

# PD04 - Best Translation of PD04 to Feature at EpicureanFriends

Post by "Cassius" of July 24, 2023 at 12:02 PM

The following post is one of a series so that we can get our collection of [the main list of Principal Doctrines under the "Texts" section](#) in better shape. Although this thread will include a "poll" in the next post, what we are really looking for is the "best" combination of faithfulness to the original combined with clarity in modern English. I will get with a collection of the Level 3 participants here to work on editing the final list, but the full discussion should be open to everyone to consider, so that's what we will do here. The results of the poll won't control what is featured on the text page but will definitely influence in and probably at least result in a footnote to this thread.

The English translation of [PD04](#) currently featured here in our Texts section is that of Cyril Bailey from his [Extant Remains](#):

[PD04](#). Pain does not last continuously in the flesh, but the acutest pain is there for a very short time, and even that which just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh does not continue for many days at once. But chronic illnesses permit a predominance of pleasure over pain in the flesh.

We have access ([thanks to Nate's full collection](#)) to many different variations including:

"Pain does not last continuously in the flesh, but the acutest pain is there for a very short time, and even that which just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh does not continue for many days at once. But chronic illnesses permit a predominance of pleasure over pain in the flesh." Epicurus PD4 (Bailey)

"Pain does not abide continuously in the flesh, but in its extremity it is present only a very short time. That pain which only just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh, does not last many days. But long diseases have in them more that is pleasant than painful to the flesh." Yonge (1853)

"Continuous pain does not last long in the flesh, and pain, if extreme, is present a very short time, and even that degree of pain which barely outweighs pleasure in the flesh does not occur for many days together. Illnesses of long duration even permit of an excess of pleasure over pain in the flesh." Hicks (1910)

"Continuous pain does not last long in the flesh ; on the contrary, pain, if extreme, is present a very short time, and even that degree of pain which barely outweighs pleasure in the flesh does not last for many days together. Illnesses of long duration even permit of an excess of pleasure over pain in the flesh." Hicks (1925)

"Pain does not prevail continuously in the flesh but the peak of it is present for the briefest interval, and the pain that barely exceeds the pleasure in the flesh is not with us many days, while protracted illnesses have an excess of pleasure over pain in the flesh." De Witt, Epicurus and His Philosophy 244 (1954)

"Continuous bodily suffering does not last long. Intense pain is very brief, and even pain that barely outweighs physical pleasure does not last many days. Long illnesses permit physical pleasures that are greater than the pain." Geer (1964)

"Pain does not last continuously in the flesh: when acute it is there for a very short time, while the pain which just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh does not persist for many days; and chronic illnesses contain an excess of pleasure in the flesh over pain." Long, The Hellenistic Philosophers 115 (1987)

"Pain does not dwell continuously in the flesh. Extreme pain is present but a very brief time, and that which barely exceeds bodily pleasure continues no more than a few days. But chronic illness allows greater pleasure than pain in the flesh. " O'Connor (1993)

"The feeling of pain does not linger continuously in the flesh; rather, the sharpest is present for the shortest time, while what merely exceeds the feeling of pleasure in the flesh lasts only a few days. And diseases which last a long time involve feelings of pleasure which exceed feelings of pain." Inwood & Gerson (1994)

"Continuous physical pain does not last long. Instead, extreme pain lasts only a very short time, and even less-extreme pain does not last for many days at once. Even protracted diseases allow periods of physical comfort that exceed feelings of pain." Anderson (2004)

"What produces pain does not remain constantly in the body over a long period of time; it is rather that the maximal pain persists for the least span of time, and even that bodily pain which barely exceeds pleasure does not continue to happen for many days <in a row.> And, indeed, chronic illnesses themselves have an excess of what produces bodily pleasure over what is productive of pain." Makridis (2005)

"Pain does not last continuously in the flesh; instead, the sharpest pain lasts the shortest time, a pain that exceeds bodily pleasure lasts only a few days, and diseases that last a long time involve delights that exceed their pains." Saint-Andre (2008) "Bodily pain does not last continuously. The peak is present for a very brief period, and pains that barely exceed the state of bodily pleasure do not continue for many days. On the other hand, protracted illnesses show a balance of bodily pleasure over pain." Strodach (2012)

"Pain does not last long in the flesh; in fact, extreme pain is present for the briefest time, while that which hardly outweighs pleasure does not last for many days. And illnesses that are prolonged may even afford the flesh more pleasure than pain." Mensch (2018)

“Pain does not continue for long in the flesh. Rather, the most intense pain lasts the shortest time; any pain that exceeds pleasant feeling in the flesh does not last many days; and lengthy infirmities have more pleasant feeling in the flesh than pain.” White (2021)

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Which of the above, or which with changes you would suggest, should be featured here in the main list? In the interest of space the poll will not include every option, so please add a comment in the thread if you would suggest a variation not listed.

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**Post by “Cassius” of July 24, 2023 at 12:02 PM**

Poll:

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**Post by “Don” of July 24, 2023 at 12:21 PM**

Parsed:

Greek text: Usener edition

4 Οὐ χρονίζει τὸ ἀλγοῦν συνεχῶς ἐν τῇ σαρκί, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἄκρον τὸν ἐλάχιστον χρόνον πάρεστι, τὸ δὲ μόνον ὑπερτεῖνον τὸ ἡδόμενον κατὰ σάρκα οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας συμβαίνει· αἱ δὲ πολυχρόνιοι τῶν ἀρρωστιῶν πλεονάζον ἔχουσι τὸ ἡδόμενον ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἢ περ τὸ ἀλγοῦν.

Parsed:

- **τὸ ἀλγοῦν συνεχῶς** Οὐ χρονίζει ἐν τῇ σαρκί,
  - *Continuous pain does not linger in the body,*
  - **ἄλγος** I. pain of body, II., Soph. 2. pain of mind, grief, distress, Hom. II. anything that causes pain, Bion., Anth.
  - **συνεχῶς** continuously
  - **χρονίζω** I. intr. to spend time, Hdt.: to take time, tarry, linger, delay, be slow, Aesch., Thuc.; c. inf. to delay to do, NTest. 2. of things, χρονίζον μένειν to remain long, Aesch. II. Pass. to be prolonged or protracted, id=Aesch.
- **μὲν ἀλλὰ τὸ ἄκρον τὸν ἐλάχιστον χρόνον πάρεστι**
  - *but, on the one hand, the highest point is present for the shortest time,*
  - **ἐλάχιστος** Sup. of ἐλαχύς, comp. ἐλάσσων, I. the smallest, least, οὐκ ἐλ. Hymn., Hdt., etc.; ἐλαχίστου λόγου of least account, id=Hdt.; περὶ ἐλαχίστου ποιεῖσθαι Plat. 2. **of Time, shortest**, δι' ἐλαχίστου [sc. χρόνου] Thuc.; δι' ἐλαχίστης βουλήs with shortest deliberation, id=Thuc.
  - **παρεστι** to be present in our at παρά + εἰμι
- **δὲ τὸ μόνον ὑπερτεῖνον τὸ ἡδόμενον κατὰ σάρκα οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας συμβαίνει·**
  - on the other hand...that which is only extends
  - That which is only pleasurable extends Through the body not many days
  - **μονος** alone, only, unique
  - **ὑπερ + τείνω** < 1. to stretch, extend, 2. to spread, 3. to exert, push to the limit, strain
  - **ἡδόμενον** neuter participle: being pleased, enjoying oneself
  - κατὰ + acc = through
  - σάρκα f (plural σάρκες) nom & acc
    - (biology) flesh
    - (botany) pulp, flesh
  - κατὰ σάρκα = through the body

### συμβαίνει

- II. metaph. to come together, come to an agreement, come to terms, Lat. convenire, τινί with another, Hdt., attic; c. inf., ζ. ὑπήκοοι εἶναι Thuc.; Pass., of the terms, to be agreed on, id=Thuc.

- 2. of things, to coincide or correspond with, c. dat., Hdt., attic:—absol., Trag., etc.

δὲ αἱ πολυχρόνιοι τῶν ἀρρωστιῶν πλεονάζον ἔχουσι τὸ ἡδόμενον ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἢ περὶ τὸ ἀλγοῦν. (2 prepositional phrases) **πολυχρόνιος**

- I. long-existing, of olden time, ancient, Hymn., Hdt., Xen.
- II. lasting for long, Arist.:—comp. -ώτερος, Plat.; Sup. -ώτατος, Xen.

αἱ πολυχρόνιοι τῶν ἀρρωστιῶν = the long-lasting days of sickness ("*illnesses of long duration*")  
 περ intensifies following word "very" ἀρρωστιῶν f Genitive plural form of ἀρρώστια

- malady, sickness, illness
- disease

πλεονάζω

- to presume on
- to be superfluous, more than enough
- (of a writer) to be prolix or tedious

## Post by "Godfrey" of July 24, 2023 at 1:04 PM

My preference is Inwood and Gerson, particularly "*The feeling of pain does not linger continuously in the flesh; rather, the sharpest is present for the shortest time....*" Somehow that seems to be a subtly better description than the other translations.

There doesn't seem to be any reference to motion or homeostasis in the Greek, but to me that's a key part of what this PD is discussing. Sensations and feelings are always changing. When pain stops for a while, the pleasure is great: kind of like bread and water being extremely tasty when one is extremely hungry.