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Analyzing the Emotions across Three Ancient Cultures: Greece, India, China

> "Hadn't time,' said the Gryphon: "I went to the Classical master, though. He was an old crab, *he* was."
> "I never went to him," the Mock Turtle said with a sigh. "He taught Laughing and Grief, they used to say."
> "So he did, so he did," said the Gryphon, sighing in his turn; and both creatures hid their faces in their paws. – Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, chapter ix

What is an emotion? In what ways can emotional experience be perceived and expressed? Are emotions the same, or at least similar, for us as they are for people elsewhere on the planet? Have they always been the same, or at least similar, throughout the history of our species? Is it possible to analyze emotional experience logically? How would such an analysis be conceived and structured?

These are just some of the questions that have inspired the writing of this essay. By their very nature, they require us to expand our horizons beyond the ease of simple paradigms and the familiarity of received ideas. Their anthropological complexity challenges us to look beyond the bounds of the culture we call our own, to move beyond the comforting simplicity of monocultural analysis. Their interrogation of time as well as of space prompts us, moreover, to reach as far back into the past as we possibly can in search of relevant evidence.

Such a project calls for patience and stamina. It also requires the juggling of multiple competences, including the ability to read and evaluate texts in various languages, ancient as well as modern. Where germane, artefacts of material culture should be adduced as well.

My own professional training as a classicist prepared me, to some extent, for such comparative work. Because "classics" in the West was historically disciplinized in such a way as to focalize the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome, it is already essentially comparative in nature. But classics, as an occidental scholarly discipline, runs the risk of privileging the Greek and Latin canons to the exclusion of all others. To do the work proposed here, we must be prepared to cast our nets more widely: to undertake the study of what I have elsewhere called "comparative classics."[1] My hope is that this kind of cross-cultural study will foster mutual interest, and even collaborative research, among disciplines that increasingly suffer from the pervasive siloization of the modern academy.

1 Kirby (2016).

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110784312-008

I myself was surprised by some of what I discovered in the course of this research. Some of my readers may share my surprise, particularly if they begin from the assumption that experiencing emotions is a purely personal, individual, and above all private event. Now each person surely experiences emotions, first and foremost, on an individual and personal level; but we shall observe that our ancient authors were especially interested in what one might call the *shared* emotions: that is, how emotions are elicited, felt, and dealt with, in *public and societal contexts* – and this, above all, as it occurs in *ritual or ceremonial events*.[2]

To engage in a cognitive assessment of the emotions is a curious enterprise. It requires that we think analytically about experiences that seem fundamentally non-analytic, non-rational, if not indeed irrational. And yet not to do so is to risk living what Plato's Socrates called the "unexamined life."

Once we have embarked on this investigation, many more questions arise. For a classicist like myself, some of these will be: "How did the ancients express their experience of emotions?"; "How did the ancients *analyze* the emotions?"; "What connections – and disconnects – can we discover among varying ancient cultures' analyses of the emotions?"; "What can those texts – for we must rely chiefly on texts – tell us about their similarities to (and differences from) one another?"; and, of course, "What can those texts tell us about *our own* similarities to (and differences from) the peoples of various ancient cultures?"[3]

2 Modern empirical research has, as it happens, tended to affirm that emotions may be "shared" (or, to use a currently-fashionable metaphor, "contagious"): e.g. Schoenewolf (1990), Hatfield *et al.* (1994), Kiuru (2012), Sampson *et al.* (2018). This has also been studied in terms of cognitive "mirroring" (Bastiaansen *et al.* [2009]). There is evidence that shared (or communally-felt) emotions can increase bonding, particularly where the so-called "negative" emotions are involved (Bosson *et al.* [2006]). All of this has powerful implications for Aristotle's fundamentally *rhetorical* examination of how a rhetor may go about eliciting specific emotions in his or her audience – or how a playwright (via the actors onstage) may do the same in the course of a dramatic performance.

3 On the universality (or otherwise) of emotions and the analysis thereof, particularly when compared across cultures and time, see e.g. Solomon (1995), (1997) and Konstan (2006a), (2006b). The history of thinking about the emotions is itself an enormous field of study, and not easily summarized; two recent attempts to provide a broad survey are those of Reddy (2001) and Plamper (2015). A methodology for the study of the emotions in ancient Greece and Rome is mapped out in Chaniotis (2012) and Chaniotis/Ducrey (2013). For history, methodology, and expert philology, see the extensive *œuvres* of David Konstan – e.g. (2001), (2006a), (2006b), (2018), and Konstan/Rutter (2003) – and of Douglas Cairns, e.g. (1993), (2008), (2015), (2019), Cairns/Fulkerson (2015), and Cairns/Nelis (2017). For further exploration of the emotions in the ancient Mediterranean, one might consult Braund/Gill (1997) and Braund/Most (2004); Harris (2001); Kaster (2005); Price (2010); and Ehrenheim/Prusac-Lindhagen (2020).

We cannot be completely sure of the nature of animal experiences.[4] It seems reasonable to infer, however, that animals feel emotions as much as humans do, and perhaps in similar ways, although there are dissenting voices on the subject.[5] Anyone who has seen a dog expressing joy when her human comes home, or fear when she hears fireworks exploding, knows what I mean. What perhaps no other animal does except for *homo sapiens*, however, is to *analyze* the emotions. If dogs are engaging in this philosophical pursuit, they are not letting on to their biped colleagues. It is, at base, a cognitive assessment of the affective experience.[6] Such cognitive assessments can be done in a variety of ways: the psychological, the anthropological, the sociological, even the linguistic.

But what interests me here is the *philosophical* approach to analyzing the emotions. For one thing, it operates supremely in the realm of intellection. For another, the process of philosophical analysis is fully capable of integrating all those other modes of assessment just named.

In order to undertake the sort of comparative analysis I described above, I have selected portions of acknowledged "classics" from three sources: the ancient Greek-speaking world;[7] the Sanskritic culture of the Indian subcontinent; and ancient China. Five major texts are explored here: the *Philebus* of Plato; the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* of Aristotle; the नाट्य शास्त्र *Nāṭyaśāstra* or "Treatise on Drama/Dance" ascribed to Bharatamuni; and the 禮運 "Lǐyùn" portion of the early Confucian 禮記 *Lǐjì* or "Record of Rites." There will also be cameo appearances by other texts from each of those cultures, where these can shed light on our inquiry.

4 Although Martha Nussbaum addresses, in nuanced fashion, a broad array of questions relevant to this, in Nussbaum (2001) 89–138.

5 The degree (and even the kind) of similarity is a matter of debate: see e.g. Fortenbaugh (1975) 67–70, Sorabji (1993), Sihvola (1996), Fortenbaugh (2002) 94 and n. 1. The Stoics and other ancient Greek thinkers flatly denied that animals have emotions in the strict sense of the term.

6 A few decades ago we might have said, a left-brain assessment of a right-brain experience, though that now seems to oversimplify the function of the human brain hemispheres.

7 By which I mean, the Hellenic cultures of the Classical period. Already by the Hellenistic era the material is much proliferated – and the topic is considerably more vexed.

1 The Greeks

1.1 Plato

Obviously we could take this investigation much farther back in time than Plato: back through the Presocratics, back to early poets such as Homer[8] and Hesiod, Sappho and Pindar. But that would be a whole massive study unto itself, requiring a different approach: the primary material for emotions in the pre-Platonic period is substantial, but for the most part it *expresses* or *depicts* emotions rather than *theorizing* them – which makes it very different from the texts examined here. In the present context, my reasons for focusing on Plato are three: because he was Aristotle's teacher; because he formulates an approach to the emotions that explicitly lays the groundwork for Aristotle's treatment in the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*; and, of course, because he was Plato.[9]

Plato does not offer a comprehensive theory of the emotions. He does, however, recur to the topic repeatedly, and his recurrent treatments sketch out some characteristics of emotions that permit the reader to infer something like a theory. Two of these characteristics that shape Plato's thinking about the emotions are: [1] the relation of body to *psukhê*, and [2] the relation of pleasure and pain.

Plato, we are told, wrote dithyrambs and tragedies in his youth.[10] If that is true, he early gained practical experience in the literary expression and stimulation of the emotions. After his conversion to philosophy, under the charismatic tutelage of Socrates, he turned to the writing of philosophic dialogues, sometimes in actual script format, and his characters not only experience emotions: they also discuss them, and indeed subject them to intense and extensive scrutiny. In Plato's literary world, emotions are expressions or functions of the *psukhê* – that untranslatable word that some render by "soul," some by "spirit," some by "inner consciousness," some even by "self," but which remains for all that untranslatable.[11] What we can say is that, for the Greeks, it is the inner core of one's being, and also that in Socratic as in Pythagorean dualism, the *psukhê* is

8 The very first word in the *Iliad* – arguably the oldest extant document in Greek literature – is μῆνιν: "anger, wrath, rage." At the other end of the poem, book 24 includes the unforgettable scene of Achilles weeping with Priam.

9 I think especially of Alfred North Whitehead's famous saying, "The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato" (Whitehead [1978] 39).

10 Diogenes Laertius 3.6.

11 The transliteration "psyche" would itself be a highly attractive solution, but it brings with it the enormous complicating freight of Freudian theory.

distinct (if not wholly separate) from the physical body.[12] As with all "Socratic" doctrines, it is not entirely clear whether Plato embraces this concept completely; but he does find fodder for discussion in the suggestion.

Whatever Plato's own conception of the relation of body to *psukhê*, his Socrates clearly sees them as functioning together and sharing some common concerns. Among the latter are pleasure and pain; and it is in these terms that Plato addresses the experience of the emotions, in a famous passage of the *Philebus*. An overarching concern in this dialogue, as in so many of Plato's, is the human good: what is entailed in the best sort of life for us? Here, the issue is raised of the relation of pleasure to the good. Socrates addresses the question of "mixed" emotions, which may be mixed in two ways: mixed, as experienced both in the body and in the *psukhê*;[13] and mixed, as in both pleasurable and painful.

As is his wont, Plato illustrates this highly abstruse schema with homely down-to-earth examples that bring his ideas into sharp focus for us. His example of the *summeikton pathos*[14] ("mixed emotion") is scratching an itch (*Philebus* 46a): the itch may in itself be "painful," in the sense of "unpleasant"; but the scratching of it is an undeniable pleasure: the overall *pathos*, "experience" or "feeling,"[15] is thus *summeikton* (mixed). Some of these "mixed" experiences involve the body alone; some involve the *psukhê* alone; some involve both, and are "mixed" in this regard as well (46b-c). Like a physician in search of a diagnosis, like a speculative thinker sussing out first principles, Plato's Socrates seeks both to understand and to articulate the operation of pain and pleasure – above all, pleasure – upon the human *psukhê*.

The specifically antithetical structure of the experience of pleasure and pain, and of their application across bodily as well as psychic contexts, is a profoundly Greek approach, harking back to the Hippocratic corpus (hot and cold, wet and dry) and to Presocratic thinkers such as Empedocles (the opposing forces of Attraction and Repulsion, acting upon the four elements – Earth, Air, Fire, and Water – to produce results in combinatory ways). For all that, it is by no means an *exclusively* Greek approach – indeed there is at least as much

12 See e.g. Plato *Gorgias* 493a, and Dillon (1996) 149.

13 Hackforth (1945) 61 maintains that Plato's "real belief" is spelt out at *Republic* 9. 584c, "most of the so-called pleasures that reach the *psukhê* through the body, as well as the most intense ones are of this form: they are some kind of relief from pain."

14 Accepting the emendation proposed in Hackforth (1945) 90 n. 1. The MSS have σύμμεικτον . . . κακόν at 46a 13.

15 An older translation for *pathos* is "affection," i.e. a condition of being *affected* by something. This usage now approaches the quaint, and risks confusion with other more common applications of the word. It is still championed by A. W. Price (2010) 121 and will be understood without hesitation by professional philosophers. The variant "affect" has been reclaimed for the more recent approach known as Affect Theory; see e.g. Gregg/Seigworth (2010).

reason to call it a "profoundly Chinese approach," seen in everything from the 陰陽 *yīn*/*yáng* distinction to, as we shall see, their categorization of the human emotions – but we may certainly depend upon the schema to guide us through much of Greek literature, including Plato.

At 47e Socrates makes a casual list[16] of emotions that register as pains within the *psukhê* itself: anger (*orgê*), fear (*phobos*), longing (*pothos*), mourning (*thrênos*), love (*erôs*),[17] jealousy (*zêlos*), malice (*phthonos*), "and the like" (*kai hosa toiauta*). The last phrase is clear indication that the list is meant to be *exemplorum gratia*, not exhaustive. But what is particularly interesting about Socrates' list is that he locates all of these "within the *psukhê* itself" (*autês tês psukhês*) – not as being mixed as to body/*psukhê*; and this despite our awareness that most of them certainly manifest somatic epiphenomena, such as raised temperature, flushing, agitation, and what we would now identify as elevated blood pressure. Even more curious is that he does find all of them mixed as to pain/pleasure, as he remarks in his very next question: "And don't we find that they are full of remarkable pleasures?" He goes on to cite two famous lines from the *Iliad* (18.108–109),

> καὶ χόλος, ὅς τ᾽ ἐφέηκε πολύφρονά περ χαλεπῆναι,
> ὅς τε πολὺ γλυκίων μέλιτος καταλειβομένοιο
>
> *kholos* [anger], which can provoke even the thoughtful person,[18]
> and which is much sweeter than honey dripping down . . .

Most remarkable of all, perhaps, is that he goes on immediately to observe the mixed nature of emotions in theater-goers who have viewed performances of tragedy and comedy (48a–b). Given how widely cited this passage is, it is perhaps not as well understood as it should be. It bears looking at more closely.

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16 The *list* as a constitutive element of these philosophical discussions will recur repeatedly in our discussion here. On the rhetorical idea of lists (and their format), in specific comparison with the format of continuous narrative, see O'Banion (2006).

17 Of all the words in this list, *erôs* is perhaps the most resistant to adequate English translation. At base it refers to any intense desire, above all sexual desire, but it is by no means limited to that. I have finally settled, however reluctantly, on "love" as tentative translation here, if only because this English term is itself as slippery and polysemous as the Greek.

18 Literally, "which can incite even the thoughtful person to *khalepênai*." The latter is often translated "to become angry," which here would be redundant. The root-word is *khalepos*, which means "difficult, painful, grievous" and can carry a connotation of irksomeness, harshness, or anger. Homer's noun, not used by Plato, is *kholos*, "anger," which is etymologically related to a later word for gall or bile, *kholê*. If Homer was already thinking – Hippocratically, as it were – about the bodily humors and their effects on the emotions, it would explain why he can posit *kholos* as what causes even the thoughtful to *khalepênai*. (*kholos* and *khalepênai* are probably not etymologically related, but it seems likely that Homer is capitalizing on the similarity of sound in **khol*-/**khal*-.)

[Σωκράτης] καὶ μὴν καὶ τάς γε τραγικὰς θεωρήσεις, ὅταν ἅμα χαίροντες κλάωσι, μέμνησαι;
[Πρώταρχος] τί δ' οὔ;
[Σωκράτης] τὴν δ' ἐν ταῖς κωμῳδίαις διάθεσιν ἡμῶν τῆς ψυχῆς, ἆρ' οἶσθ' ὡς ἔστι κἀν τούτοις μεῖξις λύπης τε καὶ ἡδονῆς;
[Πρώταρχος] οὐ πάνυ κατανοῶ.
[Σωκράτης] παντάπασι γὰρ οὐ ῥᾴδιον, ὦ Πρώταρχε, ἐν τούτῳ συννοεῖν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἑκάστοτε πάθος.
[Πρώταρχος] οὔκουν ὅς γ' ἔοικεν ἐμοί.

SOCRATES: And similarly as regards viewers of tragedies, when – even while they are enjoying[19] the performance – they weep, do you recall?

PROTARCHUS: How could I not?

SOCRATES: And as to the disposition of our *psukhai* when viewing comedies, do you realize that here too there is a mixture of pain and pleasure?

PROTARCHUS: I don't quite understand.

SOCRATES: Well, it certainly isn't easy, Protarchus, to understand that our emotional response is always like that in such a situation.

PROTARCHUS: Definitely not easy, at least for me.

This exchange points up several details worth noting, not all of which can be fully addressed in this essay.

- First, of course, the mixed nature of these emotions, and the paradoxical quality of that mixture: why do we enjoy (*khairontes*) watching the portrayal of fearful and piteous events in a tragedy, up to and including representations[20] of cannibalism, incest, or parricide? (Similarly, one might ask today, why do we enjoy being frightened by horror movies?)[21] And – we, like Protarchus, may well be excused for confusion over this – what is there that is painful or sad in comedy (specifically, in this case, Attic Old Comedy)?
- Plato wastes no time in recurring to a favorite theme of his: the enduring power of art, and dramatic art above all. For his character Socrates, that power is by no means entirely benign. (It is, as will be remembered, a particular *bête noire* of his in the *Republic*, particularly books 2–3 and 10,

19 Some translators render χαίροντες as "laughing," which, while an understandable inference, is certainly not what the Greek says. χαίρειν means "rejoice," and here, something like "enjoy, take satisfaction."

20 To be fair, most Greek tragedies do not actually show these gruesome events onstage – perhaps by reason of the logistical/technological limitations of the time, as much as for aesthetic considerations. Typically the most horrific turns of plot occur offstage, and are reported to the appalled characters and chorus (and audience) by a messenger of some sort. The *Ajax* of Sophocles is a notable (shocking) exception in that Ajax's suicide actually occurs onstage.

21 For more on this broad topic, see e.g. Nuttall (1996), Destrée (2014), Liebert (2017).

though it is revisited more optimistically – later in his writing career – in book 2 of the *Laws*.) This lays the groundwork for further philosophical discussion of the nature and function of the emotions in aesthetic response.
- Despite the suspect stature of dramatic *mimêsis*, at least in the estimation of Plato's Socrates, the *Philebus* is itself presented, precisely, in the form of a play-script.
- The discussion of the emotions is oriented specifically to a context of pleasure and pain.
- The ease with which we invoke the phrase "emotional response" should not dull us to the fact that it is indeed seen here as a *response* to some stimulus. The common word for "emotion" in classical Greek, used here, is πάθος *pathos* (which has the related form, πάθημα *pathêma*). This root **path*- is notionally the opposite of **prax*-; as *praxai* means "to do" something, so *pathein* means "to have something done *to*" one – i.e., "to undergo" or "experience" something.[22] Here, as throughout, the binary/antithetical nature of the schema is constitutive of the conventional categories invoked. It is Plato who attempts to break the binary by adding a third ("mixed") category, although this too turns out to be binary, indeed doubly so: painful/pleasurable and body/*psukhê*.
- As William Fortenbaugh points out,[23] Plato gives indication in this text that he is aware of a cognitive dimension to the emotions – but leaves that unclear.

All but the first of those points set the stage for the ways in which Aristotle will, in turn, address the *psukhê* and the emotions – in his psychological works, in ethics, and in poetics and rhetoric. Without pretending to have plumbed the depths of Plato's treatment here, which is fraught with implications for perhaps all his other dialogues, it is to Aristotle that we now turn.

1.2 Aristotle

Whether or not we are aware of this, our very notion of "philosophical" in the West is largely still shaped by the approach used, and to a great extent codified,

22 The now-archaic locution "What hast thou done and suffered?" reflects these two meanings. An example of their explicit pairing occurs at *Poetics* 9, 1451b 11, τί Ἀλκιβιάδης ἔπραξεν ἢ τί ἔπαθεν.
23 Fortenbaugh (1975) 10–11.

by Aristotle in his "esoteric" works.[24] He is happy to ponder, scrutinize, and investigate just about anything he finds in the phenomenal universe – be it metaphysics, ethics, politics, respiration, or the movement of animals – and in each case he is typically most interested in what he calls the τί ἦν εἶναι *ti ên einai* of a thing. We may (very) roughly render this odd phrase as "essential nature," although it is not even close to that grammatically. And while we may in this post-postmodern era question, or embrace, or jettison entirely, the concept of "essences," we must nonetheless acknowledge that such a concept is not only squarely Aristotelian, but important even today to a great portion of humanity. All of us, no matter what our philosophical leanings, yearn at one point or another to know what something "truly" is – what it "turns out to be" (*ti ên einai*) upon careful examination.[25]

Aristotle's indefatigable zest for philosophical investigation extended to all aspects of human existence, including the emotions. These come under discussion in a number of his extant writings, notably the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*. We shall look anon at his treatment of the emotions in those texts. But first, we should consider how he situates the emotions within the *psukhê* – a word that is, as I have noted, essentially untranslatable.[26] *Psukhê* is absolutely what Raymond Williams might have called a "keyword" for Aristotle.[27] This is not surprising, as by Aristotle's time it already had a long lineage, back to Homer's *Iliad* and doubtless much

24 The "esoteric" (or "acroamatic") works of Aristotle were those that were intended for use by his students in the Lyceum, as opposed to the so-called exoteric works, which were published – in dialogue format – for reading by a larger public. The latter survived for several hundred years, and indeed Aristotle's impressive reputation as a prose stylist was founded upon them. Eventually the exoteric works were discarded, perhaps on a misunderstanding of the term "esoteric" as referring to a secret doctrine; no copies of them appear to survive today. The writings modern readers think of as the "works of Aristotle" are thus the esoteric.

25 The use of *ên* in this sense was already, it seems, an idiom in classical Attic Greek; it occurs with this meaning in the opening words of Book 2 of Plato's *Republic*: ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ταῦτα εἰπὼν ᾤμην λόγου ἀπηλλάχθαι: τὸ δ' ἦν ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικε, προοίμιον ("So, having said this, I thought I was done with the conversation, which was, however, *as it turned out*, just an opener," 357a 1–2); similarly cf. also Book 4, 436c 1; Book 10, 609b 5; and Sophocles *Trachiniae* 1172. See Adam (1962) 1.65 *ad* 357a 2.

26 On the topic see e.g. Wilkes (1992). The problem, *in fine*, is that no English word maps the semantic field of *psukhê* exactly. (Wilkes's solution is to leave it untranslated, as in fact I also do for the most part here.)

There are other Greek words for Aristotle's concept of "mind," notably *nous*, but for Aristotle *nous* is principally a function or operation of the *psukhê*. Another term related to *nous*, namely *dianoia*, is his word in the *Poetics* for "thought"; sometimes *nous* is actually used more or less as a synonym for *dianoia*, as in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. There is a sizeable bibliography on *nous*, much of it building on foundations laid by Kurt von Fritz and Bruno Snell in the 1940s: Fritz (1943), Fritz (1945), Fritz (1946), (1964), Snell (1953 [originally 1946]).

27 Williams (1976).

further. Like *pneuma*, the Greek word we typically translate as "spirit," *psukhê* has a connection with breath and breathing: indeed in Homer's day *psukhê* meant something almost like "life-force," reflecting its relationship to the verb *psukhein*, which has to do with the moving of air (thus "blow" or "dry out").[28] So, unsurprisingly, *psukhê* is fundamental to Aristotle's anthropology. To understand how Aristotle conceived the structure and behavior of the *psukhê*, we turn in particular to two documents: *On the Psukhê*, better known by a Latin title, *De Anima*; and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, one of Aristotle's best-known works.[29]

The *De Anima* begins by affirming that the *psukhê* is οἷον ἀρχὴ τῶν ζῴων – *hoion arkhê tôn zôiôn*, "the *arkhê*, so to speak, of living beings" (*De Anima* 1.1, 402a 8–9). Now *arkhê* is the simple Greek word for "beginning" or "start"; but for the Presocratic philosophers, for Plato, and then for Aristotle, *arkhê* is something of a technical term for a "first principle": a thing from which other things originate and flow. This in itself signals the scope of the project entailed in a study of *psukhê*. Moreover, by using the term *zôiôn*, "living beings," rather than *anthrôpôn*, "human beings," Aristotle extends the primacy – and arguably the causal or creative capacity – of *psukhê* to the sphere of all life.

Aristotle had inherited from Plato a tripartite map of the *psukhê*.[30] This is encountered in Book 4 of Plato's *Republic*, where Plato's Socrates divides the *psukhê* into the appetitive portion (ἐπιθυμητικόν *epithumêtikon*); the "spirited" portion (θυμοειδές *thumoeides*); and the intellect or rational portion (λογιστικόν *logistikon*).[31] In *De Anima* 2.3, by contrast, Aristotle offers a five-fold map of the *psukhê*: its five parts include

28 Cf. the *hanzi* 氣 *qì*, which is the Chinese word for "vital energy," and which originates in a pictogram of steam rising from a bowl of rice.

29 I am setting aside the treatment of related material in the *Magna Moralia*, as the Aristotelian authorship of that treatise has been seriously called into question. We shall touch briefly on the *Eudemian Ethics* below.

30 Plato's character Timaeus also propounds a bipartite division of the World Soul (at *Timaeus* 35b ff.), based on the binary distinction of "self" and "other," but the language of that passage is profoundly mystical, and the topic is really cosmology rather than human psychology. The tripartite division is almost always the one cited as "Plato's" conceptualization of the *psukhê*. See (among many others) Burnyeat (2006).

31 See e.g. *Republic* 439–441. In this model, the *psukhê* is first laid out – in traditional binary fashion – as structured in rational/irrational faculties, which is rounded out by a *tertium quid*: the "spirited" portion. Another tripartite division, roughly analogous to what is found in the *Republic*, is offered by Plato in his famous imagery of the charioteer and his two horses at *Phaedrus* 246a–254e.

- the nutritive faculty (*to threptikon*, i.e. *threpsis*), which is the capacity "to take nourishment" (2.2, 413a 30);
- perception (*to aisthêtikon*, i.e. *aisthêsis*);
- desire or appetition (*to orektikon*, i.e. *orexis*);
- movement (*to kinêtikon*, i.e. *kinêsis*);[32] and
- thought (*to dianoêtikon*, i.e. *dianoia*).[33]

These five faculties or *dunameis* – literally "powers" or "capacities" – function in response to the cumulative intake of the five senses (as is further indicated in the extended discussion of the senses, at *De Anima* 2.7–12).[34] Of particular interest to our discussion here are perception (*aisthêsis*) and movement (*kinêsis*), and the connection they share. In this passage Aristotle takes the time to underscore the passive nature of *aisthêsis* specifically, before discussing each of the five senses in turn, and to define it in terms of *kinêsis*: "As has been said, *aisthêsis* consists in being moved [*tôi kineisthai*] and in undergoing experience/being acted upon [*paskhein*, a verbal form of *pathos*]; for it appears to be a sort of alteration/change of state [*alloiôsis*]" (*De Anima* 2.5, 416b 33–35).[35] That last point highlights the role of *kinêsis* as closely related to – in some ways a species of, in

32 The relevant Greek verb may, as in English, be transitive – *kinein* is to "move" something, *kineisthai* (passive) is to "be moved" – or intransitive (*kineisthai*, in the middle voice, is to "move about," perhaps as a sort of reflexive: to move oneself).

33 The list in *De Anima* 2.2 omits *to orektikon* (*orexis*). This may be the result of a scribal error in the copying of an earlier manuscript; or it may be that Aristotle's list in 2.3 was written at a later date, at which point *to orektikon* was added. In this analysis of *psukhê*, Aristotle purports to cover all living beings – for example, plants are said only to have the nutritive faculty – but the human organism is clearly seen as being at the apex of the class of *zôia*, living beings. The five-part list reappears in 3.9–10, with the addition of a sixth item whose importance can hardly be overstated: the addition of *phantasia*, "imagination." On the interpretive issues raised by latter, see the lucid essay of Schofield (2011), building on the landmark studies by Nussbaum (1978) and Labarrière (2004). Fortenbaugh (2002) 95–103 addresses some important relevant issues as well.

34 The term *dunamis* – assuredly another "keyword" for Aristotle – deserves a book-length treatment unto itself. *Dunamis* is often paired with *energeia*, in the correlate senses of "potential" and "actualization." *Dunamis* is also the word Aristotle uses in the *Rhetoric*, as part of the definition of rhetoric; there it means "capacity" or "faculty": the *dunamis* of discovering the available means of persuasion on any given subject (*Rhetoric* 1.2.1, 1355b 26–27). It is interesting that Aristotle lists, in the *De Anima*, neither *rhêtorikê* nor *mimêsis* as *dunameis* of the human *psukhê*, but he does devote an entire separate treatise (the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*) to each – going so far as to assert that *mimêsis* is both natural to humans and peculiar to humans (*Poetics* 4, 1448b 4–9, on which more below).

35 He moreover devotes to *aisthêsis* an entire essay in the *Parua Naturalia*, "On Perception and Perceptible Objects" (Περὶ αἰσθήσεως καὶ αἰσθητῶν), whose title I take to have been the

some cases a metaphor for – *change* of various kinds. This will prove significant for how Aristotle assesses the experience of the emotions.

Kinêsis itself is a notion of central importance to Aristotle's system. For him, a great deal about the phenomenal universe can be explained with reference, in one way or another, to *kinêsis*:[36] he goes so far as to describe the godhead as an Unmoved Mover – an entity that causes movement in the universe, but which itself is not moved.[37] Now *kinêsis* and *to kinesithai* in Greek – like the phrase "to be moved" in English – can have both literal and metaphoric meanings; sometimes, as here in *De Anima* 2.3, Aristotle will add *kata topon*, "(movement) as regards place," when he wants to specify locomotion. But he does not hesitate to use *kinêsis* in what we might infer is an emotional sense, as at 3.9 (432b 30–433a 1): "it is the heart [*kardia*] that is moved," he tells us, not the mind, when stimuli such as fear present themselves; the mind, by contrast, is capable of contemplating something fearful without triggering fear.[38]

But movement – above all, locomotion – is a faculty in the *psukhê* that is prompted by the operation of two others: desire (*orexis*) and thought (*nous* or *to dianoêtikon*).[39] An example of movement caused by *orexis* would be going to the cinema because of one's desire to experience the pleasure of watching a movie. An example of movement caused by *to dianoêtikon* would be going to the grocery to buy rice, because one knows one does not have enough rice to cook a meal.

We might also add, as Aristotle does not here, that other aspects of the *psukhê* may be involved in such movements. *Aisthêsis*, perception, would be involved in both examples just mentioned: when one notices that a certain movie is playing at the local cinema, or that the rice has almost run out. Thus, as modern philosophers since Kant at least have conceptualized the combined input of the five senses, so too we might also speak of the combined activity of these five capacities of the *psukhê* in Aristotle's schema. Note too that *kinêsis* is (here as elsewhere) associated with *alloiôsis*, "change" or "alteration." For Aristotle, *alloiôsis* is not only an important result of *kinêsis*, but is in fact sometimes its

basis of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*. In this essay as well he examines the senses in some detail.

36 Indeed Randall (1960) considers *kinêsis* "the central Aristotelian problem not just in the life sciences but in the whole study of nature" (cited in Lawson-Tancred [1986] 232 n. 19).

37 ἔστι τι ὃ οὐ κινούμενον κινεῖ (*Metaphysics* Λ [12.7] 1072a 25), one clause in a complex passage of startling and somewhat mysterious beauty.

38 This, we might say, is an example of meta-meta-discourse: a philosopher analyzing the cognitive assessment of the emotions.

39 *De Anima* 3.10, 433a 10–11.

telos – its "final cause" or goal. We shall have more to say about this with reference to rhetoric and poetics.

The ancient Greeks did not have a unified answer to where (what we might call) the mind is physically situated in the body, though they did have some favorite candidates: the *phrên* or *phrenes*, "midriff," and the *kardia* or *kradiê*, "heart."[40] But Aristotle proposes to map out the functions of the *psukhê* without resolving this conundrum. He maps them rather differently in the *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics* than in the *De Anima*, as his purpose in the *Ethics* is to apply his analysis of the architecture of the *psukhê* to the living of the best possible life. Here is how he addresses the structure of the *psukhê* in that context:

> αὕτη γὰρ ἀρετὴ ἑκατέρου, ἡ δ' ἀρετὴ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον τὸ οἰκεῖον. τρία δή ἐστιν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τὰ κύρια πράξεως καὶ ἀληθείας, αἴσθησις νοῦς ὄρεξις. τούτων δ' ἡ αἴσθησις οὐδεμιᾶς ἀρχὴ πράξεως: δῆλον δὲ τῷ τὰ θηρία αἴσθησιν μὲν ἔχειν πράξεως δὲ μὴ κοινωνεῖν. ἔστι δ' ὅπερ ἐν διανοίᾳ κατάφασις καὶ ἀπόφασις, τοῦτ' ἐν ὀρέξει δίωξις καὶ φυγή: ὥστ' ἐπειδὴ ἡ ἠθικὴ ἀρετὴ ἕξις προαιρετική, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις ὄρεξις βουλευτική, δεῖ διὰ ταῦτα μὲν τόν τε λόγον ἀληθῆ εἶναι καὶ τὴν ὄρεξιν ὀρθήν, εἴπερ ἡ προαίρεσις σπουδαία, καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ τὸν μὲν φάναι τὴν δὲ διώκειν.
>
> This is the excellence of each [part of the *psukhê*], and the excellence of a thing is relative to its proper function. Now there are three things in the *psukhê* that control action and truth: sensation, thought, desire. Of these, sensation produces no action; this is plain from the fact that beasts have sensation but no share in action. What affirmation and negation are in thinking, pursuit and avoidance are in desire; so that since moral excellence is a state concerned with choice, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good; and the latter [*scil.* choice] must pursue just what the former [*scil.* thinking, reason] asserts. [*Nicomachean Ethics* 6.2, 1139a 17–25]

Aristotle tells us here that there are three things in the *psukhê* that control action and truth (*praxis* and *alêtheia*): "sensation" or "perception" (*aisthêsis*); "thought" (*nous*); and "desire" (*orexis*). No action, he says, originates solely from perception. The possible actions arising from thought are an antithetical pair: affirmation and negation. This dyad is presented as corresponding to the dyad of possible actions arising from desire: pursuit and avoidance. A schematic representation of this text might look something like this (Figure 1):

40 Epic and lyric Greek have a number of terms for the seat of consciousness (such as *kêr* and *êtor*, both terms for "heart"). Some of them are words that, when used in post-Homeric times, shifted somewhat in meaning, such as *thumos*.

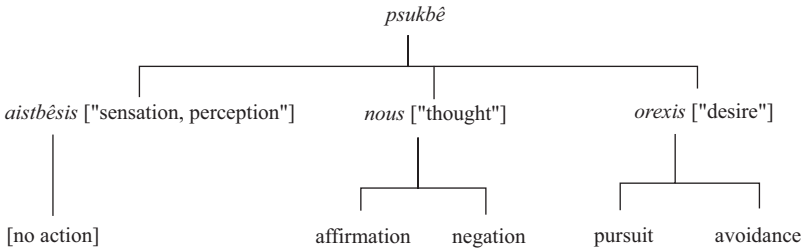

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the function of the *psukhê* as described in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 6.2.

All three of these terms – *aisthêsis*, *nous*, and *orexis* – are familiar from the *De Anima*.[41] None of them tells us anything about emotions *per se*. But there is nonetheless a cognitive/affective dimension to this system as laid out in the *Ethics*: *aisthêsis*, sense-perception, is itself – like the emotions – a passive experience, but it is related to both thought and desire. Now "desire," in the sense of *orexis*, is the basis on which we choose to do or not to do something; the Greek term may entail more intellection than the English term might suggest, but it should be immediately clear that the pursuit or avoidance of a thing – the natural results of *orexis* – will often be rooted in the data gathered via *aisthêsis*. And one's assessment of the advisability of an action – fundamentally an act of *nous* – will often have an emotional aspect to it. Thus the totality of the emotional experience, which is (to use Aristotle's phrase at the beginning of *On Interpretation*)[42] a *pathêma* of the *psukhê*, will be rooted in *aisthêsis* and may issue in *orexis*, and (in humans at least) may also be subject to the critical analysis of *nous*.

Returning to the "header," as it were, of this discussion in *Nicomachean Ethics* 6.2, we note that Aristotle says that these three things "control action and truth." One form of "action" might well be *kinêsis*, "movement," and another might be *threpsis*, "nourishment," the aim of *to threptikon*. So this schema in the

41 I do not mean to imply here that the relative chronology of the *De Anima* and *Nicomachean Ethics* is known. As with the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, assignment to general periods in Aristotle's life can be made, but I am almost certain that the esoteric treatises were revised, some perhaps repeatedly, and in some cases with cross-reference to one another. There is still some debate about the relative date of the *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics*, partly due to the three books that they share (*EN* 5–7 = *EE* 4–6); on this, and the relative dates of those two treatises, see Kenny (2016). The *De Anima* does seem to come from Aristotle's "second Athenian period," which would make it a work of his late maturity.

42 *On Interpretation* 1, 16a 8. For a more extended analysis of this key passage in *On Interpretation*, in the context of Umberto Eco's *Name of the Rose*, see Kirby (2000) 32–37.

Ethics actually reflects Aristotle's five-part map in the *De Anima* more closely than it might immediately appear to do. It also hints at the way Aristotle appears to understand the connection between cognition and the emotions.

•

All of the foregoing has been in preparation for looking at Aristotle's close-range treatment of the emotions in the *Poetics* and (above all) *Rhetoric*.[43] Indeed, in preparing to understand the *Poetics*, which is often terse, sometimes downright crabbed, and in any case incomplete as we currently have it,[44] we are in some ways best equipped by first examining Aristotle's theory of *pathos* – emotion – as deployed in rhetoric. This is the case not least because the *Poetics* itself is conceived and executed in explicitly rhetorical terms:[45] that is, in Aristotle's view, all the arts – visual, plastic, performing – entail *mimêsis*, "representation" or "imitation"; and *mimêsis* is, for Aristotle, fundamentally rhetorical.[46]

The *Rhetoric* posits that there are three – and only three – *pisteis* ("arguments" or "modes of persuasion") that are *entekhnoi*, "within (the province of) the art" of rhetoric.[47] The argument from *pathos*, i.e. the arousal of emotion in the audience as a mode of persuasion, is one of these; the other two are the

43 The best English translation of the *Rhetoric* is the second (2007) edition of Kennedy (2007). For the *Poetics*, I recommend the translations in Janko (1987) and Halliwell *et al*. (1995) – very different in style and approach, but each superb in its way. The standard Greek editions of the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* are both by Rudolf Kassel ([1965], [1976]). My citations from the Greek of the *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* are from Kassel's editions; English citations from these treatises are taken, or adapted, from the translations of Halliwell and Kennedy respectively.

44 Ancient lists of Aristotle's works indicate that the *Poetics* filled not one but two books, or scrolls; and indeed the extant text itself appears to make reference to a second scroll that has not survived. Attempts to reconstruct the lost second book of the *Poetics* include those by Janko (1984) and Watson (2012). A memorable fictionalization of its rediscovery – in a mediaeval library – is given in Eco (1983).

45 Kirby (1991a).

46 For the purposes of this inquiry I am treating the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* almost as if they were part of the same text. The *Poetics* presents its topic in quintessentially rhetorical terms; both treatises position the emotions centrally in their respective approaches; and each was clearly revised, after composition, in light of the other treatise. It is interesting and perhaps significant that the mediaeval Alexandrian and Arab philosophers classed both the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* as belonging to the Organon, a post-Aristotelian compilation of Aristotle's logical works; cf. Walzer (1934), Moraux (1951), and especially Black (1990). The oldest extant example of this approach appears to be Ammonius' *In Aristotelis Analyticorum priorum liber* I *commentarium* 11.22–38 (circa 500 CE); Ammonius classifies the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* as "asyllogistic logic."

47 An alternative interpretation of the adjective *entekhnos* in this context is "imbued with the art [of rhetoric]." *Pistis* can refer both to the process of persuading and to the resulting state of persuasion.

argument from *êthos*, the (perceived) good character of the speaker as s/he speaks, and the argument from *logos*, the explicit application of logic to the matter at hand (*Rhetoric* 1.2.3–6). In the *Rhetoric* as in the *Poetics*, Aristotle indicates that rhetors and playwrights may rely too much – or in the wrong ways – on the power of emotion; so he attempts to redress the balance (especially in the *Rhetoric*) by underscoring the power of *logos*. And *êthos*, "character," may refer not only to moral traits in a person, but also to the "characters" in a drama. So these three *entekhnoi pisteis*, "entechnic arguments," are three of the strong cords that bind the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric* together.

Although Aristotle is at some pains to treat all three of the *entekhnoi pisteis* equally, there is no disguising his fondness for the argument from *logos*, or logical inference, which may be inductive (the use of example) or deductive (the use of syllogistic, which in rhetorical contexts he calls "enthymeme"). Indeed the discovery and diagnosis of the syllogism was one of his greatest achievements, and he has a good deal to say about it, in the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics*, the *Topics*, and of course the *Rhetoric*. So large does it loom in his entire philosophical system that we may be entitled to partition his taxonomy of the "modes of persuasion" in the *Rhetoric* a bit further still, adding (as he does not) a division between what we may call the "non-rational" and the "rational" types of *entekhnoi pisteis* – *êthos* and *pathos* being, on the one hand, fundamentally rooted in non-rational responses (though those responses may certainly feed into ratiocination about the situation), and *logos*, on the other, being, of course, ratiocination *par excellence* (Figure 2). The point of this distinction, however, is not to suggest that *êthos* and *pathos* are actually *irrational* responses: rather, "non-rational" here is meant to indicate that the ratiocination entailed is not explicit, and perhaps not something of which the audience is conscious, as the rhetor elicits their responses.

Aristotle expresses some dubiety about the ways in which rhetors and playwrights alike depend on the power of *pathos*. In *Rhetoric* 1.2.5, he asserts that the contemporary *tekhnologountes* – the writers of rhetorical handbooks at that time – focus on the arousal of *pathos* to the exclusion of all else. In *Poetics* 6 (1450a 33–34), he asserts that it is the *muthos*, the very plot itself, that is best at "leading the *psukhê*" – eliciting emotional responses from the audience[48] – and yet, he warns, playwrights are all too prone to rely on the power of *opsis*, "vision" or "spectacle," i.e. what we might now call "special effects," to achieve emotional

48 Lucas (1968) 104 AD loc. makes the startling observation that this use of the word *psukhagôgei* is "drawn from necromancy," i.e., it originally referred to the conjuring of spirits. He compares Aeschylus *Persians* 687.

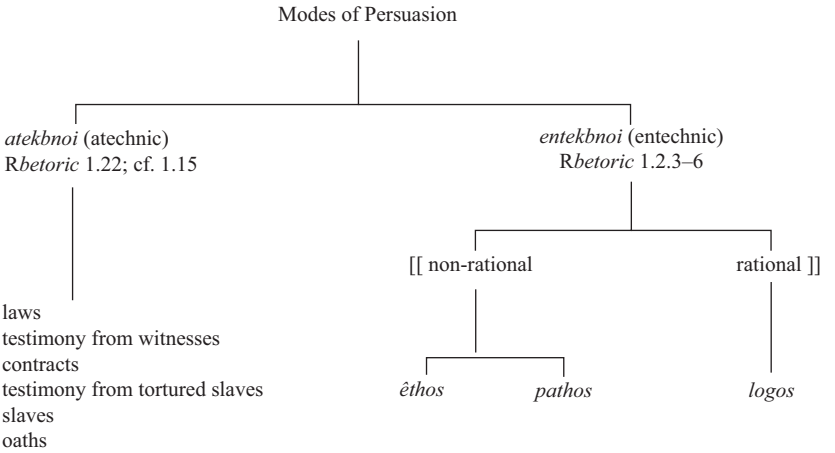

Figure 2: Schematic representation of the modes of persuasion as mapped by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*.

impact. *Opsis*, he admits, is indeed "emotionally powerful" (*psukhagôgikon*, 1450b 16), but, at the same time, *atekhnotaton*, "completely outside (the province of) the art of poetry."[49] He could hardly have deprecated it more emphatically.

All the same, it is not the emotions themselves that Aristotle deprecates in poetics.[50] Rather, he seeks to deflate the contemporary value of *opsis* in poetics, as he also does the contemporary value of *pathos* in rhetoric.

> ἔστιν μὲν οὖν τὸ φοβερὸν καὶ ἐλεεινὸν ἐκ τῆς ὄψεως γίγνεσθαι, ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συστάσεως τῶν πραγμάτων, ὅπερ ἐστὶ πρότερον καὶ ποιητοῦ ἀμείνονος. δεῖ γὰρ καὶ ἄνευ τοῦ ὁρᾶν οὕτω συνεστάναι τὸν μῦθον ὥστε τὸν ἀκούοντα τὰ πράγματα γινόμενα καὶ φρίττειν καὶ ἐλεεῖν ἐκ τῶν συμβαινόντων: ἅπερ ἂν πάθοι τις ἀκούων τὸν τοῦ Οἰδίπου μῦθον. [*Poetics* 14, 1453b 1–7]
>
> So it is possible for what is fearful and piteous to arise from spectacle, but also from the actual structure of events [*sustasis tôn pragmatôn*, another term for *muthos*, "plot"],

49 *Atekhnotaton* is the superlative degree of *atekhnos*, which is of course the binary opposite of *entekhnos*, "entechnic." It is an interesting word to apply here because Aristotle does allow, on one hand, that *opsis* is one of the six qualitative "parts" of tragedy; by that criterion it should *ipso facto* be considered entechnic. Indeed he explicitly marks it as a logically necessary part of the art (*ex anagkês*, *Poetics* 1449b 32–33). But so firm is his commitment to the primacy of plot that he wants to make clear that, by contrast, he esteems the use of *opsis* least of all, at least at the conceptual/compositional level of *mimêsis*.

50 Nor indeed does he deprecate them entirely in rhetoric; he simply wants to redress the balance so that *êthos*, *pathos*, and *logos* are all on an equal footing as sources of persuasion.

> which is more important, and the mark of a superior poet. For the plot should be so structured that, even without seeing it performed, one who hears the events [hears them recounted? read?] both shudders [*scil*. with fear] and feels pity at what happens, as one would feel [*an pathoi tis*] upon hearing the plot of the *Oedipus*.[51]

From Aristotle's approach to the emotions in the *Poetics* it is clear is that he sees them as rhetorically very powerful. But he also wants them to be elicited artistically – entechnically, we might say – and not bought cheaply with special effects. As to the specific emotions available to the playwright, he focuses principally on pity and fear, as we see in the celebrated definition of tragedy in Chapter 6:

> ἔστιν οὖν τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας [25] καὶ τελείας μέγεθος ἐχούσης, ἡδυσμένῳ λόγῳ χωρὶς ἑκάστῳ τῶν εἰδῶν ἐν τοῖς μορίοις, δρώντων καὶ οὐ δι᾽ ἀπαγγελίας, δι᾽ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν. [*Poetics* 6, 1449b 24–28]

> A tragedy, then, is the *mimêsis* of an action[52] that is serious,[53] complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished [lit. "sweetened" or "seasoned"] by distinct types in its various parts;[54] a *mimêsis* of people performing actions [*drôntôn*] rather than through narrative;[55] accomplishing, by means of pity and fear, the *katharsis*[56] of such[57] emotions.

51 Presumably the *Oedipus the King* of Sophocles, one of Aristotle's favorite plays. But many other Attic playwrights, including Aeschylus and Euripides, composed tragedies on the Oedipus legend.

52 *Praxis* ("action") here is synecdochic – or collective – for the whole plot, which is of course a series of actions.

53 *Spoudaias*, i.e. "noble" or "serious." Aristotle says that the tragic character should be *spoudaios* (hence our term "tragic hero"; by extension, the action of a *spoudaios* is also *spoudaia*. Cf., by contrast, the term *phaulos* in the definition of comedy (below).

54 A good example of what I mean by "crabbed" prose. The language is so dense, indeed so opaque, that I infer that this passage (at least) was cobbled together from hurried notes taken by one of Aristotle's students, not composed by Aristotle himself. Or if he did compose them, these must have been heavily condensed notes from which to lecture, and intended for a later polishing that they never received.

Following Lucas (1968) 97 *ad loc*., I take Aristotle to mean here that different types of "sweetening" are added to the language, as appropriate, in the various parts of the script: rhythm in the spoken dialogue; rhythm and music in the sung portions.

55 This is a direct riposte to Plato's Socrates in the *Republic*, who proposed to ban *mimêsis* entirely from the ideal state, allowing only pure narrative (*diêgêsis*) in its place.

56 The topic of *katharsis* must be one of the bloodiest battlegrounds in all of classical philology. The bibliography is vast. For the moment, I will only say that the major contenders in the battle for translation are "purification," "purgation," and "clarification." (I am setting to one side the explosive assertion in Scott [2018] that the mention of *katharsis* in the *Poetics* is not even authentically Aristotelian.)

57 The word for "of such," *toioutôn*, is sometimes taken as tantamount to *toutôn*, "of these," i.e. pity and fear specifically. The problem is "much-discussed"; Lucas (1968) 98 *ad loc*., has a lengthy explanation. Just how widely is Aristotle casting his nets here?

An analogous (if less complete) definition of comedy, similarly entailing the arousal of emotions, has already been given in Chapter 5 of the *Poetics*:

> ἡ δὲ κωμῳδία ἐστὶν ὥσπερ εἴπομεν μίμησις φαυλοτέρων μέν, οὐ μέντοι κατὰ πᾶσαν κακίαν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ ἐστι τὸ γελοῖον μόριον. τὸ γὰρ γελοῖόν ἐστιν ἁμάρτημά τι καὶ αἶσχος ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν, οἷον εὐθὺς τὸ γελοῖον πρόσωπον αἰσχρόν τι καὶ διεστραμμένον ἄνευ ὀδύνης. [*Poetics* 5, 1449a 31–37]

> Comedy, as we said,[58] is the *mimêsis* of baser[59] but not wholly evil characters; rather, the laughable [*to geloion*] is only one aspect of the shameful [*to aiskhron*].[60] For the laughable may be defined as a mistake[61] or occasion of shame [*aiskhos*][62] that not painful or destructive: the laughable [i.e. comedic] mask, for example, is something ugly and grotesque,[63] but not painful.

Here as in the definition of tragedy, the focus is on the emotional response of the audience, specifically that of laughter.[64] Like the tragic hero (*Poetics* 13, 1453a 9–10), the typical comic character makes a mistake (*hamartêma*), but its results,

58 I.e. at *Poetics* 1448a 17–18, 1448b 26.

59 *Phauloterôn*, "inferior, common, paltry, contemptible"; in characteristic binary antithesis, the comic figure is *phaulos*, as the tragic hero is *spoudaios* (noble).

60 The semantic field of *to aiskhron* includes both "ugly" and "shameful," and those values are hardly to be pried apart in a context such as this. As such, *to aiskhron* is the binary antithesis of *to kalon*, the "beautiful/good." These are ordinary classical Greek aesthetic/moral-value terms, but we find them highlighted particularly in texts such as Plato's *Phaedrus*, where Plato's Socrates opines – hopes, we might say – that the moral goodness of a person will be evinced by his physical beauty.

61 Aristotle's term here for "mistake" is *hamartêma*, a close relative of the famous *hamartia* found in *Poetics* 13, 1453a 9–10. In neither case is this a "flaw" of character, as was once sometimes thought; these are actually *errors* concerning the facts of the matter – and very often errors of personal identity – which issue in either tragic or comic consequences, according to the kind of play in which they occur.

62 The noun *aiskhos* is a close relative of *to aiskhron*. Hence Halliwell (1995) 45 translates it as "mark of shame"; Bywater (1909) 15 has "deformity"; Janko (1984) 6, "ugliness."

63 *Diestrammenon*, lit. "twisted."

64 Note my phrase "emotional *response*," which is carefully chosen. Janko (1987) 79 AD loc. goes so far as to assert that laughter is itself an emotion: "Laughter is in fact the emotion at which comedy aims, like pity and terror in tragedy." Cf. Janko (1984) 143–144. (Some might object on the grounds that laughter is a *praxis*, not a *pathos*; but all can presumably agree that laughter is the response to a felt emotion.) We could perhaps be completely certain if we had the now-lost second book of the *Poetics*, which (it seems) treated comedy at greater length (cf. *Poetics* 1449b 21–22; *Rhetoric* 1419b 5–6; Janko [1987] 54 boldly attempts a reconstruction of the relevant passage in *Poetics* book 2). It may be that we should distinguish strongly between *ho gelôs*, scil. laughter *proprement dit*, and *to geloion*, that which prompts laughter. But the latter is presumably still an external stimulus, not a *pathos* of the *psukhê*.

while they are an *aiskhos* – an occasion of shame – do not result in pain or destruction: hence the audience may take delight in the *mimêsis*, and laugh at the comic character's foibles.

A 20th-century analogue/example that well illustrates this is the character of Wile E. Coyote in the Looney Tunes "Road Runner" cartoons: he is hurled off cliffs, crushed by giant boulders, caught in TNT explosions – he is humiliated (*aiskhos* !) in every conceivable way – but the results are not (permanently) painful or destructive to him. His escapades are mock-catastrophic, rather than genuinely disastrous, and so the audience feels delight rather than pity or fear.[65]

Whether the audience's experience of a comedic performance results in some sort of *katharsis* – and if so, how – we are not explicitly told in the extant torso of the *Poetics*. Would Aristotle say that certain emotions, or types of emotion, are involved in the experience of comic *katharsis*, as are pity and fear in the case of tragic *katharsis*?[66] It seems reasonable to think so. In any case, we typically view a comedy in order to be made to laugh. What is the best name for the emotion that prompts laughter as a response?

What we have yet to consider is the fact that emotions are occurring on (at least) two levels in a dramatic performance: not only in the audience, which is the principal concern of the texts we have cited so far from Plato and Aristotle, but also in the *dramatis personae* on the stage. The thoughtful playwright needs to be mindful of these as well, and to portray them skillfully in the script. As they are an integral aspect of one's own *psukhê*, so too they will be integral dimensions of the creation of the characters in the drama. They must be realistic, and (presuming no derangement of personality) they must also be appropriate to the situations in which the characters find themselves in the play. Aristotle does not discuss this challenge in the *Poetics*, but we may infer it on analogy with his insightful comments on thought in *Poetics* 19.[67]

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Aristotle devotes a substantial portion of the second book of the *Rhetoric* to a catalogue and examination of the emotions a rhetor might seek to arouse. He is not, as we have already seen, a slave to binary taxonomy, but binarism was of

65 Examples of the hapless coyote's adventures may be viewed online, e.g. at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aewj-0wcMIo (seen 11.29.2021).

66 On comic *katharsis* see e.g. Janko (1984), Golden (1987) and (1992), Sutton (1994), Kitano (2001). One's ideas about this will of course depend *in primis* from one's understanding of what Aristotle meant by the term *katharsis* itself – a mare's nest we cannot enter here.

67 On this topic see Kirby (1995).

course – then as now – a pervasive way of mentally organizing reality,[68] so a good deal of his treatment of the emotions is presented in antithetical dyads. The material in *Rhetoric* 2 on the emotions is laid out as follows:

2.1: Importance of the topic; a definition of emotions
2.2-3: [a] Definition of the emotions; [b] ὀργή *orgê* "anger" and πραότης *praotês* "calmness/gentleness"
2.4: φιλία *philia* "love/friendship" and ἔχθρα *ekhthra* "hatred/enmity"
2.5: φόβος *phobos* "fear" and θάρσος *tharsos* "confidence/courage"
2.6: αἰσχύνη *aiskhunê* "shame" and ἀναισχυντία *anaiskhuntia* "shamelessness"
2.7: χάρις *kharis* "gratitude"[69] and ἀχαριστία *akharistia* "unkindness/ingratitude"
2.8-9: ἔλεος *eleos* "pity" and τὸ νεμεσᾶν *to nemesan* "indignation"
2.10-11: φθόνος *phthonos* "envy" and ζῆλος *zêlos* "emulation"

This is an interesting list in a number of ways, not least because he cannot have imagined it to be exhaustive. George Kennedy surmises that the discussion here may have been inserted into *Rhetoric* 2 from some other (not explicitly rhetorical) context,[70] perhaps at a later stage of revision, and that does seem possible. Some of the material – for example, that on shamelessness – is, as Kennedy notes, not particularly suited to the needs of an Athenian civic orator. But (as Kennedy does not mention) such material *would* be extremely useful to a tragic or comic playwright, which again points up my connection between the *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*. We should consider the possibility, if only in a highly conjectural spirit, that the original context for this material on the emotions was the now-lost second book of the *Poetics* – and, if so, that the reason for the apparent incompleteness of the list here might be that this represents only a portion of the treatment in *Poetics* 2, and/or that Aristotle himself inserted this selection here from some version of *Poetics* 2. (That he is keeping comic poets in mind is shown explicitly in *Rhetoric* 2.6, 1384b 10.) But John Cooper sees the basis (no more) laid here for a more thoroughgoing investigation, perhaps a comprehensive theory, of the emotions: "Having done the work on the selected emotions dealt with in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle had achieved certain systematic insights that he could have used as the

68 On this fascinating topic, see Lloyd (1966). Aristotle's own approach to our mental/linguistic organization of reality is set forth in the *Categories*, where again some binary thinking is at play. On the *Categories* of Aristotle, see e.g. Ackrill [1975].
69 Here I follow the treatment in Konstan (2006a) 156–168, which corrects the chronic misperception that χάρις here refers to "kindness," "benevolence," or the like. As he notes there: "The *pathê* in Aristotle are typically *responses* to the behaviour of others" (163, emphasis added).
70 Kennedy (2007) 113–114.

basis for a positive philosophical theory of the nature of emotions. But he never got around to doing that; at least as far as we know, he did not."[71]

Aristotle's approach here, if not comprehensive, is nonetheless "philosophical" in something like his usual fashion: for each emotion he "considers the reason for it, the state of mind of the person who feels it, and those toward whom it is directed . . . This division of the subject has some resemblance to his theory of "four causes" as seen in *Physics* 2.3."[72] So, despite its evident practical applicability – in rhetoric as in poetics – this material should not be seen solely as part of a "handbook for rhetors (or playwrights)." Here as always, Aristotle is most interested in the *ti ên einai* of each emotion, and of emotion in general. Too, the symbiosis of rhetoric and poetics is pervasive.

In *Rhetoric* 2.1.8 we encounter a definition of the emotions that may at first look rather different from what we have seen so far:

> ἔστι δὲ τὰ πάθη δι' ὅσα μεταβάλλοντες διαφέρουσι πρὸς τὰς κρίσεις οἷς ἕπεται λύπη καὶ ἡδονή, οἷον ὀργὴ ἔλεος φόβος καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα, καὶ τὰ τούτοις ἐναντία.
>
> The emotions [*pathê*] are those things through which, by undergoing change, people come to differ in their judgments and which are accompanied by pain and pleasure, for example, anger, pity, fear, and other such things and their opposites.

The reference to pain and pleasure seems a legacy from Plato's *Philebus*,[73] as we saw, though the reverse may actually be the case if the *Philebus* was composed later than this portion of the *Rhetoric*. In any case the concept of pleasure, particularly as associated with artistic performance, had probably been a matter of discussion in the Academy for some time, so it is probably safe to assume that the topic had come up during Aristotle's time there.[74]

The primacy of change (*metabolê*) here reminds us of Aristotle's reference to "alteration" (*alloiôsis*) in his discussion of perception (*aisthêsis*) in *De Anima* 2.5, which involves being "moved" (*tôi kineisthai*) in some way. Indeed, insofar as this is the case, *aisthêsis* is precisely a species of *pathos*. Now just as the goal of rhetoric is persuasion, so the goal of poetics might be said to be *katharsis*; and the emotional experiences (*pathê*) entailed in the viewing of a tragedy, we are told in

71 Cooper (1996) 239.

72 Kennedy (2007) 114.

73 See Frede (1992) and (1994) for a full development of this idea. The compositional date of the *Philebus* is not uncontroversial; see Frede (1992) 458 n. 8 for discussion. But most scholars regard it as a late dialogue. Might the *Philebus* have been composed *after* Plato had read Aristotle's *Poetics* or *Rhetoric*?.

74 Aristotle's sojourn in the Academy was not just the equivalent of a BA or even a PhD: he spent twenty years working side by side with Plato, as noted by Guthrie (1990) 6.

Poetics 6, conduce in some fashion to that end. The stirring of the *pathê* may be called a type of *kinêsis*, as in Sophocles *Trachiniae* 974–975, Σίγα, τέκνον, μὴ κινήσῃς | ἀγρίαν ὀδύνην πατρὸς ὠμόφρονος ("Be quiet, son, lest you stir | the fierce pain/suffering [*ôdunên*] of your savage-minded father [the raving Heracles]"). This example is a negative one – Hyllos is being warned *not* to arouse his father's suffering – but clearly one of the regular functions of rhetoric, whether in civic discourse or in dramatic *mimêsis*, is to arouse the emotions and thereby to "move" the audience to a desired form of change.

Another important aspect of this definition is that it specifies a change of *judgment* (*krisis*), a mental activity that we associate much more with cognitive than with affective mental activity. The word *krisis* is most commonly associated with legal decisions, which (in theory at least) are to be reached without the influence of emotion. But here yet again we observe the operation of ratiocinative cognition in Aristotle's understanding of the emotions.

That the philosophical conversation was already construed according to the binary antithesis of pain and pleasure makes it all the easier for Aristotle to refer to various emotions "and their opposites": the dyad itself suggests a dyadic structure for his analysis of the emotions. And we do in fact find in *Rhetoric* 2. 2–11 that he constructs his representative list along those lines. Moreover, given the close affinity of the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics*, it is not surprising to find that pity and fear are two of the three emotions mentioned in this definition.

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Aesthetic pleasure is regarded by Aristotle, as we see in Chapter 4 of the *Poetics*, as natural (and indeed peculiar) to humans. And as what is natural is *re ipsa* good, the pleasure we take in *mimêsis* must itself be good. The passage is so central to this discussion – to any discussion of Aristotle's theory of *mimêsis* – that it is worth citing *in extenso*:

> ἐοίκασι δὲ γεννῆσαι μὲν ὅλως τὴν ποιητικὴν αἰτίαι δύο τινὲς καὶ αὗται φυσικαί. τό τε γὰρ μιμεῖσθαι σύμφυτον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ παίδων ἐστὶ καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρουσι τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ὅτι μιμητικώτατόν ἐστι καὶ τὰς μαθήσεις ποιεῖται διὰ μιμήσεως τὰς πρώτας, καὶ τὸ χαίρειν τοῖς μιμήμασι πάντας. σημεῖον δὲ τούτου τὸ συμβαῖνον ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων: ἃ γὰρ αὐτὰ λυπηρῶς ὁρῶμεν, τούτων τὰς εἰκόνας τὰς μάλιστα ἠκριβωμένας χαίρομεν θεωροῦντες, οἷον θηρίων τε μορφὰς τῶν ἀτιμοτάτων καὶ νεκρῶν. αἴτιον δὲ καὶ τούτου, ὅτι μανθάνειν οὐ μόνον τοῖς φιλοσόφοις ἥδιστον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁμοίως, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ βραχὺ κοινωνοῦσιν αὐτοῦ. διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο χαίρουσι τὰς εἰκόνας ὁρῶντες, ὅτι συμβαίνει θεωροῦντας μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι τί ἕκαστον, οἷον ὅτι οὗτος ἐκεῖνος: ἐπεὶ ἐὰν μὴ τύχῃ προεωρακώς, οὐχ ᾗ μίμημα ποιήσει τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἀπεργασίαν ἢ τὴν χροιὰν ἢ διὰ τοιαύτην τινὰ ἄλλην αἰτίαν.

> It can be seen that poetry was broadly engendered by a pair of causes, both natural. For it is an instinct of human beings, from childhood, to engage in mimesis (indeed, this distinguishes them from other animals: the human being is the most mimetic of all, and it is through mimesis that s/he develops h/er earliest understanding): and equally natural that everyone enjoys mimetic objects. A common occurrence indicates this: we enjoy contemplating the most precise images of things whose actual sight is painful to us, such as the forms of the vilest animals and of corpses. The explanation of this too is that understanding gives great pleasure not only to philosophers but likewise to others too, though the latter have a smaller share in it. This is why people enjoy looking at images, because through contemplating them it comes about that they understand and infer what each element means, for instance that "this person is so-and-so." For, if one happens not to have seen the subject before, the image will not give pleasure *qua* mimesis but because of its execution or color, or for some other such reason. [*Poetics* 4, 1448b 4–19]

The particular pleasure he is talking about in the famous οὗτος ἐκεῖνος example, i.e. "this person is so-and-so," is what comes from successful mental activity in the realm of semiosis: the "aha" moment that comes when we make the connection between (as C. S. Peirce might say) a sign and its object. Meanwhile, the distancing afforded to us by the very phenomenon of *mimêsis*, Aristotle appears to be saying, is what allows us to take pleasure in things that would otherwise bring pain in such instances. A famous example that instantly springs to mind is the painting by Albrecht Dürer of a stag beetle, now in the Getty Museum (Figure 3). The Getty Center's notes on the painting include the following: "Singling out a beetle as the focal point of a work of art was unprecedented in 1505, when most of Dürer's contemporaries believed that insects were the lowest of creatures."[75]

But, as we saw in *Poetics* 14, Aristotle also acknowledges the pleasure of the sheer *frisson* that comes from watching an effective tragedy – or even from hearing its plot recounted.

> δεῖ γὰρ καὶ ἄνευ τοῦ ὁρᾶν οὕτω συνεστάναι τὸν μῦθον ὥστε τὸν ἀκούοντα τὰ πράγματα γινόμενα καὶ φρίττειν καὶ ἐλεεῖν ἐκ τῶν συμβαινόντων: ἅπερ ἂν πάθοι τις ἀκούων τὸν τοῦ Οἰδίπου μῦθον.
>
> For the plot should be so structured that, even without seeing it performed, one hearing the events both shudders [*scil.* with fear] and feels pity at what happens, as one would feel [*an pathoi tis*] upon hearing the plot of the *Oedipus*. [*Poetics* 14, 1453b 3–7]

The latter is a somewhat different pleasure than one derives from the cognitive, quasi-puzzle-solving activity entailed in the "aha" moment. Both, however, are

75 www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/25/albrecht-durer-stag-beetle-german-1505/ (seen 11.29.2021).

Figure 3: Albrecht Dürer, Hirschkäfer. Water-color and gouache. 14.1 x 11.4 cm. (Source: Getty Center Open Content Program).

forms of pleasure associated with *mimêsis*; and in both cases pleasure is derived from cognitive intake.

It may not be coincidental that both instances involve an aspect of recognition. In the passage from *Poetics* 4, it is the (re)cognition itself – that Peircean connection of sign with object – that is the source of pleasure. *Houtos ekeinos!*, we exclaim. This is a picture of Wile E. Coyote! In the case of Oedipus, the very mounting layers of horror that accumulate, as the pieces fall into place, are what enrich our emotional experience in the tragedy. We know, perhaps even before we enter the theater, that Oedipus has killed his father and bedded his mother. The combined calamity of parricide and incest may provoke shivers of fear and pity (and revulsion) well before the play reaches the point where Oedipus himself discovers what he has done. But the moment of recognition (ἀναγνώρισις *anagnôrisis*) is also the very moment of his his peripety or reversal of fortune (περιπέτεια *peripeteia*) – and that simultaneity is what makes Aristotle esteem the play so highly:

> ἔστι δὲ περιπέτεια μὲν ἡ εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον τῶν πραττομένων μεταβολὴ καθάπερ εἴρηται, καὶ τοῦτο δὲ ὥσπερ λέγομεν κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ ἀναγκαῖον, οἷον ἐν τῷ Οἰδιποδι ἐλθὼν ὡς εὐφρανῶν τὸν Οἰδίπουν καὶ ἀπαλλάξων τοῦ πρὸς τὴν μητέρα φόβου, δηλώσας ὃς ἦν, τοὐναντίον ἐποίησεν [. . .] ἀναγνώρισις δέ, ὥσπερ καὶ τοὔνομα σημαίνει, ἐξ ἀγνοίας εἰς γνῶσιν μεταβολή, ἢ εἰς φιλίαν ἢ εἰς ἔχθραν, τῶν πρὸς εὐτυχίαν ἢ δυστυχίαν ὡρισμένων: καλλίστη δὲ ἀναγνώρισις, ὅταν ἅμα περιπετείᾳ γένηται, οἷον ἔχει ἡ ἐν τῷ Οἰδίποδι.
>
> Peripety [περιπέτεια] is a change to the opposite direction of events, as already stated,[76] and in accordance, as we insist, with probability or necessity: as when in the *Oedipus* the person who comes to bring Oedipus happiness, and intends to rid him of his fear about his mother, causes the opposite by revealing Oedipus's true identity[77] [. . .] Recognition [ἀναγνώρισις], as the very name indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, leading to friendship or enmity, and involving matters that bear on prosperity or adversity. The finest recognition is that which occurs simultaneously with peripety, as with the one in the *Oedipus*. [*Poetics* 11, 1452a 22–33]

Note that the moment of recognition-and-peripety is one of extreme emotional upheaval for Oedipus himself: "the person [a messenger from Corinth] who comes to bring Oedipus happiness, and intends to rid him of his fear about his mother, causes the opposite." And the audience, in whom the tension and anticipation have been building toward this moment, feel both renewed horror and perhaps their own "aha" of aesthetic satisfaction as the puzzle pieces finally fall into place on stage.

Pity and fear, as we have noted, are highlighted in Aristotle's *Poetics* 6 definition of tragedy. This is not without cause, as we see from his definitions of the two emotions in the *Rhetoric*:

> ἔστω δὴ ὁ φόβος λύπη τις ἢ ταραχὴ ἐκ φαντασίας μέλλοντος κακοῦ φθαρτικοῦ ἢ λυπηροῦ: οὐ γὰρ πάντα τὰ κακὰ φοβοῦνται, οἷον εἰ ἔσται ἄδικος ἢ βραδύς, ἀλλ᾽ ὅσα λύπας μεγάλας ἢ φθορὰς δύναται, καὶ ταῦτα ἐὰν μὴ πόρρω ἀλλὰ σύνεγγυς φαίνηται ὥστε μέλλειν. τὰ γὰρ πόρρω σφόδρα οὐ φοβοῦνται: ἴσασι γὰρ πάντες ὅτι ἀποθανοῦνται, ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι οὐκ ἐγγύς, οὐδὲν φροντίζουσιν.
>
> Let fear [*phobos*] be [defined as] a sort of pain and agitation derived from the imagination of a future destructive or painful evil. For not all evils are to be feared; for example, [a person does not fear] that he will become unjust or slow-witted but [only] what has the potential for great pains or destruction, and these [only] if they do not appear far off but near, so that they are about to happen; for what is far off is not feared; all know that they will die, but because that is not near at hand, they take no thought of it. [*Rhetoric* 2.5.1]
>
> ἔστω δὴ ἔλεος λύπη τις ἐπὶ φαινομένῳ κακῷ φθαρτικῷ ἢ λυπηρῷ τοῦ ἀναξίου τυγχάνειν, ὃ κἂν αὐτὸς προσδοκήσειεν ἂν παθεῖν ἢ τῶν αὐτοῦ τινα, καὶ τοῦτο ὅταν πλησίον φαίνηται:

76 Referring perhaps to *Poetics* 1452a 4.

77 See Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*, 924–1085, for this disastrous conversation.

δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι ἀνάγκη τὸν μέλλοντα ἐλεήσειν ὑπάρχειν τοιοῦτον οἷον οἴεσθαι παθεῖν ἄν τι κακὸν ἢ αὐτὸν ἢ τῶν αὐτοῦ τινα, καὶ τοιοῦτο κακὸν οἷον εἴρηται ἐν τῷ ὅρῳ ἢ ὅμοιον ἢ παραπλήσιον: διὸ οὔτε οἱ παντελῶς ἀπολωλότες ἐλεοῦσιν (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἂν ἔτι παθεῖν οἴονται: πεπόνθασι γάρ), οὔτε οἱ ὑπερευδαιμονεῖν οἰόμενοι, ἀλλ᾽ ὑβρίζουσιν: εἰ γὰρ ἅπαντα οἴονται ὑπάρχειν τἀγαθά, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ τὸ μὴ ἐνδέχεσθαι παθεῖν μηδὲν κακόν: καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο τῶν ἀγαθῶν.

Let pity [*eleos*] be [defined as] a certain pain at an apparently destructive or painful event happening to one who does not deserve it, and which a person might expect himself or one of his own to suffer, and this when it seems close at hand; for it is clear that a person who is going to feel pity necessarily thinks that some evil is actually present of the sort that he or one of his own might suffer, and that this evil is of the sort mentioned in the definition or like it or about equal to it. Thus, those who are utterly ruined do not feel pity (they think there is nothing left for them to suffer; for they *have suffered*) nor [do] those thinking themselves enormously happy [feel pity]; they demonstrate insolent pride [*hubris*] instead. (If they think all good things are actually present, clearly they also think it is not possible to experience any evil; for this [impossibility of suffering] is one of the good things.) [*Rhetoric* 2.8.2–3]

The two emotions, that is, are intimately related in that they are both painful feelings regarding imminent destruction or pain; and though fear is self-oriented and pity is other-oriented, yet both are felt (in some way) with reference to some pain or destruction befalling *oneself*. The cognitive connections that occur as one watches a tragedy may happen so instantaneously that one is not aware of the mental process, but such connections of course involve [a] a perceptual intake (*aisthêsis*) of the dreadful events befalling the tragic character, [b] an assessment of their destructive and painful nature, and [c] by transitivity, some sort of calculation of how destructive and painful they would be were they to befall oneself.

Interesting, then, that Aristotle does not pair fear with pity in his list, but with courage/confidence (*tharsos*, present here in its adjectival/substantive and verbal forms, *to tharraleon* and *tharreô*). That is to say, the binarism that structures this list is again principally antithetical. (The basic structuring antithesis here is not "self/other," but rather, "positive/negative" or "presence/absence.") But he also does not hesitate, in the *Poetics*, to cherry-pick the two from this list that are most germane to the aesthetic experience of tragedy.

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An important aspect of Attic drama – and one easily effaced in modern discussions of it – is that such plays were fundamentally *religious* events. That is, to the end of the fifth century BCE, tragedy, comedy, and satyr-play were composed specifically for performance at major religious festivals, above all the

City Dionysia and the Lenaia.[78] The very civic geography of Athens, as well as the ceremonial events entailed in these festivals, would have constantly underscored the religious context for its citizens: the Theater of Dionysus was (and is) nestled against the southeast face of the Acropolis, and directly behind it was a shrine to Dionysus, in which the god's cult-statue (normally housed at Eleusis, some 14 miles away) would be lodged during the festival (Figure 4).

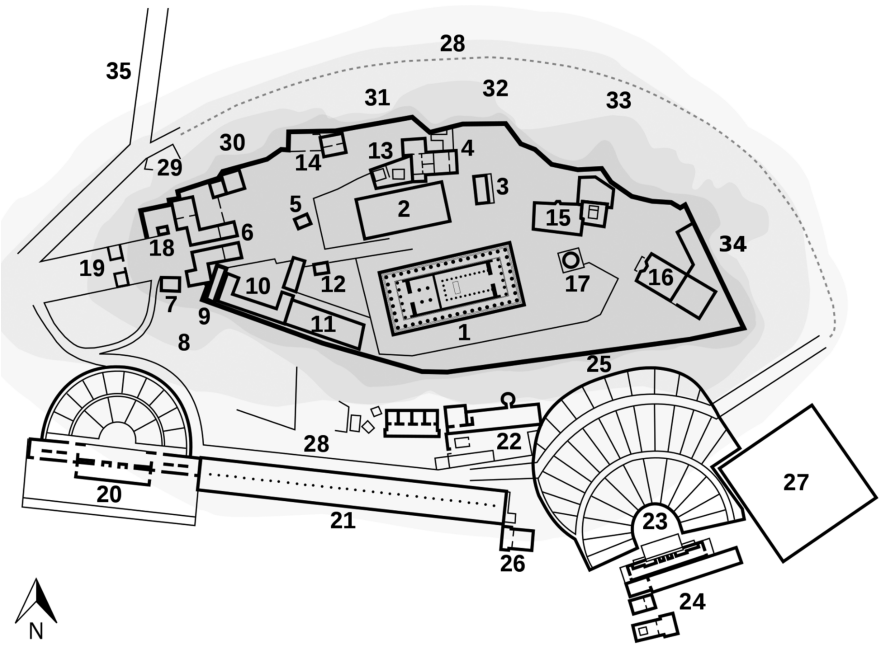

Figure 4: The Akropolis district of ancient Athens, showing the Theater of Dionysus (no. 23) nestled against the southeast slope of the hill, with the *temenos* (sacred precinct) of Dionysus (no. 24) adjacent. Credit: Tomisti, Site plan of the Acropolis of Athens (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plan_Acropolis_of_Athens.svg, CC BY-SA 4.0).

Aristotle, writing in the mid-fourth century BCE – decades after the death of Euripides, the youngest of the great Attic playwrights of the fifth century – devotes

78 Much continues to be written on this enormous topic, though it is widely ignored in more purely aesthetic considerations of Attic drama. Two older books that are foundational for any study of the history and nature of this phenomenon are those of Pickard-Cambridge (1962) and Pickard-Cambridge (1968). For more recent work on the subject, one should also have a look at Csapo/Miller (2007) and its bibliography.

very little text to the religious associations of drama. He is, however, acutely aware of them: in Chapter 4 of the *Poetics* he traces the origins of tragedy and comedy from the διθύραμβος *dithurambos* and φαλλικά *phallika* respectively. These were ritual performances in honor of Dionysus: the *dithurambos* or dithyramb was a hymn accompanied by ecstatic dancing;[79] the song was performed by a chorus of boys or men numbering as many as fifty, and apparently accompanied by the *aulos* (a reed woodwind instrument, whether with one or two pipes). The *phallika* were processions in which the representation of a large phallus, probably made of wood or clay, was carried upright; the procession seems to have involved dance,[80] and was accompanied (or followed) by risqué or ribald songs – themselves also known as *phallika* – and a sacrificial offering.[81]

Based on the relevant extant literary and archaeological materials, we can speculate (but hardly more than that) upon the specific procedures of the rituals. What we can do, if Aristotle is correct, is to understand Attic drama as a radically new genre pioneered by the composers of *dithuramboi* and *phallika*.[82] Such songs may have originated (in the deeps of time) as solo performances, principally narrative in format, to which a dance element was at some point added; but it is also possible that they *began* as *mimêsis*, perhaps specifically as mime; that other participants were at some point added to form a *khoros* or group of dancers; and that at some point, too, the dance (whether solo or choral) was then *accompanied* by song as well as instrumental music. In any case, Aristotle's (very compressed) account of the origin of drama suggests that it was a radically new invention, which at some point (early or late) incorporated all these elements: dance, song, and (above all) mimetic representation.[83]

The idea of religious ritual as closely imbricated with entertainment may seem outlandish to modern Westerners, who are mostly accustomed to thinking of those categories as distinct (or indeed mutually exclusive). But in ancient times their substantial relationship was readily accepted – and not just by the

79 On the etymology of *dithurambos*, see Versnel (1970) 16–38 (where he is careful to distinguish between the *sung* and *danced* elements of the genre). On the dithyramb generally, see Pickard-Cambridge (1962), especially Chapter 1; Zimmermann (1992), Ieranò (1997), Kowalzig/Wilson (2013).

80 *Phallika* are specifically designated by Pollux of Naucratis in his *Onomasticon* (4.100) as *danced* songs.

81 For more on *phallika*, see e.g. Pickard-Cambridge (1962), especially Chapters 2.12, 3.1, and Appendix B; and Bierl (2009), especially Chapter 2.

82 Kirby (2012) 414–415.

83 For a hypothetical reconstruction (in six stages) of this development of drama in ancient Greece, see Kirby (2012) 416–418. That reconstruction proceeds from the assumption that *diêgesis* as an artistic urge came prior to *mimêsis* – an assumption that may be worth rethinking.

Greeks, as we shall see. That relationship has some far-reaching implications for how the ancients understood the emotions as experienced, not only individually or in private, but also in public – or even what we would call civic – contexts. The aesthetic experience of such dramatic performances was clearly acknowledged to elicit emotional responses; and such responses were not incidental or accidental to the ritual contexts in which they occurred. On the contrary: those contexts conditioned both the experience and the analysis of such emotions. There is evidence for this, not just in the ancient Greek philosophical texts, but also in those (from roughly comparable periods) both in Sanskrit and in Chinese. It is to the Sanskrit literature that we now turn.

2 The नाट्य शास्त्र *Nātyaśāstra* or "Treatise On Drama"

One of the many astonishing anomalies of the so-called "Western" heritage is that the vast, ancient, and rich literary legacies of South Asia are, for the most part, as foreign to most "Westerners" as those of, say, Africa or East Asia. The so-called "Western" languages are for the most part Indo-European in origin, i.e. descended from a putative Proto-Indo-European (PIE) language spoken several thousand years ago,[84] which more than suggests a common ancestry and, however shrouded in the mists of antiquity, a shared set of cultural norms. And yet how many learned humanists in the West today can summarize the plot of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*,[85] arguably the greatest literary achievement in human history?[86]

84 One must be extraordinarily circumspect on the questions of where PIE originated and when its speakers flourished. Experts disagree in the most strenuous (sometimes acrimonious, even hostile) terms. On the topics, see (among many others) Mallory (1989); Fortson (2010); Anthony (2007). A good general reference work is Mallory/Adams (1997).

85 The converse has not always been true: Dio Chrysostom (53.6) reports that "it is said that Homer's poetry is sung even in India, where they have translated it into their own speech and tongue" (cited in Vasunia [2013] 239). Plotinus appears to have had a longstanding interest in Indian philosophy (Porphyry *De uita Plotini* 3), and many have discerned substantial Indic influence upon the metaphysics of Plotinus; see e.g. Staal (1961), Vasudevacharya (2017).

86 So great, indeed, is the achievement that legend attributes the writing-down of the *Mahābhārata* to the divine agency of the god Gaṇeśa. Its actual length is difficult to calculate, as there is no single "authoritative" version of the text. But some estimates put it at about 1.8 million words, composed in over 100,000 metrical couplets (*ślokas*) – about eight times the length of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combined. (The critical edition published by the Bhandarkar

The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is doubtless far less well-known than the *Mahābhārata* or the *Rāmāyaṇa*, even to the average person born in the Indian subcontinent.[87] For one thing, it is a treatise, not (primarily) a narrative work: शास्त्र *śāstra* can mean "precept," "advice," or "theory," as well as a "treatise" or a manual of instruction. But like certain other *śāstra*s, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is revered as of divine and not ordinary human origin. To think about this as an ancient Indian[88] might have done, we must begin with an understanding of श्रुति *śruti* and स्मृति *smṛti* as religious/philosophical categories. *Śruti* (literally "[something] heard") refers to the most sacred and revered documents, such as the four Vedas;[89] they were held not to have been composed by human writers, but rather "heard" by the ancient ऋषि *ṛṣi*s or "prophetic sages" who, hearing their divine eternal reverberation through the cosmos, wrote them down: and wrote them down, moreover, in *Sanskrit*. This only begins to give us a sense of the sacredness, both of the स्पन्द *spanda* (vibration) of primordial sound in ancient India, and of Sanskrit in particular as the most perfect and eternal instantiation of that sound. Indeed, for this

Oriental Research Institute in Pune – regarded as standard, if not absolutely definitive – comprises about 89,000 *śloka*s.)

For a recent complete, unabridged English translation of the *Mahābhārata*, see Debroy (2015). For an elegant rendition (condensed to about 1/12 the length of the original), in lucent English verse, see Satyamurti 2016. An even more compressed summary, with useful accompanying materials, is that of Narasimhan (1965).

87 That said, it was extensively studied, in the centuries following the stabilization of the text, by various schools (both *āstika* and *nāstika*) of Hindu philosophy, as fundamental to the project of theorizing the self. Modern scholars are recuperating these treatments and further advancing their assessments; see e.g. Lynch (1990), Ganeri (2012), Shulman (2012), Bilimoria/Wenta (2015) (especially Torella [2015]), Chakrabarti (2016), Adamson and Ganeri (2020).

For more on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and its cultural context, see e.g. Gupt (1994) and (2016), Rangacharya (1998), Vatsyayan (2007), Kanjilal (2012).

88 As with the ancient Greeks, it is difficult to find a simple way to refer to the ancient Indians as a people without reference to the modern nation-state. There were anciently many "kingdoms" in the subcontinent, just as not all the nations there today are identical to the corresponding modern Republic of India. Thus the term "an ancient Indian" is in a way nonsensical. But the Sanskrit language is related to Bengali, Hindi, and other modern languages and dialects, as well as to the ancient Pali, Magadhi, and other prakrits; and the term "Greater India" is sometimes taken to refer to the farthest reaches of Indic – and specifically Sanskrit – culture, marked by the use of Sanskrit as a *lingua franca* as well as in its sacral and philosophical applications. Thus, I will use "ancient India(n)" to refer to people who shared in this widespread South-Asian culture – recognizing the limitations of the term as well as its convenience.

89 Referred to in an earlier period as the "Three Vedas"; the fourth – the *Atharvaveda* – though perhaps dating from the same period as the *Yajurveda* and *Sāmaveda* – was not recognized as *śruti* until later. (The *Ṛgveda* is the oldest of the four and is, in part, the source of portions of the others.)

very reason, the word संस्कृत *saṃskṛta*, "polished, ornamented, adorned," can also mean "perfected" or even "consecrated, hallowed." To this day, the formal process of education begins with the संस्कार *saṃskāra* (rite of passage) known as उपनयन *upanayana*, "initiation" (lit. "bringing near"), in which the boy[90] is "brought to" a गुरु *guru* or spiritual teacher, thereby qualifying him to begin his journey into literacy, numeracy, and the वेदाङ्ग *vedāṅga* (those ancillary disciplines that included *inter alia* phonology, prosody, grammar, and etymology). Thus equipped, he would be prepared to study the Vedas and Upaniṣads (the older Upaniṣads, like the Brāhmaṇas and Araṇyakas, also qualifying along with the Vedic Saṃhitas as *śruti*).

Smṛti, by contrast, means "[something] remembered" or "recalled" (*scil.* from human tradition rather than from divine revelation), and is thus used to refer to texts that might still in some sense be called sacred – for example the *Mahābhārata* or the Puraṇas – but that do not have what might be called the "canonical" or authoritative status that a *śruti* text has.[91] This distinction is sometimes then cancelled out by affectionately awarding a highly-favored text – for example the *Mahābhārata* (or its most famous excerpt, the *Bhagavadgītā*), the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa*, or certain Puraṇas – the status of "Fifth Veda" (पञ्चम वेद *pañcama veda*), thereby effectively classifying it as the transcription of actual divine utterance, and thereby elevating it to the highest level of authority.

We should be impressed, then, to find that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* proclaims, in its earliest verses, that it too is a Fifth Veda (1.15), claiming to be "of stature equal with the Vedas" (वेदसम्मितः *vedasammitaḥ*, 1.4), and indeed referring to itself unapologetically as नाट्यवेद *nāṭyaveda* (1.4 *et passim*); and if there were any doubt about this, the first chapter goes on to elaborate the inspiration – the actual commissioning – of the text by the god Brahmā from "the pious Bharata," who is revered as a मुनि *muni*, i.e. "sage, seer, saint."[92] Brahmā moreover issues

90 The question of education for females, as well as for all members of the शूद्र *śudra* and "scheduled" *varṇa*s or castes (the latter now being the legal term for those formerly referred to as Dalits, Harijans, or *Pañcama*), is one that has occasioned seismic changes in the culture of the subcontinent since the twentieth century (*Caṇḍāla*, literally "savage," is a different category yet again). But there is some evidence that girls underwent *upanayana* and learnt Sanskrit even in ancient times; see Kane (1930–1962) 2.1.293–295. In practical terms, *upanayana* remains primarily a Brahmin custom today. For more on initiation in ancient India, see B. Smith (1986).

91 These distinctions were accepted in the *āstika* schools of Hindu philosopy, though some members of the Mīmāṃsā school interrogated and more or less exploded them.

92 The term *muni* was applied to such luminaries as Vyāsa, traditionally the author of the *Mahābhārata*; Pāṇini, the author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the earliest extant grammar of classical

this charge upon the request of other gods, above all the god Śiva, who wanted "an object of diversion that must be visual/pleasant to see, as well as auditory/worth hearing" (दृष्यं श्रव्यं च *dṛśyaṃ śravyaṃca* 1.11)[93] There is quite a lot to unpack in this brief request: it is first and foremost for the gods, which means it is automatically consecrated (or, at least, set apart for consecration); it operates on the supernatural plane; it must inherently entail pleasure or satisfaction; and it must have both a visual and an auditory aspect (not just the auditory dimension of purely narrative poetry).

What is more – and more astonishing – Lord Śiva stipulates that while study and discussion of the four Vedas is prohibited to the *śudra*, the lowest of the four *varṇa*s or castes, this new *nāṭyaveda* must be accessible to all the *varṇa*s (वेदं पञ्चमं सार्ववर्णकिम् *vedam pañcamaṁ sārvavarṇikam*, 1.12). In addition, then, it must be egalitarian. As Pushpendra Kumar observes: "Sociologically, this breaking of boundaries and hierarchies would make the author and the text radical, if not revolutionary."[94]

Bharatamuni's impulse, moreover, is to create a fifth Veda that will be सेतिहासं *setihāsaṃ*, "like *itihāsa*." The term *itihāsa* (literally, "so indeed it was") is the Sanskrit name for the category of heroic legend or quasi-historical narrative to which belong the great epics, the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*. And this is striking because, while those stories can be (and in fact regularly are) acted out in dramatic form, on stage and screen, such dramatic presentations are *adaptations* of the original: in the form in which these epics are preserved from antiquity, they are *śravya* – to be heard (in recitation) – but not *dṛśya*, visual. The upshot of this is both to correlate the genre of *nāṭya* to a venerable and beloved literary form, and also to tout it as an improvement over the latter: another astounding and bold assertion that is made in the opening pages of the treatise.

This fifth Veda is said to be produced from elements drawn from the other four: Bharata takes dialogue (*pāṭya*) from the *Ṛgveda*, song (*gīta*) from the *Sāmaveda*, gesture (*abhinaya*) from the *Yajurveda*, and *rasa* from the *Atharvaveda*. This combination of ingredients from familiar sources to prepare an entirely new recipe may seem no more than a way of legitimizing the *Nāṭyaśāstra* in quasi-

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Sanskrit; and the Buddha himself (*scil.* शाक्यमुनि *Śākyamuni*, "Sage of the *Śaka* people"). The etymology of *muni* is obscure: Monier-Williams (1899) *sub uoc.* traces it tentatively to **man* "impulse, eagerness," while Ghosh (2016) 1.5 n. 2 derives it from a Prakrit root **muṇa* "know," which, he says, "is most probably not of Sanskritic origin."

93 Translations of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* are taken, or adapted, from that of Ghosh (2016).

94 Kumar (2010) 1: xvi.

Vedic terms; but at the same time, it also affords Bharata the opportunity to give a brief preview of the contents of the treatise itself.

Just what *rasa* means in this context, we shall address in some detail. But at the moment it is high time for us to focus on the term नाट्य *nāṭya*. This comes from the root * नट् *naṭ*, which can mean both "to dance" and "to mime/mimic"; an evidently related root is * नृत् *nṛt* which appears to focus purely on the meaning of "dance." The etymological ramifications of these two little syllables, *naṭ* and *nṛt*, deserve an essay of their own, but for now let me point out the following:

- The breadth of this semantic field implies that at least some aspects of dance reach beyond the realm of rhythmic bodily movement and into the realm of semiosis: of representation.
- There is a strong implication here that dance and mime share an extremely ancient kinship.[95]
- We should thus not be surprised at the rich and ancient traditions of representational dance in India, including e.g. Bharatanatyam and Kathakali.
- In all these regards, the term *nāṭya* calls to mind the Greek μίμησις *mimêsis*, "imitation, representation," which is itself derived from μῖμος *mimos*, a "mimic" or "imitator," and in particular an "actor" or "mime."[96] (The noun *mimos* can also refer to the mime as a dramatic form. And *mimêsis* is an Aristotelian "keyword" if there ever was one – inherited, in fact, by him from Plato.)
- This in turn reminds us that both Plato and Aristotle make much of the distinction between διήγησις *diêgêsis*, "narrative, narrating," and μίμησις *mimêsis*: the epic genre, of which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are our most famous examples, is said to be a mixture of both *diêgêsis* and *mimêsis*, in that there are passages of simple narrative (*diêgêsis*) interspersed with passages of direct discourse, where the poet – or whoever is singing or reciting the poem – engages in actual *representation* (*mimêsis*) of the characters in the tale. It is possible to imagine a poem that would entirely abandon direct discourse in favor of pure *diêgêsis* or narrative; in such a case, for example, where Homer says,

> And then Helen, offspring of Zeus, answered him [*scil*. Priam]:
> "Now this one is Odysseus of the many wiles, son of Laertes,

95 For more on classical dance traditions in the subcontinent, see (among innumerable others) Bhavnani (1965), Vatsyayan (1968), Khokar (1979), Bose (1991), Hegde [*sic*] (1999), Venkataraman/Pasricha (2004). On dance in India as an aspect of masked ritual and performance, see Shulman/Thiagarajan (2006).

96 For other comparative treatments of Aristotle with Bharatamuni, see e.g. Gupt (1994), Ley (2000).

> who was reared in the country of Ithaca, rugged though it be,
> who knows all sorts of stratagems and shrewd plans,"[97]

he could have said, "And then Helen, offspring of Zeus, responded to Priam, pointing out wily Odysseus son of Laertes, noting that he was born in rugged Ithaca and knew all sorts of stratagems and shrewd plans." (Conversely, there is a form of composition that is pure *mimêsis* or representation: namely, drama.)[98]

- Bharatamuni offers yet another remarkable point of comparison between *nāṭya* and the Aristotelian concept of *mimêsis*, insofar as both authors draw very strong connections between dance and mimetic performance.
- The nature of mimetic performance means, in ancient India as in ancient Greece, that whatever emotions are aroused in the audience are to be experienced in a group or communal setting. (But whether or to what extent the *Nāṭyaśāstra* analyzes the emotions of the *audience* is a matter of some debate, as we shall see.)

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The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is a work of considerable antiquity, its oldest form originating possibly as early as the fifth century BCE – which is to say, around the time of Aeschylus in Greece[99] – and undergoing textual changes for several centuries after that. The authorial persona, as already noted, is a vivid and commanding one, but one need not subscribe to the traditional account of this Bharatamuni to acknowledge that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* presents a very thoroughgoing analysis of the nature of drama: drama as a concept in the mind of its creator, as a work of art performed in real time, and as an aesthetic experience on the part of the audience. As a very important aspect of that analysis, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* provides an extraordinary phenomenology of human consciousness – at least insofar as the author and actors of a play are concerned. To say the *Nāṭyaśāstra* discusses "emotion," and to leave it at that, is seriously to undervalue what is on offer in this text.

97 *Iliad* 3.199–202 (my translation).

98 For more on *mimêsis* and *diêgêsis*, see Kirby (1991b).

99 This would be the very earliest end of the range of estimates; see Dace (1963) 249. Ghosh (2016) xxiii does not venture any more specificity than "two millenniums ago." Gupt (1994) 31–32 envisions the possibility that one Bharata, a man living ca 450 BCE, created the original version of this text, which subsequently sustained interpolation, mutilation, and losses. Kumar (2010) 1.xvi asserts that "scholars are more or less agreed that the composition of the text may have taken place some time between the second century B.C. to second century A.D."

It might be more accurate (if also more ponderous) to describe it as a psychophysiology of performance.

The author of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (whom for the sake of convention if nothing else we shall continue to call Bharatamuni) casts his nets very widely in the course of the treatise: he discusses the size and shape of the theater-hall, the nature of gesture, the rules of prosody, details of costume and makeup, plot types, even the different sorts of musical instruments one might use in a theatrical performance. For the moment we concern ourselves with the material presented in Chapters 6 – "the closest thing we have to a foundational text of the discipline of aesthetics"[100] – and 7, which between them lay out an elaborate taxonomy of cognitive and affective states (and in some cases their somatic analogues).

This cluster of topics is clearly of primary importance for the author; he addresses them very early in the treatise, as soon as he has described the divine origins of *nāṭya*, the physical construction of the theater-space, the propitiation of the relevant deities, the details of the dance known as *tāṇḍava*, and the procedures for preparatory rituals. The substance of the treatise is itself spun out as the narration of a sort of performance, a dialogue between Bharata and some other "great-souled *munis*," who ask him to recount to them how the *Nāṭyaśāstra*[101] came into existence. It is in this context that we learn of his encounter with the gods, who commission the treatise from him. At the beginning of Chapter 6, the *munis* ply Bharata with questions:[102]

पूर्वरङ्गविधिः श्रुत्वापुनराहुर्महत्तमाः ।
भरतं मु यः सर्वे प्रश्नान्पञ्चाभिधित्स्व नः ॥ १॥

ये रसा इतपिठ्यन्ते नाट्ये नाट्यविचिक्षणैः ।
रसत्वं केन वै तेषामेतदाख्यातुमर्हसि॥ २॥

भा ाश्चैव कथं प्रोक्ताः कवि ते भावयन्त्यपि।
संग्रहं कारकिां चैव निरुिक्तं चैव तत्वतः ॥ ३॥

100 Pollock (2016) 7.

101 Their actual word is *nāṭyaveda*, which Abhinavagupta takes as a synonym of *Nāṭyaśāstra*. As noted earlier, it casually acknowledges the treatise's status as a (fifth) Veda.

102 I offer not one but two translations of these *Nāṭyaśāstra* selections, because we in the West are still in a very early stage of even encountering this text, let alone engaging with it. There is still much to do just to make the materials available to a Western readership.

pūrvaraṅgavidhiṁ śrutvāpunarāhurmahattamāḥ
bharataṁ munayaḥ sarvē praśnānpañcābhidhatsva naḥ
yē rasā iti paṭhyantē nāṭyē nāṭyavicakṣaṇaiḥ
rasatvaṁ kēna vai tēṣāmētadākhyātumar'hasi

bhāvāścaiva kathaṁ prōktāḥ kiṁ vā tē bhāvayantyapi
saṅgrahaṁ kārikāṁ caiva niruktaṁ caiva tatvataḥ

After hearing about the rules regarding the Preliminaries [[*pūrvaraṅga*, *scil.* prologues, preludes]], the great sages continued their inquiries and said to Bharata, "Answer five of our questions. Explain how the Sentiment [[*rasa*]] enumerated by experts in dramatic art attain their [special] qualities. And why are the *bhāvas* (Psychological states, lit. feelings) so called, and what do they *bhāvayanti* (make us feel)? Besides these, what are the real meanings of terms, such as Digest (*saṁgraha*), Memorial Verse (*kārikā*), and Etymology (*nirukta*)?" [[*Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.1–3, Ghosh (2016) 1.142]][103]

After the procedures for the stage preliminaries had been recounted to them, the great sages all addressed Bharata once again: "Answer five questions for us. Authorities on drama list various dramatic rasas. Can you tell us what it is that makes them rasas, "tastes"? Why are the emotions (*bhāva*) so called, and can you tell us what they bring into being (*bhāvayanti*)? What exactly is meant by "catalogue," "epitome," and "definition"?" [[6.1–3, Pollock (2016) 50]]

Our first translator here, M. M. Ghosh, has bit the bullet and translated our terms, *rasa* and *bhāva*, as "sentiment" and "feeling" respectively; the second, Sheldon Pollock, translates *bhāva* as "emotion" but leaves "rasa" untranslated. But as we shall see, these terms are so semantically rich and complex that it is difficult to find any English translations that can do them full justice. Part of our task here is to explore their ranges of meaning.

The third, fourth, and fifth questions are evidently included in the text here so that Bharata's brief answers to them will set him up for addressing the first two, i.e. those regarding the nature and function of *rasa* and *bhāva*. He briefly explains what a Digest (*saṁgraha*) is, indicating along the way that there is a "small number of Sūtras" (6.8) that deal with *rasa* and *bhāva*. This is interesting in that he is not claiming to present entirely new data on these phenomena. The "Memorial Verse" (*kārikā*) is glossed as the brief aphoristic explanation of a rule in a minimum of words (6.11); "Etymology" or "definition" (*nirukta*, lit. "pronounced, expressed, explained," and thus "defined" or perhaps "[etymologically] interpreted") is glossed as follows:[104]

103 In the case of items cited from Ghosh (2016) and Pollock (2016), items in parentheses and single brackets are in the original texts. Only the material in double brackets [[like this]] is added by myself.

104 The translation in Pollock (2016) does not include this portion of the text. His term "definition" in 6.3, however, arguably suits this passage better than Ghosh's "etymology."

> Etymology is the definitive meaning which arises in connexion with various nouns, is helped by dictionaries (lit. vocabularies) and the rules of grammatical interpretation, includes the significance of the root involved as well as the reasons modifying it, and is helped by various findings [of Śāstras]. And this meaning [of a noun] is established [mainly] from a consideration of its root [and *pratyaya* or affix]. [[6.12–13, Ghosh (2016) 1.144]]

This careful explanation also prepares us for the method that Bharatamuni will employ in discussing various terms in the material that follows.

Without further ado he begins to enumerate lists of various *rasas* and *bhāvas*.

> शृङ्गारहास्यकरुणा रौद्रवीरभयानकाः ।
> बीभत्साद्भुतसंज्ञौ चेत्यष्टौ नाट्ये रसाः स्मृताः ॥ १५॥
>
> śṛṅgārahāsyakaruṇā raudravīrabhayānakāḥ
> bībhatsādbhutasaṅjñau cētyaṣṭau nāṭyē rasāḥ smṛtāḥ
>
> The eight Sentiments [[*rasa*]] recognized in drama are as follows: Erotic (*śṛṅgāra*), Comic (*hāsya*), Pathetic (*karuṇa*), Furious (*raudra*), Heroic (*vīra*), Terrible (*bhayānaka*), Odious (*bībhatsa*) and Marvellous (*adbhuta*). [[6.15, Ghosh (2016) 1.144]]
>
> The erotic, comic, tragic, violent, heroic, fearful, macabre, and fantastic are the eight dramatic rasas. [[6.15, Pollock (2016) 50]]

This certainly looks like a list of emotions. But we cannot proceed further without a more detailed scrutiny of the term *rasa* here. Its use is in one way or another a metaphor; the literal meaning of *rasa* is "juice" or "sap," and the first extension of that – essentially metonymic rather than metaphoric – is to the meaning of "taste" or "flavor."[105] This very vivid usage is distinct from what we have seen in Aristotle,[106] though it is perhaps not entirely unrelated to the pleasure/pain

105 The ancient Indians distinguished six types of flavor: sweet (*madhura*), sour (*amla*), salty (*lavaṇa*), pungent (*kaṭuka*), bitter (*tikta*), and astringent (*kaṣāya*). The Chinese and Japanese traditionally recognize the first five of these, doubtless considering the sixth a mouth-drying property of certain foods and drinks, rather than a "flavor" *stricto sensu*. (The *hanzi* for "astringent" is 澀 *sè*.) Bob Holmes makes the case that "flavor" applies to a range of nasal/oral experiences wider than simply taste and smell; on his account, the data include touch, temperature, and pain; see Holmes (2017). This makes room for the mouth-drying property known as "astringency" under the heading of "flavor" per the Indic system.

In Vaiṣṇava Hinduism the term *rasa* came to be used to represent any of the five degrees of *bhakti* or "devotion," namely *śānti* (peacefulness), *dāsya* (servitude), *sākhya* (friendship), *vātsalya* (affection/fondness), and *mādhurya* (sweetness). Of these, only *mādhurya* is a gustatory metaphor. (It is debatable whether a Vaiṣṇava would consider *dāsya* a metaphor at all.)

For more on *rasa*, having begun with Pollock (2016), see e.g. Pande (2009).

106 Though it does call to mind the metaphoric use of *gustus* ("taste, flavor") in Latin, attested at least as early as Quintilian 6.3.17.

formula, as the notion of *rasa* as the characteristic "flavor" of a work of art may be said to elicit pain or (more typically) pleasure.

While there is some overlap between the terms *rasa* and *bhāva*, the two sets are by no means identical; and the presence of both of them in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is a good indication that the author means to point up certain distinctions. This begins to come into focus when he addresses the term *bhāva* itself, and divides the genus into its various species:

> These eight [[just cited]] are the Sentiments [[*rasas*]] named by Druhiṇa (Brahmā). I shall now speak of the Durable and the Complementary Psychological States [[*bhāvas*]] and the *Sāttvika* ones. [[17]] The Durable Psychological States (*sthāyibhāva*)[107] are known to be the following: love, mirth, sorrow, anger, energy, terror, disgust, and astonishment. [[18]] The thirty-three complementary Psychological States (*vyabhicāribhāva*) are known to be the following: discouragement, weakness, apprehension, envy, intoxication, weariness, indolence, depression, anxiety, distraction, recollection, contentment, shame, inconstancy, joy, agitation, stupor, arrogance, despair, impatience, sleep, epilepsy, dreaming, awakening, indignation, dissimulation, cruelty, assurance, sickness, insanity, death, fright, and deliberation. These are defined by their names. [[22]] Paralysis, Perspiration, Horripilation, Change of Voice, Trembling, Change of Color, Weeping and Fainting are the eight *Sāttvika* States. [[23]] Four kinds of Histrionic Representation are Gestures (*āṅgika*), Words (*vācika*), Dresses and Make-up (*āhārya*), and the Representation of the Sattva (*sāttvika*). [[6.16–23, Ghosh (2016)]]

> These are the eight [[*rasas*]] that were enunciated by the great Druhin. Now I shall tell you about the emotions [[*bhāvas*]]: the stable, the transitory, and the emotions generated by one's "sensitivity." [[17]] The stable emotions are desire, amusement, grief, anger, determination, fear, revulsion, and amazement. [[18]] The transitory emotions are despair, fatigue, disquiet, resentment, intoxication, exhaustion, torpor, despondency, anxiety, confusion, remembrance, satisfaction, shame, recklessness, joy, agitation, numbness, pride, depression, longing, sleepiness, possession, dreaming, waking, vindictiveness, dissimulation, ferocity, sagacity, sickness, madness, dying, fright, perplexity. [[22]] The eight sensitivities are paralysis, perspiration, horripilation, a broken voice, trembling, pallor, weeping, and fainting. [[23]] The four registers of acting that pertain to drama are the physical, verbal, psychophysical, and costuming. [[6.16–23, Pollock (2016) 50]]

The noun *bhāva* comes from the root **bhū*-, "becoming, being, existing, occurring." Thus *bhāva* may signify a "state" or "condition," or more specifically, some disposition of mind or body. This is perhaps as close to non-metaphoric language as one can get, unlike the word *rasa*, which as we saw is fundamentally metaphoric or metonymic. That said, in *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.15–17 the eight

107 Ghosh notes that other translators render *sthāyibhāva* as "dominant emotion," "Permanent State," or "permanent mood." Adamson/Ganeri (2020) 312 glosses *sthāyibhāvas* as "emotional dispositions."

sthāyibhāvas, the "durable" or "stable" *bhāvas*, are closely analogous with, or indeed synonymous to, the eight *rasas* (Figure 5):[108]

STHĀYIBHĀVA	RASA
love/desire (*rati*)	erotic (*śṛṅgāra*)
mirth/amusement (*hāsa*)	comic (*hāsya*)
sorrow/grief (*śoka*)	pathetic/tragic (*karuṇa*)
anger (*krodha*)	furious/violent (*raudra*)
energy/determination (*utsāha*)	heroic (*vīra*)
terror/fear (*bhaya*)	terrible/fearful (*bhayānaka*)
disgust/revusion (*jugupsā*)	odious/macabre (*bībhatsa*)
astonishment/amazement (*vismaya*)	marvellous/fantastic (*adbhuta*)

Figure 5: The eight *sthāyibhāvas* and their corresponding *rasas*.

We should note right away that there are eight emotions and no more[109] in this list. Why might this be? Sheldon Pollock is emphatic that it is necessarily the case: "If we think carefully about the list of eight in the *Treatise* . . . we will recognize that it comprises only those that can actually be communicated in performance. For "literature meant to be seen" [i.e. *dṛśya*] . . . emotion that can be seen was naturally counted as basic."[110] Basic, that is, for the playwright who is creating the characters that feel those emotions; and basic for the actors who portray those characters and their emotions. But not (yet), Pollock asserts, for the spectator/audience:

> A half-century ago a leading scholar of Indian aesthetics was correct to note – and has been alone in noting – that in the *Treatise* "the words rasa and *bhāva* [emotion] are used in connection with the actor and the artist and not in connection with the spectator," and that any "historical approach to these concepts must admit that they 'describe the aesthetic situation, the art object outside, more than the subjective state of the critic [[or audience]].'"[111]

108 Where there are paired English terms in this table for the *bhāvas* or *rasas*, these are again taken from Ghosh (2016) and Pollock (2016). Where only one English term is listed, that means both Ghosh and Pollock translate the Sanskrit term the same way.

109 Later theorists such as Udbhata (early 9th century CE) added a ninth *rasa*, namely the *śānta* "peaceful"; Pollock is confident that "the few references in the NŚ are later additions, though undatable" (Pollock [2016] 346 n. 131; cf. *ibid*. 21, 48, 340 n. 4). In any case the concept of a "peaceful" *rasa* is useful, in that it can designate the semiotically-unmarked or zero-degree class of *rasa*: the blank slate, as it were, upon which any other *rasa* is inscribed.

110 Pollock (2016) 8.

111 Pollock (2016) 48, citing Krishnamoorthy (1968) 45. Single square brackets here are added by Pollock.

Once we do open up the consideration of *rasa* to include the spectator/audience, as was later done, we may apply the concept to all genres of artistic achievement, not just performed drama – and we may increase the number of things that merit the name of *rasa*, perhaps substantially.[112] Can these *sthāyi-bhāvas* or "enduring emotions" be said to correspond meaningfully to any of the emotional responses likely to be experienced by the spectator/audience? Certainly, though not at all necessarily by direct correlation; a character experiencing sexual desire in the drama may well elicit a response of anger or revulsion in the audience, and so on.

Not all critics, as Pollock notes, take such a strictly formalist approach to the text. For example, compare the following translations of *Nāṭyaśāstra* 7.2 by Ghosh and Pollock:

> वागङ्गमुखरागेण सत्त्वेनाभनियेन च ।
> कवेरन्तर्गतं भावं भावयन्भाव उच्यते ॥ २॥
>
> vāgaṅgamukharāgēṇa sattvēnābhinayēna ca
> kavērantargataṁ bhāvaṁ bhāvayanbhāva ucyatē
>
> As in these, [[because]] the inner idea of the playwright is made to pervade [the mind of the spectators] by means of Words, Gestures, colour of the face and Representation of the Sattva, they are called *bhāvas*. [[Ghosh (2016) 1.164; single brackets his]]
>
> "Emotion" (*bhāva*) is also so called because it serves to "bring into being" (*bhāvayan*) the poet's inner emotion (*bhāva*), by means of the four registers of acting: verbal, physical, psychophysical, and scenic. [[Pollock (2016) 6]]

It is not incidental that Ghosh adds, in square brackets, the "mind of the spectators," as though that is implicit in the text; he wants to expand Bharata's theory to encompass audience reception as well. Noteworthy as well is that he translates *bhāvayan* as "pervade" here, whereas Pollock renders the same term "bring into being."

As with most ancient texts – and perhaps even more than most – the enduring importance of philology emerges here as soon as we begin to try and determine what was likely the original state of the text, and what changes occurred to it thereafter (and when).[113] In the case of a modern author, like Yeats, it is possible to produce a variorum edition that tracks the author's own changes to

112 This was in fact part of the later commentarial discussion on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, as noted by Pollock (2016) 13–14.

113 For the importance of philology to world literature, see Pollock *et al.* (2015) (and for Sanskrit in particular, Chapter 5).

his text, in some instances even dating the changes.[114] But with ancient authors, even those with relatively simple textual histories, it is not always possible even to know exactly what words s/he wrote. In the case of a work like the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, not only because of its antiquity but because of its complex textual history, the problem is magnified still more. As Sheldon Pollock writes, "While on formal grounds the compilation (and this is what it seems to be) can be vaguely assigned to the early centuries (perhaps third century) C.E., the material was clearly re-edited, and partly rewritten, at a later point in its history, most probably in Kashmir around the eighth or ninth century."[115] To the extent that the text *was* rewritten, it renders dubious anything one might say about the original intentions and views of an author or even of a compiler; and there may be other textual problems intervening as well.[116]

With such caveats in place, we must depend on those best equipped to pronounce on philological matters, including not only the manuscript tradition but also the changing nature of the Sanskrit language itself over the centuries. In view, then, of Pollock's admonitions, one must be extremely hesitant about attributing any individual portion of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* to whoever began the compilation, or to whoever wrote the oldest portion(s) of that compilation. That said, is it entirely plausible that someone (whom we are calling "Bharatamuni" here) would focus so much attention on dramatic performance – on the ideas of the playwright and on the modes of communicating those ideas to an an audience, whether human or divine – without even pondering the phenomenon of audience reception? And, given the sometimes highly emotional nature of audience response, the topic of the audience's *emotions* must surely have given any such author food for thought.

In addition to this, the very term *rasa*, "flavor" or "taste," more than points to someone doing the tasting. As Pollock himself notes,

> Theoretically, therefore, rasa can be regarded as a property of a text-object, a capacity of a reader-subject, and also a transaction between the two. The whole process, in fact, exists as a totality even while its several moments can be analytically disaggregated. In this, rasa precisely resembles the "taste" it metaphorically references, which may be regarded as existing at once in the food, the taster, and the act of tasting. Something of this totality has been captured by the phenomenologist of aesthetics Mikel Dufrenne, who writes of the "primordial reality of affective quality, wherein that part belonging to the subject and that belonging to the object are still indistinguishable":

114 For Yeats, e.g., see the meticulous edition of Allt/Alspach (1957).

115 Pollock (2016) 47.

116 Shrinivasan (1980) views "the rasa section in its current state as incoherent beyond repair" (Pollock [2016] 340 n. 3).

> It is for this reason that we have been led to say that the affective is in the work itself, as well as in the spectator with whom the work resonates. Feeling is as deeply embedded in the object as it is in the subject, and the spectator experiences feeling because affective quality belongs to the object.
>
> The history of aesthetic discourse in India is a history of the gradual elaboration of the components of this comprehensive view.[117]

On this view, there is also something inherent in the thing tasted, that connects it in a peculiar way with the taster:

> we have the taste of a thing only because the thing itself has taste, as it does not have sight. The long debate over rasa's location can be seen as a search for an understanding already gained by the metaphor itself – this is just what Abhinavagupta argued – one not attained in the West until the rise of phenomenological aesthetics.[118]

In view of this potential multiplicity of loci for *rasa*, Surendra Barlingay offers an interesting interpretation of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* that takes stock of the audience's reception and response in terms, precisely, of *rasa*. It may well be that his reading is conditioned by later interpretations; it was toward the end of the first millennium that commentators' attention turned particularly to these matters of audience reception and response, and this (not surprisingly) issued in some new or expanded interpretations of the term *rasa*. Whether our original Bharatamuni would have subscribed to Barlingay's interpretation cannot be known. But its strength lies, first, in the fact that he thereby accounts not only for all the rhetorical loci in the performance event (playwright, script, actors, audience), but also for the way that *bhāva* is said to connect to *rasa*.

Barlingay agrees that the poet is the specific source of *bhāva*. But he goes on, somewhat remarkably, to propound what is essentially a semiotic theory of *rasa* as it relates to *bhāva*:

> In the context of drama, *sthāyi bhāva* thus should strictly mean that persistent meaning or sense or poet's idea arising from poet's experience and which continues to associate with the stage. It is necessary to remember that, in drama too, as in ordinary language there are symbolic expressions and there are meanings of these symbolic expressions. If the two do not go together, the whole gamut of drama would be meaningless. It is really strange that most writers have completely ignored the fact that Bharata persistently uses the expressions *artha* and *saṃjñā* and adds that *sthāyi bhāvas* are *rasasaṃjñā*, i.e. those (meanings) of which the symbols are *rasa* . . . Similarly, he stated that in the dramatic process no "sense" or meaning could be had without *rasa*.

117 Pollock (2016) 26, quoting Dufrenne (1973) 455.

118 Pollock (2016) 43, with a reference to Abhinavagupta 1.283, itself translated in Pollock (2016) 205.

न हि रसादृते कश्चिदिर्थः प्रवर्तते ।

na hi rasādṛte kaścidapi arthaḥ pravartate ।

[[No [poetic] meaning proceeds from speech without [any kind of] sentiment]]
He again repeates the word *artha*, in describing *sthāyi bhāva* in the *Kārikā*.

योऽर्थो हृदयसंवादी तस्य भावो रसोद्भवः ।

yo 'rtho hṛdayasaṃvādī tasya bhāvo rasodbhavaḥ ।

[[The Psychological State proceeding from the thing that is congenial to the heart . . .]][119]

The term संज्ञा *saṃjñā* (or *sañjñā* as it may be transliterated) can have a variety of meanings: "agreement" or "harmony," and thus by extension "understanding," "correspondence," and even "sign." Barlingay correctly draws the semiosic correspondence between *bhāva* and *rasa*, which obtains even in a strict formalist approach to the text. But he takes this some distance further, applying it not only to the semiosic understanding and production of the playwright, but also to the aesthetic semiosis of the spectator/audience:

> If this fact is taken into account then alone the meaning of verse 39 in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* would be clear that the meanings or *bhāvas* (for appreciator) would emerge from *rasas*. It is unfortunate that almost every writer of Indian rhetoric thought that *sthāyi bhāvas* stand for certain "emotional states" or sentiments. It is certainly a mental state, a *citta vṛttiviśeṣaḥ* [i.e., particular mental activity] as Dhanika has clearly stated. It must not be forgotten that Bharata is only describing the process of stage communication, though this process presupposes the mental states which influence the stage process. And this is certainly the reaction to experience. It must not be forgotten that Bharata is only describing the process of stage communication, though this process presupposes the mental states which influence the stage process.[120]

Barlingay reads Bharata's terms *sthāyi bhāva* and *kāvyārtha* as "identical" (Barlingay [2007] 44), which enables him to develop his semiotic reading further:

> *Sthāyi bhāvas*, considered as meaning, then, are both prior and posterior to stage symbol or as I understand by it, *rasa*. Thus, *in the process of the creation* of dramatic art, *sthāyi bhāva* (*kāvyārtha*) leads to *rasa*, and *in the process of appreciation* and understanding of staged drama, *rasa* leads to *sthāyi bhāva*.[121]

119 Barlingay (2007) 43. Translations in double brackets here are supplied from Ghosh (2016) 1.148, 166. Single brackets are Barlingay's own. "Sentiment" is Ghosh's translation for *rasa* here; "Psychological State" is his rendering of *bhāva*.
120 Barlingay (2007) 44.
121 Barlingay (2007) 45. Emphasis in text.

On Barlingay's reading, then, the *bhāvas* of the author produce *rasas* in the script, or at least on the stage, which in turn elicit *bhāvas* in the audience. This is, fundamentally, the process of semiosis in action. Again, whether Barlingay has divined the original conceptual framework of our first author, or whether he is here influenced by later commentators – he does explicitly mention Dhanika – is debatable. But at a minimum, he has provided an account of how the *bhāvas* of the spectator/audience are connected to those of the playwright, and the role played in that connection by *rasa*.

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Bharatamuni's approach to the emotions is both like and unlike Aristotle's. As in Aristotle's work, we find in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* a close link between *learning* and *entertainment*: there is a strong sense here that the experience of a work of art can afford knowledge as well as enjoyment. Aristotle would doubtless also appreciate Bharatamuni's passion for taxonomy and categorization, as well as his explicitly semiotic approach to the phenomenon of human cognition. And he would immediately have hailed the ancient lines of connection between of theatrical *performance* with *dance*.

Where they are very dissimilar is that Bharatamuni frames his entire treatise in terms of a supernatural myth of origin, evidently in order to endow his text with the fragrance of quasi-scriptural authority. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is characterized overall by a supernatural focus that is lacking in Aristotle's approach. While Aristotle conceives the human artistic endeavor in materialist/rationalist terms, grounding his research in empirical observation, Bharatamuni understands the theatrical art in terms of what Gupt (1994) calls "hieropraxis":

> even though it did not seek the same end as religion, drama was meant to please the gods as well as men. This gave it a purpose significantly different from that of European drama which was meant to please the audience only . . . It was not supposed to depict merely a state of mind as in *Hamlet*. Rather, it had to be a drama or deed (action), which traversed from one state of being (*avasthā*) to another, from fortune of one kind to that of the opposite kind. To highlight these two essential features of ancient drama, I have called it hieropraxis or sacred action. Later drama sidelined both the sacredness and the nature of action as conceived in ancient drama.[122]

122 Gupt (1994) 3–5, 63–64, 125–127, 233. To be clear, Gupt believes that Aristotle's dramatic theory too was "formulated for what I have called the art of hieropraxis" (Gupt [1994] 233). While I do not believe that that is so for Aristotle, I do think a case could be made that it does apply to the *playwrights* (of the 5th century BCE and earlier) of whom Aristotle is thinking in the *Poetics*. Aristotle himself is separated from these by decades (in some cases centuries) of time, and even more so by a vast gulf in worldview.

But like the ancient Greeks generally, Bharata sees a close link between *entertainment* and *ritual*. As we saw in the case of the Attic tragedies of the classical period, these plays are first and foremost an offering to the gods; and insofar as a human audience is present, the latter are not just spectators at a dramatic performance, but also participants in that divine offering. In that capacity they are, furthermore, also participants in a communal event. For this reason, "Bharata is always anxious to emphasize the synthesizing role of drama in the society."[123] As in the case of the ancient Greeks, it was clearly important for the ancient Indians to experience aesthetic emotional response in a communal, public, ritual setting. And while that may strike us today as odd or foreign, it would apparently also have made very good sense to the ancient Chinese – as we shall shortly see.

3 The 禮記 *Lǐjì* or "Record of Rites"

Westerners in the grip of an orientalist worldview sometimes speak of Chinese people as "inscrutable," meaning (as I suppose) that their facial expressions do not instantly telegraph recognizable emotions. This is of course not only embarrassingly absurd but demonstrably false. Nonetheless, it would be presumptuous to conclude without examination that traditional Chinese discourse(s) about the emotions, whether vernacular or academic, inevitably map with full congruency onto typical Western ways of thinking and speaking about such things. What is needed here, to help Westerners understand how the emotions were perceived in ancient China, is a text (or set of texts) that not only mention the emotions but also discuss them in such a way as to provide philosophical analysis of them – or, at the very least, to situate them in their cultural context.

As it happens, we are especially fortunate in the case of traditional Chinese thought, on a philosophical level, in that we have some very early texts that refer to emotional terms: the *Zhuāngzǐ*, a Daoist text which (like the *Dào Dé Jīng*) perhaps represents a compilation of philosophical Daoist thinking,[124] uses

123 Kumar (2010) 1: xvi.

124 Though probably somewhat later than the *Dào Dé Jīng*: estimates for the composition or compilation of the *Zhuāngzǐ* range from the 5th to the 3rd centuries BCE. The philosopher to whom the work is traditionally ascribed, 莊周 Zhuāng Zhōu or 莊子 Zhuāngzǐ "Master Zhuang," himself seems to have lived in the late 4th and early 3rd centuries.

terms like 喜怒 *xǐ nù* – joy and anger, contrasting emotions – or a longer version of that phrase, 喜怒哀樂 *xǐ nù āi lè*, "joy anger sadness happiness" – to refer to the gamut or spectrum of human emotion. Indeed the latter four-word phrase is used today in common Chinese parlance to refer precisely to that gamut. The *Zhuāngzǐ* does not explicitly label these phenomena as 情 *qíng*, "emotions," although we do find that term applied to them in the *Xúnzǐ*, a Confucian or Legalist text of perhaps the third century BCE.[125] The latter document gives a list of three such contrasting pairs of 情 *qíng* that it says are "inborn in our nature" (性 *xìng* "nature, character") namely: 好惡 *hào wù* liking and disliking (lit. "good/bad");[126] 喜怒 *xǐ nù* joy and anger; and 哀樂 *āi lè* sorrow and joy.[127] Such enumeration gives us to wonder whether such lists are found elsewhere in traditional Chinese literature. And, in fact, they are.

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The 禮記 *Lǐjì*[128] or "Record of *Lǐ*" was, when it was composed, already to some extent a "classicizing" text:[129] the spirit of (and perhaps the very reason for) the document is one of nostalgia, of reverence for the past, arising out of a sense of respect and even reverence for the customs of an earlier time.[130] This is different in degree but not in kind from the Confucian cultural institution of 孝順 *xiàoshùn* or 孝道 *xiàodào*, "filial piety," which as a moral value has withstood the buffeting of millennia of cultural upheaval. Even in the post-Mao People's Republic of China, the power of *xiào* remains firmly in place.[131] So too, while Mao decried all relicts of the pre-revolutionary past as baleful monuments of feudalism, the current regime

125 Chong (2016) 161 n. 14. The *Xúnzǐ* is eponymously ascribed to 荀況 Xún Kuàng, also known as荀子 Xúnzǐ, i.e. "Master Xun," who lived 314–239 BCE (thus, apparently, approximately contemporary with Zhuangzi). The 禮論 *Lǐlùn* or "Discourse on Ritual," which figures as book 19 of the *Xúnzǐ*, is important background reading for an understanding of the *Lǐjì*; see Knoblock (1988–1994) 3.49–73.

126 The phrase 好物 *hǎowù* is today used to mean "tastes" or "preferences."

127 See e.g. Knoblock (1988–1994) 3.127 (22.1b).

128 For the Chinese text of *Lǐjì*, with facing English translation, consult Legge (1885).

129 "Classicizing" in the sense used in Kirby (2009) 21.

130 The customs detailed in the *Lǐjì* are of the Zhou dynasty (circa 1056 to 256 BCE), but the document as we have it, though traditionally ascribed to *Kǒngzǐ* (Confucius, 551–479 BCE, thus a few generations older than Socrates), may date from the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE).

131 The Cultural-Revolutionary practice of denouncing even family members for criticizing the Party was perhaps the single greatest threat to the survival of *xiào*. But this has, like much of Maoism, been relegated to the regrettable past; on this see e.g. Branigan (2013). The enduring value of *xiào* is attested in proverbial expressions such as 百善孝為先 *bǎishàn xiàowéixiān* ("there are a hundred virtues, but *xiào* is preëminent among them").

in the PRC celebrates cultural institutions such as Confucian thought, and actively encourages its citizens to honor them.[132]

Certainly the compiler(s) of the *Lǐjì* were moved to honor the tradition that spawned these rites. The work itself was sometimes referred to as 禮經 *Lǐjīng*, "the *Jīng* of *Lǐ*," which gives a good sense of its canonical status. 經 *Jīng* is often translated as "Book," as in 易經 *Yìjīng*, the famous *I Ching* or "Book of Changes"; but it carries the connotation of "Classic" or "Canonical Text" or even "Scripture," so strong is the reverential dimension of its semantic field.[133]

The *Lǐjì* eventually took its place among the 四書五經 *sìshū wǔjīng* or "Four Books [and] Five Classics," an early canon of authoritative Confucian documents. This group of nine texts included, among the "Four Books," the 大學 *Dà xué* or "Great Learning"; the 中庸 *Zhōngyōng* or "Doctrine of the Mean"; the 論語 *Lúnyǔ* or *Analects* of Confucius; and the 孟子 *Mèngzǐ*, an eponymous work by Mèngzǐ or Mencius (of whom more below). The "Five Classics" in this list were the 詩經 *Shījīng* or "Book of Songs"; the 尚書 *Shàngshū* or 書經 *Shūjīng*, i.e. "Book of History"; the 易經 *Yìjīng*, the "Book of Changes"; the 春秋 *Chūnqiū* or "Spring and Autumn [Annals]"; and the 禮記 *Lǐjì* or "Record of Rites."[134]

The very monosyllable 禮 *lǐ* – whose meanings can include "propriety," "courtesy," and "etiquette," as well as "ceremony" and "ritual" – is a masterclass in traditional Chinese culture, and can teach us much about east Asia generally, both in ancient times and to this day. Even very young Chinese people today, those born long after the death of Mao, live with a profound understanding of *lǐ* in their bones. The notion of *lǐ* is one of four principal benchmarks of the virtue theory of Mèngzǐ ("Mencius," in its latinized form), who[135] describes them as innate qualities (or at least potential capacities) of the 心 *xīn*, that aspect of the self

132 On this see e.g. Osnos (2014), Buckley (2014).

133 For more on the etymology and meaning of 經 *jīng*, see Kirby (2016), Section II. For more on the classics in Imperial China, see e.g. Nylan (2009) and Beecroft (2010).

134 The Chinese have historically been fond of canons; a well-known later (*scil*. Song-period) list was known as the 十三經 *Shísān jīng* or "Thirteen [Confucian] Classics," and the *Lǐjì* also formed part of this one, under the subheading of the 三禮 *Sānlǐ*, "Three Ritual Records." That full list of thirteen includes the following: 詩經 *Shījīng*, the Book of Songs; 尚書 *Shàngshū*, the Book of History; 易經 *Yìjīng*, the Book of Changes; 左傳 *Zuǒ Zhuàn*, Mr Zuo's Annals; 公羊傳 *Gōngyáng Zhuàn*, Mr Gongyang's Annals; 穀梁傳 *Gǔliáng Zhuàn*, Mr Guliang's Annals; 論語 *Lúnyǔ*, the *Analects* attributed to 孔夫子 Kǒngfūzǐ (Confucius); 爾雅 *Ěryǎ*, an early (circa 3rd century BCE) dictionary; 孝經 *Xiàojīng*, the Book of Filial Piety; the 孟子 *Mèngzǐ*, the (Book of) Mencius; and the 三禮 *Sānlǐ*, "Three Ritual Records," namely, 周禮 *Zhōulǐ*, the Zhou Rites; 儀禮 *Yílǐ*, Rites and Ceremonies; 禮記 the *Lǐjì* (or 禮經 *Lǐjīng*) itself.

135 Some scholars assert that the *Mèngzǐ* was actually composed, or at least compiled, by Mencius' students. Lau (1993) dates it to the late fourth century BCE.

whose name is sometimes translated as "heart," sometimes as "mind," sometimes as "heart-mind" (Aristotle might have suggested *psukhê* as a Greek counterpart, though *kardia* would be the anatomical organ represented by *xīn*):

> 孟子曰:「人皆有不忍人之心。先王有不忍人之心, 斯有不忍人之政矣。以不忍人之心, 行不忍人之政, 治天下可運之掌上。所以謂人皆有不忍人之心者, 今人乍見孺子將入於井, 皆有怵惕惻隱之心。非所以內交於孺子之父母也, 非所以要譽於鄉黨朋友也, 非惡其聲而然也。由是觀之, 無惻隱之心, 非人也; 無羞惡之心, 非人也; 無辭讓之心, 非人也; 無是非之心, 非人也。¶ 惻隱之心, 仁之端也; 羞惡之心, 義之端也; 辭讓之心, 禮之端也; 是非之心, 智之端也。¶ 人之有是四端也, 猶其有四體也。有是四端而自謂不能者, 自賊者也; 謂其君不能者, 賊其君者也。凡有四端於我者, 知皆擴而充之矣, 若火之始然, 泉之始達。苟能充之, 足以保四海; 苟不充之, 不足以事父母。」

> Mèngzǐ said, "All humans have hearts that are not unfeeling toward others. The Former Kings had hearts that were not unfeeling toward others, so they had governments that were not unfeeling toward others. If one puts into practice a government that is not unfeeling toward others by means of a heart that is not unfeeling toward others, bringing order to the whole world is in the palm of your hand.
>
> "The reason why I say that all humans have hearts that are not unfeeling toward others is this. Suppose someone suddenly saw a child about to fall into a well: anyone in such a situation would have a feeling of alarm and compassion – not because one sought to get in good with the child's parents, not because one wanted fame among one's neighbors and friends, and not because one would dislike the sound of the child's cries.
>
> "From this we can see that if one is without the feeling of compassion, one is not human. If one is without the feeling of disdain, one is not human. If one is without the feeling of deference, one is not human. If one is without the feeling of approval and disapproval, one is not human. ¶ The feeling of compassion [惻隱之心 *cèyǐnzhīxīn*] is the origin [端 *duān*][136] of benevolence [仁 *rén*].[137] The feeling of disdain [羞惡之心 *xiūèzhīxīn* or *xiūwùzhīxīn*] is the origin of righteousness [義 *yì*]. The feeling of deference [辭讓之心 *círàngzhīxīn*] is the origin of propriety [禮 *lǐ*]. The feeling of approval and disapproval [是非之心 *shìfēizhīxīn*] is the origin of wisdom [智 *zhì*].
>
> ¶ "People having these four origins is like their having four limbs. To have these four origins, yet to claim that one is incapable (of virtue), is to steal from oneself. To say that one's ruler is incapable is to steal from one's ruler. In general, having these four origins within oneself, if one knows to fill them all out, it will be like a fire starting up, a spring [泉 *quán*][138] breaking through! If one can merely fill them out, they will be

136 A 端 *duān* is an extremity, whether beginning or end. Here it is used in the sense of "principle" or "origin." Many translations render it here as "sprout," which may be misleading to some readers.
137 It is no coincidence that this word is homophonous with 人 *rén*, "human being"; indeed it contains that *hanzi* as its radical. Interestingly, a pre-Imperial variant of 仁 is 忎, which contains the *hanzi* for *xīn* at the bottom. Confucius, asked to gloss the term 仁, "defined it by the ordinary Chinese word for love, *ai* [i.e. 愛 *ài*], saying that it meant to "love others" [*Analects* 12.22]" (Dubs [1951] 48). For more on love in traditional Chinese literature, see especially Eifring (2003).
138 The term 泉 *quán* "spring" refers to a water source, not the season.

> sufficient to care for all within the Four Seas.[139] If one merely fails to fill them out, they will be insufficient to serve one's parents.[140]

So *lǐ* takes its place in this august constellation of moral values, two of which, interestingly, have resonances with Western ideas of emotions: 仁 *rén* shares some meanings with "compassion"; and 羞 *xiū*, "shame," says Mèngzǐ, comes from an awareness of 義 *yì*, "justice" or "righteousness." 智 *zhì* resonates rather with Aristotle's notion of *nous*, "thinking" or "thought," and, as such, is not purely passive in function, but actively "approves and disapproves" – perhaps on a cognitive as much as on an affective platform.

Mèngzǐ (ca 372–289 BCE), a Confucian, was hardly working in a conceptual vacuum here. On the contrary, this list of four 端 *duān* looks to be his development, or revision, of the 五常 *wǔcháng* or "five common [virtues]" of Confucian thought:[141] 仁 *rén*, benevolence; 義 *yì*, righteousness; 禮 *lǐ*, ritual propriety; 智 *zhì*, wisdom/knowledge; and 信 *xìn*, trust/confidence/faithfulness. The last item, 信 *xìn*, is the one not included by Mèngzǐ; it shares some common ground with 忠 *zhōng*, loyalty/devotion/fidelity, but is in fact pronounced like the word for "heart-mind," 心 *xīn* (though with a different tone in modern Mandarin).[142] The fact that Mencius makes the other four concepts out to be 端 *duān*, origins, of virtuous behavior springing from the 心 *xīn* "heart-mind," suggests strongly that he is, if not overhauling the older Confucian system, at least restructuring its elements. And, fascinatingly, he finds it natural to move directly from a discussion of *xīn* responses that, to us, may seem intensely personal and individual, to a discussion of their societal and indeed political applications.

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139 I take "all within the Four Seas" to be a synonym for 中國 *Zhōngguó*, i.e. China: literally, the "middle nation." Its "middleness" comes from its putative situation in the midst of the four seas (East, South, West, and North). The ancient Greeks had a roughly comparable notion of a huge river, Ôkeanos, surrounding a central land-mass.

140 *Mèngzǐ* 2A6. The Chinese text here is taken from http://www.uboeschenstein.ch/texte/Dao/mengzi2A6.html; accessed 13 September 2020. The translation is adapted from that in Norden (2008). I have added pilcrows (¶) in both the Chinese and the English text to mark passages central to our discussion here.

141 The number five has perhaps more than an ordinary valence in Confucian thought: in addition to the five common virtues, there are the 五倫 *wǔlún* "five [cardinal] relationships" of humankind (君臣 *jūnchén*, a sovereign and his ministers; 父子 *fùzǐ*, father and son; 兄弟 *xiōng dì*, elder brother and younger brother; 夫婦 *fūfù*, husband and wife; and 朋友 *péngyou*, friends). Perhaps originating in Daoist thought is the system of 五行 *wǔxíng* five elements or "phases" of Chinese cosmology: Wood (木 *mù*), Fire (火 *huǒ*), Earth (土 *tǔ*), Metal (金 *jīn*), and Water (水 *shuǐ*). A list of five naturally subverts binarism, though individually the 五倫 *wǔlún* each imply a dyad.

142 Once again, the glyph 忠 *zhōng* also contains the *hanzi* for *xīn*, "heart-mind," at the bottom.

So it is against this rich backdrop that we are to understand 禮 *lǐ* if we want to situate it (and related concepts of the emotions) in its cultural context in ancient China. The era in which we now live will likely not be remembered as one in which "propriety" was a paramount value; so the *Lǐjì* may strike some modern readers as obscure and even tedious. Our purpose here, however, is not to analyze the entire treatise,[143] but rather to focus on one particular small portion of it: its list of the seven 人情 *rénqíng* or "human emotions."

We may begin with a little examination of the term 情 *qíng*, the word for "emotion" here, which we had already encountered in the *Xúnzǐ*. The radical of this *hanzi*, namely 忄, is once again a (compressed) form of 心 *xīn*, the "heart-mind," reminding us (if there were any doubt) that the *xīn* is the seat of emotion. The addition of 人 *rén* reminds us that we are focusing here on human emotions, but it also opens the door for a number of idiomatic expressions involving 人情 *rénqíng* that specifically address human relations, not just in the interpersonal but also in the explicitly societal sphere. A very partial list of these, most of them current to the present day, would include the following:

有人情 *yǒurénqíng* "humane"

不近人情 *bùjìnrénqíng* "unreasonable," lit. "not close to *renqing*"

人情世故 *rénqíngshìgù* "worldly wisdom," i.e. "sophisticated in the ways-of-the-world [as regards] *renqing*"

風土人情 *fēngtǔrénqíng*, "the cultural milieu [of a given area or people]"; lit. "the air and earth of *renqing*"

人情味 *rénqíngwèi*, "friendliness, warmth," lit. "the fragrance of *renqing*"

人情債 *rénqíngzhài*, a "debt of *renqing*, i.e, of gratitude

There are other Chinese words, of course, relevant to the topic of the emotions. One of these is 感 *gǎn*, which covers a range of meanings including "feel," "perceive," and "emotion." Another is 懷 *huái*, which means "bosom, breast," and harks back to 心 *xīn* as "heart-mind," but also as an anatomical organ situated in the thorax.

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The chapter of *Lǐjì* known as 禮運 *Lǐyùn*, "Ritual Usage," includes in its eighteenth section the following passage:

143 For that, the reader is strongly urged to consult Ing (2012), which does an admirable job at such a difficult and daunting task.

故聖人耐以天下為一家, 以中國為一人者, 非意之也, 必知其情, 辟於其義,
明於其利, 達於其患, 然後 能為之。¶ 何謂人情? 喜怒哀懼愛惡欲七者,
弗學而能。¶ 何謂人義? 父慈, 子孝, 兄良, 弟弟, 夫義, 婦聽, 長惠, 幼順,
君仁, 臣忠十者, 謂之人義。講信修睦, 謂 之人利。爭奪相殺, 謂之人患。
故聖人所以治人七情, 修十義, 講信修睦, 尚辭讓, 去爭奪, 舍禮何以治之?[144]

Therefore when it is said that (the ruler being) a sage[145] can look on all under the sky[146] as one family, and on all in the Middle states[147] as one person, this does not mean that he will do so on premeditation and purpose. He must know people's feelings,[148] lay open to them what they consider right, show clearly to them what is advantageous, and comprehend what are their calamities. Being so furnished, he is then able to effect the thing. ¶ What are the feelings of humans? They are joy, anger, sadness, fear, love, disliking, and liking. These seven feelings belong to humans without their learning them. ¶ What are "the things which humans consider right?" Kindness on the part of the father, and filial duty on that of the son; gentleness on the part of the elder brother, and obedience on that of the younger; righteousness on the part of the husband, and submission on that of the wife; kindness on the part of elders, and deference on that of juniors; with benevolence on the part of the ruler, and loyalty on that of the minister – these ten are the things which humans consider to be right. Truthfulness in speech and the cultivation of harmony constitute what are called "the things advantageous to men." Quarrels, plundering, and murders are "the

144 The Chinese text is taken from the Chinese Text Project's site at ctext.org/liji/li-yun (seen 11.29.2021). Ancient copies of the *Lǐyùn* would have been written vertically, with the columns read from right to left, not horizontally and left-to-right (as here). The addition of punctuation, and of divisions between phrases, is post-classical, though traditional *hanzi* are used here. The tonal diacritics in my roman transcription correspond to the pronunciation of modern *Putonghua*, though of course we do not know precisely how classical Chinese was phonated. Doubtless there were many spoken dialects (and distinct languages) then, as there are now. On the history and development of the Chinese language(s) and writing system(s), see e.g. Ramsey (1987), Norman (1988), Qiu (2000).

Once again I have added pilcrows (¶) in both the Chinese and the English text to mark passages central to our discussion.

145 聖人 *shèngrén* is a Confucian term for "sage"; it is used with reference to Confucius himself. But 聖人 *shèngrén* can be found in Imperial Chinese as an honorific for whoever is the current emperor, as the word 聖 *shèng* also carries connotations of sacredness, which would certainly have attached to the person of the monarch long before the birth of Confucius.

146 天下 *tiānxià*, "[all] under heaven," is an idiom meaning "all the people," whether the entire realm of the monarch, the nation-state of China, or in some cases the whole world. As China came under the unified rule of 秦始皇 Qín Shǐhuáng (259–210 BCE), founder of the Qin dynasty and the first emperor, the term would of course take on added valence. (A relevant though not synonymous term is 天地 *tiāndì*, "heaven and earth," i.e. the world.)

147 Here we explicitly find 中國 *Zhōngguó*, the "Middle States," as a reference to China.

148 Here is our term 情 *qíng*, used without the accompanying 人 *rén*, though that is implied from its use earlier in the sentence. (We must still underscore the fact that 人 *rén* means "person/people," not "man/men," though the world of ancient China was resolutely androcentric and male-dominated.)

> things disastrous to men." ¶ Hence, when a sage/ruler [聖人 *shèngrén*] would regulate [治 *zhì*, "manage, govern, control, harness"][149] the seven human emotions; cultivate the ten virtues that are right; promote truthfulness of speech, and the maintenance of harmony; show his value for kindly consideration and agreeable courtesy; and put away quarrelling and plundering, if he neglect the rules of propriety, how shall he succeed?[150]

Key to our comparative analysis of analyses, then, is the passage marked by the first pilcrow: "What are the feelings of humans? They are joy, anger, sadness, fear, love, disliking, and liking. These seven feelings belong to men without their learning them," which we may break down as follows:

> 何謂人情? What are the human emotions?
>
> 喜怒哀懼愛惡欲 七者 joy, anger, sadness, fear, love, disliking, and liking, these seven things
>
> 弗學而能 belong to humans without their learning them.

The writer stresses that the emotions are 弗學而能 *fú xué ér néng*, "not learned but an innate capacity," which accords well with their origin in the 心 *xīn* "heart-mind" (and which also recalls the 性 *xìng* "inborn" attribution of the emotions in the *Xunzi*).

Now, to the list of seven[151] emotions: 喜 怒 哀 懼 愛 惡 欲 joy, anger, sadness, fear, love, disliking, and liking. Some lexical observations on these:

1. 喜 *xǐ* "joy" can mean "happiness" or even "delight," but may also refer to "liking" something (cf. 愛 *ài* below), a natural connection reminiscent of the Greek *hêdonê*.
2. 怒 *nù* "anger" may sometimes have the simpler (?) connotation of "flourishing." In any case it carries a valence of intensity.
3. 哀 *āi* "sadness" may also refer to "pity," or may be used as the verb for "pitying" or "lamentation/grieving."
4. 懼 *jù* "fear" once again contains the radical 心 *xīn* in compressed form.
5. 愛 *ài* "to love, be fond of, like, affection, be inclined (to do something), tend to (happen)"
6. 惡 *ě* (alternatively phonated *wù* or *wū*) is a complex word. Legge's smooth translation proffers simple "disliking," but 惡 *ě* can entail a range of meanings, some of them far more extreme than "disliking" might imply. The *hanzi*

149 Not to be confused with 智 *zhì*, "wisdom, intelligence," though the pronunciation (including the tone) is identical.

150 The translation is adapted from that of Legge (1885).

151 Throughout traditional Chinese literature, from this earliest period through the Song, there are lists of four, five, six, and seven emotions; on this see Ma/Brakel (2016) 351 n. 40.

is built (not surprisingly) on a base of 心 *xīn*, "heart-mind,"[152] and as an adjective can mean "evil," "fierce," or even "ugly." As a verb it can mean "hate," "loathe," "harm," or – revealingly – "fear." The compound 惡心 *ěxīn*, which repeats the character 心 *xīn* at full size, can refer to "nausea" or "disgust," but can also mean "to embarrass" someone deliberately – an egregious (nauseous?) violation of propriety in traditional Chinese culture.

7. 欲 *yù* "liking" can mean "to desire/wish for." Another *hanzi* for *yù* is 慾, "desire" or "passion," even "lust." (Note once again the 心 *xīn* element at the base of the latter.)

Several salient characteristics emerge from careful scrutiny of this list of terms and their multifarious meanings.

- As with the Greek *pathê*, these are all passive responses which [a] typically have somatic manifestations as well, and [b] may issue in active responses on the part of the person feeling them. In fact, as the above glossary shows, some of the words may at times take on an active connotation.
- The list cannot be meant to be exhaustive. As with the lists of Plato, Aristotle, and Bharatamuni, this raises the question of how and why the items included have been chosen.
- This consideration of the emotions – those (we would say) supremely personal, individual, private phenomena – is presented in a fundamentally *interpersonal* – even societal – context. That is to say, these emotions are considered, not only as experienced with reference to other people, but also as they impact social and societal relations. Further, those relations extend (given this context in the *Lǐyùn* chapter and, more broadly, the *Lǐjì* as a whole) to the political.

The passage marked by the second pilcrow sheds valuable light on why these seven emotions are examined here:

> 父慈, 子孝, A kind/gentle [慈 *cí*] father, a son who practices filial piety [孝 *xiào*];
>
> 兄良, 弟弟, an elder brother who is good/virtuous[良 *liáng*], a younger brother [ditto];
>
> 夫義, 婦聽, a just/righteous [義 *yì*] husband, a submissive [聽 *tīng*] wife;
>
> 長惠, 幼順, kind [惠 *huì*] elders, obedient/deferential [順 *shùn*] juniors;

152 The other element is the glyph 亞 (*yà* or *yǎ*), which originally meant "house"; this character is particularly ancient, being found already in oracle-bone inscriptions.

君仁, 臣忠, a humane/benevolent [仁 *rén*] ruler, loyal [忠 *zhōng*] officials/subjects,

十者 these ten things

謂之人義。 are the things that people consider to be right.

This is a full articulation of the 五常 *wǔcháng* or "five cardinal [relationships]" that lay the infrastructure for the ideal Confucian society. People "considered these to be right" precisely because they reinscribed and underscored the familial, societal, and political values that made traditional feudal society what it was in Confucius' time. In a treatise on 禮 *lǐ*, ritual propriety, it is not coincidental that the focus turns from the realm of the emotions to the public sphere; it is precisely in the latter that ritual is enacted. And when such enactments are undertaken with propriety (*lǐ*), they are more likely to elicit the appropriate emotions in those present, whether they are enacting or observing the rites.

The third pilcrow marks a curious and significant moment in the text. We were already told that the seven human emotions are 弗學而能 *fú xué ér néng*, "not learned but an innate capacity"; but here we are told that the *shèngrén* must not "neglect the rules of propriety" if he is to "manage" (治 *zhì*) the emotions, as well as cultivating the ten virtues, promoting truthful speech, maintaining harmony, showing his value for kindness and courtesy, and putting away quarreling and plundering. This suggests a fundamental role for 禮 *lǐ*, not only in governance generally, but for the managing of emotions (presumably his own internal emotions as well as the public expression of his people's emotions). How ritual and ceremony function in the public sphere, *vis-à-vis* the emotions as well as in other ways, is an important question regarding all three of the ancient works we have been considering here. So it behooves us to broaden and deepen our understanding of the nature and function of ceremony and ritual.

4 Ritual and Ceremony as Epideictic Events

As we have seen, Aristotle, the great taxonomist, had a passion for classification, and he made no exception in his study of rhetoric. Indeed he analyzes and classifies the component parts of rhetoric in a number of different ways, each designed to answer a different question. For the most part, his answers are ternary:

– What are the three *loci* of the rhetorical situation? (The rhetor, the audience, and the communicative expression that connects them.)

- What are the three rhetorical *modes* of persuasion? (The arguments from *êthos*, from *pathos*, and from *logos*.)
- What are the three *kinds* of communicative expression? (Deliberative or "political"; judicial or "forensic"; and epideictic or "ceremonial.")
- What are the three aspects of *time* that govern communicative expression? (Past, present, and future, corresponding respectively to judicial, epideictic, and deliberative.)

Sometimes, however, he employs a binary analysis: What are the *types* of persuasion? (*Entekhnoi* and *atekhnoi* – the "entechnic," i.e. the rhetorical or artistic, and the "atechnic," i.e. the non-rhetorical or inartistic.) And sometimes he will overlay a binary (antithetical) division upon a ternary; for example, in his examination of the *purposes* of the three kinds of communicative expression (*Rhetoric* 1.3.3–5), we find a ternary division overlaid by not one but two sets of binary divisions:

- Judicial communication focuses on what is just and what is unjust (*to dikaion* and *to adikon*), via *katêgoria* or *apologia* (accusation or defense);
- Deliberative communication focuses on what is advantageous and what is harmful (*to sumpheron* and *to blaberon*), via *protropê* or *apotropê* ("turning-toward" or "turning-against," i.e. exhortation or dissuasion);
- Epideictic communication focuses on what is honorable and what is shameful (*to kalon* and *to aiskhron*), via *epainos* or *psogos* (praise or blame).[153]

The binary approach is also found in *Rhetoric* 1.3.2, where we are told that there are two possible kinds of *audience* in the rhetorical situation: those who are called upon to act as judges (*kritai*), and those who are simply observers (*theôroi*). Now if, across this binary division, we distribute his ternary taxonomy of the kinds of rhetoric (judicial, deliberative, and epideictic), we find that the audiences for judicial and deliberative events are judges, whereas the audience for an epideictic event will be composed of observers. In practical terms, this means that the audiences for judicial and deliberative events – for example, the jury in a courtroom trial, and a political assembly, respectively – must render a decision, typically by voting. By contrast, the rhetor's goal regarding the audience for an epideictic event is simply to induce them to "feel a certain way"; common examples of epideictic events are commencement addresses and funerary eulogies.[154]

153 In addition to the binary divisions of praise/blame and honorable/shameful, Aristotle discusses epideictic in terms of virtue and vice (*aretê* and *kakia*, e.g. *Rhetoric* 1.9.1 ff.).

154 *Rhetoric* 1.2.3: αἱ δὲ [*scil*. πίστεις] ἐν τῷ τὸν ἀκροατὴν διαθεῖναί πως. The verb διατίθημι, it must be noted, does not explicitly refer to feelings or emotions: it means to "dispose,"

All of this is useful and important to understand because, if it is true that every incident of communicative expression is in some sense rhetorical, one would like to have a system that is capable of analyzing all of them in comparable terms. Such a system should be capable of analyzing artistic expression as well. This is not a modern idea: indeed, already in Hermogenes of Tarsus we find the notion of classifying works of art rhetorically as *epideictic*.[155] This makes sense, given that the audience is not required to vote on any decision as a result of the experience: rather the effect of a work of art is to inspire some aesthetic response. (The very word "aesthetic," related to *aisthêsis* or perception, reminds us that the *αἰσθ- root can have to do with emotions.)[156] In this regard it is significant that Aristotle's word for "observers" – *theôroi* – belongs to a word-group (*θεωρ-) that can refer specifically to attendance at a religious festival,[157] which gives us to recall that comedy, tragedy, and satyr-play arose in ancient Athens as aspects of religious festivals. This also endorses the Hermogenic logic underpinning the assertion that works of art, including enacted dramas and ceremonies, should be categorized rhetorically as epideictic events.

This is not to say that "epideictic" is a simple or pellucid category. Judicial communication, Aristotle tells us, has to do with determining of an action committed in the past; deliberative communication has to do with urging the hear to some action in the future. But in what does "the present" consist? And what is the ultimate purpose of inducing the audience to "feel a certain way"?

Chaïm Perelman, one of the most important theorists of epideictic since Aristotle, posited that the function of epideictic is to inspire "adherence" to the shared values of a community.[158]

"arrange," or "manage" someone or something (most literally, to "distribute," < διὰ + τίθημι). But this clause from *Rhetoric* 1.2.3 does refer specifically to the argument from *pathos*; taken in the larger context of the *Rhetoric*, it must mean "dispose the listener [to feel]" some way. For analogues, cf. Isocrates *To Philip* 80 and Demosthenes *On the Crown* 168 – noting that none of these examples precludes *cognitive* input that could contribute to the listener's *affective* disposition.

155 Kennedy (2007) 47, note 72, cites Hermogenes' *On Types of Style*, Chapter 12, as an example.

156 This is the case, for example, in Aristotle's *Poetics* 1454b 37: ἡ τρίτη διὰ μνήμης, τῷ αἰσθέσθαι τι ἰδόντα.

157 θεωρός: e.g. Demosthenes *On the False Embassy* 128, Dionysius of Halicarnassus *On Lysias* 29; θεωρία: e.g. Aristophanes *Wasps* 1005, Xenophon *Hieron* 1.12, Plato *Laws* 650a; θεωρέω: e.g. Thucydides *Histories* 3.104, Lucian *Timon* 50. The use of θεωρία at Aeschylus *Prometheus Bound* 802 seems apposite. Cf. also θεατής at Aristophanes *Clouds* 575.

158 Perelman/Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958), especially §11–12.

> The speaker tries to establish a sense of communion centered around particular values recognized by the audience, and to this end he uses the whole range of means available to the rhetorician for purposes of amphfication and enhancement. In epidictic [sic] oratory every device of literary art is appropriate, for it is a matter of combining all the factors that can promote this communion of the audience [. . .] Epidictic speeches are most prone to appeal to a universal order, to a nature, or a god that would vouch for the unquestioned, and supposedly unquestionable, values [. . .] The purpose of an epidictic speech is to increase the intensity of adherence to values held in common by the audience and the speaker. The epidictic speech has an important part to play, for without such common values upon what foundation could deliberative and legal speeches rest?[159]

Perelman has, in this analysis, not only correctly diagnosed the goal (and mechanism) of epideictic communication, but has also made greater sense of why Aristotle assigns epideictic temporally to the present. In the process, he has also provided us with a way of understanding how our ancient texts address the rhetoric of public, communal, societal enactments such as play performances (in Greek and Sanskrit) or ritual solemnities (in Chinese), all of which share salient dramatic, ceremonial, and indeed religious aspects. Equipped with this understanding, we are able to broaden our analysis beyond the more modern approach of the emotions as as solely private and individual experiences: instead, we may also assess them – as we have seen our Greek, Sanskrit, and Chinese texts do – within the public, communal, societal sphere.

Michael D. K. Ing, in his *The Dysfunction of Ritual in Early Confucianism*, outlines two major theories of ritual: the "correspondence" theory,[160] and the "subjunctive" theory.[161] The correspondence theory posits that the elements of a ritual correspond ontologically to elements in the world around us. "Paraphrasing Eliade, *as was* done by the gods, *so is* done by human beings in the performance of ritual; and *as is* done in ritual, *so will be* done in the world."[162] As Ing also notes, the correspondence theory is regularly coupled with a theory of "changelessness": the notion that ritual can allow people to "identify themselves with invariability and timelessness . . . [thereby resisting] the uncertainty of past and future, life and death. In rituals they become 'eternal.'"[163]

The correspondence theory, particularly when coupled with the notion of changelessness, can "lead to a significant problem for ritual performers, especially when they are compelled to explain situations where their rituals do not

159 Ibid. (from pp. 51–53 of the 1969 English version).
160 Associated e.g. with Eliade (1954), Myerhoff (1984), Geertz (2000).
161 Associated e.g. with J. Smith (1980), Seligman (2008).
162 Ing (2012) 204, citing Eliade (1954) 21. Emphasis in Ing's text.
163 Ing (2012) 205, citing Michaels (2006) 260–261.

function as claimed."[164] In such situations, they are forced to acknowledge that the world around us does not in fact always correspond to the elements of a ritual, leading to the inference either that they have performed the ritual improperly, or that ritual *per se* is not efficacious.

The subjunctive theory seeks to cope with this problem of "ritual efficacy": rather than positing that ritual maintains an ontological correspondence with the world around us, it acknowledges the disconnect between the two, and instead embraces ritual as an enactment of what *might* or *ought to* happen – hence the grammar of "subjunctivity" in the label. "Instead of depicting primitive actors as being unaware of the constraints of changing the ordinary world, the performers are depicted as rational agents acting out because of the constraints of changing the ordinary world."[165]

Both the "correspondence" theory and the "subjunctive" theory are what we might term *semiotic* theories of ritual: that is to say, both are systems of understanding ritual as itself a system of signs, where elements of the ritual *signify* other things – be these aspects of the world around us, or objects of wish or desire on the part of the ritual performers. Against both these theories, while incorporating aspects of each, Ing proposes a new system for understanding ritual, which he names the "tragic" theory: a system, like the correspondence theory, that approaches ritual as "meant to order the dysfunctional [real] world,"[166] while also freed from misguided notions of changelessness. Moreover, as with the subjunctive theory, this system equipped the early Confucians (who, in Ing's view, took an essentially "tragic" approach to ritual) to believe that "ritual could in fact change. Since ritual performers were aware of the loose fit between the ritual world and the dysfunctional world, they turned the failures of ritual into disorienting opportunities valued for their creative and therapeutic power."[167]

> Stated succinctly, the tragic consciousness of ritual is an awareness of vulnerability, ambiguity, and rupture with the past. Yet this tragic consciousness, rather than working against ritual, instead secures its longevity and efficacy. It allows ritual to remain in different, and even "modern," contexts and to support claims of efficaciousness. Ritual performers can reaffirm the value of the past while looking to the present and can mobilize the resources of vulnerability and ambiguity in enacting their rites.[168]

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164 Ibid.
165 Ing (2012) 207.
166 Ing (2012) 209.
167 Ibid.
168 Ing (2012) 214.

What is the role of emotion in ritual? Arguably a crucial one, which would explain why an analysis of them is included in the *Lǐji*. And Ing's choice of the "tragic" as a name for his theory of ritual reminds us that while *drama*, in ancient Greece as in ancient India, served, precisely, a *ritual* function, *ritual* enactment had conversely a *dramatic* function in China.

To call for a "tragic" theory of ritual raises the issue (and, perhaps, begs the question) of how to define tragedy itself. This is surely a fool's errand,[169] but most if not all tragedies do seem to represent their characters as coping (or failing to cope), in one way or another, with what Ing calls the "dysfunctional world." In the process of experiencing the drama, and in response to that experience, the audience will (as Aristotle so famously notes in his *Poetics*) themselves experience emotions. So intimately related to the very purpose of the event (tragedy, ritual) are such emotions that all three of the texts we have examined here – in Greek, in Sanskrit, and in Chinese – find it worth addressing them as integral to the experience of the enacted ritual event.

But it is the writer of the *Lǐjì* passage who, in addressing the emotions – those deeply personal, individual, often private expressions of the self – most directly points up both the public, sociopolitical importance of emotions, and the need for "managing" (治 *zhì*) them appropriately. In the *Lǐjì*, the answer to this conundrum seems to be: ritual itself. To manage the emotions in a communal ritual context is to take steps, on an individual level, toward appropriately managing the self; to manage the self is to take steps toward appropriately managing the social order as a whole. All of this illuminates the appropriateness of the title of the 禮記 *Lǐjì*, the "Record of *lǐ*." At the end of the day, ritual in ancient China, as in Greece and India, was constituted as a semiosic system that helped to make the sociopolitical order possible and to keep it in good working order: all three of these cultures reified and mobilized the communal experience of emotions and, thereby, the experience of one's very humanity as woven into the fabric of society. Given the centrality of this experience, it is no wonder that the *Lǐji*, including the "Lǐyùn" chapter, was traditionally ascribed to none other than Confucius himself.

Perhaps we should not be surprised to find that already in remote antiquity, writers across a vast swath of the globe were grappling with questions not only of how to identify and classify the emotions, but also how to assess the role of

169 The bibliography is impossibly vast. If, like this fool, you would nonetheless like a few points of entry, you might begin with Else (1967), Kaufmann (1968), Vickers (1973), Nussbaum (1986), Eagleton (2002) and (2020), and Csapo and Miller (2007) – and all their assembled bibliography, back to Plato and Aristotle.

such experiences in the social order. What does, I confess, surprise me is how similar those assessments are. The irresistible next question is whether their analyses share some common source: whether there was even in antiquity some communication between peoples regarding the nature and function of ritual – and of the emotions. The answer to this, we may never know with certainty. But that these disparate and far-flung cultures should all share such similarities of approach takes as given, among other things, that all three cultures shared an ancient respect for the process of rational philosophical analysis – and, more fundamentally, that they also shared a common experience of the human condition. In a world so riven by the vagaries of difference and alienation, this is perhaps a lesson worth remembering in our own day as well.[170]

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170 I am grateful for having been awarded a senior fellowship at the University of Miami's Center for the Humanities. In his *Vermischte Bemerkungen*, Ludwig Wittgenstein memorably wrote: "This is how philosophers should greet one another: 'Take your time'" – and time is, above all, what such a fellowship allows philologers, as well as philosophers, to make progress in their work.

My personal debts are numerous and substantial. Please understand, if I thank these good people for their generous help (in a broad variety of ways), that is not to implicate them in any of my assertions in this essay; still less in my errors: Jaswinder Bolina, Douglas Cairns, Stephen Halsey, He Xiangqian 贺向前, Thomas Martin, Peter Mentzel, Michael Nylan, Michael Puett, Steven Owyoung, Justin Ritzinger, Mihoko Suzuki, Anand Venkatkrishnan, Curie Virag, Robyn Walsh, and Yang Xiao 蕭陽.

Three names must stand outside the alphabetical order, *honoris causa*. These are Robert Wright, Huang Yang 黄洋, and – *sine quo non* – David Konstan. For these three, no amount of thanks can be adequate.

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