

## VARIETIES OF PLEASURE IN PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

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### 1. Preface

IT is well known that Plato and Aristotle disagree about the nature of pleasure: Plato associates it especially with a process of restoration out of deprivation, whereas Aristotle distinguishes it from any process as a property or activity of a kind. Yet Aristotle draws on Plato when he offers a characterization of pleasure in *Rhetoric* 1. 11. And it is a tempting suggestion that they might better have disjoined their different accounts, thereby recognizing that pleasures are not of a single kind. Thus Myles Burnyeat has remarked that we need Plato to do justice to the pleasures of *discovery*, Aristotle to do justice to those of *contemplation*; and Dorothea Frede has regretted that a new focus (perhaps natural in the *Ethics*) upon pleasures ‘active’ rather than ‘passive’, identical to or supervening upon activities rather than experiences, neglects the pleasures (and pains) of the emotions.<sup>1</sup> She suggested that, pressed upon the latter, Aristotle would have reason to find a place for the Platonic view entertained in the *Rhetoric*.<sup>2</sup>

I wish rather to argue that both philosophers accommodate a variety of pleasures, but Aristotle more successfully. For I take his account, though flawed, to be at once more inclusive and more unified than Plato’s.

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<sup>1</sup> Both in conversation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. her *Platon: Philebos. Übersetzung und Kommentar [Philebos]* (Göttingen, 1997), 426–7; ‘*Nicomachean Ethics* VII. 11–12: Pleasure’ [‘Pleasure’], in C. Natali (ed.), *Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics Book VII*, *Symposium Aristotelicum* (Oxford, 2009), 183–207 at 204.

2. Plato's *Philebus*

In the *Philebus* Socrates distinguishes two opposite movements or processes: there is a disruption of the harmony of living creatures, which gives rise to pain, and a restoration of the harmony, which gives rise to pleasure (31 D 4–10). Hunger involves ‘disintegration and pain’, whereas eating is a ‘refilling’ and pleasure (31 E 6–8).<sup>3</sup> What occurs ‘in either of these two kinds of processes’ affects the ‘living organism’, presumably body and soul, and constitutes ‘one kind of pleasure and pain’ (32 B 1–7). By contrast, some affections of the body may fail to rise to consciousness (33 D 2–34 A 5). It is later remarked that the processes must be ‘great’, and neither ‘moderate’ nor ‘small’, if they are to cause pleasure or pain (43 C 4–6). Socrates presents this as *one* kind of pleasure and pain, and quickly proposes another variety of each: ‘But now accept also the expectation by the soul itself of these two kinds of experiences: the hope of pleasant things will be pleasant and comforting, while that of painful ones will be frightening and painful’ (32 B 9–C 2).<sup>4</sup> He approves when Protarchus responds, ‘This turns out then to be a different kind of pleasure and pain, namely the expectation that the soul experiences by itself, without the body’ (32 C 3–5).

Thus far we have two related kinds of pleasure: there are (a) pleasures of the organism as a whole, which are physical processes of which the soul is aware, and (b) pleasures of the soul, which are anticipations of (a). It is not said that (b) are themselves replenishments. Socrates observes that such expectations rest upon memory, which grounds pleasures belonging to the soul itself (33 C 5–6). Memory is the ‘preservation of perception’ (34 A 10), perception being a motion whereby ‘the soul and body are jointly affected and moved by one and the same affection’ (A 3–5). It thus turns out that thirst is a complex reality with multiple aspects (and it is implicit that the same could be said of hunger). It is first described, as hunger was, as a physical phenomenon: ‘Thirst is, once again, a destruction and pain, while the process that fills what is dried out with liquid

<sup>3</sup> Here, and elsewhere, I draw on Frede’s translation, *Plato: Philebus* [*Philebus*] (Indianapolis, 1993), occasionally slightly modified.

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle will generally distinguish ‘hope’ or ‘anticipation’ (ἐλπίς) from ‘expectation’ (προσδοκία, in Plato also προσδόκημα) as a kind of belief, locating them—I believe (see A. W. Price, *Virtue and Reason in Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford, 2011), 113–22)—in different strata of the soul. However, there is no such contrast in Plato.

is pleasure' (31 E 10–32 A 1). Yet that description is later amplified by a psychology: thirst is also a desire for drink, or more precisely a filling by drink (34 E 13–35 A 2), and this desire rests upon a memory of filling what then was empty. Such a memory puts a creature in mind of the opposite physical state to that to which it is now subject. Thus desire is a state of the soul, and not of the body (35 A 3–D 3).

Physical pleasures contrast with physical pains: there is a pleasure that arises with a filling which tends towards preserving the animal, and a pain that arises with an emptying which tends towards destroying it (E 2–5). Yet a creature in pain can 'remember the pleasant things that would put an end to the pain', though he is not yet 'being filled' (E 9–10). Protarchus takes a negative view of this state: 'He seems to me to be suffering a twofold pain: one consists in the body's condition, the other in the soul's desire caused by the expectation' (36 A 4–6). Socrates can agree only when the subject 'is without hope of attaining replenishment when he is being emptied' (B 11–12). When he has that hope he can enjoy the memory, and no doubt the prospect, of replenishment (as becomes explicit later at 39 C 10–12); he is then 'simultaneously undergoing pain and pleasure' (36 B 4–C 1).<sup>5</sup>

On the face of it, this account distinguishes two different kinds of pleasure, one physical, or more precisely psycho-physical (involving the perception of a physical process), one mental.<sup>6</sup> What connects them is that the mental pleasure is an anticipation of the physical one. So read, the analysis instances what Aristotle was to identify (in G. E. L. Owen's now familiar terminology) as 'focal' connection: mental pleasure depends, at once psychologically and semantically, upon physical pleasure; though not itself

<sup>5</sup> This account of hunger and thirst is interesting, and not truistic. Michael Thompson has objected (during a lecture in London) that hunger and thirst, being (as Aquinas conceived them) 'natural appetites', are instinctively directed towards food and drink, respectively. Unlike 'sensitive appetites', they depend in no way upon cognition (*ST* Ia, q. 59, a. 1). It may only be their frustration that is experienced as painful. (He compared the experience of sexual desire.)

<sup>6</sup> That this second kind of pleasure is not a species of replenishment is accepted by J. C. B. Gosling and C. C. W. Taylor, *The Greeks on Pleasure [Pleasure]* (Oxford, 1982), 136, and S. Delcomminette, *Le Philèbe de Platon: introduction à l'agathologie platonicienne [Philèbe]* (Leiden and Boston, 2006), 303–5. A different view is taken by G. Van Riel, 'Aristotle's Definition of Pleasure: A Refutation of the Platonic Account' ['Definition'], *Ancient Philosophy*, 20 (2000), 119–38 at 126. I concede that, when Protarchus introduces anticipation as 'a different kind of pleasure' (32 C 3–4), he might mean that anticipation is a pleasure of mental rather than of physical restoration.

a replenishment, it arises from the prospect of replenishment. A little later, Socrates looks back to the temporal aspect of this: 'Did we not say before, about the pleasures and pains that belong to the soul alone, that they might precede those that go through the body? It would therefore be possible that we have anticipatory pleasures and pains about the future' (39 D 1–5). Yet the temporal priority is just one aspect of a conceptual relation that links one kind of pleasure to the prospect of another.

Now one might think that Plato had an alternative, and a more unified one. He might suppose that a desire to drink when one is thirsty, grounded upon a memory of past drinking when thirsty and reinforced by an anticipation of future drinking, is itself a mental state at once of emptiness and of incipient replenishment: desiring what one does not yet have might be conceived of as a conscious lack that is relieved by an imaginative replenishing. Then the pleasure of anticipation would turn out to be already a replenishing of a kind, not purely *in* the mind (in the idiomatic use of that English phrase that signifies unreality), but actually *within* the mind, with the mind already being replenished though the body has to wait. Thus all pleasure would be a replenishment.<sup>7</sup>

Would this be a better solution, or a piece of verbal trickery? There are indeed ways of filling it out. Verity Harte has proposed that we view an anticipatory pleasure not as 'a pleasure *in* the anticipated pleasure', but as 'an advance instalment' of the anticipated pleasure.<sup>8</sup> Yet if this phrase were fully apt, it would surely imply that the anticipatory pleasure is *of a kind with* the pleasure that is anticipated. A payment made in advance is just like a later payment, except in its timing. If the anticipated pleasure is one of a specific type of restoration, the anticipatory pleasure should be restorative in that way also, if only (so to speak) in germ. Yet how can this be?

<sup>7</sup> This must be Frede's view when she writes, 'Plato's definition of pleasure as a perceived filling or restoration is designed to cover all kinds of pleasure' ('Disintegration and Restoration: Pleasure and Pain in Plato's *Philebus*' ['Disintegration'], in R. Kraut (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato* (Cambridge, 1992), 425–63 at 444). And she then asks, 'Is it plausible to assume that the soul can "fill itself" with pleasant *logoi* or pictures?', replying "There is no reason to reject such "fillings"" (445).

It does not tell clearly against this when we read, as I quoted, that the animal which 'remembers the pleasant things that would put an end to his pain' is 'not yet being filled' (35 E 9–10). Indeed, the organism (cf. *ἐμψυχον . . . εἶδος*, 32 B 1) is not yet replenished, whence the continuing pain, even if his mind is experiencing a replenishing of a kind.

<sup>8</sup> 'The *Philebus* on Pleasure: The Good, the Bad, and the False' [*Philebus* on Pleasure'], *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 104 (2004), 111–28 at 126.

For no psycho-physical restoration has yet begun. If, instead, we think of the future pleasure as simply a matter of subjective experience, then imagination should be able to anticipate it. But that was not Plato's account. It would seem that Harte's talk of an 'advance instalment' would better fit a quite different context.

As I understand Sylvain Delcomminette, he has a related conception that avoids this objection (*Le Philèbe de Platon*, 386–7). The subject *experiences* the future pleasure *in advance*; he lives it *at a distance*, and *in his imagination*. There is, and can be, no anticipatory pleasure that is of the same kind as the pleasure anticipated. Yet the subject enters imaginatively into the experiential aspect of the psycho-physical replenishment that he expects. He can bring forward the expected *experience* even if he cannot bring forward the *reality*. And this constitutes what might be viewed as a purely mental replenishment that is derivative from, but not of a kind with, the psycho-physical replenishment that it anticipates.

It may be that this is always what Harte intended, and that her talk of an 'advance instalment' was misleading. Could she really, like Delcomminette, be conceiving of such pleasure as the imaginative anticipation of a future experience? However, this would conflict with a claim of hers that is both explicit and well grounded in Plato's text. For she also says, 'I agree with those commentators who take Socrates to portray the pleasures he takes to be capable of falsity as propositional attitudes.'<sup>9</sup> And it is indeed *this* that Socrates turns out to envisage:

There are statements in each of us that we call hopes. . . . But there are also those painted images. And someone often sees himself acquiring unlimited gold, and many pleasures in consequence; and he also sees himself within the picture, enjoying himself hugely. (40 A 6–12)

This describes *being pleased that* (as one supposes, truly or falsely) one is about to enjoy oneself. Yet that is to be distinguished from *enjoying oneself in one's imagination*. It suits the former that I should picture *myself doing* something (which is what Socrates describes); integral to the latter is picturing *doing* something. As Richard Wollheim distinguished, picturing doing a thing exemplifies

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 120. Thus pleasures and pains can, literally, be true or false, just as the judgements and pictures can (39 C 4–5). As Frede infers (*Philebos*, 249–54), their contents are propositional, and their objects are states of affairs, actual or fictitious; a false pleasure is one *concerning* a state of affairs whose actuality one erroneously accepts or expects.

*central* imagining, within which one assumes the point of view of a subject, whereas picturing oneself doing a thing exemplifies *acentral* imagining, within which one imagines a scene from no point of view that is occupied within it.<sup>10</sup> What might aptly be called a *pre-experiencing* of an anticipated pleasure would share a point of view with that pleasure: imagining enjoying myself in some way, I already enjoy myself in that way within my imagination.<sup>11</sup> Yet what Socrates describes is *seeing oneself* represented within a picture—an imagining that, in Wollheim's terms, is not central but acentral.<sup>12</sup>

Thus it appears that Plato's conception of an anticipatory pleasure is not actually one that brings forward the pleasure anticipated either psycho-physically or experientially. So we should count it neither as a full pleasure of replenishment nor as its equivalent within the mind.<sup>13</sup> Rather, we should accept that these pages of the *Philebus* in effect distinguish *two* varieties of pleasure, the one primary, the other derivative, of which only the first is a pleasure of restoration. Given that the one variety depends upon the other, this conception of pleasure is so far unified to a degree. It is later re-

<sup>10</sup> *The Thread of Life* (Cambridge, 1984), 72–6.

<sup>11</sup> Frede has the felicitous term 'vorausleben' (*Philebos*, 235).

<sup>12</sup> Joachim Aufderheide raises a nice objection: since the man is imagining *himself* acquiring gold (and the rest), which is self-reflexive, this is a case of central, not acentral, imagining. There is indeed no contrast between imagining doing something oneself and imagining doing it. However, Socrates tells us, more precisely, that he 'sees himself within the picture', and not that he imagines the scene as it would present itself to his view (with his own person scarcely visible) if he stepped into it.

Plato did not lack the resources to think this out. Desire presupposes memory, which he calls 'the preservation of perception' (34 A 10); and recollection occurs when the mind of itself 'recovers as far as possible what it once underwent' (B 6–8, trans. Gosling). This describes the revival of a previous experience that shares with it a first-person point of view. However, it is intelligible that when he later comes to identify false pleasures, he shifts to a propositional conception. This was very likely without an appreciation of all that is at issue. What the interpreter of the text has to recognize is that what we are explicitly told about anticipatory pleasures is not in fact compatible with what Delcomminette describes. (Of course, this raises questions within the philosophy of interpretation.)

<sup>13</sup> Might it still be argued, without inviting any confusion, that anticipatory pleasure *is* a kind of filling—though with *logoi* and pictures, not with physical realities? So Frede, 'Disintegration', 445. Plato could easily have stated that if he had wished. In the absence of any statement, I am deterred by reflections such as the following. Suppose that I have an intellectual need to philosophize (which Plato can view as a process leading to knowledge, cf. 51 E 7–52 B 8): I can then be pleased that I shall be able to philosophize tomorrow—but that does nothing yet, inside or outside the mind, to fulfil my need. I may indeed already enjoy contemplating the *logoi* and pictures, but that is rather Aristotelian activity than Platonic process.

iterated that anticipatory pleasures arising from physical depletion involve a mixture of pleasure and pain:

When there is pain over and against pleasures, or pleasure against pain, both are finally joined in a mixed state . . . It is the deprivation that gives rise to the desire for replenishment, and while the anticipation is pleasant, the deprivation itself is painful. (47 c 4–7)

We can grant (and I take Socrates to intend us to suppose) that the pleasure has a function, even if it is not that of a *remedy*: it can serve to provide *relief* (though this must not be so effective as to make replenishment superfluous).

This pattern is then further extended into an account of mixed pains and pleasures *within the soul itself* (47 d 5–50 d 6). This is illustrated by a quotation from Homer (*Il.* 18. 108–9) about the pleasure, sweeter than honey, that accompanies anger.<sup>14</sup> This gives rise to a discussion of the emotions that is of a piece with the earlier treatment of anticipatory pleasures, but no longer of a piece with Plato's starting point, which was the pleasures of replenishment. Again, it is possible to suggest that Socrates is viewing painful emotions as 'deprivations of some sort or other'<sup>15</sup> of which associated pleasures are already a kind of replenishment. Yet I would rather suppose that he is extending his conception of pleasure step by step: he starts with pains of deprivation and pleasures of replenishment; he continues with pains of deprivation that are accompanied by pleasures both reminiscent and anticipatory of replenishment; and he comes eventually to a mixture of pleasures and pains within the soul itself that no longer relate to deprivation and replenishment, but where each pleasure owes its being to an accompanying pain that it serves to relieve.<sup>16</sup> If this is right, what remains constant throughout his train of thought so far is that pleasure presupposes pain, and arises in contrast to it.

Such a conception is not truistic, for it may not even be true. Can there not be pleasures that are not parasitic upon pains? Socrates not only concedes this, but allows Protarchus to count these alone as 'true' pleasures (51 b 1–2). He specifies them as follows:

<sup>14</sup> Aristotle will make explicit (*Rhet.* 2. 2, 1378<sup>b</sup>1–10, to be discussed in sect. 3) that the pleasure arises from the expectation of revenge (cf. *Phileb.* 49 b 8–9).

<sup>15</sup> Frede, 'Disintegration', 450.

<sup>16</sup> That pleasure retains this function in relation to pain seems implicit at 50 a 5–b 4. Again, we do not have to interpret the pain as a deprivation to make sense of this.

[Those that] are related to so-called fine colours and to shapes and to most smells and sounds and in general all those that are based on imperceptible and painless lacks, while their fillings are perceptible and pleasant. (B 3–6)

Frede comments, ‘The condition of a *painless lack* for true pleasures confirms that all pleasures, even the best ones, are “fillings” of some sort’ (*Philebus*, 60 n. 2). Which is possible in some sort of sense. However, Socrates does not himself make the inference that what was true of the pleasures of physical replenishment, and may *also* be true of certain perceptual pleasures (as well as those of learning and relearning, 51 E 7–52 B 8), is true of *all* pleasures, including those of anticipation. Later talk of pleasure as a ‘generation’ (or ‘process’, *genesis*, 53 C 4–5; 54 C 6, D 1) may not extend such a conception indiscriminately, but rather embrace a substantive degree of variety. Pleasure is distinct from the good since it comes to be for the sake of something else (54 C 6–7). This applies to all the kinds of pleasure so far distinguished: anticipation of replenishment points ahead to an end to be achieved no less than replenishment itself; so do the pleasures that are thrown up by the contrasting pains that they serve to relieve; so, we may now add, do unmixed pleasures that are replenishments of unfelt deficiencies. All pleasures turn out to be phenomena of transition—and it is *this* that Socrates is concerned to establish, in order to infer that pleasure belongs ‘in a class different from that of the good’ (54 D 1–2).

For all its looseness, the account remains in a way restrictive. Comparing the *Philebus* with the less consistent *Republic*, Frede remarks, ‘Being true to his definition of pleasure as the filling of a lack, Plato can no longer accept any other pleasures of the mind, such as pleasures of “contemplating reality”’ (‘Disintegration’, 453). Which is well observed, even if we take not all pleasures to be of that kind.<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, who will wish to maintain that such con-

<sup>17</sup> Two recent attempts to accommodate the pleasures of contemplation within a conception of pleasure as a *kinēsis* are interesting, but appear to fail:

(a) Delcomminette (*Philèbe*, 477–9) compares the activity of rehearsing (*μελετᾶν*) that is said to be necessary in the *Symposium* if the departure to which any item of knowledge is subject is to be repaired by the creation of a ‘new’ item that ‘appears to be the same’ (207 E 5–208 A 7). He writes of a ‘permanent apprenticeship’ and ‘constant regeneration’ (478), which would be a kind of *kinēsis*. Yet one may ask about the rapidity of the forgetting. It cannot be so quick that every rehearsing of an item of knowledge, however frequent, is requisite for its regeneration; for then only perpetual rehearsal could replace each item of knowledge before it irreparably disappears. Take a recurrent item that is al-



templation has 'its own pleasure (and this increases the activity)' (*NE* 10. 7, 1177<sup>b</sup>20–1), has reason to attempt a different account.

### 3. Aristotle's *Rhetoric*

And yet *Rhetoric* 1. 11 opens with what is ostensibly a definition of pleasure, and one that apparently derives from the initial characterization of pleasure in the *Philebus*:

We may lay it down that pleasure is a movement [*kinēsis*], a settling-down by which the soul as a whole [*or suddenly?*] is perceptibly brought into its natural state of being; and that pain is the opposite. (1369<sup>b</sup>33–5, after the Oxford Translation)

There has been much discussion of why Aristotle should draw on Plato in this way.<sup>18</sup> It is not satisfactory to suppose that this represents an earlier stage of his development than either of the *Ethics*.<sup>19</sup> For the text shows evidence of later revision, and (more clearly) the early *Topics* already rejects any view that pleasure is a kind of movement (4. 1, 121<sup>a</sup>30–9). More likely is a suggestion that the present account is 'a commonly accepted view sufficiently close to the truth to meet the orator's needs'.<sup>20</sup> If, however, we find the

ways rehearsed more than is necessary. Of each rehearsal we can only say that it *contributes* to the restorative work. In this respect, perhaps, it is a *kinēsis*; only in this respect, therefore, can it be enjoyed. Which seems too restrictive. Nor is there any prior plausibility in the supposition that pleasure in contemplation must reduce to this.

- (b) J. Warren, 'Plato on the Pleasures and Pains of Knowing', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 39 (2010), 1–32 at 29–30, compares Aristotle's distinction between first and second actualities of knowing, and counts 'the bringing to mind of knowledge that has become somehow latent' as a *kinēsis*. However, what Aristotle counts not as a full alteration (such as acquiring knowledge), but as an alteration of a kind, is 'coming to contemplate' (*theōroun ginetai*), and not contemplating itself (*DA* 2. 5, 417<sup>a</sup>31–<sup>b</sup>7). Compare the distinction in the *Nicomachean Ethics* between becoming pleased quickly, which is possible, and being pleased quickly, which is not (10. 2, 1173<sup>a</sup>34–<sup>b</sup>1).

<sup>18</sup> See C. Rapp, *Aristoteles: Rhetorik. Übersetzung und Kommentar [Rhetorik]*, 2 vols (Berlin, 2002), ii. 461–5.

<sup>19</sup> See *ibid.* 461–2.

<sup>20</sup> Gosling and Taylor, *Pleasure*, 198. Note that, on this suggestion, the view presented has to be *close enough* to the truth to serve the orator; if it were simply off target, it would not serve him. Gosling and Taylor compare characterizations of *eudaimonia* (*Rhet.* 1. 5, 1360<sup>b</sup>14–17) and of virtue (*aretē*, 1. 9, 1366<sup>a</sup>36–<sup>b</sup>1), finding them 'adequate for persuasive purposes' though not 'theoretically'. For an exhaustive treatment of those see Rapp, *Rhetorik*, ii. 325–35, 395–42.

characterization of pleasure more Platonic than popular, we can have recourse to a refinement offered by Christof Rapp (*Rhetorik*, ii. 463): the Platonic view can serve as a ‘Hintergrundstheorie’ (background theory) for popular conceptions of pleasure. This proposal fits what immediately follows, which is an easy transition into commonplaces: what is habitual is pleasant, for habit resembles nature (1370<sup>a</sup>5–9); so is what is unforced, for force is unnatural (1370<sup>a</sup>9–11); so are relaxation, amusement, and rest, being free of necessity (1370<sup>a</sup>14–16).

All that I venture to add is a suggestion arising from my understanding of the *Philebus* as offering a developing characterization of pleasure that branches and spreads, rather than a single identification of it with a process of restoration. For Aristotle then quickly moves to desire: ‘Everything, too, is pleasant for which we have the appetite within us, since appetite is desire for pleasure’ (1370<sup>a</sup>16–18). He distinguishes different kinds of appetite, natural or rational. He first focuses on natural bodily desires for nourishment and kinds of nourishment, which are precisely the ones privileged in the *Philebus* as anticipations of physical replenishment. This, I have argued, already transcends the account of pleasure as replenishment.<sup>21</sup> He then generalizes to the pleasures of sense, including hearing and seeing (1370<sup>a</sup>24–5). Rational desires arise from receiving information and being persuaded (1370<sup>a</sup>25–7). He thus takes Plato’s concession that pleasures can derive from replenishment without being pleasures of replenishment as a general permission to extend the realm of pleasures indefinitely in the light of experience. Consequently, the *Rhetoric* maintains no unifying conception of them beyond a family resemblance whereby new types of pleasure relate, closely or loosely, to old ones.

Thus, I suggest, the *Philebus* may have appealed to Aristotle by its willingness to go beyond its initial conception of pleasure. Another, and evident, source of appeal is its description of the mixed pleasures and pains that go to make up human emotions (1370<sup>c</sup>3–50<sup>d</sup>6).<sup>22</sup> Here we need to distinguish different structures. What Rapp

<sup>21</sup> Yet Aristotle is capable on occasion of telescoping the two kinds of pleasure, as here (*NE* 3. 11, 1118<sup>b</sup>18–19): ‘Natural appetite is the replenishment of a lack’ (which implies that it is, as such, enjoyable).

<sup>22</sup> This is a central theme of Frede, ‘Mixed Feelings in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*’, in A. O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle’s Rhetoric* (Berkeley, 1996), 258–85. Yet it should be noted that an association of the emotions with pleasure and pain, present in the *Rhetoric* (2. 1, 1378<sup>a</sup>19–21), is equally present in the *Ethics* (*EE* 2. 2, 1220<sup>b</sup>12–

calls ‘Gegen-Emotionen’ (counter-emotions, *Rhetorik*, ii. 465) arise in three different kinds of context:

- (i) One emotion may be the converse of another, and arise in converse circumstances: enmity so relates to friendship (2. 4), confidence to fear (2. 5, 1383<sup>a</sup>14–25), and calmness can so relate to anger (2. 3, 1380<sup>a</sup>9–14).
- (ii) One emotion may arise as the pacification of another. Calmness can so relate to anger (e.g. 2. 3, 1380<sup>a</sup>14–19): it can function, in language reminiscent of the *Philebus*, as ‘a settling-down [κατάστασις, cf. *Phileb.* 42 D 6; 46 C 6] and quieting of anger’ (1380<sup>a</sup>8–9).
- (iii) Two emotions may coexist, one painful, one pleasant, one of them intensifying the other. Anger so relates to pleasure at the thought of revenge (2. 2, 1378<sup>a</sup>30–<sup>b</sup>10).

(i) does not concern us. (ii) is analogous to what count as primary pleasures in the *Philebus*: after anger may follow a restoration of calm (though this is not its goal). (iii) may detain us briefly. Salient here is the following passage (from *Rhetoric* 2. 2):

[1378<sup>a</sup>30–2] Let anger [ὄργη] be a desire with pain for an apparent [φαινομένη] revenge because of an apparent slight by people for whom it was not fitting to slight oneself or someone close to one . . . [<sup>b</sup>1–4] Every occurrence of anger must be accompanied by a certain pleasure, that which arises from the anticipation [ἐλπίς] of taking revenge. For it is pleasant to expect to achieve what one aims at, and no one aims at things that appear impossible for him . . . [<sup>b</sup>4–9] So it has well been said of anger [θυμός], ‘It is much sweeter than dripping honey, and spreads through the breasts of men.’ For a certain pleasure attends it, both because of this, and because men dwell upon taking revenge in thought. [<sup>b</sup>9–10] So the imagining that then arises causes pleasure, as it does in dreams.

Strikingly, the *Philebus* cited the same lines of Homer (*Il.* 18. 108–9) to illustrate that the emotions of ‘anger, fear, longing, lamentations, love, jealousy, malice’, though ‘a kind of pain’, are yet ‘full of marvellous pleasures’ (47 E 1–5). How are these to be understood?

Such pleasures resemble the anticipatory pleasures introduced earlier in the *Philebus*. The primary pleasures from which they derive are no longer such as to satisfy a physical lack (as with the

14; *NE* 2. 5, 1105<sup>b</sup>21–3), which have a different account of pleasure (already indicated at *NE* 2. 3, 1104<sup>b</sup>4–5).

satisfaction of hunger or thirst). However, they may be viewed as pleasures of replenishment in a figurative sense: the man who has been slighted has lost face, and needs to recover his social standing.<sup>23</sup> Might such anticipations of revenge themselves count as already a kind of psychic restoration? Hardly, I think. How can his entertaining the prospect of getting his own back, with the thought that it is realizable, *already* constitute even a partial restoration of his slighted honour? At best, it is *what* he looks forward to, viz. *taking revenge*, that will constitute a process of restoration, if it ever comes about. The anticipatory pleasure is a private rehearsal. It may indeed bring him some imaginative *relief*; but that needs to be distinguished.

I conclude that no more in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* than in Plato's *Philebus* is there any attempt to extend pleasures of replenishment to include anticipatory pleasures. If Aristotle is here happy to draw upon Plato, it may in part be because he takes Plato to license an account of pleasure that grants primacy to the first without taking it to subsume the second. If he hopes for a unitary account that would be more unifying than Plato's, he has yet to offer it. In search of this, we may now turn to the *Ethics*.

#### 4. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 7 and 10: the nature and ground of pleasure

If the interpretation of the treatments of pleasure in Plato's *Philebus* and Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is debatable, that of its treatments in Aristotle's *Ethics* is intractable. There is little agreement about the relation between the two discussions in *NE* 7 (= *EE* 6) and *NE* 10: they apparently diverge, and yet it is possible to interpret either in the light of the other. And there is no more agreement about how to read what is generally thought to be the more mature and nuanced account in *NE* 10: does it fit what we commonly count ourselves as enjoying, or does it restrict what we can really be enjoying by an extreme *Systemzwang*? I shall set out an optimistic reading that unifies the two treatments, and admits a wide range of pleasures (without,

<sup>23</sup> There are several ambiguities in the present use of *φαινόμενος* (1378<sup>a</sup>30–1). One connotation may be that the slight was apparent *to others*, and can only be put right by a retaliation equally conspicuous. Cf. *Rhet.* 1. 7, 1365<sup>b</sup>1–2: 'We may define what aims at appearance as what a man will not choose if nobody is to know of his having it.'

I shall have finally to complain, doing justice to their conceptual variety).

A famous formula in *NE* 7 runs as follows:

It is not right to say that pleasure is a perceptible process [*genesis*]: it should rather be called an activity [*energeia*] of the natural state, and instead of 'perceptible' 'unimpeded'. (7. 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>13–15)<sup>24</sup>

Equally celebrated are some lines in book 10:

Pleasure does not perfect it [sc. the activity, *energeia*] in the same way as the object perceived and the faculty of perception do, if they are good . . . Pleasure perfects the activity not as the inherent state does but as an end which supervenes—as the bloom of youth does on those in the flower of their age. (10. 4, 1174<sup>b</sup>23–33)

The passages are apparently contrasted, book 7 identifying pleasure with activity of a kind, book 10 with something that supervenes upon activity. However, the appearance can be questioned, either by playing down the contrast or by doubting whether book 7 is defining pleasure at all. It is only in book 10 that Aristotle formulates the question 'what, or what sort of thing' pleasure is (10. 4, 1174<sup>a</sup>13). The purpose of book 7 is to address various anti-hedonist arguments; its approach is rather controversial than conceptual. Even if it is unconcerned to define how *pleasure* (singular) relates to *pleasures* (plural), it does not identify these (as is clear from 7. 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>6–7, 22–3, which anticipate 10. 5, 1175<sup>b</sup>34–6); the sentence that I quoted (7. 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>13–15) characterizes activities that succeed in being pleasures. Just how book 7's 'unimpeded' (*ἀνεμπόδιστος*) relates to book 10's 'perfect' (or 'complete', *τέλειος*) is uncertain. Yet making an activity 'precise and more enduring and better', which is what its proper pleasure does (10. 5, 1175<sup>b</sup>14–15), is presumably the opposite of impeding it, whereas proper pains and alien pleasures 'injure' and even 'destroy' activities (<sup>b</sup>15–17).<sup>25</sup> So the absence of impediments that makes an activity a pleasure in 7. 12 may involve not only the goodness of object and faculty, but also the absence of alien pleasures. Perfection comes in degrees;<sup>26</sup> and perfection of a kind, achieved to a sufficient degree, may be a condition

<sup>24</sup> In quoting from the *Ethics*, I draw upon J. Barnes and A. Kenny (eds.), *Aristotle's Ethics: Writings from the Complete Works* (Princeton, 2014).

<sup>25</sup> Thus pain is both bad absolutely (*haplōs*), i.e. invariably, and as an impediment (7. 13, 1153<sup>b</sup>2–3), sc. of activity.

<sup>26</sup> 1. 7, 1097<sup>a</sup>30–4; 10. 4, 1174<sup>b</sup>19–23.

of pleasure, which constitutes a further perfection.<sup>27</sup> Equally, impediments may give rise to pain, which is itself a further impediment. So read, book 10 clarifies book 7, and does not controvert it.<sup>28</sup>

It becomes an issue how best to pin down the pleasure that perfects, or further perfects, activity. It is at least clear that we should not think of it as a distinct phenomenological factor that might, conceivably, be absent though the activity is good of its kind, or present though it is bad of its kind. That would make the relation between the experience of pleasure and its objective preconditions (notably, the good state of organ and object) a contingent one. Yet Aristotle declares that the second guarantees the first: 'There will always be pleasure' (10. 4, 1174<sup>b</sup>30). Talk of a 'bloom of youth' (*hōra*) that attaches to 'those in the flower of their age' (*hoi akmaioi*, <sup>b</sup>33) suggests the addition to activity of an experiential extra, but the phrases can be impugned: *hōra* and *akmē* are terms that can *both* indicate a peak of development (and in any non-erotic context that was identified rather with mature manhood than with adolescence).<sup>29</sup> If so, pleasure may be nothing but the perfection of the activity. This might still mark a difference or a development, with book 10 giving thought, as book 7 did not, to just how pleasure differs conceptually

<sup>27</sup> So V. Harte, 'The *Nicomachean Ethics* on Pleasure' ['Pleasure'], in R. Polansky (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge, 2014), 288–318 at 303.

<sup>28</sup> For a similar reading see M. Pakaluk, *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics: An Introduction* (Cambridge, 2005), 304–5. Note that book 10 never says that pleasure is itself an activity, though in its formal features it resembles activity rather than process. So D. Bostock, *Aristotle's Ethics [Ethics]* (Oxford, 2000), 154–5; *pace* J. Dudley, 'Évolution de la pensée aristotélicienne du plaisir', in R. Lefebvre and L. Villard (eds.), *Le Plaisir: réflexions antiques, approches modernes* (Mont-Saint-Aignan, 2006), 87–99 at 95, and C. Shields, 'The Metaphysics of Pleasure in *Nicomachean Ethics* 10', in J. Miller (ed.), *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics: A Critical Guide [NE]* (Cambridge, 2011), 191–210 at 209. Otherwise the baffling question would arise whether book 7's conception of unimpeded activity applies *both* to the activity upon which pleasure supervenes in book 10 *and* to the supervening pleasure.

<sup>29</sup> So P. Hadreas, 'Aristotle's Simile of Pleasure at *NE* 1174b33', *Ancient Philosophy*, 17 (1997), 371–4. However, he overlooks two notable pieces of evidence (both in Bonitz's index), 8. 4, 1157<sup>a</sup>8–10, and fr. 98 Rose ad fin. Both passages apply the term *hōra* to the beauty of boys. More questionable is counting boys as *akmaioi*: at *Rhet.* 2. 14, 1390<sup>a</sup>28, men in their prime (*hoi akmazontes*) are placed between the young and the old, and their physical prime is ascribed to their early 30s (<sup>b</sup>9–10). However, we meet the conjunction 'young and *akmazōn*' at *NE* 3. 11, 1118<sup>b</sup>11; and *Rhet.* 1. 5, 1361<sup>b</sup>7–11, ascribes a more virile and yet visually erotic beauty to young men (which the Oxford Translation bowdlerizes), and especially all-round athletes. Ross's phrase 'the bloom of youth' is too restrictive if applied only to adolescents. Once we correct that, the words *tois akmaiois* may cease to be an obstacle to a visual reading of *hōra*. So far, the interpreter has options.

ally from a pleasure; but this will be rather a nuance than a divergence.<sup>30</sup>

Yet does this yield too fine a distinction between pleasure and activity? It is time to focus on another term within the debated sentence: 'Pleasure perfects the activity not as the inherent state [*hexis enuparchousa*] does but as a certain end that supervenes [*epiginomenon ti telos*]' (10. 4, 1174<sup>b</sup>32–3). Here the term 'supervene' has a non-technical sense that marks a contrast with the subjacent states of the subject and object of perceptual activity. A closely related sentence occurred long before (2. 3, 1104<sup>b</sup>3–5): 'We must take as an indication of states the pleasure or pain that supervenes on the deeds.' What supervenes is something that (as Gosling and Taylor put it, *Pleasure*, 211) *is added*. Thus, in the *Magna moralia*, virtues accompanied by reason 'supervene' upon natural virtues (1. 34, 1197<sup>b</sup>37–1198<sup>a</sup>3). This does not exclude even a formal cause from supervening: we read in the *Metaphysics* that circle supervenes on bronze, stone, and wood (*Z* 11, 1036<sup>a</sup>31–2), since it is a form that they *assume*. And yet it may be particularly pertinent to us that the *Historia animalium* has a comparable use of *epigignesthai* in description not of Aristotelian form, but of visual bloom: 'The bloom *epiginetai* to the shell on its surface' (5. 15, 548<sup>a</sup>13, though within a passage excised by Dittmeyer).

How, then, are we to understand the implication at 1174<sup>b</sup>33 that the *hōra supervenes* upon those in their prime? If this *hōra supervenes*, as Gosling and Taylor propose (*Pleasure*, 212), like 'the springtime of youth' upon 'those in their prime', it adds nothing to them: 'springtime' is just a verbal flourish, and 'being in their prime' is simply what 'those in their prime' *are*. It could indeed be said that a springtime is added to human beings as they reach their prime. Yet to say that it supervenes upon men in their prime would be as odd as to say (as *Metaphysics Z* does *not* say) that circle supervenes not only upon bronze, but upon bronze circle. Hence we cannot identify the *hōra* with the *akmē* of *hoi akmaioi*. Rather, it must be something extra that their *akmē* brings with it.

However, this does not exclude identifying pleasure with the perfection of activity that is constituted by its being good of its kind. (Call this initial perfection *perfection*<sub>1</sub>, in possible distinction from a further perfection, constituted by pleasure, that is *perfection*<sub>2</sub>.) For what exactly does pleasure supervene upon in

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Gosling and Taylor, *Pleasure*, 210–12; Bostock, *Ethics*, 154–8.

1174<sup>b</sup>31–3? If it supervenes upon the subjacent goodness of subject and object, it could itself be as intimately related to the perceptual activity to which they give rise as one could conceive: it could even be identical to the perfection<sub>1</sub> of that activity. Rather as a bloom emerges out of the youth and health of young men, the perfection<sub>1</sub> of the activity could emerge out of the standing qualities of its subject and object.<sup>31</sup> However, there is an alternative to be considered. Instead of being identical to its perfection<sub>1</sub>, the pleasure might stand to that in the relation which Aristotle expresses elsewhere by the term *idion* in the sense of *proprium* (cf. *Top.* 1. 5, 102<sup>a</sup>18–30). Christopher Shields explicates this notion lucidly: ‘The notion of a *proprium* . . . refers to the sort of property that is deeper than an accident but not yet essential . . .  $\phi$  is *idion* to an  $x$  (in the sense of a *proprium*) iff  $\phi$  is a non-trivially necessary but non-essential feature of an  $x$ .’<sup>32</sup> Might it be this concept that we should rather apply within the present context, identifying pleasure with a further perfection (perfection<sub>2</sub>) that supervenes upon an initial perfection (perfection<sub>1</sub>)?

I believe that one can support this suggestion by reflection upon the relation between pleasure and the noble (or ‘fine’, *kalon*). If the pleasure of a virtuous activity is identical to its perfection<sub>1</sub>, derivative from the virtue of the agent, its quality as pleasant must be identical to its quality as noble. However, it is a recurrent topos that there are three distinct objects of selection, the noble, the beneficial, and the pleasant (2. 3, 1104<sup>b</sup>31; cf. *EE* 7. 2, 1236<sup>a</sup>32). And Aristotle conjoins the pleasant and the noble without equating them: ‘Virtuous actions must be in themselves pleasant, but they are also good and noble’ (1. 8, 1099<sup>a</sup>21–2). For the virtuous agent, the noble and the pleasant are closely related, but how? We read, very typically, ‘The man who does not delight in noble actions is not even good: no one would call a man just who did not delight in acting justly’ (117–19). It is not explicit here whether he takes pleasure in his actions *so long as* they are noble or just, or takes pleasure *in* their nobility

<sup>31</sup> This is fully argued by M. S. Strohl, ‘Pleasure as Perfection: *Nicomachean Ethics* 10. 4–5’, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 41 (2011), 257–87 at 277–83. The same reading is permitted by a related passage, *DA* 3. 7, 431<sup>a</sup>10–11, which I discuss below in n. 55.

<sup>32</sup> ‘The Science of Soul in Aristotle’s *Ethics*’, in D. Henry and K. M. Nielsen (eds.), *Bridging the Gap between Aristotle’s Science and Ethics* (Cambridge, 2015), 232–53 at 247; cf. Shields (trans. and comm.), *Aristotle: De anima [DA]* (Oxford, 2016), 393.



or justice; yet the terms *philodikaios* (<sup>a</sup>111) and *philokalos* (<sup>a</sup>113) surely suggest the second. We are also told that the brave man endures and acts ‘for the sake of the noble’ (3. 7, 1115<sup>b</sup>23); so it is the noble in action that is ‘the end which courage sets before itself’, of which Aristotle says that it ‘would seem to be pleasant’ (3. 9, 1117<sup>b</sup>1), not that it is identical to pleasure. If what attracts a man as his goal is acting nobly, and he enjoys so acting in so far as he achieves that goal (<sup>b</sup>15–16), he surely enjoys the nobility that constitutes the perfection<sub>1</sub> of his action. Pleasure and desire are different, and the former is more intimately linked to activity than the latter (10. 5, 1175<sup>b</sup>30–3). Yet their objects must correlate: the man who desires *to act nobly as such* is also a man to take pleasure *in acting nobly as such*. If the pleasure that he takes in a virtuous action were identical to its perfection<sub>1</sub>, it could not be this *in which* he takes pleasure. Thus pleasure indeed constitutes an *extra* perfection (i.e. perfection<sub>2</sub>), though it is one that is sequential and not accidental.

Here, the debated analogy may help us if we are willing to draw more from it. We may take the *hōra* to attach to instances of youth and health that are *visible*. That a young man can be seen to be healthy is not *essential* to his health: it is not part of the essence of health to be perceptible. And yet someone who is altogether healthy, even in respect of his complexion, should look healthy. This is something added to health which ensues by nature. Looking healthy is at once distinct from being healthy without qualification and intimately related to it: in that respect, it is in the nature of such a man to *look* as he *is*.<sup>33</sup> Analogously, Aristotle must suppose, there is a close affinity between the initial perfection of an activity and the pleasure that constitutes its further perfection: ‘Each of the pleasures properly belongs to the activity that it perfects’ (*συμπεκείσθαι*, 10. 5, 1175<sup>a</sup>29–30), and ‘What increases a thing is proper to it’ (*οἰκείος*, <sup>a</sup>36).<sup>34</sup> This new perfection is experiential but not accidental; it enhances the activity, already conscious, of which it is an inseparable companion.

I have proposed that the relation between perfection<sub>1</sub> and

<sup>33</sup> Cf. J. Warren, ‘The Bloom of Youth’, *Apeiron*, 48 (2015), 327–45 at 344: ‘This “bloom” is the outward sign and perceptible manifestation of the young male’s being at the peak of his physical development.’

<sup>34</sup> It can still be asked why this extra should be a *goal* (*telos*, 1174<sup>b</sup>33). I doubt if much emphasis attaches to the term here. However, Aristotle goes on to say that pleasure becomes an extra goal (as is there the most likely sense of *kai*), just because it perfects life (1175<sup>a</sup>15–17).

perfection<sub>2</sub>, though not one of identity, is one of necessity.<sup>35</sup> Yet how do they relate to the subjacent excellences of the subject of a pleasure and its object? Aristotle's example in *NE* 10. 4 is of sense-perception (though he indicates an extension to thought and contemplation, 1174<sup>b</sup>21). Joachim Aufderheide proposes that the statement 'If both the thing perceived and the thing perceiving are of the best there will always be pleasure' (1174<sup>b</sup>29–30) should be read as holding only *ceteris paribus*.<sup>36</sup> For while an imperfection of organ or object is indeed an impediment, there are other impediments (think of a migraine). So it would be an easier claim that, whereas perfection<sub>1</sub> guarantees perfection<sub>2</sub>, the subjacent excellences of the organ and its object yield perfection<sub>1</sub> (and so also perfection<sub>2</sub>) only defeasibly. However, the word 'always' shows that Aristotle intends a stronger relation. So it seems better to suppose that the reference to the subject and object is now imprecise, and actually takes in an indefinite range of conditions that extends beyond what would intuitively count as qualities of organ or object.<sup>37</sup> A reluctant piece of perceiving can count as impeded if one has to *force* oneself to persevere; and a competing pleasure can have much the same effect as a proper pain (10. 5, 1175<sup>b</sup>16–17, 22–3).<sup>38</sup>

Thus the operation of a sense in good condition towards the best of its objects is naturally enjoyable—and *will* be enjoyed if there is no distraction or other impediment. Aristotle's own account of perception already does something to ground this. Sense-qualities, themselves 'pure and unmixed', can come together to achieve a concord (*συμφωνία*, *DA* 3. 2, 426<sup>b</sup>3–6); they are then brought into a proportion (*λόγος*). Voice, which is a special kind of sound, is already a

<sup>35</sup> I concede that, on my proposal, 1174<sup>b</sup>33 may neglect a fine point of dissimilarity: the relation between pleasure and the first perfection of the activity is *necessary*, whereas that between visible bloom and a young and healthy constitution is *natural* (but perhaps not invariable).

<sup>36</sup> 'Aristotle against Delos: Pleasure in *Nicomachean Ethics* 10' ['Delos'], *Phronesis*, 61 (2016), 284–306 at 300.

<sup>37</sup> The phrase *to aisthanomenon* (1174<sup>b</sup>30) appears to be equivalent here to *hē aisthēsis*, which signifies the sense (1174<sup>b</sup>28–9); however, it may be significant that it elsewhere refers not to the organ or sense but to the animal (*DA* 1. 5, 410<sup>b</sup>18–19), which is the true subject of the perceiving (1. 4, 408<sup>b</sup>13–15).

<sup>38</sup> It is a point of nuance whether we take distraction or reluctance to constitute an imperfection (i) only in the activity, or (ii) also, if only for a time, in the faculty itself. I have opted for (i), which is the more plausible. Strohl ('Pleasure', 261–2 n. 9) rests a preference for (ii) on a strict reading of the text. On the other hand, we might well take a context of poor illumination to constitute a temporary defect in an object of sight *taken as such*.

‘sort of concord’. Since ‘voice and hearing are in a way one, and a concord is a proportion’, it turns out that ‘hearing too will be a certain proportion’ (<sup>a</sup>27–30). Now ‘in general what is mixed, a concord, is pleasant rather than the high or the low’ (<sup>b</sup>5–6); hence the hearing of a voice is a pleasure.<sup>39</sup> On this account, there can be a structure common to perceptual activity and its object which helps to explain why some perceivings are more pleasant than others. This sheds light on what it is for an object of sense to be ‘best’ (*σπουδαιότατον*, *NE* 10. 4, 1174<sup>b</sup>22–3). A little earlier, we had ‘finest’ or ‘most beautiful’ (*κάλλιστον*, <sup>b</sup>15). That risked circularity unless we have a non-hedonic criterion of beauty. Aristotle’s talk of ‘concord’ and ‘proportion’ at least gestures towards such a criterion.<sup>40</sup>

Aristotle provides the material for an additional argument that is relatively indiscriminate in not distinguishing between better and worse *sensibilia*. In *NE* 1. 7 he excluded perception from the human good on the ground that it is not a distinctively human activity (1098<sup>a</sup>1–3). However, he has a further explanation of the pleasure that we take in perceiving which adduces our natural love of knowledge: ‘All men by nature desire to know. An indication of this is the delight we take in our senses . . . and above all the sense of sight . . . The reason is that this, most of all the senses, makes us gain knowledge and brings to light many differences between things’ (*Metaph. A* 1, 980<sup>a</sup>21–7).<sup>41</sup>

These considerations relate to the pleasures of perception privileged in *NE* 10. 4. However, it should be possible to generalize over other human activities. Aristotle may have a general presumption that the unimpeded exercise of a natural function has to be a

<sup>39</sup> I follow here the translation, and interpretation, of Shields, *DA*.

<sup>40</sup> Aufderheide (‘Delos’, 295) takes the value to be ethical, not because the term *σπουδαίος* has to connote that (cf. 1. 7, 1098<sup>a</sup>9–10), but because it is acting well and nobly that is most *τέλειος* (1097<sup>a</sup>25–<sup>b</sup>6). Hence he takes the topic of 10. 4 to be finding pleasure in acting virtuously, a pleasure at once perceptual and ethical. However, Aristotle is willing here to generalize over *every* kind of perception, thought, and contemplation (1174<sup>b</sup>20–1); and he writes repeatedly of the activity of a faculty in good or best condition in relation to the best of *its* objects (<sup>b</sup>15–16, 19, 22–3), and not of human goals. I agree with Aufderheide (296) that ethical value *can* be perceived; this will be crucial within sect. 6 below.

<sup>41</sup> The Editor draws my attention to a related explanation in the *Poetics* of why we enjoy realistic depictions of things themselves repellent, such as corpses: even beyond our natural love of representation, ‘learning is delightful not only to philosophers but to ordinary people as well . . . This is why people like seeing images, because as they look on them they understand and work out what each item is, for example “This is so and so”’ (4, 1448<sup>b</sup>13–17, trans. Kenny).

pleasure. This certainly applies to the virtuous actions of the virtuous agent. One might read out of *NE* 1. 8, 1099<sup>a</sup>17–20, taken on its own, that Aristotle simply refuses to *count as* ‘virtuous’ the agent who fails to enjoy acting virtuously; which would be a definitional full stop. His view is rather that the virtuous agent is motivationally *such as* to enjoy acting virtuously. Hence his pleasure is a *sign* (cf. *Pr. An.* 2. 27) of his state of character (*NE* 2. 3, 1104<sup>b</sup>3–5). When a man acts as his nature prompts him, he should take pleasure in his action.

### 5. A miscellany of pleasures

If an account of pleasure is to succeed, it needs to accommodate a great range of pleasures, without admitting what are evidently not pleasures at all. To what I have sketched there is an objection, and an obstacle; but both may be resolvable. Anthony Kenny offered a counter-example that is often quoted: ‘The most sensitive nose in the world put in front of the most powerfully smelling manure in the world will not necessarily find the experience pleasant.’<sup>42</sup> This raises again the question what it is for an object of sense to be ‘best’ (10. 4, 1174<sup>b</sup>22–3). What Kenny describes hardly achieves concord or proportion. In fairness to Aristotle, we should rather think not of the most blatant perceptual properties, but of those which demand a discrimination that is unusually perceptive of ‘many differences between things’ (*Metaph. A* 1, 980<sup>a</sup>27). Walter Pater observed that ‘at every moment . . . some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest’.<sup>43</sup> To the curious nose (such as Aristotle ascribes to us), a whiff of manure, if it is faint enough to enrich and not eclipse an olfactory totality, should provide a mild discriminatory pleasure.

What, next, of mediocre, idiosyncratic, or even vicious pleasures? The first are no problem: it is not said in 10. 4 that only the intensest pleasures are pleasant, and a good enough view of a good enough object should be enjoyable to a non-maximal degree (cf. 1174<sup>b</sup>19–20). More problematic is Aristotle’s recurrent distinction between objects that are ‘unqualifiedly’ (*ἀπλῶς*) or ‘naturally’ (*φύσει*) pleasant, which are pleasant to good subjects, and others that are pleasant only to defective subjects.<sup>44</sup> The central analysis of pleasure in 10. 4

<sup>42</sup> *Action, Emotion and Will* (London, 1963), 149; cf. *DA* 2. 9, 421<sup>b</sup>23–5.

<sup>43</sup> *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (London, 1873), Conclusion.

<sup>44</sup> 1. 8, 1099<sup>a</sup>11–15; 7. 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>2–7; 10. 3, 1173<sup>b</sup>20–5; 10. 5, 1176<sup>a</sup>19–24; *EE* 7. 2, 1235<sup>b</sup>31–1236<sup>a</sup>3.

makes its point by focusing upon exemplary perceptual pleasures. It needs to be extended, of which Aristotle shows an awareness in at least two places:

Since activities differ in respect of virtuousness and baseness, and some are desirable, others to be avoided, and others neutral, so too are the pleasures; for to each activity there is its proper pleasure [*οἰκεία ἡδονή*]. The pleasure of a serious activity is virtuous, and that of a base activity depraved. (10. 5, 1175<sup>b</sup>24–8)

Those things are both valuable and pleasant which are such to the virtuous man; and to each man the activity in accordance with his own state is most desirable, and so to the virtuous man that which is in accordance with virtue. (10. 6, 1176<sup>b</sup>25–7)

Here his topic is pleasure in action rather than perception, and yet it indicates what he would say about defective pleasures more generally. To the short-sighted subject, fitting objects are close and medium-sized; to the subject who is hard of hearing, they are loud, while to the sufferer from hyperacusis they are soft. What is required is a correspondence between subject and object (cf. 10. 4, 1175<sup>a</sup>1–3) such that his sense-organs can function in a way that best approximates to that of the normal subject. (Nowadays we have spectacles, hearing aids, and earplugs all carefully calibrated to bring this about artificially.) In the case of action, virtuous or vicious, we can say something that is loosely analogous: vicious action is pleasant to the vicious agent to the extent that he stands to it as the virtuous agent stands to virtuous action—which, in Aristotle's view, will be imperfectly.<sup>45</sup> He may engage in it keenly, and he may have the satisfaction of achieving things he intends to achieve. Yet he will fail, as we may put it, to *identify* fully with what he does. His pleasures will come into conflict since they are unnatural (1. 8, 1099<sup>a</sup>11–13), and he will be full of regrets (9. 4, 1166<sup>b</sup>5–25). Aristotle ascribes this to his being 'thoroughly bad and impious' (1166<sup>b</sup>5). It equally comes of his being human, and so (if he is not brutish, cf. 7. 6, 1149<sup>b</sup>27–1150<sup>a</sup>8) partly good.<sup>46</sup>

What, finally, of the relation, central to Plato's account, of pleasure to process (*genesis*)? In book 7 Aristotle is concerned to reject

<sup>45</sup> Cf. *EE* 7. 2, 1236<sup>a</sup>5–6, for the idea that agents enjoy actions that are 'fitting to their characters' (*κατὰ τὰς ἕξεις*)—though the immediate application is to the good and practically wise.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, extended edn (Oxford, 1997), 127–30; Strohl, 'Pleasure', 269–71.

any Platonic argument that pleasure, being a process towards a goal, has no value in itself (cf. *Phileb.* 54 C 2–D 3). In the passage surrounding the sentence that I quoted from 7. 12 he relates pleasures to processes of a kind without making them either equivalent or mutually exclusive:

Again, it is not necessary that there should be something else better than pleasure, as some say the end is better than the process. For pleasures are not processes, nor do they all involve process: rather, they are activities and ends, and they attend not acquisition but use. Not all pleasures have an end different from themselves, but only the pleasures of persons who are being led to the completing of their nature. This is why it is not right to say that pleasure is a perceptible process: it should rather be called an exercise of the natural state, and instead of 'perceptible' 'unimpeded'. It is thought by some to be a process because they think it is good strictly speaking; for they think that an activity is a process—which it is not. (1153<sup>a</sup>7–17)

The claim is that pleasures do not *all* 'involve process'. As Burnyeat has pointed out, passages in book 7 imply that there can be pleasure in movement, even if it is less than pleasure in rest.<sup>47</sup> This removes any bar to an accommodation of the pleasures, privileged by Plato, of restoration, though Aristotle needs to reinterpret them. In their case, he proposes, 'the activity at work in the appetites concerns the remaining part of our state and nature' (7. 12, 1152<sup>b</sup>35–6; cf. 7. 14, 1154<sup>b</sup>17–19). This activity contingently subserves a natural goal that lies outside itself (such as recovery from illness), but it is not this that defines its essence. It will have a natural terminus, viz. when other pleasures return (1153<sup>a</sup>2–3), but it does not follow that it is a process. Thus convalescence is complex, involving at once the recovery of a desirable state and the exercise of a residuum of health. As would appear from the conjunction of two passages (7. 12, 1152<sup>b</sup>34–6; 7. 14, 1154<sup>b</sup>17–20), it is pleasant naturally in respect of the latter, and coincidentally in respect of the former.<sup>48</sup>

Frede ('Pleasure', 195–6) has objected that the same things should

<sup>47</sup> 'Kinēsis vs. Energeia: A Much-Read Passage in (but not of) Aristotle's *Metaphysics*', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 34 (2008), 219–92 at 271. See NE 7. 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>7–12; 14, 1154<sup>b</sup>26–8. Equally, 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>22, speaks of the pleasures from learning, and 14, 1154<sup>a</sup>13–15, of pleasure as coming either from states or from processes.

<sup>48</sup> All that Aristotle concedes to Plato is that the processes of restoration can themselves *appear* (7. 12, 1152<sup>b</sup>31–3), or *be taken* (14, 1154<sup>b</sup>18–19), to be pleasures, viz. real pleasures, and not just coincidental ones. Not clearly distinguished is a further restriction upon what count as 'natural' pleasures: an activity may fail to count as a natural pleasure if it is enjoyable not without qualification (12, 1153<sup>a</sup>5–6), but only for a particular person, and perhaps at a particular time (cf. 1152<sup>b</sup>30–1).

then be enjoyable before and after restoration. Yet this is certainly not how Aristotle sees things, for he comments upon 1152<sup>b</sup>35–6 as follows: ‘An indication of this is the fact that men do not delight in the same things when their nature is being replenished as they do when it is in its restored state’ (1153<sup>a</sup>2–3). He instances that, during such replenishment, ‘they enjoy even sharp and bitter things’ (a5). Here it is crucial to note an ambiguity. If he means that they then savour the *bitterness* of bitter things, he is in trouble: that would evidence a perversion of illness, and not a persistence of health. So we should rather embrace David Bostock’s expansion of Aristotle’s point: a thirsty man will enjoy even bitter ale (its bitterness ceasing to be an impediment while he is thirsty, since what then is salient is its simple *liquidity* and associated *potability*); and yet, once his thirst is quenched, he will take pleasure only in something palatable.<sup>49</sup> In other cases, as during convalescence, a man will enjoy a reduction in his activities: just out of hospital, he may enjoy short walks, though once he is restored he will find that tedious, and resume lengthy hikes.<sup>50</sup> In all such cases, a part of the subject that is still functioning well, or well enough, responds to an aspect of the object that fits it. Once his functions improve, he will shift to a different activity which provides more satisfaction for an agent who has become more exacting or energetic.<sup>51</sup>

The analysis in book 10 of pleasure itself serves to support the

<sup>49</sup> See D. Bostock, ‘Pleasure and Activity in Aristotle’s Ethics’, *Phronesis*, 33 (1988), 251–72 at 268.

<sup>50</sup> These are special cases of a more general phenomenon: activities may be impeded not only by pains, but also by alternative pleasures (7. 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>20–2; 10. 5, 1175<sup>b</sup>1–10, 16–24).

<sup>51</sup> This relates, but does not reduce, to the account in Van Riel (‘Definition’, 131) and K. Corcilius, ‘Aristotle’s Definition of Non-Rational Pleasure and Pain and Desire’, in Miller (ed.), *NE*, 117–43 at 130–1. Taking the slightly different example of a drinking, of water, which is normally neutral (and so much like my case of walking), Corcilius says that whether it will be pleasurable ‘depends on the combination of two factors, the tactile sensation itself and the bodily state of the animal’ (130); for pleasure, these two things ‘have to come *together*’ (131 n. 25). I add that thirst makes the liquidity of the water sufficient and salient for the subject, so that the presence or absence of other properties becomes immaterial to him. Strictly, we should distinguish two different deficiencies (which may coexist): the subject may have lost a finer discrimination of tastes, or become indifferent to it. In either case, his mind is occupied by a simpler pleasure. Once he is replenished or restored, this will cease to hold his interest. What cases of indifference display, and Aristotle’s analysis in 10. 4 disregards, is that enjoyment depends partly on the focus of *attention* (which may be voluntary or involuntary). In this respect, what is explicit in book 10 fails to do justice to what was implicit in book 7.

thesis in book 7 that pleasures are not themselves processes, though they may connect with processes. However, it then becomes problematic that there are cases where a pleasure, in the sense of something that one enjoys, would seem itself to *be* a process or movement, defined by a point of departure and a point of arrival. Among the things that we are allowed to enjoy are playing dice and hunting (9. 12, 1172<sup>a</sup>4), acting virtuously (10. 3, 1173<sup>a</sup>15, <sup>b</sup>29–31; 1174<sup>a</sup>6–8), and house-building (5, 1175<sup>a</sup>34); and yet one might take each of these to be a process. There are various possible ways of sorting this out. One is to follow Bostock (*Ethics*, 160–3) in generalizing from the focus upon perceptual pleasures within the analysis of pleasure in 10. 4: perhaps what one enjoys is always thinking or perceiving (1174<sup>b</sup>14–26, <sup>b</sup>33–1175<sup>a</sup>1). Perception cannot itself be fast or slow, even when, for example, the musical performance to which one listens is fast or slow.<sup>52</sup> Alternatively, it is entirely faithful to book 7's treatment of incidental pleasures (and cf. already 7. 12, 1153<sup>a</sup>10–11) to adopt a proposal by Taylor that what one really enjoys is exercising one's present capabilities.<sup>53</sup> This involves no essential change *to oneself*, even if it causes real change *outside oneself* (as when one is house-building, cf. 10. 4, 1174<sup>a</sup>19–21). And the second solution permits the enjoying of action in addition to thought or perception.

I shall return to this in my next and final section, permitting a view that, whenever one is enjoying anything, one is enjoying a thinking or perceiving, but doubting whether Aristotle held that this is *all* that one is strictly enjoying.

## 6. Sensation, emotion, and attitude

Particularly relevant within ethics are pleasures and pains that relate emotion to action. Frede has suggested (see n. 2 above) that Aristotle's account has more success with activities than with passions,

<sup>52</sup> Also, as R. Heinaman observes ('Pleasure as an Activity in the *Nicomachean Ethics*', in M. Pakaluk and G. Pearson (eds.), *Moral Psychology and Human Action in Aristotle* (Oxford, 2011), 7–45 at 40), watching a thing change from one quality to another is not *oneself* to change from one quality to another.

<sup>53</sup> 'Pleasure: Aristotle's Response to Plato', in Heinaman (ed.), *Plato and Aristotle's Ethics [Ethics]* (Aldershot, 2003), 1–20 at 14–15. Harte ('Pleasure', 308) notes that house-building involves a *technē*, or 'productive state involving a *logos*' (6. 4, 1140<sup>a</sup>6–8). One would therefore expect it to be enjoyable in the manner of acting or contemplating.



and that, if we are to accommodate passive as well as active pleasures and pains, notably those connected to the emotions, we have reason to return to the Platonic account employed in the *Rhetoric*. I doubt this, and hope, with the help of Frede herself ('Pleasure', 186–8, 201–3), to show how Aristotle can accommodate different kinds of pleasure or pain, active or passive.

Frede has drawn our attention to distinctions that need to be made in relation to virtuous activity, as is particularly clear with the virtues of temperance and courage. In her terminology, we may distinguish *adverbial* from *adjectival* pleasure ('Pleasure', 187). When I take a praline that it is good for me to take, I have a double pleasure, enjoying both how it tastes (adjectival), and tasting temperately (adverbial). At least these are both pleasures. The contrast becomes sharper when we have a conjunction of adjectival pain and adverbial pleasure, as easily arises with courage on the battlefield:

The end which courage sets before it would seem to be pleasant, but to be concealed by the attending circumstances . . . Death and wounds will be painful to the courageous man . . . And the more he is possessed of virtue in its entirety and the happier he is, the more he will be pained at the thought of death . . . It is not the case, then, with all the virtues that the exercise of them is pleasant, except in so far as it reaches its end. (3. 9, 1117<sup>a</sup>35–<sup>b</sup>16)

Here we either have a single complex activity with multiple aspects, or a multiplicity of closely related activities:

- (a) Being wounded, which it is painful to feel.
- (b) Dying, which it is distressing to anticipate.
- (c) Acting nobly, which it is itself pleasant to achieve.

We may gloss these as follows: (a) being wounded causes a painful sensation; (b) regretting that one is going to die makes it painful to entertain that prospect; even so, (c) the virtuous agent finds pleasure in acting nobly. Here we have pleasure or pain variably as a sensation [(a)], as an attitude [(b)], and as what Frede counts as adverbial [(c)]. There are thus three hedonic elements: sensation, attitude, and (if it is positive) enjoyment.

Plato's core account of pleasure as a perceived process of restoration, and of pain as one of disintegration or destruction (*lusis*, *Phileb.* 31 E 5; *phthora*, E 10), seems at most to apply to (a). Aristotle's view appears to be more promising, though we need to reflect

how best to apply it. Most straightforward is its application to a series of distinct perceptions:

- (A) Sensing a wound by the sense of touch (as I suppose Aristotle would conceive of it, cf. *DA* 2. 11, 423<sup>b</sup>15–17, on the man who feels a blow through his shield), where the damage is more or less grave, and one's sense of touch is keen.
- (B) Being aware, in thought or imagination, of the prospect of death, where the object is bad, and one's mind all too active.
- (C) Being aware, in thought or incidental perception, of the nobility of one's action, where the object is good, and one's mind properly appreciative.

Thus Aristotle could distinguish that the agent suffers pain at the wound, feels distress at the prospect of losing his life (especially if it is a good one), and takes pleasure in the thought of acting nobly.<sup>54</sup>

Frede has objected that such a conception fails to do justice to the experience of intense emotions. *There*, she supposes, we still need something more akin to Plato's account (and Aristotle's ostensible adoption of it in the *Rhetoric*). Presumably this applies just to (A) and (B). Let us first reflect on cases of touch, taking an instance first of tolerable discomfort and then of intolerable pain. There is a sentence in the *De anima* that applies within happier variants upon (A) that are rather disagreeable than agonizing: 'To feel pleasure or pain is to be active with the perceptual mean towards what is good or bad as such' (3. 7, 431<sup>a</sup>10–11). This has often been read as a cryptic description of a desire or aversion directed towards an object that is perceived or imagined to be good or bad. However, talk of a perceptual mean applies only to actual perception, and of a proper object (such as colour, in the case of sight). In our present case the sense is touch, and the medium (not, it is argued, the organ) is the flesh (2. 11, 423<sup>b</sup>17–26). Aristotle explains the perceptual mean in this context as follows:

We do not perceive an object that is equally hot or cold, or hard or soft, with ourselves, but only the excesses, the sense being a sort of mean between contrary qualities present in its objects. That is why it discriminates between its objects; that which is intermediate can discriminate, because relatively to each of the extremes it plays the part of the other

<sup>54</sup> On the intimate relations between the noble, the good, and the pleasant cf. *Rhet.* 1. 9, 1366<sup>a</sup>34; *EE* 7. 15, 1249<sup>a</sup>18–19.

extreme . . . So the organ of touch must be neither hot nor cold. (424<sup>a</sup>2–10, trans. Ross)

Thus the subject can feel the hot or the hard, say, when these contrast with his present state to a degree that affects his sense of touch unpleasantly, without, as it were, the sense's blowing its fuse and eclipsing a discriminating perception by a blinding sensation.<sup>55</sup>

Very different (though there may be no precise point of transition) are cases of really acute pain. Here we find what might appear to be traces of Plato's view: consider *NE* 3. 12, 1119<sup>a</sup>23–4: 'Pain upsets and destroys the nature of the person who feels it' (not that this identifies the pain and the damage); also *EE* 3. 1, 1229<sup>a</sup>40–<sup>b</sup>1, which speaks of pains 'whose nature is to be destructive of life' (though these are a subclass of pains). Yet in fact these remarks accord with Aristotle's description of the disruptive effect of perceptual overload: 'Excesses of the sensible qualities destroy the sense-organs (for if the change produced is too strong for the organ, the proportion, i.e. the sense, is destroyed, as harmony and pitch are if the strings are struck too hard)' (*DA* 2. 12, 424<sup>a</sup>29–32, after Ross). Here the subject is overcome by a sensation of such intensity that it swamps his power of perceptual discrimination.

What of (B)? Let us recall what we read in the *Rhetoric*: 'Let anger be a desire with pain for an apparent revenge because of an apparent slight' (2. 2, 1378<sup>a</sup>30–1). The emotion can be intense without in any way confusing the perception that detects an occasion or the imagination that conceives a response. The same may hold of the consolations of malice: in Homer's words, these may surpass honey in sweetness, and spread through the breast, in ways that enhance the pleasures of incidental perceiving or imagining. If the emotion is intense and the conditions of perception indistinct, a shadow may be misperceived through fear as an enemy, or through love as the loved one (*De insomniis* 2, 460<sup>b</sup>3–7). The pleasures and pains of emotionally charged incidental perception or imagination complicate the perceptual model, but in a way that would seem permitted by a view that does not reduce the pleasure or pain to a perfection

<sup>55</sup> What, then, is going on within *DA* 3. 7, 431<sup>a</sup>8–14? 3. 7 is a disjointed chapter on any reading. I now take those lines to touch on two related phenomena: seeking or shunning a prospective object as pleasant or painful, and finding it one or the other. If one reads <sup>a</sup>10–11 as perceptual, there ceases to be anything problematic in its switching from the pleasant or painful to the good or bad. For this confirms the intimate relation between the quality of the perceptual object *qua* perceptual, and the pleasure of perceiving it, as set out in *NE* 10. 4.

or deficiency in organ or object, but rather conceives of them as resulting from a range of subjacent states. Earlier, I discussed how such states can constitute impediments to pleasure (text to nn. 37–8 above). They may also magnify pleasure or pain. We can think of emotion as magnifying the impact of the appearance of the enemy as threatening or of the loved one as alluring (cf. the variable impact of a feverish perception of lines on a wall as animals, 460<sup>b</sup>11–16). The subjacent ground of the pleasure or pain will then expand to take in the subject's underlying emotional state. Though this is not ideally lucid, I see no evident gain in shifting to a confused construal of the pleasure as restorative.

So what of (C)? Aristotle could rest with a cluster of linked perceptions, taking the view, ascribed to him by Bostock, that what we enjoy is always thinking or perceiving. This permits a lucid if limited answer to a question posed by Frede ('Pleasure', 205): 'What is natural and unimpeded about acts of courage?' Her answer is that what remains unimpeded, when fate turns against one, is a brave action not in all its aspects, but in respect of its being an instance of *acting well*. Yet if we follow Bostock, we can clarify how this lends itself to a pleasure that is itself unimpeded: shifting the focus from action to perception, we can specify that the agent's awareness of the nobility of his action is a fully unimpeded case of incidental perception, since his moral sense is alive to the ethical quality of his action. We need not ask whether his *action* is unimpeded.

However, that may not be what Aristotle intends. He has a general requirement that acting virtuously (which involves having the right state of character, *NE* 2. 4, 1105<sup>a</sup>28–33) must be pleasant to the agent (1. 8, 1099<sup>a</sup>13–15; 2. 3, 1104<sup>b</sup>3–13). To make sense of this, we need to extend Bostock's conception. It may be said that an action can become pleasant to the agent *through* his awareness of its nobility: the thought or perception of its nobility may percolate through his experience as an agent, so that he takes pleasure in so acting. It is *acting* bravely that the brave man enjoys, if only in respect of the nobility that is his end, and not only *being aware* of the nobility (3. 9, 1117<sup>b</sup>13–16). According to Aristotle's general view of the relation of choice to action, *choosing* to act nobly is *beginning* so to act; the virtuous agent who chooses to act nobly (<sup>b</sup>14–15; cf. 9. 8, 1169<sup>a</sup>26) thereby starts to take pleasure in acting nobly.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> I argue for this in Price, 'Choice and Action in Aristotle', *Phronesis*, 61 (2016), 435–62 at 452–60.

How, then, are we to accommodate the mixed cases that are typical of courage (and liable to occur, if less acutely, with any virtue)? Aristotle concedes that, as I quoted, a fatal exercise of courage is only pleasant ‘in so far as it reaches its end’ (3. 9, 1117<sup>b</sup>16). How are we to make sense of this qualification? Suppose that a certain act has some very desirable feature  $F_1$ , and some very undesirable feature  $F_2$ . The agent can then say ‘I am glad to be doing this act in respect of  $F_1$ , and sorry to be doing it in respect of  $F_2$ .’ Yet he cannot qualify an answer to the question ‘Well, are you enjoying doing it, or not?’ in those ways—the grammar of ‘enjoy’ does not permit it. So a decision needs to be made.

It seems that Aristotle now has two alternatives. He can insist that the courageous agent must, on the whole, *enjoy* sacrificing his life. This is unpromising, though it fits a later passage: in 9. 8, with an extravagance that is untypical of him, he presents a hero’s achieving the noble by laying down his life for others as an experience that is not only enjoyable, but supremely so.<sup>57</sup> Or else, he could shift to a different form of words, and allow (in English) that the agent may be *glad* to sacrifice his life in one respect, since it is noble, though he is *sad* to do so in another respect, since his life is good. Aristotle can then insist, if he wishes, that, if the agent is fully virtuous, he must, *overall*, be glad to act as he does (which precludes the conflicted discomfort of a self-control that does not amount to courage). This will be demanding, but no longer insane. It will require of the agent that he make fully his own, so that it reverberates through his thoughts and feelings, the following reflection: his action’s nobility is not impeded even by its fatality, since it is in *dying* for his friends and country that he is able to act *superlatively* well.

Yet this requires Aristotle to exploit a distinction that he fails to draw.<sup>58</sup> Sometimes the Greek language lets him down. (It is not his

<sup>57</sup> Note how, within 1169<sup>a</sup>18–26 (a complex passage with a succession of *gars*, or ‘for’s), the hero’s willingness to lay down his life for friends and country is explained by preferences at once for nobility over vulgar values, and for a brief but intense pleasure over mild and extended pleasure. The interweaving of these preferences precludes our relating the second to anything other than his laying down his life (which is, indeed, not reducible to his dying).

<sup>58</sup> I share this complaint with S. Broadie, ‘Reply to C. C. W. Taylor’, in Heinaman (ed.), *Ethics*, 21–7 at 23–4, and Harte (‘Pleasure’, 316). Take a homely illustration: I may be glad to be able to perform some tedious or distasteful task for a friend or child of mine even though its nature is not such that I can in *any* way enjoy what I am doing as I do it. (I act willingly, perhaps even keenly, but with gritted teeth and averted eyes.)

fault that he has only the word *hekōn* in 3. 1 to do the work for which we can employ ‘voluntary’, ‘intentional’, and ‘willing’.) But here he had two terms that lend themselves to making the necessary discrimination: *hēdesthai*, and *chairein*, which can be used equivalently to our ‘enjoy’, and ‘be glad’, respectively. In some passages in the *Ethics* it is tempting to relate the second to the attitude of acceptance that the ethical agent has towards all his ethical actions *qua* ethical, whatever their cost.<sup>59</sup> Yet that is not what Aristotle intends, for he is willing to switch between the expressions *hēdonē* and *to chairein* as if they were equivalent (7. 11, 1152<sup>b</sup>6–8). To find a plausible solution to the present problem, he needs to distinguish them, demanding of the self-sacrificial agent that, not being in two minds about his action (he is *ametamelētos*, 9. 4, 1166<sup>a</sup>29), he perform it gladly, but not that he enjoy it.

This would be a refinement. As things stand, Aristotle’s failure to distinguish enjoyment from gladness, giving them different and appropriate roles, is a flaw both in his conception of ethical virtue and in his account of pleasure.

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<sup>59</sup> In illustration of her distinction between ‘adjectival’ and ‘adverbial’ pleasures, Frede (‘Pleasure’, 186) conveniently quotes two remarks, one about temperance (2. 3, 1104<sup>b</sup>5–6), another about courage (1104<sup>b</sup>7–8). However, her rendering of *chairōn* as ‘cheerfully’ is implausibly cheerful for some contexts.

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