Aristotle on Pain: Pain as hindering the *energia* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*

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ABSTRACT*

This paper endeavours to examine the function of pain in Aristotle's ethical philosophy. First, it delves into the relationship between pleasure and activity before directing its attention towards the relationship between pain and activity. While certain pains can be interpreted as kineseis that drive an animal out of its natural state, in the ethical domain, that pain which is understood as hindering the *energeia* assumes greater significance. This paper expounds on the implications of this idea of pain as an impediment to the activities of human and animal life and its connection to other vital areas of Aristotle's philosophical thought, including sense perception, psychology, and moral action.

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INTRODUCTION

Pain is a universal experience that is encountered by everyone. While for some individuals it may arise only in response to injury or illness and punctuate an otherwise painless life, for others it can be a persistent and debilitating challenge that is intimately connected with chronic illness or mental afflictions. Pain may be disregarded, contested, or ameliorated, but also studied and analysed. Given that pain is a ubiquitous aspect of human existence, its intellectual reflection can potentially contribute to an improved understanding of the nature of pain itself and, secondarily, to a greater comprehension of human beings as a whole. On the basis of this assumption, this paper proposes an insight into Aristotle's account of pain, arguing that the Stagirite offers a coherent theory of pain in which pain can be understood as hindering the activity (ἐνέργεια) of the animals experiencing it.

Pleasure and pain play a decisive role in Aristotle's ethics, since all animals have the natural capacity to perceive pleasure and pain but man alone also has the perception of good and bad, right and wrong (*De an.* II.2 414b4–5; *Pol.* I.1 1253a11–19). Pleasure on its own is something good and desirable, while pain is something bad and avoidable (*Eth. Nic.* VII.13 1153b1–4), and it therefore seems natural that "most people… choose what's pleasurable, as if it were the only good thing; and avoid pain, as

if it were the only bad thing" (*Eth. Nic.* III.4 1113b1–2[1]; cf. X.1 1172a25–26). And yet "not every pleasure is desirable" (*Eth. Nic.* X. 3 1174a9), for "we do bad things because they give us pleasure, and typically fail to do honourable things because they are painful" (*Eth. Nic.* II.3 1104b8–11). Accordingly, the concepts of pleasure and pain lie at the very heart of Aristotle's ethics: "those things [pleasure and pain] extend through the whole of life and have a major bearing, a powerful influence, on how good a person you are and on whether you flourish in life" (*Eth. Nic.* X.1 1172a23–25; cf. II.2 1104b3; II.3 1104b8–9). It is therefore natural that "pleasure and pain – moral and political philosophy is the right place for thinking about those" (*Eth. Nic.* VII.11 1152b1–2)[2].

Despite the indications that pain, along with pleasure, warrants study, Aristotle's treatment of pain in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is surprisingly brief. Consequently, it is not surprising that his concept of pain has received only minimal attention in modern scholarship in comparison to the attention paid to the problem of pleasure. Some scholars have even suggested that Aristotle offers no detailed theory of pain, and as a result, this topic has not received the same level of attention as its counterpart, pleasure.[3] However, as recently argued by Wei Cheng (2015)[4] and as I further elaborate and defend in this paper, Aristotle does have a well-defined concept of pain in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This concept can be reconstructed by examining the parallel accounts of pleasure.[5]

1 If not specified otherwise, all translations of the Nicomachean Ethics are from A. Beresford's translation (Aristotle 2020).

2 My paper is based on an analysis of the Nicomachean and Eudemian Ethics. However, it seems that in biological treatises, Aristotle uses λύπη similarly as in the ethical ones, i.e. as a general term for pain which stands in opposition to pleasure. For more specific pains connected more closely to his anatomical and physiological investigations, he sometimes uses λύπη (e.g. Hist. animal. III.2 512a31; IV.8 534a3) and sometimes other words, namely πόνος (Hist. animal. VI.23 576b12, VI.29 579a15, VII.4 584a4; De gener. animal. IV.4 772a34, IV.4 773a17), ὀδύνη (Hist. animal. IX.1 609b25, IX.40 628b27, X.7 638b22; De part. animal. III.9 672a36), and ἄλγος (Hist. animal. III.20 522a9, VIII.24 604b15, VIII.24 604b23, De part. animal. II.2 648b16). For a discussion of Aristotle's vocabulary of pain see Cheng (2018).

3 See, for example, Bostock (2000, 143–160), Brodie (1991, 313–365), Frede (2016), Harte (2014), Taylor (2008), Owen (1977), Wolfsdorf (2005). Pain is generally less studied than pleasure in classical scholarship. This trend has been challenged recently in studies concerning medical and philosophical theories of pain in Plato, Aristotle, and the 'Hippocratic' authors. See e.g. Evans (2007), Erginel (2006, 2019), Linka and Kaše (2021, 2023).

4 For a broader context of the problem of pain in Aristotle and his ancient commentators, see Cheng (2017, 2018a, 2018b, and 2019).

5 Cheng calls the approach to pain through pleasure (and vice versa) the "mirroring method"; see Cheng (2015, 336). This approach is based on the fact that pleasure (ἡδονή) and pain (λύπη) are often mentioned together as opposites to each other (e.g. Eth. Nic. II.3 1104b3–16, II.5 1105b21–23, II.6 1106b19–2, II.7 1107b4–7, III.2 1111b16–18, III.11 1118b30–33). This is true for the biological treatises, too: Hist. animal. IV.8 535a12, VII.1 581a30–31; De part. animal. III.4 666a11–12; De an. I.4 408b1–6, I.5 409b16–17, II.2 413b23, II.3 414b4–5, II.9 421a11–12, III.7 431a9–10, III.7 431b9, III. 11 434a3, III.13 435b22–23; De motu 7 701b35–36, 7

In this paper, I intend to examine the role of pain in Aristotle's ethical framework. While Cheng proposes that Aristotle's notion of pain should primarily be understood in terms of κίνησις, which is similar to Plato's account of pain, and that the relationship between pain and ἐνέργεια is secondary and only applicable in specific instances (Cheng 2015, 329–359), I argue that in the ethical context, pain is better understood as hindering ἐνέργεια, which aligns more closely with Aristotle's intentions and motivations.

In the first section of this paper, I provide an overview of Aristotle's account of pleasure as ἐνέργεια (activity) in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, placing it in contrast to the views of his predecessors and contemporaries who conceived of pleasure as κίνησις (motion) or γένεσις (becoming or coming into being).[6] In the second section, I argue that the concept of pleasure as ἐνέργεια is crucial for comprehending Aristotle's conception of pain (λυπή),[7] which I explore in detail in the third section. In the fourth section, I delve into the experience of pain and its relationship to sense perception. Finally, in the fifth section, I investigate the question of whether all pains are negative and how pain relates to other phenomena that impede ἐνέργεια.

1. PLEASURE AS ΓΝΕΣΙΣ AND ΚΙΝΗΣΙΣ

Aristotle introduces his account of pleasure in opposition to Plato and other members of the Academy[8] who "assume that the key good is something perfect and complete, and that processes (κινήσεις), and in particular processes that bring about something (γενήσεις), are incomplete, and then try to show that pleasure is a process and brings about something".[9] In the *Nicomachean*

701b37–702a1, 7 702a2–3; De sensu 1 436a10, 1 436b15–16, 5 443b20,5 443b26, 5 444a8; De somn. vig. 1 454b30.

6 Aristotle explicitly mentions Eudoxus at Eth. Nic. X.2 1172b9, Plato at Eth. Nic. X.2 1172b28. In Eth. Nic. X.1 Aristotle mentions two groups of people: one group says pleasure is good, the other that it is bad (Eth. Nic. X.1 1172a27–28; cf. Eth. Nic. VII.11 1152b9–11). The second group of thinkers who Aristotle attacks in his critique are some members of the Academy and/or Plato himself. According to some scholars, Speusippus is targeted at Eth. Nic. X.1 1172a27–28 (Aristotle 1980, 341). See also Cheng (2015, 71–117).

7 It is worth mentioning that Aristotle uses the word λυπή in the majority of cases when talking about pain (in the whole corpus, the word λυπή is used 476 times). This choice, I believe, is not arbitrary. Outside the philosophical context, the word λυπή usually means sorrow or some related emotional state. In contrast to Aristotle, in Corpus hippocraticum, for example, the most common word for pain is ὀδύνη and πόνος (891 and 709 times), and λυπή is used only marginally and usually not in the sense of physical pain (60 occurrences). It seems that Aristotle follows Plato and the tragic poets in preferring this word for pain and broadens its content when also using it for physical pain. However, this word still denotes the relatedness of pain to the psychic and emotional layers of animal life. See Cheng (2018a). See also Cheng (2015, 362–370).

8 See, for example, Eth. Nic. X.2 1172b28, cf. Phlb. 60a–b (is pleasure the good?); Eth. Nic. X.3 1173a15, cf. Philb. 24e–25 (good is determinate, pleasure indeterminate); Eth. Nic. X. 3 1173a23, cf. Philb. 52b–e (mixed and unmixed pleasures).

9 Eth. Nic. X. 3 1173a28–31. Cf. VII. 11 1152b13, "Every pleasure is a perceptible process to a natural state", πᾶσα ἡδονὴ γένεσίς ἐστιν εἰς φύσιν αἰσθητή. In Philebus, we read

Ethics X. 3 Aristotle rejects both these conceptions with a series of arguments. Against the identification of pleasure with *κίνησις*, Aristotle objects that it is in conflict with our understanding of the process: "Every process seems to have its way of being fast or slow, if not in itself (as in the case of the motion of the cosmos) at least relative to something else. But neither of those applies to pleasure" (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173a32–34). An additional argument is introduced in the *Nicomachean Ethics* X.4: pleasure – in analogy to seeing – is "something whole; there's no instance you could freeze a pleasure, such that it has to go on for more time before its form is completed" and, therefore, "it's not a process" (*Eth. Nic.* X.4 1174a12–19).

Aristotle's argument against the understanding of pleasure as γένεσις is based on the assumption that "When X comes into being, what it comes out of is what it also dissolves back into … What pleasure brings about, that's what pain destroys" (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b4–6).[10] The authorities who are criticised hold that "that pain is the lacking of your natural state and pleasure the refilling and the restoring of that natural state" (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b7–9). Aristotle objects that according to this view, it is the body that feels pleasure, which does not seem always to be the case (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b11). He recognises that the understanding of pain in the thinkers who are criticised "seems to be based only on the pleasures and pains to do with eating and drinking" and admits that in this particular case "the idea is that people get into a state of need and first experience that pain, then feel pleasure at filling up again" (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b13–16; cf. *Gorg.* 496d–e). Nonetheless, "this doesn't happen with all pleasures" (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b15–16), as Aristotle illustrates with the pleasures of knowledge, where "there is no prior need or lack of anything here" (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b19–20) and also pleasures of sense perception and memories and hopes and other pleasures of the soul. "So what shall we say all those pleasures 'bring about'?", asks Aristotle, and concludes: "so there's nothing that can be refilled" (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b19–21).

The position that is criticised is well documented in the *Gorgias* and the *Philebus*, where Plato formulates his rather negative[11] evaluation of pleasure: if

the following formulation: "Socrates: Have we not been told that pleasure is always a process of becoming and that there is no being at all of pleasure?" (ἆρα περὶ ἡδονῆς οὐκ ἀκηκόαμεν ὡς ἀεὶ γένεσίς ἐστιν, οὐσία δὲ οὐκ ἔστι τὸ παράπαν ἡδονῆς;) Philb. 53c4–5. Transl. D. Frede in Cooper (1997).

10 γένεσίς τε πῶς ἂν εἴη; δοκεῖ γὰρ οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ τυχόντος τὸ τυχὸν γίνεσθαι, ἀλλ' ἐξ οὗ γίνεται, εἰς τοῦτο διαλύεσθαι· Cheng 2015, 189 notices that the argument based on opposites can be used only about accidental pleasures and pains (hunger – eating, thirst – drinking).

11 For Plato, in contrast to the group of people mentioned in Eth. Nic. X.1 1172a27–28, pleasure is not entirely bad. In the Philebus, he classifies it as the fifth-highest good (Philb. 67a). However, this positive evaluation applies only to pure pleasures unmixed with pain, belonging to the soul and related to knowledge (Philb. 66c). For Plato, thus, pleasure is not the good. He often emphasises negative characteristics of pleasure, so at least some kinds of pleasure are evaluated as negative (Gorg. 495b–d, 497a, 497b–d, Phlb. 54d, Phd. 65c, 69a, 83d). However, in labelling Plato as an

pleasure is the becoming of the natural state, we cannot identify it with goodness, because becoming always consists of both pleasure and a preceding pain, something desirable and something undesirable (*Gorg.* 496d–e).[12] Thus, it is the natural state which is good, not the process leading to it.[13] Pleasure always implies some preceding lack, as in the case of the pleasure of food; we can feel the pleasure of eating only after preceding hunger (*Gorg.* 496c–d)[14]. As Plato summarises in *Gorgias*, "feeling enjoyment isn't the same as doing well, and being in pain isn't the same as doing badly, and the result is that what's pleasant turns out to be different from what's good" (*Gorg.* 497a3–5).[15]

Aristotle is well aware that this conception leads to a neutral or even negative ethical evaluation of pleasure, which does not allow an association between pleasure and a natural, good, and healthy state (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173a27–34). Facing these difficulties, Aristotle introduces his own theory of pleasure which is connected to ἐνέργεια. This theory allows him to ascribe pleasure to the activities of the natural state, too.

2. PLEASURE AS 'ENEPΓEIA

In Books Seven and Ten of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle argues both against the identification of every kind of pleasure with movement and process and for its close link to the activity. Before we focus on his account of pain, it is necessary to gain a correct understanding of the relation between pleasure and activity, since it will form the basis for a proper evaluation of the relationship between pain and activity.

In *Nicomachean Ethics* VII. 12, Aristotle introduces his own conception of pleasure in opposition to the Platonic notion of pleasure as a process:

anti-hedonist, a more cautious evaluation is needed. Especially in the Protagoras, he is very sympathetic to pleasure and even in dialogues such as the Gorgias or Philebus, he is not criticising pleasure per se, but rather its lower forms and the negative influences it can have on human life. A good human life, however, can be and should be pleasurable. This is possibly already reflected by Aristotle, who, in his discussion of the opinions on pleasure in the Academy, probably targets Speusippus as the chief anti-hedonist, not Plato. See Cheng (2015, 71–128). For discussion of Plato's (anti)hedonism, see Tylor and Gosling (1982, 65–76).

12 In his criticism of Platonic opinions on pleasure, Aristotle is aware of the connection between pleasure understood as γένεσις and κίνησις and the negative evaluation of pleasure, and so he argues against this conception.

13 However, in Gorg. 492a–499a, the word γένεσις is not mentioned. In connection with pleasure, Plato uses this word in Philebus (Philb. 31b8, 54a8–10, 54c1, 54e2)

14 The examples of pleasures and pain used in Gorgias are mainly connected to eating and drinking, which is criticised by Aristotle in Eth. Nic. X.3 1173b13–16. The idea that hunger and thirst are something pathological is also to be found in medical writings, especially in the treatise Winds (De flatibus). See Flat. 1 (6.92 L = 104.5–10 Jouanna). For the roots of the notion of deficiency and filling in relation to pleasure and pain before Plato, see Gosling and Tylor (1982, 21–23).

15 Οὐκ ἄρα τὸ χαίρειν ἐστὶν εὖ πράττειν οὐδὲ τὸ ἀνιᾶσθαι κακῶς, ὥστε ἕτερον γίγνεται τὸ ἡδὺ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ. Transl. D. J. Zeyl in Cooper (1997). For Plato's account of pleasure, see also Phd. 65b–c, 68e–69b, 83d–e; Resp. 583c–584a; Gorg. 492a–499a; Philb. 31a–34a, 44a–45a. For a detailed analysis of Plato's theory of pleasure, see van Riel (2005, 7–52).

> Also, there doesn't always have to be some other thing that's better than pleasure, the way some people say the endpoint, B, must be better than the A-to-B process. Because pleasures are not A-to-B processes (not all of them even involve any such process). They are activities, exercisings of our capacities, and hence are endpoints and goals. They don't arise when we're changing from A to B. They arise when we're using some part of our nature. Not all pleasures have some other thing as their endpoint. That's only true when people are being brought to a completion of their nature. That's why it's simply not right to say that pleasure is a 'perceptible' A-to-B process'. It would be better to say that it's the exercising of our natural dispositions. And instead of 'perceptible' we should say 'unimpeded'. *Eth. Nic.* VII.12 1153a7–15[16]

According to this passage, pleasure arises if there is no hindrance or impediment to it and if the animal is in its natural state. The most important impact of the activity issuing from the connection with pleasure is that it becomes completed (τέλειος).[17] This completion lies in the fact that some perfection (τελειότης) complements the activity. In contrast to the process, the activity is completed in itself and has no external goal (*Eth. Nic.* X.3 1173b2–4). The nature of such perfection and the role pleasure plays in the activity are expressed in the following passage in Book Ten:

> And the pleasure perfects and completes the activity, not in the same way as the disposition does (by already being in place), but as a kind of emergent, perfecting feature – like the 'bloom' of youth. *Eth. Nic* X.4 1174b31–33[18]

How should one understand the metaphor between the "bloom of youth" and the "emergent, perfecting feature"? Sarah Brodie, for example, reads τέλος in this passage as "a completion/perfection additional to the latter [i.e. the activity] although inseparable from it" (Aristotle 2002, 436). Gerd van Riel understands *ὥρα* as the bloom arriving in the moment when a man has achieved his prime (ἀκμή) and is ἀκμαίοις. In that condition, the man has success, power, prestige, etc. The bloom, however, is not something indispensable for our life. It only "gives a supervenient quality to our life, a perfection that cannot be reached in any other way" (Van Riel 2005, 57). According to my reading, pleasure brings something to an (already complete) activity that this activity would otherwise be deprived

16 ἔτι οὐκ ἀνάγκη ἕτερόν τι εἶναι βέλτιον τῆς ἡδονῆς, ὥσπερ τινές φασι τὸ τέλος τῆς γενέσεως· οὐ γὰρ γενέσεις εἰσὶν οὐδὲ μετὰ γενέσεως πᾶσαι, ἀλλ' ἐνέργειαι καὶ τέλος· οὐδὲ γινομένων συμβαίνουσιν ἀλλὰ χρωμένων· καὶ τέλος οὐ πασῶν ἕτερόν τι, ἀλλὰ τῶν εἰς τὴν τελέωσιν ἀγομένων τῆς φύσεως. διὸ καὶ οὐ καλῶς ἔχει τὸ αἰσθητὴν γένεσιν φάναι εἶναι τὴν ἡδονήν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον λεκτέον ἐνέργειαν τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἕξεως, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ αἰσθητὴν ἀνεμπόδιστον.

17 τελειοῖ δὲ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἡ ἡδονή. Eth. Nic. X.3 1174a23.

18 τελειοῖ δὲ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἡ ἡδονὴ οὐχ ὡς ἡ ἕξις ἐνυπάρχουσα, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπιγινόμενόν τι τέλος, οἷον τοῖς ἀκμαίοις ἡ ὥρα.

of.[19] People then gladly perform this activity accompanied by pleasure and they desire it to last forever (*Eth. Nic.* X.5 1175a30–32). To have this bloom (ὥρα), one must be in one's prime (ἀκμαίοις). If we apply this metaphor to pleasure, it seems that the activity must fulfil some criteria for pleasure to arise. The activity must have the goal in itself and it must be completed in each and every moment.[20] For our purposes, we should underline the importance of the relation between pleasure and activity, namely, that pleasure completes the activity and brings some supervenient quality to it.[21] What is more, if pain is the opposite of pleasure, its relation to activity should also be the opposite in some way. Thus, to understand pain, we must focus on its relation to activity.

3. PAIN AS HINDERING ACTIVITY

Answering the question of 'what is pain' in Aristotle is more intricate than answering the same question about pleasure since, as I have already mentioned, pain does not lie at the centre of his focus. It is thus more promising to look at what pain *does*, and from that deduce what its nature is. And since pleasure and pain play the biggest part in Aristotle's ethical theory, we will best see their role in the discussions about virtues and vices.

In *Nicomachean Ethics* III.12 Aristotle explains the role of pain in acquiring virtues and vices as follows:

> Being gluttonous and lecherous seems a more wilful character trait than being a coward. It's caused by pleasure, something we choose, whereas cowardice is caused by pain, something we try to avoid. Plus, pain disrupts and damages the nature of whatever's experiencing it, but pleasure doesn't do anything like that. *Eth. Nic.* III.12 1119a21–25[22]

Here, pain and pleasure stand in opposition to each other: pleasure is something choice-worthy (αἱρετόν), and pain is something to be avoided (φευκτόν). Pain is to be avoided because it has a negative influence on the nature (φύσις) of the individual experiencing it. This negative influence manifests itself in the degeneration or destruction of the nature of the animal or human being.[23] When

19 Yet even without pleasure, the activity would be completed and perfected, since the cause of its completion is not pleasure but the faculty which exercises it. See Gauthier and Jolif (1970, 842). See also van Riel (2003, 177–186). For an interpretation of this passage along the same lines, see also Schields (2011).

20 In contrast to ἐνέργεια, which has the end in itself, the process is leading to some external end and is defined as ἐνέργεια ἀτελής in De an. II.5 417a16, Phys. III,2 201b32, Met. IX.6 1048b29, XI.9 1066a21.

21 Cheng interprets the superveniency of pleasure in the frame of higher-order consciousness and thus shows that Aristotle's theory of pleasure may play a role in contemporary discussions about pleasure and consciousness. See Cheng (2015, 231–328).

22 Ἐκουσίῳ δὲ μᾶλλον ἔοικεν ἡ ἀκολασία τῆς δειλίας. ἢ μὲν γὰρ δι' ἡδονήν, ἢ δὲ διὰ λύπην, ὧν τὸ μὲν αἱρετόν, τὸ δὲ φευκτόν· καὶ ἡ μὲν λύπη ἐξίστησι καὶ φθείρει τὴν τοῦ ἔχοντος φύσιν, ἡ δὲ ἡδονὴ οὐδὲν τοιοῦτο ποιεῖ. μᾶλλον δὴ ἑκούσιον.

23 The nature (φύσις) of living beings is their substance, i.e. their soul. See Met. V.4 1014b35–36, Met. V.4 1015a13–19. De part. animal. I.1 641a17–32. The verb ἐξίστημι in

one hurts oneself, for instance, or when one is ill, one's nature is degenerated, but only when it is entirely annihilated (when he dies) is it destroyed completely. How much one's nature has degenerated thus correlates with the amount, quality, and intensity of the pain. It seems that pain in general works as an important warning signal: if one does not heed one's injury or illness, which becomes manifest through pain, it can lead to more serious and irreversible damage to one's nature and, eventually, to death. In the domain of ethical pains, for example, when a coward feels fear (emotional pain) in battle, the amount of pain may not necessarily correlate to the amount of potential damage to his nature (he can save his life by acting in a cowardly manner and leaving the battlefield); however, it does correlate to the damage done to his moral character.

The degenerative and destructive features of pain are further discussed in the context of the question of why pain in general is considered bad and avoidable:

> And of course, it's also uncontroversial that pain is a bad thing and to be avoided (φευκτόν). In some cases, pain is simply a bad thing (ἁπλῶς κακόν), in other cases because it hinders us in some respect (πῇ ἐμποδιστική). *Eth. Nic.* VII.13 1153b1–3[24]

Analogously to Aristotle's distinction between simply good things and things that are good only for someone (*Eth. Nic.* VII.11 1152b26–27), I understand this passage as describing two aspects of pain: ἁπλῶς κακόν describes pains that are bad for everyone in all circumstances, πῇ ἐμποδιστική describes pains that are bad only for some animals in some circumstances.[25] How are these two aspects in which pain is considered bad connected to the notion of pain which degenerates and destroys the natural state of the animal that experiences it? I understand them both as expressing the effects pain has on the animal experiencing it. Pains which degenerate or destroy our nature are simply bad (ἁπλῶς κακόν) because for every animal it is bad when its nature is degenerated.

the sense of degeneration is also used in Pol. V.IX 1309b32 (democracy is a degenerate form of the best state) and Hist. an. I.1 488b18–20 (someone of noble birth is someone who did not degenerate from his φύσις).

24 ἀλλὰ μὴν ὅτι καὶ ἡ λύπη κακόν, ὁμολογεῖται, καὶ φευκτόν· ἢ μὲν γὰρ ἁπλῶς κακόν, ἢ δὲ τῷ πῇ ἐμποδιστική. Translation slightly modified. Amongst the translators, there is disagreement as to whether the passage should be understood as talking about the two aspects in which the pain is bad, or whether it is talking about two kinds of pain. The first position is advocated by e.g. A. Beresford, J. Sachs, H. G. Apostle, R. A. Gauthier and J. Y. Jolif, J. B. Saint-Hilaire, and F. Dielmeier. The second position is advocated by e.g. R. C. Bartlett, S. D. Collins, D. Ross, T. Irwin, C. D. C. Reeve, and R. Crisp. In this article, I read the quoted passage following the first group of scholars. It is true that the phrase ἢ μέν … ἢ δέ is, in Eth. Nic., usually used when distinguishing two types of something (see e.g. Eth. Nic. 1115b15, 1119a22, 1128b6, 1130b19, 1139b29, 1141b15). However, I understand the syntactic structure of the quoted phrase in such a way that the distinguishing function of ἢ μέν … ἢ δέ is connected not only to ἡ λύπη, but to ἡ λύπη κακόν, so it specifies the manner in which pain (λύπη) is bad (κακόν).

25 After all, there is no one best state for everyone, and nor does everyone pursue the same pleasure (Eth. Nic. VII.13 1153b29–30).

And even though in some circumstances some additional good can arise from pain (e.g. in a surgical operation, *Eth. Nic.* VII.11 1152b30–32), the degeneration of nature is *per se* never beneficial.[26] On the other hand, if we emphasise that pain is bad because it hinders something (πῇ ἐμποδιστική), it does not mean that it is necessarily destroying our nature but rather that it hinders us from performing some of its activities.[27] This aspect of pain is emblematic of human beings because the activities that are hindered stem either from our character (ἦθος) or/and from the intellect. As human beings, we are by nature rational and political and to flourish, we should, as much as we can, devote our lives to rational activities in accordance with virtues.[28] Thus, the second characteristic of pain expresses the fact that it hinders us (ἐμποδίζει) from advancing these rational and virtuous activities.[29]

In the context of Aristotle's ethics, it seems more promising to focus on this second aspect of pain, because it is more closely connected to the activities that we perform as human beings and have a closer connection to our character. Additionally, the examples of pain that Aristotle mentions in the *Nicomachean Ethics* are almost always connected to the intellectual or moral capacities of the human soul,[30] for example in the next passage:

> In fact, outside pleasures have pretty much the same effect as the pains specific to an activity. Pains specific to our activities disrupt them. Like, say, if you find writing or doing arithmetic boring and tiresome. You just don't do it – you simply don't write; you don't do the arithmetic – if the activity is painful like that. So the pains specific to an activity have exactly the opposite effect on it to its pleasure. (By specific to it I mean the ones that arise in the activity itself.) And outside pleasures, as I just said, have pretty much the same effect as pain. They disrupt the activity; only not in the same way. *Eth. Nic.* X.5 1175b16–24[31]

26 One of the chief roles of the vegetative soul is the preservation of our substance (De an. II.4 416b12–22).

27 Being the principle of life, the soul is responsible for performing various activities connected to its vegetative, sensitive, and rational levels, and these activities can be hindered by pain (De an. II.4 415b13). For nourishment, growth, and reproduction as activities of the vegetative level of the soul, see De an. II.1 412a12. The sensitive soul is responsible for sensation, locomotion, and desire. It is also a necessary condition for feeling pleasure and pain; see De an. II.2 413b20.

28 Eth. Nic. I.7 1098a12–18; I.1 1097a11; VIII.12 1162a16; IX.9 1169b18; Pol. I.1 1253a2–3; Pol. I.1 1253a8.

29 Cheng sees the kinetic model of pain as the primary explanatory tool in understanding pain and the energia-like model (hindering the energeia in my terminology) as a secondary model, applicable only in very specific situations. I, however, take it that in ethics, which is the most important context for discussing pain, the hindering aspect of it is dominant and more relevant. Cf. Cheng (2015, 345–372).

30 An exception is to be found at Eth. Nic. X.3 1173b12–13.

31 σχεδὸν γὰρ αἱ ἀλλότριαι ἡδοναὶ ποιοῦσιν ὅπερ αἱ οἰκεῖαι λῦπαι·φθείρουσι γὰρ τὰς ἐνεργείας αἱ οἰκεῖαι λῦπαι, οἷον εἴ τῳ τὸ γράφειν ἀηδὲς καὶ ἐπίλυπον ἢ τὸ λογίζεσθαι· ὃ μὲν γὰρ οὐ γράφει, ὃ δ' οὐ λογίζεται, λυπηρᾶς οὔσης τῆς ἐνεργείας. συμβαίνει δὴ περὶ τῆς ἐνεργείας τούναντίον ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων ἡδονῶν τε καὶ λυπῶν· οἰκεῖαι δ' εἰσὶν αἱ ἐπὶ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ καθ' αὑτὴν

Outside pleasures (ἀλλότριαι ἡδοναί), i.e. pleasures which are not naturally connected to the activity we are currently performing, as well as specific pains, hinder us from performing the activity and feeling its proper pleasure. A similar example concerns people who enjoy listening to music: they are unable to concentrate on the activity of discoursing, as soon as they hear the sound of a flute (*Eth. Nic.* X.5 1175b5–6). In both these examples, pain and outside pleasure hinder the proper carrying out of the activity.

Human beings can also feel pain because of their vicious character. If we are intemperate, acting moderately is painful to us. Similarly, cowards feel excessive distress when facing a frightening situation (*Eth. Nic.* II.2 1104b3–16). In these situations, moral depravity is accompanied by pain, and we cannot feel the pleasure that a good person feels when acting virtuously. If moral vices are too intense, we are even unable to perform the activities we should because the pain we feel is so intense it hinders us from being active: when someone is really a big coward: "particular situations drive [this] man out of his mind with pain and stress to the point where he throws down his arms and does those other disgraceful things" (*Eth. Nic.* III.12 1119a29–30).[32]

In the *Nicomachean Ethics,* there are no explicit examples of pains connected directly to the activities of the perceptual soul.[33] Nevertheless, we can easily imagine that when there is damage to a sensory organ, carrying out the activity of this organ becomes painful as, for example in the case of excessively sensual objects it destroys our ability to perceive (*De an.* II.12 424a27–32). However, the destruction of the organ is perhaps better characterised as an injury degenerating our nature and relates more to the notion of the vegetative part of the soul. By means of nourishment and reproduction, the vegetative part of the soul is responsible for the preservation (σωτηρία) of the individual and the species (*De an.* II.4 416b12–22).[34] If we suffer an injury or illness, when we are hungry or thirsty, our nature, for which the vegetative soul is responsible, is threatened or partially destroyed.[35] Even though the disturbance is not fatal, the animated body which cares about its own preservation is in danger. Despite the fact that these pains and illnesses hinder us from proceeding in some activities of the upper levels of the soul, their primary notion in connection to pain, however, is that they destroy our

γινόμεναι. αἱ δ' ἀλλότριαι ἡδοναὶ εἴρηται ὅτι παραπλήσιόν τι τῇ λύπῃ ποιοῦσιν· φθείρουσι γάρ, πλὴν οὐχ ὁμοίως.

32 αὐτὴ μὲν γὰρ ἄλυπος, ταῦτα δὲ διὰ λύπην ἐξίστησιν, ὥστε καὶ τὰ ὅπλα ῥιπτεῖν καὶ τἆλλα ἀσχημονεῖν.

33 In Eth. Nic. IX.9 1170a13–1170b5, Aristotle mentions that being alive (which in animals is defined by their capacity of perceiving and in humans by perceiving and thinking) is "something good and pleasant in itself" (τὸ δὲ ζῆν τῶν καθ αὐτο ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἡδέων Eth. Nic. IX.9 1170a19–20). Thus, pleasure (and pain) is an internal part of animal life (ζωή).

34 The notion of "preservation" is well summarised in Polansky (2017, 218).

35 The pleasures and pain connected to eating and drinking are mentioned at Eth. Nic. X.3 1173b13–16.

nature, and the hindering aspect only follows the degenerative one.

In the realm of ethics, the impact of pain as a degeneration of nature on the facets of animal life that are connected to morality and reason is a significant factor. When an individual is suffering or unwell and is required to perform some rational activity, they will encounter significant obstacles. If the pain is not too severe, they will continue with the activity, but without achieving perfection and being deprived of the corresponding perfect pleasure, because, as noted previously, perfect pleasures are only associated with perfect activities. If the pain is intense, it will make the performance of the activity completely impossible. Therefore, while I deem the 'hindering the activity' model as primary for understanding pain in Aristotle's ethics, one should not overlook the fact that pain as a destruction of nature also plays a crucial role here. Whenever any part of our nature is harmed, some activity of our soul is inevitably hindered. While pain conceived as a degeneration of nature can easily be compared to Plato's account of pain discussed earlier (*Philb.* 32a1–3), emphasising the hindering aspect of pain and its particular role in moral and intellectual activities can be seen as Aristotle's innovation.

4. EXPERIENCING PAIN

In the previous section, I tried to show *what* pain is for Aristotle, what pain *does*, and how it relates to the activities performed by human beings. In this section, I would like to provide a discussion of another relevant feature of pain, namely how we experience it. First, I will focus on animals in general, and then I will narrow my focus to human beings in particular. For that reason, we must make an excursus into another work by Aristotle, namely *On the Soul*. As mentioned above, the feeling of pain relates somehow to sense perception and, in general, to perceptive aspects of animal life. Pleasure and pain are an internal part of animal life, which, according to Aristotle, is defined by the capacity of sense perception (in animals) and sense perception and thinking (in human beings).[36] The structure of perception and its relation to pleasure and pain are explained in the biological context in *On the Soul*. However, it can be instructive and applicable in the ethical context, too, because the perceptive aspect of life explained in *On the Soul* has its ethical relevance.

In *On the Soul*, Aristotle repeatedly claims that the capacity of sense perception is a necessary condition for feeling pleasure and pain.[37] Thus, if we want to understand how animals experience pain, we must focus on the relationship between sense perception and feeling pleasure and pain. Aristotle discerns between these two processes, but describes the relationship between them as follows:

> Perception is similar, then, to base assertion and to thinking. But

36 See Eth. Nic. IX.9 1170a13–1170b5.

37 De an. II.2 413b24, II.3 414b3–5, III.11 434a2. The relation between sense perception and pleasure and pain is also to be found in Theophrastus' De sensibus, in his testimony about Anaxagoras and Empedocles (De sensibus 9.9–10; 29,1–3).

> whatever there is something pleasant or painful, it by, so to speak, affirming or denying, pursues or avoids. And it is the case that being pleased and being pained are actualization of the mean of the perceptual faculty in relation to that is good or bad insofar as they are such. *De an.* III.7 431a8–15[38]

This model can be explained with the example of a sheep and a wolf.[39] When the sheep sees a wolf, it is instinctively moved to flee. When, on the other hand, the sheep sees grass, it moves to eat it. In this model, sense perception works as an intermediary between the animal and the good or bad – pleasurable or painful – object. The fact that the animal relates itself to some object considered to be good and to another considered to be bad depends on three factors: the natural state of the animal (φύσις), its actual state, and the state to which it is to be moved by the given object. The sheep flees from the wolf because it experiences that the wolf would move it out of its natural state/destroy its natural state. A similar mechanism applies when we are thirsty: the drink is pleasurable for us because it moves us from the actual state of thirst to a state of satiety.

Thus, in the case of pain, we experience an object and such perception moves us from our natural state. We want to flee from the potentially or actually harmful object. This happens, for example, when we are near something hot. We move our hand away before or immediately after we burn ourselves. Thus, the passage quoted above speaks about two types of pain. On the one hand, there is anticipated/potential pain (sheep-wolf),[40] while on the other hand, there is actual bodily pain. In both cases, the animal is moved from its natural state. If the sheep are about to flee from the wolf, they must perceive it in some way and this perception evinces the fear the sheep feels. The fear (emotional pain) urges the sheep to flee since there is a risk of its nature being destroyed by the wolf. The sense perception thus triggers the mechanism of the relation between the natural state, the actual state, and the object. However, pain itself, be it anticipated or actually felt, is not identical to sense perception. Their relation could be characterised as one act but two beings. Sense perception allows the animal to assess whether the given object causes pain or pleasure to it. Thus, we feel pain as the destruction of our nature thanks to the mediation of sense perception.

After this short excursus into Aristotle's psychology, let us return to his ethics and inquire how we experience the hindering aspect of pain in moral or intellectual contexts. However, since this problem is not directly addressed

38 Transl. Ch. Shields. τὸ μὲν οὖν αἰσθάνεσθαι ὅμοιον τῷ φάναι μόνον καὶ νοεῖν· ὅταν δὲ ἡδὺ ἢ λυπηρόν, οἷον καταφᾶσα ἢ ἀποφᾶσα διώκει ἢ φεύγει· καὶ ἔστι τὸ ἥδεσθαι καὶ λυπεῖσθαι τὸ ἐνεργεῖν τῇ αἰσθητικῇ μεσότητι πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν, ᾗ τοιαῦτα. καὶ ἡ φυγὴ δὲ καὶ ἡ ὄρεξις ταὐτό, ἡ κατ' ἐνέργειαν, καὶ οὐχ ἕτερον τὸ ὀρεκτικὸν καὶ τὸ φευκτικόν, οὔτ' ἀλλήλων οὔτε τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ· ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶναι ἄλλο.

39 My interpretation here is based on Corcilius (2008, 78ff). See also Corcilius (2011).

40 Anticipated pleasures and pain are already mentioned in Plato's Philebus 32b9–c3.

by Aristotle, understanding how we experience moral or intellectual pain requires us to revisit the notion of pleasure. Aristotle views pleasure as the completion and perfection of a given activity. Therefore, the painful activity must be incomplete and imperfect. Regardless of the intensity of the pain, the activity is deprived of some of the features it could have had if accompanied by pleasure: activity is intensified (συναύξει) by its being pleasurable (*Eth. Nic.* X.5 1175a30), we judge the objects of our pleasurable rational activity more precisely (ἐξακριβοῦσιν, *Eth. Nic.* X.5 1175a31), we grasp them better (κατανοοῦσιν ἕκαστα μᾶλλον, *Eth. Nic.* X.5 1175a33), and we are happy/joyful (χαίροντες, Eth. *Nic.* X.5 1175a32) when performing these activities.[41] Conversely, pain dampens the intensity of the activity, rendering us less accurate in our thinking, less aware of the objects of our thinking, and incapable of enjoying the activity and performing it optimally.[42] Nevertheless, the extent of the pleasure or pain experienced still depends on the intensity of the pain. Despite the presence of pain, some degree of pleasure can still be derived from engaging in rational activities, albeit not to the fullest extent.

To further elucidate the impact of pain on our activities, it is useful to differentiate between specific and outside pains, as Aristotle did in his distinction between specific and outside pleasures. In the strongest sense, specific pain can be so severe that it renders us unable to carry out the activity we wish to perform: when we suffer from a broken leg, for instance, we cannot walk or engage in various other activities that are dependent on walking. Furthermore, the pain we experience as a result of our broken leg not only hinders us from performing activities directly connected to it, such as running or jumping, but it can also have a negative impact on activities that are more closely linked to rationality or morality. For instance, this pain may impair our ability to concentrate on reading or thinking or prevent us from acting courageously by making it impossible for us to stand and confront danger. Thus, even though the pain is outside these activities, it still hinders them to some degree. For both specific and outside pains, it holds true that if the pain is not intense, it does not make it impossible for us to perform the activity, but merely deprives us of the pleasure or satisfaction we would normally have experienced.

The effects of pain become particularly evident when we examine individuals who suffer from long-term or chronic pain. Such pain can have fatal consequences for their lives, as the objective of human life, namely *eudaimonia* – living in accordance with reason and performing virtuous acts accompanied by pleasure – becomes severely disrupted.[43] In

41 See also Jimenez (2015, 155–156).

42 It may be argued that sometimes pain can have a reverse effect and sharpen our senses and rational capacities. However, when the pain persists, we must spend more energy on persisting in such activities and our efficacy and concentration eventually cease.

43 Eth. Nic. I.7 1098a12–18, X.7 1177b19–25.

the case of long-term pain, individuals may either be unable to perform activities because of the intensity of the pain or they may be able to perform them, albeit without experiencing adequate pleasure. Pain, particularly when it is chronic, therefore poses a significant obstacle to the attainment of the goals of human life, rendering it incompatible with a life of happiness and well-being. As Aristotle noted, "We can all tolerate pain for a short while; you can't possibly endure something continuously – not even the Form of the Good itself – if you find it painful."[44] Even though I can imagine that the pleasure I get from intellectual activity may overcome the pain I feel because of bodily pain (think of Epicurus), Aristotle is aware that attaining *eudaimonia* in such a life would be difficult and for the majority of people probably impossible, since the influence of pain on other aspects of our life can be so decisive.

5. BENEFICIAL PAINS AND FATIGUE

Answering the questions 'what is pain?' and 'how do we feel pain?' does not exhaust Aristotle's account of pain in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and two other critical aspects necessitate examination. First, it is essential to note that not all pain is inherently negative. Quite the contrary, some pains are intrinsically linked to noble and advantageous activities, and avoidance of these pains is unwarranted. Second, pain is not the sole phenomenon that impedes activity, as fatigue or exercise can also assume similar characteristics. Therefore, it is pertinent to explore the relationship between pain and these phenomena.

The examples of pains I have mentioned so far were interpreted as negative phenomena hindering some activity of the sufferer. However, Aristotle mentions several times that pain plays a positive role in human life or that it is natural and appropriate to feel pain (*Eth. Nic.* II.3 1104b27–28; cf. *Eth. Eud.* II.3 1221a28–31). Some pains are necessary, and it is thus natural to feel them (*Eth. Nic.* III.1 1110a19–22). It is also a sign of natural sensitivity that people are overwhelmed by great pains (*Eth. Nic.* VII.7 1150b6–8). Pain is an important component of the right upbringing and habituation of good character traits.[45] Also, some character virtues, for example, bravery, are very closely connected to pain.[46] Brave men should be afraid and feel pain in appropriate situations; if not, they are reckless or insensitive (*Eth. Nic.* I. 10, 1100b32–33, III.7 1115b12–22). To suffer painful things is preferable to doing shameful ones (*Eth. Nic.* III.1 1110a19–22). Pain is to be felt when our friend is in distress or when

44 Eth. Nic. VIII.6 1158a23–25.

45 Eth. Nic. II.3 1104b3–16, X.1 1172a19–25; cf. Eth. Eud. II.1 1220a29–37; Pol. VIII.5 1139a28: "Learning is no amusement, but is accompanied with pain" (οὐ γὰρ παίζουσι μανθάνοντες· μετὰ λύπης γὰρ ἡ μάθησις). Transl. B. Jowett in Barnes (1991). For the relation between pleasure, pain, and the development of virtuous character, see Jimenez (2015) and Curzer (2012, 318–340).

46 Eth. Nic. III.6 1115a24–27, III.9 1117a32–35. See Vigani (2017, 318–319); Jimenez (2015, 140).

we feel painful emotions in reaction to what happens to people around us.[47]

Pain assumes a vital role in education, one for which no substitute exists. As young individuals cultivate good character traits, they may still experience pain in manifesting them. However, there exists a distinction between the pain experienced by a coward and that experienced by a brave individual. A courageous person experiences pain in situations that are exceedingly dangerous and daunting. Pain may impede their ability to act, but it does not distort their courage. They act valiantly, even if they choose to withdraw. Thus, both virtuous and vicious individuals may experience pain that hinders their activities. For virtuous individuals, pain is an indicator that they are confronting a situation that is too hazardous or harmful and prevents them from acting recklessly.[48] For vicious individuals, pain denotes an insufficiency in their character since they experience it in inappropriate situations. Concerning pains that are associated with the sensitive and nutritive soul, it is natural to experience them, as they serve as warnings of the degeneration of our nature. However, virtuous individuals can endure these pains more easily and act in a righteous manner, even if it is a painful experience for them.

A second topic to be discussed in this section is the relation between pain and other phenomena that can be characterised as hindering the *energeia*. Fatigue can be included in this category. When we are fatigued, our cognitive and sensory functions may not function correctly, and our ability to act virtuously, such as fighting courageously, may be hindered since we lack the energy that is required. However, fatigue differs from pain in that it is more closely linked to natural processes within the animal body, with no degeneration of nature involved. When we become fatigued, our soul's faculties remain intact. A comparison can be made between fatigue and ageing. As we age, our sensory abilities diminish, and our sight and hearing are not as sharp as they were in our youth. Nevertheless, if we possessed the eye the young person has, we would see as well as they do (*De an*. I.4 408b21–25). Therefore, only the bodily organ has deteriorated, not the capacity or function of the perceptive soul. Similarly, when we are tired and unable to perform sensual, motive, or cognitive activities, it is not caused by a malfunction in the functioning of our soul, but rather by the natural limitations of our physical body which, sooner or later, becomes fatigued.

The distinction between fatigue and pain in relation to hindering activities becomes especially clear when we consider the role of education and the soul. A tired person can recover their ability to perform mathematical activities simply by resting, but a pained person who finds mathematics unpleasant will

47 Eth. Nic. II.7 1108b1–3, IX.4 1166a7–8, IX.11 1171a27–1171b22.

48 For the courageous person, wounds and death in battle are painful, but standing firm and acting courageously are not. See Vigani (2017, 318–319, 327).

require education and correction of the soul in order to overcome the pain associated with engaging in the activity. In this way, the structural differences between fatigue and pain are further emphasised, as fatigue is a temporary state that can be remedied through physical rest, whereas pain, especially when it is caused by moral depravity, may require a deeper and more complex remedy involving the correction of one's inner nature. Thus, fatigue and pain, while both hindering the activity, differ in their underlying causes and implications for the individual's character and development.

Is at least bodily pain comparable to fatigue in its ability to hinder activity? For instance, is being unable to run because of fatigue the same as being unable to run because of pain in a broken leg? In the case of fatigue, the hindrance of our activity is not caused by damage to our nature, but rather by temporary exhaustion that can be alleviated by rest or other remedies. On the other hand, pain is a more severe hindrance because it results from damage to our nature, and recovery often requires more than just rest. While both pain and fatigue can impede our activity, they differ in the reasons for which they do so. Despite their often being experienced together, making sharp distinctions between the two is not always easy. However, upon closer analysis, it becomes evident that pain differs from fatigue in that it hinders activity because of the deterioration of nature, while fatigue only temporarily hinders activity without damaging nature.

Emphasising positive or beneficial aspects of pain indicates that pain is not always bad. In fact, pain is often a natural occurrence that arises from the nature of animals and the human body, and in some instances, it can even be beneficial. The 'naturalness of pain' in certain situations is supported by its similarity to fatigue, as both conditions impede activity, and at times, it may be challenging to differentiate between them. For instance, after an extended run, the line between fatigue and mild pain is faint, and although this 'fatigue pain' hampers their running five more miles, it is not unnatural or harmful. Instead, it serves as a useful signal that our body is operating at its maximum potential, and we must interpret it correctly.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, it has been argued that in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle presents a coherent and logically consistent theory of pain. The nature of this theory, which must be reconstructed because of the scarcity of direct textual sources, lies in the relation between pain and activity. As demonstrated, there are two ways of understanding pain as something bad: pain as degeneration of nature and pain as hindering activity. The focus has been on the notion of pain relevant to the ethical context, and it has been shown that pain has opposite effects to pleasure and that it hinders activity. This hindering can manifest itself as disturbing the concentration on the activity and awareness of it or completely destroying the possibility of performing it.

Aristotle's understanding of pain in the ethical context focuses on pains

connected to the rational or moral aspect of human life, including pains connected to injuries and illnesses, which are understood as the destruction of one's nature. The physiological level of pain has also been explained in connection to sense perception. It has been argued that some pains are natural, and it is actually beneficial to feel them since they are natural for our human (and animal) condition. The fact that pain hinders an activity does not necessarily imply that it is always bad. Rather, the importance of pain for ethics lies in the fact that human beings should learn how to evaluate and endure the pains that afflict them. It is natural to feel pain, but only in some circumstances and to some degree. Not all pains are to be avoided, and nor are all pains to be endured. Virtuous people are free from the pain connected to vicious acts and can endure natural pains and the pains connected to virtuous acts. When necessary, they can overcome the natural impulse to avoid pain and suffer it in manifesting virtuous character traits.

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