

THE ROLE OF PLEASURE IN THE GOOD LIFE
IN THE PHILEBUS

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A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts

McMaster University

April 1968

MASTER'S DEGREE (1968)
(Philosophy)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario.

TITLE: The Role of Pleasure in the Good Life in the
Philebus

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SUPERVISOR: Dr. S. Najm

NUMBER OF PAGES: ii, 153

SCOPE AND CONTENTS: This thesis is concerned mainly with Plato's dialogue, the Philebus, with specific references to the Phaedo, the Protagoras, the Republic and the Gorgias. An attempt has been made to confine the discussion to the description of the forms of pleasure and an analysis of pleasure's role in the good life as they are presented in those dialogues. Included in the account is an analysis of the method and the arguments presented by Plato. Because of the limited nature of the topic, only a brief discussion of the role and nature of the forms of knowledge appears in the paper.

I

INTRODUCTION

In several of Plato's dialogues both implicit and explicit references are made to a major ethical question, the nature of the good life for man. Although often clouded by the main issues of the relevant works, the topic is clarified and elaborated until finally, in the Philebus, it becomes the subject of a purely ethical dialogue. Several questions are involved in the problem: the nature of the good life, the constituents of that life, and the values of those constituents.

The earliest dialogue which deals specifically with the problem is the Protagoras. In that work we are presented with the answers to the first two questions, the answers which, with the exception of the Phaedo, remain the same throughout the Platonic dialogues. The good life is the happy life, constituted of a mixture of pleasure and knowledge. It is in the discussion of the nature and value of those factors, however, that Plato's thought undergoes major modifications. Although in both the Protagoras and the Phaedo the pleasurable sensation is limited to bodily experiences, knowledge is viewed in different ways--in the

former dialogue as a limiting factor, one which regulates the choice of pleasures; in the latter as a higher function with the ability to comprehend truths greater than those of the physical world. With the shift in emphasis regarding reason's function a change can be seen in the values relegated to reason and pleasure. Whereas an undeniable scientific hedonism appears in the Protagoras as the good life for man, with pleasure as the dominant factor, in the Phaedo hedonic calculation is regarded as an inferior way of life when compared to the life of knowing higher truths. That domination of knowledge over pleasure remains a conviction of Plato's throughout the remainder of his dialogues. Pleasure's role, however, becomes increasingly interesting as it increases and decreases accordingly as the theory of the forms of pleasure is formulated by Plato. Although a discussion of both knowledge and pleasure is required in order to define the role of pleasure in the good life, in this paper stress will be placed on the role of pleasure rather than on reason's position.

Before discussing the Philebus we must take notice of two of the middle dialogues, the Republic and the Gorgias, since several additions to Plato's ethical theory occur in those works. Although good and bad pleasures were mentioned in the Protagoras and Phaedo, Plato was concerned in those dialogues mainly with purely

physical pleasures. The lack of discrimination between different kinds of pleasures resulted in a complete rejection, in the latter dialogue, of all pleasures as being evil, with a proposal of a katharsis of such experience to aid the attainment of the good life. Although the suggestion of katharsis remains embodied in the proposals for the educational system of the rulers in the Republic, Plato realizes that a classification of pleasure is required to retain some types of pleasures. Thus in the Republic the first mention is made of the depletion-repletion formula for pains and pleasures, the nature of desire, and the higher pleasures of learning and pure pleasures. Not all pleasures, as he had declared in the Phaedo, are unworthy of being allowed admittance into the good life. The re-iteration of the distinctions made in the Republic in another dialogue, the Gorgias, stresses two facts-- first, that Plato believed in certain formulations of the nature of pleasure, and secondly, that some aspects of his theory, such as the description of the nature of desire, the complete psychological description of the feelings involved, and justification still require clarification before a complete theory of pleasure and its relation to the good life could be determined.

To solve the difficulties arising from earlier dialogues, Plato composed the Philebus, an orderly, complete study of the topic of pleasure and its relation to

the good life for man. The purpose of the dialogue is to answer four questions: first, whether it is possible to equate either pleasure or knowledge with the good life; secondly, if not, to determine which constituent is the more valuable; thirdly, to find the factor constituting the goodness of the good life; fourthly, to discover which constituent is more similar to that factor. Each of these problems is analyzed respectively by a separate method: by a comparison of the two lives with the three qualifications of good, a metaphysical argument, an ontological argument, and a comparison of pleasure and knowledge with the element constituting goodness. Concluding his discussion, Plato compiles a value scale of goods, indicating the relative positions of knowledge and pleasure.

Despite the fact that the classifications of pleasure and knowledge are utilized by Plato to re-enforce the second major question, it seems to be of value to begin the discussion of the Philebus with an explanation of those two factors to indicate the sense in which the two terms are used in the arguments. Once that has been accomplished, the discussion will follow the three formulations of the problem which will be indicated in the following section.

II

DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

1. Statement of the Issues

(a) First Formulation

Since for Plato there are actually three questions to be answered regarding pleasure's relation to the good life, three formulations of the issue are required. First is the general formula that the state of pleasure or of knowledge can be equated with the good life--as Socrates states at 11D,¹ "you people [Philebus and the Hedonists] put forth the state of enjoyment, whereas we put forward that of intelligence". The exact formulation of the two positions is given at 11B:

Philebus says that the good for all animate beings consists in enjoyment, pleasure, delight, and whatever can be classed as consonant therewith: whereas our contention is that the good is not that, but that thought.

¹Plato, The Philebus, in R. Hackforth, trans. and commentator, Plato's Examination of Pleasure (The Philebus) (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., The Library of Liberal Arts. First published in 1945 by the Cambridge University Press), 11D. All quotations from dialogues other than the Philebus are from The Collected Dialogues of Plato edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, published by Bollingen Foundation, New York, third printing 1964, (sub. ref. G.D.P.).

intelligence, memory and things akin to these, right opinion and true reasoning, prove better and more valuable than pleasure for all such beings as can participate in them, and that for all these, whether now living or yet to be born, nothing in the world is more profitable than so to participate.

A restatement of Socrates' position at 19D adds the element of obligation to the primary ethical principle:

there is something which may properly be called a better good than pleasure, at all events, namely reason, knowledge, understanding, skill and all that is akin to these things: and ... it is these, not pleasure and so on that we ought to acquire.

In the recapitulation of the argument at 60A-B the same element of "ought" is applied to Philebus' position, along with the emphasis on the fact that in the first formulation pleasure is equated with good:

Philebus maintains that pleasure is the proper quest of all living creatures, and that all ought to aim at it; in fact he says that the good for all is pleasure and nothing else, these two terms, pleasure and good, being properly applied to one thing, one single existent. Socrates on the other hand maintains that they are not one thing, but two, in fact as in name: "good" and "pleasant" are different from one another, and intelligence has more claim to be ranked as good than pleasure.

In this first formulation of the problem several points require clarification. Despite Socrates' statement at 11D that he is putting forward the state of intelligence as the good life as a parallel to Philebus' state of en-

joyment, the wording of his own position with phrases such as "prove better and more valuable than pleasure", "more profitable", "a better good" indicate that his position is not as stringent as that of his opponent. In opposition to the equation of pleasure and good, Socrates, already awaiting the second formulation of the problem, arms himself against the objection that his own position undergoes a modification when a third state is found to be the good for man. As R. Hackforth correctly notes:²

Philebus held "good" and "pleasant" to be identical in meaning; his Hedonism is of an extreme type, which allows no value to anything except pleasure. Socrates' "Intellectualism" on the other hand is not extreme; intelligence, thought, and the like are better for all things capable of them; a thesis which does not exclude an intrinsic value of pleasure.

Included in the first formulation of the good life for man is the restriction at 11D of the good as a "state or condition of the soul" which will "render the life of every man a happy life". The equation of the good and the happy lives has its precedents in the first dialogue dealing specifically with the relation between pleasure and the good life, the Protagoras.³ It must be noted,

²R. Hackforth, Plato's Examination of Pleasure (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., The Library of Liberal Arts), p. 12.

³Protagoras, C.D.P., 351C-356D, 357A-B.

however, that the happy life is not equated either in the Protagoras or in antecedent dialogues with the life controlled exclusively by the passions.⁴ In the dialogues involved the life of a man who is overpowered by his passions is described as an evil unbecoming the real nature of man. The happy life of man consists not in an over-indulgence of physical passions, but rather in a combination of reason and the emotions, the rational faculty performing discriminatory and checking functions.

Both R. Hackforth and A. E. Taylor find the limitation to the happy life of man significant since it confines the moral discussion to the realm of human happiness. Hackforth proposes that

there is nothing to suggest that Socrates has referred to any metaphysical or super-sensible Good, or discussed the "Form of the Good". Both parties have however been concerned with something wider than the good for man, but it is this that Plato is to make the subject of his dialogue; hence Socrates now makes his suggestion, which Protarchus readily accepts, that the quest shall be for a condition of soul capable of providing human happiness.⁵

Although Taylor agrees with Hackforth's analysis of the situation,⁶ he attaches even more significance to it. According to his interpretation, "Philebus originally

⁴Refer to Protagoras, 357A-B; Gorgias, 506C-E; Republic, 577D-580C; and Phaedo, 34 in C.D.P.

⁵Hackforth, p. 12.

⁶A. E. Taylor, Plato: Philebus and Epinomis, ed. Raymond Klibansky (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1956), p. 26.

makes an assertion not simply about the good for man in particular, but about good universal, "the good", while Socrates speaks only about the good for man."⁷

An analysis of the text at 11B tends to confirm Hackforth's interpretation of the initial position of both Socrates and Philebus. For Protarchus, the good is for "all animate beings", for Socrates, for "all such beings as can participate in them [thought, intelligence, etc.]". Granted that the term "animate" cannot be equated with "human", both positions can be viewed, as Hackforth suggests, as referring to something larger than a purely human good. Only at 11D, when the discussion is limited by Socrates to a search for a condition of soul which can render the life of man a happy one does the topic become one of purely human good. In opposition to Taylor's interpretation that Philebus alone is speaking of the universal good, two facts must be noticed: first, for Philebus, the subject of the good was all animate beings, a limitation which discounts the view that his theory refers to universal good; secondly, at 11B Socrates also refers to "such beings", and thus places his position on the same level as that of his opponent. Further, when

⁷A. E. Taylor, Plato: The Man and his Work (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, 1966), p. 410.

Socrates introduces the suggestion at 11D that the discussion be placed on a purely human level. Protarchus immediately accepts that limitation, indicating that his initial position did not refer to any universal good.

The important part of the passage at 11D is the reference to the state or condition of the soul which would render man's life a happy one. By limiting the discussion to such a state Socrates prevents any material objects such as bodily excellences or material goods from becoming the main objects of importance for man. That qualification limits the discussion to the individual himself, not to the amount of riches or wealth which he may possess. In this manner Plato has made it possible for any person to be the happiest of men--whether he be rich or poor, powerful or inept physically, beautiful or ugly in appearance.

(b) Second Formulation

As Plato states at 11B, the purpose of the discussion in the Philebus is "to get at the truth of the matter", to settle once and for all the problem of the nature of the good life, and to determine the roles of knowledge and pleasure in that life. Although the first formulation of the problem allows for a solution, the possibility that neither pleasure nor knowledge can be equated with the good life must be recognized. If the equation should prove untenable, then the ethical question would

remain unanswered. To offset that possibility, Plato offers a second formulation. As he states at 12A, if a third state were found that was better than either pleasure or knowledge, then the first proposed solution would be discarded, and the discussion would follow a different line of reasoning. Instead of being an attempt to equate either pleasure or knowledge with the good, the problem would become one of deciding whether pleasure or knowledge is the more valuable element in the good life. Plato's statement of the second formulation occurs in the passages from 11D to 12A:

But suppose that some other state better than these be found; then if it were found more akin to pleasure, I imagine that while we both of us yield to the life that securely possesses the feature in question, the life of pleasure overcomes that of intelligence. ... But if it were found more akin to intelligence, then intelligence is victorious over pleasure, and it is pleasure that is worsted.

If a third state were found that proved to be the good life, that state would be accepted for what it is. The purpose of the dialogue would then be to discover the more valuable constituent in the good life, the factor which would take second prize.

(c) Third Formulation

In general terms, the second formulation of the problem could be presented in the form of a question: In

the purely human realm, is knowledge or pleasure more valuable in the good life for man? With the third formulation the specifically moral question attains cosmic significance when the search becomes one for the factor which causes the goodness in any mixture. Instead of dealing solely with the mixture of pleasure and knowledge in the good life, Plato concentrates on the form of the good mixture and the nature of the constituents of that compound. The question then becomes more abstract--Can pleasure or knowledge, being what they are by nature, be the cause of the goodness of a good mixture such as that constituting the good life for man? Plato is now asking whether an equation can be made between one of the constituents and the formal cause of the goodness of the mixture. As in the first formulation, if the equation proves to be untenable, the question will then be asked whether the nature of pleasure or knowledge is more similar to the element causing the goodness. Socrates proposes the third formulation at 640:

And what, may I ask, shall we regard as the most valuable thing in our mixture, that which makes an arrangement of this sort commend itself to us all? If we discover that, we can go on to consider whether this factor in the whole scheme of things is closer and more akin to pleasure, or to reason.

The distinction between the good life and the goodness in that life has caused some problems of inter-

pretation in the dialogue and resulted in charges of inconsistency against Plato. According to R. Hackforth, "Socrates corrects or modifies his first suggestion, that reason, rather than pleasure, is the cause of the goodness of the Mixed Life."⁸ Hackforth argues that the reason for the modification becomes clear at 65A-B when Measure and Proportion are shown by Plato to provide the Goodness of the mixture. The modification itself occurs, according to Hackforth, at 21D-E when Plato states that he "will contend even more warmly than before; that whatever it is which, by its inclusion in this mixed life, makes that life both desirable and good, it is something to which reason is nearer and more akin than pleasure."

Granted that a third element, that of goodness, has for the first time appeared at 21D, there is no textual justification for Hackforth's contention that there has been a correction or modification of Plato's first suggestion of 11B that pleasure or knowledge is better and more valuable and more profitable for an individual to participate in. There was no direct reference to either factor as the cause of the goodness of the mixture. When referring to the status of the two constituents, Plato

⁸Quotation and following argument are from Hackforth, p. 36.

spoke only of one or the other overcoming or being victorious over the other. The only passage which could confirm a modification of his theory occurs at 22D immediately preceding the one advanced by Hackforth as proof of a change on Plato's part:

For as to the cause that makes this combined life what it is, very likely one of us will say that it is reason, and the other pleasure; so that while neither of the two would, on this showing, be the good, one of them might very possibly be that which makes the good what it is.

For the first time a distinction is made between the good and the element which constitutes goodness. It would appear, with the introduction of the terms pleasure and reason, that Plato has been, as Hackforth suggests, equating reason with the cause of the goodness. A closer inspection of the context of the passage in the dialogue and the exact wording reveals that such need not necessarily be the case. The dialogue began with a statement concerning one of the purposes of the Philebus--to determine whether pleasure or knowledge was the more valuable constituent in the good life. Before the answer could be given to that question, the nature of the good life had to be determined. The solution led to another question, the cause of perfection, adequacy and choiceworthiness of the good life. Only after the nature of the good life is

described is mention made of cause. Plato's statement at 22D, that "very likely one of us will say it is reason, and the other pleasure", utilizes the future tense of the verb "to be", indicating that up to that point neither party has answered the question in hand. Continuing with the passage at 22D, Plato contends that "this then is the point for which I will contend with Philebus even more warmly than before: ... " Taking Hackforth's interpretation, stress can be placed on the words "even more warmly than before", indicating that the same point was argued previously, a clear indication that since it was not argued before, a modification has been introduced. If, however, we concentrate on "this then is the point", we have the emphasis on the fact that the subject is the cause of the goodness, rather than on the previous discussion. Further, the phrase "even more warmly than before" may indicate that his purpose in revealing reason's affinity to cause is more important to him than showing the superior value of reason in the good life.

The final decision on the acceptance or rejection of Hackforth's analysis must be based not only on the above discussion but also on the results to be derived from antecedent passages in the Philebus. If the remainder of the dialogue is interpreted by the Aristotelian Formal and

Efficient Causes, as Hackforth suggests,⁹ ignoring the second formulation of the problem, which Hackforth's interpretation discards by assuming that reason and goodness were equated at 11B, then several difficulties will be involved, including the macrocosm-microcosm argument and the inclusion of the sections from 53C to 55C, the pleasure as process theory and "the common-sense attitude towards Hedonism".¹⁰ If, on the other hand, the second formulation of the problem is accepted, such problems become greatly minimized.

The only major problem that does exist in interpreting the Philebus under three formulations is that Plato does not delineate a value scale for the second formulation while he does so for the third formulation in the passages from 65B to 66A. It may be argued, however, that the human and cosmic significances of reason and pleasure become intermingled in the final classification of goods, in which the values of both elements are compiled. In that classification the answer to the second formulation of the problem becomes clear, although primary consideration must be accorded to the form of the mixture which constitutes its goodness.

⁹Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 111.

2. "Pleasure" and "Knowledge" Defined

Before proceeding with an analysis of each of the formulations, it is necessary to understand what Plato means by the terms "pleasure" and "knowledge". It is important to note, to begin with, that each of the phenomena is discussed both in the abstract and as it appears in actual experiences. Unless that distinction is recognized, several problems in interpretation are likely to occur, especially with regard to the relationship between the two factors. In order to clearly distinguish the meanings of the terms, pleasure and knowledge will be analyzed first in their pure forms then in their actual forms.

(a) The Pure Forms of Pleasure and Knowledge

Introduced at 20B of the Philebus as forms devoid of any admixture of the opposite quality, both pleasure and knowledge begin to acquire definite characteristics as the dialogue progresses. In the experiencing of pure pleasure, for instance, since no intelligence or judgment can be included no consciousness is involved. As Plato explains at 21B-C, "if you were without reason, memory, knowledge, and true judgment, you would necessarily, I imagine, in the first place be unaware even whether you were, or were not, enjoying yourself, as you would be destitute of all intelligence". Further, without memory

and judgment a person could neither remember that pleasures had occurred nor anticipate pleasures in the future.

Plato's analysis of pure pleasures presents several difficulties. In the first place the question arises whether Plato is entitled to discuss the nature of pleasure in the abstract. If, as he advocates, the person "experiencing" pleasure is unaware of the sensation being a pleasurable one, it is doubtful whether the process can be called pleasurable. According to his description of sensation in the passages from 33D to 34A, any "movement, which occurs when soul and body come together in a single affection and are moved both together" results in the consciousness of that occurrence. No process of knowledge seems to be involved. Yet at 21B Plato specifically states that either reason, knowledge, memory or true judgment accounts for our awareness of pleasure. Since reason and true judgment apply only to decisions concerning facts, there is no reason to assume that they have the additional characteristic of possessing the ability to give consciousness to feelings such as pleasure and pain. Similarly memory, since it is merely "the preservation of sensation", as Socrates states at 34B, cannot provide that consciousness. That leaves only knowledge, a vague term not specified by Plato, as the factor in question. Throughout the discussion of knowledge,

however, no explanation is given concerning its relationship to the factor of consciousness. Pleasure's relationship to pure knowledge remains ambiguous.

In addition to being a "non-conscious" sensation, pure pleasure has the character of being unlimited in nature. As Plato notes at 31A, "pleasure is itself unlimited and belongs to the kind that does not and never will contain within itself and derived from itself either beginning, or middle, or end."

Pure knowledge "without an atom of pleasure, or indeed of pain, in a condition of utter insensibility to such things" (21E) has characteristics paralleling those of pure pleasures. Like pure pleasure, which is devoid of any admixture of knowledge, pure knowledge contains no pleasure or pain. With the case of pure knowledge, however, the exclusion of the pleasure factor does not result in a meaningless phenomenon as it did in the instance of pure pleasure. By excluding the pleasure factor Plato has not dismissed a feeling which may accompany and confirm the results of the reasoning process. Pure knowledge may exist because it does not require any assistance from the pleasure feeling for its existence.

Just as the mark of pleasure is immoderateness or unlimitedness, so knowledge is noted for being "akin to Cause and belonging ... to that kind" (31A). Yet despite the fact that Plato specifically regards reason as most

similar to cause, the reference to its character as being limited in nature also prevails in the dialogue at 650 when Plato states that nothing is "more measured than reason or knowledge". The two characteristics of pure reason, the affinity to both cause and limit will be utilized alternatively to justify the privileged position of knowledge in both the second and third formulations of the problem.

(b) Actual Pleasures

Actual pleasure, unlike pure pleasure, would require assistance from knowledge to add the element of awareness to the sensation. Further, unlike pure pleasure, which is a generic unity, actual pleasure consists of a variety of different pleasures, like those of the moral and immoral person, the wise and the foolish man, pleasures which, as Plato indicates at 120, are often unlike and opposite to each other. In the Gorgias¹¹ a similar compilation of different types of pleasure was presented-- the pleasures of fools and cowards, wise and brave men, foolish and sensible individuals.

For Socrates, as Hackforth correctly notes, the phenomenon of pleasure in man is "a complex of feeling and the source of feeling,"¹² and as such it must be analyzed

¹¹Gorgias, C.D.P., 497E-498B.

¹²Hackforth, footnote 1, p. 16.

In regard to the source, the conditions under which it arises, and the various forms that it assumes. As Plato indicates in his, for both pleasure and knowledge we must "see to what each of them is bound, and what happens to them at what time they occur whenever they do". Then he says "Does not each of them in each one and every, and how... each possesses a certain nature before the un-qualified nature is reached" (102d). In other words, we are "examining the question of kinds of pleasure: has it a particular nature, or has it not, and if it has, how many are there and what are they like? And especially the same question arises with regard to intelligence" (102d).

(1) THE NATURE OF PLEASURE AND PAIN

The nature of pleasure and pain is a highly complex and subtle, since it is composed of various elements, which to the extent of the nature, as it is presented in the history of the development of all creatures. As Plato states in his, "Pleasure and pain are different, but they are both of the same nature" (102d). The nature of pleasure and pain is that of the "continuous" or "intermittent" type. The nature of pleasure and pain is that of the "continuous" or "intermittent" type. The nature of pleasure and pain is that of the "continuous" or "intermittent" type. The nature of pleasure and pain is that of the "continuous" or "intermittent" type. The nature of pleasure and pain is that of the "continuous" or "intermittent" type.

seat of pleasure and pain is the living organism:

when the natural state of a living organism, constituted ... of the Unlimited and the Limit, is destroyed, that destruction is pain; conversely, when such organisms return to their own true nature, this reversion is invariably pleasurable.

In the discussion of the physical and mental pleasures, the idea of pleasure and pain and its relation to the disequilibrium of the bodily elements is retained. Although it belongs to the soul alone, desire is based on memory of past pains and pleasures associated with depletion and repletion. Even the pure pleasures of the soul alone will be shown to be preceded by a want, although that "lack" is imperceptible and painless to the individual.

(ii) Conditions of Occurrence

For Plato, the human organism is composed of two separate elements, the body and the soul. Although the two factors are distinct in nature, they are also very closely connected, the relationship being established through the process of sensation. Before embarking on a discussion of the two major areas in which pleasures occur, the body and the soul, it is necessary to understand the nature of sensation. According to Plato, movements in the body produce either sensation or non-sensation. When the experience is exhausted in the organism without reaching the soul, it remains undetected by the soul and therefore is called non-sensation. Only when the processes

penetrate both body and soul together, that is, when the body and soul come together in a single affection and are moved both together does sensation occur. Thus all consciousness involves the soul. Despite Plato's classification of pleasures into physical and mental, under the theory of sensation there are no such things as purely physical pleasures.

(a) Physical Pleasures

Plato explains the conditions under which physical pleasures occur in a general theory at 32B:

when the natural state of a living organism, constituted ... of the Unlimited and the Limit, is destroyed, that destruction is pain; conversely, when such organisms return to their own true nature, their reversion is invariably pleasant.

As Plato states at 31D to 32A, in such cases as hunger and eating, thirst and drinking, heat and coldness, freezing and the application of heat, the disturbance and restoration of harmony are accompanied in all cases by pain and pleasure respectively.

The depletion-repletion formula for physical pains and pleasures has its precedents in earlier dialogues. In the Republic hunger, thirst and similar states are called "inanitions or emptinesses of the bodily habit", while pleasure is "to be filled with what befits nature".¹³

¹³Republic, C.D.P., 585B.

A similar theory is proposed allegorically in the Gorgias in the analogy of the sieve,¹⁴ when the soul of a foolish person is compared to a perforated sieve requiring continuous filling. Later in that dialogue specific reference is made to the theory when Plato states that in cases such as hunger and eating, and thirst and drinking, every deficiency is painful while every satisfaction of that state is pleasurable.¹⁵

(b) Mental Pleasures

Although the first type of pleasures may explain organic wants and their satisfactions, it cannot indicate any pleasures belonging to a life raised above such wants, such as the life of man who delights not only in present physical gratification but also in pleasures of anticipating pleasurable experiences. Not entirely unrelated to the purely physical pleasures, as Plato indicates at 32C, these apprehensive or pleasant anticipations which precede expected pains or pleasures are felt by the soul alone.

Plato's examination of the mental pleasures is based mainly on an examination of desire--its nature and the seat of its occurrence (34D). Unlike the feelings of

¹⁴ Gorgias, C.D.P., 493A-494B.

¹⁵ Ibid., 496C-E.

pleasure or pain originating in the body, the feeling of desire begins in the soul. In the phenomenon, the effort involved in the creature is always towards the opposite condition which the body is experiencing--if a person is thirsty, he desires a replenishment by drink; if he is hungry he wants to be filled. Plato argues that the progress away from the balance existing in the organism cannot be counteracted by a contradictory impulse towards the normal condition by the bodily processes themselves. The desire for the opposite condition must be derived through the soul from the memory of past replenishment and its accompanying pleasures. At 350-D he concludes that

the fact that impulse leads the creature in a direction opposite to its experience proves ... the existence of a memory of something opposite to that experience. ... Our discussion then, inasmuch as it has proved that memory is what leads us on to the objects of our desire, has made it plain that it is to the soul that all impulse and desire, and indeed the determining principle of the whole creature, belong.

As A. E. Taylor correctly notes:

Desire is thus definitely a process of which the subject is the soul, not the body, and--if we are speaking of human hunger or thirst, that is of the desire for food or drink it is only loosely that we talk of the body as hungry or thirsty. Hence the simple formula with which we started, "pleasure is, or answers to, a process of organic repletion, as pain to one of depletion, is already found insufficient to distinguish even the hunger and thirst of a man from the physical discomfort of a hungry or thirsty brute.¹⁶

¹⁶Taylor, Plato: Philebus and Epinomis, p. 59.

Although the analysis of desire had previously appeared in the Gorgias, the final formulation of its nature had not yet been completed. Plato states in that dialogue:

Then do you realize the result--that you say a man enjoys pleasure simultaneously with pain, when you say that he drinks when thirsty? Does not this happen at the same time and the same place, whether in body or soul? For I fancy it makes no difference.¹⁷

Plato had not determined that desire occurred in the soul alone, apart from the body. In the Republic, however, he recognized that fact. All appetites such as hunger and thirst are classified under one process--"the soul of one who desires" is described as striving for the replenishment of that deficiency.¹⁸

With his analysis of physical and mental pleasures, Plato has given an outline of the two sources of the pleasurable experience and indicated the conditions under which such pleasures arise. His framework complete, he can next undertake the major task of the classification of pleasures.

¹⁷Gorgias, C.D.P., 496E.

¹⁸Republic, C.D.P., IX, 583C.

(iii) Classification of the Forms of Pleasure

The distinctions which were found to exist between the physical and mental pleasures form the basis for three ways of viewing pleasures, through the categories of truth, intensity and purity.

(a) True and False Pleasures

In the analysis of the mental pleasures, two important characteristics of such pleasures were noted--first, that the desire involved in the pleasures referred to anticipatory pleasures or pains and secondly, that there is always a mixture of pleasure and pain involved in the ensuing sensation. These two basic characteristics account for two major ways in which falsity can exist--first, because of the almost universal fact that man over-estimates the happiness which will be allotted to him in the future, and secondly, because a just calculation of the pleasures involved in a mixed experience is an extremely difficult if not impossible task to perform. The third area in which falsity occurs depends on the nature of pleasure in general as a process of repletion--often the nature of pleasure is mistakenly believed to be the neutral state.

Before discussing each of the forms of falsity it is necessary, as Plato realized, to justify the application of truth value to pleasures. According to Plato

at 36E, by appealing to experience we can find several instances, such as dreaming and insanity, in which a person mistakenly believes that he is experiencing pleasure or pain when no such emotions are really being felt. According to Plato, although the individual believes that he is experiencing pleasure and pain, such is not really the case. The emotions in dreams and those felt by the insane are not real in the sense that pleasure and pain are real when felt by a sane, awake person, and therefore such pleasure can be called "false". But in what does the falsity consist? Plato's solution to the problem is revealed in his general statement at 36C that pleasures are true or false in the same way as are fears, expectations, or opinions. Since fears and expectations fall under the same general category as pleasure, all being emotions and therefore questionable objects of truth value, the basis for the argument must be that pleasures are similar to opinions with regard to the manner in which truth value will be assigned to them.

Since it is generally accepted that opinions are true or false, Plato attempts to prove that the natures of pleasure and opinion are similar enough to vindicate the assignment of truth value to each. Similarities can, as Plato states at 37A, be seen in the structure of both phenomena: first, the states do exist--there are such

things as holding an opinion and feeling a pleasure; secondly, both processes have an objective reference--that about which the opinion is held and the object in which the pleasure is felt. Using these first two characteristics as premisses for an argument, Plato concludes that the person holding an opinion, whether rightly or wrongly, is always really holding that opinion, and the case is similar with the feeling of a pleasure. Three points are actually being made by Plato--first, that "in respect of reality holding an opinion and feeling a pleasure are on the same footing" (37A); secondly, truth or falsehood is an element which is both separate from the processes of knowing and feeling and is incapable of changing the natures of those experiences; and thirdly, that the two processes have within their nature the character of being rightly or wrongly held or felt.

The third point mentioned is the one which must be proved by Plato if his contention that pleasures can be called "false" or "true" is to stand. In other words it must be shown that the case of pleasure parallels that of opinion, in which "falsehood and truth supervene with the result that it becomes not merely an opinion but a certain sort of opinion, true or false respectively" (37B). Plato's argument takes the form of comparing the qualities of pleasures and opinions. To begin with, he must prove that pleasures and pains are not, as Protarchus claims in

the dialogue, simply pleasures or pains per se, that is, without qualities other than that of simply being felt. That pleasures do have qualities like greatness, smallness and intensity (37C) is admitted by the hedonists in their argument that the unlimited nature of pleasure accounts for its being equated with the greatest good for man (27E). Since pleasure admits of variations of degree, it is also possible that other qualities can be predicated of it--for example, truth and falsity. The argument used by Plato follows the general theory of predication,¹⁹ in which things are called by names because they possess the qualities in question--for example a person is called "good" because he is possessed of good things, a thing is beautiful because beauty is present in it. As Plato states at 37D, if badness is added to any of the things in question, it becomes a bad opinion or a bad pleasure. If such is the case, good and bad pleasures would exist. The existence of bad pleasures would conclusively discount any claim by the hedonists for an equation of the good and pleasure. Further, it would reveal the necessity of an analysis of the different kinds of pleasures in order to determine which pleasures should be admitted to the good life.

¹⁹Gorgias, C.D.P., 497E.

Once it has been accepted that rightness or wrongness can be so predicated, Plato needs only to define in what the falsity and truth consist in regard to opinions, then apply that factor to pleasures to explain their falsity. Plato concludes at 37E that an analysis of opinion reveals that wrongness or falsity exists when a mistake is made regarding the content of the opinion. It follows, according to Plato, that if a pleasure makes a similar mistake regarding its objective reference, the pleasure will also be mistaken, or false. A major problem, however, remains--how can pleasure be mistaken in regard to the object arousing the feeling of it? The answer to that question reveals the nature of the first type of false pleasure discussed by Plato in the Philebus.

1. False Pleasures and False Opinions

How can pleasure be mistaken regarding the nature of its object? The answer lies, according to Plato, in the relationship between pleasure and opinion. Not only are the two processes similar in nature but they also occur simultaneously. Differing pleasures often occur, according to Plato, at 38A, with true opinions and false ones. For Plato at least a part of the difference involved in the pleasures relates to the fact that the pleasures themselves contain some degree of falsity. He must show that pleasures are false not merely in the

sense that they accompany false opinions, but rather because the pleasures are infected with a falsity of their own. With an analysis of judgment he hopes that that point can be proved.

Plato's discussion of the nature of judgment in the passages from 38A to 39C reveals two major areas in which falsity may occur, in judgments about present and about future pleasurable sensations. In all judgments, memory and perception are involved. In the process, sense perception leads to an opinion which in turn becomes an assertion when audibly expressed. Since sense perception is the basis for all judgments, the truth value of the judgment depends on the dependability of that information. When memory, sensation, and the ensuing feelings, like love or fear or similar emotions, are true representations, the result of the process is true. When, however, the process begins with either indistinct or faulty sense perception, the result is faulty opinions and judgments. The process does not stop there. Once the opinions and judgments have been made, a picture of the assertion is made in the imagination. That representation is either true or false, depending on the nature of the assertion. If the picture pleases us, the result is a pleasurable sensation; if it is not to our liking, then the feeling of pain follows (38B-39E).

Similar to the case of pleasures occurring in the present or having occurred is that of anticipation. Corresponding to opinions based solely on the future are the pleasures of the soul. According to Plato at 39E it is a basic fact of human existence that all men look forward to the future and to what it will hold for them. Yet this projection into the future, the expectation, is actually an assertion made by ourselves to ourselves about facts which have not yet occurred. If the calculation of facts which we draw in our imagination alone is correct, the judgment about our future life is true; if it is faulty, then the judgment is false. Often men misjudge both their abilities and the goods which will come to them, and draw a picture of future abundant wealth, fame, or power. Having painted such a picture, they become overwhelmed by pleasant sensations--as Plato describes it at 40A, "they behold themselves in the picture immensely delighted with themselves". This delight, however, is false since it is based on a false representation of facts which have not yet occurred.

Included in this first type of false pleasures is an element of evil. The man who is good, just, and pious is, under Plato's theory, said to be dear to the gods. Since he is in harmony with the deities, the good man has written in his mind a rule of true communication, that is,

he realizes the true nature of present, past, and future events. The unjust, evil man, on the other hand, since he is void of communication with the gods, is filled with false representations. Plato concludes at 40B that "the evil, no less than the good, have pleasures painted in their minds, but these pleasures ... are false". False pleasures are therefore bad in a moral sense--bad men delight in false pleasures while good men enjoy true ones.

The source of the first kind of false pleasures has been described by Plato as the accompaniment of false opinions. As Plato notes at 40C, "a person holding any opinion at all must hold it in fact, yet it might sometimes have reference to what was not a fact, either of the present, the past, or the future". A corresponding condition is said, at 40D, to occur with pleasures and pains: "Anyone who feels pleasure at all, no matter how groundless it be, always really feels that pleasure, yet sometimes it has no reference to any present or past fact, while in many cases, perhaps in most, it has reference to what never will be a fact", and therefore can be called false pleasure.

Exactly what is the nature of this first type of falsity? How is falsity attached to those pleasures? According to Plato at 42A, "the falsity or truth of those opinions ... infected the pains or pleasures with what

they had caught themselves". Hackforth interprets Plato's statement as meaning that the analysis of judgment and its connection with pleasure shows "that although the quality of a pleasure as true or false does indeed depend (in the case of some pleasures, at least) on the quality of the judgment, yet the pleasure itself has that quality".²⁰

Despite the fact that Plato states that the falsity of the opinions "infects" the pleasures, he fails to explain how the transference manages to occur. In cases in which the pleasurable sensation accompanies an opinion, Plato merely states that the feeling arises from the picture painted in the imagination, accordingly as that representation pleases or displeases us. If the picture is wrong, that error is caused by faulty sense perception, which in turn causes the judgment or assertion to be false. Since pleasure has no powers of discrimination, being merely a reaction to the picture present before it, pleasure itself cannot be called "false" in the way that opinion is so described--that is, because of a lack of true facts or representations to sustain its choice. Although the pleasure may, as Plato states at 40D, have no reference to a fact, present, past, or future, from its very nature of being a response it cannot choose as can the reasoning process to accept or refuse the material

²⁰Hackforth, p. 72.

given to it by the senses, by referring to past experience in which similar situations have arisen. It does refer to an object or picture, and must respond in a manner befitting that representation. If the prospect of unbelievable riches presents a pleasing picture to us, that picture gives us pleasure. Our reaction befits the situation.

In opposition to Plato's contention that the pleasure involved is false, I would say, as does Protarchus, that the opinion, not the pleasure, is infected with falsity. If an error has been made, it must have occurred within a process capable of making mistakes--that of the reasoning process. If the objection should be made that the reasoning faculty is incapable of erring, we need only refer to Plato's definition of judgment in the Philebus. Since judgment involves memory in addition to sense perception, the element of error possible through sense perception should be counteracted by the recollection of previous instances in which such error has occurred. The reasoning faculty is, therefore, capable of correcting, or at least allowing for, misrepresentations; it must be classified as a discriminatory faculty.

Theodor Gomperz justifiably objects that Plato has committed a fallacy by attempting to withdraw aesthetic valuations from the sphere of subjective feeling and to

establish them on the bases of supposed objective criteria.²¹ Although pleasure has an objective reference, the relationship between pleasure and its object does appear to differ considerably from that of opinion and its reference. In opining, a judgment must be made about a situation. The process of judging always involves a process of reasoning about the elements involved in the situation. With pleasure, however, no conscious effort at analysis is involved--the response of an individual toward the object is immediate and unreflective. The relationship between pleasure and its object appears to be more akin to the process of perception, whose results are infallible, than to that of opining or judging. In both perception and the feeling of pleasure no possibility of falsity exists.

In his article, "True and False Pleasures", David Gallop contends that Plato has not sufficiently indicated falsity in the pleasure associated with false judgment.²² His first two objections, that a reaction is not affected by truth or falsity providing that the individual be-

²¹Theodor Gomperz, Greek Thinkers: A History of Ancient Philosophy, trans. G. G. Berry (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street), II, p. 190.

²²David Gallop, "True and False Pleasures", in A. D. Woozley, ed., Philosophical Quarterly, X (1960), 332-333.

believes the judgments to be true, and that if the pleasure were appropriate to that belief no discredit could be allotted to the pleasure have already been mentioned as objections to Plato's theory.

In the third and fourth objections Gallop attempts to discredit Plato's contention that only the evil man has misrepresentations of the future. He argues that there are instances in which ignorance of vital information is involved, when the individual cannot be blamed for misinterpreting the facts, and taking pleasure in them. According to Gallop, such instances occur with all individuals and cannot be designated solely to the evil person. No conclusions can be drawn about the moral quality of a man's reactions or his life generally from this first type of false pleasures. Gallop concludes that Plato has no valid grounds for excluding this kind of false pleasure from the good life or rating it at a lower scale than true pleasures, since the amount of such false pleasure in a man's life lies largely beyond his control.

As an argument directed from outside of Plato's system, Gallop's insistence that all men, whether they are favoured or disfavoured by the gods, partake of false judgments appears to be valid, especially in the case of present judgments when lack of information is often present in the situations than man encounters. Even the best of men make mistakes in their lifetimes. However, to do

Plato justice, we must view the passages at 40B-C in relation to Plato's own theory, that is, we must criticize Plato from within the boundaries of his own theory. For Plato the good man who is dear to the gods is the knowledgeable man, the man who knows not only how to cope with everyday experiences through right opinion, but also has knowledge of ultimate realities. The individual who is ignorant of the nature of the universe must also lack knowledge of the nature of particular occurrences in that universe. That ignorance is most clearly revealed, according to Plato, in judgments about future events, when no objective facts are immediately present to the person who is judging. A true judgment regarding future events requires knowledge of relations, of how the universe operates, and of the nature of the individual himself.

For Plato, the majority of people have inverted the true values of knowledge and relegated them to an inferior position. Pleasure in all forms becomes the greatest good; knowledge is viewed merely as a tool for realizing that pleasure. With that reversion the true nature of man as primarily a rational being becomes hidden, the pleasure factor becomes dominant, and judgment is overpowered by the passionate element of the soul. An abundance of false representations regarding future events occurs. In Plato's terms, therefore, the man who is dear

to the gods acts according to his real nature as a rational being, one who realizes the values of knowledge and pleasure in his life and acts according to that knowledge. With the rational factor in control, for the most part, as Plato states at 40C, the good man will delight in true pleasures rather than in false ones. Plato is not insisting that the good man is always right in his evaluation of events, but that in the majority of the cases the judgment is true rather than false. The exclusion of the pleasures associated with false judgments would automatically come about when the forms of knowledge were admitted into the good life, since knowledge would control the forms of pleasure. By introducing the moral note of disapproval for such pleasures, however, Plato has given a reason for rating false pleasures on a lower scale than the true pleasures and the forms of knowledge. In opposition to Gallop's contention, Plato would argue that the amount of such pleasures is in man's control to a large degree--with the proper use of reason the number of such false representations would lessen considerably.

Gallop's fifth objection is that these false pleasures are not related to any specific classes of experience or activity. To indicate that such is the case he presents two examples of false pleasures which, when compared, would destroy any classification into one genre

of experiences--a man's pleasure in a false report that his enemy is dead, and another's pleasure in dreaming that he may win a football pool. According to Gallop, only misapprehension is common to both pleasures; and in the case of the second, there is not even real "misapprehension", because the individual may have no illusions about winning. Gallop's examples, however, tend to discredit his own thesis. In the first place, he has chosen one example, the first, from what would be a present false pleasure, and the second from an anticipatory pleasure. Although Plato makes the general classification of false pleasures in association with false judgment, he makes a division into such false pleasures regarding past, present, and future judgments. In order to indicate that no or few similarities exist between the false pleasures, Gallop should have chosen examples in the same time period. Further, the second example itself would not have met with Plato's favour. Although it is, in a sense, an anticipatory pleasure since it refers to the future, in Plato's meaning of "anticipatory", the example does not refer to any future fact. No real pleasure is involved in the example because no assertion is being made to oneself of the winning of the lottery. In fact, the element of judgment is not really involved in the example proposed by Gallop. In opposition to Gallop, there is a general class of pleasures accompanying false judgment. Although

the pleasures themselves may not be false, there is a distinct genre of experiences to which Plato is referring, that of the pleasures accompanying false judgment.

Gallop's sixth objection, that the "cognitive" rather than the "affective" part of the hope or fear is false, has already been mentioned in the discussion of the first type of false pleasures. With the seventh objection Gallop concludes his discussion of the false pleasures associated with false judgment with what appears to be an appeal to the nature of man. His argument is as follows: "there may be something unsatisfactory in dreaming of unrealisable possibilities (of ideal states, for example), or enjoying 'memories' of a past that never happened. Yet it is almost as bad to live continually in a past that did happen; and, of course, if we do nothing but dream of our own success, our dreams will never come true."²³ In speaking of the false pleasures associated with unfounded expectations of future prosperity, however, Plato would reject such dreams because man would not then be realizing his true capabilities as a human being. Gallop's contention that "it is almost as bad" to live in the past indicates that the unsatisfactoriness involved has pragmatic implications concerning the happiness of the person involved, implications which Plato fails to give

²³Ibid., p. 333.

in his theory. Further, Plato does not suggest in any way living continually in a past or in the future. Plato was speaking not of living in dreams but rather of judging about facts and experiencing pleasure or pain associated with those judgments. The stress placed by Gallop on "dreaming" is unwarranted by the text under discussion.

2. Falsity due to Hedonic Calculation

In describing the first type of false pleasures, Plato introduced a moral note to the account, indicating that the badness of pleasures was due to the falsity inherent in them. The objection arises at 39E-41A that the badness consists in more than just the falsity: "surely it is not at all because they are false that we set down pains and pleasures as bad, but because they involve some serious and considerable badness of another sort". Plato fails, however, to continue explicitly with the problem of bad pleasures. At 41A he states that

these bad pleasures whose character is due to badness we will speak of a little later on, if we still think fit to do so. We must, however, discuss those false pleasures--and they are numerous and frequent--which exist or come to exist in us in another way. Maybe we shall find this useful for the decisions we have to make.

Plato's ambiguity in the above passage leads to different interpretations by various authors. Hackforth interprets it as a half-promise that is never fulfilled, except in the refusal by Plato at 65E to include any

pleasures accompanying folly or evil into the good life.²⁴ The passage does, however, lend itself to another interpretation. According to A. B. Taylor, Protarchus refuses to accept the generalization that the goodness or badness of pleasures depends simply on their truth or falsity because the truly depraved pleasures are not derived from unfounded anticipations. Socrates must show that other pleasures are false for different reasons in order to make the generalization stand.²⁵ Although Taylor's interpretation seems to contradict that of Hackforth, the two can be reconciled to a certain degree. By recognizing the one instance in which Plato returns to the topic of evil pleasures, Hackforth unwittingly disproves his own contention that the subject of bad and false pleasures is dismissed by Plato. According to Plato's first definition of false pleasure, as that which accompanies false opinion, and his second, which concerns the falsity per se of pleasures, the evil pleasures rejected by Plato at 63E owe their nature to the combination of the two forms of falsity which Plato describes. Both the judgment that extreme pleasures are good and the nature of those extreme pleasures, which is conducive to falsity, account for the rejection of the bad pleasures. Thus although Plato

²⁴Hackforth, footnote 1, p. 79.

²⁵Taylor, Plato: Philebus & Epinomis, p. 67.

appears to be dismissing the subject of bad and false pleasures, such is not really the case.

Plato states that "if we still think fit to do so" we will discuss the relationship in detail. In opposition to Hackforth's interpretation, I would agree with Taylor that the relationship is discussed, but implicitly rather than explicitly. The problem appears to be solved without the necessity of a formal discussion in the passages from 45D to 45E in the description of the extreme pleasures, in the description of malice in its relationship to comedy from 48C to 48E, and in the general description of evil pleasures in the Mixed Life at 63E. To support the contention that the discussion of bad-false pleasures is not dismissed, we can also appeal to Plato's vague statement of purpose in introducing the second type of falsity in pleasures at 41A--"maybe we shall find this useful for the decisions we have to make". Although "the decisions" may refer to the decisions concerning which pleasures are to be included in the Mixed Life, they may also be regarded as applying to the decisions whether false and bad pleasures can be equated, and consequently whether evil pleasures can be given the right to be admitted into the Mixed Life.

In conclusion two points must be made regarding the introduction of the topic of bad pleasures which immediately precedes the discussion in the Philebus of

the second type of falsity in pleasures. First, it forms a transition from the first to the second type since the badness involved in the first type will also be shown to be present in the second. Secondly, the connection between falsity and evil will be revealed as a prevalent characteristic of the mental pleasures.

The first type of falsity was based on the nature of the pleasures of anticipation. Another feature of pleasure also leads to error--that of its being a mixture of pleasure and pain. As Plato stated in the analysis of the mental pleasures, desire is a phenomenon of the soul, a condition in which the soul longs for a replenishment of the bodily habit. In desire there is always a mixture of pleasure and pain, both emotions being unlimited in nature, that is, they are capable of going to extreme degrees in the actual pleasurable or painful sensation. When we attempt to form a judgment concerning the amount of pleasure, the problem becomes one of finding a suitable method for deciding the amount of the pleasure and pain involved--as Plato states at 41E, "to determine the comparative magnitude, or degree, or intensity of a pain and a pleasure, or of one pain or pleasure as against another".

Even if such a method could be found, the results would be untrustworthy because of the nature of the objects with which it deals. As Plato states at 41E-42A:

Well now, if it is true that, in the case of vision, to observe magnitudes from a distance and from close at hand obscures the truth and engenders false judgment, does not the same hold good in the case of pains and pleasures? ... The reason why pleasures appear greater and more intense when compared with something painful, or again, in the reverse case, pains appear so by being compared with pleasures, is found in the pleasures and pains per se, according as we pass from a distant to a close observation of them, and set them beside one another.

A successful method, according to Plato at 42B, would result in a determination of the unreal, only apparent excess which makes the feelings appear greater or smaller than they really are.

The nature of the second type of false pleasures requires some explanation. As Hackforth explains, the falsity arises from an illusion in respect of hedonic magnitude. Since the pain is being felt immediately from the body, while the pleasure is only of anticipation and therefore is, in a sense, at a distance from us, we often exaggerate the present pain feeling and under-estimate the future pleasant feeling. Further, when the anticipated pleasure arrives, we often exaggerate it and under-estimate the past pain feeling.²⁶

In opposition to Hackforth, who stresses the temporal distance in which the actual pleasures and pains

²⁶Hackforth, 77-78.

occur, Constantin Ritter concentrates on the nature of the judgments which occur after or before an anticipated sensation. According to Ritter, Plato

thinks that that sensation is to be distinguished as false which arises from an incorrect conception about actual relations, or which arises through false hopes and fears about the future. Similarly, a sensation of pleasure or of pain will be false inasmuch as error in recollection or the power to produce contrasts forms its basis.²⁷

Plato's statement of the nature of the experience involved tends to make a clear explanation of the problem difficult. Hackforth's stress on temporal distance, although it appears to be warranted by Plato's phrase "according as we pass from a distant to a close observation of them, and set them beside one another", presents some difficulties, especially in reference to anticipated pleasures. Although the actual feeling, as a present experiencing, is in the future, there is a sensation present derived from the picture we form of the expected pleasant experience. Plato admits that fact when he states that the experience is a mixed one. The exaggeration mentioned by Plato would be derived from false hopes for the future, and accordingly the falsity involved would be of the first type already discussed by Plato. However, Plato regards the second type of pleasure as being basically different from

²⁷ Constantin Ritter, The Essence of Plato's Philosophy, trans. Adam Altes (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd:1933), p. 291.

the first type. As he states at 42A-B:

Just now it was the falsity of those opinions that infected the pains and pleasures with what they had caught themselves ... But now the reason why pleasures appear greater and more intense when compared with something painful, or again, in the reverse, pains appear so by being compared with pleasures, is found in the pleasures and pains per se.

Ritter's analysis, with its stress mainly on the nature of relation would also fall under the same criticism. If Plato were concerned only with the problem of comparison, he would have omitted the second classification of false pleasures.

Plato is arguing that the falsity involved in the experience exists in the pleasures per se. Thus it involves more than a comparison of the feelings of pleasure and pain. Granted that the nature of past feelings may be under-estimated in the experience of a present sensation because of the factor of proximity, as Hackforth suggests, within the experience itself certain factors appear which lead to a mistaken evaluation of the sensation. To begin with, since the experience is a mixed one, it is difficult to separate adequately the two factors in a precise manner. What appears to be a completely pleasurable sensation has within it an element of pain. Viewing it as one experience, a totality, we might judge that no pain is involved. A more detailed examination, however, would confirm the existence of two elements.

The second factor in the pleasures which tends to make them false is their unlimited nature. Since pleasures admit of no fixed degree, we cannot say that there is so much pleasure or pain in an experience. It is impossible to decide the exact amount of the feelings involved. The apparent or unreal element in the pleasurable or painful experience is therefore incapable of being precisely determined. Some falsity will always remain undetected in the mixed experience.

Both the method and the worth of hedonic calculation have been described in previous dialogues. In the Protagoras it is given the primary place of importance and advanced as the ethical standard.²⁸ Its value, however, gradually decreases in later works. With the Phaedo it is viewed as a degrading occupation for the philosopher, paralleling the devaluation of the worth of physical pleasures.²⁹ As G. M. A. Grube correctly notes, Plato

goes on to explain how a proper standard of conduct can be based only on knowledge. There are two ways of life then: the wrong way, that of the average man based on a careful weighing of the pleasure values, and the right way, that of the philosopher, based on knowledge. And, in the Phaedo, good means the transcendental Form of Goodness. This is an object of knowledge, and it is in this knowledge that the philosopher will find the only reliable criterion in his choice

²⁸ Protagoras, C.D.P., 356A-357B.

²⁹ Phaedo, C.D.P., 64C-D.

of pleasures. To physical pleasures he will attach little importance, but of any other pleasures we have heard practically nothing.³⁰

In the Gorgias³¹ the same theory of hedonic calculation as an inferior art is advanced with the comparison of the processes of art and routine. With the Philebus, therefore, the final rejection of the calculation of the pleasures of the body as a way of life is rejected--not only because it is an inferior occupation, but also because it is incapable of furnishing the information required of it.

David Gallop offers several objections to Plato's analysis of the second type of false pleasures.³² With the first objection Gallop contends that for an object to be false it must be a direct but misleading object of our experience, and that the false pleasures described by Plato fail to fall under that classification. To support his thesis, he makes a parallel between the case of pleasure and the overestimation of a man's bank balance or his next year's income. According to Gallop, the money that we wrongly suppose to possess is not false money--rather

³⁰G. M. A. Grube, Plato's Thought (Beacon Hill, Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), p. 69.

³¹Gorgias, C.D.P., 501A-B.

³²Gallop, 334-337.

it is no money at all. Taking first the example, we could argue against Gallop that the judgment about the money was false, not the money itself. Further, the example is unfair in that it fails to demonstrate what Plato is attempting to prove with his analogy with sense perception. In the case of vision, the distance involved has bearing on the judgment because, as Plato previously stated at SSC-D, objects viewed at a distance are often obscured and indistinct. Two different judgments will occur because one will be clear, the other unclear. With regard to pleasure, the case is different. The two feelings of pleasure and pain are felt simultaneously, one being close at hand, the other being either in the past or future and therefore at a distance. In opposition to Gallop, the feelings are direct objects of our experience and, like objects which are viewed at a distance, the suppressed factor is misleading to the person experiencing the feelings. The nature of the mixed experience, as a combination of pleasure and pain, in two temporal times, causes the misleading aspect. The example of the bank balance fails to demonstrate any mixedness of the experience, and is therefore unacceptable as a refutation of Plato's theory.

Gallop's second objection, that there is no special genre of experiences covered by the second type of falsity also lacks credibility. Plato is speaking of a

distinct type of experiences, the mixed ones in which hedonic calculation is involved. When Gallop objects, in the third comment, that such errors are inherent in our nature and are incapable of being avoided, he is not really arguing against Plato, who would admit that no method can adequately calculate the exact amount of pleasure or pain in an experience. Plato does, however, wish to reveal that such falsity is inherent in mixed experiences, and should be recognized as existing therein. That fact will provide a basis for the superior value of pure pleasures and the forms of knowledge.

Gallop's last six objections are based on the argument that we do not wrongly estimate the size of our pleasures for the reasons suggested by Plato. As Gallop states in his fourth comment, that is particularly true of cases in which pleasure is juxtaposed with pain. In the fifth comment, he sets up the argument by contending that the experiences not only seem pleasanter because of the contrast with pain but that the actual pleasure is enhanced or increased by the contrast. In ordinary speech, the actual, not merely the apparent pleasure, is enhanced by previous or present discomfort. Gallop's examples, however, seem to indicate that he is speaking of an actual pleasant sensation which follows an actual painful sensation. Plato himself admits at 45A-B that in such cases when the preceding want is great, the antecedent pleasure

will also be great. With regard to the second type of false pleasure, however, we are dealing with a different type of phenomenon involving a pained condition accompanied by desire, a condition in which the two feelings of pleasure and pain exist simultaneously.

With the sixth objection Gallop concentrates on the meaning of the idiom "seeming". What does it mean when we say that these experiences "seem" pleasanter, with the contrast with pain? According to Gallop, we do not mean to contrast the way the experience here and now seems with the way the same experience here and now is. What we do mean is that the experience here and now is more pleasant than is generally the case because of the circumstances. If Gallop is referring to instances of actual pleasure, which he seems to be doing, and is comparing that experience to previous experiences in which the feeling was different, then he is correct in stating that the "feeling" idiom refers to actual pleasures. Such experiences, however, do not refer to the mixed experiences of which Plato has been speaking, in which pleasure is introduced in an anticipatory role, rather than in the actual experiencing of the repletion.

A similar objection can be raised against Gallop's seventh objection. Although it may be true that a new acquaintance or an unfamiliar drink may "seem" pleasant in the sense of actually arousing pleasant sensations

without the knowledge of the whole class of similar experiences, that meaning cannot harm Plato's argument concerning the second type of false pleasures because it does not fit in with the type of experiences described by Plato. Nor does the description of "seem pleasant" as containing a large element of descriptive meaning in the eighth objection apply to Plato's contention.

In the ninth objection Gallop analyzes two phrases, "seeming pleased" and "feeling pleased", which seem to support Plato's "false pleasure" thesis. Gallop asks whether it is possible to either seem pleased or feel pleased without being pleased. In agreement with Gallop, if "seemed pleased" means merely a conventional expression of being pleased, then he is not really pleased. With regard to the "feeling" element, Gallop indicates that that idiom usually refers to the subject's awareness of and attention to his experience--not to an illusory experience. In other words, the individual must be pleased in order to feel pleased. Plato, however, would admit that even in the case of the second type of false pleasure the individual is being pleased. It is the amount, not the pleasurable sensation itself, which is miscalculated. The nature of the experience, not the experience itself, is what must be carefully scrutinized.

Gallop's final argument against Plato's discussion of the second type of false pleasure is based on the fact

that there are no units by which pleasure can be calculated. If no such units exist, it is questionable whether pleasure can be miscalculated or wrongly estimated.

Plato does, however, recognize the difficulties that are present in calculating the degree of pleasure or pain in an experience, as has already been mentioned in the discussion of the second type of false pleasures.

3. The Third Type of Falsity

Unlike the first two kinds of falsity which, according to Plato, attach themselves to the pleasures, the third type is concerned with the nature of pleasure in general and our recognition of that nature as repletion accompanying an emptying process. According to Hackforth this third type differs considerably from the first two. Whereas the others are concerned with pleasures and pains, the third kind is not really a false pleasure at all--in fact, it is not really a pleasure but a false belief which asserts that the neutral condition is pleasurable. Its inclusion in the discussion is warranted by the fact that Plato's purpose is to analyze all kinds of falsity that are attached, rightly or wrongly, to pleasures.³³

Although part of Hackforth's theory is correct, it fails to account for the whole of Plato's explanation

³³Hackforth, 81-82.

of the third type of falsity. Hackforth correctly interprets Plato's statement that the third kind is based on a misconception of the nature of pleasure but fails to notice that the discussion of the anti-hedonist theory and the ensuing classifications of pleasure with regard to intensity and mixedness and purity are used by Plato to demonstrate both the positive aspects and yet the basic misconception derived from that theory.

Instead of viewing the section under discussion as a whole, Hackforth ³⁴ makes an arbitrary break in the passages, using the shift in terminology from "false" to "mixed" as a bridge in Plato's thought. The break comes, according to Hackforth, when Plato ceases to speak about the neutral state and begins a discussion of mixed pleasures. Although pleasures equated with the neutral state are not pleasures at all, Hackforth argues that Plato realizes the existence of real pleasures, those of the mixed state, which do contain falsity. In opposition to Hackforth's interpretation, it will be shown that the discussion of the mixed pleasures is an integral part of the discussion of the third type of false pleasures. Further, indication will be given that "false" and "mixed" are not, as Hackforth suggests, terms which refer to the

³⁴Ibid., p. 86.

same state. The second reason given by Hackforth for the change in terminology is that it prepares the way for associations with religious purity. According to Hackforth, Plato begins at that point to study the pathology of pleasure and pain, that is, the connection with the sickness or disease of both body and soul. It has already been indicated, however, that the discussion on the moral level has already begun. Lastly, it will be argued that the falsity of this third type consists not merely in a false belief, but also in the feelings themselves associated in the mixed experience under discussion.

The argument for the third kind of falsity is based on a misconception that arises when a person mistakes the nature of a pleasant or painful life. According to Plato, there are three types of lives--the pleasant, the painful, or the life consisting of neither pleasure nor pain, which is equated at 35A-B with the life of intelligence. The neutral state, described at 42D-E, exists when neither repletion nor depletion is occurring. In order that the discussion be based on a firm foundation, Plato must first demonstrate that the third state is capable of existing. His proof rests on a clarification of the theory of sensation. Previously he had claimed that motions from the body become sensations only when both body and soul are moved together. At 43C he explains

that only great changes cause pains and pleasures--moderate and small ones producing no pain or pleasure whatsoever. Thus even though there may be a continuous flowing up and down within our bodies, (43A), as long as the processes are not extreme a neutral state can and does exist. Plato concludes at 43C-D that three states of life are possible--the pleasant, the painful, and the neutral, each being different from the others. When it occurs that a person fails to recognize the triad of lives, he mistakenly equates the pleasant or painful with the lack of pain or of pleasure respectively. As Plato states at 43E,

it cannot be right either to hold the intermediate life to be pleasant or painful, if it is a question of holding an opinion, or, to speak of it so, if it is a question of speaking; unless indeed we desert right reasoning.

David Gallop objects to the third type of false pleasures on several points.³⁵ First, he correctly notes that there is no empirical evidence to sustain the depletion-repletion theory, which is the basis for Plato's argument. Even if the theory is accepted, several other problems arise. In his second observation, Gallop objects that although repletion is said to cause physical pleasure, Plato refuses to call that pleasure "true" pleasure. In opposition to Gallop, it can be argued that

³⁵Gallop, 338-340.

pleasure is not equated to the normal condition, but is described as accompanying the process of repletion. Gallop recognizes that fact in his third observation. He argues against the view, however, that there could be a confusion between the state of being replete with the process of replenishment. To indicate the validity of his contention, Gallop introduces an example of the process of replenishment and one of the state of being replete--the pleasure of attacking dinner and the after-dinner feeling. Gallop argues that no person would confuse the two, and thereby concludes that Plato was not actually speaking of a confusion between the state and process of replenishment. Gallop's example, however, does not provide sufficient evidence to prove that the neutral state cannot be mistakenly taken to be the pleasant or painful state, nor does it warrant the contrast that he suggests in his sixth observation. If we take Gallop's example, it could be argued that even the after-dinner feeling is not pleasurable unless it is compared to the distress felt before the repletion. Plato wants to argue a point which seems to be empirically justified--that the release from pain caused by repletion causes pleasure in the sense that it destroys pain. All great changes from the normal condition of the body cause pleasures or pains.

There is no reason, however, for asserting the contrast mentioned in the fourth observation is really the

contrast between felt process and neutral state of repletion and other forms of pleasure not involving the discomfort of any previous deficiency at all. The pure forms of pleasure are introduced not as a contrast between illusory and true pleasures, but rather as a further proof that the neutral state cannot be equated with a cessation of pain, a point that has already been established in the remarks concerning the third kind of false pleasure.

In his fifth observation, Gallop analyzes Plato's statement that we mistake the feeling of relief from previous distress for one of positive pleasure. The example of the gourmet would present problems for Plato since, as Gallop suggests, in that case the pleasures of taste would have some claim to purity. They would not, however, have as much claim as those of smell, as Gallop would suggest, since the processes of repletion and depletion would still be involved, and therefore perceptible antecedent pain would be present.

An argument paralleling that of the Philebus appeared previously in the Republic.³⁶ There pain is regarded as the opposite of pleasure, and the neutral state is described as a quietude of the soul. Plato argues that it is impossible for the intermediate state to be-

³⁶Republic, C.D.P., IX, 583C-584A, 584B-C.

some either pleasure or pain. To support his contention he uses two arguments: first, from an examination of motion and secondly, from a comparison of the natures of mixed and pure pleasures. The first argument describes pleasures and pains as motions of the soul, while the neutral state is a quietude. Since the neutral state is distinguished by its lack of motion, it cannot be equated with either pleasure or pain, which are characterized by motion towards or away from a normal condition. When the condition of quietude occurs, however, it is often mistaken for one or another of the two states. As Plato states at 584A of that dialogue, "in such case the quietude in juxtaposition with the pain appears pleasure, and in juxtaposition with the pleasure pain. And these illusions have no real bearing on the truth of pleasure, but are a kind of jugglery". The element of contrast, therefore, plays an important role in the third type of false pleasure.

The second argument presented in the Republic disproves the theory that pleasure is merely cessation of pain. Since certain pure pleasures exist, like those of smell, which are not preceded by pain, the general theory that pleasure is merely a cessation of an unpleasant sensation cannot be true. Despite the fact that it cannot be equated with a cessation of pain, Plato realizes that

in many cases the pleasurable sensation is closely related to that phenomenon. Both in the mixed bodily sensations and in anticipatory pleasures the element of pain is always included. The argument in the Philebus closely parallels the outline in the Republic, and tends to confirm the theory that the section is not divided, as Hackforth argues.

In the Philebus the false belief that pleasures are nothing but escapes from pains is attributed at 44A to the enemies of Philebus. The identity of those enemies, although it is most likely the Pythagoreans, is never specifically stated by Plato, and therefore remains questionable.³⁷

Although the anti-hedonist theory is introduced by Plato as a false theory, some aspects of their position are of positive value to the discussion of pleasure. We can, as Plato notes at 44C, "avail ourselves of their gift of divination" concerning the variable nature of pleasure and the illusory character of its attractiveness (44C-D). According to the anti-hedonists, if "the true nature of any form" is to be discerned, we must focus our attention on the greatest amount of that form. If hardness is the subject of our research, then we must look to the hardest thing that we can find. In

³⁷Gomperz, p. 190 and Hackforth, p. 87.

the analysis of pleasure, therefore, our attention should be focussed on the highest and most intense pleasures--those of the body. Looking further at the situation we find that these pleasures become even greater in degree with a sick man than with a healthy person. Plato has already established that the bodily pleasures consist of a mixture of pleasure and pain. Taking the nature of desire, a phenomenon which yearns for the opposite condition of depletion, it follows that a great want will be followed by an intense hope for repletion, and therefore a great pleasure. Since an ill person feels more deprivation, he must consequently experience greater pleasures than does a person with only moderate wants. Plato concludes that the magnitude of pleasures is greater with the case of sickness than with health, and therefore greater pleasures exist in a profligate life than in a temperate one. As Plato states at 45D-E two lives can be distinguished through the category of the intensity of pleasure: "the temperate man, surely, is regularly restrained by the proverbial warning, 'Never too much', and heeds it; whereas the senseless profligate is mastered by his extreme pleasure, which ultimately drives him insane and makes him the talk of the town". The greatest pleasures and the greatest pains occur when both body and soul are bad, not when they are good.

Several points are being made by Plato. First,

the nature of bad pleasures is clarified. In addition to the falsity attaching to pleasures, badness involves magnitude--overwhelming pleasures are evil, ruining the individual who indulges himself in them. Secondly, the third type of falsity involves the differentiation of pleasures into a new category of intensity. Thirdly, a classification of pleasures under mixed and pure arises since the third type of falsity which occurs in the mixed group of pleasures can be shown to be false through an analysis of the pure types. After the analysis of the mixed types of pleasures, Plato states at 44D that "next you shall learn what pleasures I regard as true, so that when we have examined the nature of pleasure from both points of view, we may have a comparative basis for our decision", that is, the decision whether pleasure can, or cannot be equated with riddance of pain. Although the classifications by intensity and into mixed and pure are integral to the discussion of the third type of falsity, each will be discussed separately in order that their significance can be properly appreciated.

(b) Classification of Pleasures according to Intensity

For Plato, the extreme pleasures are found in a profligate existence, the moderate ones in a life of temperance. The contrast in lives due to the element of intensity of pleasures and pains is mentioned several times

by Plato in his earlier works. The Gorgias, in particular, stresses the distinction in the analogy of the sieve.³⁸ Whereas the temperate man is content and relatively free from worry, the intemperate man is forced to search continually for pleasures to satisfy his intense desires. The evil man who experiences and yearns for such pleasures is miserable for two reasons--not only is his an endless search for satisfaction, but his overpowering passion, and the actions which are necessary to satisfy his desires, preclude any possibility of a true and lasting friendship, which is, according to Plato, one of the greatest boons to mankind. Evil and intensity, therefore, stand together in a man's life. In the Republic the soul of the despot is described as enslaved, full of confusion and repentance, needy, suffering from unfulfilled desires. In opposition stand the moderate desires. The righteous man is devoid of such extremes of passion.³⁹

A description of the extreme pleasures involves a further classification into mixed and pure. Only by showing that the intense pleasures of the mixed class have

³⁸Gorgias, G.D.P., 493E-494A, 507D-E, 577D-580C.

³⁹Republic, G.D.P., 577D-580C.

in their nature the foundations for error can Plato prove that the theory stating that pleasure is equivalent to the release from pain is false.

(c) Mixed and Pure Pleasures

The analysis of mixed pleasures is introduced to explain the types of extreme pleasures, on which the theory of the anti-hedonists is based. Mixed pleasures, those in which pain is always present, can occur in the body, the soul, or the body and soul combined. In every sensation the experience is called pleasant or painful, depending on whether pleasure or pain is the predominant factor, or neutral, when the two factors are equal in magnitude and thereby cancel each other out (46D).

The mixed experience of the body occurs when the natural state of the organism is being either impaired or restored to its natural condition. When the body is attempting to rid itself of one experience and attain the other, "a fierce excitement" often occurs (46C). Instances in which pains predominate are itching and tickling, in which the inflammation or irritation is internal and the person fails to relieve it. However, when the pleasure element predominates the person becomes excited, jumps for joy, is, as Plato notes at 47A, driven clean out of his wits and commences "shouting aloud like a fool and lunatic". The people who enjoy such pleasures, who call them the

greatest pleasures and believe that the person experiencing them is the most fortunate of all beings, are described by Plato at 47B as the greatest of fools. Although Plato does not specify the reason for his evaluation of such individuals, it is not difficult to see why he condemns their opinions. They fail, to begin with, to discern that those greatest pleasures are mixed with correspondingly fierce pains, and further, to distinguish the excitement aroused by the struggle against one condition from the pleasure element. The profligate mistakes the real nature of pleasure.

As A. E. Taylor correctly notes, the work of the classification of false pleasures continues in the discussion of the mixed pleasures.⁴⁰ He argues that in the passages from 46D to 47B Plato illustrates that mistakes in error of pleasure balance occur--in other words, that the intensity of pleasure fails to be a true measure of the feeling since the stronger element of the pleasure-pain combination tends to repress the importance of the weaker. According to Taylor, the type of falsity involved is even more serious than that included in the errors due to hedonic calculation. Instead of attaching to the judgment about the magnitude of the two opposing

⁴⁰Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 424.

sensations, the falsity exists in the immediate experience per se. Thus the difference between this case and that of the 'illusions of perspective' is that the element of contrast and anti-hedonist tension is now an ingredient in the actual concrete single experience. In the mixed experience we have a type of falsity existing in the sensation which itself misrepresents the nature of pleasure. The great pleasures, although they are not really intense, tend to be desired for their greatness. The factor of intensity has the power to lure individuals like the Hedonists to accept the theory that only mixed experiences are valuable.

The second type of mixed pleasures, that of body and soul combined, has already been explained, as Plato notes at 470^c-D, as the mixture that occurs when the soul anticipates repletion while the body is undergoing depletion. It is important to note that such an occurrence is only one type of mixed experience.

There remains only one instance of mixed pleasure to be explained, that of pleasure and pain occurring in the soul alone. To illustrate pains of the soul itself, Plato lists, at 47A, the examples of anger, fear, longing, lamenting, love and emulation. Passion and anger, although they are pains, are, as Plato indicates with a quotation from Homer, "replete with immense pleasures" (47B) as are lamentation and longing (48A). In tragedy a similar mixture occurs.

To clarify the nature of a mixed experience of the soul alone, Plato presents a detailed examination of one instance, comedy, in the passages from 48B to 50D. Once the elements of comedy have been discerned, states Plato at 50D, it is clear that other cases such as love and fear could also be analyzed with similar results derived from their study. Further, once mixed pleasures of the soul have been shown to exist, and the nature of the mixture explained, a general principle can be stated-- "that whether the body be affected apart from the soul, or the soul apart from the body, or both of them together, we constantly come upon the mixture of pleasure with pain" (50D).

The mixture of emotions which arise in comedy is analyzed with specific reference to the malice felt by a spectator of that form of art. Although malice is a pain of the soul, a certain pleasure occurs simultaneously with the pain when a malicious person views others who are experiencing misfortune. The nature of malice as it is revealed in comedy will be shown by Plato through a discussion of the ridiculous, and through the part played by ignorance in the ridiculous. The ridiculous, according to Plato, is a certain form of badness which derives its name from a state of mind which is noted for its ignorance of one's true nature. Such ignorance or stupidity which is

an ill thing partakes of one or more of three forms: ignorance of personal possessions, of the true nature of one's physical attributes, or most important, of the possessions of the soul. It is an almost universal attribute of mankind, and an evil one, to claim, dispute, and lie about its wisdom. Further, in mankind in general two classes of people are foolish enough to mistake their own nature--the strong and the powerful, and the weak and impotent. When a weak person holds a false opinion of himself, that person is called ridiculous by people who see him. When, however, a powerful person mistakes his own character, he is viewed as formidable and hateful. As Plato states at 49C: "Ignorance in the strong is hateful and ugly; it is fraught with mischief to all around, and so are its copies on the stage, but weak ignorance ranks as the ridiculous, which in fact it is.

The exact nature of the experience of malice in comedy is explained by Plato. Pleasure and pain can be wrongful or proper, depending on the circumstances under which the emotion arises. Taking delight in an enemy's misfortunes is neither wrong nor malicious, but when a similar reaction occurs when a friend experiences evil the response is wrongful. Ignorance is recognized as an evil. When we see our friends deluding themselves, being ridiculous in their overestimation of their physical, mental, or worldly assets, we laugh at them. The mixture

of pleasure and pain is clear. Plato concludes that "the upshot of our argument then is that when we laugh at what is ridiculous in our friends, we are mixing pleasure this time with malice, mixing, that is, our pleasure with pain; for we have been for some time agreed that malice is a pain in the soul, and that laughter is a pleasure, and both occur simultaneously on the occasions in question" (50A). In laments, tragedies and comedies, both in real life and on the stage, the mixture of pain and pleasure occurs in the soul alone.

Having described the mixed pleasures, Plato reveals at 51A his reason for introducing the extreme anti-hedonist position. The value of the theory lies in its insight that some pleasures are apparent and quite unreal, while others seem to be great and numerous, but are in fact intermingled with pains and processes of relief occurring in the suffering of both body and soul. Despite the fact that the anti-hedonist position is false in its basic assumption that there are no real pleasures, an analysis of their theory reveals the falsity that can exist in the mixed pleasures. For Plato, however, there are other real pleasures which fail to come under the heading of escapes from pains and which are true, rather than false in nature. In both the Republic and the Gorgias⁴¹ the introduction of the pure pleasures is used to discredit

⁴¹Gorgias, G.D.P., 584B-C.

the anti-hedonist position.

The basic characteristic of these pure pleasures, which include beautiful colours, figures, most odours, and some other experiences, is that such experiences are not preceded by a perceptible and painful want, but are accompanied by a perceptible and pleasant sensation. At 51C of the Philebus Plato explains the nature of the purity attaching to the pleasures derived from colours, figures, etc. Taking the example of figure, he warns us that it does not pertain to living creatures or pictures; the beauty attaches itself to simple figures like straight or round, and the surfaces and solids that the craftsman produces from straight and round. Such things are beautiful in themselves and "they carry pleasures peculiar to themselves which are quite unlike the pleasures of scratching" (51C-D). Simple colours produce a similar response. To make his meaning clearer Plato lists more examples. Audible sounds which are both smooth and clear, and deliver a single series of pure notes are beautiful in themselves and are attended by a specific kind of pleasure. The characteristics of these first three pleasures, colour, figure, and odour, are three in number--there is no perceptible preceding pain or want, their objects are beautiful in themselves, and the pleasures are peculiar to themselves. Similar to the first class of pure pleasures, but "of a less sublime type" (51E) are the pleasures of odours. Although they

are of less value per se than the first class, since they exhibit the characteristic of no preceding pain, and since their general character and source of experience are the same, Plato classifies them within the first group.

The third type, or second, if odours are included in the first type, is that of learning. Like the first two kinds, there is no perceptible want preceding the pleasures of learning. In connection with the nature of want in the pleasures of knowledge, Plato at 52A-B introduces a rather confused argument. He asks whether the feeling of distress is involved when knowledge is lost. Protarchus' answer is a surprising one--he replies that distress does not come "to a man's natural self" (52A), but that it does arise with the reflexion on the loss and the pragmatic utility which such knowledge might have entailed. The natural self, as Hackforth explains,⁴² is not the self which feels the pain; somehow the distress is felt quasi-externally, almost as if there were another self which feels the sensation. At 52B Plato argues that the experiences of the natural self alone are relevant to the discussion, therefore no pain is felt in forgetting. The conclusion is that pleasures of learning are unmixed, and that they belong to only a privileged few.

⁴²Hackforth, footnote 2, p. 101.

Hackforth tends to classify the unmixed pleasures into two groups only, according as they are, or are not, accompanied by the apprehension of beauty.⁴³ The sublime kind of pleasure, under his classification, consists of the pleasures of viewing certain simple shapes and colours, and of hearing simple musical notes. Under the second group would come the pleasures of smell, which do not involve the apprehension of beauty, and the pleasures of learning. The differences in value, according to Hackforth, among pure colours, regular shapes, single musical notes and smells are that the objects of smell, unlike the others, fail to exemplify the unity in variety or the relation of symmetry in a whole of parts. Although the theory could be Platonic, there is no textual justification at this point in the Philebus for asserting that the value difference depends on such a criterion.

Constantin Ritter tends to make the two classifications into pure pleasures of physical nature and of spiritual nature. He says⁴⁴

Pure pleasures of a physical and sensuous nature are, e.g. those which are produced by perception of beautiful colours and lines, regular geometrical figures and stereometric bodies, and by pleasing odours and tones. They are of a softer and quieter nature [a point to be established

⁴³Ibid., 88-89.

⁴⁴Ritter, 291-292.

by Plato] and they stimulate and vivify without causing a feeling of want or pain either before or afterwards. In the spiritual realm they have their counterpart in joy known only to a few individuals; this joy is accompanied by the successful activity of the urge for knowledge.

Theodor Gomperz agrees that the pleasures of odours have been classified in the first group of pure pleasures, keeping its difference from figure and sound in mind, while the pleasures of scientific knowledge belong in the second. One noteworthy criticism levelled by Gomperz is that Plato seems to ignore the difficulties of learning.⁴⁵ The pleasures accompanying learning are in a different class from the other pure pleasures mentioned by Plato. In the other instances, the objects of beauty seem to provoke a simultaneous response of pleasure in the person viewing them; with learning, however, a more complicated process seems to be involved. There are no specific objects of learning mentioned by Plato in the Philebus which would evoke the pleasurable response. Further, rather than there being a spontaneous response, it seems more probable that reflection, rejected by Plato at 52B as not pertaining to "the natural self", is required before the pleasant experiences can occur. It seems, under Plato's conditions, that a person experiencing the pleasures of learning must not only be learning, but also

⁴⁵Gomperz, p. 192.

experiencing pleasure while learning and, at the same time, recognize, or be conscious of, the two factors.

The factor of consciousness can be explained by Plato's theory of sensation. Although pure pleasures fail to leave an impression (21B-C), certain manifestations of body dis-equilibrium reach the soul and become co-mingled with it to produce the sensation of pleasure or pain when great changes occur in the organism. Both the recognition of the nature of the experience and the calculation of its strength appear to be inherent in the experience.

The problem remains, however, whether it is possible to experience two phenomena at the same time, as Plato suggests in the pleasures of learning. It is doubtful whether a person can be learning and at the same time be taking pleasure in that experience. Protarchus' suggestion at 52A, that pain is felt on reflection, appears to be plausible because there is a specific content of lost knowledge that would be examined, and the response would be aimed at that content. With the experience of reasoning, however, no particular object is there to evoke a response--the only object is a process which, under Plato's restrictions, cannot be viewed on reflection.

According to Plato at 37A pleasure always has an objective reference, as does opinion. When a person is gaining knowledge, the reference in question is objective;

when he is experiencing pleasure, there is an object towards which he feels pleasure. For Plato, an individual can experience the pleasures of learning, or of acquiring new knowledge. The objective reference for the pleasure appears to be the process of learning itself. If such is the case, the object of the pleasure would be a process, and would therefore be considerably different from the objective references mentioned by Plato for the feelings of pleasure and for opinion. If, on the other hand, the pleasures of learning refer to responses to the content of knowledge gained by the learning process, the additional process of analyzing the nature of the worth of that knowledge would be required for the response to occur. Instead of an immediate response to the object by the individual, that is, a response of the natural self in relation to the object, a second process of analysis would occur, the results of which would evoke the appropriate response. Thus only a second self, which Plato rejects, could view the benefits of learning and take pleasure in them.

The special significance given to the pleasures of learning is noticeable in the Republic⁴⁶ when Plato compares the values of pleasures belonging to physical repletion with those of learning. Just as hunger and thirst

⁴⁶Republic, G.D.P., IX, 585B-586D.

constitute an emptiness of the body, so do ignorance and folly form an emptiness of the habit of the soul. When body and soul partake of nourishment, the void is filled. The truer filling and fulfillment is that of the more real being. That which more truly is, is unchanging, immortal, and akin to truth. Only the pleasures proper to man, those that reason approves of, follow truth. Since reason alone chooses the proper, the best, and the truest pleasures, the pleasures of knowledge must be of more value than the pleasures pertaining to any other objects.

R. C. Lodge's summary stresses the superior value of the pleasures of reason over the pleasures of sense;⁴⁷

For Platonism there is, on the one hand, Reality, a system of Ideas organized around the Idea of Good, a system which is perfect, self-sufficient, final. On the other hand, there is Man, a being imperfect, dependent, weak and needing support. The good for man consists in seeking that support where alone final support is to be found--in learning to understand the Divine order, and to make over human life in terms of the Divine patterns, to take reality up into human nature, to become real and Divine, so far as this is possible for man. Man is a bundle of instincts, reachings out after experiences of all sorts. Of themselves, these instinctive gropings lead nowhere. Out of touch with the one thing which supremely matters, all the lesser goods of life--wealth, power, and the rest--are simply unmeaning, and a life

⁴⁷R. C. Lodge, Plato's Theory of Ethics (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1928), p. 56.

spent in the pursuit of pleasure, wealth, etc., is a life utterly devoid of value and significance.

Having described both the mixed and pure pleasures, Plato is in a position to decide whether the anti-hedonist is justified. One point has already been decided--that pleasures do not consist solely in a reduction of the pain element. The question still remains whether all pleasures are false. In analyzing a quality for truth value, we can follow one of two methods--the anti-hedonist method of analyzing an object by referring to the largest amount of that object, or the proper manner of choosing the purest quality. In the analysis of the intense pleasures, we have found that only mixed pleasures can provide the greatest amount of feeling. However, it has also been shown that those pleasures are replete with falsity. Taking a specific example, that of whiteness, we find that the quality or purity of the colour, not the bulk, determines which example of the colour is most true. Plato concludes at 53B-C that "any and every sort of pleasure that is pure of pain will be pleasanter, truer, and fairer than one that is not, whatever be their comparative bulk or quantity."

With the final account of true and false pleasures, Plato has proved that the anti-hedonists are mistaken on two counts--first, with their limitation of the nature of pleasure to physical repletion and, secondly,

by their failure to recognize that some pleasures may be true. Through an analysis of their position, Plato has revealed the real nature of pleasure in its various forms and shapes and the value of the different pleasures. His classification being completed, he can next describe the forms of knowledge.

(c) Actual Forms of Knowledge

Plato's classification of the forms of knowledge appears in the passages from 55C to 59C of the Philebus. The scale of the kinds of knowledge is an ascending one, depending on the amount of precision and mathematical determination involved in the various arts and sciences. Beginning with rule of thumb crafts devoid of measurement, such as music, medicine, agriculture, navigation and military science, it progresses to crafts making considerable use of measure and instruments, like building. The superior value of the second class of arts and crafts depends on its greater degree of exactness.

A major division can be made between the first examples which make use of unequal units in their reckoning and the philosophical arithmetic used in geometry and calculation, which works only with pure numbers. As Plato states at 57C-D, "the arts which we have had before us [calculation and measurement] are superior to all others, and ... those amongst them which involve the

effort of the true philosopher are, in their use of measure and number, immensely superior in point of exactness and truth."

More superior than even the geometry and calculation of the philosopher is the art of dialectic. Unlike the arts whose value stems from the degree of mathematical precision, dialectic is in the privileged position of dealing not with the forever changing entities of experience which are incapable of providing precise and exact truth but rather with that which exists in reality, that which remains forever unchanged. Dialectic alone possesses paramount truth since only it possesses in fullest measure reason and intelligence in their purest forms. At 59C Plato states "that we find fixity, purity, truth and what we have called perfect clarity, either in those things that are always unchanged, unaltered and free of all admixture, or in what is most akin to them; everything else must be called inferior and of secondary importance."

III

THE FIRST FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Plato's first task in the Philebus is to indicate whether either pleasure or knowledge can be equated with the good life for man. In order for such an equation to be valid, the factor in question must possess all three qualifications of the good which Plato notes at 20D: perfection, adequacy, and choiceworthiness. The good for man is "what any one of us who knows what it is would be completely satisfied by".⁴⁸

Similar descriptions for the good are presented in both the Gorgias and the Republic. In the former dialogue⁴⁹ the good is described as the end of all actions, as that for the sake of which everything is performed. Although the argument in the Gorgias, that everything including the pleasant is done for the sake of the good, is not repeated in the Philebus, the similarity in the description of the distinguishing marks or notes of the good in the two accounts is clear. Similarly the description

⁴⁸Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 413.

⁴⁹Gorgias, C.D.P., 499E-500A.

in the Republic of the good as that "which every soul pursues and for its sake does all that it does"⁵⁰ stresses the same factor, although the account refers to a transcendental good.

In the passages from 208 to 220 Socrates attempts to prove that neither of the lives of pleasure or of knowledge is worthy of being called the good life for man. His method, the experimental or method of difference,⁵¹ is to apply each of the three forms of good to the lives of pleasure and knowledge unmixed with their opposites. Only by using the pure forms of each can Plato determine whether either, alone, can rightfully be called the good. With regard to choiceworthiness, the insufficiency of pleasure is evident since consciousness, memory, and calculation are required in any pleasurable experience for it to be felt, remembered, or anticipated. As for the life of knowledge, no man would choose to live without pleasurable sensations. The most choiceworthy life would be one which contained a mixture of the two elements. Regarding completeness and sufficiency, only the mixed life fulfills those two requirements. Neither the life of pleasure nor that of knowledge can be equated with the

⁵⁰ Republic, C.D.P., 505E-506A.

⁵¹ Gomperz, p. 188.

good life for man. As Socrates states at 22B, any person who prefers a life other than the mixed life is mistaken in his estimate of the nature of what is truly desirable, and thereby is asking for what he does not really want as a result of either ignorance or a unhappy necessity.

The battle between the two claimants, pleasure and knowledge, for the title of good is by no means limited to the Philebus alone. The rights of both were already dismissed by Plato in the Republic.⁵² In that dialogue he argued that knowledge, to be the good, meant knowledge of the Good, and therefore left the Good still undefined. As for pleasure, since there are both good and bad pleasures, the theory that pleasure is the good ultimately terminates in a contradiction in terms, i.e. the same things, pleasures, could be both bad and good at the same time.

Socrates' statement at 22B of the Philebus, that the equation of either pleasure or knowledge with the good is a result of either ignorance or necessity, also has precedents in earlier works. Taking necessity as the element leading to the false opinion, we find that in the Protagoras⁵³ Plato cites instances in which overpowering passions can force a man to commit evil actions despite the fact that he recognizes the proper course of action. A

⁵²Republic, G.D.P., 505B-C.

⁵³Protagoras, G.D.P., 355B.

similar account is given of the despot in the Republic,⁵⁴ enslaved by his passions, full of repentance, needy, suffering from unfulfilled desires, who is forced by the pleasures of sense to act contrary to his real wishes. The account given in the Gorgias,⁵⁵ in the analogy of the sieve, clearly demonstrates how a man can be compelled to spend the whole of his life in pursuit of pleasure.

The second factor, ignorance, also plays a major role in the decision that one factor, especially pleasure, is the good. In the Protagoras⁵⁶ all actions performed by a person who is mastered by pleasure are described as being committed through ignorance since they are performed without true knowledge of the good, which is described as a pleasant life regulated by the factor of intelligence. The same point is made in the Gorgias.⁵⁷ According to Socrates, all harmful results occur when a person does what he does not really will to do. Taking the example of the tyrant, who is believed by Polus to be the happiest of all men, since he is ignorant of what really constitutes the

⁵⁴Republic, C.D.P., 577D.

⁵⁵Gorgias, C.D.P., 493A-494A.

⁵⁶Protagoras, C.D.P., 355D-356D.

⁵⁷Gorgias, C.D.P., 468D, 474C-477B.

happy life for man, he is revealed by Plato to be the most miserable of all men. The false belief that happiness consists in the ability to inflict wrong on others and to go unpunished leads such an individual into actions which he would not perform if he recognized the nature of a happy life. To suffer wrong rather than to inflict it, to be punished rather than to escape just retribution are, according to Plato, actions which are better for the person. The argument in the Republic⁵⁸ is similar to that presented in the Gorgias. Justice, which is described as virtue and wisdom, is contrasted with injustice, a vice and ignorance. The happiest man is the man who lives well and is just; the unhappy man the evil one. Since injustice is less profitable than justice and, according to the account in the Gorgias, unprofitable consequences result from a lack of knowledge, it follows that the person who maintains that the unjust life is the happy life is mistaking the real nature of the pleasant life.

The first formulation of the problem has been completed. Since both pleasure and knowledge fail to demonstrate the three qualities which any good must possess, neither factor is worthy of being the good for man. A third state, however, that of the mixture of

⁵⁸Republic, C.D.P. 350D-354A.

pleasure and knowledge, has been found which illustrates all three notes of the good. With the discovery of the third state two questions arise: first, which of the two constituents is more valuable in the mixture; and secondly, what causes the "goodness" of the good mixture. Those two questions constitute the second and third formulations of the ethical problem.

IV

THE SECOND FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Plato has decided that the good life for man is the mixed life. The question now becomes one of value--whether pleasure or knowledge is the more important element in that life.

1. The Need for Classification

Before that question can be answered it is necessary to recognize in what sense the terms "pleasure" and "knowledge" are to be understood. As A. E. Taylor correctly notes:⁵⁹

The bearing of the methodology on the immediate problem of the dialogue is, of course, that it follows that we cannot pronounce on the goodness of either pleasure or intellectual activity until we know how many and what distinct species or kinds, are covered by these vague generic terms (19B). For if there are really distinct species of either, some of them may conceivably not be good at all.

The worth of both factors will depend greatly on the nature of the kinds involved.

Before the task of classification can begin, how-

⁵⁹Taylor, Plato: Philebus & Epinomis, p. 34.

ever, Plato must prove that a compilation and description are required. The first step in the justification is a listing of different pleasures. At 120-D he notes that there are pleasures of immoral men and fools, and pleasures felt by moral and reasonable people. The compilation of pleasures may have been an attempt on Plato's part to bring to mind specific passages of the Gorgias,⁶⁰ and the consequences of a position which fails to distinguish various types of pleasures. Most hedonists, according to Plato in that earlier dialogue, arbitrarily equate pleasure with good. An analysis of the method of predication, however, reveals the problems which arise from such an equation. Things are said to have specific characters if and only if they possess certain characteristics--for example, good people are good only if they possess good qualities, beautiful things are beautiful because beauty is present in them. An appeal to experience reveals that all kinds of people, fools and cowards, brave and wise men experience pleasure to a like degree. If pleasure is equated with good, then all people experiencing pleasure are good, all those feeling pain are evil. Generally, however, the wise and brave man is considered good, just as the fool and coward is

⁶⁰Gorgias, C.D.P., 497E-499A.

deemed to be evil. The ridiculous result of the Hedonist position is that the evil man can become as good or even better than the good man when the former is experiencing a pleasurable sensation.

A mere compilation of pleasures, however, is insufficient to warrant the acceptance of the view that pleasures assume many forms of all sorts which are often unlike each other. The objection can be made, as Philebus does at 12D, that the pleasure itself cannot be different in the various examples, since pleasure is only pleasure, and "nothing could be more completely similar than a thing to itself". The difference in the pleasures mentioned by Socrates could lie not in the pleasures themselves but rather in the opposite sources of sensation. The solution to the basic difference in the view of pleasure, for Philebus as a generic unity, for Plato as "a complex of feeling and the source of feeling"⁶¹ must be found on other than empirical grounds.

Plato finds the answer in a logical argument which he presents in the passages from 12E to 13C. As Hackforth correctly notes, "Socrates does not here attempt a psychological examination, but insists that Protarchus' ground for asserting this is really logical--or rather illogical, inasmuch as he takes no account of the difference between

⁶¹Hackforth, footnote 1, p. 16.

generic and specific identity."⁶² With the illustrations of colour and figure, Socrates attempts to bring to light two important facts: first, with generic terms like colour and figure, in respect of being genus terms, no difference can be involved; secondly, when specific instances of the genus are taken, such as various colours and figures, there are in many cases different and even opposite instances of the species. If such is the case with colour and figure, Plato argues that the same should hold good with pleasure. As Plato states at 13A, it should be possible "to find pleasures in some cases opposite to pleasures", to find both good and bad types.

According to Hackforth, "Socrates' point is that generic identity can never of itself justify the attribution to the species of a genus, still less to their particulars, of any common quality other than that denoted by the generic term."⁶³ As Socrates states at 13A-B, only pleasant feeling can be attributed to pleasure--there is no logical justification for calling pleasure or any of its instances good. Viewed in a different perspective, "'Pleasure is good' is, in fact, a synthetic proposition (13A), and therefore we cannot assume the impossibility of regarding some pleasures as good, but

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid., footnote 2, p. 16.

others as bad."⁶⁴

The logical argument utilized by Socrates fails to convince Protarchus of the need for classification. Plato himself must have realized the short-comings of the analogy. Although colour and figure can be fitted into the genus-species classification, it is doubtful whether pleasure has its place there. Looking at colour, we find that the term is a general name under which examples like red, white, black, etc. can be placed. The use of the name to cover all such instances is warranted by the convenience it produces. With a term like "pleasure", however, the parallel cannot be sustained. We do not, in ordinary speech, say that x, y, and z are certain kinds of pleasure that are subsumed under the genus pleasure. No statement can be made concerning the forms of pleasure and its species which would parallel "this colour is red" or "this figure is square". Only descriptive statements like "this pleasure is great" or "this pleasure is a pleasure experienced by an immoral man" can be formed. If it should be objected that it is meaningful to speak of "mental" or "physical" pleasures, the retort could be made that those terms merely denote the source of the experience, and not the nature of the experience itself. Without an analysis of the nature of

⁶⁴Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 411.

such different pleasures, however, the logical argument fails to be convincing.

Since Plato is unable to substantiate his contention either by listing examples of various pleasures or through the logical argument, he decides at 13E-14A to switch to a different method of reasoning--of putting his thesis "on all fours" with that of Protarchus, that is, to agree that knowledge is a unity-in-plurality. The "trickery" used by Plato in no way provides an adequate reason for Protarchus to admit the existence of various kinds of pleasures. The acceptance by Protarchus is based only on the unproved assumption by both parties that knowledge and pleasure are similar in nature, a parallel which Protarchus would deny if he were taking his own position seriously. Plato has failed in all three attempts to prove the need for classification. In order to discuss what he believes to be the nature of pleasure, however, he has Protarchus admit the last appeal as valid.

2. The Problem of Classification

Although the practical problem of the need for classification has been solved, a basic problem, that of classification itself, still exists. As Plato notes at 15A, classification itself is concerned not with concrete objects exhibiting the one and many, with "something that comes into being and perishes", but rather with conceptual

objects like "Man", "Ox", the "Beautiful", the "Good". Three questions are involved: first, whether such units exist; secondly, how they are such unities if they are changeless and self-identical; and thirdly, how the unity is related to its particulars--in part or in whole.⁶⁵

The method of approaching the discussion of the one-many problem is generally attributed to the Pythagoreans.⁶⁶ Introduced as a "gift of the gods" at 160, dialectic is described in detail with illustrations in the passages from 160 to 18D. Since the description of the method is of secondary importance to the topic of pleasure, only a brief outline will be given of it. According to the Pythagoreans, all things that are said to exist are composed of one and many and have within themselves the nature of the Limit and the Unlimited. In examining such entities, one must begin with the generic unity and work down to a specific number of forms between that genus and the infinity of particulars which it exhibits. The first two examples given by Plato, of speech and musical sound, illustrate the method of division, while the third, that of pre-alphabetical lang-

⁶⁵ Philebus, 12C-15C. See John Burnet, Greek Philosophy: Thales to Plato (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1962), p. 326 and Taylor, Plato: Philebus & Epinomis, p. 31; in opposition to Hackforth's interpretation in footnote 1, p. 20.

⁶⁶ Taylor, Philebus & Epinomis, p. 33 and Burnet, p. 331.

uage, is meant to illustrate the reverse procedure of division, that is, beginning with the smallest units and progressing to the whole, rather than beginning with the whole and dividing it down to the infinity of particulars. With regard to pleasure and knowledge, the dialectical method "requires of us ... to show how each of them is both one and many, and how ... each possesses a certain number before the unlimited variety is reached" (18E-19A). Protarchus clarifies the nature of the problem at 19B: "Socrates ... is now raising the question of kinds of pleasure; has it different kinds, or has it not, and if it has, how many are there, and what are they like? And exactly the same question arises with regard to intelligence." The importance of the methodology is recognized by A. E. Taylor:

The matter with which the Philebus deals is precisely the most appropriate to Socrates, the application of the Pythagorean conception of science, conceived as knowledge of number and measure, to the valuation of human conduct, the discovery of a rational rule of action by appeal to which disputes about right and wrong may be settled, as disputes about the number, bulk, weight of things are determined by recourse to counting, measuring, and weighing.⁶⁷

⁶⁷Taylor, Plato: Philebus & Epinomis, p. 14.

5. The Four-Fold Classification of Existents

Before proceeding to the classifications of pleasure and knowledge, Plato concentrates on the Pythagorean theory of the nature of the universe. The ontological or metaphysical discussion is introduced to discover the proportional value of pleasure and knowledge by comparing them to the "supreme reality to which all things approximate".⁶⁸

The classification of existents is presented in the passages from 230 to 32B. Socrates begins with the general statement that there are four kinds of things which constitute reality: the Unlimited, the Limit, the Mixture of the two, and the Cause of the mixture. His method of analyzing the first two components, as he states at 23E, is through the process of dialectic, "observing how each of them is split into many and torn apart, and then collecting each of them into one again: and so try to discern in what possible way each of them is in fact both a one and a many".

The language used by Plato in his classification makes it almost impossible to decide the exact nature of the existents. The unlimited, infinite, or indeterminate has been interpreted by Taylor as "quality with a continuous range",⁶⁹ as "any process capable of indefinite

⁶⁸Grube, p. 74.

⁶⁹Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 414.

increase in magnitude, volume, intensity,"⁷⁰ and as "the variable";⁷¹ by Gomperz as what possesses degrees of intensity because these degrees constitute a continuum capable of infinite division,⁷² and by Ritter as what permits every possible comparison, what admits of the more or less.⁷³ Generally, therefore, the Unlimited can be considered as that which contains within itself the power of infinite increase or decrease.

The Limit can be described as a quality that contains within itself precise determination. Taylor describes it as that which has no range or variation at all, as precise and definite ratio or measure⁷⁴ and as precise mathematical determination, number, ratio and measure,⁷⁵ For Ritter, the Limit is whatever is quantitatively determined by number and measure,⁷⁶ while Gomperz interprets it as all measure and number, as well as ideas implying measure and number such as equality, duplication and so on belonging to the province of the limit.⁷⁷

⁷⁰Taylor, Plato: Philebus & Epinomis, p. 38.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Gomperz, p. 188.

⁷³Ritter, p. 189.

⁷⁴Taylor, Plato: Philebus & Epinomis, p. 38.

⁷⁵Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 414.

⁷⁶Ritter, p. 189.

⁷⁷Gomperz, 188-189.

Having described the first two factors, Plato at 25B sets out to explain the third, the mixture. To assist him in the description of the mixture, Plato appeals at 25B for assistance from the gods. Hackforth's suggestion that the reference to the deities indicates that something new is being added to the Pythagorean theory⁷⁸ seems to be correct. The addition, according to Hackforth, is that for Plato all good things result from the mixture. John Burnet explains more fully the differences involved in the theory expounded by Plato. "The Pythagorean doctrine simply identified the Form with being and the Unlimited with becoming, but Plato distinctly states that the Mixture alone is truly 'being'. ... In other words, the mature philosophy of Plato found reality, whether intelligible or sensible, in the combination of matter and Form, and not in either separately."⁷⁹

For Plato, the mixed element means "a precise and definitely determined magnitude or intensity of any quality",⁸⁰ occurring when the limited unites to form "a mixed and generated reality", a proper union of the two constituents.⁸¹ As Plato states at 26B, "it is here that we

⁷⁸Hackforth, footnote 1, p. 46.

⁷⁹Burnet, p. 331.

⁸⁰Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 414.

⁸¹Ritter, p. 189.

find the source of fair weather and all other beautiful things, namely in a mixture of the unlimited with that which has limit". Beauty, strength, health and fair things result from that combination. John Burnet correctly notes that

the Pythagoreans had identified the Limit with the good and the Unlimited with evil, but here we are distinctly told that so far as human life is concerned, good things are all to be found in the mixture. It is just for that reason that the 'mixed life', which includes both Thought and Pleasure, is found to be superior, not only to the life of Pleasure alone, but also to the life of Thought alone.⁸²

Thus the answer to the first formulation of the ethical problem finds confirmation from the ontological discussion.

The real significance of the metaphysical argument does not appear, however, until the analysis of the nature of the Cause has been completed. The discussion of Cosmic Reason begins at 28A with an appeal to authority. "All the wise agree", states Plato at that point, "that in reason we have the king of heaven and earth." To decide whether "the wise" are correct in their assumption, it is requisite to have "a fuller investigation of the kind in question itself", that is, to investigate the nature of the Cosmic Cause. Plato's first argument is

⁸²Burnet, p. 331.

based on the relationship between cause and effect and the nature of that phenomenon. As Plato notes at 26E-27A, all things that exist have a cause of their coming-to-be. Since an intelligent order exists in the universe, it follows that Reason and Intelligence must be the cause of that ordering (28E). Since the cause or maker is, by its very nature, more valuable than that which it makes (26E-31B), it follows that Reason and Intelligence are of more worth than either the constituents or the mixture which those constituents form.

Since all reality is based on the four-fold classification of existents, it is possible, according to Plato, to apply the same principle of analysis to all existents. Taking first the mixed life of pleasure and knowledge, which was found to be better than either of its constituents, Plato concludes at 27D that it belongs to the class of the mixture, since the genus term "mixture" includes all unlimited things that are bound by limit, and the mixed life contains the unlimited pleasure bound by Intelligence. As for the unmixed life, it belongs to the class of the Unlimited since it admits of the "more" and the "less". Since Reason and Intelligence were found to be the most valuable factors in the whole of things, it follows that the same factors must be most valuable in the actual mixed life of pleasure and knowledge--more so than pleasure or the mixture.

The argument is actually based on a parallel between the universe and man. If Reason and Intelligence rule over the cosmos, then they must perform the same function in the life of man. Plato clarifies the relationship in the macrocosm-microcosm analogy. Regarding physical attributes, both the universe and animals are composed of the four elements of fire, water, breath and earth. Compared to those of the universe, the elements in us are inconsiderable in quantity, impure in quality, and fail to possess the powers befitting their real nature. The universal qualities sustain, produce, and increase the qualities belonging to us which constitute a collective unity which we call a body. It can therefore be said that the body of the universe maintains our body which derives and obtains from it the four constituents of all corporeal nature.

The notion of the supremacy of universal attributes, with particular stress on physical qualities, is closely paralleled in the Republic in the analogy of the sun. Although no specific attributes like fire or water are mentioned, the Idea of Good is described as the cause of the being of the particulars, and of their growth, nourishment, and generation. Yet the existence of physical attributes does not constitute the whole of the function of the Idea of Good--in addition, it is an epistemological principle. Only through the influence of the Idea of Good is it

possible for us to know the particulars, ourselves, and the supreme principle of all things.⁸³

The second step taken by Plato in the Philebus is the comparison of the universe and man in order to indicate the mental parallel. At 30A Plato reverses the macrocosm-microcosm argument to an analogy from man to the universe--an analogy of microcosm-macrocosm. Since every human has a soul and since it has already been determined that the body of the universe is composed of the same elements as is our body, the universe must also possess a soul. Returning to the discussion of the four-fold classification of existents, Plato argues that Cosmic Cause is required to furnish our body with soul, to maintain our physique and cure our body when it comes to harm, and to provide all sorts of arrangements and remedial measures. As Hackforth correctly notes, "the argument is this; Even apart from the need to postulate a world-soul as the source of our own souls (305A5-8), it would be unreasonable to believe that the Cause which animates our bodies and enables them to maintain or regain health, should fail to animate and sustain the body of the universe."⁸⁴ Plato concludes at 30E that the Universe is composed of the Unlimited and the Limit, presided over by the Cause of their mixture,

⁸³Republic, C.D.P., VI, 508A-509B.

⁸⁴Hackforth, footnote 1, p. 56.

Reason is viewed as being akin to Cause. According to the four categories of existents, Cause is distinct from and superior to the constituents of the mixture. In the macrocosm-microcosm analogy, the problem arises as to how reason can be both akin to Cause and part of the mixture. Plato has said that the Mixture must be composed of the Unlimited and the Limit. Taking the specific example of the good life for man, the Unlimited would be explained by the factor of pleasure, the mixture by a combination of pleasure and knowledge, the cause by Reason. The Limit would be left undefined.

Hackforth finds a similar confusion in the passage under discussion.⁸⁷ At 28D Plato asserts that the mixture of pleasure and intelligence belongs to the class of the Mixture, which consists of all things bound fast by the Limit. According to Hackforth, Plato's contention is half substantiated by the declaration that Pleasure belongs to the class of the Unlimited. However, the second constituent, Intelligence, is declared to belong not to the class of the Limit, but rather to the fourth "kind", Cause. Hackforth argues that human intelligence must have been viewed by Plato as setting a limit to the "unlimited advance" of Pleasure, keeping it in bounds. Hackforth refers to the passage at 27D9 as proof of that

⁸⁷ Hackforth, footnote 1, p. 52.

contention. According to Hackforth, that line of thought is not pursued by Plato at that point because Plato's purpose is to reveal the superiority of Intelligence over Pleasure, and to accomplish that he must assign Intelligence to the fourth kind.

The confusion which exists in the passage may have arisen from Plato's use at various times of "knowledge", "intelligence", and "reason". Previous to the four-fold classification of existents, the terms "knowledge" and "intelligence" were used in explaining his position. With the comparison to Cause, however, we have the use of the term "reason", indicating that perhaps a different process or entity is being described. However, Plato does not appear to make that distinction. At 11B, "thought, intelligence, memory, and things akin to these, right opinion and true reasoning" are mentioned together. At 11D they are classified under "the state of intelligence". With the recapitulation of his position at 19D, Plato states that we should acquire "reason, knowledge, understanding, skill, and all that is akin to these things." Plato does not appear to differentiate between the terms. Thus when we come to the analogy between reason and Cause, it is valid to question the nature of the relationship between reason or intelligence and the factor of the Limit.

Since Plato's argument is based on analogy, it would appear that human reason would perform a similar function in the human body as does Cosmic Reason in the Universe, that is, causing the goodness of the good mixture. We could conclude, therefore, that Plato has determined not merely that reason is more valuable than pleasure in the good life, but that reason is the cause of the goodness in that life. The argument would tend to confirm Hackforth's argument that Plato's search is for the goodness in the mixed life. According to Hackforth:

if it can be proved that this cause does in fact exist, and that it is an Intelligence working for good ends, we shall have grounds for asserting that man's intelligence, as a constituent of the Mixed Life of the individual, is more akin to the cause of that life's goodness than is pleasure.⁸⁸

Such, however, is not the case, as Socrates' conclusions at 31A indicate. The reader is reminded only "to have these points in mind about the pair of them, namely that reason was found akin to Cause and belonging, we may say, to that kind, whereas pleasure is itself unlimited and belongs to the kind that does not and never will contain within itself and derived from itself either beginning, or middle, or end." The careful manner in which the conclusions are worded signifies that the analogy is not to be taken as positive proof, but rather as

⁸⁸Hackforth, p. 49.

an indication that the nature of intelligence is such that when its influence is imposed on a situation, the result is one of orderliness and harmony. As such when the soul uses reason, a limit is imposed on all things which are unlimited in nature. Thus Reason belongs to the category of Cause, insofar as when the soul utilizes it the consequence is a good mixture; and its function is one of limitation since the application of reason to a situation results in moderation in the right degree. The connection of Reason with Limit is stressed in the conclusions concerning Pleasure--Pleasure's main characteristic is its lack of moderation. Belonging to the kind that never contains within itself any boundaries, pleasure is the opposite of reason, whose function is to impose limit and order upon us. Reason's supremacy over pleasure in the good life is thus clearly revealed.

4. The Neutral Life

Within the classification of the forms of knowledge and pleasure minor arguments are presented to reinforce the idea that reason is of more value than is pleasure in the good life. In the discussion of the neutral state Plato states that although no man could live a life without emotions, such a life would pertain to the gods, who live by reason alone. Since the gods deem reason to be of more value than feelings, in-

telligence can be said to be of more value than pleasure (330). A suggestion of the supremacy of the neutral life appeared at 220 when Plato hinted that reason might be identical with the Good and was reinforced in the account of Cosmic Reason at 30B when divine reason was described as the cause of the good things in the Universe.

5. Pleasure as Becoming

At the end of the classification of pleasures, at 530, Plato introduces the theory of pleasure as Becoming, a theory to which "certain subtle thinkers" subscribe. According to that theory, all things are divided into one of two kinds, either those aiming at something else, or those which exist independently--"those which are with a view to something else, and those for the sake of which the first sort come to be, whenever they do come to be" (53E). In the scale of value, the first is always inferior to the second; the independently existing entity, according to Plato at 53D, always having the "pride of place". A similar value scale had been introduced at 26E-27A when Cause was revealed as more valuable than the mixture or the constituents of that mixture. In the present section, the subject is the object produced by that cause. With the recurrence of a value scale is the return to a metaphysical argument to substantiate the worth of reason.

At 54A Socrates introduces a second pair of

opposites, Becoming and Being. The problem is to discover which is done for the sake of the other. Although the answer seems obvious, Plato insists on appealing at 540 to everyday experiences, to such instances as providing oneself "with medicine, or tools of any kind, or any sort of material". By referring to daily occupations Plato indicates that although the argument is metaphysical in nature, its conclusions apply equally to specific instances in the phenomenal realm. Thus, paralleling the macrocosm-microcosm argument in the four-fold classification of existents is the comparison of the process of Becoming and the state of Being to the becoming and being in ordinary life. As Plato notes at 540:

it is with a view to something coming into being that anyone provides himself with medicine, or tools of any kind, or any sort of material, the becoming always takes place with a view to the being of this or that, so that Becoming in general takes place with a view to Being in general.

According to A. E. Taylor, "the theory is that pleasure is an accompaniment of transitions, incompleting developments. It is felt while the development is going on, but falls away when the definite and permanent goal of the 'evolution' is reached."⁸⁹ Taylor objects that the theory is an illegitimate extension of the depletion-

⁸⁹Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 427.

repletion formula to cover all cases of pleasure. The good, according to the Pleasure-as-Becoming theorists, would be the healthy or normal state of the organism, and pain and pleasure deviations from the ideal condition. He summarizes the proposed theory as follows: "Pleasure attends our progress to the 'good', but not our fruition of it; that will be the 'neutral condition', painless but not pleasurable. This is what is meant by the view that pleasure is always 'becoming', never is 'being'."⁹⁰

If the theory that pleasure is Becoming is true, according to Plato, there must be some Being at which it aims. Although the hypothesis has not previously been explicitly stated in the dialogue, the terms associated with Becoming have been used in reference to pleasure. Pleasure and pain were described as unlimited, that is, during their occurrence, no bounds appear (243). Unlike definite quality, which has stopped going on and is fixed, indeterminate qualities are "always going a point further" (24D). With the description of the actual pleasures of replenishment, the general formula indicates that pleasures and pains are processes--"when the natural state of a living organism ... is destroyed, that destruction is pain; conversely, when such organisms return to their own true nature, this reversion is invariably pleasure" (323).

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 428.

A clearer statement at 320--"there is distress at the time of restoration"--indicates that although there is a close relationship between the processes of depletion and repletion and the appropriate feelings of pain and pleasure, the two phenomena are distinct. Further indication that such is really the case appears in the theory of sensation with the description of non-sensation, and when Plato states that only great changes produce sensation. Only at 451 does Plato specifically state the nature of pleasure as process--when referring to intense pleasures he asks, "Are they, or do they become, greater with those who are suffering from sickness or with healthy people?"

All pleasures, not merely those of the body, exhibit the character of process. The true pleasures are described as attaching to experiences in which there is a preceding want, although that want is imperceptible and painless. Despite the fact that all pleasure is process, the nature of the pleasure as process differs considerably between the pure and mixed pleasures. With the mixed bodily experience, the pain or pleasure increases or decreases accordingly as the experience varies in degree of intensity. That experience can, because of the nature of the phenomenon, go to extreme lengths. The pure pleasures, because of their nature, are marked by moderation, devoid of such radical fluctuations. In the argument advanced by Plato, no distinctions are made con-

cerning the differences in the pleasures. It appears, however, from his statement at 54E, that the discussion is limited to the mixed pleasures of the body, when he says that the pleasures involved accompany the "relief for their hunger or thirst or such other troubles as becoming relieves." Plato concludes at 54C that in all cases where there is a regular relation of means to end, the end falls under the heading of Good. If pleasure is becoming, it must be for the end, which is the Good, and cannot be equated with it.

According to Plato at 54E, people who praise the pleasures of repletion must also both require and desire the processes of depletion, since no pleasures could exist without those antithetical processes. As Theodor Gomperz correctly notes, the paradox is that the hedonists must both desire those states and, since they are painful, wish for their elimination.⁹¹

The life of pleasure is diametrically opposed to the neutral life which has been described as the life preferred by the deities. Implicitly, therefore, the comparison is made by Plato between the two types of lives--the most degraded form, of pleasure, and the ideal, the life of intelligence. The contrast tends, by an emotional appeal, to place the life that is based only on physical pleasures in its proper perspective as the lowest form of

⁹¹Gomperz, p. 193.

life possible for man, a life which fails to take into account man's nature as a rational as well as an emotional being.

Socrates' analysis of Callicles' position in the Gorgias⁹² revealed the absurdity that resulted from the pleasure-as-good theory. According to the Hedonist position, if we itch, then scratch, we would be living pleasantly and therefore happily. The account in the Gorgias is based on the failure of the theorists to distinguish between good and bad pleasures. In the Philebus a similar error is made by the people who proclaim that pleasure is only Becoming. Despite the fact that pure pleasures are processes of Becoming, Plato wants them to be viewed in a different manner, as superior to the mixed bodily experiences. By viewing all pleasures as Becoming, the important distinctions between the forms of pleasure fail to be distinguished.

Hackforth regards the section from 53C to 55A as a non-integral part of the dialogue. He proposed that the argument proceeds from a premise, that pleasure is becoming, which is not known to be true but which does contain some measure of probability. The proposition is accepted only because it leads to a conclusion agreeable to Plato--that pleasure is not the good, and that "good"

⁹²Gorgias, C.D.P. 494C-494E.

cannot be predicated of any pleasure. Problems arise, according to Hackforth, when we look back to 13B and 28A, at which points Plato explicitly and implicitly states that some pleasures are good. Further, at 518ff the pure pleasures, although they are never entitled "good", are regarded in that manner and embraced in the mixture constituting the good life. Why, then, did Plato include the section in the dialogue? Hackforth offers two solutions: first, that it is just another example of Plato's inconsistency at 52C of confusing the unlimited and limited nature of pleasures, an objection that has already been dealt with in this paper; and secondly, because of the provisional nature of the argument. According to Hackforth, two reasons exist for its inclusion--first, the doctrine simply could not be ignored in a discussion of pleasure; secondly, it can be used to lead to a conclusion less hedonistic than that reached at 54D, one which Socrates is willing to accept.⁹³ The first reason seems highly improbable since irrelevant information is rarely introduced by Plato for the sole purpose of its inclusion. The second suggestion is more valid, providing that we are able to refer to the second formulation of the ethical problem and not to the third, as Hackforth has suggested; that is, to the value of pleasure in the good life rather

⁹³Hackforth, 105-107.

than to the goodness of the good life.

Theodor Gomperz offers several objections against Plato's argument in the section under discussion,⁹⁴ accusing Plato of committing several logical violences. According to Gomperz, Plato's objections that inconsistencies arise within the theory hold good only against the Hedonist who says that pleasures arise only from the satisfaction of desire. In opposition to Gomperz, Plato acknowledges that fact when he states at 54E that he is speaking of "troubles as Becoming relieves". Next Gomperz objects that the criticism holds good only if the supposition that the pleasure of satisfaction is less in quantity than the preceding pain of privation is accepted. However, Plato specifically states that the people involved are "delighted on account of the Becoming" (54E), and that pleasure is the reason why the opposite states are required, why they would not care to live without them. The third criticism offered by Gomperz, which consists of two parts, is of a more serious nature, consisting of a proposed reply for the hedonists. The first suggestion is that although pleasure is not a positive good, since it does diminish an evil, it is an end worthy of attainment. Plato, however, has already armed himself against that criticism at 45C-D. If pleasure is Becoming, which is the

⁹⁴Gomperz, 193-194.

basis for the argument, then pleasure cannot be an end at all. The contention is not that pleasure is not a positive good, but rather that pleasure is not an end. If pleasure is not a good, pain cannot be an evil, and Gomperz's objection proves to be invalid. The second proposition by Gomperz is that the theory refers to the actual world and actual human nature, and that it is irrelevant to speak of an existence without hunger, thirst, and other needs. In defence of Plato, on the purely logical level the criticism against the hedonists is valid--there is an inconsistency inherent in the theory. Yet Plato has, throughout the psychological examination of pleasures and pains, concentrated on the actual experiences. Viewing the problem from a different perspective, we can see that Plato's purpose in the argument is to indicate the worth of the hedonist position. By showing that the theory is logically unjustified, and with the comparison of the neutral and pleasurable lives, Plato has shown that value.

6. The Common-Sense Attitude towards Hedonism

Immediately preceding the discussion of the forms of knowledge is a section from 55B to 55C which Hackforth entitles "The Common-Sense Attitude towards Hedonism."⁹⁵ Hackforth contends that the passage is not integral to the preceding discussion but constitutes "a direct appeal to

⁹⁵Hackforth, p. 111.

common-sense against the position of Philebus that pleasure is the only good."⁹⁶ In the section, Socrates argues that it is untenable that only pleasures of the soul can be good, other good things, including virtues proper to the soul such as courage, temperance, and reason, and good things in our bodies, being worthy of inclusion into man's life. Socrates argues that if pleasure alone is viewed as being good, a person feeling pain, even if he were a good man, would become evil, and vice versa.

Hackforth argues⁹⁷ that the section is not really intended as a serious refutation of Hedonism. Its main purpose is to indicate the common-sense beliefs which Hedonism must face--it must prove that all the commonly accepted goods are virtueless. Hackforth correctly notes that Plato has, in the Gorgias and the Republic evaluated the worth of the cardinal virtues and external goods and shown that pleasure is not the only good. The inclusion of such goods in the Philebus is meant as a reminder of those earlier dialogues. Hackforth concludes that Plato's intention in the dialogue is not to show that pleasure or knowledge is the good, but rather to reveal which forms of each are to be admitted into the good life. By placing the reminder at the end of the discussion of the forms of

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 111-112.

pleasure, Plato also brings to mind the fact that knowledge has been shown to be a good, and therefore requires no justification for its inclusion in the good life. Only the superior value of all types of knowledge over the forms of pleasure needs to be shown.

Plato's attempt to relate the section to the rest of the dialogue by introducing it as one by which "we might re-inforce the argument" does present some difficulties. For the first time in the dialogue he includes the cardinal virtues and bodily and external goods, despite the fact that the good for man was limited to a certain state or condition of the soul. If Plato's purpose is to prove that the hedonists fail to account for different goods, then the same criticism could be applied to the Mixed Life which he proposes as the good life, since that life would consist only of pleasure and knowledge. The argument against the hedonists fails to damage their position to any great extent since it is faulty--the pain or pleasure, not the person experiencing it, is evil. The argument does serve two functions, however: first, it discredits the contention that pleasure alone is the good; and secondly, it tends, by an emotional appeal, to persuade the audience of the inferior value of pleasure. The emotional aspect forms a foundation for the acceptance of the view that all forms of knowledge are superior to any forms of pleasure.

7. The Classification of the Forms of Pleasure and Knowledge

In the discussion of the forms of pleasure and knowledge stress is placed on the truth and falsity of the kinds involved. The pure pleasures alone have the character of being true. With the forms of knowledge, the less mixed with guesswork, information from the senses, and ordinary arithmetic, the purer and therefore truer are the forms. As Plato states at 59C, fixity, purity, truth and clarity are superior over all things, and are of primary importance. The names Reason and Intelligence command the greatest respect, since only they properly describe the process of thought whose object is true Being. Only Reason can attain knowledge of the supreme, unchanging entities-- "everything else must be called inferior and of secondary importance" (59C), that is, everything including the pure pleasures.

With the classification of the types of pleasure and knowledge, Plato reveals most clearly the nature of the two phenomena and the overwhelming supremacy of dialectic over all other things. Reason must, therefore, be of more value in any compound than pleasure could ever be. The answer to the second formulation of the ethical problem is that reason is the more valuable constituent in the good life.

V

THE THIRD FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

At 51A Socrates notes that "we shall have to grasp the Good, either precisely or at least in rough outline, if we are to know to what we must give, as we put it, the second prize". In the Philebus we have found, as Plato states at 60A, "a way towards the Good." Just as when we are searching for a person we look for his residence as the place where he is most likely to be, so also, when we search for the Good we look first for its place of residence, the mixed life. The mixed life, or more specifically the well-mixed life, as Plato notes at 613, is good and therefore the goodness can be found through an analysis of it.

As Hackforth correctly notes,⁹⁸ the distinction between what is good and goodness is now, for the first time, explicitly made by Plato, although implicit references have been given at 22B and 22D of the dialogue. The goodness involved has not been mentioned in the metaphysical argument concerning the four-fold classification

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 123.

of all reality. Despite the fact that Cosmic Reason was described by Plato at 27C as the cause of the orderly mixture, and therefore of the good mixture, neither the cause nor the mixture itself was equated with the factor constituting the goodness.

Socrates' method of revealing the Good is to combine certain forms of pleasure and knowledge in a well-mixed compound, then to analyze the mixture to discover the goodness in it. At 61D he suggests that the good mixture might be obtained by blending together all of the forms of pleasure and knowledge. That method, however, would be too dangerous since it haphazardly includes all types without first analyzing the consequences of such a step. Plato settles, therefore, for a different method of approach--that of first including the true types of pleasure and knowledge, then analyzing the less true types to determine whether they also are required for a happy life (62D). As Plato notes at 61D-E, pleasures and types of knowledge differ considerably from one another, different ones being truer than others. Plato suggests at 61E that the truest portions might "constitute and provide us with the fully acceptable life." Although the discussion begins at 62A by following the method proposed, it soon becomes clear that the ability to understand the Forms and all that is, and to render an account of that knowledge, is

insufficient for a human. We also require practical knowledge "if we are going to find the way home when we want it" (62B). To divine knowledge must be added the knowledge of particulars, despite the fact that such knowledge lacks both fixity and purity (62B). With the provision that the pure forms are allotted primary importance, all sorts of knowledge, both inferior and superior, gain admittance to the good life. The inclusion of all the forms of knowledge before the mention of the pure pleasures foreshadows the primacy of the types of intelligence in the value scale.

The question of methodology naturally arises concerning the admittance of pleasures. As Plato notes at 62E, "it is time for us to raise the same question about pleasures, whether we are to let them all loose at once or should allow passage first to such of them as are true." Because of the unlimited and mixed nature of most pleasurable experiences, factors which are conducive to falsity, Plato decides in the interest of safety to allow only the true ones first. Paralleling the inclusion of the useful kinds of knowledge, Plato, at 62E, next admits "any necessary pleasures there may be". If the parallel between the admittance of the forms of knowledge and of pleasure is strictly adhered to, however, we could conclude, as Plato states at 63A, that "it is advantageous and harmless to us all to spend our lives in the enjoyment of all pleasures," a result that Plato is unwilling to accept.

The argument from 63B to 64A is advanced by Plato as an indication why the strict parallel between pleasure and knowledge cannot be utilized. The difference lies in the fact that not all impure pleasures are necessary and harmless--some are both unnecessary and detrimental to the individual, and should be excluded from the happy life. To reveal the differences, Plato has each constituent answer the question of which forms of the other, if any at all, it would admit. Pleasure's answer is that neither knowledge nor itself could exist advantageously without the other, a point which has already been made clear at both 22B and 60E. The functions of knowledge accepted by Pleasure are two-fold: first, there is "knowledge of all things in general", and secondly, "of each of ourselves in particular to the fullest extent possible" (63B-C).

The second function indicates the recognition that different forms of pleasure are associated with corresponding forms of knowledge which control them, bringing to mind the account of the tri-partite soul of the Republic,⁹⁹ in which the soul is described as consisting of three parts, each with its particular type of pleasure, its own appetites and controls. The admittance of knowledge of things in general also has its parallel in that dialogue

⁹⁹Republic, C.D.P. IX, 580D-381C.

in the analogy of the sun, when the Form of Good is described as both an ontological and an epistemological principle. Real knowledge can occur, according to Plato only after the process of dialectic has attained the knowledge of the Good; a part of the whole is known and the part can be related to that whole. Applying the theory advanced in the Republic to the Philebus, knowledge of things in general is required before the value and amount of various pleasures can be determined. As Plato has said in the Protagoras,¹⁰⁰ our salvation in life is a correct choice of pleasure and pain, although the choice is there limited to the magnitude of pleasures. In the Gorgias¹⁰¹ knowledge is described not only as a factor which imposes moderation on the appetites, but also as one which chooses and discriminates between good and bad pleasures. Once knowledge of things in general has been obtained, particular objects can be analyzed to discover their place and value in the scale of things. Man will then know both the nature and value of the various forms of pleasure.

When the question of Pleasure's worth and place is put to Reason's evaluation, the result is a rejection

¹⁰⁰Protagoras, C.D.P., 357A-B.

¹⁰¹Gorgias, C.D.P., 501A-507D.

of certain forms of pleasure. With regard to the greatest and intensest pleasure, there are several objections--not only is it confusing to the soul, "disturbing with frenzy the souls in which we [the types of knowledge] dwell", but it can also prevent reason from coming into existence (63D). The same thought had appeared in the earlier dialogues. In the Phaedo man, when unencumbered by intense desires, is described as pursuing "pure and absolute being, with his pure intellect alone",¹⁰² yet, "as long as we have this body, and an evil of that sort is mingled with our souls, we shall never fully gain what we desire, and that is truth". In both the Phaedo and the Republic Plato recognizes the damage of being overcome by the extreme pleasures and suggests a process of ridding the soul of such passions. As R. E. Cushman notes, "from the Phaedo's account of katharsis, it is manifest that the attainment of knowledge presupposes refashioning of the soul into such a likeness as corresponds with the qualitative excellence of its object."¹⁰³ In the Republic¹⁰⁴ Plato proclaims that the soul must be "cleansed and scraped free of the rocks and barnacles which, because it now feasts on earth, clings to it in wild." Further, the strict regulation of the curriculum

¹⁰²Phaedo, C.D.P., p. 66.

¹⁰³ Robert E. Cushman, Therapeia (The University of North Carolina Press, 1958), p. 58.

¹⁰⁴Republic, C.D.P., 611E-612A.

for the guardians is a concrete manifestation of the process.

At 63E of the Philebus Plato concludes that only certain pleasures can be admitted into the good life-- the true and pure pleasures which are akin to knowledge, the pleasures that "consort with health and temperance", and the pleasures that "attend upon virtue in general". According to Hackforth,¹⁰⁶ the third class of pleasures, the moral pleasures, have a status different from the first two kinds--the moral pleasures failing to fit into the general definition of pleasures as replenishment. Hackforth is not entirely correct in his analysis of the "moral pleasures". Plato has, by describing the intense pleasures as belonging to the evil person, implied that in the life of moderation pleasures exist which exhibit the characteristic of being less intense. Further, all pleasures, including the pure ones, have the nature of fulfilling a want, despite the fact that the want is painless and imperceptible, and therefore may be classified as pleasures of replenishment. In order, as Plato states at 63E-64A, that the mixture should be "as fair and peaceable as might be", the pleasures accompanying folly and all other sorts of evil, that is, the extreme pleasures, are excluded. Only in a mixture of this type,

¹⁰⁶ Hackforth, 128-129.

according to Plato, can the good be discerned as it appears both in man and in the universe.

Constantin Ritter's analysis adequately summarizes the nature of the good life:¹⁰⁷

The question about what really constitutes HAPPINESS and how the greatest sum of pleasure attainable by man can come about is answered by the Philebus, with due appreciation of the natural conditions as follows: the question is always one of a mixture of pleasure and knowledge, a mixture which from the beginning would have to include the pure types of both. An enhancement of the value gained thereby is yet to be produced by a mixture of all possible further knowledge. For also the impure pleasures which are perturbed by referring them to concrete, always inadequate conditions, show themselves to be compatible with the pure ones, and all mutually supplement each other in a unity in which we miss every absent part. In addition to the pure pleasures, the necessary ones must also be included in the mixture. On the other hand, the impure types must necessarily be kept at a distance.

In addition to the forms of knowledge and pleasure, one further constituent, that of Reality must be added to make the mixture complete. Socrates argues at 64B that nothing could come into being or, if it did, continue in being without Reality. With the addition, we will have "created what might be called an incorporeal ordered system for the rightful control of a corporeal subject in which dwells a soul" (64B). Theoretically, then, we have

¹⁰⁷Ritter, p. 292.

arrived at a well-mixed compound which, if it were capable of existence, would rightfully control an individual. It is "incorporeal" insofar as the topic was treated on a theoretical level--the "Mixed Life", which would be the Happy Life for Man, would be so ordered.

The inclusion of Reality into the mixture, as Hackforth suggests,¹⁰⁸ presents some problems for Plato. Hackforth proposes that what Socrates says concerning Reality should not be taken literally; if the mixed life is only a fantasy we cannot turn it into a real existent by pumping reality into it. He suggests that it is Plato's way of expressing his hope and faith that the kind of life indicated is no impossible ideal, and his recognition that unless it is so all his labour in the dialogue has been in vain. The hope and faith that the well-ordered life could actually exist, as expressed in the Philebus, has its parallel in the Republic. In the latter dialogue, the dream was for an ordered society in which all the elements would exist harmoniously, forming an ordered body. Plato recognized, however, that all actual governments, no matter how good they are, are liable to decay because of man's nature--monarchy, timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, all are destined to fall away from the ideal when various elements in them vie for their own

¹⁰⁸ Hackforth, 132-133.

power. In the Philebus, however, Plato reveals his personal faith that man himself is not lost, that there is a chance for him to lead both a good and a happy life.

Having decided which forms of pleasure and knowledge are to be included in the mixture, Plato states at 64C that "we now stand upon the threshold of the Good and of that habitation where all that is like thereto resides". The "good" and the mixture have taken on cosmic significance, the search being for "the most valuable thing in our mixture", the type of thing that makes "an arrangement of this sort commend itself to us all" (64C). Once it has been discovered, it will be possible to consider whether "this factor in the whole scheme of things is closer and more akin to pleasure, or to reason" (64C). We have, therefore, a variation of the macrocosm-microcosm analogy--the element which makes things in the universe good will be similar to the factor of goodness in a well-mixed life.

The cause of the value of any mixture, as Plato states at 64D, is easily discernible as measure and proportion. Any compound which fails to exhibit those qualities ruins both its ingredients and itself; "what you are bound to get in such cases is no real mixture, but literally a miserable mass of unmixed messiness" (64D-E). At 26B Plato had described a good mixture as one being

determined by "a law and order that are marked by limit", on the unlimited constituents. Since the qualities of measure and proportion constitute beauty and excellence, Plato argues that the Good also has the character of the Beautiful. Because the method of choosing the kinds of pleasure and knowledge to be included in the mixture was through their truth value, Truth must also be added as a factor. At 65A Socrates concludes that "if we cannot hunt down the Good under a single form, let us secure it by the conjunction of three, Beauty, Proportion and Truth; and then, regarding these three as one, let us assert that that may most properly be held to determine the qualities of the mixture, and because that is good the mixture itself has become so".

Although the three principles governing the mixture are clearly set down by Plato, there is a measure of ambiguity involved in the nature of the elements. As Theodor Gomperz correctly notes, "'Proportionality' is counted by him as 'beauty'; it is, therefore, either identical with this quality or else related to it as one species to another species logically higher or lower than itself. In neither case is it admissible to co-ordinate it with beauty; and yet this is what Plato does when he speaks of the 'three forms of the good'."¹⁰⁹ Gomperz's

¹⁰⁹Gomperz, 197-198.

objection is valid for the text at 64B of the Philebus. The privileged position of Beauty can, however, be explained by referring to earlier dialogues. As J. E. Raven explains in Plato's Thought in the Making, absolute Beauty, as it is described in the Symposium, is the emotional counterpart of the Idea of Good in the Republic. The impulses which urge men to seek these objectives, Eros and Philosophy, are the emotional and intellectual aspects of the selfsame impulse, the impulse which is the character of the perfect man.¹¹⁰ Keeping the Symposium and Republic in mind, we can see that by treating Beauty and Measure and Proportion separately Plato manages in the Philebus to include both emotional and intellectual factors in the Good. Returning to an earlier passage at 51B, we are reminded that the true pleasures attaching to figures, odours and sounds were bound to experiences which were beautiful in themselves. Although Plato fails to apply the category of Beauty to the pleasures of intellect in the Philebus, he does so clearly in the Symposium. As Raven notes,¹¹¹ the ascent progresses from particular objects of beauty to absolute beauty, that is, from beautiful bodies to beautiful customs, branches of knowledge, and eventually to the branch

¹¹⁰ J. E. Raven, Plato's Thought in the Making (Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 109.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 115-116.

of knowledge which is knowledge of absolute beauty, dialectic. Thus beauty is also to be found in intellectual activities.

Plato is now in a position to decide "whether it is pleasure or intelligence that is more akin to the highest Good, and more valuable with men and gods alike" (65B). His method is to examine Beauty, Truth and Measuredness separately in relation to pleasure and thereby to discover in the section from 65B to 66A which qualifies for the second place. Reason and pleasure are again analyzed in their pure forms as Plato indicates at 63D-E when he mentions "pleasures being ... completely destitute of Reason". As Hackforth correctly notes,¹¹² Plato's methodology is not inconsistent with the analysis of the pure pleasures already given in the dialogue. The pleasures which have been accepted into the mixed life have been modified with the addition of Limit. The point to be made is that the value of any pleasure is due to its association with Reason and Limit.

When pleasure in itself is subjected to truth value it is clear, as Plato indicates at 65C, that it is "the worst of all imposters". Plato's description of false pleasures showed that such is the case. Reason, however, if it is not identical with Truth, is the thing most like

¹¹²Hackforth, p. 134.

it--it is "the truest thing in the world" (65D). With regard to Measuredness, pleasure was shown to be unmeasured or unlimited in character, while reason and knowledge are the most measured things that exist. As for Beauty, reason and intelligence, unlike pleasure, can never be regarded as being or ever becoming ugly. When we view a person experiencing and enjoying the extreme pleasures, "we detect in them an element either of the ridiculous or of extreme ugliness, so that we ourselves feel ashamed, and do our best to cover it up and hide it away: and we leave that sort of thing to the hours of darkness, feeling that it should not be exposed to the light of day" (56E-66A). The enjoyment of extreme pleasures is morally wrong, unbecoming the true nature of man. No doubt can be left that reason and intelligence are more akin to and of more value than pleasure to the cause of goodness in the good life for man.

The two major questions involved in the third formulation of the ethical problem have been solved by Plato. The Goodness involved in any Mixture is due to its form, a form consisting of Beauty, Measuredness, and Truth. Reason is more similar than pleasure to that form. All that remains in the dialogue is for Plato to construct a value scale of human goods.

VI

THE VALUE SCALE

The final classification of goods occurs in the passages from 66A to 67B. The highest good lies in "the region of measure--of what is measured or appropriate"; the second "in the region of what is proportioned and beautiful, and what is perfect and satisfying and so forth" (66B).

Hackforth suggests that the reason for the order of the first two highest goods is as follows:¹¹³

in the formula of the first we are looking at each part or factor of the good life by itself, so that the formula signifies the achievement of right quantitative determination in respect of each knowledge and each pleasure. ... In the formula of the second we look at the good life as a whole, or (which is the same thing) we apprehend the relation of its parts.

According to Hackforth, Plato has logically placed the rightness of each part before the rightness of inter-related parts in the good life. In opposition to that interpretation, Taylor and Comperz interpret the good in the highest position as having cosmic significance,

¹¹³Hackforth, p. 138.

with measure being a characteristic of all good things.¹¹⁴
 The second category of goods would be the realization of the first kind in the world of appearance. Taylor describes the second class as "the immediate effects of measure and proportion, wherever they are found"¹¹⁵. The interpretation appears valid if we recall that at 640 the discussion of pleasures takes on cosmic significance-- the factor of Good was shown to apply "in the whole scheme of things", applying, as Plato states at 64D, to "any compound, whatever it be". Plato is not, as Hackforth contends, speaking specifically of the good life for man, but rather of good things in general.

The third place falls, according to Socrates, to reason and intelligence; the fourth to what belongs to the soul itself--sciences, arts, and right opinions. The third highest good is knowledge of the higher realities; the fourth of lower forms of cognition. As Gomperz notes, intellect and knowledge apprehend the first two goods, while in the fourth place we have the application of reason to the domain of actual, objective facts.¹¹⁶

In the fifth place are listed the pure pleasures of the soul itself, what Gomperz calls "the emotional

¹¹⁴Taylor, Plato: the Man and his Work, p. 434 and Gomperz, p. 196.

¹¹⁵Taylor, Plato: Philebus & Epinomis, p. 90.

¹¹⁶Gomperz, p. 196.

effects they produce through the agency of the elementary aesthetic feelings, resting on the relation of forms"¹¹⁷. The scale ends at the "sixth ascent".

Taking the final classification of goods as a whole, we can see that primary importance is given to form, then knowledge, and lastly, pleasure. With both form and knowledge, superior value is allotted to the types containing cosmic significance--to order or measure in general, and to dialectic, the art which can comprehend measure in general. Since measure constitutes the goodness in any mixture, all forms of it are superior in a list of goods. The forms of knowledge, reason and intelligence, are next in importance because they are more similar to the cause of goodness and because they can comprehend the nature of that goodness. The inferior forms of cognition take fourth place not only as a parallel to measure in the objective realm, but also because they allow a person to understand particular instances which are measured in nature. Pure pleasure, the counterpart of Beauty in the three forms of good, is fifth in the scale, the emotional element having been shown to be inferior in nature to the intellectual factor.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

With the final classification of human goods Plato re-iterates his conclusions concerning the second and third formulations of the ethical problem. Reason, in both the cosmic and human realms, is superior to pleasure, even to the pure pleasures.

VII
CONCLUSION

Practical ethical judgments are statements about objects or actions, of the form, "This is good (or bad)", "That is right (or wrong)", "Mr. X is moral (or immoral)". Metaethical judgments are statements about possible practical judgments, and are thus a step removed from actual cases. Practical ethical judgments apply standards, rules, and principles in evaluating objects as good or bad, actions as right or wrong, and persons as moral or immoral. Metaethical judgments, on the other hand, define and appraise the standards, rules, and principles that justify practical decisions.¹¹⁸

Despite the fact that a discussion of "the good" is involved basically with the task of conceptual clarification, certain practical ethical conclusions about personal and social action are derived from and justified by the tenets of the metaethical theory. Depending on the nature of the ethical theory, stress is placed either on the theoretical or practical aspects of "the good". With pragmatic and utilitarian theories of ethics the main concern is with particular situations and the way in

¹¹⁸Raziel Abelson, "Introduction", Ethics and Metaethics (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), p. 4.

which an individual should act towards those circumstances, rather than with a general formulation for goodness. The cases of absolutist, idealistic, and evolutionary theories differ considerably with regard to their emphasis on the basic rules by which all actions should be performed--the will of god, the nature of man, the progress of natural processes, or other "self-evident" principles towards which man should act. With the importance placed on the theoretical aspect of the problem, everyday decisions are given an inferior role, individual actions in particular situations assuming a less privileged position than the general rule.

Although more importance is placed on either the theoretical or practical aspects of the theory involved, the other factor, the practical in the case of the theoretical, the theoretical in the practical ethical theory, must also be justified if the theory in question is to be complete. For instance, the absolutists must be able to derive and justify actions which involve moral decisions in everyday living from the general principles of their theory if it is not to be regarded as an empty imperative describing an ideal condition which is incapable of being applied to the human realm. So also must the pragmatists or utilitarians justify the general principles of their theories, the principles which are the standards for practical decisions. When either aspect of the

ethical problem is ignored, the theory must be regarded as incomplete.

In the Philebus we are presented with a theoretical rather than a practical code of ethics. Taking the final classification in the passages from 66A to 67B as an indication of the value of goods for man, we find that order and proportion are viewed as the prime excellences. Knowledge of things in general, then practical knowledge, gain secondary importance, followed by the pure pleasures. The good life for man, a life which would make man happy, would consist of a mixture of pleasure and knowledge. However, neither of those two constituents can be regarded as the most important factor in that life. The form of the life itself, the harmonious relationship between the forms of knowledge and of pleasure, makes the life good, just as it does in the case of all good things in the universe.

Not even the two constituents are regarded as being of equal value. All forms of knowledge are superior to any forms of pleasure. In the classification of knowledge itself the superior form has the ability to comprehend the forms of beauty, truth, and proportion as they are exemplified in the two highest goods. Even the pure pleasures have a close relationship to form in that they refer not to actual existents such as trees or houses, but rather, as Plato explains at 51C, to pure examples of

form and colour, in which the objects themselves are intrinsically beautiful. With the exception of practical knowledge, which would allow us to participate in actual living, all of the goods listed for man have reference to the nature, not of man, but rather of the universe in general. That observation gains significance with the realization that even the necessary pleasures are excluded from the final classification of goods.

In the Philebus, therefore, we are confronted by an almost purely theoretical account of the good life for man. For Plato, the good life consists in a harmonious relationship between certain forms of pleasure and knowledge. The justification for that conclusion lies in the analogy between man and the universe. Since only mixtures are good, according to the classification of existents, the good life for man must be a mixture. That conclusion is re-enforced by the application of the three forms of the good, perfection, adequacy, and choiceworthiness, to pleasure and knowledge. When it is found that neither alone can fulfill the three conditions, Plato concludes that only the mixture is worthy of being called the "good". Since all mixtures are good because of their form, goodness consisting of a unity-in-plurality of Beauty, Truth, and Proportion, so also must the good life for man be good because of those factors. Regarding the relative values of pleasure and knowledge, since

knowledge is akin to Cause, and the Cause or Maker is always superior to that upon which it acts or which it produces, knowledge must be superior to pleasure. All of the major arguments, therefore, are on the purely theoretical level. Acceptance of Plato's conclusions would rest on the acceptance of his metaphysical arguments.

Any theory, however, that is based primarily on "a priori" principles such as those advanced by Plato is liable to be questioned. No empirical evidence can be produced to justify his claims. Further, the value of the macrocosm-microcosm argument, which is used throughout the dialogue to substantiate his contentions, is questionable. The element of comparison in no way substantiates an equation between two objects. Although Plato acknowledges that fact when he compares human reason to Cosmic Reason at 31A, he fails to recognize the limitation of the analogy in subsequent passages. Having concluded that the goodness of all mixtures is of one nature, he does not hesitate to apply that condition to the good life for man as a definite proof that reason is more akin than pleasure to that factor.

The result of Plato's use of metaphysical arguments is the theoretical nature of his conclusions about the good life. As a consequence, no practical advice is presented for the person encountering situations in which

moral judgments are required. In fact, the final classification of goods fails to produce general principles which could be applied to such situations. It is very difficult to discern in what way the principle of harmony could be utilized to judge situations of moral conflict.

A major aspect of practical ethics which any ethical theory should discuss is the relationship between an individual and other people. Man's world is not a solitary one: a mutual interrelationship between individuals is an unavoidable condition of any society. Any ethical theory which fails to recognize the affinity of individuals and to take into account the manner in which others should be treated lacks completeness. People are continually with others, doing things for others, and accepting things from them. Included in a theory of ethics should be a directive concerning our mode of action towards other individuals as beings similar to ourselves. If, within a theory, the individual is allotted dignity, then others also must be accepted as possessing that dignity, a fact which would greatly influence our actions. The same relationship holds true if the individual is viewed as a debased, completely egoistic animal. Although the cardinal virtues, some of which, like justice, refer to our conduct towards others, are mentioned at 55B, they are included only as an indication of the inadequacy of

the hedonist position. It does not seem unreasonable to expect some consideration of the nature of human relations in the Philebus, which is a dialogue dealing specifically with the good life for man.

In addition to the practical application of a theory of ethics, which includes our relationship with others, two other major problems must be included in an ethical theory--those of obligation and freedom. Without freedom of decision, all actions would be determined, either by some external force which makes the person act in a certain manner or by some trait of human nature which causes a similar effect. If all actions are determined, no choice is available to the individual. Without choice, a person could not make moral judgments about others or about the moral fabric of his own life. Closely related to the problem of freedom is that of obligation. The distinction between "is" and "ought", that is, between how things are and how they ought to be, plays a major role in any theory of ethics. Without the possibility of freedom, no distinction could be made between the "is" and the "ought". All people would be as they are, since without the possibility of choice they could not change their nature. The term "ought" could then be dismissed from the language, as could the problem of ethics itself.

Plato recognizes the need for both freedom and obligation in the Philebus. He states that knowledge, intelligence, memory, and things akin to these ought to be pursued in the search for the good life. The reason for that pursuit lies in the nature of man as being primarily a rational animal. However, he also recognizes that man is an emotional being. The often over-riding desire for pleasure acts as a foil to the rational element, causing a conflict of interests, and therefore tension. Man is free, according to Plato, to choose between the lives of pleasure and knowledge. That freedom, however, is of a restricted nature. Only two choices are offered: the pleasurable life or the life controlled by knowledge. By choosing a life of pleasure, the individual actually accepts a life over which he will have no control. According to Plato, such a life would be one of overpowering passion, which is merely an alternation between a fulfillment of desire and a wish for the desire itself, a life which contains as much pain as it does pleasure. Thus the life of pleasure would not really be completely pleasurable. For Plato, freedom lies in man's ability to choose a life of knowledge. That life would include pleasure that is moderate in degree and necessary to the person, and the pure pleasures which, unlike the mixed bodily pleasures, are not detrimental to the individual.

Man is obligated to choose the type of life proposed by Plato not only because of the factor of dignity, but also for pragmatic reasons. According to Plato, man's rationality is the factor that distinguishes him from lesser animals, the factor that gives him moral worth. By choosing the inferior way of life, that of living by the pleasure principle, he becomes no more than an animal, unable to act according to his own volition. Such a brutish existence degrades the individual. Plato's arguments in the Philebus for the superiority of reason over pleasure indicate that the individual who chooses the life replete with pleasure is mistaken in his estimation of the value of such pleasures. Pragmatically, such an estimation is also mistaken. Although the person may believe that he is receiving intense pleasure, and living the most favourable life, such is often not the case. The nature of the mixed bodily experiences, as revealed in Plato's psychological examination of the nature of pleasure, reveals that pain is intermingled with the feeling of pleasure, that it is, in fact, an unconditional accompanying factor in such experiences. Further, an analysis of such pleasures reveals the falsity that occurs in pleasures of anticipation and in hedonic calculation. The pleasures believed to be felt and those that are actually experienced differ considerably. Only with knowledge can a

true estimation of such pleasures be formed.

Plato's account of freedom has both merit and deficiency. By setting the standard toward which man should act as the dignity of man himself, Plato really offers no alternative for the individual in his choice of lives. The freedom is actually nominal--if a man wants to be a man he must choose the life proposed by Socrates. The second choice, that of a pleasurable existence, is not worthy of being an alternative. Merit, however, can be seen in such a concept of freedom. Choice always involves two or more factors. The ability to choose must involve a standard for choice if the choice is to have value. Complete freedom, in the sense of choosing any alternative without qualification, would be meaningless since nothing would warrant our choice. Plato has presented the standard--the dignity of man. Further, since no physical impediments are involved, the discussion being based on a state or condition of the soul, physical freedom is also guaranteed in the theory.

The description of the actual nature of the mixed bodily pleasures constitutes the most valuable contribution of the Philebus. Plato's recognition that there are several forms of pleasure, some acceptable and others not, is valuable in that it clarifies the nature of the phenomenon of pleasure. Not only do the sources of

pleasure, bodily, those arising from both body and soul, and those of the soul alone, vary, but the pleasures themselves are shown to contain differences. Some are mixed with pain, others are free from any perceptible want. Only the pure pleasures, those unmixed with pain, can be really true. The pleasures often believed to be the best pleasures contain within themselves the element of falsity. With his detailed psychological examination, Plato clearly reveals the illusory character of such pleasures.

With regard to Plato's treatment of pleasure in the Philebus, certain difficulties arise. By applying the method of classificatory division to the ethical realm, in its loose application to the topics of pleasure and knowledge, Plato automatically objectifies the feelings of pleasure. That objectification fails to take into account the subjective response of an individual towards objects which produce pleasurable feelings. The method itself forms the basis for a theoretical rather than an empirical study of the subject of ethics. Further, even the arguments for the need of classification are unconvincing. The listing of pleasures at 120-D does not disprove Protagoras' contention that the sources, not the pleasures themselves, are different. Nor does the analogy to colour and figure, illustrating the differences between generic and specific identity, which is presented in the passages

from 12E to 13B, prove that pleasure also is a genus with particular instances to be analyzed. By putting knowledge on all fours with pleasure at 13E-14A, Plato has not convinced Protarchus by any valid rational argument of the need for classification. The objectification of pleasures plays a major role in the classification of the first type of false pleasures from 38A to 40E. Only by regarding pleasure in the same way as opinion can Plato call such pleasures "false". The exact meaning of that "falsity", however, remains ambiguous. At 55B-C another problem appears with the argument that according to the hedonist position a man feeling pleasure would be good, while one feeling pain would be evil. If given the chance, the hedonist could easily retort that the feelings themselves, not the person experiencing them, would be good or bad. The introduction of such an argument by Plato to indicate the superior value of knowledge over pleasure is detrimental rather than constructive to his purpose of fairly discussing the values of the two constituents of the good life.

Despite the shortcomings of some of the arguments, valid insight can be gained from a reading of the Philebus. As a method, dialectic presents a systematic study of the question of ethics. Pleasure is revealed in its various manifestations, with a detailed examination of the

nature and value of its forms. Of prime importance is Plato's insight into the factor of illusion in the mixed bodily experiences. For Plato the dignity of man lay in his nature as a rational being. Despite the fact that no practical insight can be gained from the Philebus, the aim of the dialogue is a worthy one--to reveal the true nature of man and to persuade others to pursue that nature. The ideal condition, although perhaps never attainable, reveals Plato's conviction that man can become more than his selfish motives indicate, that by realizing his true nature man can transcend his existence as a pleasure-seeking animal.

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