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Species and Dimensions of Pleasure

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There are ontological investigations and analyses of various sorts. One of them is classificatory. Just as the botanist classifies plants into genera and species, so too the ontologist can try to classify the furniture of the world in a systematic way. The highest genera in such a system are called *categories*. This paper aims at a classification of the first species of the genus of pleasure, where pleasure is taken to be a mental quality. Classificatory ontology is not necessarily ”ontology for ontology’s sake”. Sometimes a new ontological scheme brings to light hidden presuppositions in other philosophical areas and, perhaps, even in the philosopher’s culture as a whole. It may show that some ontological species have been invisible because of a blind spot in the dominant ontology. I think that this has been the fate of some species of pleasure. Utilitarianism, preference utilitarianism included, has been blind to certain types of pleasure, in particular pleasures in activities.

1. Pleasure and related categories

What is pleasure? The contrary of pleasure is displeasure or pain. However, pleasure and displeasure have, like positive and negative electric charges, something in common. They are both *affective phenomena*, the one with a positive sign the other with a negative sign. Affective phenomena contain or depend on non-affective parts; they depend on pure *cognitions*. In my opinion, when one is in an affective state one is always directed at something. By ‘cognizing’, I mean not only perceiving and thinking (seeing an evaluatively completely neutral thing, seeing that some natural state of affairs obtains, thinking of an evaluatively completely neutral state of affairs, etc.), but also having sensations. I am of the opinion (see section 3) that to have an affectively neutral sensation is to cognize it. Often, but not always, affective phenomena also contain conations. There are two basic kinds of conations, desires and aversions. In other words, conations, like affective phenomena and unlike cognitions, often have a polar opposite.[1] However, in what follows I am not going to discuss all the aspects of affective phenomena. I am only going to discuss the *affective aspect* of affective phenomena.

Famous philosophers have referred to the polarity of affective phenomena in different ways. Spinoza talked about joy and sorrow, Hume about approval and disapproval, Kant and the utilitarians about feelings of pleasure and pain, and Brentano about love and hate. These choices reflect different views and emphases. I myself shall

use '*pleasure*' as a *genus* term for the affective aspect of positive affective phenomena and '*displeasure*' as the corresponding negative *genus*. One consequence of my terminological choice is that the affective aspects of enjoyments and states like being in love are called pleasures.

Some pleasures may be called 'pleasure *that*', some 'pleasure *in*', and some 'pleasure *sensations*'. I can be happy *that* something has happened, I can feel pleasure *in* seeing something, and I can *have* pleasurable taste sensations. All these different phenomena fall under the genus concept of pleasure. Obviously, the pleasure involved in a pleasure *that* or a pleasure *in* is not an existentially self-sufficient phenomena, but is merely an aspect of a larger complex whole. Many mental phenomena contain both cognitive, conative, and affective parts. Pleasure that and pleasure in always contain both cognitive and affective parts; pleasure that and pleasure in are existentially dependent upon cognitions. In this they are similar to conations. A conation (desire or aversion) is always directed at something, i.e. it is dependent upon something cognized; be it something supposed, represented, presented or sensed. We can have *pure cognitions* (cognitions free of all conations and pleasures) but *pure conations* (conations free of all cognitions) are impossible.

There is a tendency to take it for granted that all our desires are desires for pleasure or for the reduction or elimination of displeasure. In John Stuart Mill's famous words:

> that to think of an object as desirable (unless for the sake of its consequences), and to think of it as pleasant, are one and the same thing; and that to desire anything, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility.[2]

I happen to think that Mill is wrong, but even if he is right, pleasure (= the affective aspect of a positive affective phenomena) is nonetheless distinct from desire. A desire is always a conation *for* something, and a rational desire is necessarily future-directed. When we have a desire, we experience a *conscious tendency*, a striving for something which we either want to have, want to do, or want to come into existence, but when we feel we *need not* have such a tendency. We may, for instance, be in a state of pleasure without having any desire for the pleasure to continue. There are, though, a lot of subtleties in the relationship between affections and conations, but they will not be explored here. I only want to claim that *some mental phenomena have "three dimensions*": *cognitions, conations, and an affective aspect. Pleasure is the same as positive affective aspect.*[3]

The question to be dealt with in sections 2 to 7 is: What are the highest species and dimensions of pleasure?

2. Bentham and Mill on pleasures

Jeremy Bentham once made a long list of different kinds of pleasures and pains, both complex and simple.[4] He distinguished fourteen main species of simple pleasures, namely pleasures of sense, wealth, skill, amity, a good name, power, piety, benevolence, malevolence, memory, imagination, expectation, relief, and pleasures dependent on association. Some of these pleasures he divided into different sub-species, but he left some questions unanswered. Are all the different simple pleasures different in the way the different *infima species* of color hues are different color hues? Are the

simple pleasures different only because *one and the same kind* of pleasurable feeling is connected with different cognitive states or sensations?

According to the *pluralistic* view, pleasures in smells and pleasures in tastes are different species of the genus pleasure in the way that the yellow hue and the green hue are different species of the genus color hue. According to the *monistic* view, there is one and only one kind of pleasure, a kind of feeling which can be connected with a lot of other mental states, among them smell sensations and taste sensations. On both these accounts of pleasure, pleasure can of course vary in intensity and duration. The monistic view implies that the affective aspects of all pleasures of the same intensity and duration are of equal worth; the pluralistic view is compatible with such a claim but does not entail it.

John Stuart Mill thought that Bentham's monistic view was wrong. As a rectification, Mill proposed his distinction between higher and lower pleasures:

> The comparison of the Epicurean life to that of beasts is not felt as degrading, precisely because a beast's pleasures do not satisfy a human beings conception of happiness. Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites, and when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification. --- But there is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation. It must be admitted, however, that utilitarian writers in general have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency, safety, uncostliness, etc., of the former - that is, in their circumstantial advantages rather than in their intrinsic nature.[5]

Like Bentham, Mill was not really interested in making clear the ontological difference between ”the mental pleasures of the intellect” and ”the bodily pleasures of sensation”. He was only interested in their *value difference*. However, it is hard not to regard such a value difference as being founded on some difference between natural kinds of pleasures. How can one *kind* of pleasure be more valuable than another *kind* if there is no essential natural difference between them?

According to Mill, there are two different supreme kinds of pleasures, mental and bodily. Might there be more? Kant made a distinction between *three* kinds or objects of pleasures (”Lust”).[6] I shall, firstly, propose a quadripartite classification of pleasures into:

(i) sensory pleasure in objects, events, and states of affairs,
(ii) non-sensory pleasure in objects, events, and states of affairs,
(iii) sensory pleasure in activities and accomplishments, and
(iv) non-sensory pleasure in activities and accomplishments (summary in section 6); as I am using the terms above, actions are not regarded as events.

Secondly (in section 7), I will expand this classification by introducing yet another distinction: pleasure connected with self-awareness versus pleasure not connected with self-awareness.

3. Sensory pleasures

Most discussions about pleasures take it for granted that some sensory pleasures, in particular bodily sensations, can be taken as typical examples of pleasures; and that,

therefore, they are the proper point of departure.[7] Such sensory pleasures are often tacitly assumed to be *necessarily pleasant*. But is it an analytic truth that sensory pleasures are pleasant? Experiences which we traditionally denote by 'sensory pleasure' contain, I will argue, a duality in which pleasure is merely one of the two aspects.

What I am trying to nail down with regard to pleasure has been brought out clearly in a discussion about whether or not *pains* are *necessarily unpleasant*.[8] The view that pains are *not* necessarily unpleasant has empirical backing. Some people in pain who have been given morphine have reported that they still have the same pain sensation, but that this sensation is no longer unpleasant or painful. The old concepts cannot really handle the new situation; a sensation which is not painful should of course, ideally, not be called a pain sensation. But lacking adequate concepts for this wholly new kind of sensation, people sometimes take recourse to seemingly contradictory sentences like 'The pain sensation is not painful any more'. I think that this empirical finding about pains should be taken very seriously for the following reasons.

Let us look at the ordinary distinction between (i) a meaningful word as a whole, (ii) its linguistic meaning in abstraction from the sign, and (iii) the word as a pure meaningless sign, i.e. as mere sound or inscription. This tripartition can easily be understood if we think of two different kinds of experiences. First, almost everyone can see that different sounds or inscriptions which belong to different languages can be very similar in spite of obvious differences (e.g. English 'yellow', German 'gelb', and Spanish 'amarillo'). Second, when we start to learn a new language we do perceive only pure sounds and inscriptions; only later do they become real words with linguistic meaning. Any person familiar with experiences like these is able to understand the distinction between a word, its meaning, and the sounds and inscriptions. The same, however, I think, cannot be said of a person living in an absolutely mono-lingual community. Of course, in such a community the distinctions are not pragmatically needed, but, and that is my point, they are probably extremely hard to make even for a good philosopher living there. He must make thought experiments in order to find the distinctions, and I think that what we are able to imagine is in part dependent upon what, in fact, we have earlier perceived.

To me, at least, the morphine observations referred to were astonishing in a way which is similar to the astonishment which, I think, arose in people in mono-lingual communities when they for the first time heard about the existence of other languages. If the rumors were true, they needed new distinctions within their own language. Henceforth, it would be useful to be able to talk *about* different languages and distinguish between a word and its two parts, the meaning on the one hand and the sounds and inscriptions on the other hand. Correspondingly, we, today, have to develop our language so that we can say that pain sensations consist of two parts, an affectively neutral "pain" sensation and an affectively non-neutral pain aspect. This means that pain sensations should be regarded as displeasure in "pain" sensations. If the terms are used this way we should say that "pain" sensations are not necessarily unpleasant, but that pain sensations are.

If *pain sensations are displeasure in "pain" sensations*, then, for reasons of symmetry, we should also adopt the view that *pleasure sensations are pleasure in "pleasure" sensations*. As far as I know, there is today no drug which can actually take away the pleasure from some pleasure sensations, and in this way create "pleasure" sensations which are purely cognitive phenomena. But in thought, the dissociation seems to be possible. "Pleasure" sensations, then, are not necessarily pleasant, but pleasure sensations are.

The proposed analysis of pleasure sensations fits in very well with the way we normally look upon taste sensations and smell sensations. We distinguish between pleasant tastes/smells, unpleasant tastes/smells, and tastes/smells which are affectively indifferent. Moreover, we accept that different persons can evaluate the same taste/smell differently. Implicitly, if not explicitly, we often distinguish between two parts in pleasurable tastes and in pleasurable smells. In both kinds of cases we seem to find an affectively neutral sensation which in some way is connected with either a pleasure or a displeasure. A pleasant taste sensation is really pleasure *in* a certain taste sensation.

There are no pure self-sufficient pleasures or displeasures. Both pleasures and displeasures are always dependent upon something to which, as C.D. Broad (who held the same view) phrased it, they give an *hedonic tone*.[9] Since I regard having sensations as a simple form of cognition, my claim is that: *Pleasure without cognition is impossible, whereas cognition without pleasure (or displeasure) is possible*.

In order to make this italicized thesis more clear, we can once again turn to my language analogy. Within the philosophy of language, there are two opposing analyses of the sign. According to one view, linguistic meaning cannot possibly exist if there is nothing at all which functions as a sign substratum. The most famous proponent for this view is F. de Saussure with his distinction between the sign and its two parts, the signified and the signifier. Without a signifier (= sign substrata like sounds and inscriptions) there can be no signified (= meaning). On the other view, meanings can exist independently of all sign substrates. Such self-sufficient meanings are either thought of as Thoughts in themselves (cf. Frege) or as mental events in our heads. The controversy between these views has an analogue in the ontology of pleasure. Either pleasure (cf. meaning) should be regarded as *necessarily* connected with something else (cf. sounds and inscriptions), or pleasure should be regarded as something that can exist in and of itself. The latter view has been the dominant view within empiricist traditions. As J.C.B. Gosling says in his *Pleasure and Desire*:

> … philosophers in the British Empiricist tradition have been very inclined to treat pleasure as a sensation, which feels the same on each occasion, but is caused by a great variety of experiences. They were encouraged in this view in part by the English language. [10]

I have in this section argued only that a ”Saussurean view” captures the truth for sensory pleasures, but I think it captures the truth for all kinds of pleasures. According to this view of sensory pleasure, pleasure is always merely one aspect of a Gestalt. Sensory pleasure is phenomenologically *fused*, not merely associated, with affectively neutral sensations. The same kind of fusion appears in perceptions of linguistic meaning. When I read a word, the meaning is fused with the inscriptions and a Gestalt, the word, is perceived. My view contains two theses. Firstly, as already noted, pleasures are one-sidedly dependent upon cognitions. Secondly, pleasures are partly shaped by the cognitions they depend upon and fuse with. A comparison with poems may be of help. A poem is not indifferent to the structure of the inscriptions which are the bearer of the meaning. Even though the essence of a poem may be its meaning, the graphical layout is an integral part of it.[11] This is one of the reasons why poems are especially hard to translate. A good way to put my view about sensory pleasure is to say that *in sensory pleasure affectively neutral sensations are to the pleasure what the graphical layout of a poem is to the poem.*

Often our perceptions are *modified* in interesting ways. When we learn to read a new language, a lot of pure graphical layouts become modified in the learning process, i.e. they take on meaning. But in spite of this *meaning modification* the pure graphical signs retain some kind of identity. We know that they are the same signs. Similarly, we can at least imagine an opposite kind of modification in which we forget the new language and make the words become meaningless inscriptions and sounds again. With the help of morphine it is possible to modify pain sensations and turn them into ”pain” sensations. In *thought*, we can make a similar modification of pleasure sensations and turn them into ”pleasure” sensations. The general point is that in modifications of this sort there is something which remains identical and something which is either added (and fused) or removed. Entities which in this way can be thought of as both added and removed from another entity, I will call *locally supervenient properties*. They are: (i) existentially dependent upon some subvenient properties, (ii) not reducible to any subvenient properties, (iii) neither by logical necessity nor by natural necessity supervenient upon their subvenient properties.[12]

Often when we talk about pleasurable tastes and pleasurable smells, it is the taste and the smell *of a physical object*, that we are referring to. We may find, for instance, that some special wine has a good taste, and that a certain flower smells good. In these cases, it is easy to regard the pleasure in question as locally supervenient. We know that our taste sometimes changes, and that the things we now find good-tasting and good-smelling one day may be so no longer, even though the taste and the smell have not changed. Our perception has undergone a *pleasure modification* in the sense described. Similarly, I claim, a pleasurable smell sensation may in principle loose its quality of being pleasurable and, contrariwise, a neutral smell sensation may become pleasurable. In these modifications, the taste and the smell, respectively, retain their identity in spite of the corresponding modifications. However, even in those cases where we do not sense the taste and the smell *as being of an object* (i.e. when our attention is so focused that the taste and the smell no longer appear as tastes and smells *of objects* but as pure taste and smell sensations) a distinction can be made between the supervenient pleasure and the sensation in itself. *Pleasure can never exist in and of itself; it is always fused with something else; there are no self-sufficient feelings of pleasure*.

So far, my examples of sensory pleasures have been pleasures fused with tastes and smells, but perhaps tactile pleasures like hugging, caressing, and kissing are the prime examples, not to speak of sexual pleasure. For cultural reasons, I suppose, sexual pleasure is not explicitly mentioned and discussed by the founding fathers of utilitarianism. I shall not give it a special treatment either. But I want to make it clear that since my supervenience thesis for pleasure is quite general, I have to claim that even in sexual orgasms a distinction can be made between orgasms and ”orgasm” sensations.

A special class of sensory pleasures are made up of so-called coenesthetic sensations, i.e. not clearly localisable feelings like feeling well, feeling warm all over, etc.

Before ending this section, I want to forestall a possible misunderstanding of my supervenience view of pleasure. The fact that sensory pleasure is a locally supervenient quality, does not imply that there is only one kind of pleasure which supervenes and fuses with all the different kinds of sensations. Supervenience of pleasure does not imply monism with regard to pleasure. I am merely claiming that pleasure as a genus is, when instantiated, always instantiated as a supervenient quality. I am not claiming that it is one and the same lowest species that supervenes in all the different cases. Pleasures

behave like color hues. Even if all objects in a certain aggregate are necessarily colored (= genus), these objects may of course have different color hues. (I am using 'genus' and 'species' as wholly relative terms).

Some thirty years ago W.P. Alston put forward views which are similar to the ones I have presented this far. Alston used other arguments, and he did not speak of supervenience, but I would like to quote the following:

> (C) Pleasure is a quality which can occur only as one aspect or attribute of some larger complex, as a certain pitch or timbre occurs only as an aspect of a sound which has other aspects. Theories of this sort differ according to the sort of conscious element pleasure is thought to qualify: sensations, complexes of sensations, feelings, and so on. However, once we abandon the project of identifying pleasure with a certain kind of mental element, there is no reason not to take the most liberal alternative and consider the quality of pleasantness attachable to any sort of conscious state. This would have the advantage of not forcing us to explain away the fact that thoughts, realizations, memories, and mental images all seem to be accompanied by pleasure in the same way as sensations. For purposes of further discussion we shall take as our formulation of (C): *Pleasure is a quality that can attach to any state of consciousness*. --- thesis (C) emerges as the only serious contender from the ranks of quality-of-consciousness theories,[13]

Alston, however, gives no clear answer to the question whether there is merely *one* quality of pleasantness or whether there are many such qualities. In my view, there are many lowest species but one genus.

4. Non-sensory pleasures

Reading a good book is a paradigm example of an intellectual and a non-sensory pleasure. In the former section, I used good tastes and good smells as prime examples of sensory pleasures. Although it is not wholly clear where the line between sensory and non-sensory phenomena should be drawn, we do have some firm intuitions about what should be placed on either side of this line. Looking at good art, listening to a good lecture and enjoying a good conversation are obviously non-sensory pleasures. The same also goes for the kind of pleasure one experiences when one has completed a difficult task such as the pleasure of winning in competitive sports. A similar pleasure, however, can also start an actitivy, as when a good new philosophical idea pops up in one's mind.

Non-sensory does *not* mean non-perceptual. Reading a book, looking at art, listening to a lecture, and partake in a conversation are all non-sensory *and* perceptual activities. The text is perceived since the reading is for its existence dependent upon sensations, i.e. sensations of the graphical signs; pictures are for their existence dependent upon visual sensations and lectures and conversations on auditory sensations. Most non-sensory phenomena are in fact perceptual and *dependent* for their existence upon sensations; the non-sensory part supervenes upon something sensory. It is merely *one of the aspects*[14] of such perceptions which, in their own essence, are non-sensory. When we are reading a novel, the graphical signs make up the sensory component,[15] whereas the meanings of the signs and the plot conveyed by these meanings make up non-sensory aspects. In this case, by the way, the sensory component is transcultural, whereas the non-sensory aspect is culturally determined.

The pleasure in reading is rightly called a non-sensory pleasure *not* because it is non-perceptual, but because it *primarily* supervenes (locally) upon a non-sensory aspect of a perception. *Secondarily*, though, this non-sensory aspect is, in turn, supervenient

(locally) upon sensory components. In the case of a sensory pleasure, the pleasure is primarily supervenient upon sensations, in the case of reading (and listening and talking) the pleasure is primarily supervenient upon meaning and only secondarily upon sensations.

An analysis of the seeing of something beautiful will, I hope, bring out some important features of the distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasure. Pleasure of the beautiful, by the way, was one Kant's example of a kind of pleasure which differs from ordinary sensory pleasures.[16] To this Nietzsche remarked:

> … in the shape of a fat worm of basic error, as in the famous definition Kant gives of the beautiful. Kant said, 'Something is beautiful if it gives pleasure *without interest*'. Without interest! … as our aestheticians never tire of weighing in on Kant's side, saying that under the charm of beauty, *even* naked female statues can be looked at 'without interest', I think we are entitled to laugh a little at their expense: …[17]

From a causal point of view, I think Nietzsche is right. There is a connection between perception of beauty and interest. But that does not settle all the philosophical problems involved. Phenomenological analyses can be kept distinct from causal analyses.

We must first carefully distinguish between pleasure (as a positive affective aspect of some phenomenon) and its causes. Pleasure, in the sense spoken of here, belongs by definition to the realm of consciousness, but the same does of course not apply to its possible causes. Such causes may be material and neural as well as non-material but unconscious. Similarly, conations and desires are in this paper treated as though they belong by definition to the realm of conscious phenomena.

When we see something which we find beautiful, be it a woman, a flower, a whole landscape, or something else (choose whatever you want), we do not necessarily desire to have the woman, the flower, or the x. It is even hard to imagine what it would mean to *have* a landscape; and when we want to have a flower, we want to have it in order to be able to *look at* it more often. We merely want the pleasure of the beautiful sight. When we are looking at something beautiful, we desire that our visual pleasure will last for a while, but we need not desire the object itself in any other way. From a phenomenological point of view, pleasures can exist without desires directed at anything outside the pleasure itself. And when, as a matter of fact, a pleasure in a visually perceived x and a desire do get x are parts of the same phenomenon, we can nonetheless *in thought distinguish* between the affective and the conative aspect of the phenomenon.

The pleasure involved in seeing the beauty of a woman or a landscape differs, I shall argue, from the pleasure which can be found in seeing some specific color or some specific shape as being in itself beautiful. The latter pleasures are sensory, the former are non-sensory. Seeing merely a beautiful color or a beautiful shape are events like having a pleasurable taste or smell, even though we do not in any literal sense *feel* anything in such visual pleasures. The pleasure in the color or the shape is not a feeling in the body. It is the seeing of the beautiful. This visual pleasure is a quality which supervenes upon a visual sensory quality. In this respect, the visual pleasures of seeing beautiful colors and beautiful shapes are like the savory and olfactory pleasures in tastes and smells.

The sensory pleasures spoken of can exist both when we perceive a thing out in the world as having a beautiful color, a beautiful shape, a good smell, and being good-tasting, and when our attention is so fixed that we merely have a beautiful color

sensation, a beautiful shape sensation, a good smell sensation, and a good taste sensation. In both cases, i.e. both when we perceive a thing with properties as having beautiful properties and when we directly have the corresponding sensations, the pleasures in question are fused with some sensory property. In the former case this sensory property is perceived as inhering in an objectively existing thing, and in the latter case the sensory property appears merely as a subjective experience.

When we come to the beauty of women and landscapes we meet more complex states of affairs. Neither a woman nor a landscape is merely a thing with ordinary sensible properties. From a perceptual point of view both of them are, notwithstanding all their differences, function Gestalten. We perceive them directly *as* a woman and *as* a certain kind of landscape, respectively. They are entities which in various ways have functions in space and time. Only if we manage to *modify* our normal everyday perceptions are we able to perceive a woman or a landscape as a pure material thing or a pure material state of affairs. When Gestalten are understood in this broad sense, Gestalten are analogous to the meanings of words; the sounds and inscriptions are to the meaning what the pure material thing is to the 'woman-ness' and the pure material state of affairs is to the 'landscape-ness' now under discussion. Beauty in these cases are always *beauty as*. The beautiful woman is beautiful *as* a woman, i.e. she is a beautiful woman; the beautiful landscape is beautiful *as* a landscape, i.e. it is a beautiful landscape. It makes no sense to say: "I am seeing something beautiful, but I cannot see *what* it is". Of course, the perception may be more specific, i.e. a beautiful flower may be perceived as a *beautiful rose*,[18] but that does not alter my general point, namely that in the cases under discussion we have beauty *as something*, where this something is a *function Gestalt* which (locally) supervenes upon some subvenient material thing or state of affairs.

From what I have now said it follows that when we see e.g. persons *as* beautiful, there is a *three-tiered* structure which is analogous to the one existing in the case of pleasurable reading. We have pleasure which is supervenient upon Gestalten, and these Gestalten, in turn, are supervenient upon things with properties. In both kind of cases the three tiers are 'pleasure→Gestalten→things'. Therefore, seeing something beautiful is rightly called a non-sensory pleasure. However, I do not think that it should be called an intellectual pleasure. All intellectual pleasures are non-sensory pleasures, but all non-sensory pleasures are not intellectual pleasures.

Classifications can be of two fundamentally different sorts, non-conventional and conventional. The non-conventional ones are assumed to delimit a part of reality whose limits exist independently of the classificatory concepts, whereas in a conventional classification the concepts themselves constitute *the limits* by some kind of fiat. When there is an impassable gulf between two proposed species, the classification is non-conventional. The distinction between color (the determinable or genus) and shape (the determinable or genus) is non-conventional since there is no resemblance relation across the divide between colors and shapes.[19] It is impossible to order colors on the basis of their resemblance to shapes, and vice versa. For instance, no color is more like a circle than any other color is; or, more generally, no color is more shapelike than any other. There is nothing even close to continuity and conventionality here. A lot of determinables or species of color, however, are conventional. Among colors, there is in our classification an inevitable conventional element as soon as we leave the determinable (genus) and the *infima determinates* (*species*) behind. We have to impose classificatory limits on the continuity of hues. Even though red continuously shades into yellow in the spectrum, we need for pragmatic reasons to make one or several

distinctions. One should note, though, that this conventionality exists, so to speak, on top of all those *non-conventional* resemblance *relations* which ground the spectrum in the *non-conventional infima species*.

I regard the distinctions between cognitions, conations, and the affective aspect, as non-conventional distinctions for the same reasons as those put forward in relation to color and shape. Also, of course, their *infima species* are non-conventional. But what about the distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasures and all the different kinds of pleasures we ordinarily speak of? An infinity of species is impossible to handle in everyday speech, and this truth applies to the species of pleasures as well as to the species of colors.

Some non-sensory pleasures can be ranked as being more or less sensory than others, I suggest. Looking at good art, for instance, may be regarded as more sensory than pleasurable reading, and looking at real beautiful objects may be regarded as more sensory than looking at good art. Similarly, some sensory pleasures might be looked upon as more sensory than others. To my mind, tactile pleasures are more sensory than taste pleasures, which, in turn, are more sensory than olfactory pleasures, which, in turn, are more sensory than visual sensory pleasures. Listening to enjoyable music gives a kind of pleasure which ought to be classified together with reading and art-looking as a non-sensory pleasure, but it is much more sensory, and can be thought of as being infinitely close to the line which separates the non-sensory from the sensory.

The fact that sensory and non-sensory pleasures may be ranked according to ”sensoriness”, does not prove that the distinction in question is a conventional one. If my earlier claims about supervenience relations are correct, then the distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasures is grounded in how Gestalten supervene upon perceived things and sensations, and that thesis makes the distinction non-conventional. Therefore, I regard the distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasures as an ontological distinction. However, in fact, it would not make too much of a difference to my views if the distinction turned out to be conventional. The pleasures of reading would nonetheless be as distinct from the pleasures of taste as the sensation of yellow is from the sensation of red.

5. Pleasures in activities and accomplishments

Pleasure can supervene upon sensations, presentations of events, and perceptual states of affairs. The pleasure of winning is a pleasure *that*. The winner is pleased *that* the state of affairs constituted by his having won obtains. Similarly, when an inventor gets the idea for a new invention, he is pleased because he thinks *that* he can really materialize the idea. In all the kind of cases now hinted at, bodily activity appears as something which is external to the pleasures at hand. This feature is quite obvious in the cases of ”pleasure that”, but it is also true for a lot of ”pleasure in”. Think of taste. Often we have to act in order to be able to taste something. We have to go to the table, and we have to bring the food into our mouth. Nonetheless, these bodily actions are, from the point of view of our taste, merely means for getting the good taste sensations. Similar remarks can be made about smells. Often we get smell sensations without doing anything at all, but even in those cases when we have to act in order to get a special smell, the smell itself is experienced as an object distinct from our actions.

Activity is also external to the non-sensory pleasure of beauty. Even if we have acted in order to be able to see something beautiful, this activity is not part of the seeing of

the object. Even though beauty from a causal point of view is in the eye of the beholder, from a phenomenological point of view it appears as existing in some object or state of affairs in the world. Often, of course, we merely happen to see something beautiful, and in such cases the seeing of the beautiful appears as an event.

All the examples of pleasures now given are, from a phenomenological point of view, *pleasures in objects, events, and states and affairs*. They do not appear as pleasures in any activity.[20]

Reading and listening are, unlike seeing, activities, and the pleasures in reading and listening are not pleasures in objects, events or states of affairs; activities are not, as I am here using the terms, events or states of affairs. Reading and listening are intellectual and non-sensory activities. The mind is and appears as active. However, before discussing the difference between the non-sensory pleasure in beauty-perception and the non-sensory enjoyment in the activity of reading, we shall take a look at some pleasures and enjoyments which can be involved in bodily activities. Enjoyments, obviously, belong to pleasure in the genus sense, although enjoyments now and then are contrasted with pleasures in some narrow sense.[21]

Examples of simple bodily activities are walking, climbing, jumping, biking, nailing, drilling, sawing, sewing, cooking, drawing, etc. Craftsmen, artisans, workmen, sportsmen, all of them (male or female) are constantly involved in complex bodily activities. The kind of bodily activities I have in mind are neither mechanical nor non-mental. Skill and consciousness are essential parts of them. But so is the bodily activity.

My first claim is that pleasures connected with bodily activities can, just like pleasures in objects, events, and states and affairs, be divided into sensory pleasures and non-sensory pleasures. Assume you are playing tennis, to take a simple and, hopefully, emotionally neutral example.[22] You may then, within your body, have a lot of sensations which seem not to fit in directly in any of the traditional five senses. At any moment, some parts of your body are tensed and other relaxed, and both the tension and relaxation can be felt and can be fused with feelings of pleasure (or pain). Some sensory psychologists even speak of a special ”muscle sense”.[23] Also, your kinesthetic sensations you may find either pleasurable or painful. If you like sweating, then the sensations which are caused by the sweat running down the skin of your body are fused with feelings of pleasure. You may perhaps experience a warm pleasurable feeling, without any definite spatial boundaries, which covers a large part of your body, a feeling which cannot be ascribed to any special sense modality but which is nevertheless sensory in character. All the kind of pleasurable bodily sensations now referred to, are sensory pleasures in the sense earlier delimited.

There is, however, mostly also a non-sensory aspect in bodily activities. An aspect which, like the sensory component, is often fused with some kind of pleasure. To enjoy tennis is something more than having pleasurable bodily sensations.

Actions are necessarily extended in time. As the existence of melodies shows, there are not only Gestalt qualities which are Gestalten in space, there are also Gestalt qualities which are Gestalten in time. All actions, I claim, are such temporal Gestalten. Actions are Gestalten both from the agent’s and the observer’s point of view, but since I am here discussing possible pleasures in action, I will only consider the agent’s perspective.

Back to tennis again. When you are playing, although you may have some kind of awareness of the bodily sensations just discussed, your perception has to be focused on the ball, the other player, and on the court. As stressed by Merleau-Ponty,[24] your intentionality is directed away from your body out into the surrounding world. The

intentional correlate is a very complicated structure with Gestalten extended both in space and time. You see the ball's and your opponent's movements, you perceive the world in the special way one does when one moves. You have an awareness of your movement although you are not directly aware of yourself. The perceived Gestalten contain connections and fusions of several sensory modalities. You do not only see the ball and your opponent, you hear them, too. In particular, you hear the sound produced by the rackets when the ball is hit. In some way you experience your whole body posture. At the same time, if you like tennis, you enjoy your actions. Life is for the moment quite good. You may even be happy. Since this kind of enjoyment relates to the whole action Gestalt, there is no contradiction in saying that it may very well include some painful sensations.

The kind of simple happiness I have tried to describe has, of course, been noted before in philosophy. Aristotle had a keen eye for pleasure in activities. Bentham mentions the pleasure of skill in his list of different pleasures (see the beginning of section 2), but just as he did not make any distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasures, he did not distinguish pleasures in activities from other pleasures. And, as far as I know, nor have later utilitarians found the polarity between activity and non-activity (in contradistinction to the polarity between sensory and non-sensory phenomena) to be of any importance for the axiological foundation of utilitarianism.

Both Ryle[25] and Alston[26] have referred to the pleasure in doing something as one of the kind of phenomena which forces us to reject the bodily sensation view of pleasure. Gosling[27] has made some interesting observations in relation to this kind of enjoyment (see e.g. the quotation later on in section 6), but he has nonetheless not given it the stress I think that it deserves. There is, though, one thinker, the philosopher and psychologist Karl Bühler, who did stress the existence of pleasure in activities.

Bühler was not interested in pleasure as such, but in motivational forces. However, since he, like Mill, was of the opinion that all our desires are desires for pleasure or reduction of displeasure, Bühler discovered that motivational psychology cannot do without some distinctions between different kinds of pleasures. He himself distinguished between three main kinds of pleasures: (1) *pleasure in satisfaction*, which comes at the end of an activity; (2) *pleasure in creativity*, which comes before and starts an activity; and (3) *pleasure in functioning*, which accompanies activities.[28]

At first Bühler stressed pleasure in functioning (or in activity) in order to make it clear that without the existence of such pure pleasure in activity children's development becomes incomprehensible (*Die geistige Entwicklung des Kindes*, 1921). Then, he used his distinctions in order to criticize Freud for neglecting them - with bad consequences (*Die Krise der Psychologie*, 1927). Bentham, Mill, and utilitarianism are, however, wholly absent from his discussions.

In a rather unknown paper,[29] Viktor Winkler-Hermaden, a pupil of Bühler, elaborated on the latter's threefold distinction. He added two kinds of pleasure: (4) pleasure in work and (5) pleasure in ideals.[30] Both these kinds of pleasures are, like pleasure in functioning, pleasures which accompany activities.

To the readers familiar with Gilbert Ryle's and (especially) Zeno Vendler's distinction between activity verbs and accomplishment verbs,[31] I think I can very briefly give an idea what Winkler-Hermaden's distinction between pleasure in functioning and pleasure in work seems to be about. Pleasure in functioning is pleasure in activities described by activity verbs. Such activities have no goal which they are approaching. Running is such an activity, and pleasure in mere running is pleasure in functioning. Pleasure in work is pleasure in activities described by accomplishment

verbs. Such activities has a natural end point which completes the activity. Running a certain distance is an accomplishment, and the pleasure of running a specific distance (in order, for instance, to keep fit) is pleasure in work. In relation to an activity it makes no sense to ask ”How long did it take?”, but in relation to an accomplishment this is often a very pertinent question.

Lately, psychologists interested in our experiences of happiness have focused attention on pleasures in activities and accomplishments. Mihaly Csìkscentmihàlyi, in particular, has developed Bühler’s approach. Csìkscentmihàlyi has summarized his philosophical reflections and empirical findings in the book *Flow. The psychology of optimal experience*. He claims that:

> Contrary to what we usually believe, moments like these, the best moments in our lives, are not the passive, receptive, relaxing times—although such experiences can also be enjoyable, if we have worked hard to attain them. The best moments usually occur when a person’s body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. Optimal experience is thus something that we *make* happen. [32]

The end phrase ‘we *make* happen’ should not be interpreted as meaning that the experience in question is external to the action. The optimal experience is in my terminology *fused* with the action. Csìkscentmihàlyi also writes that:

> In the course of my studies I tried to understand as exactly as possible how people felt when they most enjoyed themselves, and why. My first studies involved a few hundred ”experts”— artists, athletes, musicians, chess masters, and surgeons—in other words, people who seemed to spend their time in precisely those activities they preferred. From their accounts of what it felt like to do what they were doing, I developed a theory of optimal experience based on the concept of *flow*—the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.[33]

The term flow, it should perhaps be said, was not invented by Csìkscentmihàlyi. It was (and is) an everyday term which he turned into a term of art in his book. For some reason, Csìkscentmihàlyi does not find it appropriate to say that flow is a kind of very intense pleasure. Instead he talks about *optimal experiences*. My guess is that for him the concept of pleasure has connotations which ties it to experiences which we apprehend as merely given to us.

> Yet we have all experienced times when, instead of being buffeted by anonymous forces, we do feel in control of our actions, masters of our own fate. On the rare occasions that it happens, we feel a sense of exhilaration, a deep sense of enjoyment that is long cherished and that becomes a landmark in memory for what life should be like.
>
> This is what we mean by *optimal experience*.[34]

The point I want to make about flow as *one* kind of optimal experience can be stated in the following way: *Flow is to action what non-sensory beauty is to seeing*.

Just as non-sensory beauty is a pleasure fused with visual Gestalten, flow is a non-sensory pleasure fused with action Gestalten.

Let us now return to the pleasure of reading as an example of a purely *intellectual* activity, i.e. an activity which requires no direct bodily movement, although it requires a body with moving eyes and a lot of processes going on inside, especially in the brain. In such an activity there are no bodily sensations and no sensory pleasure, but the concept of flow seems to be equally applicable to reading as to playing tennis. When

you are reading a good novel, although you may have some awareness of sensations of various kinds, your perception has to be focused on the content of the book. Your intentionality is directed away from your body out into the content of the book. The intentional correlate is a very complicated structure with Gestalten which appear as being outside ordinary space and time. If you like the book you enjoy your reading, i.e. you take pleasure in your intellectual activity. Life is for the moment quite good. You may even be happy. The similarity with flow in bodily activities can be rather great.

It is now time to state an important thesis implied by my presentation of Bühler's thoughts on pleasures in activities and of Csìkscentmihàlyi's concept of flow: *In the philosophy of pleasure, the distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasures should be supplemented by a distinction between on the one hand pleasures in objects, events, and states of affairs, and on the other pleasures in activities and accomplishments*.

6. The heterogeneity of pleasure

The distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasure can be combined with the distinction between pleasure in objects, events, and states of affairs and pleasure in activities and accomplishments. We then get the following matrix which supplies us with four species of pleasure based on the two "dimensions" discussed:

	Sensory pleasure	Non-sensory pleasure
Pleasure in objects, events, and states of affairs.	*tactile pleasures, good tastes and smells, beautiful colors and shapes*	*seeing something as beautiful*
Pleasure in activities and accomplishments.	*kinesthetic pleasures*	*experiencing flow*

At the end of section 4, I said that sensory and non-sensory pleasures can be ranked according to "sensoriness", but that there nonetheless is a non-conventional line which separates them. Something similar may be true of the distinction between pleasure in objects, events, and states of affairs and pleasure in activities and accomplishments. The pleasures which may supervene upon the *havings* of taste sensations and smell sensations and upon the event or *achievement* of seeing something, should be kept distinct from the corresponding pleasures involved in the *activities* of tasting, sniffing, and observing. However, these activities may perhaps be regarded as "less active" than for instance sports activities.

Some words are needed about the way I look upon kinesthetic pleasures. The place given to the other examples ought to be clear from earlier remarks in the paper. I think that, on rare occasions, we can naturally have pure kinesthetic sensations just like we can have pure taste and smell sensations. Artificially, it is very easy to create them. One need merely stand still on the floor, relax, and then move up and down on one's toes while one concentrates on the sensations which appear in one's legs. These sensations

appear as indissolubly fused with the activity at hand, and when pleasure supervenes, this pleasure should be regarded as a sensory pleasure in an activity.

Both Alston and Gosling, whom I have mentioned a couple of times, have found it important to draw attention to the fact that there is an enormous variety of pleasures and enjoyments. Alston has written:

When someone maintains that pleasure is the only thing which is desirable for its own sake, he certainly means to include states of the following sort:

(1) Enjoying (taking pleasure in) doing something, such as playing tennis.
(2) Getting satisfaction out of something, such as seeing an enemy humiliated.
(3) Having a pleasant evening; hearing pleasant sounds.
(4) Feeling good, having a sense of well-being.
(5) Feeling contented.[35]

Gosling has written:

Things which seem natural to say when we consider examples of being overwhelmed with pleasure, hardly fit examples of enjoying absorbing activities; and what seems plausible to say of these last looks bizarre with fleeting enjoyments or cases of being pleased. This complexity, which tells against simple analyses of pleasure as a feeling, tells equally against other over-all accounts in terms of attention, vigour, relation to desire or whatever it may be.[36]

I do agree. The heterogeneity of pleasure is immense, but that is a heterogeneity on the level of lowest species which is quite compatible with the existence of higher species. Heterogeneity is quite consistent with some homogeneity, and both features have to be taken into account in an ontology of pleasure.

In section 3, I argued for the view that pleasure is always merely one aspect of a Gestalt quality. Pleasure is always phenomenologically *fused*, not merely associated, with cognitions which in themselves are affectively neutral. My view contains two theses: (i) that pleasures are one-sidedly dependent upon (or supervene upon) cognitions, and (ii) that pleasures are partly shaped by the cognitions they supervene upon and fuse with. This means that, in the matrix above, it is impossible to distinguish between kinds of pleasures and objects of pleasures. Each one of the four species of pleasure delimits both a kind of pleasure and a kind of object of pleasure.[37]

The species and dimensions of pleasure that I have now presented are both necessary and sufficient for three other philosophical points that I want to make. In the next section (7), I will show that there is an interesting correlation between the distinction between sensory and non-sensory pleasure and a distinction between pleasure connected with self-awareness and pleasure not connected with self-awareness. Then (section 8), I shall claim that it is hard for utilitarianism, in the forms we know it today, to handle pleasures in actions. The third point is very brief, and I will present it at once.

Pleasure and the prospect of pleasure often function as explanans in explanations of actions. Therefore, what kind of pleasures we distinguish may affect what kind of psychological explanations we are prone to accept. In my view, pleasure in activities and accomplishments has not been as visible (= known reflectively) as has the other kinds of pleasures. This is noted by Csìkscentmihàlyi. If the concept of flow is taken seriously, it makes some interesting reinterpretations of motivations possible. Here is one:

It is usual to explain the motivation of those who enjoy dangerous activities as some sort of pathological need: they are trying to exorcise a deep-seated fear, they are compensating, they are compulsively

reenacting an Oedipal fixation, they are ”sensation-seekers.” While such motives may be occasionally involved, what is most striking, when one actually speaks to specialists in risk, is how their enjoyment derives not from the danger itself, but from their ability to minimize it. So rather than a pathological thrill that comes from courting disaster, the positive emotion they enjoy is the perfectly healthy feeling of being able to control potentially dangerous forces.[38]

7. Pleasure and self-awareness

It seems trivial to say that pleasures are necessarily pleasures *for someone*. There are no pleasures in themselves, only pleasures *in* (or *in relation to*) a mind. One should not, however, let this triviality obscure a fact which is of interest both in skill training and in the philosophy of pleasure.

Now and then we loose ourselves in some action, be it manual or intellectual. One may be so absorbed in, say, playing tennis and playing the piano that one is not really aware of oneself performing the action. The same applies to reading. Sometimes after a really good book read under fortunate circumstances, it is as if one wakes up when one becomes aware of the fact that one has been reading for a while. It is as if the self has been somewhere else. One has been aware only of the persons and the plot of the book, but not of *oneself* as reading. The activity of reading was performed unreflectively. There was consciousness but no self-awareness.

Modern sports psychology offers a lot of evidence to the effect that if you can get so involved in a skill of yours that you loose your self and become a phenomenological unity with your activity, then you will be much more skillful than before.[39] Also, for instance, singers and musicians often say that in order to perform well you have to become one with the melody. Loss of self-awareness and skillfulness very often go together, but our interest here is the philosophy of pleasure. What about pleasure and self-awareness? Do they go together, too?

Once again, I can get a little help from Csìkscentmihàlyi. As a psychologist, he wanted to lay bare both the structural features of our optimal experiences and to find some of the necessary conditions for them. He found that:

> As a result, one of the most universal and distinctive features of optimal experience takes place: people become so involved in what they are doing that the activity becomes spontaneous, almost automatic; they stop being aware of themselves as separate from the actions they are performing.
>
> A dancer describes how it feels when a performance is going well: ”Your concentration is very complete. Your mind isn’t wandering, you are not thinking of something else; you are totally involved in what you are doing. . . . Your energy is flowing very smoothly. You feel relaxed, comfortable, and energetic.”
>
> A rock climber explains how it feels when he is scaling a mountain: ”You are so involved in what you are doing [that] you aren’t thinking of yourself as separate from the immediate activity. . . . You don’t see yourself as separate from what you are doing.”
>
> A mother who enjoys the time spent with her small daughter: ”Her reading is the one thing that she’s really into, and we read together. She reads to me, and I read to her, and that’s a time when I sort of lose touch with the rest of the world, I’m totally absorbed in what I’m doing.”
>
> A chess player tells of playing in a tournament: ”. . . the concentration is like breathing—you never think of it. The roof could fall in and, if it missed you, you would be unaware of it.”[40]

Examples can be multiplied. We can increase our pleasure in many kinds of activities if we manage to ”loose ourselves” in the actions in question. My philosophical point, however, is that beside the distinctions between (1) sensory and non-sensory pleasures and between (2) pleasure in objects, events, and states of affairs and pleasure

in activities and accomplishments, *there is also a distinction to be made between (3) pleasures connected with self-awareness and pleasures not so connected*. Furthermore, there seems to be some interesting correlations between the last distinction and the other two, i.e. the ones I used when I constructed the fourfold matrix at the end of the former section.

According to Csìkscentmihàlyi's empirical data, a lot of pleasures in activities and accomplishments are more intense when there is no self-awareness than when there is. The phenomena of fascination in looking at something (e.g. art) indicates that the same is true for non-sensory pleasures in objects, events, and states of affairs. But with regard to *sensory* pleasures in objects, events, and states of affairs, it seems to be the other way round. Taste sensations, for instance, seem to become even more pleasurable if one turns from an immediate apprehension of them into a state where one can say that one is having pleasurable sensations. A self-awareness that one has pleasurable sensations seems to increase the total pleasure. I think the same is true also for sensory pleasures in activities and accomplishments, at least I feel sure about pleasurable kinesthetic sensations. If I am right, then there is a general truth to the effect that *reflective awareness makes sensory pleasures more intense, whereas unreflective awareness makes non-sensory pleasures more intense*.

I think that some of Gosling's remarks point in the same direction:

> To the extent that I feel it my mind is on the feeling, and if I give myself over to my toothache, that is to think of nothing else but it. A person who is absorbed in his sensations is giving special attention to what he is feeling.
>
> The situation is quite different in the case of pleasure. Take, for instance, the cases of a film or a theatre addict who gets so carried away by his entertainment that he quite forgets where he is. He identifies himself as a participant in the events played out before him, has the illusion of taking part in the drama or comedy and reacts accordingly. Other members of the audience, the seating, the surroundings of the stage, these are all forgotten. So far is he from realizing whether he is enjoying himself, or the play, that he does not even, for a time, realize that he *is* enjoying the play; he first has to adjust to the fact that it is not real life. He can then, no doubt, answer that he must have been enjoying it, and complain at being interrupted. But now asking the questions, so far from drawing his attention to the feeling, in fact stops the enjoyment. Before the interruption the man was enjoying himself, but then he was wrapped up not in his own feelings, but in the action on the stage. *At the height of his enjoyment he did not realize that he was enjoying himself, and no question was further from his mind* (italics added). But if to take pleasure and to enjoy are to feel, then the times of greatest pleasure would be the times of acutest feeling, or clearest realization of the occurrence of pleasure. When one enjoys oneself it is not that fact that forces itself on one. If one's attention is anywhere it is elsewhere.
>
> This case is one where in the course of enjoying oneself one fails to realize it, though it would be strange if one did not realize it afterwards.[41]

Csìkscentmihàlyi has *not* noted that whereas unreflectiveness heightens the pleasures in activities, reflectiveness heightens sensory pleasure. He wrongly turns every kind of pleasure into a flow.[42]

The proposed connection between reflective awareness and sensory pleasure can be backed theoretically. Mostly, in everyday life, our attention is focused on the kind of Gestalten which I have dubbed non-sensory. We are seldom interested in sensations as such or in things *as things*. What is of interest are things in their, so to speak, functional aspect. We perceive things as usable tools, as machines, as having biological functions like being a certain kind of plant, a certain kind of animal, and so on. In particular, we see human bodies not as merely material things but as persons. With regard to texts, it is the meanings which are of interest, not the graphical signs. We can be said to attend *from* pure things and pure signs *to* functions and meanings; or *from* Gestalten substrates

to the corresponding Gestalten. Also, we can be said to attend *from* sensations *to* pure things and pure signs. This means that we seldom attend to sensations as such. In order to get thing-attention and sensation-attention, a reflective effort is needed. We have to tell ourselves to attend to things in themselves or sensations in themselves, respectively. Otherwise we will have no direct apprehension of them. Therefore, normally, pure things and sensations, and the possible corresponding supervening pleasures, appear to us only when we are reflecting upon ourselves and our perceptions. Sensory pleasure becomes tied to self-awareness.

It should be added that there is a kind of continuity where self-awareness takes on degrees and passes into the wholly unreflective. A friend of mine, who should know, says that in sports like long distance running and long distance skiing, it can be *almost as if* one looses oneself. In a sense, there is no self-awareness in the activity, but one is nonetheless able very clearly to think, for instance, ”Here am I skiing”. My guess is that this kind of phenomena is possible when the activity in question has a clear repetitive structure.

8. Utilitarianism and pleasure

In a recent overview of utilitarianism G. Scarre writes that he believes that ”the three most important areas of concern for contemporary utilitarian moral theorists” are:

> the definition of a philosophically viable concept of utility; the justification of utilitarian ideas about justice and fair treatment; and the defence of utilitarianism against the charge that it is too demanding a moral doctrine, requiring of individual agents a readiness for self-sacrifice that is possible only for moral saints.[43]

It is only with regard to the first problem, that of a viable concept of utility, that my proposed ontology of pleasure is relevant. I am going to comment shortly upon three kinds of utilitarianisms with different conceptions of utility: (quantitative) *hedonistic* utilitarianism, *Mill’s* (qualitative hedonistic) utilitarianism, and *preference* utilitarianism. That part of an *ideal* utilitarianism which claims that some utilities are not pleasures at all, not even non-sensory, is of course not affected by my remarks. However, in so far as ideal utilitarianism does not deny intrinsic value to all pleasures, but merely claims that there are other intrinsic values beside pleasure, then my remarks are pertinent to ideal utilitarianism, too.

Although I am confident that pleasure is intrinsically valuable, I have made no attempt to discuss degrees of pleasurableness and value among the four different species of pleasure that I distinguished in the matrix at the beginning of section 6. This classification was so far intended to be only a descriptive classification of different pleasures. I stressed the very high value many people put on pleasures in action merely in order to make it clear that such pleasures are impossible to neglect. But utilitarians have of course, as they should, both explicitly and implicitly said things about the value of the different pleasures I have distinguished. This is the way my classificatory matrix looked:

	Sensory pleasure	Non-sensory pleasure
Pleasure in objects, events, and states of affairs.	*tactile pleasures, good tastes and smells, beautiful colors and shapes*	*seeing something as beautiful*
Pleasure in activities and accomplishments.	*kinesthetic pleasures*	*experiencing flow*

Starting from the matrix, I think we can say that *hedonistic* utilitarianism has a tendency to regard all pleasures as belonging in the upper left square. Therefore, it does not discuss the value of the other kinds of pleasures. *Mill's* utilitarianism takes account also of the upper right square, and he claimed that these pleasures has a higher intrinsic value than those in the left upper square. My claim is that both these kinds of utilitarianisms implicitly reduce all pleasures in activities and accomplishments (the second row) to pleasures in objects, events, and states of affairs (the first row). This claim complies very well with the view that classical utilitarianism, as an ally of empiricism, takes over the empiricists' passive view of man, where man is merely a receptacle for impressions and feelings of pleasure and pain.

Of course, actions in the ordinary sense always enters the scene when utilitarians discuss what action to pursue in order to reach a certain end. They often discuss *the consequences of actions*, but these consequences are mostly regarded as *states*, *events*, or *processes*, not as actions.[44] Actions are to the utilitarians normally only *means* to valuable states, events, or processes; they are seldom regarded as valuable *in themselves*.

The utilitarian neglect of actions and pleasures in activities and accomplishments has repercussions on at least one other utilitarian problem. It underlines the classical problem (first pointed out by G.E. Moore) of how to handle *organic unities* of value.[45] Actions and accomplishments are, like melodies, Gestalten in time. And *pleasures* in activities and accomplishments are therefore also *temporal* organic unities. In my view, this problem ought never to be left out of account in expositions of the utilitiarian calculus. But even a philosopher like Broad, who himself had made remarks about organic unities, did not mention them in his classical exposition of the utilitarian calculus.[46] According to Broad's presentation, it is always possible *first* to estimate the total utility for any specific momentary moment, and *then* merely add these utilities in order to get the total utility of a whole temporal interval. However, if there are pleasures which are Gestalten in time, the total utility of a temporal interval cannot be estimated in this way.

Many utilitarians of today would, I guess, say that remarks like the ones I have just made are no longer relevant. Modern utilitarianism is *preference* utilitarianism,[47] and according to preference utilitarianism, intrinsic values should be based on preferences not on pleasures. This move, however, does not make the axiological foundation of utilitarianism immune to my criticism. Even if there are preferences which are *not* preferences for pleasure, a lot of preferences definitely *are* preferences for pleasure.

Anyone who tries to get a clear overview of his preferences will need some classification of different kinds of pleasures and an associated value schema. Therefore, a *comprehensive* preference utilitarianism cannot neglect the problem of how to value

different pleasures. Assume that a preference utilitarian is going to make a utility estimation for a group of people. This utilitarian has to ask each person in the group what his/hers preferences are. And in doing this, *he* need not bother about different kinds of pleasures but *the consulted persons* must; at least if they are going to give a well-founded answer. Now, if the man himself belongs to the group whose utility he is calculating (which, by definition, he does in universalistic utilitarianism), he himself has to think about the way he wants to value different pleasures, too. A *restricted* preference utilitarianism can of course put these preference grounding problems within parenthesis, and try to solve all the other problems which confront utilitarianism, but that is beside the point now at issue.

As far as I can see, today's utilitarianism has as much problem with their axiological foundation as classical utilitarianism had. A renewal of the ontology of pleasure may be *one* good point of departure for a renewal of the discussion of intrinsic values.[48]

Notes

[1] Note that I am not claiming that all *specific emotions* have a polar opposite. For comments on this problem, see e.g. K. Mulligan, "The Spectre of Inverted Emotions and the Space of Emotions", *Acta Analytica 18* (1997), pp. 89-105; esp. §5.
[2] Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Fontana: London 1962, p. 293 (chapter IV).
[3] This means that my views on pleasure belong to the so-called "quality-of-consciousness theories of pleasure"; see W.P. Alston's article "Pleasure" in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Macmillan: New York 1967. Cf. note 13.
[4] Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, chapter V.
[5] Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Fontana: London 1962, p 258 (chapter II).
[6] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, Hafner Press: New York 1951, §5; translation J.H. Bernard. Kant distinguished between the *pleasure of the pleasant* (which arises when the sensual desires which we share with the animals are satisfied), the *pleasure of the good* (which is connected with our interest in morals), and *the pleasure of the beautiful* (which is the result of a free play of the faculty of imagination).
[7] As Alston says in his article "Pleasure" (in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Macmillan: New York 1967): "The heavy emphasis on the bodily sensation theory in recent philosophical discussion has tended to obscure the fact that there are a number of other theories that belong to the same family", p. 342.
[8] R.J. Hall, "Are pains necessarily unpleasant?", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* vol. XLIX (1989) pp. 643-659.
[9] Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, Routledge & Kegan Paul: London 1930, p. 229.
[10] Gosling, *Pleasure and Desire. The case for hedonism reviewed*, Clarendon Press: Oxford 1969, p. 23.
[11] What I very briefly is saying about poems is, as I see it, wholly in conformity with what R. Ingarden has claimed about literature in general; see *The Literary Work of Art*, Northwestern UP: Evanston 1973, in particular §§ 8, 13, and 68. According to Ingarden, a literary work of art is constituted by four heterogeneous strata which make the work into a polyphony of aesthetic characters. One of these strata is the phonetic stratum.
[12] J. Kim distinguishes in his article "Supervenience" (see H. Burkhardt & B. Smith eds., *Handbook of Metaphysics and Ontology*, Philosophia Verlag: Munich 1991) three kinds of supervenience: weak, strong, and global (pp. 877-79). My point number (iii) makes clear the fact that the concept of *local supervenience* differs from the concepts of *strong* and *weak supervenience*, respectively. However, a locally supervenient property *may* supervene *globally*.
[13] Alston in his article "Pleasure" in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Macmillan: New York 1967, pp. 343 and 344. Cf. also notes 3 and 7.
[14] Those familiar with Husserl can insert 'Moment' instead of 'aspect' here as elsewhere in the paper.
[15] Those familiar with Husserl can insert 'Stücke' instead of 'component'; I am using 'part' as the term which subsumes both 'component' and 'aspect' (cf. preceding note).
[16] See note 6 above.
[17] Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Cambridge UP: Cambridge 1994 (ed. K. Ansell Pearson), p. 78.
[18] There is a kind of determinable-determinate logic here which I will not discuss. A beautiful rose cannot possibly be an ugly flower.

[19] For a more detailed argumentation see section 3 of my ”Determinables as Universals”, forthcoming in *The Monist* (January 2000: ”The Austrian Tradition: From Bolzano to the Vienna Circle”).
[20] They are of course from a physiological and neurological point of view *based* on activities. In order for us to have any sensations at all, the perceptual system has to be active.
[21] Cf. again Gosling’s book *Pleasure and Desire* and Alston’s article ”Pleasure” in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
[22] Tennis is also used as an example by Alston in his article ”Pleasure” in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
[23] C.G. Mueller, *Sensory Psychology*, Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs N.J. 1965, pp. 111 and 114.
[24] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Routledge & Kegan Paul: London 1962.
[25] G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, Penguin: Harmondsworth 1963 (1949), chapter 14.6 ”Enjoying and Wanting”.
[26] See the article ”Pleasure” in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
[27] Gosling, *Pleasure and Desire*.
[28] See Bühler, *Die geistige Entwicklung des Kindes* (second edition), Fischer: Jena 1921, § 35, and *Die Krise der Psychologie*, Fischer: Jena 1927, § 15. *Pleasure in satisfaction* is my translation of ”Befriedigungslust”; it is also called ”Endlust”, ”Erfolgslust”, ”Lust des Geniessens”, and ”Inhaltslust”. *Pleasure in creativity* is my translation of ”Schaffenslust”, and *pleasure in functioning* that of ”Funktionslust” (a few times also called ”Tätigkeitslust”). For a short overview of Bühler on language and pleasure, and of his implict theory of structure, see K. Mulligan, ”On structure: Bühlers linguistic and psychological examples”, in A. Eschbach (ed.), *Karl Bühler’s Theory of Language*, J. Benjamins: Amsterdam 1988, pp. 203-226.
[29] Brought to my knowledge by Kevin Mulligan.
[30] V. Winkler-Hermaden, ”Über das Verhältnis von Lustgefühl und Tätigkeit”, *Archiv für die Gesamte Psychologie*, LIII. Band (1925), pp. 63-102. *Pleasure in work* is a translation of ”Arbeitslust”, and *pleasure in ideals* a translation of ”ideelle Lust”.
[31] See Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, chapter V.5, and Vendler, *Linguistics in Philosophy*, Cornell UP: Ithaca NY 1967, chapter 4. In section 6 I am also using their related term ‘achievement verbs’.
[32] Csìkscentmihàly, *Flow. The psychology of optimal experience*, Harper & Row: New York 1990, p. 3.
[33] *Flow. The psychology of optimal experience*, Harper & Row: New York 1990, p. 4.
[34] *Flow. The psychology of optimal experience*, Harper & Row: New York 1990, p. 3.
[35] Alston in his article ”Pleasure” in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p. 341.
[36] Gosling, *Pleasure and Desire*, p. 138-39.
[37] A distinction like that between *act quality* and *act content* is only applicable *within* the squares. It is *not* applicable to the matrix as a whole. I am *not* saying that in two kinds of *act qualities*, sensory and non-sensory, we can apprehend two kinds of *act contents*. The *act quality - act content* schema fits ordinary apprehensions of things, events, and states of affairs very well (upper right square). Compare for instance the pleasure in seeing or listening to something and the pleasure in remembering the same thing (= qualitatively different acts with the same content). In my opinion, this schema fits most sensations, too (upper left square). To have sensations is to cognize (=act quality) sensations (=act content). The schema, however, does not equally smoothly fit actions. As K. Mulligan has remarked: ”… the activity in question, eg playing tennis, is not represented and does not represent”; see p. 95 of ”The Spectre of Inverted Emotions and the Space of Emotions”, *Acta Analytica 18* (1997), pp. 89-105. When the schema is applicable, it is a very useful tool also in analyses of pleasures. For such analyses see e.g. K. Mulligan, ”On structure: Bühlers linguistic and psychological examples”, in A. Eschbach (ed.), *Karl Bühler’s Theory of Language*, J. Benjamins: Amsterdam 1988, pp. 203-226; B. Smith, Austrian Philosophy. *The Legacy of Franz Brentano*, Open Court: Chicago 1994, chapter 5.5; and S. Witasek, *Grundzüge der allgemeinen Ästhetik*, Leipzig 1904, pp. 195-202.
[38] *Flow. The psychology of optimal experience*, Harper & Row: New York 1990, p. 60.
[39] See e.g. L-E. Uneståhl (ed.), *Sport Psychology in Theory and Practice*, Veje: Örebro 1986, chapters 2 and 17.
[40] *Flow. The psychology of optimal experience*, Harper & Row: New York 1990, pp. 53-54.
[41] Gosling, *Pleasure and Desire*, p. 45.
[42] See, in particular, the end of chapter 5 in *Flow. The psychology of optimal experience*.
[43] G. Scarre, *Utilitarianism*, Routledge: London 1996, p. vii.
[44] See L. Bergström, *The Alternatives and Consequences of Actions*, Almqvist&Wiksell: Stockholm 1966, chapter 3.12. I do not think that, in the relevant respect, things have changed since this book was written.
[45] For a good presentation of the problem see R. Chisholm, *Brentano and Intrinsic Value*, Cambridge UP: Cambridge 1986, chapter 7.
[46] This is very clear in e.g. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, pp. 246-49.
[47] G. Scarre, quoted at the beginning of this section, is though of a wholly other opinion. He says that preference utilitarianism ”may be ultimately the least sustainable form of utilitarian value theory”; *Utilitarianism*, Routledge: London 1996, p. 133.

[48] Cf. G. Scarre: ”Production of a satisfactory theory of value is probably the hardest, yet at the same time the most vital, task facing utilitarians today”, *Utilitarianism*, Routledge: London 1996, p. 151.