

University of Groningen

Plato on pleasure and illusion

van Zoonen, Derek

DOI:
[10.33612/diss.250286363](https://doi.org/10.33612/diss.250286363)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2022

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
van Zoonen, D. (2022). *Plato on pleasure and illusion*. [Thesis fully internal (DIV), University of Groningen]. University of Groningen. <https://doi.org/10.33612/diss.250286363>

Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

The publication may also be distributed here under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license. More information can be found on the University of Groningen website: <https://www.rug.nl/library/open-access/self-archiving-pure/taverne-amendment>.

Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.

Propositions accompanying the thesis *Plato on Pleasure and Illusion*
by D. H. C. van Zoonen

1. Plato develops a convincing argument for the counterintuitive thesis that the appearance and the reality of a pleasure can come radically apart.
2. This unorthodox insight constitutes a strikingly original, strikingly powerful argument against hedonism.
3. The *Phaedo* suggests that bodily pleasure should be actively shunned because it deceives us about the reality and clarity of the messy sensible world around us.
4. *Republic* 9 suggests that what strikes us as a pleasure may not always be the real thing. Its central argument can, and should, thus be understood as a powerful immanent critique of hedonism.
5. *Republic* 9 suggests that something only counts as a pleasure if it involves a restorative process in which one of our needs are met.
6. The *Philebus* suggests that pleasure is a special way of apprehending the world: in our hedonic experiences the world does, or does not, reveal itself to us.
7. This proposal drives one of the key claims of the *Philebus*: if humans want their pleasures to make contact with a reality beyond their heads, the hedonist's equation of what is pleasant and what is good must be mistaken.
8. Plato's theory of pleasure satisfactorily explains why there can be such things as hedonic mistakes or false pleasures.
9. The *Genesis* Argument in the *Philebus* defends the subtle, cogent, and philosophically interesting proposal that, as a γένεσις, pleasure cannot be the good our life as a whole is aimed at reaching.

10. Self-knowledge (even of our occurrent states) is not a given, it is an achievement—and an *ethical* achievement for that matter.
11. Plato's extensive discussion of 'the tyrannical man' in *Republic* 9 and *Gorgias* is meant to show that addiction—the progressive narrowing of the things that bring you pleasure—is the polar opposite of happiness.
12. Plato's *Philebus* deserves as much philosophical attention as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* has so far received.
13. Λόγος in Parmenides, fragment DKB 7.5 (κρίναι δὲ λόγῳ πολύδηριν ἔλεγχον) cannot, and does not, mean 'argument', 'reason,' 'rational discourse,' or 'rationality.'
14. Examining one's life is neither necessary nor sufficient for living a good life.
15. Recent advances in psychopharmacology lend credence to Hofmann, Ruck, and Wasson's speculative hypothesis that participants in the Eleusinian Mysteries ingested a psychedelic substance known as ergot—a chemical precursor to lysergic acid diethylamide 25.
16. Therapists and their clients should understand that the very idea of psychotherapy is necessarily predicated on an implicit, often unquestioned notion of what makes for a life worth living.
17. The intellect is a beautiful servant but a terrible master.