soul. Even if the same movement were to affect both the appetitive and rational parts of the soul, it would produce very different experiences, causing pleasure or pain in the former and reporting some property of an external object, such as hardness or sweetness, to the latter. After all, the rational soul has the crucial ability to reflect upon its own motions that the appetitive part of the soul lacks. Furthermore, the rational soul is active in a way that the appetitive part of the soul is not. As a result, not only is the rational soul aware of the psychic motions and the external objects and properties which they represent, but it can also respond to these representations by making judgments about external objects or taking pleasure in their beauty.

Timaeus' characterization of the appetitive part of the soul at 77c as incapable of reflecting upon itself supports my claim that bodily pleasure and pain are non-intentional αἰσθήσεις. After all, it is by reflecting on the way in which its own motions are affected by external motions that the rational part of the soul becomes aware of the external objects which these motions represent (46a). However, Timaeus' description of the way in which the rational part of the soul communicates with the appetitive part at 71a-d seems to attribute at least some degree of intentional awareness to appetite, even if this awareness is not fully rational. The following passage presents the solution the "generated gods" (ἐκγόνοις μὲν θεῶν οὖσι, 40d8) devised for the problem of how the rational part of the soul would communicate with the irrational, appetitive part.

147 According to Skemp (1947), “All our sensations penetrate to the higher ‘kinds’ of soul in us. Those of the plants cannot do so, and therefore must be ‘other’,” (55). He draws attention to the ἄλλαι αἰσθήσεις referred to in the creation of plants at 77a-5. I do not think any particular significance should be attached to this phrase. The attribution of “irrational” αἰσθήσεις to the mortal part of the human soul at 69 suggests that humans experience the same cognitively unsophisticated type of αἰσθήσεις as plants do, which Timaeus identifies as pleasant and painful αἰσθήσεις at 77b-6.

148 The active nature of reason is demonstrated by a human being’s ability to “drag that massive accretion of fire-water-air-earth into conformity with the revolution of the Same and uniform within him, and so subdue that turbulent mass by means of reason (λόγῳ)” (42c-7).
καὶ φαντασμάτων νυκτός τε καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέραν μάλιστα ἐπιθαυμάσχοντο, τούτῳ δὴ θεὸς ἐπιβουλεύσας αὐτῷ τὴν ἡπατίαν οἰκείαν καὶ ἔθηκεν εἰς τὴν ἑκάστην κατοικίαν, τυφλὸν καὶ λείον καὶ λαμπρὸν καὶ γλυκὸν καὶ πικρότητα ἔχον μηχανισάμενος, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ τῶν διανοημάτων ἕκ τοῦ νοῦ φερομένης δύναμις, ὁδὸν ἐν κατόπτρῳ δεχομένῳ τύπον καὶ κατιδεῖν εἰδώλα παρέχοντι...

They knew that this part of the soul [i.e. appetite] was not going to understand the deliverances of reason and that even if it were in one way or another to have some awareness of them, it would not have an innate regard for any of them, but would be much more enticed by images and phantoms night and day. Hence the god conspired with this very tendency by constructing a liver, a structure which he situated in the dwelling place of this part of the soul. He made it into something dense, smooth, bright and sweet, though also having a bitter quality, so that the force of the thoughts sent down from the mind might be stamped upon it as upon a mirror that receives the stamps and returns visible images. (Timaeus 71a3-b5)

According to this passage, even if the appetitive part of the soul had "some awareness" (τινὸς...αἰσθήσεως) of the λόγοι of the rational part, it would not respond to them. However, the appetitive part is said to be strongly influenced by "images and phantoms" (ὑπὸ δὲ εἰδώλων καὶ φαντασμάτων). Taking advantage of this fact, the god(s) constructed the liver, which is affected by “the force of the thoughts sent down by the mind” (τῶν διανοημάτων ἕκ τοῦ νοῦ φερομένης δύναμις). In his description, Timaeus compares the way in which the liver is affected by these thoughts to the way in which a mirror receives "impressions and visible images" (τύπου καὶ κατιδεῖν εἰδώλα).

At first glance, this passage seems to directly contradict my thesis that the appetitive part of the soul is incapable of object-directed αἴσθησις. The αὐτῶν at 71a4 is the genitive object of τινὸς...αἰσθήσεως, which is attributed to the appetitive part of the soul. Furthermore, the claim that the appetitive part is influenced by εἰδώλα and φαντάσματα at 71a5-6 seems to presuppose the capacity for intentional awareness, for how else could images influence appetite if not as objects of some form of awareness? Furthermore, the mention of φαντάσματα recalls the occurrence of φαντάσματα at 46a2, which refers to representations of the objects of sight within the soul. The comparison between the liver and a mirror at 71b4-5 seems to confirm that the

149 Note the change from the plural subject εἰδότες (referring to the gods created by the demiurge at 69c3-4) to the singular θεὸς at 71a7. Despite the abrupt change from a plural to a singular subject, there is nothing to indicate that the liver was fashioned by any other than the mortal gods, who at 69c4 were assigned the task of “fashioning the generation of those that were mortal” (τῶν δὲ θυγατέρων τὴν γένεσιν...δημιουργεῖν). This is confirmed by the reappearance of the plural subject at 71d5-7: “For our creators (οἱ συστήσαντες ἡμᾶς) recalled their father's instruction to make the mortal race as excellent as possible...”
appetitive part is in some way aware of images, analogous to the way in which we are aware of the objects of sight.

A closer examination of this passage reveals that its interpretation is not so straightforward. First of all, object-directed ἀίσθησις is not positively attributed to appetite; instead, it is introduced as a hypothetical possibility ("even if it [i.e. the appetitive part] were in one way or another to have some awareness of them [i.e. the λόγοι of reason]", ἐὰν τε πηγαί μεταλαμβάνοι τῶν αὑτῶν αἴσθησεως, 71a4). As it turns out, the problem of the communication between reason and appetite is not fundamentally the problem that appetite lacks the capacity for intentional awareness, but rather that it would not listen to the arguments of reason, even if it could hear them. The reference to εἴδωλα and φαντάσματα also does not settle the question, since both terms have more than one meaning in Plato. For example, εἴδωλον can refer to a literal image or likeness, as it does in the description of the mirror later in this passage 71b5 and earlier in the Timaeus at 46a3; however, it also can refer either to ghosts or, by extension, to things that are insubstantial or unreal. Similarly, φάντασμα can mean image or representation, as it does at Timaeus 46a2, but it can also mean a mere image or appearance, i.e. something that is not fully real. Therefore, neither εἴδωλον nor φάντασμα necessarily refer to the object of some form of awareness, such as sight. In the context of this passage, it seems more likely that appetite is influenced by illusions or deceptive appearances rather than visual stimuli, and in this sense both pleasure and pain qualify as φαντάσματα. One could argue that the comparison between the liver and a mirror at 71b4-5 indicates that the εἴδωλα and φαντάσματα should be interpreted as literal images, and yet one must keep in mind that the comparison with a mirror is an analogy, and so need not be interpreted as a literal description of the function of the liver. In fact, interpreting the liver as a surface upon which reason imprints images that appetite literally "sees" results in an implausible and somewhat comical account of the interaction between the different parts of the soul, and it raises many more questions than it answers. If appetite sees images on the liver, then does this mean that it has its own sense organs which function like eyes? Not only is this possibility inherently absurd, but it also contradicts everything Timaeus has said so far about the nature of the appetitive part of the soul.

150 For example, Phaedo 81d3 and Laws 959b2.

151 For example, at Theaetetus 150b1 εἴδωλα are contrasted with ἀληθινά in the sense of "realities". See also Theaetetus 150e6 and Laws 889d2.
As Timaeus goes on to describe the way in which the rational part of the soul affects the condition of the liver, it becomes clear that reason communicates with appetite not by means of visual stimuli, but rather by means of pleasant and painful sensations.

So whenever the mind's thoughts could avail itself of a congenial portion of the liver's bitterness and threaten it with severe command, it could frighten this part of the soul. And by infusing the bitterness all over the liver, it could project bilious colors onto it and shrink the whole liver, making it wrinkled and rough. It could curve and shrivel up the liver's lobe and block up and close off its receptacles and portal fissures, and thereby causing pains and bouts of nausea. (Timaeus 71b5-c3)

Although the mind is metaphorically said to "threaten" (ἀπειλῇ) and "frighten" (φοβοῖ) the appetitive part of the soul in this passage, the actual effect it has on the liver is not to paint images on it, but rather to "infuse bitterness all over it" (κατὰ πᾶν ύπομειγνύσα ὀξέως), to "project bilious colors onto it" (χολώδη χρώματα ἐμφαίνοι) to "shrink" (συνάγουσα) it and finally to make it "wrinkled and rough" (ῥυσόν καὶ τραχύ). These physical changes in the condition of the liver in turn cause "pains and bouts of nausea" (λύπας καὶ ἁσας) in the appetitive part of the soul. In order to respond to the "threats" of reason, the appetitive part of the soul does not need anything more sophisticated than the capacity to experience bodily pain, which is the non-intentional αἴσθησις caused by the destruction of the harmonious condition of the living animal. Timaeus goes on to describe the positive effects reason can have on the physical condition of the liver.

And again, whenever thought's gentle inspiration should paint quite opposite pictures, its force would bring respite from the bitterness by refusing to stir up or make contact with a nature opposite to its own. It would instead use the liver's own natural sweetness on it and restore the whole extent of it to be straight and smooth and free, and make that portion of the soul that inhabits the region around the liver gracious and well behaved. (Timaeus 71c3-d2)
Again reason is metaphorically said to "paint quite opposite pictures" (τάναντία φαντάσματα ἀποζωγραφοῖ) on the liver, while in reality it restores the liver to its natural condition. More specifically, it uses "the liver's own natural sweetness on it" (γλυκύτητι δὲ τῇ κατ’ ἐκεῖνο συμφύτῳ πρὸς αὐτὸ χρωμένη) and "restores the whole extent of it to be straight and smooth and free" (πάντα ὀρθὰ καὶ λεῖα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἑλεύθερα ἀπευθύνονσα). Thus, just as reason causes pain in the appetitive part of the soul by destroying the natural condition of the liver, it can also cause pleasure in the appetitive part of the soul by restoring the liver to its natural, ideal state.

The liver plays an important role in the communication between reason and appetite. If reason were to somehow produce pleasure and pain in the appetitive part of the soul directly, without affecting the condition of the body, then the resulting pleasures and pains would be fundamentally different from bodily pleasures and pains, which are joint movements of the soul and the body. By physically altering the condition of the liver relative to its harmonious, natural condition, reason produces pleasures and pains in the appetitive part of the soul which are not fundamentally different from any other bodily pleasures and pains. As a result, the pleasures and pains caused by reason are examples of mean-state αἴσθησις, despite the fact that they are constituted partly by a bodily change produced by the rational part of the soul instead of a bodily change resulting from the impact of an external object.

4 Pure Pleasures in the Philebus and the Timaeus

Bodily pleasures are not the only pleasures associated with αἴσθησις in the Philebus. In this section I argue that the pure and true pleasures described at 52b-53c are pure precisely because they are psychic rather than bodily, despite the fact that some of them are related to αἴσθησις. One consequence of their psychic nature is that they are not caused by the restoration of the harmonious condition of the living organism as a whole. Pure and true pleasures are related to like-to-like αἰσθήσεις rather than mean-state αἰσθήσεις, and like-to-like αἰσθήσεις are hedonically neutral, which rules out the possibility that the αἰσθήσεις themselves may be constitutive of these pleasures. Unlike bodily pleasures, these pleasures are pure, because they require the harmonious condition rather than being identified with the restoration of this condition. The psychic nature of the pure pleasures also explains why they are placed in the same category as other psychic pleasures, such as those associated with learning.

152 However, see my discussion of the pleasures of smell below, which are a partial exception.
The pure pleasures also differ from bodily pleasures in that they are assigned to “the class of things that possess measurement” (τὰς δὲ μὴ τῶν ἐμμέτρων, 52d1). Socrates distinguishes them from the intense and violent pleasures, which he assigns “to the class of the unlimited, the more and less, which affects both body and soul” (τῆς τοῦ ἀπείρου γε ἐκείνου ἤττον καὶ μᾶλλον διά τε σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς φερομένου, 52c6-7). This is the most direct piece of evidence that the pure and true pleasures do not involve the body, since one of the ways the intense and violent pleasures are distinguished from them is precisely the fact that they affect the body as well as the soul. If the pure pleasures also had a joint effect on the body and the soul, then there would be no point in Socrates’ qualification that the impure, unlimited pleasures have this joint effect.

Socrates’ description of the pure pleasures at the end of the dialogue, where he ranks them fifth in the final ranking of goods, provides further evidence that these pleasures are purely psychic and distinct from the αἰσθήσεις to which they respond. In this passage, the pure pleasures are divided into two groups, “those which accompany the sciences” and “those which accompany perception” (ἀς...ἐπιστήμαις, τὰς δὲ αἰσθήσεων ἐπομένας, 66c5-6). The participle ἐπομένας implies that some pure pleasures are related to αἴσθησις, and yet still distinct from it. Here again Socrates emphasize that these pleasures belong “to the soul itself” (τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτῆς, 66c5) rather than affecting both the body and the soul.

One apparent problem for my interpretation is Socrates’ claim that some pure pleasures involve “imperceptible and painless lacks” (τὰς ἐνδείας ἀναισθήτους...καὶ ἀλύπους, 51b5-6) and “their fulfillments are perceptible and pleasant” (τὰς πληρώσεις αἰσθητὰς καὶ ἡδείας, 51b6). According to Frede's (1993) translation, this comment has generalizing force, implying that all of the pure pleasures involve the same type of bodily movement as bodily pleasure, i.e. a restoration. If this translation is correct, then the only distinction between the pure pleasures and bodily pleasures is that the former are preceded by a painless instead of a painful destruction. However, I will argue that this comment does not apply to all psychic pleasures, but only to the pleasures of smell.

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153 See Chapter 2, Section 2 for my discussion of the significance of the fact that different types of pleasure are assigned to different fundamental classes of being in the Philebus.

154 Cf. Frede's conclusion that “all pleasures, even the best ones, are ‘fillings’ of some sort” ((1993), 60, n. 2).
Socrates divides the pure and true pleasures related to αἴσθησις into two species, 1) sights and sounds (51c-d) and 2) the “less divine” class of smells (51e). The mention of “imperceptible lacks” appears in Socrates’ initial list of the pleasures that count as true, which runs as follows.

\{ΣΩ.\} Τάς περί τέ τα καλὰ λεγόμενα χρώματα καὶ περί τὰ σχήματα καὶ τῶν ὀσμῶν τάς πλείστας καὶ τάς τῶν φθόγγων καὶ ὁσία τάς ἐνδείας ἀνασθήτους ἔχοντα καὶ ἀλίπους τάς πληρώσεις αἰσθήτας καὶ ἴδειας [καθαρὰς λυπῶν] παραδίδουσιν.

Soc.: Those that are related to those colors which are called beautiful and to shapes and to most smells and sounds and in general [καὶ ὁσία] all those that are based on imperceptible and painless lacks, while their fulfillments are perceptible and pleasant. (Philebus 51b1-7)

The Τάς at the beginning of Socrates’ statement picks up the τίνας in Protarchus’ question, which in turn picks up τίνας ἡδονὰς at 51a5. Different types of true pleasures are specified by the τῶν ὀσμῶν τάς πλείστας and the τᾶς τῶν φθόγγων in the next line. The list ends with a clause introduced by ὁσία. Contra Frede’s translation, I interpret the ὁσία clause not as a generalization that applies to all of the pure pleasures, but rather as the specification of an additional type of pure pleasure. Although both readings are possible, my interpretation makes better sense of the account of the different types of pure pleasures that follows, as well as the physiological explanation of the senses of smell, sight and hearing in the Timaeus. Socrates goes on to describe the pure pleasures of smell as follows.

\{ΣΩ.\} Τὸ δὲ περὶ τάς ὀσμὰς ἠττον μὲν τούτων θείων γένους ἡδονῶν· τὸ δὲ μὴ συμμεμείχθαι ἐν αὐταῖς ἀναγκαίους λύπας, καὶ ὅπη τούτο καὶ ἐν ὅτι τυγχάνει γεγονός ἠττών· τοῦτ' ἐκείνου τίθημι ἀντίστροφον ἅπαν. ἀλλ', εἰ κατανοεῖς, ταῦτα εἴδη δύο <ὥν> λέγομεν ἡδονῶν.

Soc.: Then there is also the less divine tribe of pleasures connected with smells. But because there is no inevitable pain mixed with them, in whatever way or wherever we may come by them, for this reason I regard them as the counterpart to those others. So, if you get my point, we will then treat those as two species of the kinds of pleasures we are looking for. (Philebus 51e1-5)

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155 Socrates makes this distinction at 51e4-5: “So, if you get my point, we will then treat those two as species (εἶδη δύο) of the kinds of pleasures we are looking for”.

156 Frede (1993) translates τὰ καλὰ λεγόμενα χρώματα “the so-called pure colors,” mistakenly rendering καλὰ as “pure” instead of “beautiful”. In her German translation (1997), she translates this phrase “was man schöne Farben...nennen”, suggesting that this is simply a slip rather than an alternate reading of the text.

157 As evidence that this is a possible interpretation, the ὁσία clauses at Philebus 11b5 and 21b1 follow lists, and yet as the context makes clear, they pick out a further item rather than introducing a generalization about the preceding items. See also Sophist 265e1. In all of these examples, ὁσία is preceded by a καὶ, whereas ὁσία normally appears without a καὶ when it introduces a generalization. See, for example, Theatetus 18611-c2.
In this passage, Socrates defends his inclusion of the psychic pleasures of smell in the group of true and pure pleasures precisely because αἰσθήσεις of smell are themselves pleasant, rather than hedonically neutral like sight and hearing. Socrates makes sure to clarify that despite the fact that some smells are pleasant αἰσθήσεις, “there is no inevitable pain mixed with them” (τὸ δὲ μὴ συμμεμεῖχθαι ἐν αὐταῖς ἀναγκαίως λύπας, 51e2). It is no accident that he does not mention the possibility that the pure pleasures of sight and hearing might be mixed with pain; the only reason one might worry that the psychic pleasures related to smell are mixed with pain is that smells are generally pleasant or painful rather than hedonically neutral. This implies that at least part of the pleasure involved in the pure pleasures of smell is bodily pleasure constituted by restorations of the organism.  

The fact that the pure pleasures of smell imply the destruction of the organism, even though this destruction is painless, explains why Socrates refers to them as the “less divine tribe of pleasures” (ᾧτον μὲν τούτων θεῖον γένος ἡδονῶν, 51e1-2). If all pure pleasures involved perceptible fillings preceded by imperceptible lacks, there would be no hesitation or qualification in Socrates’ inclusion of the pure pleasures associated with smell.

This description of the pure pleasures of smell in the Philebus agrees with the account of smell in the Timaeus, which is given as an example of mean-state αἴσθησις that involves imperceptible lacks (κενώσεως μὲν ἀναίσθητα, 65a3-4) and perceptible replenishments (πληρώσεως δὲ αἴσθητικά, 65a4).

Όσα δὲ κατὰ σμικρὸν τὰς ἀποχωρήσεις ἑαυτῶν καὶ κενώσεις εἴλθησεν, τὰς δὲ πληρώσεις ἀθρόας καὶ κατὰ μεγάλα, κενώσεως μὲν ἀναισθήτα, πληρώσεως δὲ αἰσθητικά γεγονόμενα, λύπας μὲν οὐ παρέχει τῷ θητῷ τῆς ψυχῆς, μεγίστας δὲ ἡδονάς· ἐστὶ δὲ ἔνδηλα περὶ τᾶς εὐωδίας.

All those bodies which experience only gradual departures from their normal state or gradual depletions but whose replenishments are intense and substantial are bodies that are unaware of their depletions but not of their replenishments, and hence they introduce very substantial pleasures in the mortal part of the soul but not any pains. This is clear in the case of fragrances. (Timaeus 65a1-6)

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158 Of course, it is possible that the pure pleasures of smell are not entirely bodily, since an aesthetic appreciation for the purity of an odor may accompany the bodily pleasure produced by the restoration of the organism.

159 The fact that the pure pleasures of smell are related to pleasant rather than hedonically neutral perceptions is a more natural explanation for the fact that they are “less divine” than Frede’s explanation that smells have a “less definite nature” than sight and hearing in the Timaeus ((1993), 61, n. 2). For one thing, the description of the pure pleasures of smell in the Philebus does not mention their less definite nature. Furthermore, even if perceptions of smell have a less definite nature than other perceptions in the Timaeus, this does not necessarily imply that the pleasures related to these perceptions in the Philebus must also have a less definite nature, and so be considered less divine.
In the *Timaeus*, the fact that visual and auditory αἰσθήσεις are neither pleasant nor painful is explained by the particular characteristics of fire and air, which are the only material elements involved in these αἰσθήσεις. By contrast, smells are described as a “half-kind” (ἡμιγενές, 66d2), since they do not involve material changes in any one of the four elements. Instead, odors are caused by the transformation of water into air or air into water (66d-e). Due to the involvement of water, olfactory αἰσθήσεις, unlike visual and auditory αἰσθήσεις, are categorized as either pleasant or painful (67a). However, according to the passage quoted here, unlike other bodily pleasures, at least some pleasant fragrances are preceded by imperceptible destructions and so are not mixed with bodily pain. Despite this feature of pleasant fragrances, in the *Philebus* Socrates does not identify pleasant fragrances as pure pleasures, but rather the psychic pleasures “connected with smells” (περὶ τὰς ὀσμὰς, 51e1). This implies that the pure pleasures of smell are distinct from αἰσθήσεις of smell, just as the pure pleasures of sight are distinct from visual αἰσθήσεις.

After insisting on the purity of the pleasures of smell, Socrates introduces a similar worry about the purity of the pleasures of learning. In contrast with the pure sensory pleasures, the pleasures of learning are uncontroversial examples of psychic pleasure. Some scholars have interpreted this passage as explicit evidence for the view that all of the pure pleasures involve some type of lack, albeit imperceptible, as well as for the more general view that the restoration account applies to psychic as well as bodily pleasures. Instead of a confirmation of the possibility of psychic fillings, or any other type of psychic restoration, I interpret this passage as a reference to and revision of earlier Platonic accounts of pleasure which describe psychic pleasures as types of filling, especially the account found in *Republic* IX. Thus, far from asserting that the pleasures of learning result from some kind of psychic restoration, Socrates explicitly rejects such a model.

Soc.: Then let us add to these the pleasures of learning, if indeed we are agreed that there is no such thing as hunger for learning connected with them, nor any pains that have their source in a hunger for learning.

Pro.: Here, too, I agree with you.

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160 See my argument above that the pure and true pleasures are psychic rather than bodily.

161 E.g. Frede (1993), 60, n.2; and Tuozzo (1994), 505. See pages 2-6 above for general arguments against this view.
Soc.: Well, then, if after such filling with knowledge, people lose it again through forgetting, do you notice any kinds of pain?

Pro.: None that could be called inherent by nature, but in our reflections on this loss when we need it, we experience it as a painful loss.

Soc.: But, my dear, we are here concerned only with the natural affections themselves, apart from reflection on them. (Philebus 51e7-52b3)

Socrates only adds the pleasures of learning to the list of pure pleasures on the condition that these pleasures do not involve any desire or pain.\textsuperscript{162} Protarchus observes that some people feel pain when they forget something and reflect upon this loss, and yet Socrates does not classify this reflection as one of the natural affections associated with learning, and he is only concerned with these natural affections (τὰ τῆς φύσεως μόνον παθήματα). Nothing in this passage suggests that Socrates identifies the pleasures of learning with processes of restoration. First of all, he makes no reference to the fourfold division of being, which forms the basis of his account of bodily pleasures as restorations.\textsuperscript{163} Secondly, if ignorance were a deviation from a human being’s natural bodily condition, like hunger and thirst, then both ignorance and the loss of knowledge would be painful on all occasions. After all, the emptying of the body associated with hunger is painful by its very nature, independently of the subject’s reflection on this process. Rather than a metaphysical claim about the nature of the pleasures of learning in the Philebus, the description of learning as “filling with knowledge” (μαθημάτων πληρωθείσων, 52a5) seems to be an explicit reference to the account of the intellectual pleasures in Republic X (585a-b).\textsuperscript{164} Thus, Socrates’ rejection of such a model for understanding the pleasures of learning serves as a warning to those

\textsuperscript{162} Tallon (1972) and, more recently, Warren (2010) have raised concerns about the claim that the pleasures of learning do not involve any pain. As Warren observes, “our progress towards knowledge can be accompanied by a variety of affective experiences, and it can often be difficult or painful” (1). However, I do not take the point of this passage to be that the pleasures of learning are never accompanied by pain, but rather that they do not necessarily involve pain in the way that the vast majority of bodily pleasures do. In addition, Socrates only has a specific subset of the pleasures of learning in mind in this passage, those that “belong, not to the masses, but only to the very few” (οὐδὲν τῶν πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ τῶν σφόδρα ὀλίγων, 52b7-8). Socrates clearly has only the highest forms of learning in mind here, and so our ordinary experiences with the difficulty of learning have no direct bearing on the pleasures of learning discussed in this passage.

\textsuperscript{163} See Philebus 32b9-c4 and my discussion of this passage on pages 3-4 above.

\textsuperscript{164} Note that “filling” (πλήρωσις) is just one example of the type of process which gives rise to bodily pleasure in the Philebus; other examples include “the natural restoration of cooling down” (κατὰ φύσιν δὲ πάλιν ἀπόδοσις τε καὶ ψῦξις, 32a3) and “the natural process of dissolution or retribution” (πάλιν δὲ εἰς ταῦτα ἀπιόντων καὶ διακρινομένων ἢ κατὰ φύσιν ὀδός, 32a7-8). Socrates gives the general account of the changes involved in bodily pleasures in more general terms, describing these various processes as types of restoration (τῆς ἀναχώρησι, 32b4). In contrast, all pleasures, whether bodily or psychic, are described as types of πλήρωσις in the Republic (585a-b).
readers who are tempted to assimilate the pleasures of learning described in this passage with the account of the pleasures of learning in the Republic.

Although there is no explicit mention of psychic or pure pleasures in the Timaeus, it is constructive to compare the account of pure pleasures in the Philebus with the description of the “supremely beneficial function” (τὸ δὲ μέγιστον αὐτῶν εἰς ὡφελίαν ἔργον, 46e7-8) of sight and sound in the Timaeus (46e-47e). The benefits of sight include knowledge of the universe, including the stars, sun and heaven (47a1-4), the invention of number and the idea of time (a4-7), the origin of philosophy itself (a7-b2), as well as access to a model of order and harmony (i.e. the heavens) which humans can emulate internally (b5-c4). Notice that all of these functions of sight are actually types of knowledge and psychic achievement which go far beyond the visual αἰσθήσεις themselves, just as the pure pleasures of sight are purely psychic experiences that are related to rather than identical with visual αἰσθήσεις. The benefits of hearing include the possibility of speech (c6-7), the αἴσθησις of musical harmony (c7-d7), which likewise acts as a model for the movement of the rational parts of our souls, as well as rhythm (d7-e2), which gives us a sense of measure and grace. Even though these visual and auditory experiences are not explicitly characterized as pleasant, they are the same types of αἴσθησις which are associated with the pure and true pleasures in the Philebus. Timaeus even specifies in the case of listening to music that it only has a beneficial function when it is pursued “not for irrational pleasure” (οὐκ ἐφ’ ἡδονὴν ἄλογον, 47d3-4), implicitly contrasting irrational pleasure with the rational appreciation of musical harmony.165

So far in this section I have rejected the view that pure and true pleasures are processes of restoration, yet I have not given any alternative explanation for them. If pure and true pleasures are not restorations and are compatible with the harmonious condition of an organism, what causes them, and how can one distinguish between the person who experiences the god-like, neutral state of harmony and the person who experiences pure pleasure? One striking contrast between the description of the bodily pleasures and the pure and true pleasures is the role of the soul in these two types of experiences. In both the Timaeus and the Philebus, the soul is described as a passive recipient of bodily pleasures and pains, as well as αἰσθήσεις in general (Timaeus 42a, 43c; Philebus 34a). In contrast, the soul plays an active role in the pure and true pleasures.  

165 Cf. Bobonich (2002), 358-9. Bobonich helpfully compares this passage with Timaeus 80a4-b8, where the physiological process which underlies the perception of harmonious sounds is said to bring pleasure [ἡδονὴν] to fools and delight [εὐφροσύνην] to the wise.
pleasures. The supremely beneficial role of the sights and sounds described at 47a-e is precisely the fact that they help the soul regulate its own motions and actively govern the motions of the body, rather than being governed by them. When one looks at the motions of the heavens, these motions do not penetrate through to the soul and forcibly rectify the motions of the soul, as the motions of a hot body can physically restore the harmony of an organism that is too cold. Rather, it is up to the rational soul to actively emulate the motions of the heavens. The heavenly motions serve as a model for the motions of the soul, rather than a direct efficient cause in the way that bodily disturbances are efficient causes of distortions to the soul’s motions.166

One might argue that the correction of the straying orbits of the rational soul just is what psychic restoration amounts to. However, the capacity to experience pure and true psychic pleasures, whether involving the senses or not, seems to require some preexisting degree of rationality and order within the soul. There is evidence in the Timaeus that harmony and order, whether perceived through sight or hearing, can only be perceived and properly appreciated by a human being who has already restored the natural motions of the rational soul. False judgment is explained by the distorted motions of the rational part of the soul (43e-44a), and only when these motions are restored can a human being “correctly identify what is the same and what is different” (44b). Without the ability to judge correctly about perceptible objects, it is not clear that looking at the heavens would be of any benefit, since a person may look at the heavenly bodies without recognizing the beauty and harmony of their movements.

Conclusion

The different ways in which bodily pleasures and pure and true pleasures are related to αἴσθησις reveal that they are radically different types of psychic phenomena. Bodily pleasures are αἴσθησεις, and so are joint movements, specifically restorations, of the body and the soul. Pure pleasures, on the other hand, are purely psychic phenomena, and so they are motions of the soul itself, although some of them are responses to αἴσθησεις. This conclusion shows that bodily and pure pleasures have no shared nature, and as a result no unified account of pleasure can explain both. Frede (1993) and Evans (2007) both argue that the restoration account of bodily pleasure at 32b is a unified account of pleasure in the Philebus, and yet I have argued that whereas bodily

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166 Cf. Republic 529d where Socrates draws an explicit contrast between the beauty of the visible stars and the perfect ratios and shapes they instantiate, which are “perceptible to reason and thought but not visible to the eye” (λόγῳ μὲν καὶ διανοίᾳ ληπτά, δὲ τις δ’ οὐ, 529d4-5).
pleasures are restorations of the harmonious condition, pure pleasures presuppose this condition. As a result, while the bodily pleasures imply destruction and are unfit for the gods (ἀσχημόν, 33b10), the pure pleasures are described as “divine” (θεῖον, 51e1) and are included as intrinsically good features of the best human life. Frede (1993) argues that certain pleasures are included in the best human life as merely remedial goods, necessary because of the imperfection of human nature as compared to the perfect nature of the gods. According to her interpretation, the life of thought without pleasure would be better for humans than the mixed life, if only it were possible for humans to live such a life. In contrast, I have argued that the pure pleasures do not imply any destruction or imperfection. In the next chapter, I will argue further that the pure pleasures are closely connected with cognitive activities that are essential to the good life, including knowledge and φρόνησις, which is the best condition of the soul. This connection between pure pleasures and intelligence suggests that the life of the philosopher is not only painless, but necessarily pleasant.167

167 Frede (1993) argues that Plato has given up the notion he defended in Republic IX that the philosopher’s life is the most pleasant. This conclusion ignores the inclusion of the pure pleasures in the good human life and the description of these pleasures as “pleasanter, truer and more beautiful” than impure pleasures (53c).
Chapter 4
Pleasure and Φρόνησις

The Philebus opens in the midst of a debate about whether pleasure or φρόνησις (intelligence) constitutes the human good. In order to test these two positions, Socrates asks Protarchus to judge whether either the life of pleasure without φρόνησις (including related capacities, such as memory and judgment) or the life of φρόνησις without pleasure is good for a human being (20b-22c). In Chapter 1 I argued that this thought experiment, which I call the Choice of Lives, has the specific function of showing that pleasure and φρόνησις are much more intimately related than either of Protarchus or Socrates initially suppose. It is a mistake to ask whether pleasure or φρόνησις is the human good, since this way of framing the debate implies that these two candidates are easily distinguishable psychic conditions which can exist independently. The Choice of Lives reveals that many pleasures require one of the capacities associated with φρόνησις, but Socrates does not work out the precise relationship between pleasure and these other forms of cognition until the detailed analysis of pleasure which dominates the second half of the dialogue (31b-55c).

The types of cognition Socrates associates with φρόνησις at the beginning of the dialogue, and which he subsequently subtracts from the life of pleasure, are memory (μεμνῆσθαι, 11b7, 21c2; μνήμην, 21b6), judgment (δόξαν...ὁρθὴν, 11b8; δόξαν...ἀληθῆ, 21b6-7, c4), calculation (ἀληθεῖς λογισμούς, 11b8; λογισμοῦ, 21c5; λογίζεσθαι, 21c6), knowledge (ἐπιστήμην, 21b6) and understanding (νοεῖν, 11b7). In this chapter I examine the relationship between pleasure and these other forms of cognition. Like Socrates, I begin with memory and the closely related capacity of recollection, which plays an essential role in the psychic pleasures of expectation. In Section 1, I take a close look at the distinction between memory and recollection, which I argue are (at least logically) distinct psychic capacities rather than different functions of a single

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168 In some passages in the Philebus φρόνησις seems to have a broader scope than that implied by the translation “intelligence”, referring to a wide array of cognitive capacities, including memory and judgment. Ultimately, Socrates identifies φρόνησις with νοῦς, and both seem to refer to an intellectual virtue, such as “wisdom” or “intelligence”. See Menn (1992) for a plausible defense of the identification of φρόνησις and νοῦς in the Philebus and other late Platonic dialogues, as well as compelling reasons for thinking they refer to an intellectual virtue, as opposed to a more general cognitive capacity or the mind as a whole.

169 I discuss the relationship between pleasure and αἴσθησις in Chapter 3, which is the one form of cognition (other than pleasure itself) that Socrates does not subtract from the life of pleasure.
capacity. I then show in Section 2 how recollection in particular is necessary for both desire and the pleasures and pains of expectation. Section 3 is devoted to the relationship between pleasure and judgment. Some pleasures, like judgments, have complex intentional content which can represent the world correctly or incorrectly. I discuss both the ways in which these pleasures resemble judgments and the important differences between true and false pleasures and the true and false judgments on which they depend. I also argue that Socrates uses the predicate “false” (ψευδής) in a different sense in reference to mixed pleasures, which do not depend on false judgments, but rather precede and give rise to them. Finally, in Section 4 I discuss the relationship between pleasure, knowledge, and the closely related intellectual virtue of νοῦς or φρόνησις.

Ultimately, I argue that pleasures differ in their cognitive requirements as a result of their fundamentally different natures. It is not the case that some pleasures rely on recollection, others on judgment or knowledge, but that the pleasures themselves are essentially the same kind of psychic condition or activity. On the contrary, different types of pleasure constitute distinct forms of cognition, which differ as radically from one another as sensations differ from judgments. Since pleasure is essentially heterogeneous, some of the distinctions Socrates draws apply only to a subset of pleasures. For example, the distinction between true and false pleasures applies only to those pleasures which have intentional content that the subject can represent correctly or incorrectly. In the course of distinguishing between different types of pleasure, Socrates gives a detailed account of the psychic capacities of different kinds of animals, from the most basic to the most complex. By comparing the pleasures shared by all animals with distinctively human pleasures, Socrates emphasizes the extraordinary variety of psychic

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170 I do not have a separate discussion of the relationship between pleasure and calculation (λογισμός), which only appears in a few passages later in the dialogue, sometimes in connection with the highest form of knowledge (57a1; cf. 58d2), and sometimes in connection with a less precise form of knowledge or craft (56e7).

171 There is a question about whether Socrates really limits the discussion to animals. The most basic psychological capacities are attributed to ζώα. While this word normally refers to animals, it can also mean “living things”, given its etymological connection with ζάω, the verb meaning “to live”. Euthydemus 302a-b plays on this broader meaning, which there is extended to include the gods, and Timaeus 77b also makes this broader meaning explicit in order to justify the inclusion of plants. In fact, Frede (1993) translates ζώα “living creatures” in the Philebus passages (e.g. 31d5, 35c10), which seems deliberately more ambiguous in its extension than “animals”. “Living things” does not explicitly restrict the psychological capacities to animals, leaving open the possibility that plants are meant as well. This possibility is supported by the attribution of pleasant and painful αἰσθήσεως, as well as desire, to plants in the Timaeus (77b). Furthermore, in the evaluation of the life of pleasure in the Philebus Socrates claims (playfully?) that such a life would not be choiceworthy for any animal or plant (22b4-5).
phenomena grouped under the single heading ‘pleasure’. ‘Pleasure’ does not refer to a single psychological capacity which an animal either possesses or lacks. Instead, many animals are only capable of bodily pleasure, while human beings have the potential to experience a vast array of psychic pleasures, including some that are worthy even of gods.

1 Memory and Recollection

After concluding the account of bodily pleasure and pain, Socrates introduces a “different kind of pleasure and pain” (ἡδονῆς καὶ λύπης ἑτέρον εἴδος, 32c3-4) which “the soul experiences by itself, without the body” (χωρὶς τοῦ σώματος αὐτῆς τῆς ψυχῆς, 32c4). Socrates claims that he cannot give a proper account of this new kind of pleasure without giving an account of memory, since it “depends entirely on memory” (διὰ μνήμης πᾶν ἐστι γεγονός, 33c). Socrates defines memory as “the preservation of αἴσθησις” (Σωτηρίαν τοίνυν αἰσθήσεως τὴν μνήμην, 34a10). It is not obvious in what sense memory “preserves” αἴσθησις, but I will argue that here μνήμη refers specifically to the enduring awareness of αἴσθησις that enables a subject to have temporally extended experiences. This interpretation is supported by Socrates’ characterization of memory in his two descriptions of the life of pleasure without intelligence (21b-c, 60e). In both of these passages, he suggests that if one were to radically remove all memory from a creature’s life, then any temporally extended experience would be impossible. As he puts it, such a creature “would not have memory of its experience for any length of time” (60d9-e1).

Socrates goes on to distinguish between memory and recollection (ἀνάμνησις) (34b), emphasizing that the latter belongs to the soul alone. I argue that recollection and memory are independent psychic capacities, and yet Socrates sometimes uses the term “memory” (μνήμη) to refer to both capacities without distinguishing between them, since they are both ways of being aware of past experiences. According to my interpretation, neither memory nor recollection consists in the storage of experiences outside of the subject’s immediate awareness. Instead,

172 See Chapter 3 for my analysis of bodily pleasure and pain, which I argue are forms of αἴσθησις.

173 It is actually Protarchus rather than Socrates who characterizes the pleasures and pains of expectation in this way, yet Socrates immediately affirms this characterization, saying “Your assumption is correct” (Ὀρθῶς ὑπέλαβες, 32c6).

174 Since bodily pleasure has a temporally extended structure, being identified with a process of restoration, it also seems to depend on memory. It is not clear whether Plato realized that his conceptions of bodily pleasure and memory imply that the subject of the unmixed life of pleasure could not even experience bodily pleasure (since this requires both αἴσθησις and memory), let alone the pleasures that belong to the soul alone and require more sophisticated forms of cognition.
memory is the continuing awareness of perceptions and other experiences and recollection is the process of later recovering experiences of which one is no longer aware.

The task of analyzing the role of memory in various types of pleasure is complicated by Socrates’ frequent failure to make the distinction between memory and recollection explicit. In fact, the word “recollection” (ἀνάμνησις) and its cognates appear only six times in the dialogue, and only twice with reference to recollection as an independent psychic capacity. These two instances are both located in the passage where Socrates explicitly distinguishes recollection from memory (34b2, 34c1). Elsewhere in the dialogue, Socrates uses μνήμη more generally to refer to both memory and recollection. Nevertheless, a close examination of the distinction between memory and recollection at Philebus 34b shows that they are distinct capacities which can occur independently of one another. After all, one can easily imagine creatures which possess memory, in the sense that they are aware of events which take place over time, without possessing the capacity for recollection. Some may object that the ability to remember something that one can never later recall is an empty and useless capacity, or even a contradiction in terms. However, this is only true if one thinks of memory as the storage of information or experiences outside of a subject’s immediate awareness, rather than the capacity that makes any continuous experience possible.

Socrates claims that he and Protarchus must investigate not only memory, but also αἴσθησις, before they can properly account for the psychic pleasures of expectation. Socrates has already outlined the restoration account of bodily pleasure and pain in detail (31b-33b), and yet up to this point he has not given an account of αἴσθησις, and the word has yet to appear in the dialogue, either in nominal or verbal form. Socrates defines perception as an affection (πάθος or πάθημα) or upheaval (σεισμός) that moves both the body and the soul (33d, 34a). Socrates does not here describe what effect these bodily disturbances have on the soul, but we have already learned from the account of bodily pleasure and pain that deviations from the natural condition of an organism produce pain and the processes that restore this natural condition produce pleasure. Socrates makes the further point that some bodily disturbances are too small to have any effect on the soul, and he calls this nonperception (ἀναισθησία), which he distinguishes from forgetting (λήθη) (33e). This detail is important, not only because it refines Socrates’

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\[175\] See chapter 2 for detailed discussion of the account of αἴσθησις in the Philebus and comparison with the treatments of αἴσθησις in other late Platonic dialogues, including the Theaetetus and Timaeus.
account of the harmonious condition of the living organism, which is disturbed only when the soul is affected by bodily changes, but also because it prepares the ground for Socrates’ account of memory. Socrates next defines memory very concisely as the “preservation of αἰσθήσις” (Σωτηρίαν τοίνυν αἰσθήσεως τὴν μνήμην, 34a10). A few things are worth noting about this definition. Although the content of memory is not limited to αἰσθήσις, Socrates privileges αἰσθήσις in the initial definition of memory. This suggests either that αἰσθήσις is a paradigmatic example of the content of memory, or that it is more relevant to the context of this particular definition of memory. In what follows, I will suggest that Socrates focuses on the memory of αἰσθήσις in order to highlight certain features of memory which distinguish it from recollection; for example, unlike recollection, memory is temporally continuous with αἰσθήσις and both memory and αἰσθήσις are movements of the body-soul compound, rather than belonging to the soul alone.

The distinction between non-perception and forgetting provides the first clue about the sense in which memory “preserves” αἰσθήσις. One might, like Aristotle, conceive of memory as something that necessarily involves a lapse of time, instead of a type of cognition that functions concurrently with αἰσθήσις. By distinguishing forgetting from non-perception, Socrates insists only on the minimum requirement that αἰσθήσις actually occurs (for one can have memories only of things one has actually experienced) and that the formation of memory precedes forgetting. Thus, the conception of memory in this passage resembles the wax-block model of memory in the Theaetetus, according to which experiences are immediately imprinted on the soul and remain in memory until this imprint fades (191d). As in the Philebus, memories are not formed after a lapse of time, but rather “we hold the wax under our perceptions and thoughts and take a stamp from them, in the way in which we take the imprints of signet rings” (ὑπέχοντας αὐτὸ ταῖς αἰσθήσει καὶ ἑννοίαις, ἀποτυπούσθαι, ὡσπερ δακτυλιῶν σημεῖα ἐνσημαινομένους, 191d-).

176 Thus at 34b Socrates imagines a case in which the soul loses the memory of either an αἰσθήσις or something it has learned (ἀπολέσασα μνήμην εἴτ’ αἰσθήσεως εἴτ’ αὐτ’ μαθήματος, 34b10-11).

177 In other words, the special sense in which αἰσθήσις moves both the body and soul “in common” (κοινῇ, 34a3-5; see Chapter 3, Section 1) seems to apply likewise to memory.

178 See De Memoria 451a23-25, 451a29-31: “It is only at that instant when the state or affection is implanted in the soul that memory exists, and therefore memory is not itself implanted concurrently with the implantation of the sensory experience...to remember, strictly speaking, is an activity which will not occur until time has elapsed. For one remembers now what one saw or otherwise experienced formerly; one does not remember now what one experiences now” (ὅταν γάρ ἐγγένηται ἡ ἐξίς ἢ τὸ πάθος, τότε μνήμη ἑστιν, ὡστε μετὰ τοῦ πάθους ἐγγυμνομένου οὐκ ἐγγίνεται...τὸ δὲ μνημονεύειν καθ’ αὐτό οὐκ ὑπάρχει πρὶν χρονισθῆναι’ μνημονεύει γάρ νῦν δ’ ἐδειν ἢ ἐπαθεὶ πρότερον, οὐχ δ’ νῦν ἐπαθεὶ, νῦν μνημονεύει).
7). Presumably the process of imprinting on the soul takes place as soon as we perceive or think something; otherwise, if a perception or thought had already passed out of one’s awareness, it would be too late to remember it. As in the *Philebus*, experiences which fail to imprint on the soul are not “forgotten”, but rather they are not remembered in the first place (191e).

The wax-block model explicitly characterizes memory as a capacity for storing information outside of one’s immediate awareness, since it is through memory that a subject compares present and past experiences. However, the wax-block model explains both memory and recollection, whereas in the *Philebus* Socrates distinguishes these two cognitive capacities. If memory referred to the storage of experiences outside of a subject’s awareness in the *Philebus*, as apparently is the case in the *Theaetetus* passage, Socrates would not say that recollection occurred after the *loss* of memory (ἀπολέσασα μνήμην, 34b10). In the *Philebus* Socrates characterizes memory as a form of awareness that begins concurrently with αἴσθησις and is “lost” when this experience passes out of the subject’s awareness. Thus, memory “preserves” αἴσθησις in the sense that it extends the time during which a subject can be aware of an experience. Furthermore, if an experience were by its nature temporally extended, then memory is the capacity that would allow a subject to be aware of the whole experience as a unified event which takes place over time.

The distinction between memory and recollection provides further evidence that the description of memory as the “preservation of αἴσθησις” should be understood primarily as the enduring awareness of αἴσθησις, rather than the storage of αἴσθησις outside of a subject’s immediate awareness. Socrates clarifies the role of recollection by pointing out how it differs from memory in the following passage.

{ΣΩ.} Μνήμης δὲ ἀνάμμησιν ἀρ’ οὐ διαφέρουσαν λέγομεν;
{ΠΡΩ.} Ἰσως.
{ΣΩ.} Ἄρ’ οὖν ὁ πόδε; {ΠΡΩ.} Τὸ ποῖον;
{ΣΩ.} Ὅταν ἃ μετὰ τοῦ σώματος ἔπασχέν ποθ’ ἡ ψυχή, ταῦτ’ ἂνεν τοῦ σώματος αὐτῇ ἐν ἑαυτῇ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀναλαμβάνῃ, τότε ἄναμμησθεὶς πον λέγομεν.

Soc.: And do we not hold that recollection differs from memory?
Pro.: Perhaps.
Soc.: Does not their difference lie in this?
Pro.: In what?
Soc.: Do we not call it ‘recollection’ when the soul recalls as much as possible by itself, without the aid of the body, what she had once experienced together with the body? *(Philebus 34b2-8)*

It is not immediately obvious what difference Socrates has in mind here. Socrates emphasizes the fact that recollection, unlike the original experience, does not involve the body. He does not identify any feature of recollection which could distinguish it from memory other than its independence of the body, which implies that the body is somehow involved in the formation of memory.179 The description of the content of recollection as “what she [i.e. the soul] once experienced together with the body” implies that αἰσθησις is partly constituted by bodily changes. Translating the verb ἐπασχέν “experienced” is misleading, since Socrates is careful to avoid suggesting that the body itself has conscious experiences, which would lead to absurdities akin to the Trojan horse model of perception rejected in the *Theaetetus* (184d). However, αἰσθησις has already been defined as the joint movement of the soul and the body, and in this sense the body and the soul undergo the same affection. Socrates may be drawing attention to the fact that the movement of the body plays a similar role in the formation of the memory of a particular αἰσθησις as it does in the formation of the αἰσθησις itself. If this is the case, both αἰσθησις and memory are constituted by joint movements of the body and the soul. In contrast to αἰσθησις and memory, recollection can occur at any time and does not involve the movement of the body. If Socrates were thinking of memory primarily as the storage of experiences outside of an animal’s immediate awareness, then the contrast between memory and recollection in this passage would break down. After all, a memory may be stored for a very long time and the body would not obviously play a more central role in a long-stored memory than in the ultimate recollection of it.

Although recollection and memory are both capacities through which the soul is aware of past experiences, I have argued that Plato draws a real and interesting distinction between them at *Philebus* 34. The distinction between memory and recollection in the *Philebus* can be further elucidated by considering a distinction Broad (1923) makes between two ways of perceiving change, which is still cited by philosophers of perception today (e.g. Hoerl (2009)). Broad illustrates his distinction between two ways of perceiving change by contrasting the different ways in which we perceive the movement of the second and hour hands on a clock. Broad

179 Lang (1980) reaches the same conclusion that recollection differs from memory in belonging to the soul alone (382).
proposes that any theory of perceptual experience must be able to explain the difference between two ways of perceiving motion. The ways in which memory and recollection interact with αἴσθησις in the Philebus provide Plato with the tools for meeting this demand. Hoerl (2009) summarizes Broad’s example as follows: “an account of temporal phenomenology needs to explain the difference between coming to see that the hour hand of a clock has moved, and seeing the second hand moving” (9). The perception of the second hand’s movement requires what I have been calling the capacity for temporally extended experience, whereas the perception of the hour hand merely requires the ability to compare a momentary perception of the position of the hour hand with another such momentary perception which occurred in the past.

According to the Philebus’ account of memory, recollection and αἴσθησις, seeing the second hand move involves a combination of αἴσθησις and memory, which enables a subject to have a continuous experience of a temporally extended process. Thus, memory does not involve the storage of a momentary αἴσθησις which a subject can compare with a subsequent momentary αἴσθησις and thus become aware of change. On the contrary, memory ensures that a αἴσθησις does not immediately leave a subject’s consciousness, and so the experience of the second hand moving is a single, extended episode of awareness. The perception of the movement of the hour hand, on the other hand, requires the distinct capacity of recollection. The difference in the sense in which the two hands are “seen” is indicated by the way the experiences are described in the quoted passage. A person “comes to see” that the hour hand is moving, but simply “sees” that the second hand is moving. In the case of the hour hand, the subject perceives two separate things, the hour hand in one position and, at some future time, the hour hand in another position. At no point does the subject perceive the hour hand moving. The “coming to see” that the hour hand has moved requires only the momentary perception of the hour hand in one position and the subsequent momentary perception of the hour hand in another position, together with the recollection of the previous perception. The only cognitive capacity common to both the experience of seeing the movement of the hour hand and that of seeing the movement of the second hand is simple perception. However, the former also requires recollection, while the latter requires memory.

Hoerl (2009) points out that there is a limit to the length of any single perceptual experience, which explains why one cannot see the hour hand moving in the same way one can see the second hand moving (9-10).
This example reveals the distinct cognitive roles of memory and recollection, and it also opens at least the conceptual possibility of creatures which possess one of these cognitive capacities without the other. One can easily imagine a creature that can perceive the movement of the second hand but not the movement of the hour hand. Perhaps it is more difficult to imagine a creature that can perceive the movement of the hour hand without being able to perceive the second hand moving, but there is no reason to object to such a creature as a conceptual possibility. This animal would also perceive the movement of the second hand, but in the exact same way it perceived the movement of the hour hand, since it would not be able to have temporally extended experiences.

2 Desire and Expectation

After defining memory and distinguishing between memory and recollection, Socrates goes on to show how these capacities underlie both desire and expectation. Socrates has already mentioned many examples of desires at this point in the dialogue, such as hunger and thirst, but he has not yet given a precise account of their nature. Instead, he has spoken loosely of such states as bodily pains caused by the destruction of the harmonious condition of the body (31e-32a). However, desire turns out to be more cognitively complex than mere bodily pain. In the analysis of desire (34d-35d), Socrates begins by reiterating the basic point that desire involves bodily pain; for example, hunger arises from the bodily pain caused by the emptying of the animal (34e9-11). He then adds a layer of complexity by pointing out that desire is not just the effect of a certain bodily condition on the soul, like bodily pain, but rather it is an intentional psychic phenomenon which is directed at a past αἴσθησις, specifically an experience of bodily pleasure. Protarchus first states that desire is “for drink” (πώματός, 34e14), but when questioned by Socrates, he agrees to the more precise formulation that it is “for filling with drink” (πληρώσεως πώματος, 35a1). This clarification suggests that the object of the desire is not properly an external object (drink), but rather a certain bodily process (filling or some other form of restoration), which

181 Although Aristotle makes a different distinction between memory and recollection, he also conceives of them as distinct forms of cognition which can (and often do) exist independently (453a7-9). For example, he claims that recollection requires the faculty of deliberation (τὸ βουλευτικὸν, 453a13), and thus only belongs to animals which possess this faculty.

182 Contra Evans (2007), who argues that desires just are bodily pains, from which he concludes that bodily pains (and bodily pleasures) are representational states (86-90).

183 The necessary connection between desire and bodily pain demonstrates that Socrates is here giving an account of bodily desires in particular.
happens to be caused by a certain type of external object. However, this account of the object of thirst cannot be easily generalized to explain the objects of other bodily desires, since the specific process which will bring an end to bodily pain is not always possible to identify, even by the most rationally sophisticated subject. For example, anyone experiencing severe bodily pain desires relief, and yet in many cases one has no idea which kind of bodily process would bring relief. In his general account of desire, Socrates identifies the object of desire not with a specific bodily process like filling, but rather with a particular type of *psychic* experience. Socrates makes the following comments about the nature of desire in general.

{ΣΩ.} Σώματος ἐπιθυμίαν οὐ φησιν ἡμῖν οὗτος ὁ λόγος γέγνεθαι.
{ΠΡΩ.} Πῶς;
{ΣΩ.} Ὡτι τοῖς ἐκείνων παθήμασιν ἐναντίαν ἀεὶ παντὸς γήρων μηνύει τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν.
{ΠΡΩ.} Καὶ μάλα.
{ΣΩ.} Ἡ δ’ ὀρμή γε ἔπι τοῦ παθήματος ἀγωνισά  γὰρ ἡ τὰ παθήματα δηλοὶ ποινήματος ὑπάλληλον τῶν τοῖς παθήμασιν ἐναντίων.
{ΠΡΩ.} Πάνω γε.
{ΣΩ.} Τὴν ἄρα ἐπάγωσαν ἔπι τὰ ἐπιθυμούμενα ἀποδείξεως μηνύματος ὁ λόγος ψυχῆς σύμπασαν τὴν τῇ ὀρμήν καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν καὶ τῇ ἀρχὴν τοῦ γήρων παντὸς ἀπέφηνεν.

Soc.: Our argument forces us to conclude that desire is not a matter of the body.
Pro.: Why is that?
Soc.: Because it shows that every living creature always strives towards the opposite of its own experience.
Pro.: And very much so.
Soc.: This impulse, then, that drives it towards the opposite of its own state signifies that it has memory of that opposite state?
Pro.: Certainly.
Soc.: By pointing out that it is this memory that directs it towards the objects of its desires, our argument has established that every impulse, desire, and the rule over the whole animal is the domain of the soul. (Philebus 35c6-d3)

In this passage, the object of desire for every living creature is identified as “the opposite of its own experience” (τοῖς ἐκείνων παθήμασιν ἐναντίων, 35c9). Socrates uses the word πάθος to refer to both bodily and psychic affections (cf. 34a), and in a sense these are one and the same (see Chapter 3, Section 1), and yet in the account of desire a creature accesses the relevant πάθη towards which it strives through memory. Memory and recollection are both directed at αἰσθήσεις, such as bodily pleasure and pain, and not the bodily processes which produce these

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184 From the way Socrates describes the role of memory in desire, it is clear that he has the particular function of recollection in mind, as he defined it at 34b-c. In this passage it is recollection that “turns up” (ἀναπολήσῃ) memories of past experiences (34b11); secondly, recollection is distinguished from memory as being a purely psychic capacity, while memory involves both the body and the soul (34b6-8).
experiences in the soul. If desire takes its object from the content of memory, then it too must be directed at a psychic experience. In particular, it is aimed at the experience which is “opposite to what it suffers”, and since desire arises out of bodily pain, one can conclude that it is directed at some kind of bodily pleasure.\(^\text{185}\)

This general account of desire corrects some of Socrates’ earlier statements about particular desires, such as thirst and hunger. Properly, bodily destruction, which was identified with desires such as hunger and thirst in the account of bodily pleasure and pain and again in the beginning of the analysis of desire, is only the cause of bodily pain and not desire itself. Desire requires the additional capacity to recall previous experiences. After elucidating the role of memory in desire, Socrates adds a motivational aspect to his description of desire. The fact that desires motivate actions is essential in our common sense notion of what desire is, but has not been explicit so far in his analysis. He claims that the purely psychic nature of desire “shows that every creature strives towards the opposite of its own experience” (“Ὅτι τοῖς ἐκείνου παθήμασιν ἐναντίαν ἀεὶ παντὸς ζῴου μηνύει τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν, 35c9-10”). Where does this striving (τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν), also called an “impulse” (ὁρμή, 35c12, d2) come from? The motivational force of desire is explained by the fact that living creatures naturally pursue pleasure and avoid pain. When Socrates claims that every creature strives towards the opposite of its own experience, he means that every creature strives towards pleasure when it is in pain, and not vice versa.\(^\text{186}\)

Neither Socrates nor Protarchus have made pleasure’s role as a goal towards which living organisms naturally strive explicit up to this point in the dialogue. However, Socrates’ summary of Philebus’ argument at the end of the dialogue gives a very central place to this function of pleasure. Socrates reports, “Philebus says that pleasure is the right aim for all living beings and that all should try to strive for it” (Φίληβός φησι τὴν ἡδονὴν σκοπὸν πᾶσι ζῴοις γεγονέναι καὶ δεῖν πάντας τοῦτον στοχάζεσθαι, 60a7-8). Socrates’ analysis of desire implies that there is some truth to the

\(^{185}\) Socrates later claims that desire is directed at “the pleasant things (τῶν ἡδέων) that would put an end to the pain” (35e9-10), suggesting that the object of desire can be extended from the experience of bodily pleasure to the objects which help bring about this experience, at least in cases where these objects are known.

\(^{186}\) The fact that living creatures naturally pursue pleasure and avoid pain highlights the abnormality of the intense pleasures associated with disease (46c-47b), which cause creatures to pursue more intense pains in order to increase the intensity of their pleasures. In fact, the attractiveness of bodily pleasure in general is to some extent irrational, since it presupposes a previous bodily pain. This criticism of bodily pleasure is inherent in the argument Socrates reports at 53c-55a that pleasure is an example of “generation” (γένεσις) rather than “being” (οὐσία), since anyone who pursues generation simultaneously pursues destruction, rather than the neutral state which is free from both. The proper goal of any rational creature is to achieve this neutral state, which is identified with the natural condition of the body and the soul (55a; cf. 32e-33b). See chapter 5, section 2 for my argument that Socrates only accepts this argument in relation to bodily pleasures.
motivational aspect of pleasure noticed by Philebus, if not as a recommendation of the way all animals “should” (δεῖν) behave, at least as a description of how they often do behave, at least in relation to bodily pleasure.

Socrates refers to animals in general in his summary of the restoration model of pleasure and pain (τῶν ζῴων, 35e3). However, he quickly limits his account to human subjects in the second part of the summary (τις...ἡμῶν, 35e3-4), and he continues to use a masculine personal pronoun in his description of the “in between” state (αὐτῶν, 36a1), and in the contrast between positive and negative expectation (τις ἡμῶν, 36a8). Up to this point, Socrates has explicitly attributed all of the psychic capacities he has discussed, including bodily pleasure and pain, αἴσθησις, memory, recollection and desire, to all animals (ζῶα). However, he attributes false pleasures only to human beings.187 Determining the point at which Socrates narrows the scope of the discussion from the psychic capacities shared by all (or most) animals to those which belong solely to human beings is crucial for understanding the difference between the cognitive capacities of humans and other animals, as well as the cognitive requirements of individual psychic capacities, such as expectation and the pleasures associated with it.

Socrates introduces expectation (ἐλπίς or προσδοκία) and the pleasures and pains associated with it by considering a condition which is “in between” (ἐν μέσῳ) the affections of bodily pleasure and bodily pain (35e7).188 Socrates is not referring here to the neutral condition of bodily and psychic harmony, which is “in between” pleasure and pain in a different sense, representing the limit or end of both.189 Instead, he is describing a condition in which an animal experiences bodily pain and simultaneously recalls a previous experience of bodily pleasure. This is the condition in which an animal experiences desire. Protarchus claims that this state would produce a “twofold pain” (διπλῇ τινὶ λύπῃ) since the subject simultaneously experiences both bodily pain and the “soul’s desire caused by the expectation” (κατὰ δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν προσδοκίας τινὶ πόθῳ, 36a4-6). Although Protarchus runs together the capacities for desire and expectation, Socrates represents expectation as a separate psychic capacity which does not

187 E.g. see 40c4-6: “From what has now been said, it follows that there are false pleasures in human souls (ἐν ταῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ψυχαῖς) that are quite ridiculous imitations of true ones, and also such pains.”

188 The account of expectation is anticipated at 32b-c, but Socrates’ account of αἴσθησις, memory, recollection and desire intervene between this first mention of the pleasures of expectation and the account itself, which runs from 35e to 36c.

necessarily accompany desire. In response to Protarchus’ statement, Socrates distinguishes between two possible psychological conditions which can result from desire.

{ΣΩ.} Πῶς, ὦ Πρώταρχε, τὸ δεπλοῦν τῆς λύπης ἕπες; ἄρ’ οὐκ ἔστι μὲν ὅτε τις ἧμῶν κενούμενος ἐν ἔλπιδι φανερὰ τοῦ πληρωθῆσαι καθέστηκε, τοτὲ δὲ τούλαντίον ἀνελπίστως ἔχει;

Soc.: How do you mean that there is a twofold pain, Protarchus? Does it not sometimes happen that one of us is emptied at one particular time, but is in clear hope of being filled, while at another time he is, on the contrary, without hope? (Philebus 36a7-b2)

Desire and expectation are closely linked, but not identical. Desire is simply an impulse to change the condition of the body caused by the combination of bodily pain and the recollection of a past experience of pleasure. Expectation on the other hand involves an assessment of whether a desire is likely to be satisfied, and nowhere does Socrates suggest that this type of assessment is built into the structure of desire. Although desire is always painful, since it is caused by a painful bodily lack, this pain is mixed with pleasure whenever it is accompanied by the sure prospect that the bodily need will be satisfied.

Another difference between desire and expectation is the scope of their subjects. While desire is explicitly attributed to all animals (35c6-d3), Socrates only explicitly attributes expectation to human subjects (36a8). Socrates summarizes the account of desire and expectation by stating, “This is, then, the occasion when a human being and other animals are simultaneously undergoing pain and pleasure” (Τότε ἄρ’ ἄνθρωπος καὶ τάλλα ζώα λυπεῖται τε ἄμα καὶ χαίρει, 36b8-9). At first, the reference to “other animals” (τάλλα ζώα) seems to settle the question about the scope of the capacity of expectation. However, τότε refers back to the condition described by Socrates as follows.

Μῶν οὖν οὐχὶ ἐλπίζων μὲν πληρωθῆσεθαί τῷ μεμνῆσθαι δοκεῖ σοι χαίρειν, ἅμα δὲ κενούμενος ἐν τούτοίς [τοῖς χρόνοις] ἀλγεῖν;

And don’t you think that he enjoys this hope for replenishment when he remembers, while he is simultaneously in pain because he has been emptied at that time? (Philebus 36b4-6)

According to Frede’s translation, the psychic pleasure a person experiences in this description is a pleasure of expectation (“he enjoys this hope for replenishment”); however, χαίρειν is more naturally taken with the dative infinitive τῷ μεμνῆσθαι, so that the person takes pleasure in recalling a past experience of bodily pleasure rather than the expectation of a future pleasure.
Hackforth’s translation interprets the passage in this latter way: “Then don’t you think that when hoping for replenishment we feel pleasure through what we remember, though nevertheless we feel pain simultaneously because of the emptying process going on at the times in question?” This way of interpreting the passage suggests that a subject may take psychic pleasure in recalling a previous bodily pleasure, whether or not the subject also has the capacity to assess the likelihood of experiencing this kind of pleasure again in the future.

Up to this point, Socrates has not identified expectation with any other type of cognition, such as desire or judgment. The ambiguity of the reference of the “simultaneous pleasure and pain” (λυπεῖται τε ἁμα καὶ χαίρει) which Socrates attributes to some non-human animals at 36b8-9 leaves open the question of whether non-human animals experience either positive or negative expectations in addition to pleasurable memories of past pleasures and the bodily pain associated with desire. Instead of addressing these questions about the cognitive requirements for expectation, Socrates famously proposes that pleasures can be true or false (36c6-7). The role of the pleasures and pains of expectation in his defense of the distinction between true and false pleasures gives some insight into the questions about expectation that were left unresolved at the end of the analysis of desire. First, expectations (προσδοκίαι), along with fears and judgments, are listed among the forms of cognition that can be false (36c10-11). Socrates never claims in the Philebus that αἰσθήσεις, bodily pleasures or pains, memories, or desires are false, and so it is unlikely that expectation is equivalent to any of these forms of cognition. After the comparison of the soul to a book, Socrates identifies expectations (ἐλπίδες) as a subset of the assertions (λόγοι) which are written in the soul (40a6-7). These assertions were earlier identified with judgments (δόξαι) and were described as true and false (39c4-5). Furthermore, throughout the entire discussion of the false pleasures of expectation and the comparison of the soul to a book, Socrates talks explicitly about human souls (e.g. ἡμῶν ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς, 39d3), and he uses a masculine pronoun in all of his examples (e.g. αὐτὸς αὐτὸν ὁδίποτε ἄν, 38c9). These passages strongly suggest that expectations are a subset of judgments or assertions (δόξαι or λόγοι), and as such belong only to human subjects.

190 At 38b12-13 Socrates states that memory and αἰσθήσεις “lead to judgment or the attempt to come to a definite judgment”, but while this judgment may be true or false, Socrates never calls either the memory or the αἰσθήσεις true or false. Αἰσθήσεις and memory are ascribed a similar role in the formation of judgment in the comparison of the soul to a book at 39a.
Since it is a form of belief or judgment (δόξα), expectation is a more cognitively demanding capacity than desire, and belongs to a more limited scope of subjects. Although Socrates seems to regard the expectation which a person experiences when in the “in between” condition of desire as the paradigmatic case of expectation, nothing in the nature of expectation depends on either bodily pain or desire. Even while in the neutral condition of bodily and psychic harmony, a person may still expect either pleasant or painful experiences in the future. The comparison of the soul to a book reveals that expectation is part of a larger category of judgments, which can be about the past or the present as well as the future (39c-e). As a result, the pleasures and pains associated with expectation also belong to a larger class of psychic pleasures and pains which depend on judgments and which can be either true or false. In the next section, I will give a general account of the relationship between pleasure and judgment and clarify the sense in which pleasures can be true or false.

3 Pleasure and Judgment

One of the most striking claims Socrates makes in the Philebus is that some pleasures can be false (ψευδής). In this section, I examine the relationship between pleasure and judgment (δόξα) in an attempt to understand this claim. Socrates does not simply argue that certain pleasures are responses to, and in this way depend on, judgments; he makes the much more radical claim that certain pleasures have the same intentional structure as judgments, and like judgments, they can represent their content correctly or incorrectly. Just as a judgment is partly constituted by its content, so the content of a particular pleasure is integral to what that pleasure is rather than something external to it. At the same time, Socrates does not entirely assimilate pleasure and judgment; whereas he compares judgments to statements (λόγοι) in the soul, he compares pleasures to images (φαντάσματα). I suggest that the identification of certain pleasures (and pains) with images instead of statements in the soul reflects the fact that pleasures, even those which belong to the soul alone and have intentional content, are affectively laden in ways that judgments are not.  

Socrates points out that pleasures and judgments sometimes share the same content, and pleasures with the same content as false beliefs are also false. However, he also distinguishes a

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191 Socrates classifies a great variety of psychic affections, including hope, fear, love, grief and malice, as psychic pleasures, pains or mixtures of the two. Although many of these affections have the same intentional structure as judgments, Socrates by no means reduces them to judgments.
second sense in which pleasures can be false, and in this sense ψευδής is better translated as “deceptive”. Pleasures are false in this second sense when they are experienced simultaneously or in close proximity with pain and thus produce false judgments in the soul concerning their size or intensity. These pleasures precede rather than follow false judgments; moreover, they need not themselves possess the same intentional structure as the false judgments to which they give rise. Just as pleasures may be false in either of these two senses, they can also be true in either sense, which explains Socrates’ use of “true” as a synonym for “pure” in the description of the true and pure pleasures of sight and hearing (51b).

Socrates first defends his application of the predicates “true” and “false” to pleasure by drawing an analogy between the structure of pleasure and that of judgment (37a-b), and subsequently by describing the falsity of pleasure as a direct consequence of the falsity of certain accompanying judgments (37d-40e). I show in what follows that these two parts of Socrates’ account of false pleasure are necessary and complementary stages of a single argument. The first stage of the argument establishes that at least some pleasures are the kinds of things which can be true or false. Thus, Socrates must show that just as one can believe or judge that something is the case, one can also take pleasure in a particular state of affairs. However, the fact that certain pleasures have the same intentional structure as judgment is not enough to explain their truth or falsity, since Protarchus can still insist that the truth and falsity of the content of a pleasure does not affect the truth or falsity of the pleasure itself, as it does in the case of judgment. Socrates introduces the analogy of the painter and the scribe in order to convince Protarchus that the content of a psychic pleasure is as essential to what that pleasure is as the content of a judgment.

Socrates first draws a structural analogy between pleasure and judgment (δόξα). In the following exchange, Socrates draws attention to the fact that both pleasure and judgment can be “about” something.

{ΣΩ.} ...ἔστιν γάρ πού τι δοξάζειν ἡμῖν;
{ΠΡΩ.} Ναί.
{ΣΩ.} Καὶ ἥδεσθαι;
{ΠΡΩ.} Ναί.

192 According to Frede (1993), Socrates’ attempt to establish the truth and falsity of pleasure by drawing a structural analogy between pleasure judgment “misfires” (p. 41, n. 1), since it does not convince Protarchus to give up his view that pleasure is separable from its object. However, according to my interpretation, even though the analogy between pleasure and judgment is not alone sufficient to defend the thesis that pleasure can be false, it plays a crucial role in the subsequent argument about the relationship between pleasure and judgment. Having intentional content is what makes pleasure the kind of thing which can misrepresent a state of affairs in the world.
Soc.: ... Is there something we call judging?
Pro.: Yes.
Soc.: And is there also taking pleasure?
Pro.: Yes.
Soc.: But there is also what the judgment is about?
Pro: Certainly.
Soc.: And also what the pleasure is about? (Philebus 37a2-9)

The claim in this passage that there is something “in which” (ὦ) one takes pleasure is more specific than the claim that pleasure is directed at an object. I argued in Chapter 3 that bodily pleasure does not have an object, but even if the bodily restoration which partly constitutes bodily pleasure were actually its object, as some commentators have supposed, one would not describe this bodily restoration as the thing “in which” a person takes bodily pleasure. This would be akin to describing the objects of sight or hearing as the things “in which” sight and hearing are taken, rather than simply the things one sees or hears. Similarly, although bodily pleasure can be the object of memory or desire, one would not describe it as the thing “in which” one experiences either memory or desire. The fact that it sounds natural in both Greek and English to say that some pleasures are “about” something or “taken in” something is not merely a fortuitous accident of grammar. These phrases reflect something about the nature of certain pleasures, which are not simply directed at external objects or psychological experiences, like memory or desire; instead, like the content of a judgment, the content of a pleasure of this type can be expressed as a statement or proposition about the world.

After establishing that at least some pleasures have something akin to propositional content, Socrates claims that pleasure often “arises with” a false judgment (ἡδονὴ πολλάκις οὐ μετὰ

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193 Hackforth (1945) translates this line “And that in which the pleasure is felt”, but there is something peculiar about the neuter participle τὸ ἡδόμενον, since it seems to serve as the grammatical subject of the verb ἡδεται. One would expect the subject of ἡδεται to be either masculine (referring to the person who takes pleasure) or feminine (referring to the soul as the subject of pleasure).

194 Evans (2008) makes the same point, claiming that it is only in virtue of being “about something” that any mental state can be true or false (93-4). He calls mental states which are about something in this way “attitudes” (93).

195 I hesitate to simply assert that these pleasures have propositional content, as do Evans (2008), Frede (1985) and Penner (1970), because Socrates ultimately compares pleasures to images rather than statements in the soul; while it is clear that images have some sort of complex representational content, it seems odd to describe this content as “propositional”. However, Socrates does say that the psychic pictures which represent pleasures in the analogy illustrate, and thus in some sense have the same content as, statements in the soul.
δόξης ὀρθῆς ἀλλὰ μετὰ ψεύδους ἡμῖν γίγνεσθαι (37e10-11) and also that true or false judgments are often “accompanied by” pleasure and pain ("Επετεὶ μὴν ταύτας, δὲ νυν ἐλέγομεν, ἡδονὴ καὶ λύπη πολλάκις, ἀληθεῖ καὶ ψευδεῖ δόξη λέγω, 38b9-10). Most commentators agree that, according to Socrates’ account, the truth and falsity of a pleasure is determined by the truth or falsity of a judgment which accompanies it; however, Evans (2008) argues that there are two competing interpretations in the literature about the nature of this accompanying judgment. On one interpretation, a pleasure which has propositional content is accompanied by the judgment that this propositional content is true, and the truth value of a pleasure depends on the truth value of this judgment. On the alternative interpretation, a pleasure which has propositional content is accompanied by the judgment that this content is either pleasant or good. According to the latter interpretation, taking pleasure in something is a way of valuing it, and this interpretation relies on the assumption that the attitude of pleasure can be directed correctly or incorrectly.¹⁹⁶

In what follows, I argue that Evans’ distinction between these two types of interpretations is misleading, for it implies that they are mutually exclusive. The text of the Philebus suggests that pleasures rely on both types of judgments, i.e. judgments both about the truth and the value of their content. When someone takes pleasure in something, this pleasure contains two implicit judgments, 1) that the content of the pleasure is true, i.e. that it correctly represents something in the world, and 2) that the content of the pleasure really is pleasant. One sign of the dependence of pleasure on both these judgments is that if the subject ceases to hold either sort of judgment, then she also ceases to experience the corresponding pleasure. For example, suppose someone takes great pleasure in the news that they have been offered a job. This pleasure depends both on the judgment that the job has really been offered (i.e. that the content of the pleasure is true) and on the judgment that being offered the job is a good thing. If this person later learns either that the offer was made to her by mistake or that it has some unforeseen bad consequences, then she will no longer take pleasure in it.

After giving an account of how judgment comes about by means of a concurrence of memory and ἀἴσθησις (38c-39a),¹⁹⁷ Socrates famously compares the soul to an illustrated book. He claims that there are two craftsmen in the soul, the scribe, who writes statements in the soul which

¹⁹⁶ Evans (2008) labels these two interpretations the “Content Account” and “Value Account” respectively. He cites Gosling (1959) as an example of the first type of interpretation and Harte (2004) as an example of the second.

¹⁹⁷ Compare the various accounts of false judgment offered in the Theaetetus (187d-200d).
correspond to true and false judgments, and a painter, who paints images which accompany these judgments and share their truth value (39a-c). Just as the statements written in the soul are analogous to judgments, the images are analogous to pleasures. The description of these images as \( \phiαντασθέντα \) (38d2) and \( \phiαντάσματα \) (40a9) calls to mind the brief and yet provocative account of \( \phiαντασία \) in the Sophist, where “appearing” (\( \phiαίνεται \)) is described as “the blending of perception and belief” (\( σύμμειξις \ αίσθησεως καὶ δόξης \)) (264b1-2). The description of the images (\( εἰκόνες \) or \( \phiαντάσματα \)) created by the painter in the \textit{Philebus} closely resembles this account of \( \phiαντασία \), since they are described as illustrations of judgments, which are themselves derived from \( αίσθησις \) (39b6-c1).

At first this description of the images in the soul seems to suggest that they always follow \textit{perceptual} judgments, which in turn suggests that the pleasures represented by these images are always taken in some kind of perceptual content. However, the one example we get of a psychic pleasure of this type is the pleasure someone takes in envisaging (\( \ὁρᾷ \)) himself with a large amount of gold (40a). This example reveals that the content of the images in the soul, and hence also the psychic pleasures they stand for, can include a composite of many different perceptions and judgments and is not strictly limited to things that have been perceived. After all, one can easily envisage oneself enjoying the benefits of riches without ever having literally seen oneself in this condition. The emphasis on visual perception highlights the immediacy and vividness of the experience; the subject not only expects or judges that this state of affairs will be realized, but he also takes great pleasure in its prospect. Images (\( εἰδώλων καὶ φαντάσματων \), 71a5-6) are similarly credited with evoking affective responses in the \textit{Timaeus}, where they are the principal method by which reason communicates with the appetitive part of the soul (71a-d). Depending on their content, these images have the power either to entice (\( ψυχαγωγήσοιτο \), 71a6-7) or to frighten (\( φοβοῖ μὲν αυτό, \) 71b5) appetite.

The analogy of the scribe and the painter introduces a new class of psychic phenomena to which psychic pleasures belong, which is distinct from both judgments and \( αίσθησεις \). These pleasures

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198 It is not clear whether the images in the soul represent pleasures or the \textit{content} of pleasures. I prefer the former interpretation of the analogy, according to which the same relationship holds between the images in the soul and pleasures as between the writings in the soul and judgments. Furthermore, Socrates substitutes “pleasures” for “images” when he says that wicked people have “pleasures painted in their souls” which are false (40b).

199 See Chapter 3, Section 3 for my discussion of this passage.
are not types of αἴσθησις like bodily pleasures; instead, they belong to the soul alone, possess intentional content and are causally linked with judgments. As a result, psychic pleasures and pains can be true or false like judgments, just as φαντασία is said to be true or false in the Sophist, since it is “among the things that are akin to speech” (τούτων τῷ λόγῳ συγγενῶν, 264b2-3). However, although the introduction of φαντάσματα in the soul which follow judgments provides a new class of psychic phenomena to which Socrates can assign these psychic pleasures, he does not clearly delimit the scope of this class or say how psychic pleasures differ from other members of this class. The class of φαντάσματα also seems to include psychic pains, as well as other psychic affections, such as fear and anger. Thus, at 40e Socrates extends his conclusions about true and false psychic pleasures to these other phenomena. The identification of “wrath, fear, longing, lamentations, love, jealousy, malice, and other things like that” at 47e-48a as complex mixtures of psychic pleasure and pain provides a potential answer to the question of the scope of this class, since it suggests that there are only two basic kinds of φαντάσματα, psychic pleasures and psychic pain, in addition to more complex mixtures of the two.

Socrates extends his description of the statements and images in the soul to cover judgments and pleasures concerning the past and the present as well as the future (39c-e); however, he focuses on the pleasures associated with judgments about the future, which he calls expectations or hopes (ἐλπίδες). Socrates prefaces his example of this type of judgment and the corresponding pleasure by claiming that just, pious and good people are loved by the gods (39e). After he gives an example of a pleasure which is taken in a future state of affairs, Socrates concludes that good people usually enjoy true pleasures and wicked people usually enjoy false ones, because good people are dear to the gods and wicked people are not (40b-c). Any interpretation of the account of false pleasures in this passage must explain why good people usually enjoy true rather than false pleasures. This claim is particularly curious when applied to the pleasures associated with expectations about the future, since even if good people value the correct things and are less liable to error in general, this does not explain the greater reliability of their judgments about the future.

The justification for Socrates’ claim about the pleasures of good people lies in the example he provides of a pleasure that is directed at a future state of affairs.

{ΣΩ.} Λόγοι μὴν εἶσιν ἐν ἑκάστοις ἡμῶν, ἃς ἐλπίδας ὁνομάζομεν;
{ΠΡΩ.} Ναί.
{ΣΩ.} Καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰ φαντάσματα ἐξωγραφημένα· καὶ τις ὁρᾷ πολλάκις ἑαυτῷ χρυσὸν γεγονόμενον ἄφθονον καὶ ἕπ’ ἑαυτῷ πολλὰς ἡδονὰς· καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐνεξωγραφημένον αὐτὸν ἑφ’ αὐτῷ χαίροντα σφόδρα καθορᾷ.

Soc.: There are assertions in each of us that we call hopes?
Pro.: Yes.
Soc.: But there are also those painted images. And someone often envisages himself in the possession of an enormous amount of gold and of a lot of pleasures as a consequence. And in addition, he also sees, in this inner picture of himself, that he is beside himself with delight. (Philebus 40a6-12)

Although Socrates does not explicitly identify the pleasure described in this passage as false, the content of the pleasure, i.e. the expectation of a great amount of gold, suggests that it is a false rather than a true pleasure. After all, the acquisition of wealth is much more likely to be the preoccupation of a vicious person than a virtuous one, and if this were a true pleasure, it would provide an immediate counterexample to Socrates’ claim that the pleasures of wicked people are usually false. In this example, Socrates describes a pleasure which has quite complex content. The person takes pleasure not only in envisioning himself “in possession of an enormous amount of gold” (ἑαυτῷ χρυσὸν γεγονόμενον ἄφθονον), but in the fact that this gold will bring him many pleasures. Thus, the pleasure described in this passage relies both on the judgment that a certain state of affairs will come to be in the future and on the judgment that this state of affairs will be pleasant. It is the falsity of this second judgment which renders this pleasure false, regardless of whether it comes to pass that the person acquires a large amount of gold. Incidentally, it is also this second judgment which makes the expectation pleasant rather than painful or neutral. Although good people do not have any better way of predicting what will come to be in the future, they are less likely to make the mistake of taking pleasure in a state of affairs, whether past, present or future, which is not truly pleasant.

Socrates next provides an alternative way of thinking about the content of false pleasures, which further elucidates his claim that virtuous and vicious subjects experience mostly true and false pleasures respectively. Instead of emphasizing the causal link between false pleasures and false judgments, he says that false pleasures are “not about anything that either is the case or ever was the case, or often (or perhaps most of the time) refers to anything that ever will the case” (μη...
μέντοι ἐπὶ τοῖς οὖσι μηδ’ ἐπὶ τοῖς γεγονόσιν ἐνίοτε, πολλάκις δὲ καὶ ίσως πλειστάκις ἐπὶ τοῖς μηδὲ μέλλουσι ποτε γενήσεσθαι, 40d8-10). Here Socrates claims not merely that false pleasures are implicated in the falsity of a false judgment about their content, but he goes so far as to claim that false pleasures are taken in things which do not exist. Characterizing the content of false pleasures as not just mistaken, but actually non-existent, helps to motivate Socrates’ view that the content of pleasure affects the way one should evaluate the pleasure itself. The view that true pleasures are directed at things which actually exist, in contrast with false pleasures, which are directed at non-existent things, is anticipated in the contrast Socrates draws between the pleasures of a wise person and those of a fool at the beginning of the dialogue.

ἡδεσθαι μὲν φαμεν τὸν ἀκολαστάινοντα ἄνθρωπον, ἡδεσθαι δὲ καὶ τὸν σωφρονοῦντα αὐτῷ τῷ σωφρονείς· ἡδεσθαι δ’ αὖ καὶ τὸν ἀνοητάιοντα καὶ ἀνοήτων δοξών καὶ ἔλπιδων μεστόν, ἡδεσθαι δ’ αὖ τὸν φρονοῦντα αὐτῷ τῷ φρονείς· καὶ τούτων τῶν ἱδονῶν ἑκατέρας πῶς ἁν τις ὁμοίας ἄλληλαις εἶναι λέγων οὐκ ἀνόητος φαίνοιτο ἐνδίκως;

Soc.:…We say that a debauched person gets pleasure, as well as that a sober-minded person takes pleasure in his very sobriety. Again, we say that a fool, though full of foolish opinions and hopes, gets pleasure, but likewise a wise man takes pleasure in his wisdom. But surely anyone who said in either case that these pleasures are like one another would rightly be regarded as a fool. (Philebus 12c8-d6)

When read in light of the account of false pleasures, Socrates’ identification of the objects of the pleasures which belong to the sober-minded or wise person takes on a new significance. The sober-minded person “takes pleasure in his very sobriety” (ἡδεσθαι... αὐτῷ τῷ σωφρονείς) and the wise person “takes pleasure in his wisdom” (ἡδεσθαι... αὐτῷ τῷ φρονείς). In contrast, the intemperate person and the fool simply “take pleasure” (ἡδεσθαι), without this pleasure being taken in anything in particular. The fool cannot very well take pleasure in his foolishness, since what makes him a fool is partly that he is unaware of his own foolishness. In the account of mixed psychic pleasures later in the dialogue, Socrates describes fools as people who think they are richer, more beautiful, more virtuous, or wiser than they really are (48c-49b).202 A fool’s pleasure depends on these and other false self-conceptions, and because the reality is so different, a fool cannot rightly be said to take pleasure in anything at all.

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202 At 12c-d, “fool” and “foolish” are translations of τὸν ἀνοητάιοντα and ἀνοήτων respectively. The relevance of the later division of foolishness (ἄνοια) from 48c-49b is confirmed by the appearance of the cognate form ἀνοήτως. Socrates refers to those who display forms of foolishness as those who “have such a false opinion about themselves” (ταύτην τὴν ψευδή δόξαν περὶ ἑαυτῶν ἀνοήτως δοξάζουσι, 49b1-2).
In addition to associating true pleasures with virtuous subjects and false pleasures with vicious ones, Socrates claims that the truth value of pleasure tracks the moral worth of the pleasure itself. Thus, just as the truth or falsity of a judgment determines whether it is a good or bad judgment, likewise, truth and falsity can be used as a criterion for distinguishing between good and bad pleasures. At this point, Protarchus has conceded that pleasures can be false, and he does not even object to the claim that they can be bad (cf. 41a), and yet he resists the idea that pleasures are either good or bad just insofar as they are either true or false. Some commentators have also questioned Socrates’ inference from the truth or falsity of a pleasure to its moral goodness or badness. However, I believe this claim can be defended by examining the way in which the condition of the soul is affected by both epistemic and moral failing in Plato’s later dialogues. Ultimately, true judgments and pleasures stem from the same condition of the soul which is associated with moral and intellectual virtue, and likewise, both false judgments and false pleasures are consequences of psychic disorder. I will discuss this claim in more detail in Section 4, where I examine the relationship between pleasure, knowledge, and virtue.

Most scholars mistakenly assume that the analogy between pleasure and judgment applies to all of the pleasures discussed in the dialogue, and thus that all pleasures have the same intentional structure as judgment and are true or false in the way pleasures of expectation are true or false. However, not all pleasures have intentional content that they can correctly or incorrectly represent. For example, bodily pleasure does not possess an intentional structure, nor does it require the capacity for judgment, which explains the fact that Socrates attributes it to animals in general while restricting the pleasures and pains of anticipation to human subjects. Other scholars raise doubts about whether the predicates “true” and “false” are always applied to pleasures in the same sense, and some go so far as to accuse Plato of either intentional or unintentional equivocation. I argue in what follows that Socrates does apply the predicate “false” to pleasure in two senses, and yet far from equivocating, Socrates explicitly distinguishes between them.

203 See, for example, Evans (2008), 103-111.
204 For example, according to Butler (2007), “Socrates establishes right away that all pleasures are ontologically dependent on propositional judgments or beliefs” (111-12). Cooper (1977) raises a puzzle about why the bodily pleasures associated with normal and healthy appetites are incorporated into the good human life at 62d8-9, even though they are “impure and false” (727). He does not consider the possibility that bodily pleasures are neither true nor false, even though they are nowhere explicitly identified as either true or false in the dialogue. He assumes they are false simply because they do not appear in the list of true pleasures, since he takes the distinction between true and false pleasures to be exhaustive.
After putting aside the question of the goodness and badness of pleasures, Socrates announces to Protarchus, “Now we have to take up false pleasure in another sense and show that there is a great variety that arise and are at work in us,” (τὰς δὲ ψευδεῖς κατ’ ἄλλον τρόπον ἐν ἣμιν πολλὰς καὶ πολλάκις ἐνούσας τε καὶ ἐγγεγυμένας λεκτέων, 41a7-b1). If Socrates were merely introducing another species of false pleasure, one would expect him to call it another type or kind of pleasure, rather than using the adverbial phrase κατ’ ἄλλον τρόπον (“in another way” or “sense”) modifying the predicate “false” (ψευδεῖς, here used substantively). Socrates has in mind those pleasures which “lie side by side” (παρακεῖσθαι) with pains, so that a subject simultaneously experiences opposite αἰσθήσεις (41d1-3). As an example, Socrates mentions the familiar case of an animal experiencing bodily pain while simultaneously desiring the opposite experience. Already, this description contrasts sharply with the false pleasures discussed so far in the dialogue. First of all, Socrates does not limit his account to pleasures and pains that belong to the soul alone and share the same intentional structure as judgments. Indeed, the example he gives is a mixture of bodily pain (or pleasure) and psychic pleasure (or pain) that is common to all animals.

The mixed pleasures and pains described in this passage do resemble the false pleasures of expectation in that they are often accompanied by false judgments, and yet the relationship between pleasure and judgment is not the same in both cases. Socrates compares these mixtures of pleasure and pain to a type of visual illusion that “distorts the truth and cases false judgments” (τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀφανίζει καὶ ψευδῆ ποιεῖ, 42a1). Unlike the false pleasures of expectation, mixed pleasures precede and cause false judgments, rather than following and being caused by them, and Socrates describes this as the “opposite” (ἐναντίον) result (42a5). He contrasts the two ways in which pleasure is related to judgment in the following passage.

{ΣΩ.} Τότε μὲν αἱ δόξαι ψευδεῖς τε καὶ ἀληθεῖς αὗται γιγνόμεναι τὰς λύπας τε καὶ ἡδονὰς ἅμα τοῦ παρ' αὑτὰς παθήματος ανεπίμπλασαν. {ΠΡ.} Ἀληθέστατα. {ΣΩ.} Νῦν δέ γε αὐτὰ διὰ τὸ πόρρωθεν τε καὶ ἐγγύθεν ἐκάστοτε μεταβαλλόμεναι θεωρεῖσθαι, καὶ ἀμα τιθέμεναι παρ’ ἀλλότριας, αἱ μὲν ἡδοναὶ παρὰ τὸ λυπηρὸν μείζους φαίνονται καὶ σφοδρότεραι, λύπαι δ’ αἱ διὰ τὸ παρ’ ἡδονὰς τοῦναντίον ἑκείναις.

Soc.: Earlier it was true and false judgments which affected the respective pleasures and pains with their own condition.
Pro.: Quite right.
Soc.: But now it applies to the pleasures and pains themselves; it is because they are alternately looked at from close up or far away, or simultaneously put side by side, that
the pleasures seem greater compared to pain and more intensive, and moreover pains seem greater and more intensive in comparison with pleasures. (Philebus 42a7-b6)

Whereas the false pleasures of expectation inherit their falsity from false judgments, pleasures that are experienced either simultaneously with or in close proximity to pains are themselves the source of falsity. However, the explanation of their falsity has nothing to do with their content, or with any other intrinsic feature, but rather with the concurrence of pain. The predicate ψευδής has a wide semantic range in Greek; in addition to “false”, it can also mean “lying” or “deceptive”, especially when it is applied to a person (LSJ). I propose that Socrates is using the predicate ψευδής in this alternative sense with reference to mixed pleasures and pains, which deceive subjects into judging that they are greater and more intensive than they are in reality.

After introducing the “deceptive” pleasures that are mixed with pains, Socrates gives two further examples of pleasures that are ψευδής in some sense. The first he describes as “even falser than these, both in appearance and reality” (ψευδεῖς ἐτεῖς μᾶλλον ἦ ταύτας φαινομένας τε καὶ οὐσίας, 42c6-7). The claim that pleasures can be ψευδής to greater and lesser degrees suggests that Plato has the second sense of ψευδής in mind whereby it means “deceptive”, and this is supported by the fact that ταύτας refers back to the pleasures that are mixed with pain, which are ψευδής in this second sense. The attribution of these more ψευδής pleasures to animals in general (ἐν τοῖς ζῴοις, 42c7) supports this interpretation, since deceptive pleasures do not require the distinctively human capacity for judgment. Pleasures that are mixed with pain may produce false judgments in human subjects; however, since these pleasures precede rather than follow false judgments, they may also occur independently of judgment in non-rational animals.

The second example of deceptive pleasure that Socrates goes on to describe occurs when a subject compares bodily pain with the natural, harmonious condition, which is neither pleasant nor painful. Some people mistakenly identify pleasure with freedom from pain, since in comparison with the experience of pain, this painless, neutral condition seems pleasant. This illusion causes these people to have a false judgment about the experience of pleasure (Ψευδῆ γε

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205 Frede (1993) translates the last part of this passage “and pains seem, on the contrary, moderate in comparison with pleasures” (47). This translation implies that being mixed has opposite effects on pleasure and pain, causing the former to appear greater and the latter smaller. However, this contradicts the claim made later in the dialogue that in the case of certain mixed pleasures, such as those procured by itching, the pain outweighs the pleasure (46d). According to my interpretation, the τοὐναντίον indicates not that being mixed has opposite effects on pleasure and pain, causing one to appear greater and the other smaller, but rather that it makes pains appear more painful as opposed to more pleasant, so that the subject errs in the opposite way.
Ultimately, Socrates denies that these “even more deceptive” pleasures are pleasures at all; after all, whereas pleasures that are mixed with pain appear greater than they really are, in this second example a condition appears pleasant that in reality is not pleasant at all. Perhaps this is why Socrates initially describes them as more deceptive both in appearance and in reality (φαινομένας τε καὶ οὔσας, 42c6-7). As in the case of pleasures that are mixed with pain, the illusion that the painless condition is pleasant precedes the false judgment that this condition is pleasant, and this explains Socrates’ attribution of these “pleasures” to animals in general. Thus, non-rational animals may not falsely judge that the painless condition is pleasant, but their behavior may indicate that they desire and pursue this condition, and thus that they are susceptible to the same illusion.

After refuting those who identify pleasure with the freedom from pain, Socrates discusses the opinion of those who say that “everything the followers of Philebus call pleasures are nothing but escape from pain” (Λυπῶν ταύτας εἶναι πάσας ἀποφυγάς, ἃς νῦν οἱ περὶ Φίληβον ἡδονᾶς ἐπονομάζουσιν, 44c1-2). These ‘clever’ theorists about nature (μάλα δεινοὺς λεγομένους τὰ περὶ φύσιν, 44b9) seek to discover the nature of pleasure by examining the “most intense” pleasures that result from bodily disease (44d-45c). These are more extreme examples of the sort of pleasure that is mixed with pain and produces false judgments about its size. Socrates then discusses a much wider class of mixed pleasures, which include all possible combinations of bodily and psychic pleasures and pains, devoting particular attention to mixtures of psychic pleasure with psychic pain (46b-50d). Frede (1993) identifies these mixed pleasures as examples of a fourth type of false pleasure, which has a distinctive type of flaw (xlvi-xlv), and yet Socrates does not present them as such. In fact, he does not even refer to them directly as ψευδής. The only indication that these pleasures are ψευδής in some sense is Socrates’ transition to discussing “true” (Ἀληθεῖς, 51b1) pleasures at 51a-b. Instead of a fourth type of false pleasure, I interpret the mixed pleasures as further examples of “deceptive” pleasures, which seem more intense through the juxtaposition of pain. The only way in which the mixed pleasures differ from the original examples of “deceptive” pleasures is that they involve the simultaneous experience of pleasure and pain, whereas Socrates originally had in mind both pleasures that were experienced simultaneously with pain and those that occurred merely in close proximity with pain.

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206 I discuss the argumentative strategy of these anti-hedonists in Chapter 5.
In the description of the “true and pure” pleasures from 51b-d, Socrates uses the predicate “true” in a way that corresponds to the “deceptive” sense of ψευδής. First of all, Socrates has already discussed the pleasures that are true in the propositional sense, since he mentioned the possibility of true as well as false pleasures of expectation, and claimed that good people tend to have true rather than false pleasures (40b-c). He does not need to provide further explanation for how pleasures can be true in the sense of representing the world correctly, and he does not describe the truth of the pure pleasures of sight and hearing in this way. Instead, he focuses almost entirely on their purity (τὰς ἀμείκτους, 50e6; τὰς τε καθαρὰς ἡδονὰς, 52c1-2), in contrast with the pleasures that are mixed with pain (51a, 52c2-3), such as those produced by rubbing (51d1). The description of a pure instance of white as “the truest and most beautiful of all instances of white” (τοῦτο ἀληθέστατον...καὶ ἀμα δή κάλλιστον τῶν λευκῶν πάντων, 53a9-b) provides further evidence that the predicate “true” functions as a virtual synonym of “pure” in the characterization of the pure pleasures of sight, hearing etc., whereas earlier in the dialogue Socrates categorizes certain pleasures as true or false by analogy with judgments. Although Socrates does not emphasize the relationship between pleasure and judgment in this passage, as he does in the case of true and false pleasures of expectation, the recognition of absolute beauty undoubtedly constitutes a high-level cognitive achievement of some sort. In the next section, I argue that the pure and true pleasures do not require true judgment, but rather the most pure form of knowledge, as well as the virtuous condition of the soul that goes along with it.

4 Pleasure, Knowledge and Virtue

Socrates does not address the relationship between pleasure and knowledge directly,207 and yet his description of the objects of the pure and true pleasures and the objects of the purest forms of knowledge suggests that they are closely connected. The objects of the pure pleasures of sight and hearing are described as both pure and absolutely beautiful. For example, consider the following description of the objects of the pure pleasures related to hearing.

{ΣΩ.} Δέγω δὴ ἡχὰς τῶν φθόγγων τὰς λείας καὶ λαμπράς, τὰς ἐν τι καθαρὰν ἰείσας μέλος, οὐ πρὸς ἑτερον καλὰς ἀλλ’ αὐτὰς καθ’ αὐτὰς εἶναι, καὶ τούτων συμφύτους ἡδονὰς ἑπομένας.

Soc.: What I am saying is that those among the smooth and bright sounds that produce one pure note are not beautiful in relation to anything else but in and by themselves and

207 Although he includes the pleasures of learning among the pure pleasures (τὰς περὶ τὰ μαθήματα ἡδονὰς, 51e7-52a1; τοῦ μανθάνειν, 52a2).
that they are accompanied by their own pleasures, which belong to them by nature. 

*(Philebus 51d6-9)*

Although Socrates does not explicitly associate these pleasures with any form of intelligence, the appreciation of objects that are beautiful in themselves is presumably a cognitively demanding activity. For one thing, these pure aesthetic pleasures are grouped with the pleasures of learning (*τὰς περὶ τὰ μαθήματα ἡδονάς*, 51e7-52a1). This class of pleasures is almost certainly inaccessible to non-rational animals, and even among human subjects, there are no doubt many who fail to recognize and appreciate the absolute beauty of perfect shapes and pure colors and sounds. The pure and true pleasures of sight, hearing and smell seem to require at least true judgment about the purity and beauty of their objects; however, Socrates’ discussion of different forms of knowledge suggests that they are even more cognitively demanding than that.

In Socrates’ account of different forms of knowledge (*ἐπιστήμη*), he distinguishes between more and less precise forms. The latter include *τέχναι*, such as playing music,208 medicine, agriculture, piloting and generalship (56a-b), whereas the former include shipbuilding and housebuilding, which make use of measuring devices, such as the compass and rule (56b9-c2). Part of what makes these crafts more precise is their use of arithmetic (*Ἁριθμητικὴν*, 56c10), and Socrates goes on to distinguish two forms of arithmetic, one used by the many in these crafts and another used by philosophers (*Ἁριθμητικὴν πρῶτον ἀρ’ οὐκ ἄλλην μέν τινα τὴν τῶν πολλῶν φατέον, ἄλλην δ’ αὖ τὴν τῶν φιλοσοφοῦντων*, 56d4-6; cf. 56e7-57a2 and 57d6-8). Socrates then identifies dialectic (*ἡ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι δύναμις*) as the most precise form of knowledge (57e6-7).

After describing the subject matter of dialectic (58a) and clarifying that they are seeking the knowledge that aims at the greatest clarity, precision and truth rather than usefulness (58c-d), Socrates again contrasts the more and less pure forms of knowledge based on their objects. Whereas most forms of knowledge are concerned with beliefs (*πρῶτον μὲν δόξαις χρῶνται καὶ τὰ περὶ δόξαν ζητημένως*, 59a1-2) and “what comes to be, will come to be, or has come to be” (*περὶ δὲ τὰ γενόμενα καὶ γενασόμενα καὶ γεγονότα*, 59a7-8), the form of knowledge they seek concerns what is stable, pure and true.

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208 Note that the pure and true pleasures of hearing are not those that would accompany the craft of playing music, since their objects are explicitly identified as individual, pure notes rather than the combinations of notes that create musical harmonies.
Soc.: Either we will find certainty, purity, truth, and what we may call integrity among the things that are forever in the same state, without anything mixed in it, or we will find in it what comes as close as possible to it. (Philebus 59c2-5)

The resemblance between the objects of the more precise forms of knowledge and the pure and true pleasures of sight and hearing is striking. Not only are both pure (καθαρός) and true (ἀληθής), but Socrates even mentions the use of a compass in describing both the objects of the pure pleasures of sight and the measuring instruments employed by the more precise crafts (e.g. τοῖς κανόσι, 51c5; κανόνι, 56b9). This suggests that the pure and true pleasures are related to the more precise forms of knowledge rather than the less precise forms which involve judgment. 209

Socrates identifies the most precise form of knowledge as “by its nature a capacity in our soul to love the truth and do everything for its sake” (τις πέφυκε τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν δύναμις ἐρᾶν τε τοῦ ἀληθοῦς καὶ πάντα ἕνεκα τούτων πράττειν, 58d4-5). Perhaps taking pure and true pleasure in the objects of this most precise form of knowledge is just what it is to “love the truth” (ἐρᾶν τε τοῦ ἀληθοῦς). If the most precise form of knowledge essentially involves taking pure and true pleasure in its objects, and if pure and true pleasure likewise involves cognizing the stable, pure and true objects of this form of knowledge, then this suggests that pure and true pleasures and the most precise form of knowledge constitute a single capacity of the soul. 210

If pure pleasure and precise knowledge are two exercises or manifestations of a single psychic capacity, how do they relate to intelligence (φρόνησις or νοῦς)? 211 At one point, Socrates actually identifies the highest form of knowledge with φρόνησις and νοῦς (59d1), 212 however, although

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209 Knowledge is also associated with νοῦς at Timaeus 37c2.

210 Cf. Philebus 15d9-e1 where Socrates says young boy who learns to create confusion through discourse is “as pleased as if he found a treasure of wisdom” (ἡσθεὶς ὡς τινα σοφίας ηὑρηκὼς θησαυρόν).

211 Socrates also uses σοφία as a virtual synonym for φρόνησις and νοῦς. Although Socrates usually refers to the fourth class of being as νοῦς, he also assigns σοφία to this class of being at 30b4, and he explicitly associates the two forms of cognition at 30c9. Socrates also describes the wise person (σοφός) as the one who is successful at using the divine method of collection and division (17c7, 17e1), and he describes fools at 49a1-2 and 49d11 as those who have pretensions to wisdom (μεστὸν…δοξοσοφίας). It is also worth noting that Socrates only refers to philosophers four times in the dialogue, all in describing the people who possess and use the highest and most pure form of knowledge at 56d-57d.

212 Cf. Philebus 30c9 and Timaeus 37c2. See also 58d where Socrates describes dialectic as the highest form of knowledge, because it is a capacity of the soul (τις πέφυκε τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν δύναμις) that is most likely “to possess purity of mind and reason” (τὸ καθαρὸν νοῦ τε καὶ φρονήσεως… ἐκτήσθαι, 58d4-7).
pure pleasure and knowledge are associated with φρόνησις/νοῦς, Socrates classifies this form of cognition elsewhere as a capacity for creating harmonious mixtures by imposing limit on unlimited elements, rather than a cognitive capacity directed at a specific sort of object (28d, 30b). In what follows, I argue that φρόνησις refers primarily to a particular condition of the soul, which manifests in many positive forms of cognition, including knowledge, pure pleasure and true judgment, and which is also associated with moral virtue. Ultimately, the well-ordered souls of wise and virtuous people explain why they generally possess true judgments and pleasures (40b-c), and also why Socrates insists that the distinction between true and false pleasures overlaps with the distinction between good and bad pleasures (40e-41a).

Socrates associates intelligence with its own distinctive type of pleasure from the very beginning of the dialogue. In an attempt to convince Protarchus that pleasure is “complex” (ποικίλον, 12c4) and that individual pleasures can be “unlike” (τινα τρόπον ἀνομοίους ἀλλήλαις, 12c7-8) one another, Socrates contrasts the pleasures of temperate and intemperate people, as well as those of wise people and fools.

Although the wise person takes pleasure in intelligent activity (τῷ φρονεῖν) in this passage, Socrates does not identify a particular object of this activity. Instead, he emphasizes the connection between the character of the subject (τὸν φρονοῦντα) and both the pleasure and the

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213 Cf. Carpenter (2006): “Wisdom suggests, in a way that knowledge does not, a certain state of mind rather than the grasp of certain information” (5, note 1).

214 Carpenter (2006) argues similarly that Socrates justifies his association of true pleasures with morally good people by showing how the character of a person’s pleasures and judgments reflects the condition of his or her soul. She writes, “since the soul, and the human being and her life, are each composed of interconnected and mutually defining parts, even when badly connected, the expression of any one part of the soul will reflect the state of the whole soul” (19). In the discussion of the pleasures associated with disease, Socrates seems to go even further and imply that the character of a person’s pleasures reflects not only the state of their soul, but that of their body as well. Thus, false and mixed pleasures have a detrimental effect on the entire organism, leading to both bodily and psychic disease.
cognitive activity characteristic of such a person. Similarly, he associates the fool (τὸν ἀνοηταίνοντα) with foolish opinions and hopes (ἀνοήτων δοξῶν καὶ ἐλπίδων μεστόν); he does not specify what makes these opinions and hopes foolish, except that they belong to a foolish subject. Elsewhere in the dialogue, Socrates suggests that what is most characteristic of fools is not faulty forms of cognition in general, but in particular those regarding their own character and intelligence (49a, cf. 19c1-3).

Although Socrates does not explicitly identify intelligence with moral virtue in this passage, the parallel contrasts between the pleasures of temperate and intemperate people and those of wise people and fools suggests that he associates temperance and wisdom (as well as intemperance and foolishness). This “Socratic” sentiment is also foreshadowed by Protarchus’ remark at 19c1-3: “But while it is a great thing for the wise man to know everything, the second best is not to be mistaken about oneself, it seems to me” (ἀλλὰ καλὸν μὲν τὸ σύμπαντα γιγνώσκειν τῷ σώφρονι, δεύτερος δ’ εἶναι πλοῦς δοκεῖ μὴ λανθάνειν αὐτὸν αὐτόν, Philebus 19c1-3). Here a positive form of cognition (τὸ σύμπαντα γιγνώσκειν) is associated with a subject described as σώφρων, despite the fact that this predicate seemed to refer to a subject with moral rather than intellectual virtue at 12c-d.

The description of the pernicious, mixed pleasures associated with disease provides further evidence for the close association between the intellectual and moral capacities of subjects. At 45d, Socrates once again contrasts the pleasures of temperate and intemperate people, although this time he refers to them as the pleasures “associated with excess” (ἐν ὕβρει, 45d3) and those “in a moderate life” (ἐν τῷ σώφρονι βίῳ, 45d4). He goes on to point out that moderate people (τοὺς...σώφρονας, 45d7) always obey the maxim “nothing too much” (τὸ “μηδὲν ἄγαν”, 45e1), whereas “fools and those given to excess” (τῶν ἀφρόνων τε καὶ ὑβριστῶν, 45e2) are driven to madness (μέχρι μανίας, 45e3) by excessive pleasure (ἡ σφοδρὰ ἡδονὴ, 45e3). Socrates describes the same subjects as both foolish and morally depraved in this passage, and the relationship between the character of these subjects and their pleasures is not merely incidental; instead,

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215 The verb γιγνώσκω and its cognates appear only twelve times in the dialogue, and it does not seem to refer to a distinctive form of cognition. For example, in addition to its appearance in this passage, Socrates uses it to refer to 1) the capacity to discriminate between white and black (12e5), 2) the ability to recognize the good, generalized to non-human subjects (20d8; see discussion in Chapter 1, Section 1), 3) the discrimination of the relative sizes of different pleasures (διαγιγνώσκαται, 41e3), 4) the Delphic oracle’s injunction to “know yourself” (γνῶθι σαυτὸν, 48c10, 48d2), 5) the ability to recognize the experience of pleasure is occuring (60d6), and 6) the exercise of the best kind of knowledge (62c2).
excessive pleasure reinforces this character, driving them away from rationality and towards madness (μανία). Socrates then states that these excessive pleasures arise “in some vicious state of soul and body and not in virtue” (ἐν τνι πονηρίᾳ ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ σώματος, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐν ἀρετῆ, 45e5-6). Note that Socrates associates excessive pleasure not only with a bad condition of the soul, but with a bad condition of both the body and the soul.216 Socrates later refers to a person in this condition as “profligate and mindless” (ἀκολαστότερός τε καὶ ἀφρονέστερος, 47b), suggesting that a person in the opposite condition would possess both intelligence and moral virtue.217

The same connection between epistemic and moral achievement (and failure) is even more visible in the account of the soul in the Timaeus, where the motion of the rational part of the soul reflects its capacity (or incapacity) for both true judgment and virtuous action. In the Timaeus, αἴσθησις and judgment are both described as encounters between the soul’s own motion and the motion of physical objects. The soul is composed of the orbits of the Same and the Different, and when the soul is in its original, natural condition, the movement of these orbits is perfectly circular. Αἴσθησις occurs when motion from an object in the environment causes a joint movement of the body and the soul.218 These motions have the potential to disrupt the orbits of the soul, forcing them out of their perfectly circular courses (43c4-d2). Judgment, like αἴσθησις, results from interactions between psychic and bodily motions, and yet while the soul itself is passively affected by motions coming from without in the case of αἴσθησις, psychic motions play a much more active role in the formation of judgments, as demonstrated in the following passage.

ταύτων δὴ τοῦτο καὶ τοιαύτα ἔτερα αἱ περιφοραὶ πάσχουσαι σφοδρῶς, ὅταν τέ τω τῶν ἐξωθὲν τοῦ ταύτου γένους ἢ τοῦ θατέρου περιτύχωσι, τότε ταύτων τῷ καὶ θάτερόν τοῦ τἀναντία τῶν ἀληθῶν προσαγορεύουσαι ψευδεῖς καὶ ἀνόητοι γεγόνασιν.

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216 This supports my interpretation of the close relationship between the body and the soul in the Philebus, which I argue combine to form a single unified mixture (Chapter 2, Section 3).

217 Note that mixed psychic pleasures are also associated with foolishness (ἀνοία, 48c2), which is identified as a form of vice (πονηρία) (48d-49e). I follow the manuscripts in reading ἀνοία rather than ἄγνοια throughout the passage, which is an emendation proposed by Cornarius in 1561. See Thein (unpublished manuscript) for detailed discussion of this emendation and the reasons for its almost universal adoption.

218 See Chapter 3, Section 1 for my discussion of Plato’s account of αἴσθησις in the late dialogues and Chapter 3, Section 3 for my analysis of the different ways in which different types of αἴσθησις affect the appetitive and rational parts of the soul.
It is this very thing – and others like it – that had such a dramatic effect upon the revolutions of the soul. Whenever they encounter something outside of them characterizable as *same* or *different*, they will speak of it as “the same as” something, or as “different from” something else when the truth is just the opposite, so proving themselves misled and unintelligent. (*Timaeus* 43e8-44a3)

While the motions which produce *αἴσθησις* are said to “strike against the soul” (*αἱ κινήσεις ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν φερόμεναι προσπίπτοιεν*, 43c4-5), judgment occurs when the revolutions of the soul (*αἱ περιφοραὶ*) themselves “encounter” (*περιτύχωσιν*) something outside of them. Whereas the motions of *αἴσθησις* potentially disturb the motions of the rational part of the soul, the rational part of the soul does not necessarily respond to these motions. In contrast, a judgment is formed when the revolutions of the soul “speak of” (*προσαγορεύουσαι*) perceptual objects as, for example, the same as or different from something else.²¹⁹ In this passage, the rational soul makes false judgments about external objects, and these false judgments are attributed directly to the rational soul’s own motions, which were dramatically affected (*πάσχουσαι σφοδρῶς*) by motion from without. Thus, lack of intelligence or foolishness (*ἀνόητοι*) is directly attributed to a very concrete condition of the rational part of the soul in which it moves in an erratic and asymmetrical manner.

Although all human souls are affected by the motions of external objects through *αἴσθησις*, not all humans lack intelligence, and the following passage highlights the possibility of a person correcting the erratic motions of the rational part of the soul and regaining the capacity for true judgment as a result.

²¹⁹ Cf. *Philebus* 38c-e, *Sophist* 263e-264b, and *Theaetetus* 190a where Plato describes judgment as the result of a conversation the soul has with itself.
what is the same and what is different, and render intelligent the person who possesses
them. (Timaeus 44a7-b6)

Note that a well-ordered soul is what makes a person “intelligent” (ἐμφόνα) as opposed to
“foolish” (ἀνουσ). In this passage the process of correcting the skewed orbits of the rational soul
is partly aided by a decrease in the amount and intensity of the motions which affect it from
without, yet elsewhere in the dialogue it is clear that reestablishing order in the soul also requires
great effort on the part of each individual. For example, Timaeus said earlier that a person would
return to the “original condition of excellence” (εἰς τὸ τῆς πρώτης καὶ ἀρίστης ἀφίκοιτο εἴδος
ἕξεως, 42d1-2) only after having successfully “dragged that massive accretion of fire-water-air-
earth into conformity with the revolution of the Same and uniform within him” (πρὶν τῇ ταὐτοῦ καὶ ὁμοίου περιόδῳ τῇ ἐν αὐτῷ συνεπισπώμενος τὸν πολὺν ὄχλον καὶ ἱστερον προσφύντα ἐκ πυρὸς καὶ ὕδατος καὶ ἀέρος καὶ γῆς, 42c4-d1).

The account of judgment in the Timaeus explains the difference between true and false judgment
not by making reference to features internal to these judgments, but rather by contrasting the
conditions of the soul from which these judgments emerge. Thus, although the Timaeus gives a
unified account of how judgments are formed (i.e. by a certain kind of encounter between
psychic and bodily movements), it also shows that the truth or falsity of a person’s judgments
can serve as a reliable indicator of the condition of his or her soul. As I have shown above, the
correlation between false pleasures and false judgments in the Philebus implies that true and
false pleasures are likewise linked to essentially different psychic conditions. Thus, the
difference between the pleasures of a wise person and those of a fool are even greater than one
might at first suppose; not only are true and false pleasures taken in different kinds of content,
but they are products of different kinds of souls. Moreover, not only do false judgments and

Note that the correlation between the condition of an individual's soul and the truth or falsity of his or her
judgments should only be thought of as a general tendency, since no one is entirely immune to false judgments. For
one thing, in the Timaeus, the example of a false judgment caused by the disorderly motion of the orbits in the
rational part of the soul is specifically a perceptual judgment about whether one object of perception is the same or
different from another. Similarly, at Theaetetus 191c-195b, false judgment is explained as a misfit between what is
imprinted in the wax block of one's memory and one's perceptions; furthermore, the likelihood of making false
judgments is directly related to the condition of the wax block in the soul (e.g. whether it is hard or soft).

Whereas a good psychic condition may help ensure that we make true perceptual judgments, we come to many
judgments through other means than perception. In fact, at Theaetetus 196a-d Socrates explicitly criticizes this
model of memory because it fails to explain mistakes that do not involve perception. Socrates gives judgments about
arithmetical sums as examples of judgments we make while “remaining within our thoughts themselves” (ποτε ἐν αὐτῶι ταῖς διανοήμασιν, 196c6). Another example of a non-perceptual judgment would be one that is formed on the
basis of what another person tells us, and nothing would prevent even a perfectly virtuous and wise person from
being lied to and forming a false judgment on the basis of that lie. In the Philebus Socrates recognizes that no one is
the false pleasures which rely on them arise from a disordered condition of the soul, but also those deceptive pleasures which are mixed with pain and associated with bodily and psychic disease. This contrast between the forms of cognition associated with psychic order and disorder respectively undermines the accuracy of Socrates’ description of the debate between himself and Philebus at the beginning of the dialogue.

{ΣΩ.} Ὡς νῦν ἡμῶν ἑκάτερος ἑξιν ψυχῆς καὶ διάθεσιν ἀποφαίνει τινὰ ἐπιχειρήσει τὴν δθναμένην ἀνθρώποις ἀνθρώπους πᾶσι τὸν βίον εὐδαιμόνα παρέχειν. ἄρ’ οὐχ οὕτως;

Soc.: Each of us will be trying to prove some condition or state of the soul to be the one that can render life happy for all human beings. (Philebus 11d)

Initially, Socrates identified both pleasure and knowledge as a particular state (ἕξιν) or disposition (διάθεσιν) of the soul. However, as it turns out, pleasure does not refer to a single state of the soul, but rather true and false pleasures arise from diametrically opposed psychic conditions.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that different types of pleasure have very different cognitive requirements. Pleasures differ in their cognitive requirements because they belong to essentially different classes of psychic phenomena; for example, bodily pleasures are types of αἴσθησις, whereas psychic pleasures are psychic φαντάσματα, which have the same intentional structure as judgments and are either true or false. Examining the relation between pleasure and other forms of cognition shows that Plato does not conceive of pleasure as a single, unified class of psychic phenomena by the time he writes the Philebus. The revelation that pleasure is essentially heterogeneous significantly complicates the question of the role of pleasure in the good human life, and it is the Philebus’ answer to this question to which I will turn in the next and final chapter.

completely free from false pleasures and the false judgments which accompany them when he says that the psychic pleasures of good people are true “for the most part” (τὰ πολλὰ, 40c1), rather than always true.
Chapter 5
Pleasure and the Good Life

The purported purpose of the examination of pleasure in the *Philebus* is to distinguish between its different species (εἴδη) (cf. 19b), but instead Socrates reveals that different pleasures have fundamentally different natures. The dissimilarity between different pleasures is much more radical than that between black and white, which are dissimilar and yet still share the same fundamental nature insofar as they are colors. In fact, some pleasures are so different that it is impossible identify a single feature in virtue of which they all qualify as examples of pleasure. Even contrasting pleasure with pain does not help to isolate a single feature that is common to all pleasures, since some pleasures are intrinsically mixed with pain. Protarchus’ insistence from the beginning of the dialogue that pleasures do not differ “insofar as they are pleasures” (13c) breaks down as soon as one recognizes the true nature of the pleasures of the body and especially those “most intense” pleasures which accompany bodily or psychic disease (45c). As it turns out, many of these pleasures owe much of their intensity to the accompanying feeling of pain.

The classification of pleasure into different fundamental classes of being (Chapter 2, Section 2), the different ways in which pleasure is related to αἴσθησις (Chapter 3), as well as the different forms of cognition with which Socrates associates and identifies different forms of pleasure (Chapter 4), all vindicate Socrates’ initial characterization of pleasure as ποικίλον, as well as Protarchus’ intuition in the Choice of Lives that distinctively human pleasures are radically different and more choiceworthy than those of a mollusk (Chapter 1). In this chapter, I consider how the dialectical context of the examination of pleasure reinforces the conclusion that pleasures have no shared nature or account. This context includes both Socrates’ initial attempt to convince Protarchus that pleasures can be unlike and even opposite one another (12c-14b) and the closely related account of the method of division and collection (14c-20a), Socrates’ report of the view that pleasure is a type of γένεσις (53c-55c), and the ultimate evaluation of different types of pleasure and the various roles these pleasures play in the best human life (59e-67b).\(^\text{221}\)

In section 1 I discuss Socrates’ initial insistence that pleasure is “complex” (ποικίλον, 12c4) and that some pleasures are unlike one another. I relate Socrates’ argument in this section to later

\(^{221}\) Interestingly, it is not Socrates but the personification of thought itself (τὴν φρόνησιν καὶ τὸν νοῦν, 63c5-6) that decides which pleasures should be included in the best human life (63c-64a).
passages where Socrates explicitly challenges the assumption that pleasure is a natural kind. Socrates argues that hedonists are mistaken in their assumption that since various psychic phenomena share the name “pleasure” they must also possess the same fundamental nature. Socrates supports his conclusion by calling into question the general tendency to draw inferences from the way words are used to the actual nature of the phenomena or objects in the world to which these words refer. The source of this mistake is the inherent ambiguity of language, and in particular the fact that a single name can often refer either to a genus or to the species within this genus, which can be unlike or even opposed to one another. Socrates offers the divine method of Collection and Division as a solution to this general problem of language, as well as the specific problem of correctly understanding the relationship between the name “pleasure” and the actual phenomena to which it refers.

In Section 2 I consider a passage which seems to undermine two of my central claims about the account of pleasure in the *Philebus*, 1) that pleasures do not possess a shared nature or account and 2) that some types of pleasures are genuinely good. In this passage, Socrates reports the view of some “subtle thinkers” (κομψοὶ γὰρ δή τινες, 53c6) who identify pleasure as a type of γένεσις or “becoming” (53c-55c). The passage not only treats pleasure as a unified class, but it also concludes that pleasure cannot be genuinely good. This passage presents interpretive difficulties for any commentator on the *Philebus*, since it seems to directly contradict other passages in the dialogue, including in particular the analysis of pure pleasures (51c-53c) and the ranking of these pleasures among the human goods (66c). Matthew Evans argues that the *genesis* argument (53c-55c) applies to all pleasures and unambiguously shows that pleasure cannot be good, because of the very kind of thing it is, i.e. a *genesis* or “becoming” rather than an *ousia* or “being”. I argue that Socrates does not fully endorse the *genesis* argument, although he displays genuine sympathy with those who hold this view, because it reveals something true about the nature of the pleasures which belong to the unlimited class. However, these critics of pleasure make a mistake shared by defenders of hedonism in supposing that the word “pleasure” refers to a unified class of psychic phenomena.

The evaluation of pleasure at the end of the dialogue reveals that for the purposes of determining the good human life there are three main categories of pleasures. The physiological and cognitive differences between these three groups of pleasures are crucial for understanding the final

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mixing of the best human life and the ranking of the human goods, for each of these three groups of pleasure are evaluated differently. In Section 3 I discuss the incorporation of bodily pleasures into the best life and the rationale behind it. Although they are not themselves good, bodily pleasures play a necessary role in preserving the health of an organism. Insofar as human souls are embodied, they will inevitably experience both bodily pleasure and bodily pain, and these αἰσθήσεις do not necessarily have a disruptive and negative effect on the soul. In the ideal case, the orbits of the rational soul are unaffected by bodily pleasure and pain. Furthermore, bodily pleasure and pain possess the positive function of helping animals become aware of and satisfy their bodily needs.

Among psychic pleasures, the pure pleasures described at 51a-52c are the only ones that are mixed into the best human life. All of the other psychic pleasures are rejected from the best life due to one of two defects, either impurity or falsity. For the purposes of mixing together the best life, Socrates expresses no need to distinguish between these two kinds of defective pleasure, since both are detrimental to human happiness, arising from a bad condition of the soul, and so are themselves bad. In contrast, the pure psychic pleasures receive fifth place in the final ranking of goods. In Section 4 I argue that the pure pleasures make a positive contribution to the goodness of the best human life and they are not merely what Frede (1993) calls “remedial” goods, which are only good for humans because of their flawed and imperfect nature (xliii). On the contrary, according to my interpretation, the mixed life outlined at the end of the dialogue is not a kind of “second best” scenario, choiceworthy only because humans are not capable of living the pleasureless life suitable to a god. In fact, although Socrates and

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223 See Chapter 4, especially Section 3, for a discussion of the differences between these two types of defective pleasure and the relationship between them.

224 See Chapter 3, Section 4 for my argument that all of the pure and true pleasures are psychic, even those which follow or respond to a particular type of αἴσθησις, with the partial exception of the pure pleasures related to smell.

225 This type of view is common among commentators of the Philebus. For example, Gosling (1975) writes “we get the suggestion that pleasure is only part of the good for man, and only because man is an inferior sort of being. It would be better to be a god, and so better to be able to live a perfect life without pleasure” (103). Cf. Evans (2007b), 346. Butler denies that the mixed life is merely a second best alternative to the life of a god in the Philebus by arguing that “knowledge is a necessary condition for the existence of pleasure” and thus that “every instance of pleasure is also an instance of knowledge” (91). He claims that his new interpretation of the nature of pleasure explains how the mixed life is “no less good” because of pleasure, even if pleasure itself does not make a positive contribution to the goodness of this life. I will argue, on the contrary, that some pleasures are genuinely good and contribute to the goodness of the best human life. Carone (2000) holds a similar view, insisting that “pleasure is one of the intrinsically desirable aspects [of a happy life]” and that “at least some pleasures can be intrinsically good” (262).
Protarchus are thinking principally of human happiness, there are some indications in the dialogue that enjoying pure pleasure is one way in which humans can become like gods.

1 Challenging the Assumption that Pleasure is a Natural Kind

In the last four chapters I have shown that different kinds of pleasure have radically different natures, which undermines the conventional grouping of these diverse phenomena under the single heading, “pleasure”. I now want to show that denying the unity of the category “pleasure” is one of the dialogue’s main strategies for defeating hedonism and converting Protarchus. If this is one of the main strategies, one would expect to find an explicit challenge to the basic assumption that “pleasure” properly refers to a natural kind of some sort. It is uncontroversial that Socrates distinguishes between different things one can call by the name “pleasure”, but the question is whether these phenomena really are properly grouped under the same genus, and if so, what essential feature(s) the members of this genus share.

By the time Socrates examines the natures of different kinds of pleasure, he has already shed considerable doubt on their generic unity, foreshadowing the results of the later examination. The dialogue begins with a change of interlocutors, Protarchus taking over the defense of pleasure as the chief human good from Philebus. After briefly summarizing his contention with Philebus about whether pleasure or knowledge is the human good, the first substantive claim Socrates makes about pleasure is, “But as to pleasure, I know that it is complex (ποικίλον) and, just as I said, we must make it our starting point and consider carefully what sort of nature it has (ὧντα φύσιν ἔχει)” (12c). In the debate which follows, Socrates does not yet examine the nature of pleasure itself, such its underlying physiological and psychological processes. He only undertakes this enterprise after he has established the necessary metaphysical framework, beginning with an account of bodily pleasure and pain (31b-32b). Instead, in this early debate Socrates questions the conceptual unity of pleasure, warning Protarchus not to move too hastily from the broad scope of the concept “pleasure” to the conclusion that the individual phenomena which fall under this concept possess the same nature.

After his initial statement that pleasure is ποικίλον, Socrates makes the following claim about the relationship between the name “pleasure” (ἡδονή) and the nature of the phenomena to which this name refers.
ἔστι γάρ, ἀκούειν μὲν οὔτως ἀπλῶς, ἐν τι, μορφᾶς δὲ δήπον παντοῖας ἐίληψε καὶ τινα τρόπων ἀνομοίους ἀλλήλας.

If one just goes by the name it is one single thing, but in fact it comes in many forms that are in some way even quite unlike each other. (Philebus 12c6-8)

Ultimately, Socrates reveals that it is a mistake to assume that “pleasure” refers to a unified class simply because it sounds like a unitary concept. Gosling translates this sentence, “Mentioned by itself like that, it [i.e. pleasure] sounds like a single thing, but it no doubt takes all sorts of forms, which in some ways are unlike each other.” Gosling’s translation brings out even more clearly than Frede’s how misleading the word “pleasure” can be. Gosling stays closer to the literal meaning of the verb ἀκούειν, emphasizing that “pleasure” sounds like a single thing, but in reality pleasures come in many disparate forms.226

Socrates does not at first challenge the assumption that there is a genus to which all pleasures belong; instead, he first argues for the more limited point that even if pleasures belong to a single genus, then they may still be unlike or even opposed to one other in other respects. He supports this claim by drawing an analogy between pleasure and color, which is a clear example of a unified genus. Socrates argues that just as black and white are opposites, although colors do not differ “insofar as every one of them is a color” (κατὰ γε αὐτὸ τοῦτο οὐδὲν διοίσει τὸ χρῶμα εἶναι πᾶν, 12e), likewise, the generic unity of pleasure does not rule out the possibility that one pleasure may be unlike or even directly opposed to another (12d, 13c).

By means of the analogy with color, Socrates distinguishes two claims which the hedonist must defend separately, 1) that the name “pleasure” refers to a unified genus, as in the case of color, and 2) that all pleasures share some feature which makes them not only pleasant but also good.227 Socrates concedes that no one would ever try to defend the claim “that pleasant things are not pleasant” (οὐχὶ ἡδέα εἶναι τὰ ἡδέα, 13a9), and yet he challenges Protarchus, rather contentiously, to identify “the common element in the good and bad pleasures that allows you to call them all good” (τί οὖν δὴ ταύτων ἐν ταῖς κακαῖς ὁμοιως καὶ ἐν ἄγαθαῖς ἐνόν πάσας ἡδονὰς ἀγαθὸν εἶναι προσαγορεύεις; 13b3-5). Naturally, Protarchus immediately reacts to the distinction Socrates

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226 Gosling also interprets this section as presenting a doubt about the whole hedonistic enterprise. As he notes, “Hedonist arguments tend to seem simpler than they are because they are conducted in terms of ‘pleasure’, in the singular” (73). Cf. Gosling’s discussion of this passage in his general commentary, p. 142.

227 One can continue to see this principle at work later in the dialogue. Cf. 28a where “being unlimited” is ruled out from being the shared property that makes all pleasures good, because pains are also unlimited.
draws here between good and bad pleasures; nevertheless, the point still holds that if pleasures are good, there must be some feature common to all of them which explains their goodness.\textsuperscript{228}

Despite the analogy with color, Protarchus obstinately resists Socrates’ claim that pleasures can differ from one another, not just in their sources or the conditions in which they arise, but even in their intrinsic properties. Many commentators have sided with Protarchus against Socrates at this point in the dialogue, accusing Socrates of blurring the distinction between pleasure and its object or source. Gosling (1975) criticizes Plato for “refusing to separate pleasure from the activity or experience enjoyed” in this passage (74-5),\textsuperscript{229} thus concluding that pleasures differ from each other from the fact that they are taken in opposite activities. However, Socrates does not contrast pleasures based on the activities in which they are taken, but rather based on the types of subjects to which they belong; in fact, he does not even identify the object of the fool’s pleasure. Thus, Gosling’s claim that “Plato relies on being able to talk of experiences and activities as pleasures” (75) is misguided. The nature of the subject of a pleasure is much more likely to have an effect on the nature of this pleasure than an activity which, admittedly, seems to be largely extrinsic to the pleasure itself. The point is not simply that fools and wise people take pleasure in different things. On the contrary, the comparison makes the much more provocative suggestion that although we say that both the wise person and the fool take pleasure (\textit{ῄδεσθαι}, 12c8-d2), we may in fact be referring to two very different kinds of experiences.

Socrates does not claim in this passage to show anything about the nature of pleasure itself, such as whether it is a genus that admits of species, like color, or not; instead, he makes the more limited point that Protarchus cannot conclude that pleasures are all alike simply from the fact that pleasure sounds like a unitary concept. The determination of the actual nature of pleasure must await Socrates’ very detailed examination of it, which does not begin until 31b.\textsuperscript{230}

\textsuperscript{228} No such common feature is ever identified in the dialogue, and yet a subset of pleasures, the pure ones, does turn out to be genuinely good (66c). The common feature which explains the goodness of the pure pleasures, and also distinguishes them from all other types of pleasure, is their inherently measured or limited nature (52c).

\textsuperscript{229} Cf. also Hackforth (1945), who claims that Plato allows Socrates to commit a fallacy, because he refuses to separate two senses of pleasure, 1) the feeling of pleasure, which Protarchus claims cannot admit of difference and 2) the complex of feeling and source of feeling (16, n. 1).

\textsuperscript{230} Gosling makes the further objection that Plato fails to distinguish clearly between asking about the \textit{meaning} of pleasure and the theoretical question of its nature or conditions under which it occurs. He writes, “He [Plato] wants to do something called asking what pleasure is, and is prepared to run together considerations from the meaning of ‘pleasure’, considerations from a theory of the conditions for the occurrence of pleasure and considerations from views about what would constitute a skill of pleasure as though they all obviously bore on the same question” (76). However, as I have already noted, Socrates’ argument in this passage remains at the level of language, and he
examination of pleasure reveals that pleasures do not properly belong to a single genus, and thus have no unifying nature. As it turns out, some pleasures are even more unlike one other than opposite colors. For example, bodily pleasure has more in common with bodily pain than with the pure pleasures which belong to the soul alone. Bodily pleasure and pain both belong to the unlimited class of being and they are both opposed to the harmonious condition of a living body (31c); pure pleasures, on the other hand, belong to the mixed class (52d) and are compatible with this harmonious condition. The unlimited class itself is an example of a genus, and Socrates explicitly states that all members of the unlimited class are susceptible to becoming “more and less” or “strong and mild” (24e-25a). As a result of this common property, the members of the unlimited class are said to share a “single nature” (μίαν τινα φύσιν) (25a). Therefore, the unlimited class as a whole is a unified genus with a single nature, and some pleasures are included in this class while others are not. This fact alone suggests that the name “pleasure” cannot refer to its own unified class of phenomena, since otherwise the class of pleasure would run across the boundaries of the fourfold division of all being. By showing that some pleasures do not even belong to the same fundamental class of being, Socrates implicitly answers Protarchus’ objection that pleasures differ only in their sources and not in their intrinsic nature (12d), for he shows that pleasures differ from one another in their basic ontology, not just in the conditions in which they arise.

The initial debate between Socrates and Protarchus (12c-14b) is followed by a methodological interlude in which Socrates describes a particular puzzle concerning the simultaneous unity of things such as “man”, “ox” or “the beautiful” and the great diversity of particulars which fall under these unities. After describing the type of puzzle he has in mind (15a-b) and identifying the source of these puzzles in the ambiguity of language (15d), Socrates proposes a solution, which he claims is a “gift of the gods” (Θεῶν...δόσις, 16c5). This “divine method” resembles the method of Collection and Division, which is both described and demonstrated in several other late Platonic dialogues. I interpret the type of problem introduced at 15a-16a as the same kind of problem Socrates pointed out about the referent of the name “pleasure”. Thus, this merely raises the possibility that pleasures could differ from each other and still belong to the same genus without making any final claims about their actual nature or the conditions under which they occur.

See Chapter 1, Section 3 for my argument that the restoration account applies only to bodily pleasures. Since pure pleasures do not involve any restoration, and so are not necessarily preceded by destruction, nothing prohibits one from enjoying them while in the harmonious condition.

Thus Frede (1993) refers to it (xxv ff.). Gosling instead refers to it as the “heavenly tradition” (153-181).
passage serves to put the problem of pleasure in a larger context, and the divine method functions as a solution both to this more general problem, as well as to the particular problem regarding pleasure and knowledge, which Socrates and Protarchus must address before they can continue their discourse. The fact that words like “pleasure” or “color” seem to refer both to a genus and to the differing species within this genus is a symptom of the much more general problem that language is inherently ambiguous. However, instead of giving up discourse altogether, Socrates introduces a method by which dialecticians can eradicate this ambiguity and use language in a more precise way.

Socrates begins the methodological section of the dialogue by raising several general puzzles about how the same thing can be both one and many (14c-16a). At 15a-b he identifies the specific puzzle he has in mind, which has to do with unities, which are forever the same and unchanging, rather than with things which come to be and perish. The passage is difficult to interpret because, as Gosling points out, it is not clear that the problem of the unity of things like “man” and “the beautiful” has any relevance to the problem previously identified with regard to pleasure, i.e. that pleasure simultaneously sounds like a unitary concept and also comes in many forms. At 15b Socrates seems to be raising an unrelated puzzle about the unity of things like “man” and the simultaneous multitude of individual men. However, he introduces the puzzles which arise concerning such unities with the statement that “zealous concern with divisions of these unities and the like gives rise to controversy” (περὶ τῶν ἑνάδων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἡ πολλὴ σπουδὴ μετὰ διαιρέσεως ἀμφισβήτησις γίγνεται, 15a5-6). I follow Gosling in interpreting the first problem concerning these unities (15b1-2) not as a question about whether

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233 Most commentators interpret the passage as a discussion of Plato’s method of division, which first appears in the Phaedrus (265a-266b), and is later developed and exemplified in the Sophist (e.g. 218b-231c; 264b-268d) and Statesman (258b-268b). However, Trevaskis (1960) challenges this position.

234 Socrates applies the same puzzle to the branches of knowledge at 13e-14a. In fact, Protarchus only accepts his point about pleasure because the same puzzle applies to Socrates’ own candidate for the human good and not because he takes the point of the argument. Thus, Socrates’ discussion of the same kind of puzzle in a more general context does not serve merely as repetition; Socrates makes the same point regarding more neutral examples of unities such as “man” and “ox”, in the hopes that Protarchus can evaluate the argument in an impartial, rational way.

235 Cf. Gosling’s discussion of the relevance of the one-many problems in his general commentary, pp. 151-3.

236 In the case of pleasure, the reference to generic unity is merely apparent.

237 In particular, note Socrates’ claim that unities like “man” are one and the same and yet are found “among the things that come to be and are unlimited” (ἐν τοῖς γεγομένοις ἄδω καὶ ἀπείροις, 15b5), which seems like a clear reference to sensible particulars rather than the species of a genus.
any such unities exist, but rather as a question about whether each given example of a unity is truly a unity, rather than merely apparently one.

Furthermore, Gosling notes that the reference to the “things that come to be and are unlimited” may be relevant to the problem concerning pleasure because the particular members of the genus differ from one another precisely because they belong to different species (144). The particulars which fall under a genus are mentioned again in Socrates’ description of the divine method, and this later passage provides some clue about their relevance to the problem of correctly identifying the multiple species which fall under a single genus. When applying the divine method, one starts with a genus and its unlimited particulars and must determine “the exact number of every plurality that lies between the unlimited and the one” (τὸν ἀριθμὸν αὐτοῦ πάντα κατίδη τὸν ἀπείρον τε καὶ τοῦ ἑνός, 16d). Thus, the particular members of a genus or species are directly relevant to collection and division, because they are the many different phenomena which one collects into a single species or genus, and they are also the final members of any class which ultimately resists division into a further subspecies.

After identifying the particular one-many problem he has in mind, Socrates characterizes it as primarily a problem of language, rather than a problem about the nature of the things to which words refer.

Simply put, the potential for confusion comes from our use of the same name to refer to both a genus and species of this genus, and not from any uncertainty or imprecision in the nature of things. For example, we use “color” to refer both to colors generally and to specific kinds of color, like red or blue; however, in the case of color we are not likely to be confused by the seeming contradiction of the claims that 1) red and blue are both examples of color and that 2) red and blue are different colors (i.e. different species of color). Although this type of ambiguity...
is often harmless, it can lead to serious mistakes, as it does, for example, in philosophical discussions of genera such as pleasure, knowledge, or the good.

The divine method depends on understanding the ambiguity inherent in language. According to the divine method, “whatever is said to be consists of one and many, having in its nature limit and unlimitedness” (ἐξ ἑνὸς μὲν καὶ πολλῶν ὄντων τῶν ἀεὶ λεγομένων ἐστι, πέρας δὲ καὶ ἀπειρίαν ἐν αὐτῶι σύμφωτου ἔχοντων, 16c9-10). Interestingly, the subject matter to which one applies the divine method is language itself (i.e., “whatever is said to be”), although it is the nature of actually existing objects and phenomena that grounds one way of organizing language rather than another. Socrates next says that “we have to assume that there is in each case always one form for every one of them, and we must search for it, as we will indeed find it there” (δεῖν οὖν ἡμᾶς τούτων οὕτω διακεκοσμημένων ἀεὶ μίαν ἰδέαν περὶ παντὸς ἕκαστοτε θεμένους ζητεῖν—εὑρήσειν γὰρ ἐνοῦσαν, 16d). Here Socrates makes two extraordinary claims about the divine method, 1) that it has a broad application (“in each case”, ἕκαστοτε and “for every one of them”, περὶ παντὸς) and 2) that is always successful (“we will indeed find it there”). This confidence seems to undermine my argument that some names, such as “pleasure”, do not end up referring to “one form” (μίαν ἰδέαν). First of all, Gosling is right to caution against a too literal reading of the claim that the method should be applied to every λόγος (150-1). Secondly, the things which are “ordered thus” (τούτων οὕτω διακεκοσμημένων) are not really “whatever is said to be” as Frede’s translates has it, but rather “whatever is always said to be”.

Thus, this principle may only apply to well-established genera, such as those of musical pitches or vocal sounds (17c-18c), and not literally to every instance of predication. After all, surely Socrates is not blind to the fact that language is frequently misused in particular instances. Furthermore, Socrates’ confidence in the ultimate success of the divine method is not entirely without justification. Despite the fact that some pleasures belong to different and unconnected genera, every pleasure ends up belonging to some class or other (e.g. bodily pleasures, pure pleasures, etc.), and each of these classes itself belongs to a larger genus (e.g. bodily pleasure belong to the unlimited class and the pure pleasures belong to the mixed class). In other words, if one starts with the unlimited particulars, one will always be able to collect them into unified classes.

Note the ἀεὶ in 16c9
Socrates does not go into detail about how one should go about subdividing a genus into its proper species, or conversely, gathering together a group of diverse phenomena into a single species or genus. In the *Philebus*, as elsewhere in discussions of the method of division, where exactly one divides a genus into species is far from arbitrary. In fact, Socrates attributes the original division of vocal sounds to a mythical, divine origin, thus lending special authority to this example of a correct division of a genus into its species (18b). However, Socrates does not clearly explain in this passage how mere *humans*, like Protarchus and himself, can correctly divide a genus into its species or collect a multitude of diverse phenomena into a unified genus.

Fortunately, Socrates’ examination of particular pleasures and related psychic phenomena later in the dialogue provides at least one possible answer to this question. Socrates introduces the account of desire by asking, “What is the common feature whose recognition allows us to address all these phenomena which differ so much, by the same name?” (Πρὸς τί ποτε ἄρα ταὐτὸν βλέποντες οὕτω πολὺ διαφέροντα ταῦθ’ ἐνὶ προσαγορεύομεν ὄνοματι; 34e3-4). This question suggests that the proper criterion for determining whether a group of disparate phenomena belong to a single genus is whether or not they possess some “common feature” (τί...ταὐτὸν). Although certain species of pleasure do possess such a feature (for example, bodily pleasures are all caused by restoration of an organism’s harmonious condition), Socrates never identifies a single feature which is shared by all types of pleasure. According to Socrates’ statement concerning desire, pleasure’s lack of generic unity implies that different pleasures are not rightly called the same name. Fortunately, however, narrowing the scope of the word “pleasure” would not require as radical revision of ordinary language as one might think; after all, at the beginning of the dialogue, Philebus’ candidate for the human good is not identified simply as “pleasure”, but rather as a collection of experiences which are called by a variety of names. At the end of the dialogue, Socrates addresses the personification of the different types of pleasure, “My friends, whether you ought to be called ‘pleasures’ or some other name” (Ὦ

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241 He merely insists that the processes of collection and division should not proceed too fast or too slow (16e-17a).

242 Cf. *Phaedrus* 265, where Socrates insists that one must “cut up each kind according to its species along its natural joints” (265e).

243 Similarly, at 25a4 the fact that the members of the unlimited class admit of certain qualifications, such as “more or less” or “strong and mild” signifies that they all share a “single nature” (μᾶλ...των φόσα). Cf. also *Theaetetus* 208c1-210a9, where Socrates proposes a third possible definition of an account (λόγος), according to which an account identifies the mark (σήμειον) by which an object differs from everything else. However, see also the warning at *Sophist* 231a to be careful about inferring too much from similarities, since many of them are superficial or accidental and do not signify a shared nature.
φίλαι, εἶτε ἡδονὰς ὑμᾶς χρῆ προσαγορεύειν εἶτε ἄλλω ὀνόματι, 63b2-3). Socrates does not refer to pleasure in the singular, despite the fact that he goes on to address “reason and intelligence” (τὴν φρόνησιν καὶ τὸν νοῦν) as a singular entity (63c5-6). Furthermore, Socrates even hesitates to use the plural “pleasures” (ἡδονὰς) to refer to the radically different types of pleasure distinguished in the dialogue. According to my interpretation, this hesitation signals the fact that, properly speaking, the different kinds of “pleasure” belong to distinct classes of being.

One possible objection to the interpretation I have offered in this section of Socrates’ strategy for defeating his hedonist interlocutor is that it contradicts Socrates’ claim in the opening debate about pleasure that “no one contends that pleasant things are not pleasant” (τὸ μὲν οὖν μὴ οὐχὶ ἡδέα εἶναι τὰ ἡδέα λόγος οὐδὲς ἀμφισβητεῖ, 13a8-9). At first glance, this statement seems to rule out the possibility that hedonists could be mistaken in their application of the term “pleasure”. However, while the noun “pleasure” seems to misleadingly imply that all the phenomena to which it applies belong to a single unified class, the adjective “pleasant” does not. As it turns out, the adjective “pleasant” resembles the adjective “unlike”. Once properly understood, Protarchus’ objection that pleasures do not differ “insofar as they are pleasures” (καθ’ ὅσον γε ἡδοναί, 13c5) is no more coherent than Socrates’ structurally parallel imitation of this claim, according to which “the most unlike thing is of all things most like the most unlike” (τὸ ἀνομοιότατόν ἐστι τῷ ἀνομοιοτάτῳ πάντων ὁμοιότατον, 13d4-5). Similarly, the conclusion that the word “pleasure” does not refer to a unified class of phenomena does not contradict Socrates’ claim that “no one contends that pleasant things are not pleasant” (13a8-9). After all, it would not make sense to claim that unlike things are not unlike, even though no one would insist thereby that there exists a unified class of “unlike things”. The adjective “pleasant” differs from the noun “pleasure” in that it does not refer to pleasure itself, but rather applies to the activities or objects in which pleasure is taken. The mere fact that learning is pleasant to one type of subject and eating is pleasant to another does not imply that learning and eating belong to a single unified class, yet calling the experiences derived from these two different activities by the same name, “pleasure”, seems to imply (misleadingly) that these experiences have the same

244 Thus, according to Socrates, “Philebus holds that what is good for all creatures is to enjoy themselves, to be pleased and delighted, and whatever else goes together with that kind of thing” (Φιλέππος μὲν τῶν ἀγαθῶν εἶναι φησὶ τὰ χαίρειν πάσας ζῴας καὶ τὴν ἡδονὴν καὶ τέρψιν, καὶ δασα τοῦ γένους ἐστὶ τούτον αἵδιαμα, 11b4-6).

245 See Chapter 2, Section 4 for my argument that Socrates does not distinguish between φρόνησις and νοῦς, but rather uses both interchangeable in reference to his candidate for the cause of the good life. Thus, when φρόνησις and νοῦς are listed together, I interpret this simply as pleonasm.
nature. Socrates dedicates a large portion of his discussion with Protarchus about the chief human good to correcting precisely this mistake.

2 The Scope of the Genesis Argument

Although the putative topic of the *Philebus* is the debate about whether pleasure or thought is responsible for human happiness (11d), the bulk of the dialogue is taken up with Socrates’ detailed examination of different types of pleasure (31b-53b). In the previous section I argued that Socrates’ intense focus on uncovering the fundamental dissimilarities between different types of pleasure plays an important role in the argumentative structure of the dialogue as a whole. Thus, Socrates convinces Protarchus not only that pleasure alone is insufficient as an explanation of human happiness, but also that his original conception of pleasure does not even refer to a unified class of phenomena with a single, shared nature. By the end of the dialogue, the various distinctions Socrates has drawn between different kinds of pleasures provide the necessary criteria for the ethical evaluation of these different pleasures, as well as the ultimate decision about which types of pleasure should be incorporated into the good life.

Between the examination of pleasure and the corresponding, albeit much briefer, examination of the different kinds of knowledge (55c-59d) intervenes a self-contained passage in which Socrates reports the view of certain “subtle thinkers” (κομψοὶ γὰρ δὴ τινες, 53c6) who argue that pleasure is always an example of “becoming” (γένεσις) and has no being (οὐσία) (53c-55a). The authors of this argument conclude from this ontological fact about pleasure that pleasure cannot belong to the class of the good (54c8). This argument, which I refer to in what follows as the genesis argument, has no apparent relationship with its immediate context.246 Furthermore, the argument treats pleasures as an undifferentiated unity, in striking contrast with the many distinctions between different kinds of pleasure which Socrates has taken great pains to emphasize throughout the immediately preceding examination of pleasure.247 An even greater interpretative

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246 According to Hackforth (1945), the genesis argument is “not an integral part of the dialogue” and should be thought of as a “semi-independent discussion”. In fact, he even suggests that it plays a role comparable to that of a modern day appendix (105). Gosling (1975) likewise notes that the introduction of the genesis argument is “abrupt” and he observes, “One gets the impression that Plato had this piece to hand, was unwilling to abandon it, could not blend it in smoothly, so in desperation inserted it badly at this point” (220).

247 Hackforth (1945) makes a similar observation: “it seems puzzling that Plato should revert to a point of view which, by treating pleasure as a simple unity, appears to ignore the classification of its types” (105). This apparent reversion is even more puzzling on my interpretation that one of Socrates’ main strategies in the examination of pleasure is to demonstrate that the different types of pleasure do not even belong to a single, unified genus.
challenge concerns Socrates’ attitude towards the genesis argument and the relationship between the conclusion of the argument and the evaluation of pleasure in the dialogue as a whole. Socrates does not present the argument as its own, and yet he twice comments that he and Protarchus should be grateful to its author(s) (53c7 and 54d6). The passage allows for two competing interpretations, 1) that Socrates fully endorses the genesis argument, including its conclusion that every pleasure is an example of genesis and so cannot be good and 2) that Socrates only accepts the argument in relation to a particular class of pleasures, and so the argument only shows that these pleasures are examples of geneseis and so cannot be good.

In this section I argue for a version of (2). Socrates does not fully endorse the genesis argument, and in particular he disagrees with its scope. Thus, he does not accept the initial premise of the genesis argument that “pleasure is always a process of becoming” (ὡς ἀεὶ γένεσίς ἐστιν, 53c5); as a result, he only accepts the consequences of the argument with regard to a particular class of pleasures. In fact, the argument only directly applies to bodily pleasures, which Socrates has described by means of the restoration account at the beginning of the examination of pleasure (31b-32b). Despite the abrupt introduction of the genesis argument, I argue that it directly relates to Socrates’ revision of the original classification of all pleasure, which immediately precedes it (52c-d). The genesis argument tacitly provides an ontological basis for the contrast, both explicit and implicit, between pure and mixed pleasures, which runs throughout the account of true pleasures (e.g. 51d). Socrates is grateful to the author(s) of the genesis argument, because it shows that bodily pleasures, as well as all types of mixed pleasures, are not merely less desirable because of their intrinsic link with pain, which is a point the hedonist is likely to accept. Instead, the argument provides evidence for the more radical position that the active

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248 Socrates initially attributes the genesis argument to a group of people, whom he describes as “subtle thinkers”, but later he reminds Protarchus that they must be grateful to the person (in the singular) “who indicated to us that there is always only generation of pleasure and that it has no being whatsoever” (τῷ μηνύσαντι τῆς ἡδονῆς πέρι τὸ γένεσιν μὲν, οὐδόν δὲ μηδ’ ἴντων αὐτῆς ἐλατεῖ, 54d5-6).

249 Scholars who argue for some version of the first option include Evans (2007b), p. 355 and n. 25 and (2007c), passim; and Frede (1993), p. 63, n. 3. Scholars who defend some version of the second option include Carone (2000), 264-270, Hackforth (1945), 105-8 and Gosling (1975), 220-1. Of course, these interpretations differ in their particulars. For example, Carone (2000) attempts to reconcile the genesis argument with the conclusion that the pure pleasures are intrinsically good, whereas according to Gosling (1975) it applies at least to the “pure physical pleasures” (221).

250 Gosling (1975) likewise interprets the genesis argument as aimed at physical pleasures in particular, and yet he includes the pure pleasures introduced at 51c in the class of physical pleasures. See below for my argument that the pure pleasures belong to the soul alone, despite the fact that some of them are responses to αἰσθησις.
pursuit of these pleasures is *irrational* as the goal or τέλος, either of a particular action or of one’s life as a whole, because of the very kinds of things they are.

Socrates begins the *genesis* argument by drawing a distinction between those things that are “for the sake of something else” (τὸ μὲν ἔνεκά του, 53e5) and those “for whose sake the other kind comes to be” (τὸ δ’ οὖ χάριν ἐκάστοτε τὸ τινὸς ἔνεκα γεγονόμενον ἂει γίγνεται, 53e6-7). Socrates next gets Protarchus to agree that any process of becoming (γένεσις) belongs to the category of things which come to be for the sake of something else. The class of γένεσις is not *identical* to the class of things that are for the sake of something else, for Socrates claims that “all ingredients, as well as all tools, and quite generally all materials” (φάρμακα τε καὶ πάντα ὅργανα καὶ πᾶσαν ὑλήν) are “for the sake of some process of generation” (γενέσεως μὲν ἔνεκα) (54c1-2).

Socrates next claims that γένεσις is always for the sake of some οὐσία (54c3-4), implying that οὐσία names the class of things for whose sake other things come to be. After extending this conclusion to pleasure (54c6-7), Socrates evaluates the two classes as follows.

{ΣΩ.} Τό γε μὴν οὖ ἔνεκα τὸ ἔνεκά του γεγονόμενον ἂει γέγονον ἂν, ἐν τῇ τοῦ ἄγαθου μοῖρα χάριν ἐστιν· τὸ δὲ τινὸς ἔνεκα γεγονόμενον εἰς ἄλλην, ὦ ἄριστε, μοῖραν θετέον.

Soc.: But that for whose sake something comes to be ought to be put in the class of the things good in themselves, while that which comes to be for the sake of something else belongs in another class. (*Philebus* 54c9-11)

Socrates draws the conclusion that if pleasure is a γένεσις, then it also belongs to a class “different from that of the good” (ἄλλην ἢ τήν τοῦ ἄγαθου μοῖραν, 54d1-2).

The *genesis* argument provides many dialectical clues that Socrates does not fully endorse it. For example, as Hackforth (1945) observes (105), Socrates twice repeats the initial premise in a conditional form when drawing the conclusions of the argument. Thus, he states, “Now, pleasure, if it is a generation, comes to be for the sake of some being” (Οὐκοῦν ἡδονή εἴπερ γένεσίς ἐστιν, ἔνεκα τινος οὐσίας εἰς ἄνάγκης γίγνετ’ ἂν, 54c6-7) and he asks Protarchus “But if pleasure really is a kind of generation, will we be placing it correctly if we put it in a class?

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251 Ultimately, even tools and materials must, properly speaking, be for the sake of something in the second class, i.e. the class of things for the sake of which other things come to be. If tools and materials are really for the sake of γένεσις and nothing further, then γένεσις would belong to both classes.

252 Frede (1993) translates the εἴπερ in 54c6 “since” instead of “if”; however, the fact that Socrates repeats the premise that pleasure is a γένεσις in a conditional form in 54d1 suggests that the εἴπερ may have conditional force in both passages. Hackforth (1945) and Gosling (1975) translate the premise as a conditional in both places.
different from that of the good?” (ἀρ’ οὖν ἱδονή γε ἐπερ γένεσίς ἐστιν, εἰς ἄλλην ἡ τῇν τοῦ ἄγαθοῦ μοῖραν αὐτήν τιθέντες ὁρθῶς θήσομεν; 54d1-2). Furthermore, the description of pleasure as a process that comes to be for the sake of some being resembles the account of bodily pleasures presented at 31b-32b, according to which bodily pleasure is caused by the restoration of the harmonious condition of a living body. Socrates provides several examples of the relevant sorts of restorations, and they are all processes which take place over time, such as “filling” (πλήρωσις, 31e8) or “restoration” (ἀπόδοσις, 32a3). Additionally, like γενέσεις, the processes of restoration which cause the experiences of bodily pleasure are all “for the sake of” or aimed at something else, i.e. the harmonious condition of the animal. The strong resemblance between Socrates’ restoration account and the account of pleasure implicit in the genesis argument may provide a clue about why he is positive towards the argument. However, it also provides a possible explanation for his hesitance regarding the argument’s initial premise. Whereas the genesis argument describes all pleasures by the same model, Socrates’ own restoration account only applies to a particular class of pleasures, i.e. the bodily ones.

Gosling (1975) agrees with my interpretation that the genesis argument only applies to bodily pleasures (he refers to them as “physical pleasures”), and yet he assimilates some of the pure pleasures to this same class, referring to them as “pure physical pleasures” (121). I have argued elsewhere that the pure pleasures belong to the soul alone, although some of them are responses to objects which are perceived through the senses. The pure pleasures are not taken in αἴσθησις per se, but rather in certain objects of αἴσθησις, which are pure and beautiful. Thus, the objects of pure pleasure are identified as things like “the beauty of a shape”, such as “something straight

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253 Cf. Hackforth’s claim that, “this is no more than a new terminology, in which γένεσις and φθορά replace πλήρωσις and κένωσις” ((1945), 107).

254 In Chapter 2, Section 3 I have provided reasons for doubting that the restoration account applies to all pleasures. I examined the ontological assumptions which underlie the restoration account, in particular the connection between the notions of destruction and restoration and the mixed class of being. According to the new metaphysics presented at 23c-27c, the only entities which undergo destruction and restoration are mixtures of limit and the unlimited. I argued that bodily pleasures involve the restoration of the natural condition of the living body as a whole, since neither the body nor the soul alone qualifies as a mixture of the relevant sort. Furthermore, the condition of the body has a direct effect on the condition of the soul, so even if the body and the soul were each a mixture of limit and the unlimited, neither one would undergo restoration or destruction independently of the other. Pleasures which belong to the soul alone do not involve the restoration of the organism, since the condition of the body remains unaffected and the soul is just not the right type of ontological entity to undergo destruction or restoration.

255 See Chapter 3, Section 4.

256 Contrast Gosling (1975) who describes the pure pleasures as “pure physical pleasures” (221).
or round and what is constructed out of these with a compass, rule, and square” (51c1, 3-5).

These objects are “not beautiful in a relative sense...but are by their very nature forever beautiful by themselves” (51c6-7). Socrates specifically says that the pure pleasures of sight are “not at all comparable to those [pleasures] of rubbing” (51d1), and this claim would be contradicted if the pure pleasures were caused by the same type of bodily changes as bodily pleasures are.

Although the pure pleasures sometimes occur in response to aiòðºµµπµµ, unlike the pleasures caused by rubbing or any other bodily change but like the capacity to judge that a perceptual object is beautiful, the pure pleasures belong to the soul alone.

After finishing his account of the genesis argument proper, Socrates considers some of the implications for the nature of pleasure. Socrates claims that destruction (φθορά) is the opposite of generation (γένεσις) (55a2-3), but that the two are intimately linked, in that both are opposed to being. As a result, Socrates observes that anyone who chooses to pursue a process of generation as an end in itself must at the same time be pursuing destruction as an end in itself (55a). Since bodily pleasure is intrinsically linked to bodily pain in precisely the same way, anyone who pursues pleasure as an end in itself necessarily also pursues its opposite, bodily pain. Thus, such a person would “choose generation and destruction in preference to that third life which consists in neither pleasure nor pain, but is a life of thought in the purest degree possible” (55a5-8). Here Socrates makes reference to the original comparison between the life of pleasure and the life of thought (21b-e); however, in the present passage he contrasts the life of thought with the life that contains both generation and destruction (i.e. both pleasure and pain).

The genesis argument reveals that the central mistake of those people who pursue bodily pleasure for its own sake is that they “find their fulfillment in processes of generation” (τῶν ἐν ταῖς γενέσεως ἀποτελομένων, 54e1-2). These people will never find satisfaction, because

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257 See also Socrates’ description of the pure pleasures of hearing, which are taken in “the smooth and bright sounds that produce one pure note” and “are not beautiful in relation to anything else but in and by themselves” (51d6-8).

258 The pleasures caused by rubbing are stereotypical examples of ethically questionable pleasures related to the body. Cf. Philebus 46d10 and Gorgias 494c-e.

259 Cf. Theaetetus 185e, where Socrates distinguishes between two psychic capacities, which involve the body and belong to the soul alone, respectively: “While the soul considers some things through the bodily powers, there are others which it considers alone and through itself” (185e). Examples of the objects of the latter capacity are “like and unlike, same and different” as well as “beautiful and ugly, good and bad” (186a). As I interpret this passage, the first capacity corresponds to aiòðºµµπµµ in the Philebus, which is merely the soul’s awareness of bodily changes and sometimes the external objects which these bodily changes represent, while the second refers to capacity for judgment.
bodily pleasure, being a γένεσις, cannot function as an end or τέλος, just as it does not belong to the class of the good. A γένεσις is described as something that is “in need of something else” (τὸ δὲ ἀεὶ ἐφιέμενον ἄλλου) as opposed to οὐσία which is “sufficient to itself” (53d3-4). Pure pleasures differ from bodily pleasures in that they are not described as being for the sake of some further end. The bodily pleasures can be interpreted as “for the sake of” the harmonious condition, but the pure pleasures are not necessarily preceded by the destruction of the harmonious condition. Furthermore, the pure pleasures possess all three of the aspects of the good listed at the end of the dialogue: beauty, proportion and truth (65a). From the beginning of Socrates’ description, the pure pleasures are identified as the true ones (51b). Also, as mentioned above, they all involve the apprehension and appreciation of beauty. Finally, their classification in the class of things that possess measure suggests that they are proportionate (52c-d). These passages all support the conclusion that the pure pleasures are good in themselves and that the genesis argument is not meant to apply to them.

The genesis argument reveals the true nature of bodily pleasure, and in doing so it reinforces the implicit contrast Socrates draws between the fundamental natures of pure and mixed pleasures respectively throughout the account of pure pleasure (51c-53b), as well as his revision of the original classification of all pleasures in the unlimited class (52c-d). Throughout the examination of different types of pleasure, which runs from the account of bodily pleasures beginning at 31b through the account of pure pleasures, Socrates has for the most part refrained from discussing the ethical implications of the differences between these pleasures. The genesis argument is the first formal argument about the value of pleasure, and although Socrates

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260 Cf. the initial criteria for determining the highest good at the beginning of the dialogue. Socrates claims that it must be 1) the most final or complete thing (τελεώτατον, 20d3), as well as being 2) desirable (20d7-10) and 3) “it must have no need of anything else in addition” (μηδὲν μηδενὸς ἐτι προσδεῖσθαι, 20e6). Through the genesis argument Socrates has succeeded in showing that bodily pleasures, as well as any type of pleasure that is mixed with pain, is neither desirable, sufficient or complete in itself.

261 The inherently measured nature of the pure pleasures seems to conflict with the way Socrates and Protarchus describe pleasure when they compare pleasure and knowledge at the end of the dialogue (65b-66a). For example, Protarchus claims that pleasure is “the greatest imposter of all” (ἀπάντων ἁλαζονίστατον, 65c5). However, in this passage Socrates and Protarchus seem to be evaluating Protarchus’ original conception of pleasure, which treated all pleasures alike, including bodily and psychic pleasures, true and false ones, as well as those associated with both disease and health. Protarchus shows that he is thinking particularly about mixed, as opposed to pure, pleasures when he states, “when we see anyone actively engaged in them [i.e. pleasures], especially those that are most intense, we notice that their effect is quite ridiculous, if not outright obscene” (Ἡδονὰς δὲ γε ποι καὶ ταύτα σχεδὸν τὸς μεγίστας, ἢταν άδομεν ἠδόμενον ὅπιτον, ἢ τὸ γελοῖον ἐπ’ αὐτῶν, 65e9-66a1). This negative depiction of “pleasure” does not pertain to the pure pleasures, which Socrates refers to as “those pleasures we set apart and defined as painless” (Ἅδονας ἔθεμεν ἀλύπους ἀρομάμενοι, 66c4-5) when he assigns them fifth place in the final ranking of the goods.
does not agree with its scope, it provides him with the tools he needs for discriminating not only between the *natures* of bodily and mixed pleasures respectively, but also between their relative *values*. Therefore, the placement of the *genesis* argument at the end of the examination of the nature of different classes of pleasure and before the official evaluation of pleasure and the determination of its role in the good life is highly strategic rather than random, as some commentators have supposed.

According to my reading, Socrates does not fully espouse the *genesis* argument, because it does not apply to the pure pleasures. His sympathy with the view and its author can be explained instead by the fact that it is an accurate description of what is wrong with pleasures which are mixed with pain. We must take seriously Socrates’ and Protarchus’ reaffirmation of the judgment that the mixed life of pleasure and thought is the most choiceworthy at the end of the dialogue (60a-61a, 67a), as well as the inclusion of the pure pleasures in the final ranking of goods (66c). Pleasure is not included in the mixed life as an unfortunate symptom of an imperfect nature, a remedial good, or even as something of neutral value that does not interfere with or detract from thought, but as a genuine good. As a result, the mixed life is more choiceworthy for a human than an unmixed life of thought, because any life that did not include the pure pleasures would actually be less good because of this omission.

### 3 The Necessity of Bodily Pleasure in the Good Life

Throughout the many different discussions and evaluations of pleasure in the Platonic corpus, bodily pleasure consistently receives the most vehement criticism. The treatments of pleasure in Plato’s late dialogues are no exception; for example, in the *Timaeus* bodily pleasure is described as “evil’s most powerful lure” (*μέγιστον κακοῦ δέλεαρ*, 69d1), and it is one of the affections

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262 All of Socrates’ claims about the value of the various pleasures he discusses are either tentative or proleptic. For example, 32d Socrates makes the tentative claim that “pleasure and pain may rather turn out to share the predicament of hot and cold and other such things that are welcome at one point but unwelcome at another, because they are not good, but it happens that some of them do occasionally assume a beneficial nature.” Likewise, Socrates predicts that he and Protarchus, “will find no other way to account for badness in the case of pleasures unless they are false” (40e). Protarchus objects that pleasure is implicated in “other grave and wide-ranging” kinds of badness, and yet Socrates puts off the topic of the ethical badness of pleasure until later in the dialogue (41a).


265 Butler (2005): 120.

which disturbs the orbits of the rational part of the soul (42a-b). However, in his account of bodily pleasure in the *Philebus*, Socrates remains neutral about its value, never criticizing the class of bodily pleasures as a whole.\textsuperscript{267} In this section I argue that Plato conceives of both bodily pleasure and bodily pain as morally neutral in themselves, although they can have bad effects, depending on the condition of the soul of the particular subject. As a result, bodily pleasures are incorporated as “harmless” additions to the good human life, and yet they do not make their own positive contribution to the goodness of this life.

The account of bodily pleasure in the *Philebus* differs from other treatments of bodily pleasure in the Platonic corpus in its scope, for Socrates does not consider the effect of bodily pleasure on humans alone, but instead characterizes it as a psychic phenomenon common to all animals (τοῖς ζῴοις, 31d5). The only general criterion mentioned in the dialogue for distinguishing between good and bad pleasures is Socrates’ prediction in the middle of the account of false pleasures that he and Protarchus “will find no other way to account for badness in the case of pleasures unless they are false” (Οὐδ’ ἡδονάς γ’ οἶμαι κατανοοῦμεν ὡς ἄλλον τρόπον εἰσίν πονηραὶ πλὴν τῶν ψευδεῖς εἶναι, 40e9-10). It should come as no surprise that Socrates’ prediction comes true, at least once one takes into account both of the senses in which pleasures can be false (ψευδεῖς).\textsuperscript{268}

Socrates argues that pleasures are true or false in the primary sense as a result of the truth or falsity of certain accompanying judgments, which implies that both true and false pleasure requires the capacity for judgment. Since bodily pleasures are common to all animals, they cannot depend on the capacity of judgment in this way. This implies that the bodily pleasures, which are common to humans and non-rational animals, fall outside of the distinction between true and false pleasures in this sense. Furthermore, only those mixed bodily pleasures associated with diseased subjects are ψευδής in the second sense of deceptively leading their subjects astray. As a result, according to Socrates’ principle that pleasures are only bad insofar as they are false, at least some bodily pleasures, the healthy and undeceptive ones, are not bad.

However, there is also textual evidence that bodily pleasures are not good. In the previous section I argued that Socrates accepts the conclusions of the *genesis* argument, although only for a limited range of pleasures. According to my interpretation, the account of pleasure implicit in

\textsuperscript{267} Even the negative description of the “most intense” bodily pleasures is directed in particular at those mixed bodily pleasures which accompany disease (45b ff.).

\textsuperscript{268} See Chapter 4, Section 3 for my discussion of the two senses in which pleasure can be false in the *Philebus*. 
the *genesis* argument resembles Socrates’ own account of bodily pleasure in particular, which identifies bodily pleasure as the psychic experience caused by the restoration of the harmonious condition of a living organism (32b). If Socrates accepts the conclusions of the *genesis* argument with reference to the bodily pleasures, then this implies that even the healthy bodily pleasures are not the type of phenomena that can be classified as good.

The last remaining alternative is that Plato conceives of bodily pleasures as neither intrinsically good nor intrinsically bad in the *Philebus*. In fact, Socrates anticipates this very possibility in the following passage, which comes right after the account of bodily pleasure and pain.

> ἡδονῇ δὲ καὶ λύπῃ, καθάπερ θερμῷ καὶ ψυχρῷ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς τουούτοις, τοτὲ μὲν ἀσπαστέον αὐτά, τοτὲ δὲ οὐκ ἀσπαστέον, ὡς ἀγαθὰ μὲν οὐκ ὄντα, ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ ἔνια δεχόμενα τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔστιν ἐστὶν ὅτε φύσιν.

Pleasure and pain may...turn out to share the predicament of hot and cold and other such things that are welcome at one point but unwelcome at another, because they are not good, but it happens that some of them do occasionally assume a beneficial nature. (*Philebus* 32d3-6)

By the end of the dialogue, bodily pleasure and pain turn out to fit just this description, assuming a beneficial or harmful nature depending on whether they go along with good conditions of the body and soul, such as health and virtue, or bad conditions, such as disease and vice. Thus, in a healthy and virtuous subject, bodily pleasure and pain do not have any negative effects on the condition of the soul, despite the fact that they involve restoration and destruction of the organism as a whole. On the contrary, in normal cases bodily pleasure and pain help an animal preserve the harmonious condition of the body, which is identified as the animal’s natural and healthy condition. Thus, bodily pain makes an animal aware of bodily deficiencies and bodily pleasure helps motivate an animal to restore these deficiencies, even in the case of animals that lack the capacity for judgment.269 Bodily pleasure is a necessary consequence of embodiment, but according to the account in the *Philebus*, it is not necessarily a negative one.

A similar distinction between harmful and harmless bodily pleasures is present also in the *Timaeus*. In the *Timaeus*, the tripartition of the soul plays an important role in distinguishing between the effect bodily pleasures have on everyone and the special threat they pose towards the souls of fools. The distinction between the rational and appetitive parts of the soul in particular allows Plato to distinguish between the psychological processes underlying morally

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269 Cf. Ganson (2009), who argues similarly that *αἰσθησις* was devised to preserve bodily health in the *Timaeus* (9).
neutral and morally corruptive bodily pleasures and to explain why bodily pleasures may be harmless to some and dangerous to others. All bodily pains and pleasures involve the destruction and restoration of the harmonious condition of an animal, and this harmony is destroyed or restored specifically when movements which originate in the body affect the appetitive part of the soul. However, the gods specifically designed the human body in the way they did to ensure that the movements of the irrational parts of the soul, including bodily pleasure and pain, would have as little effect on the motions of reason as possible (69d6-e3). Ultimately, Timaeus claims that humans who exercise their reason will eventually be able to master these necessary but potentially disruptive motions instead of being mastered by them (42b-d, 44b-c, 47c, 90c-d).

According to my interpretation of the account of bodily pleasure in the *Philebus*, bodily pleasure is in itself a morally neutral psychic phenomenon, although it has the potential both to benefit certain types of subjects and to harm others. When Socrates asks the personification of reason at the end of the dialogue which kinds of pleasure should be mixed into the good life, reason accepts the true and pure pleasures as well as a second type of pleasure, which is described as follows.

πρὸς ταύταις τὰς μεθ’ ὑγιείας καὶ τοῦ σωφρονεῖν, καὶ δὴ καὶ συμπάσης ἀρετῆς ὁπόσαι καθάπερ θεοὶ ὁπαδοὶ γιγνόμεναι αὐτή συνακολουθοῦσι πάντη, ταύτας μείγνυ·

And besides, also add the pleasures of health and of temperance and all those that commit themselves to virtue as to their deity and follow it around everywhere. (*Philebus* 63e4-7)

Socrates and Protarchus have already allowed true pleasures in general (62e3-7), as well as the true and pure pleasures in particular (ἁς τε ἡδονὰς ἀληθεῖς καὶ καθαρὰς, 63e3), into the mixed life, and so this description can only refer to the bodily pleasures. This passage supports my claim that the bodily pleasures fall outside the distinction between true and false pleasures. After all, Socrates never indicates that bodily pleasure can ever be true; however, if they are false, it would be difficult to explain why some false pleasures are incorporated into the good life while the rest are rejected. The description of this class of pleasures as those which “go along with health and temperance” (τὰς μεθ’ ὑγιείας καὶ τοῦ σωφρονεῖν) ensures that Socrates only mixes in those bodily pleasures which accompany good conditions and thus “assume a beneficial nature” (δεχόμενα τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔστων ὁτε φύσων, 32d5-6).

270 Recognizing that the distinction between true and false pleasures is not exhaustive of all the pleasures discussed in the dialogue allows one to avoid the troubling implication that Socrates ends up mixing at least some false pleasures into the good life. Cf. Cooper (1977), 723-728.
4 The Value of Pure Pleasure in the Good Life

Even though bodily pleasures are ultimately incorporated into the good life, they are not intrinsically good, and so the good life is not made any better by their presence. However, the same cannot be said for the class of pure pleasures, which are readily accepted into the good life at 63e and are ranked fifth in the final ranking of the goods at 66c. In this section I first establish that the pure pleasures represent a unified class of psychic phenomena with a single nature, despite the fact that some pure pleasures are described as “following” types of knowledge, while others “follow” αἰσθήσεις (ἐπιστήμαις, τὰς δὲ αἰσθήσεσιν ἑπομένας, 66c5-6). I then suggest that the pure pleasures, in conjunction with the types of knowledge and αἰσθήσεις which they follow, have the important role of balancing the potentially disruptive motions coming from the mortal part of the soul, including the motions associated with bodily pleasure and pain. Furthermore, the pure and true pleasures instantiate all three aspects of the good distinguished by Socrates at 64e. Finally, I respond to the objection that if some pleasures have genuine value, than this would imply that a mixed human life is more valuable and choiceworthy than the pleasureless existence of a god.

I have argued elsewhere that the pure pleasures are purely psychic phenomena, despite the fact that some of them are responses to objects that are perceived through the senses. All pure pleasures involve the subject’s recognition of the beauty or harmony of some object, whether this object is perceived through the senses or contemplated by the soul alone. In the Timaeus, one can see a similar overlap in the objects of perception and thought, suggesting that Plato does not privilege one method of accessing these objects over another in his late thought. For example, at 46e-47e Timaeus describes the “supremely beneficial function” (τὸ δὲ μέγιστον...ὠφελίαν ἔργον, 46e) of both sight and hearing, and he not only attributes to these perceptual capacities the acquisition of information about the external world; more significantly, he credits them with leading to the invention of number (μεμηχάνηται μὲν ἀριθμόν, 47a6) and even philosophy itself, which is described as “a gift from the gods to the mortal race whose value neither has been nor ever will be surpassed” (οὗ μεῖζον ἀγαθὸν οὔτ' ἠλθεν οὔτε ἥξει ποτὲ τῷ θνητῷ γένει δωρηθὲν ἐκ θεῶν, 47b1-2). According to Timaeus himself, this most important gift of the gods is a direct by-product of sight and the other senses.

271 See my more detailed discussion of the relationship between the pure pleasures and αἰσθήσεις in Chapter 3, Section 4. See also my discussion of their “measured” nature in Chapter 2, Section 2.
In both the *Philebus* and the *Timaeus* the pure pleasures seem to play an active role in preserving psychic health and virtue. This evidence suggests that the pure pleasures do not merely make a good human life better, but they actually play an essential role in both the achievement and maintenance of human happiness. In the *Timaeus*, bodily pleasures and pains, along with the other πάθη which arise in the mortal part of the soul, such as fear and confidence, have the potential to disrupt the proper motion of the rational part of the soul (42a-b). Although the frequency and intensity of these disturbances are said to subside with time (44c-b), Timaeus insists that it is up to each individual to actively counteract these disturbances and reestablish the rational soul’s natural, circular motion (42c-d). Timaeus’ description of the beneficial function of sight provides one example of that type of psychic activity which can help restore the rational soul to its best and original condition.

Let us rather declare that the cause and purpose of this supreme good is this: the god invented sight and gave it to us so that we might observe the orbits of intelligence in the heavens and apply them to the revolutions of our own understanding. For there is a kinship between them, even though our revolutions are disturbed, whereas the universal orbits are undisturbed. So once we have come to know them and to share in the ability to make correct calculations according to nature, we should stabilize the straying revolutions within ourselves by imitating the completely unstraying revolutions of god. (*Timaeus* 47b5-c4)

Through perceiving the orderly motions of the heavens, not only can humans restore the motions of their own rational soul, but they can benefit from all of the desirable side-effects of psychic harmony, which includes the capacity for making correct calculations. It is important to observe that it is not merely the perception of the heavens, which requires no more than lifting up one’s head, that has a beneficial effect on the rational soul, but rather the recognition and appreciation of the order instantiated in the movements of the heavens. In the *Philebus*, Socrates identifies the pure pleasures as this extra element of appreciation which accompanies perceptions of order and harmony, at least in some subjects.\(^{272}\)

\(^{272}\) Cf. Timaeus’ parallel description of the supreme benefit of hearing where he says that the perception of harmony in music likewise corrects the orbits of the rational soul, but only in those who are guided by understanding (μετὰ μοι) and not by “irrational pleasure” (ἡδονήν ἄλογων) (47d2-7).
One might be tempted to conclude from these passages that certain perceptions and the pure pleasures which accompany them are necessary only for achieving psychic harmony and order, and they have no continuing role to play in the life of a wise and virtuous person. However, the account of psycho-physical health in the *Timaeus* suggests that idleness and rest can have a deleterious effect on the condition of both the body and the soul, and that one can only maintain psychic health if one constantly exercises both the body and the soul and thus manage to “keep in a state of natural equilibrium the internal and the external motions” (τὰς ἐντὸς καὶ ἐκτὸς ἀμύνηται κατὰ φύσιν κατηφορία, 88e1). This passage indicates that the pure pleasures and the other psychic activities which they accompany continue to play a role in the good human life, even after psychic harmony has been achieved.

Despite Socrates’ dramatic revision of his initial classification of pleasure and the positive characterization of the pleasures he assigns to the mixed class, many scholars interpret Socrates’ apparent preference for the mixed life of pleasure and intelligence over the unmixed life of intelligence in the *Philebus* as a reluctant compromise, necessary only as a result of a human being’s natural limitations. This view is understandable, given the rather unconvincing manner in which Socrates initially rejects the unmixed life of intelligence. After all, he does little more than solicit the opinion of a professed hedonist about whether the life of intelligence without pleasure is complete, sufficient and choiceworthy, or whether it lacks something that would make it better (21d-e). Certainly, no careful reader of Platonic dialogues should be convinced that the mixed life of pleasure and intelligence is better than any other alternative solely on the basis of this passage; however, Protarchus’ rejection of the unmixed life of intelligence occurs within the first third of the dialogue, before Socrates’ introduction of the fourfold division of being and the detailed analysis of pleasure. What I argue in this section is not that the conclusion of the *Philebus* is either obvious or unsurprising, but rather that the analysis of pleasure, and in particular the possibility of pure pleasure, justifies the evaluation of certain pleasures as genuine.

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273 Cf. *Theaetetus* 153b-c on the direct relationship between learning (μαθήσεως) and practice (μελέτης) and the health of the soul.

274 The most common way of explaining this conclusion is by pointing out that it only applies to human beings, and only because of their inherent limitations. Cf. Evans (2007b), 340-1, 359-60; Diès, (1941), cv; Frede (1993), xliii, (1985), 151; Gosling (1975), 103; Hampton (1990), 65, 120, n. 28; Obdržálek (2007); Poste (1860), 55, n. ad loc; and Tallon (1972), 441. Butler (2007) offers a deflationary reading of the status of pleasure, according to which the pleasure incorporated into the mixed life is “ontologically parasitic” upon knowledge (91) and, even more radically, pleasure is not “an independent kind of ‘thing’” (107). Against this general interpretative trend, Carone (2000) and Vogt (2007) both affirm that some pleasures are genuine goods, and that the mixed life is better than the unmixed life of intelligence as a direct result of the pleasures present in it.
goods and vindicates the preliminary identification of the mixed life as the human ideal at the beginning of the dialogue.

At 59e, after the analyses of pleasure and knowledge, Socrates turns to the task of mixing together the best human life. He first reiterates the Choice of Lives thought experiment, reaffirming the conclusion that the mixed life of pleasure and intelligence is better than either of the unmixed alternatives (60b-61a; cf. 20d-22b). Although he and Protarchus agree that the mixed life receives the “first prize” as the supreme human good, he reminds Protarchus that they have yet to determine whether pleasure or intelligence deserves the second prize for being the component that is responsible for the goodness of the mixed life (61a; cf. 22c-e). He then proposes that they examine the nature of the good “precisely or at least in outline” (σαφῶς ἦ καὶ τινα τύπον, 61a4), so that they can evaluate the goodness of pleasure and intelligence in turn. However, before evaluating pleasure and intelligence, Socrates first determines which pleasures and which kinds of knowledge belong in the best life. Interestingly, Socrates questions Protarchus directly about which kinds of knowledge they should mix into the best life, but in the case of pleasure, he mainly questions the personification of intelligence (63c-64a). Before questioning Intelligence itself, Socrates and Protarchus come only to the very general conclusion that they should first allow in the true pleasures, and then those which are either beneficial or harmless (62e-63a). After rejecting ‘the strongest and most intense pleasures’, which no doubt refers to those mixed with pain, Intelligence responds,

As to the true and pure pleasures you mentioned, those regard as our kin. And besides, also add the pleasures of health and of temperance and all those that commit themselves to virtue as their deity and follow it around everywhere.

ἀλλ’ ἂς τε ἡδονὰς ἀληθεῶς καὶ καθαρὰς [ἂς] εἶπες, σχεδὸν οἰκείας ἡμῖν νόμιζε, καὶ πρὸς ταύτας τὰς μεθ’ ὑγείας καὶ τῶν σωφρονῶν, καὶ δὴ καὶ συμπάσσῃς ἁρετής ὁπόσαι καθάπερ θεοῦ ὀπαδοί γεγονόμεναι αὐτῇ συνακολουθοῦσι πάντῃ, ταύτας μεῖνων·

(Philebus 63e3-7)

Socrates questions the personification of pleasures too, but only after Protarchus and he have already agreed to include all forms of knowledge in the best life. The way in which Socrates addresses pleasure and reason is instructive about their respective natures. He questions the personification of “intelligence and reason” (φρόνησιν καὶ τὸν νοῦν, 63c5-6), terms which are used interchangeably throughout the dialogue, implying that reason is one thing with a single nature. In contrast, he addresses “pleasures” in the plural, simultaneously expressing doubt about whether they should be called by this name. In questioning the generic unity of pleasure, Socrates here echoes his first comment about pleasure: “But as to pleasure, I know that it is complex (ἡμεῖς φύσιν ἔχει)” (12c). See Section 1 above.
When Socrates and Protarchus agree to allow “true” pleasures into the best life, they do not clearly distinguish between the special class of pleasures Socrates introduced at 51b and the much larger class of true pleasures, which include, for example, the true pleasures of anticipation, which Socrates explicitly associates with virtuous subjects. In contrast, Intelligence both singles out the distinct class of pure and true pleasures which belong to the mixed class and says that these pleasures are “practically akin to us” (σχεδὸν οἰκείας ἡμῖν). Intelligence also allows the pleasures that accompany health and virtue into the best life, which presumably include the rest of the true pleasures, as well as the bodily pleasures associated with health. Intelligence does not specify whether or not any of these pleasures are good, but Socrates and Protarchus’ previous agreement suggests that they are at least harmless (ἀβλαβές, 63a1).

After successfully mixing together the best human life, Socrates proceeds to provide the promised outline of the good. He identifies the nature of proportion (τῆς συμμετροὺ φύσεως, 64d9) as an essential feature of all mixtures, and he observes that “measure and proportion manifest themselves in all areas as beauty and virtue” (μετριότης γὰρ καὶ συμμετρία κάλλος δήποι καὶ ἀρετή πανταχοῦ συμβαίνει γίγνεσθαι, 64e). Protarchus agrees that the mixture also contains truth, and Socrates finally concludes that “if we cannot capture the good in one form (μιᾷ…ἰδέᾳ), we will have to take hold of it in a conjunction of three: beauty, proportion and truth” (65a1-2). Socrates then asks Protarchus to judge whether pleasure or intelligence is “more closely related to the supreme good” (τοῦ ἀρίστου συγγενέστερόν, 65b1). Protarchus responds that intelligence is closer to all three forms of the good, and yet in each case he compares intelligence with the mixed and violent pleasures which belong to the unlimited class, rather than the pure pleasures which belong to the mixed class and are inherently measured. First, he compares intelligence with the bodily pleasures of sex (περὶ τὰφροδίσια, 65c6), then to “pleasure and excessive joy” (ἡδονῆς μὲν καὶ περιχαρείας, 65d8), and finally to the “most intense” (τὰς μεγίστας) pleasures, which have a ridiculous effect and make people ashamed (65e9-66a3).

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276 See the previous section on the inclusion of bodily pleasures. For a discussion of Socrates initially puzzling claim that “for the most part” good and bad people possess true and false pleasures respectively, see Chapter 4, Sections 3 and 4.

277 Even before consulting Intelligence, Socrates and Protarchus agree to allow all of the true pleasures into the good life (τούτων πρώτας μεθετέον ἡμῖν ὅσαι ἀληθέσι, 62e4-5).
Were Protarchus to compare intelligence with the inherently measured pleasures, the recipient of the “second prize” would be much less obvious. After all, Intelligence itself describes these pleasures “practically akin to us”. I am not suggesting that these pleasures are more closely related to the supreme good than intelligence, but only that the awarding of second prize to intelligence does not rule out the possibility that some pleasures are also genuine goods. The characterization of this special class of pleasures shows that they are in fact closely related to measure, beauty and truth, the three forms of the good identified at 65a. Socrates explicitly associates them with measure (ἐμμετρίαν, 52c4) and assigns them to “the class of things that possess measure” (τῶν ἐμμέτρων, 52d1). In addition, he repeatedly characterizes the objects of the pure sensory pleasures as beautiful (51b3, c1, c5, d2, d7), suggesting that these pleasures are also closely related to the form of beauty. Finally, “true” is one of the predicates Socrates regularly employs to identify this special class of pleasures (e.g. 51b1, 63c3). The ranking of the goods at the end of the dialogue confirms that the measured pleasures are genuine goods, for they take fifth place in the same ranking that includes reason, certain kinds of knowledge, and even limit itself (66a-c).278

Despite the overwhelming evidence that Plato recognizes the intrinsic value of a certain class of pleasures in the Philebus, some scholars object that this conclusion makes the good human life better and more choiceworthy than the life of a god; as Evans (2007b) puts it, such an outcome that would be “impius” (357-8). In raising this objection, Evans identifies the life of a god with the pleasureless life of intelligence. Two passages support this view about the gods. The first passage immediately follows the comparison of lives, in which Socrates claims that the result of the comparison does not apply to “divine reason” (θεῖον...νοῦν, 22c5-6), and the second comes later in the analysis of bodily pleasure and pain, where Protarchus calls the thought that gods undergo pleasure and pain “inappropriate” or “unseemly” (ἄσχημον) (33b10). However, these passages are merely provisional comparisons between the life of gods and men, and both occur before the introduction of psychic pleasures and the pleasures which belong to the mixed class.

278 As Vogt (2007) points out, “we should think that pleasure, by gaining fifth rank, fares extremely well...To gain fifth rank with such competitors is not to come in last and accept a lowly status. To gain fifth rank among such competitors is to be praised” (251). Against this view, Singpurwala (2009) interprets the fact that pleasure gains merely fifth place in the final ranking of goods as a sign “that there is something wrong with pleasure.” She asks, “If true pleasures are not restorations, but have being and are good in themselves, then why does Plato rank them last?” (80). However, Singpurwala does not consider that if there were really something wrong with pleasure, Socrates need not have ranked them at all.
When Protarchus states that pleasure and pain would be “unseemly” (ἄσχημον) for gods, he is surely thinking of the bodily pleasures which imply the disruption of a living being’s natural harmony, since these are the only pleasures and pains they have considered up until this point in the dialogue.²⁷⁹ Protarchus has accepted Socrates’ restoration account of pleasure, according to which every pleasure is necessarily preceded by destruction of the harmonious condition of an organism. Therefore, Protarchus’ reluctance to attribute such a condition to the gods is understandable, since the gods are not supposed to be subject to any form of imperfection. However, the pure pleasures necessitate no such destruction or imperfection, for they are consistent with the harmonious condition. According to the tripartite account of the soul presented in the Timaeus, pure pleasures are not only compatible with the proper motion of the rational soul, but may even, as I have argued above, help the rational soul restore and maintain this proper motion. Even if the body undergoes an imperceptible destruction in the case of the pure pleasures of smell,²⁸⁰ since gods do not experience αἴσθησις,²⁸¹ their pure pleasures would be entirely free from destruction of any kind. Even without perception, gods could still take pure pleasure in the same types of objects as humans do, such as perfect shapes or ratios. The Timaeus provides additional evidence for the attribution of at least certain types of pleasure to the gods. For example, at 37c6-d1 Timaeus attributes pleasure to the Demiurge.²⁸² The Demiurge delights in the similarity between the created world and its model. The created world can be compared with the harmonious mixtures in the Philebus and the “model” plays an analogous role to that of limit. The object of the Demiurge’s pleasure would then be the good-making features instantiated in the world through its possession of limit, features such as measure and beauty, and these are precisely the objects of the measured pleasures.

²⁷⁹ Carone (2000) also emphasizes the importance of the context of this passage, which occurs in the discussion of bodily pleasures and pains (262).

²⁸⁰ See Chapter 3, Section 4 for my argument that Socrates only attributes “imperceptible lacks” to the pure pleasures of smell, rather than pure pleasure in general. The fact that the pleasures of smell imply bodily lack, even if this bodily condition does not affect the soul, may explain why Socrates describes the pleasures of smell as “less divine” (ἡττον...θεῖον, 51e1).

²⁸¹ Sense perception is one of the things that distinguishes humans from gods in the Timaeus. It is the bombardment that the human soul undergoes at birth through perception which causes the distortion of the orbits of reason (42e-44c). Cf. Timaeus 33c, where Timaeus explains that the demiurge did not give the body of the cosmos eyes or ears, because there was nothing either visible or audible outside of it.

If gods can experience some pleasures, then this implies that the same life is choiceworthy for both gods and humans, and this is the life which contains both intelligence and pleasure as intrinsically good components. Thus, at the end of the dialogue Socrates asks Protarchus to judge whether pleasure or intelligence is “more closely related to the supreme good and more valuable among gods and humans” (τοῦ ἀρίστου συγγενέστερόν τε καὶ τιμώτερον ἐν ἄνθρωποις τέ ἐστι καὶ θεοῖς, 65b1-2), and he frequently refers to their search, not as an investigation of the human good in particular, but as either the good for all living beings (22b) or the unqualified good (61a).

Conclusion

The inclusion of some pleasures in the final ranking of the goods at the end of the Philebus represents a dramatic shift in Plato’s attitude towards certain pleasures, and so it is not surprising that many scholars misinterpret the force of this conclusion. Even in the Republic where the pleasures of reason are favorably compared to the pleasures of spirit and appetite, intellectual pleasures are judged to be more pleasant and real than other pleasures, but are nowhere judged to be better or praised as genuine goods. In the Philebus, not only are some pleasures unambiguously ranked among the highest goods, but Socrates gives no indication that these pleasures are good only in some qualified or extrinsic way. Instead, certain pleasures make their own positive contribution to the goodness of the best human life, making the mixed life more valuable and choiceworthy than the unmixed life of intelligence. This new estimation of the value of at least some pleasures is a direct result of the detailed examination of pleasures in the Philebus, which ultimately reveals that different sorts of pleasures have fundamentally different natures.
Conclusion

The analysis of different types of pleasure in the *Philebus* reveals that pleasure is essentially heterogeneous, rather than a single class of psychic phenomena which share the same nature. Throughout the dialogue Socrates draws many distinctions between different types of pleasure, which overlap in complicated ways and not all of which are exhaustive. If Socrates meant to examine the nature of pleasure by applying the divine method of division introduced early in the dialogue, one would expect him to reach a definite conclusion about how many species of pleasure there are and what distinguishes them.\textsuperscript{283} With the exception of the clear distinction between bodily and psychic pleasures (32b-c) and that between the pleasures which belong to the unlimited and mixed classes respectively (52c-d), Socrates draws a great number of distinctions that do not seem to correspond to generic divisions between different types of pleasure at all. For example, he argues at length that pleasures, like judgments, can be true or false (36c-40e), but there is no indication that true and false pleasures belong to distinct classes; on the contrary, the distinction seems to apply only to psychic pleasures which have the same intentional structure as judgment. Furthermore, the distinction between pure pleasures and those that are mixed with pain cuts across, and even blurs, the distinction between bodily and psychic pleasures, for there are psychic pleasures that are mixed with bodily pains and vice versa, as well as mixtures that are confined to either the body or the soul (46b-c, 47c-d).

The division of pleasure appears to be haphazard only if one assumes that Socrates succeeds in isolating a single thing, pleasure, which can be divided into a definite number of species. According to my interpretation, the examination of pleasure does produce a positive result, but instead of yielding a definite number of species of pleasure, it confirms Socrates’ initial observation that pleasure is ποικίλον, a motley assemblage of essentially different psychic phenomena. However, one might still wonder how many distinct classes of phenomena this

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\textsuperscript{283} Socrates clearly states this purpose when Philebus asks about the relevance of the divine method: “This is the very point in question to which our preceding discussion obliges us to give an answer: to show how each of them [pleasure and intelligence] is one and many, and how instead of becoming unlimited straightaway, each one of them acquires some definite number (τινά...ἀριθμὸν) before it becomes unlimited” (19a).

In reference to the beginning of the analysis of pleasure, Guthrie (1978) writes, “I avoid the heading ‘classification of pleasure’, though that may be said to start here, because Plato is very casual about his classifications” (216). Given its divine provenance (16c), it should come as a surprise that Plato is “very casual” when applying this method to pleasure. According to my interpretation, the division of pleasure does succeed, but only in showing that pleasure was not a unified class to start with.
motley assemblage contains. Plato does not answer this question directly in the text, but I would like to suggest that the diverse phenomena that Socrates examines under the general heading of “pleasure” fall into three groups: 1) bodily pleasures, 2) psychic pleasures, which can be true or false and which include fear, hope, and those psychic pleasures that are mixed with pain, such as malice, anger, grief and love, and 3) the pure and true pleasures which belong to the mixed class in the fourfold division and are closely associated with knowledge. If this is correct, then it may provide some evidence that the tripartite psychology that is so prominent in the Timaeus lurks behind the analysis of different types of pleasure in the Philebus.

According to the account of the soul in the Timaeus, bodily pleasures and pains belong to the appetitive part (77b), and psychic affections such as fear, anger and hope, which correspond to the second group of pleasures outlined above, belong to the spirited part (69c-70b). Furthermore, Timaeus claims that sight and hearing have the beneficial function of stabilizing the motions of the rational part of the soul, and he refers specifically to the ability to see the perfect orbits of the heavenly bodies and to listen to harmonious melodies (47a-e). Although he does not explicitly describe these perceptions as pleasant, the description of these particular sights and sounds closely resembles the description of the pure pleasures of sight and hearing in the Philebus, suggesting that these too belong to the rational part of the soul.

If the analysis of pleasure in the Philebus is meant to show that pleasure lacks generic unity, and if this analysis is correct, what explains the common assumption that pleasure refers to a unified class of psychic phenomena? Why do we make this mistake about pleasure? One possible explanation of this mistake is that the diverse phenomena we group under the heading “pleasure” all stand in a similar relationship to motivation. At the end of the Philebus Socrates criticizes Philebus for basing his assumptions about the nature and value of pleasure on the testimony of the animal passions (τῶν θηρίων ἔρωτας) instead of the love of arguments and the philosophical muse (67b1-7). Ultimately, Plato may agree with Philebus that all subjects, including fools,  

284 The members of both the second and third group belong to the soul alone, but so do many other forms of cognition, such as judgment, memory and desire. The classification of the pure and true pleasures in the mixed class clearly sets them apart from other psychic pleasures. See Chapter 2, Section 2 and Chapter 4, Section 4 for more on the distinctive features of the pure and true pleasures.

285 Given the many parallels between the Philebus and the Timaeus, the absence of any reference to the tripartition of the soul in the Philebus is a puzzling. See my discussion of the chronological and thematic connections between these two dialogues in the introduction.

286 See Chapter 2, Section 2 for my detailed discussion of bodily pleasure and pain in the Timaeus.
animals and wise people, pursue pleasure, and yet still deny that “pleasure” refers to a single thing in all of these cases. As the Visitor from Elea warned Theaetetus in the *Sophist* “If you’re going to be safe, you have to be especially careful about similarities, since the type we’re talking about is very slippery” (231a).
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