

‘Enemies of Philebus’ and the ‘Wise’ of *Republic* 9

OLGA ALIEVA (Moskau)*

Abstract – This paper examines the parallels between the theory of pleasure ascribed by Plato to the ‘enemies of Philebus’ in the homonymous dialogue and that of the ‘wise men’ in the *Republic*, book 9. Though some of these parallels were noticed by G. Grote in 1865 and by J. Adam in 1907, their observations did not receive further elaboration. First, because the ‘wise’ of the *Republic*, book 9 admit at least one ‘real’ pleasure, whereas the ‘enemies of Philebus’ hold that pleasures do not exist at all (Hackforth 1945). Second, because the ‘enemies of Philebus’ came to be identified with Speusippus: indeed, Plato could not possibly refer to his nephew as ‘the wise’ in the *Republic*. Against this, I seek to re-establish the connection between ‘the wise’ and ‘the enemies’, and thereby to shed some light on Plato’s literary and philosophical strategies, as well as on the making of his own theory of pleasure.

Keywords – Plato, *Philebus*, *Republic*, pleasure, Speusippus, hedonism

Among various views on pleasure discussed in the *Philebus*, Socrates mentions the theory of some physiologists (δεινοὶ λεγόμενοι τὰ περὶ φύσιν), whom he also calls ‘enemies of Philebus’. They hold ‘that pleasures do not exist at all’¹ (44b10: τὸ παράπαν ἡδονὰς οὐ φασιν εἶναι) by which we are meant to understand that pleasures have no nature of their own, but are simply λυπῶν ἀποφυγαί (44c1). Therefore, these stern (δυσχερεῖς) physiologists regard pleasure as ‘thoroughly unsound’ (οὐδὲν ὑγιές), and its very attractiveness they regard as ‘sorcery’ (γοήτευμα). Though Socrates does not share their views on pleasure, he apparently sympathizes with them, saying that their hatred of pleasure is that ‘of a nature far from ignoble’.

* National Research University, Higher School of Economics. The author is grateful to Prof. Michael Erlert for his comments on an earlier version of this paper.

¹ Hereinafter translation after Hackforth 1945 (with modifications), unless otherwise specified. I follow the Greek text in Diès 1941.

More than a century ago, J. Adam noticed that the doctrine of the *δυσχερεῖς* was also referred to in the *Republic*, and that it was implied in the *Gorgias*.² On the basis of the similarity of doctrine, as well as on certain textual parallels, he identified the ‘enemies of Philebus’ with the ‘wise men’ mentioned in *Republic* 9. Adam’s guess did not receive further consideration after Hackforth noticed that the *δυσχερεῖς* of the *Philebus* denied any nature to pleasure at all, whereas for the σοφοί of R. 583b ‘there was at least one true pleasure’ (*sc.* τοῦ φρονήμου).³

An alternative explanation of Plato’s allusion to the *Republic*, book 9 in the *Philebus* was proposed by D. Frede, who does not exclude that in *Philebus* 44a Plato ‘humorously characterizes his own attitude of an earlier stage’ (i.e. that of *Republic* 9 and of the *Phaedo*), when he himself denied reality to pleasures.⁴ However, in this case we must face the same problem: in *Republic* 9 Plato leaves room for some ‘real pleasures’, unlike the ‘enemies of Philebus’.⁵ It is therefore unrealistic to connect the position of the ‘enemies’ to that expressed by Socrates himself in *Republic* 9. As for the *Phaedo*, the description of bodily pleasures in terms of ‘sorcery’ can be found at 81b, but Plato did not fully deny reality to pleasure even in this dialogue.⁶

According to another interpretation, the description of the *δυσχερεῖς* physiologists exactly fits Speusippus,⁷ whose antihedonist position is reported by Aristotle (EN 7,14 1153b. 10,2 1173a). The

² Adam 1907, 378-380: ‘note in particular γοήτευμα as compared with ἐσκιαγραφημένη’. He argues that there are ‘strong positive reasons’ for holding that in R. 583b Plato has in view ‘preachers of the Orphic-Pythagorean moral and religious school’: their concern with purification combined with interest in natural science, as well as the very designation as σοφοί (cf. Grg. 493) point in this direction. Before Adam, a similar interpretation (though defended on different grounds) was offered by Grote 2009, 609f. (see below n. 36).

³ Hackforth 1945, 87f.

⁴ Frede 1992, 461 n. 30; ead. 1997, 270f. with n. 79. Tarrant 2010, 114 n. 14 justly, albeit very briefly, criticizes this view.

⁵ Pace Gosling/Taylor 1982, 147 and Gosling 1975, 231.

⁶ Alieva (forthcoming).

⁷ Taylor 1928, 456; Schofield 1971, to cite just a few. Tarán 1981, 80 and Frede 1997, 269f. believe that the identification is based on a misunderstanding. Against Tarán’s ‘misguided scepticism’ see: Dillon 2003, 41 n. 28 and Tarrant 2010, 112 n. 5.

parallels could then be explained by the fact that Speusippus relied directly on the theory of *Republic* 9. As H. Tarrant convincingly argues, Plato’s commitment to the ‘real pleasures’ in *Republic* 9 is ‘closely linked to the so-called Theory of Forms’. Speusippus, ‘the most famous opponent of the Forms apart from Aristotle’, rejected Plato’s distinction between ‘the true and higher pleasures of the philosopher and the false and lower pleasures of those dominated by the irrational parts of the soul’.⁸ Still, his description of the ‘lower pleasures’ must have remained dressed in Plato’s terms. Despite its indisputable advantages, this explanation does not account for the fact that in the *Republic* Socrates admits his indebtedness to some ‘wise’ instructors, and, just as in the *Philebus*, their instruction gives the initial impetus to his own research.⁹ Surely Speusippus cannot be simply identified with the ‘wise’ of *Republic* 9.

With these problems in mind, we would like to return to the parallels between the two dialogues. Let us start with the *Philebus*. Socrates has just demonstrated that pleasures and pains *qua* propositional attitudes can be ‘false’ (36c-41a; ‘Dairymaid’s pleasures’ and ‘Rumpelstiltskin’s pleasures’ in Frede’s classification; kind 1 in that of Wolfsdorf).¹⁰ He goes on to analyze another type of falsity (41a7: τὰς ψευδεῖς κατ’ ἄλλον τρόπον), that of quantitative evaluation (41a-42c; ‘Esau’s pleasures’ in Frede’s classification; kind 2 Wolfsdorf).¹¹ Socrates shows that pleasures and pains appear greater and more intense (μείζους φαίνονται καὶ σφοδρότεραι) because of juxtaposition (τιθέμεναι παρ’ ἀλλήλας) with each other (42b2-6). As Wolfsdorf put it, such juxtaposition ‘distorts at least one of the affective conditions’, so the pleasure is considered false because of this ‘distorted portion’.¹² After that, Socrates goes on to consider other pleasures (Frede’s ‘the Ascetic’s pleasures’; kind 3 Wolfsdorf),¹³ ‘even more false’. The lines 42c5-7 have been interpreted differently, so it is worthwhile to cite the Greek text:

⁸ Tarrant 2010, 113.

⁹ See below p. 12.

¹⁰ Frede 1992, 171ff.; ead. 1997, 242-260; Wolfsdorf 2013, 80-84.

¹¹ Frede 1997, 260-265.

¹² Wolfsdorf 2013, 85-87.

¹³ Frede 1992, 443; ead. 1997, 265-274; Wolfsdorf 2013, 88-90.

Phlb. 42c5-7: Τούτων τοίνυν ἐξῆς ὀψόμεθα ἐὰν τῆδε ἀπαντῶμεν ἡδονὰς καὶ λύπας ψευδεῖς ἔτι μᾶλλον ἢ ταύτας φαινομένας τε καὶ οὔσας ἐν τοῖς ζῴοις.

Nach diesen Fällen wollen wir als nächstes sehen, ob wir nicht auf folgende Weise auf noch falschere Arten von Lust und Unlust stoßen als diese, die scheinbar und auch wirklich bei den Lebewesen auftreten (Frede 1997).

Next I want to see whether there are not some examples of pleasure and distress that creatures experience that seem and indeed are even more false than these (Gosling 1975, cf. Hackforth 1945: ‘that appear false and are false’).

On Frede’s reading, there are two types of ‘even more false’ pleasures: one (φαινομένας) is a mere appearance of pleasure (‘Freiheit von Schmerz’ = ‘Ascetic’s pleasure’, discussed in 42c-44d, we shall call it ‘kind 3’ with Wolfsdorf), another is a real (οὔσας), but distorted pleasure (‘Falschheit als Mischung’ = ‘Calliclean pleasures’, discussed in 44d-50e).¹⁴ It permits her to claim that it is, in fact, ‘Calliclean pleasures’ (kind 4) which are *really* (‘wirklich’) ‘even more false’.¹⁵

This, however, makes little sense in terms of the argument. The comparison (ἢ ταύτας) can only be with the kind 2 pleasures (‘Esau’s pleasures’), the discussion of which precedes the passage and which turn out to be a sub-kind of false pleasure kind 4, as several commentators have rightly observed.¹⁶ But the whole kind 4 (*genus*) cannot be ‘more false’ than one of its sub-kinds (= kind 2).¹⁷ For this reason, we think that Hackforth’s and Gosling’s translations, taking φαινομένας

¹⁴ Frede 1997, 265. Similarly Wolfsdorf 2013, 88.

¹⁵ Frede 1997, 275: ‘Zum bloßen Schein wird die Lust, wenn man sie irrtümlich mit der Schmerzfreiheit identifiziert. Als *wirklich* ‘noch falscher’ erweisen sich dagegen die Extremfälle, vor denen der Asket bei der Schmerzfreiheit Zuflucht gesucht hat’.

¹⁶ Wolfsdorf 2013, 89; Hackforth 1945, 92: ‘Besides (1) the mixed pleasures and pains of bodily origin first examined, there are (2) those of body and soul together, and (3) those of soul alone. The second sort are here dismissed briefly, for we have noticed them already: they are found when pleasurable anticipation coincides with the pain of organic depletion (36b)’.

¹⁷ Of course, within the *genus* pleasures can be more or less over- or underrated, or distorted, but this distortion, as Socrates has already told us, does not depend on the kind of pleasure, but on the intensity of the corresponding pain.

τε καὶ οὔσας as referring to one kind of pleasure, is preferable.¹⁸ And it is clear from what follows that the kind in question is kind 3 (mistaking the neutral state for pleasure).

Another question concerns the participle οὔσας: is it used absolutely or predicatively (*sic* οὔσας [ψευδεῖς])? If we take both participles to refer to the ‘even more false’ pleasures, then the predicative sense (chosen by Gosling and Hackforth) is clearly preferable. Another option would be to connect the participles with ταύτας: in this case, Socrates’ claim would be that the pleasures just discussed have an illusionary element in them (φαινομένως) but still are, to some extent, real (οὔσας). On the contrary, the pleasures he is going to discuss (kind 3) are mere illusion (‘more false’). Both readings give satisfactory sense, but the latter is also slightly supported by the parallel construction ἐνούσας τε καὶ ἐγγιγνομένας at 41b1, where the two participles connected by τε καὶ refer to the same kind 2.

Let us now see what these ‘even more false’ pleasures have to do with the ‘enemies of Philebus’. First, Socrates mentions the doctrine of some ‘wise men’ (43a2: σοφοῖ) who claim that our φύσις is being constantly (43a2: ἀεὶ) destroyed ‘by processes of combination and separation (συγκρίσεις καὶ διακρίσεις), of filling and emptying (πληρώσεις καὶ κενώσεις), and by certain kinds of growth and decay (αὔξεις καὶ φθίσεις)’ (42c10-d3). These processes, as long as they destabilize the natural balance, bring pain. Pleasure is restoration to the natural state (42d5: εἰς τὴν αὐτῶν φύσιν; cf. 31b-32b). The ‘wise’ see this destruction/restoration process as a part of the continuous cosmic cycle (43a3: ἀεὶ γὰρ ἅπαντα ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω ῥεῖ), and for this reason they do not admit of the ‘third condition’ (i.e., when living creatures experience neither deterioration nor restoration): ‘one of these processes must always be going on in us’.

Against them, Socrates argues that μέσος βίος (43e) is, in fact, possible, for some of bodily depletions and restorations pass unnoticed by the soul (43a). He does not question the constant flux as

¹⁸ Also in terms of language, τε καὶ often marks an intrinsic connection between the joined elements: LSJ s.v. τε II; Kühner/Gerth 1955, 249 (§ 522): ‘... das erstere und das durch καὶ hinzugefügte Glied in einer innigen oder notwendigen Verbindung mit einander stehen’.

such, but shows that this flux is not yet a decisive argument for denying the possibility of a ‘neutral state’. Once that neutral state, or μέσος βίος, is proved possible, it turns out that some pleasures are ‘even more false’ than those intensified by contrast (kind 2). Namely, when one thinks that he feels pleasure when he simply is not feeling pain (44a10: χαίρειν οἴονται τότε ὅταν μὴ λυπῶνται = kind 3).¹⁹

At this point, Socrates asks: ‘Then are we to take the line that these things are three in number, as we said just now, or that they are only two, pain being an evil for mankind, and release from pain (44b2: τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν τῶν λυπῶν) being called pleasant as in itself a good?’ (44a).²⁰ Protarchus does not understand (44b5: οὐ μανθάνω) how one can possibly claim that ‘at this stage’. Then, Socrates reacts, you do not understand the ‘enemies of Philebus’.

The way the ‘enemies of Philebus’ are introduced into the dialogue testifies to the effect that Plato identifies them with the ‘wise’: they, too, do not admit of the third alternative Protarchus and Socrates have just claimed possible.²¹ This identification goes in line with the interest of the ‘enemies’ to the natural philosophy (44b9: τὰ περὶ φύσιν) and with their definition of pleasure as λυπῶν ἀποφυγαί (44c1). Therefore, Socrates’ words that he intends to modify the theory of the ‘wise’ (43c1: ἔσται κάλλιον καὶ ἀνεπιληπτότερον τὸ λεγόμενον), applies also to them.

¹⁹ The use of the word χαίρειν suggests that the supporters of this position might have distinguished the state of μὴ λυπεῖσθαι from ἡδονή. See: Dillon 2003, 70.

²⁰ Gosling/Taylor 2009, 145 argue that the μέσος βίος actually gives ‘a foothold’ to the ‘enemies of Philebus’: their attack on pleasure ‘could only carry conviction if it was possible to live some life that did not consist of these pleasures or pains’. That is true, but once the possibility of the neutral state is granted, we are forced to admit that this neutral state must be different from pleasure (44a10: χωρὶς τοῦ μὴ λυπεῖσθαι καὶ τοῦ χαίρειν ἢ φύσις ἑκατέρου). This, in turn, ruins the argument of the ‘enemies’: the ‘foothold’ turns out to be a pitfall (so, rightly, Frede 1997, 267).

²¹ It is hardly necessary to posit a different group of thinkers (‘the disciples of Heraclitus’) here, as, for instance, Bury 1897, 92 does. Similarly Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1920, 272: ‘Im *Philebos* selbst 43a sind die σοφοί keineswegs dieselben wie die δεινοὶ τὰ περὶ φύσιν, sondern die Herakliteer ...’. It is well attested that Pythagoreans (Epicharmus, Philolaus, etc.) adopted both Heraclitean problematics and vocabulary. See: Horky 2013, 138 *et passim*.

The character of this modification is explained by Socrates himself. After Socrates has presented the doctrine of the *δυσχερεῖς*, Protarchus asks: ‘Should we believe (πειθεσθαι) them?’ (44c). ‘Not believe’, Socrates replies, but ‘avail ourselves of their gift of divination’. At 51a, when pleasures of kinds 3 and 4 have already been considered, Socrates shows how far this ‘divination’ has taken him:

With those who maintain that all pleasures are a cessation (παύλαν)²² of pain I am not altogether inclined to agree (πειθομαι), but, as I said (reference to 44c [author’s note]), I use them as witnesses to²³ show that (1) some pleasures are apparent and unreal (τινὰς ἡδονὰς εἶναι δοκούσας, οὐσας δ’ οὐδαμῶς), (2) while others present themselves to us as being great and numerous (μεγάλας ἑτέρας τινὰς ἅμα καὶ πολλὰς φαντασθείσας), but are in fact jumbled up with pains and processes of relief (συμπεφυρμέναι ὁμοῦ λύπαις τε καὶ ἀναπαύσεσιν ὀδυνῶν) from such severe suffering as besets both body and soul.

This passage is in some respects unique, for Plato ‘lays bare’ his own philosophical device and exposes the inner mechanism of the dialogue. Socrates seems to be making an important point here, namely that he used the doctrine of the *δυσχερεῖς* in order to show that (1) some pleasures are entirely unreal (= kind 3), whereas (2) others are real, but seem more intense than they really are by contrast with accompanying pains (= kinds 2 and 4). Thereby he admits that the doctrine of the *δυσχερεῖς* has been significantly modified.

Namely, (1) must refer to the mistake of *δυσχερεῖς* themselves: they mistake the neutral state (rest) for pleasure (movement). Such pleasures are ‘even more false’, as we have seen, for under no condition can rest be regarded as pleasure, which is essentially a movement. On the other hand, (2) the ‘unreal’ pleasures (in terms of the ‘physiologists’) are now declared to possess some degree of reality.²⁴ Pleasures

²² Erginel 2011 must be right in delimiting *παύλα* and *ἀπαλλαγὴ* in Plato’s *Republic* 9; however, this delimitation cannot be valid for the *δυσχερεῖς* in the *Philebus*, given their reluctance to admit of the neutral condition.

²³ ‘to’ = πρὸς τό. I correct here Hackforth’s translation [Hackforth 1945] (‘I avail myself of their evidence that’) relying on Gosling 1975 (‘I use them as witnesses to show’), for the distinction between ‘unreal’ and ‘impure’ pleasures does not belong to the ‘wise men’, as we see, but to Socrates himself.

²⁴ This shift in meaning is accompanied by a shift in wording: they are *συμπεφυρμένα* *ἀναπαύσεσιν*, not *ἀναπαύσεις* as such.

of this type appear more intense by contrast with corresponding pain – unlike the previous type, these *are* pleasures, albeit ἐσκιαγραφημένα.

The above given reconstruction of the argument against the ‘wise’ in the *Philebus* makes parallels with *Republic* 9 (583b-586d) even more striking than Adam suggested. Having briefly presented the ‘doctrine of the wise’ (583b: τῶν σοφῶν τινος), i.e. that pleasures apart from those of the φρόνιμος are a sort of σκιαγραφία, Socrates builds upon this doctrine (R. 583c1: ᾧδ’ ... ἐξευρήσω ... ζητῶν). First, he introduces, at 583c, (i) an intermediate state between pleasure and pain (ἡσυχία), analogous to the μέσος βίος in the *Philebus*. It is important for the distinction Socrates makes here that it is a *state*, not movement as pains and pleasures are (583e10: κίνησις τις).²⁵ Nonetheless, being neither pain nor pleasure, this intermediate state can *appear* (584a7: φαίνεται) as both, if preceded by either of them. This is why Socrates calls it ‘sorcery’ (584a10: γοητεία τις) which has ‘nothing sound’ (584a9: οὐδὲν ὑγιές) in it. One immediately notes lexical parallelisms with the doctrine of the δυσχερεῖς in the *Philebus* (44c8: οὐδὲν ὑγιές; γοήτευμα). To be sure, the δυσχερεῖς apply this characteristic to the pleasure *in general*, whereas in the *Republic* the reference is made to one particular kind of mistake (ἡσυχία mistakenly taken for pleasure). However, as we already know from the *Philebus*, the ‘wise’ themselves

²⁵ The processes in question are again πλήρωσις and κένωσις (585b; cf. Phlb. 42c10-d3) and, just like in the *Philebus*, these alterations form part of a bigger cycle (κάτω ... ἄνω φέρεσθαι in 584d6f.; cf. Phlb. 43a). Not without reason A.E. Taylor pointed to Alcmaeon’s doctrine of health as ἰσονομία of the bodily opposites in this connection (DK 24 B4). See: Taylor 1928, 448ff. He adds that this doctrine was further elaborated by Pythagoreans in the ethical vein. More recently, P. Kingsley has defended the thesis that this elaboration was not only ethical, but also allegorical. See Kingsley 1995, 104. This can be seen from the *Gorgias*, where a similar theory of pleasure is adjusted to the allegorical interpretation of the netherworld imagery, and where we meet the same play on ἀπιστία/ἀπληστία as in R. 585e (Grg. 493c: τὴν ψυχὴν κοσκίνῳ ἀπήκασε ... τετρημένην, ἅτε οὐ δυναμένην στέγειν δι’ ἀπιστίαν καὶ λήθην; cf. R. 586b3f.: οὐδὲ τὸ στέγον ἐαυτῶν πιμπλάντες etc.). In the *Gorgias*, too, the theory is attributed to some ‘wise men’. It seems therefore highly plausible that in the *Gorgias* and in the *Republic* Plato refers to the same set of ideas. The doxographical tradition (DK 31 A95) ascribes a similar view to Empedocles. Gosling/Taylor 1982, 80 think that this view of Empedocles ‘may have come to interest Plato via the influence of Pythagoreanism’.

did not distinguish between different kinds of ‘false’ pleasures, as Socrates does.²⁶ Consequently, what was for them a term applicable to the whole *genus* of pleasures, becomes a characteristic of one *species* within Socrates’ ‘investigation’.

Second, Socrates discusses (ii) ‘pleasures that do not derive from pains’ (584b: αἰ οὐκ ἐκ λυπῶν εἰσίν),²⁷ or ‘pure’ pleasures (584c1: καθαρὰν ἡδονήν), to which he also adds (iii) ‘impure’, or ‘mixed’ pleasures (586b7f.: μεμειγμέναις λύπαις, εἰδώλοις τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἡδονῆς καὶ ἐσκιαγραφημέναις), or liberations from pain. The pleasures of the latter type are characterized by intensity (584c6: μέγιστα), and this intensity is again, as we have already seen in the *Philebus*, associated with σκιαγραφία (586b7-c5: ὑπὸ τῆς παρ’ ἄλληλας θέσεως ἀποχραινομέναις, ὥστε σφοδροῦς ἑκατέρας φαίνεσθαι).

Now, what we have in the *Republic* is (1) an initial reference to the ‘wise’; (2) the idea that the neutral state is to be distinguished from both pleasure and pain; (3) the idea of mutual intensification in case of mixed pleasures;²⁸ (4) terminological parallels.²⁹ The only difference is that in the *Republic*, book 9 Socrates does not specify where, and in which respect, he has modified the doctrine of the ‘wise’. However, since the starting points (the doctrine of some ‘wise’) and the end-points (its modified version) of the argument on pleasure in the two dialogues mainly coincide,³⁰ and also given the similarity of wording,

²⁶ The important ‘discovery’ of Plato consists precisely in the fact that pleasures are ‘unlike each other’ (Gosling/Taylor 1982, 134). We need not confine this observation to the *Philebus* alone.

²⁷ Hereinafter transl. after Reeve 2004.

²⁸ The term σκιαγραφία does not appear in the *Philebus*, but ἡ παρ’ ἄλληλα θέσις (42b2-6, see above p. 7) is a synonymous term. It means, according to E. Keuls, a ‘divisionist [painting] technique exploiting optical color fusion: patches of color contrasted sharply to the nearby viewer, but seemed to blend when observed from appropriate distance’. Cf. Arist. Sens. 3 440b16 and discussion in Keuls 1978, 79-81, 83 n. 74.

²⁹ σκιαγραφία ~ ἡ παρ’ ἄλληλα θέσις; γοητεία ~ γοήτευμα; οὐδὲν ὑγιές; πλήρωσις ~ κένωσις; ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω; λυπῶν ἀποφυγαί ~ λυπῶν ἀπαλλαγαί (R. 584c6); and the language of appearance (φάντασμα) and purity (κάθαρσις).

³⁰ Erler 2013, 79 justly argues that the theories of pleasure presented in the *Republic* and in the *Philebus* are not incompatible, and that the latter represents an elabo-

we think that the *onus probandi* lies on those who divorce the ‘wise’ of the *Republic* and the ‘wise’ of the *Philebus*.

With this in mind, we can now return to the embarrassing qualification *πλὴν τῆς* [*sc. ἡδονῆς τῆς*] τοῦ φρονίμου (583b4). Socrates clearly states that his wise instructors admitted at least one real pleasure, which goes against the picture given in the *Philebus*, as Hackforth justly noted. If we agree with Hackforth, we need to admit that there were at least two groups of thinkers to whom Plato refers to as the ‘wise men’ and whose views on pleasure were practically indistinguishable, but for this particular detail. That would be a strange coincidence indeed.

Another, more economic, solution would be to take *πλὴν τῆς τοῦ φρονίμου* as Socrates’ own conclusion from the doctrine of the ‘wise’. In the dramatic context of the *Republic*, unlike that of the *Philebus*, the polemical element is less relevant: Socrates needs some quick and steadfast arguments to prove the pleasantness of the philosophical life. So he only presents the result of the modification (later explained in the *Philebus*). The resulting theory is still significantly dependent on earlier speculations of the ‘wise’ – it is this dependence that Socrates admits here.

In any case, the fact that in both texts Plato accurately ascribes the doctrine of illusionary pleasures to the ‘wise men’ cannot be solely due to a scrupulous ‘observance of copyright’. Instead, it makes perfect sense if Plato was not ready to endorse it without qualifications. Let us remind ourselves that Callicles’ vehement criticism of *ἡσυχία* (Grg. 493e7), suggested by the ‘wise men’ as a life ideal,³¹ testifies to the effect that already at this early stage of his career Plato was aware of the problems inherent in the doctrine of the ‘wise’.³² A life of no

ration of an earlier version, not its ‘correction’. On other points of convergence between the two dialogues, see also Erler 2010.

³¹ One notes regular associations of *ἡσυχία* with a Pythagorean lifestyle; for instance, D.L. 9,21 says that a Pythagorean Ameinias converted Parmenides to *ἡσυχία*. As Lebedev notes in a recent paper, the term *ἡσυχία* alludes to the Pythagorean *ἐχεμυθία*. See Lebedev 2017, 498. Compare above n. 25.

³² It hardly needs clarification that ‘being aware of the problems’ does not imply ‘sympathizing with Callicles’ arguments’.

motion is not, properly speaking, a life: it is more appropriate to stones or to corpses (492e5).³³

It is often tacitly (and wrongly) assumed that Plato himself was tempted by this ‘life of a corpse’. If it had been so, he would not have taken pains in the *Republic* to show that philosophical life is not only pleasant, but is in fact the most pleasant of all lives. In our reading, then, Plato gives credit to his predecessors for having detected *some* illusionary pleasures; however – and he is particularly insistent on this point – their idea of the ‘real’ pleasure as complete rest harbours even more difficulties. Thereby he not only proves the reality of pleasure *qua* movement, but also defends the attractiveness of the philosophical life in front of those who thought ὅτι τῶ ὄντι οἱ φιλοσοφοῦντες θανατῶσι (Phd. 64b).

Let us now return to the hermeneutical problem we raised at the beginning of this article: in the *Philebus*, Plato alludes to Speusippus, who cannot be identical with the ‘wise’ of the *Republic*. We do not intend to question the identification defended, on solid grounds, by Tarrant and others.³⁴ If the views endorsed by the ‘enemies of Philebus’ did echo later Academic discussions on pleasure, this does not necessarily imply that such views were coeval with these discussions. By rejecting the upper part of the pleasure-scale, Speusippus joined the chorus of radical ascetics like those with whom Plato had argued long before the *Philebus*. By reopening the discussion of the *Republic*, book 9, Plato must tacitly admit that his nephew’s views on pleasure were not particularly novel. So, when the necessity arose to react to the dispute inside the Academy (of which Aristotle informs us), Plato already had some of the necessary arguments at hand, and only need-

³³ Frede 1985, 156 rightly underlines that Socrates in the *Gorgias* ‘does not object to the determination of pleasure as the *fulfilling* of desire itself’. However, elsewhere she argues: Socrates in the *Gorgias* (493d-494a) did proclaim that ‘the best policy is to keep the jars of one’s needs and desires well filled’ (Frede 2010, 11). I would like to underline, with Gosling/Taylor 1982, 121, that ‘the physiologically inspired account of pleasure’ was extended by Plato, not rejected.

³⁴ See above n. 7.

ed to shake the dust off.³⁵ This leaves us with a solution suggested as early as in 1865 by G. Grote: ‘the δυσχερεῖς to whom Plato makes allusion in the *Philebus*, are the persons from whom his nephew and successor Speusippus derived [this] doctrine’, i.e. Plato’s ‘pythagorizing friends’.³⁶ Well, as Plato himself seems to hold, a proper argument is never antiquated.

oalieva@hse.ru

³⁵ Therefore, we could (at least partly) agree with those scholars who insist, like A. Diès, that Aristotle’s account of the Academic discussions is not the only background to take into consideration. Diès 1941, lv. Similarly: Pradeau 2002, 322f.

³⁶ Grote 2009, 609f.

Works cited

- Adam, J. (ed., comm.), *The Republic* of Plato, vol. 2, Cambridge 1907.
- Alieva, O., How Plato Saved Pleasures for Philosophy, in: Cornelli, G./Bravo, F./Robinson, T. (edd.), *Phaedo*: Selected Papers from the Eleventh Symposium Platonicum, Sankt Augustin (forthcoming).
- Bury, R.G. (ed., comm.), *The Philebus* of Plato, Cambridge 1897.
- Diès, A. (ed., trans.), Platon. *Philèbe*, Paris 1941.
- Dillon, J., *The Heirs of Plato: a Study of the Old Academy, 347-274 B.C.*, Oxford 2003.
- Dillon, J./Brisson, L. (edd.), *Plato’s Philebus*: Selected Papers from the Eighth Symposium Platonicum, Sankt Augustin 2010.
- Erginel, M., Plato on the Psychology of Pleasure and Pain, in: *Phoenix* 65 (2011) 288-299.
- Erlr, M., *Philebos* und *Phaidon* über die Qualität von Emotionen, in: Dillon/Brisson 2010, 152-157.
- , Argument im Kontext: Das dritte Argument für die Eudaimonie des Gerechten in der *Politeia* (583bff.) und der „Griesgram“ im *Philebos* (42c-44d), in: Notomi, N./Brisson, L. (edd.), *Dialogues on Plato’s Republic*. Selected papers from the Ninth Symposium Platonicum, Sankt Augustin 2013, 76-81.
- Frede, D. (trans., comm.), Platon. *Philebos*, Göttingen 1997.
- Frede, D., Rumpelstiltskin’s Pleasures: True and False Pleasures in Plato’s “Philebus”, in: *Phronesis* 30 (1985) 151-180.
- , Disintegration and Restoration: Pleasure and Pain in the *Philebus*, in: Kraut, R. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, Cambridge 1992, 425-463.
- , Life and its Limitations: the Conception of Happiness in the *Philebus*, in: Dillon/Brisson 2010, 3-18.
- Gosling, G.C.B. (trans., comm.), Plato. *Philebus*, Oxford 1975.
- Gosling, G.C.B./Taylor, C.C.W., *The Greeks on Pleasure*, Oxford 1982.
- Grote, G., *Plato and the Other Companions of Socrates*, vol. 2, New York 2009 [= 1865].
- Hackforth, R., *Plato’s Examination of Pleasure*, Cambridge 1945.
- Horky, Ph.S., *Plato and Pythagoreanism*, Oxford 2013.
- Keuls, E.C., *Plato and Greek Painting*, Leiden 1978.
- Kingsley, P., *Ancient Philosophy, Mystery, and Magic*, Oxford 1995.
- Kühner, R./Gerth, B., *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*. Satzlehre, Zweiter Teil, Hannover/Leipzig 1955.
- Lebedev, A., Parmenides, ἀνὴρ Πυθαγόρειος. Monistic Idealism (Mentalism) in Archaic Greek Metaphysics, in N. Kazansky (ed.), *Indo-European*

- Linguistics and Classical Philology XXI. Proceedings of the International Conference, St. Petersburg 2017, 493-536.
- Pradeau, J.-F. (trans., comm.), Platon. *Philèbe*, Paris 2002.
- Reeve, C.D.C. (trans.), Plato. *Republic*, Indianapolis 2004.
- Schofield, M., Who were οἱ δυσχερεῖς in Plato, *Philebus* 44a ff.?', in: *Museum Helveticum* 28 (1971) 2-20.
- Tarán, L. (ed., comm.), Speusippus of Athens: A Critical Study with a Collection of the Related Texts and Commentary, Leiden 1981.
- Tarrant, H., A Taste of the Doctrines of Each Group of Sages: Plato's Midwifery at Work in the Academy, in: Dillon/Brisson 2010, 110-122.
- Taylor, A. E. (comm.), A Commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*, Oxford 1928.
- Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, U. von, Platon, vol. 2, Berlin 1920.
- Wolfsdorf, D., *Pleasure in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, Cambridge 2013.